

*THE IMPACT OF THE REGICIDE OF
CHARLES I ON CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH
NOTIONS OF TIME AND THE FUTURE*



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Declaration

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit of 80,000 words, as specified by the guidelines of the Faculty of History Degree Committee.

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Abstract

'The impact of the regicide of Charles I on contemporary English notions of time and the future'

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This thesis focuses on the execution of King Charles I of England on 30 January 1648/9. It seeks to investigate and document the impact of the event on the English, specifically its effect on contemporary senses of time. Charles was a king put on trial and executed by members of his own Parliament. Organised by radical supporters of the Army who had taken over the government in a coup, his execution shook the nation to its core. The king was God's lieutenant on earth, and he was the font of all law and justice. His execution sparked a wave of mourning and commemoration, as well as a sense of loss and psychic disorganization. His death left the country at a crossroads, unsure of how to proceed. What sort of time were they living in, and what did the future hold? Were there discernible shapes and patterns of time? Were these altered by an event as unprecedented as the regicide?

I focus on three groups of writers: astrologers, history writers, and newsbook authors, performing a diachronic analysis of their publications to understand how their ideas of time and the future evolved in the tumultuous time of civil war and regicide. Through a close examination of sources like almanacs, newsbooks, and polemical histories, I conclude that the early moderns tried to normalise the disruptive regicide by embedding it within larger narratives of time. They downplayed the radical nature of the event in search of order, incorporating it within grand narratives of God's providential plans on earth, of generational changes in society and politics, or of recurring cycles of rebellious behaviour. The regicide gave contemporaries an opportunity to create, clarify, and strengthen their grand narratives and schemes of time.

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Abbreviations and Conventions

N&S	Carolyn Nelson and Matthew Seccombe, <i>British newspapers and periodicals, 1641-1700</i> , New York, NY: Modern Language Association of America, 1987.
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
PFKCII	Marchamont Nedham, <i>Mercurius pragmaticus (for King Charles II). Communicating intelligence from all parts...</i> (Apr 1649-May 1650), N&S 370.

Original spelling and punctuation are retained in all quotations, except where confusion would otherwise arise, other than the use of i and j, u and v, which has been modernised. Dates are given in the Old Style but with the year taken to begin on 1 January. For primary printed sources the place of publication is London, unless otherwise stated.

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Introduction

How do we react to unexpected and traumatic events? For early moderns living through the English Civil Wars, society was turned upside down. The brutality of war, the billeting of soldiers, the brutish and unsystematic dispensing of arbitrary justice was a marked change from the many years of peace that came before. Ronald Hutton called the period 'arguably the most traumatic experience that the English, Welsh and Cornish people had ever had'.¹ According to Charles Carlton, around one in four English males fought between 1642-1646, and around 3.7% of the total English population perished. To put this in perspective, the figure for the First World War in Britain was 2.61%.² Relative peace and hopes for a settlement came with the success of Parliamentary armies. However, the greatest act of political violence was yet to come. The military coup led by Colonel Pride in December 1648 left the Army and the more extreme members of Parliament in charge. Convinced that Charles was not to be trusted, they put the king on trial for treason. The trial, which lasted seven days, found him guilty of levying war and spilling the blood of his own subjects for his own personal gain. Charles was publicly executed on 30 January 1649.

What qualifies the regicide as a disruptive and traumatic event? As Jason Peacey has noted, reigning kings had previously been murdered or deposed, but never

¹ Ronald Hutton, *Debates in Stuart History* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 32-3.

² Charles Carlton, *Going to the Wars: The Experience of the British Civil Wars, 1638-1651* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 340 and 214, cited in Peters, 'Trauma Narratives of the English Civil War', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 16:1 (2016), p. 91.

put on public trial and executed.³ Sanctioned and carried out by a small minority in Parliament, the regicide shocked both English and continental sensibilities.⁴ We can gauge the magnitude of the trauma by looking at some contemporaneous reactions. The diaries of Philip Henry contain the oft-cited eyewitness account:

The blow I saw given, and can truly say with a sad heart, at the instant whereof ... there was such a grone by the thousands then present, as I never heard before and desire I may never hear again.⁵

The anonymous author of *The Bloody Court* embellished the Henry account, adding that 'there was scarce a Protestant in the World, to whom the true Relation came, but shed tears for him'.⁶ In a 1649 compilation of epitaphs entitled *Monumentum Regale*, Charles's execution was even compared to deicide:

Kings are Gods once remov'd. It hence appears / No Court but Heav'ns
can try them by their Peers / So that for Charles the good to have been
tride / And cast by mortal Votes, was Deicide. / No Sinne, except the first,
hath ever past / So black as this.⁷

³ Jason Peacey, 'Introduction', in *Regicides and the Execution of Charles I*, ed. Jason Peacey (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 1.

⁴ Peacey, 'Introduction', p. 1.

⁵ *Diaries and Letters of Philip Henry*, ed. Matthew Henry Lee (London: Kegan Paul, 1882), p. 12.

⁶ [Robert Wild?], *The Bloody Court; or the Fatall Tribunall . . .* (Printed for G. Horton; And published by a Rural Pen, for general Satisfaction, n.d.), sig. B4r, Oxford, Worcester College Library copy, cited in Nancy Klein Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask/Masque of Politics: The Case of Charles I', *Journal of British Studies* 28:1 (1989), p. 3.

⁷ [John Cleveland], *Monumentum Regale: Or A Tombe, Erected for that incomparable and Glorious Monarch, Charles the First, King of Great Britane, France and Ireland, &c., in select Elegies, Epitaphs, and Poems* (n.p., 1649), sig. B8r, Wing C4681, cited in Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask', p. 4.

Losing their king, according to another elegy, meant 'los[ing] our selves, and every thing'.⁸ The demise of the symbol of sovereignty and monarchy, as Nancy Maguire argues, 'collapsed identifying organizational concepts'.⁹ Commentators had to resort to using pre-existing metaphors to describe the ensuing situation.¹⁰ The polity was now 'headlesse', and the rest of the body distorted: 'Strange Bodie-Politick! whose Members spread, / And, Monster-like, swell bigger than their *Head*'.¹¹ Maguire cites other similar examples of published responses to the regicide, concluding that the English suffered a sense of 'unorganized confusion', 'self-fragmentation', and 'psychic disorganization'.¹² In John Aubrey's *Brief Lives*, James Harrington 'was on the scaffold with the King when he was beheaded; and [Aubrey had] oftentimes heard him speake of King Charles I with the greatest zeale and passion imaginable'. Charles's 'death gave him so great a grieffe that... never any thing did goe so neer to him'.¹³ In his biography of the Irish bishop James Ussher, Richard Parr placed the regicide as 'a central moment of the text'. According to Parr, as a clergyman close to both James I and Charles I, Ussher went 'into irreversible decline after 1649'.¹⁴ For an

⁸ *An Elegy, Sacred to the memory of our most Gracious Soveraigne Lord King Charles*, Wing E447, pasted into the Folger copy of *The Scotch Souldiers Lamentation*, cited in Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask', p. 4.

⁹ Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask', p. 4.

¹⁰ Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask', p. 4.

¹¹ [George Wither], *Vaticinium Votivum: Or, Palaemon's Prophetick Prayer* (n.p.: 'Trajecti: Anno Caroli Martyris primo'), sigs. D3r and E1r, cited in Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask', p. 5.

¹² Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask', p. 4.

¹³ John Aubrey, *Aubrey's Brief Lives*, ed. Oliver Lawson Dick (London: Secker & Warburg, 1958), p. 124, cited in Jonathan Scott, 'James Harrington's prescription for healing and settling', in eds. M.J. Braddick and D.L. Smith, *The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 192.

¹⁴ Richard Parr, *Life of the Most Reverend Father in God James Ussher . . . with a Collection of three hundred Letters* (1686), p. 38, cited in John McCafferty, 'Irish bishops, their biographers and the experience of revolution, 1656–1686', in *Experience of Revolution*, eds. Braddick and Smith, p. 267. The quoted words are McCafferty's.

anonymous poet, the regicide's implications were clear: the 'Tragedie doth portend / Earth's dissolution, and the world's just end'.¹⁵

This dissertation is concerned with how the early moderns understood the times they were living in, of what was to come, and how these ideas were affected by an unprecedented event like the regicide. Through a diachronic examination of publications by astrologers, historians, and newsbook writers, I investigate how time and the future were envisioned and used by these authors before the regicide, before comparing these conceptions with those present in their post-regicide work.

Time and trauma

This project explores how individuals understood their place in time: what sort of time were they living in, and where did one stand in relation to the rest of time?¹⁶ Prominent scholars have surveyed how societies and communities understood time, focusing on concepts like providence over the span of a century or more.¹⁷ This thesis takes a different approach: we will consider how a

¹⁵ *Vaticinium Votivum* Spenser, sig. f2r, cited in Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask', p. 12.

¹⁶ This is in contrast to histories of clock-time and technologically driven changes in time-senses, most notably E.P. Thompson's classic 'Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism', *Past and Present* 38 (1967), pp. 56-97, David Landes's *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (London, 2000), Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift's *Shaping the Day: A History of Timekeeping in England and Wales 1300-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Most recently, see Vanessa Ogle's *The Global Transformation of Time, 1870-1950* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015) and Jane Desborough's *The Changing Face of Early Modern Time, 1550-1770* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019).

¹⁷ Classic literary studies include Ricardo J. Quinones's *The Renaissance Discovery of Time* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), which examines a wide spectrum of communities. C. A. Patrides's *The Grand Design of God* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) and Robert Nisbet's *History of the Idea of Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 1980) review providence and progress respectively, but across the spans of several centuries. Achsah Guibbory's *The Map of Time: Seventeenth-Century English Literature and Ideas of Pattern in History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986) focuses on seventeenth-century literary writers, closely reading their life's work to track changes in their 'ideas of pattern' and

particular event like the regicide affected notions of time. Thus, I aim to describe an event-driven, or more specifically a traumatic event-driven change.¹⁸ As Hayden White has argued, historical events, once reckoned with, had to be placed within imaginative and conceptual matrices.¹⁹ These representations shaped the way they understood the world and shaped the way they saw the future.²⁰ It is my task to understand how the regicide changed their 'fictions of factual representation', with particular reference to their ideas of the future.²¹

How do violent events change ideas of time? Conceptions of time are intimately related to the processes of memory and identity formation. Individuals and

'shapes of history' across a century. Thomas Corns, 'Review of *The Map of Time* by Achsah Guibbory', *Prose Studies: History, Theory and Criticism* 10:1 (1987), pp. 108-09. On Britain, see the wide-ranging work of Ronald Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Year 1400–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) and David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). More recently, historians have moved towards a history of temporality, with more attention to social practices. See Matthew Champion's *The Fullness of Time: Temporalities of the Fifteenth-Century Low Countries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017) and the Viewpoints section of the recent issue of *Past & Present* 243:1 (2019), pp. 247-327.

¹⁸ The term 'trauma' is usually used to describe personal and subjective experiences, and was created in the modern period as a medical term. Here I do not wish to medicalise or pathologise the event. Instead, I refer more to its connotations as a far-reaching, over-awing and profoundly changing experience, that forces people to come to terms with unfamiliar and often unwanted realities.

¹⁹ David Carr similarly concludes 'that narrative pervades our experience prior to specifically academic reflection on the past'. David Carr, *Time, Narrative, and History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), cited in Jonathan A. Carter, 'Telling Times: History, Emplotment, and Truth', *History and Theory* 42 (2003), p. 27. The quoted words are Carter's.

²⁰ White refers to modern historians and the practice of history writing, but the same may be said of individuals reflecting on past events, as Covington argues. Sarah Covington, '“Realms so barbarous and cruell”: Writing Violence in Early Modern Ireland and England', *History* 99:336 (2014), p. 478; Hayden V. White, 'The fictions of factual representation', in *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 121; Wulf Kansteiner, 'Hayden White's critique of the writing of history', *History and Theory* 32 (1993), pp. 273-95, cited in Covington, 'Writing Violence', p. 478.

²¹ Covington, 'Writing Violence', p. 478.

communities structure their identity narratives around 'crucial events', turning points that 'structure the flow of time by dividing it into "what as before" and "what came after"'.²² When constructing these narratives, writers 'emplot' these events into a plot, a structure that imparts meaning to the events.²³ Alessandro Cavalli proposes three models of how communities incorporate traumatic events into their life narratives. First, the event could be taken as a 'zero-point', where the event closes the past and opens a new era. The past, or large segments of it, are ignored in favour of a rebirth. Second, the event could be ignored and continuity with the past emphasised.²⁴ Third, an 'elaboration of memory', where the event and the past are consciously remembered and their meanings continuously interrogated.²⁵ These meanings shape their identity and outlook of the future: if the community identity became redefined around victimhood, they would expect continued support from the outside world for the future.²⁶ Sociologist Jeffrey Alexander describes a theory of cultural trauma, which 'occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in

²² Alessandro Cavalli, 'Memory and Identity: How Memory Is Reconstructed after Catastrophic Events', in *Meaning and Representation in History*, ed. Jörn Rüsen (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), p. 170.

²³ White argued that there are four dominant plots these histories and narratives can take: romance, comedy, tragedy and satire. Carter believes writers are not restricted by genre. Hayden V. White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2014), pp. 8-10; Carter, 'Telling Times', pp. 22-3.

²⁴ These two models follow the psychoanalytical concept of removing or displacing, in this case either the past or the event itself, respectively. Cavalli, 'Memory and Identity', pp. 173-4.

²⁵ Cavalli, 'Memory and Identity', pp. 173-4.

²⁶ Cavalli, 'Memory and Identity', p. 178.

fundamental and irrevocable ways'.²⁷ One need not be personally traumatised by the event: an event that had 'penetrating if not overwhelming significance' to society would affect its members.²⁸ However, collective trauma needs to be constructed through 'the trauma process'. Moral responsibility needs to be assigned, political actions taken, and the lessons of the trauma commemorated and memorialised.²⁹ For early modern England, the regicide clearly resounded as an event of collective trauma, evidenced by contemporary contestation over its meaning and significance. Eulogists portrayed Charles I as a martyr and his death as the culmination of a tragedy. An essential part of the script, Charles's death was inevitable and 'made sense'. It could be argued that making a victory out of a momentous defeat is a psychological coping method. In contrast, critics of Charles like Anthony Weldon saw the execution as providential justice for Charles's blood crimes against the nation, and also the beginning of the end for monarchy itself.³⁰ Thus, without referring explicitly to the idea of cultural trauma, regicide scholars have documented the process of contestation that followed the traumatic event. However, they have not focused on the assumptions of time embedded in these competing meanings. Visions of time and the future have political power, and scholars of 'chronopolitics' like Rhys

²⁷ Jeffrey C. Alexander, 'Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma', in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, eds. J.C. Alexander, Ron Eyerman, Bernard Giesen, Neil J. Smelser, and Piotr Sztompka (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 1.

²⁸ Neil Smelser identifies some such events for modern American society, like the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941 and the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, where Americans were 'called upon to come to terms'. Neil J. Smelser, 'Psychological Trauma and Cultural Trauma', in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, eds. J.C. Alexander, Ron Eyerman, Bernard Giesen, Neil J. Smelser, and Piotr Sztompka (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 48.

²⁹ Alexander, 'Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma', pp. 26-7.

³⁰ John D. Staines, *The tragic histories of Mary Queen of Scots, 1560-1690: rhetoric, passions, and political literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), p. 211; Patricia Crawford, 'Charles Stuart, That Man of Blood', *Journal of British Studies* 16 (1977), pp. 41-61.

Jones have examined the impact of disruption on conceptions of time.³¹ We do not know whether his death marked a break in time or perhaps as a turning point. The contestation was essentially a struggle over the future and its course: if the regicide was martyrdom, Charles should be commemorated with fasts and sermons, as indeed he was after the Restoration.³² If regicide was tyrannicide and a providential release from monarchy, England should perhaps become a republic. Bound up with the questions of meaning and commemoration are notions of the shape of time and the future, of what is possible, and what should be pursued. How did the regicide fit within a larger temporal narrative? Did this narrative change because of the regicide? These are aspects of the regicide-as-cultural-trauma that I will investigate in this thesis.

Even though there is now a long tradition of studying the lived experiences of the Civil Wars, historians have only begun to investigate early modern trauma in recent years.³³ Much of the literature involves personal trauma from war and

³¹ Rhys Jones, '1816 and the resumption of "ordinary history"', *The Journal of Modern European History* 14:1 (2016), pp. 119-142. For an overview of chronopolitics, see G. W. Wallis, 'Chronopolitics: The Impact of Time Perspectives on the Dynamics of Change', *Social Forces* 49 (1970), pp. 102-8, I. I. Klinke, 'Chronopolitics: A Conceptual Matrix', *Progress in Human Geography* 37 (2012), pp. 673-690. Studies applying this approach are predominantly modern, including Roger Stahl, 'A Clock War: Rhetorics of Time in a Time of Terror', *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 94 (2008), pp. 73-99, Fernando Esposito and Sven Reichardt, 'Revolution and Eternity. Introductory Remarks on Fascist Temporalities', *Journal of Modern European History* 13 (2015), pp. 24-43.

³² David Cressy, 'The Protestant Calendar and the Vocabulary of Celebration in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies* 29:1 (1990), p. 36.

³³ The lived experiences of the Civil Wars have been explored most significantly by historians like John Morrill, Charles Carlton, Martyn Bennett, and Ian Gentles. J. S. Morrill, *Revolt in the Provinces: The People of England and the Tragedies of War, 1630-1648* (Harlow: Longman, 1999); C. Carlton, *Going to the Wars: The Experiences of the British Civil Wars, 1638-1651* (London: Routledge, 1992); M. Bennett, *The Civil Wars Experienced: Britain and Ireland, 1638-1661* (London: Routledge, 2000); I. Gentles, *The English Revolution and the Wars in the Three Kingdoms, 1638-1652* (Harlow: Longman, 2007).

turmoil on the Continent and Ireland.³⁴ For England, Mark Stoyle discusses the experience of ordinary royalist foot soldiers who served during the Civil Wars and how they remembered their involvement in the war. Petitioning for support during the Restoration period, these soldiers were particularly reticent to describe their Parliamentary enemies as ‘rebels’ and mostly sought for reconciliation.³⁵ Erin Peters considers the evidence for psychological trauma among Civil War combatants, concluding that there is evidence for intrusive memories, attempts to ‘actively narrate their sufferings’, and the creation of a collective trauma narrative shared across the nation.³⁶ Matthew Neufeld and Andrew Hopper have examined the memory of the conflict and its lasting impact, while others like David Appleby, Imogen Peck, and Amanda Whiting have worked to recover the memorialising narratives of war widows.³⁷ However

³⁴ See for example Judith Pollmann’s chapter on trauma and atrocities in *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 159-85, Andreaas Bähr, ‘Remembering Fear: The Fear of Violence and the Violence of Fear in Seventeenth-Century War Memories’, in *Memory before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Erika Kuijpers, Judith Pollmann, Johannes Müller, Jasper van der Steen, (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 269-82; Stuart Carroll (ed.), *Cultures of Violence: Interpersonal Violence in Historical Perspective* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007). For Ireland, works include Micheál Ó Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds.), *Ireland 1641: Contexts and Reactions* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013); Joan Redmond, ‘Memories of Violence and New English Identities in Early Modern Ireland’, *Historical Research* 89 (2016), pp. 708-29; David Edwards, Pádraig Lenihan and Clodagh Tait (eds.), *Age of Atrocity: Violence & Political Conflict in Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009); Covington, ‘Writing Violence’, passim.

³⁵ Mark Stoyle, ‘Memories of the Maimed: The Testimony of Charles I’s Former Soldiers, 1660–1730’, *History* 88:209 (2003), p 221.

³⁶ Erin Peters, ‘Trauma narratives of the English Civil War’, *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 16:1 (2016), pp. 83, 84, 91. See also Eric Gruber von Arni, *Justice to the Maimed Soldier: Nursing, Medical Care and Welfare for Sick and Wounded Soldiers during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum, 1642-1660* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), and David Appleby and Andrew Hopper (eds.), *Mortality, Medical Care and Military Welfare in the British Civil Wars* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).

³⁷ Matthew Neufeld, *The Civil Wars after 1660: Public Remembering in Late Stuart England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013); Andrew Hopper, ‘The Farnley Wood Plot and the

there has been no concerted attempt to understand the temporal nature of these recollections and experiences, and the structure of time embedded in these received narratives. Furthermore, other than Charles's family and confidants, few individuals would have suffered personal trauma with the regicide. Literary scholars have examined plays to understand contemporary concepts of trauma.³⁸ The figurations of time and the future do not surface in these discussions, even though the material occasionally warrants such consideration. For example, Hermanson concludes her discussion of Restoration horror plays by gesturing towards time: '[Horror plays] resonate with the pessimistic questioning of (a set of) belief systems that had served generations: ultimately, they express a loss of faith in the future.'³⁹

memory of civil war in Yorkshire', *The Historical Journal* 45 (2002), pp. 281-303; David Appleby, 'Unnecessary Persons? Maimed Soldiers and War Widows in Essex, 1642-1662', *Essex Archaeology and History* 32 (2001), pp. 209-21; Imogen Peck, 'The great unknown: the negotiation and narration of death by English war widows, 1647-1660', *Northern History* 53 (2016), pp. 220-235; Amanda Whiting, *Women and Petitioning in the Seventeenth-Century English Revolution: Deference, Difference, and Dissent* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015).

³⁸ For example, Thomas P. Anderson, *Performing Early Modern Trauma from Shakespeare to Milton* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006); Patricia Cahill, *Unto the Breach: Martial Formations, Historical Trauma, and the Early Modern Stage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Mathew R. Martin, 'This Tragic glass': tragedy and trauma in Tamburlaine Part 1', in *Staging Pain, 1580-1800: Violence and Trauma in British Theater* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), eds. Matthew R. Martin and James Robert Allard, pp. 15-30. Anderson mentions the regicide itself as an example of a traumatic event, that is worked through using performances of *Titus Andronicus*. Anthony DiMatteo, 'The Trauma of Empire in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture', *College Literature* 35:1 (2008), p. 185. These literary studies follow on from the creation of trauma studies, pioneered in the 1990s by Cathy Caruth, Dominick LaCapra, and Shoshana Felman. Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998) and *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992).

³⁹ Anne Hermanson, *Horror Plays of the English Restoration* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), p. 157.

The regicide studied

Despite its significance, the regicide's reception is relatively understudied.⁴⁰

Jason Peacey's edited volume *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I* remains the most comprehensive resource. Sarah Barber identifies the rhetoric of balance used by supporters of the regicide and the republic, tracing several instances in from 1642 and into the Interregnum. Their argument excluded kings from a bipolar arrangement between people and their representatives.⁴¹ Andrew Lacey summarises how eulogists wrangled with the regicide: 'Initially there is apotheosis: the dead Charles is now beyond all earthly sorrow, and, as a glorious saint in heaven, he can rest from his labours'. Secondly, they 'contrast[ed] the glory of Charles in heaven with the sorrows of his subjects left on earth. This was an effective propaganda ploy to use in 1649 when many people were yearning for a return to normality and settled government'. Lastly, they 'reflect[ed] upon the inevitable vengeance which would fall on the rebels; a vengeance to be poured out by God and Charles' supporters'.⁴² This political theology was developed in response to the post-regicide situation in which the eulogists found themselves, having to explain how such tragedy could have taken place. Other scholars like Lois Potter, Elizabeth Wheeler, and Kevin

⁴⁰ Scholars have also been occupied with the decision-making process behind the regicide, most notably the debate between Sean Kelsey and Clive Holmes over whether the regicide was used as a negotiating tactic. S. Kelsey, 'Staging the trial of Charles I', in *The Regicides*, ed. Peacey, pp. 71-93; S. Kelsey, 'The Death of Charles I', *The Historical Journal* 45:4 (2002), pp. 727-54; S. Kelsey, 'The Now King of England': Conscience, Duty, and the Death of Charles I', *English Historical Review* 132:558 (2017), pp. 1077-109; C. Holmes, 'The Trial and Execution of Charles I', *The Historical Journal* 53:2 (2010), pp. 289-316; and most recently, S. Kelsey, 'A Riposte to Clive Holmes, 'The Trial and Execution of Charles I'', *History* 103:57 (2018), pp. 525-44.

⁴¹ Sarah Barber, 'Belshazzar's Feast: Regicide, Republicanism and the Metaphor of Balance', in *The Regicides*, ed. Peacey, pp. 94-116.

⁴² Andrew Lacey, 'Elegies and Commemorative Verse in Honour of Charles the Martyr, 1649-60', in *The Regicides*, ed. Peacey, pp. 241-2.

Sharpe have similarly investigated the *Eikon Basilike* and its representation of Charles as a Christ-like figure, who transcended the earthly tragedy to achieve his destiny as a martyr.⁴³ Another related strategy, illuminated by Nancy Maguire and Claire Gheeraert-Graffeuille, was the use of theatrical tropes from Stuart court masques to turn the regicide into a royalist victory: 'Charles and his supporters succeeded in recreating the "Royal Mask" paradigm... the "hyberbolical and mythical" king reclaimed the laws of the Royalist universe, dispelling the king-killing antimasquers by his martyrdom.'⁴⁴ Thus, scholars have generally chosen to write about Charles's posthumous reinvention as a martyr, and the techniques used by contemporaries to redefine the situation in their favour. While helpful in describing the rhetorical strategies used, there is no sustained analysis of any change in rhetoric by individuals across the divide of the regicide. This project attempts to perform such an analysis in order to gauge the impact of the regicide.

Several historians of print and politics have mined newsbooks to understand the regicide and its reception. Tubb argues that the newsbooks had accepted and indeed portrayed the inevitability of Charles's death by mid-January.⁴⁵ In parallel, Joad Raymond traces a sense of fatalism from the King's supporters from the spring of 1648. As the Second Civil War came to a close, Charles

⁴³ Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: Royalist Literature, 1641-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Elizabeth S. Wheeler, 'Eikon Basilike and the Rhetoric of Self-Representation', in *The Royal Image: Representations of Charles I*, ed. Thomas Corns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 122-40; Kevin Sharpe, 'Private conscience and public duty in the writings of Charles I', *The Historical Journal* 40:3 (1997), pp. 643-665.

⁴⁴ Claire Gheeraert-Graffeuille, 'The Tragedy of Regicide in Interregnum and Restoration Histories of the English Civil War', *Etudes Episteme* 20 (2011), *passim*; Maguire, 'The Theatrical Mask', p. 22.

⁴⁵ Amos Tubb, 'Parliament Intends "To Take Away the King's Life": Print and the Decisions to Execute Charles I', *Canadian Journal of History* 41:3 (2006), pp. 483-4.

'became figured as a Christian martyr' and the newsbooks 'generated [a] cultural fantasy' wherein Charles chose to keep a clear conscience and to suffer for England's cause. Thus, the 'reception [for *Eikon Basilike*] had already been constructed' by the time it appeared on 9 February 1649.⁴⁶ Thus, despite being 'the most shocking political event of the seventeenth century', the regicide 'did not have any great immediate impact on the newsbooks'.⁴⁷ Although the royalists expressed their 'outrage', their anger was 'mechanical'.⁴⁸ Raymond suggests that we should 'not infer too much' from the lacklustre reaction to the regicide, saying that 'the literary repercussions of ideological earthquakes can be slow and immensely diffracted'.⁴⁹ While there seemed to be no seismic change, I will show how these newsbooks incorporated the regicide and subtly shifted their expectations of the future.

For my analysis I have selected individuals working in three distinct genres of published sources. These sources were chosen for their strong temporal potential, and for their serial and periodic nature, which is ideal for a diachronic study.

Astrologers

Almanacs were extremely popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: with an annual circulation of 400,000, roughly one-third of English families bought one each year in the 1660s.⁵⁰ However as sources they have generally

⁴⁶ Joad Raymond (ed.), *Making the News: an Anthology of the Newsbooks of Revolutionary England, 1641-1660* (Moreton-in-Marsh: Windrush, 1993), p. 207.

⁴⁷ Joad Raymond, *Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641-1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 179.

⁴⁸ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 179.

⁴⁹ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 179.

⁵⁰ Bernard Capp, *Astrology and the Popular Press: English Almanacs 1500-1800* (London: Faber and Faber, 1979), p. 23.

been neglected. Bernard Capp's *Astrology and the Popular Press* (1979) remains the main comprehensive work, with Patrick Curry and Louise Curth focusing on astrological beliefs and medicine respectively.⁵¹ Almanacs in their most basic form consist of a calendar, with dates of eclipses, and the expected movements of the heavenly bodies. They also often contained feast dates, law terms, a list of historical events, and the dates of regnal years. Almanacs became overtly political after the start of the wars in 1642, and as Capp has observed, 'Though a degree of governmental control was gradually restored, political speculation remained an important feature in the more popular almanacs throughout their later history'. Although astrologers worked with impersonal mathematical calculations and a shared body of knowledge passed down the ages, many of them took sides in the conflict. As Harry Rusche has shown, prominent astrologers like William Lilly and George Wharton attained political prominence and influence. Lilly's 1645 almanac *Anglicus, Peace or No Peace*, predicted the successful Battle of Naseby, contributing immensely to his renown. According to Patrick Curry, 'His almanacs sold 13,500 copies in 1646, 17,000 the next year, and 18,500 in 1648. [In 1649] this leaped up to nearly 30,000 copies. In the 1650s they were translated into Dutch, German, Swedish, and Danish.' Another prolific astrologer was John Booker, whose almanacs gained prominence in the early 1640s and garnered unwanted flattery in the form of counterfeits and pirated copies. Booker was himself appointed by parliament as the licenser of mathematical and astrological books. As carriers of political and religious ideas,

⁵¹ Patrick Curry, *Prophecy and Power: Astrology in Early Modern England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); Louise Hill Curth's *English Almanacs, Astrology and Popular Medicine, 1550-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007). Ann Geneva's monograph is more concerned with Lilly's practice than his almanacs. Ann Geneva, *Astrology and the Seventeenth-century Mind: William Lilly and the language of the stars* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

almanacs are a rich source for the study of temporality and ideas of time. Their yearly publication schedule also provides a useful means for tracking change over time. Most recently, Imogen Peck has used almanacs of the 1650s to understand how the recent past '[was] interpreted and memorialized'. Almanacs were popular tools of memory, helping their readers remember and frame the immediate past.⁵² As we will see, their framings of the past were complemented by particular visions of the future.

Historians

Historians are a natural choice for this study. The humanist historians of the early modern period scoured biblical, Greek, and Roman records to explain the present.⁵³ In his classic work *Tudor Historical Thought*, F.J. Levy notes that 'By 1614 the application of the concept of anachronism [or the clear distinction between past and present] had become well-nigh second nature'.⁵⁴ John Pocock has similarly argued for a shift in historical consciousness in this period.⁵⁵ The Whiggish trajectory of a 'historiographical revolution' in the seventeenth century has since been challenged: there were similar perceptions of 'anachronism' in the earlier past.⁵⁶ Nonetheless it was clear that with the war

⁵² Imogen Peck, 'A chronology of some Memorable Accidents': the representation of the recent past in English almanacs, 1648-60', *Historical Research* 92:255 (2019), pp. 97-117. See also Laura Williamson Ambrose, 'Travel in Time: Local Travel Writing and Seventeenth-Century English Almanacs', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 43:2 (2013), pp. 419-443 and Adam Smyth, 'Almanacs, Annotators, and Life-Writing in Early Modern England', *English Literary Renaissance* 38:2 (2008), pp. 200-244.

⁵³ Daniel Woolf, 'From Hystories to the Historical: Five Transitions in Thinking About the Past, 1500-1700', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68:1-2 (2005), p. 39.

⁵⁴ F.J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967), p. 291.

⁵⁵ J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: a Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957).

⁵⁶ Alexandra Walsham, 'Revising the Past (Review of Daniel Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past*)', *History Workshop Journal* 59 (2005), p. 250.

and the breakdown in censorship, historical writing in the 1640s used the language of causality.⁵⁷ Histories of this period moved away from the analogical reasoning used during the Tudor period, preferring instead to explain the Civil War state of affairs by tracing its proximate causes.⁵⁸ Readers like William Drake tried to understand the times he was living in by reading histories and treatises on politics.⁵⁹ Having traced the causal nexus from the past to the present, it was simple for historians to extrapolate it into the future and predict how the future would unfold.⁶⁰ Indeed, some scholars have ventured to explore how historians like Hobbes and Milton conceived of the future.⁶¹ However, most histories of historiography in this period are more interested in how historians understood the past and the 'sense of the past', rather than the future, which is a topic that they approach only obliquely.⁶² Matthew Neufeld's dissertation 'Narrating Troubled Times' astutely observes how post-1660 histories were written with an

⁵⁷ Woolf, 'Hystories', p. 39.

⁵⁸ For example, an older history would use a distant exemplar like Augustus Caesar to explain why Charles failed as a king. New histories privileged events that were causally linked to Charles's rule. Woolf considers this shift 'in part the... consequence of a severe shock to the body politic in the 1640s'. Woolf, 'Hystories', p. 39.

⁵⁹ Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 73.

⁶⁰ Historians did indeed believe that the past determined the future. Reinhart Koselleck, 'Historiae Magistra Vitae', in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 37-39, as cited in Matthew George Neufeld, 'Narrating Troubled Times: Memories and Histories of the English Civil Wars and Interregnum, 1660-1705', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Alberta (2008), p. 231, fn. 196, now published as Neufeld, *The Civil Wars after 1660: Public Remembering in Late Stuart England*.

⁶¹ Nicholas von Maltzahn, *Milton's History of Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Guibbory, *The Map of Time*; Patricia Springborg, 'Hobbes and Historiography', in *Hobbes and History*, eds. G.A.J. Rogers and Tom Sorell (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 43-71.

⁶² See for example the discussion in R.C. Richardson, *The Debate on the English Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), and Royce MacGillivray, *Restoration Historians and the English Civil War* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974).

eye towards influencing the future.⁶³ However, the discussion does not consider the effect of disruptive events on conceptions of the future. This project is an attempt to address this lacuna. The definition of a 'history' in this period is by no means intuitive. For the purposes of understanding notions of time and the future, an author who makes use of causal logic to narrate a sequence of events and explain their outcomes and significance is deemed to be historically-minded. Therefore, even if the work or the author is clearly polemical or goes beyond its evidence, they remain useful to my purposes.

Newsbooks

Scholars like Joseph Frank, Joad Raymond, and Anthony Cotton have described the rapid rise of newsbooks in the 1640s.⁶⁴ Political wrangling in London, alongside a breakdown in effective censorship, fuelled an explosion in the number of titles and circulation: 'They were part of the political culture of the civil war, and reflected at once a political and commercial interest.'⁶⁵ New issues containing domestic news dispatches were printed and sold on a weekly basis.⁶⁶ Newsbooks, even more so than other periodicals, lend themselves to a diachronic approach. Their serial nature permits us to track the evolution of ideas and approaches, as well as the authors' use of tropes and across time.⁶⁷

⁶³ Neufeld, 'Narrating Troubled Memories', *passim*.

⁶⁴ Joseph Frank, *The Beginnings of the English Newspaper, 1620-1660* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961); Raymond, *Invention*; A.N.B. Cotton, 'London newsbooks in the Civil War: their political attitudes and sources of information', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford (1971).

⁶⁵ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 16.

⁶⁶ Domestic news was previously proscribed, and the coranto newsletters of the 1620s and 1630s contained only foreign news, with distribution limited to the elite. Raymond, *Invention*, p. 10.

⁶⁷ Jason McElligott makes the same observation in *Royalism, Print and Censorship in revolutionary England* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2007), p. 19.

Newsbooks also saw themselves as agents of public morality, to 'publicise exemplary virtue, castigate heinous backsliders, and keep a watchful eye on public morality'.⁶⁸ Their prescriptive nature can provide us with insight as to how they wish the future was, versus what they foresaw it to be.

Newsbooks and their authors were in the business of framing the future.

Nedham, for one, wrote an extended letter from Utopia in his *News from Brussels*.⁶⁹ 'Making the news involved the reconstruction of the boundaries of truth, fiction and history, and was a most active activity'.⁷⁰ Woolf similarly remarked on how the invention of the newsbook laid the foundation for the modern experience of an extended present. The medieval person experienced the present as an instant, instead of a duration. This was a result of several factors, including the slow rate of news diffusion, the small amount of news filtering through, a lack of commonality or an imagined community, and the low density of visual and aural cues to sudden changes in the form of printed media and conversations.⁷¹ By the time they heard of events, the immediate consequences had most likely passed and their outcomes set in stone. Hence there was no pragmatic need to debate or discuss the event, and even less reason to participate. With the arrival of newsbooks, the present was turned into a duration and into its own 'a zone of activity', demarcated from history and the past. Current events would be reported in newsbooks, which occasioned discussion before falling off into the past and the history books. Newsbooks

⁶⁸ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 24.

⁶⁹ Raymond, *Making the News*, pp. 22-3.

⁷⁰ Raymond, *Making the News*, p. 24.

⁷¹ Daniel Woolf, 'News, history and the construction of the present in early modern England', in *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Sabrina Alcorn Baron and Brendan Dooley (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 82.

were also printed with running pagination to encourage collection into volumes. This had a commercial motive, but it also spoke to newsbooks' role as future histories, or histories in the making.⁷² It was through this ability to frame the past and 'shap[e] events as they were recorded as history' that Raymond could speak of newsbooks 'inventing the future'.⁷³ Woolf concurs, arguing that the reporting of the news 'focus[ed] public attention on the present', and also encouraged interest in how 'the past evolved into or "caused" the present'. He argues that the emergence of the news encouraged the shift from 'medieval and humanist historical thought', as defined by 'similarity, comparison and metaphor', to the modern tradition of 'proximity, continuity, and metonymy'.⁷⁴

In scoping this project, I have intentionally left out established literary figures like John Milton, John Donne, John Taylor, and Thomas Hobbes. These individuals have long established critical traditions, consideration of which would detract from the periodical sources. Less attention was also given to personal sources like diaries, memoirs, and other life-writing because these were often compiled and edited in the years after. For example, John Evelyn's 'Diary' was a composite work composed only fully in the 1680s.⁷⁵ A diachronic study would be difficult without knowing, with reasonable certainty, which parts of the text were written contemporaneously to the events they described. In contrast, print sources were effectively frozen in time once published.

⁷² Woolf, 'News, history', pp. 99-100. See also Carolyn Nelson and Matthew Secombe, *Periodical Publications 1641-1700: A Survey with Illustrations* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1986).

⁷³ Raymond, *Making the News*, p. 25.

⁷⁴ Woolf, 'News, history', pp. 107-8.

⁷⁵ Alan Stewart, *The Oxford History of Life Writing: Volume 2. Early Modern* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 8.

This thesis has five chapters. The first examines the printed works of various astrologers from 1640 to the regicide, and the second chapter covers their work in the years after the execution to 1654. These texts include their annual almanacs, along with other astrological and polemical pamphlets that they produced. I then proceed to survey histories in the third chapter, surveying all the known publications of three historians from 1638 to 1655. Finally, chapters four and five examine royalist newsbooks and licensed parliamentary newsbooks respectively. I have separated them for several reasons. First, these two groups had different polemical goals, and their choice of content and style reflected this difference. Royalist newsbooks blossomed in 1647 in response to the growing political divisions between the Presbyterians and the Independents. They were aimed squarely at London audiences, particularly the ‘gentlemen’, merchants, and apprentices. By appealing to concerns over high taxation, declining trade, and growing political unpredictability, they hoped to create a fifth column of royalists who would take control of London. With the royalist defeat in the Second Civil War and the regicide, these newsbooks became more insular. They changed tack and began writing for ‘committed royalists and London Presbyterians’ who might support Charles II’s invasion from Scotland.⁷⁶ Second, they had varying levels of access to information. As McElligott has observed, royalist newsbooks had ‘little, if any hard “news”’, and they generally responded to news that was already in circulation. Thus, their content read more like ‘the works of pugnacious and opiated newspaper columnists’.⁷⁷ In contrast, the astrologers and the historians worked from similar assumptions

⁷⁶ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, pp. 38-40. McElligott cites how royalist newsbooks ignored the harvest failures of the late 1640s that led to widespread starvation in rural areas.

⁷⁷ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 10.

and with similar methods, even if their opinions differed. Overall, this thesis aims to elucidate the senses of time and the future evident in these sources. How were the present and future viewed, how were these conceptions justified, and was the future intelligible and predictable? And how did these conceptions change with the regicide?

1. Almanacs and Astrologers before the Regicide

This chapter discusses the conceptions of time in texts written by astrologers before the regicide. This chapter is split into three sections. The first discusses prevailing ideas of the present and how the troubles came to pass, and what the future held for England. The second assesses the ways in which astrologers used time as rhetoric to persuade their readers to adopt a certain course of action. The third section considers astrologers' epistemologies: the sources of evidence they used, and the role of faith and providence in their prognostications. These astrologers' attitudes to time can be defined in reference to four themes: the amount of personal agency, the nature of the happiness they predicted, the mechanism through which they garner this happiness, and the choice of evidence they used.

William Lilly was 'the most abused as well as the most celebrated astrologer of the seventeenth century'.¹ He apprenticed for a John Evans in the 1630s, and eventually published his first almanac in 1644 with the backing of Bulstrode Whitelocke, whose illness Lilly diagnosed through astrology. *Merlini Anglicus Junior* sold out its first printing in the first week, and his prediction of the victory at Naseby cemented his status as the preeminent Parliamentary astrologer. He followed what Curry calls an 'astral republicanism', advocating the King's submission to Parliament's authority and justifying it through reference to the stars.² His stance brought scrutiny from the Presbyterians, even though he

¹ Capp, *Astrology*, p. 57.

² Patrick Curry, 'Lilly, William (1602–1681), astrologer', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 23 Sept 2004 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16661>, accessed 8 June 2019]. Ann Geneva argues

decried more extreme movements like the Ranters. Yet his politics did not restrict his social circle: in 1646 he became lifelong friends with the loyal royalist Elias Ashmole.³ He was also friends with his fellow Parliamentary astrologer John Booker. Fascinated by astrology from a young age, Booker began writing almanacs in 1631, for which he gained much fame. Booker was appointed joint licenser of mathematical and astrological texts in June 1643, a position that led to conflict with William Lilly, whose first almanac Booker refused to approve. Capp identifies him as a 'militant parliamentarian' by the 1640s, who initially stood for a 'limited monarchy' before moving against the Presbyterians after the regicide. Despite a rocky start, Booker became an enthusiastic supporter of Lilly's astrological textbook in 1647 and sought his advice on several occasions.⁴

Booker and Lilly were diametrically opposed to Captain George Wharton, the 'royalist astrologer par excellence' with whom they traded insults on paper.⁵ Wharton began writing almanacs in 1641, possibly with the help of John Vaux. He fought at Edgehill in 1642, and eventually gained Charles's support for his astrological work. Wharton began his war of words with Booker in 1643, and later insulted Lilly in 1645. He supplemented his astrological work and royalist agenda with a newsbook in 1647, where he attacked the Independent faction

that Lilly implied that Charles had to submit or die as early as 1644, but this is highly improbable. A. Geneva, *Astrology and the Seventeenth Century Mind*, p. 212. For a rebuttal, see M. Hunter, 'Reviewed Work(s): *Astrology and the Seventeenth Century Mind: William Lilly and the Language of the Stars* by Ann Geneva', *Albion* 28:3 (1996), pp. 479-81.

³ Curry, 'Lilly, William', *ODNB*.

⁴ Bernard Capp, 'Booker, John (1602–1667), astrologer', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 23 Sept 2004 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2865>, accessed 8 June 2019]

⁵ Curry, *Prophecy and Power*, p. 27.

and the Levellers.⁶ These three political astrologers dominated the scene, offering their commentary on the politics of the day.

In contrast, other astrologers like John Vaux, Vincent Wing, and Seth Partridge were much less vocal in their almanacs. Vaux was the curate of St Helen Auckland, Durham, where he published almanacs from 1621 until his death in 1651. These had a regional Northern focus.⁷ Not much is known of his politics, but we know he was ejected from his position in 1650, presumably for his religious disposition.⁸ A mathematician and land surveyor by trade, Wing was a moderate parliamentarian whose loyalties were inconspicuously scattered in his text, and later evolved into royalism with the Restoration.⁹ Like Vaux, Wing's almanacs were written locally for North Luffenham, Rutland.¹⁰ His almanacs started in 1641 and continued until his death in 1668. The title was continued under the Wing name for five generations, a dynasty of self-taught practical mathematicians.¹¹ Like Wing, Partridge was a mathematician who taught its practical applications from astronomy to navigation and land measuring. Little

⁶ Bernard Capp, 'Wharton, Sir George, first baronet (1617–1681), astrologer and royalist', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 28 Sept 2006 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29165>, accessed 8 June 2019]. See the chapter on royalist newsbooks for more details on Wharton's newsbook career.

⁷ Capp, *Astrology*, p. 34.

⁸ Capp, *Astrology*, p. 335.

⁹ Bernard Capp, 'Wing, Vincent (1619–1668), astronomer, astrologer, and land surveyor', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 23 Sept 2004 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29731>, accessed 8 June 2019].

¹⁰ Capp, *Astrology*, p. 34.

¹¹ Capp, 'Wing, Vincent'.

else is known of him. His first almanac was for 1649, skipping a year before continuing from 1651 until 1660.¹²

Visions of the Present

A divided and weak country

Despite their political differences, all astrologers of the period believed that their present times constituted an unnatural and unparalleled period. It was a time of division, where a 'sick and languishing' England suffered from an 'unnaturall bloody War', which saw many 'Rapines, Thefts, Murders, Robberies'.¹³ In his 1642 tract subtitled *Newes from the Grammar-school*, Lilly explained England's condition in verse:

These dolefull times present, Perfect-ion musquam, / But what is growne
imperfect, past, or plusquam. What's in the Future was of truth fortold, /
Love in these last dayes shall or will grow cold. / ... Ne're such confusion
since the Babylonian, / All's out of order, Quando set for Quoniam.¹⁴

The present and past had become corrupted and 'imperfect', and disorder reigned, with confusion in grammatical syntax. The notion of love growing cold in the last days could be a reference to Matthew 24:12, where Christ described the leadup to the Apocalypse and the profusion of false prophets. These prophets deceive the unfaithful and lead them away from Christ, and thus 'the

¹² A.F. Pollard and H.K. Higton, 'Partridge, Seth (1603/4–1686), mathematical writer', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 23 Sept 2004 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21490>, accessed 8 June 2019].

¹³ Vincent Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ. 1649*. (Printed by J.L. for the Company of Stationers, 1649), Wing / A2824, sig. C7v; John Booker, *Uranoscopia, or, An Almanack and Prognostication being a Prospective Glasse for the yeare of Christ, 1649* (Imprinted by F.K. for the Company of Stationers, 1649), Wing / A1354, sig. C2v.

¹⁴ William Lilly, *Lilli's Propheticall History of this yeares Accidence, 1642. Or, Newes from the Grammar-school*, Wing / L2205A, E.126[15], sigs. A3v-A4r, henceforth *Prophetical History*.

love of many shall wax cold'.¹⁵ Thus for Lilly, amidst the confusion caused by the troubles, the only certainty of the future that existed was scriptural. This confusion could be solved should Charles return to London and his Parliament:

Our penes great, the cure can none rehearse us. / Till our great King
returne Londinum versus. / Grammar hath three, but then we will
beseech / Charles for one Concord in the English speech. / When
Englands hosts like heavens, moves on one axis / Then wee'l take further
forth in our Symaxis.¹⁶

England was in pain, divided, and incoherent. One concord in grammar and speech would allow England to come together once again, for it to make sense once more. Additionally, England was frozen in time and being pulled in different directions. All that was required was for Charles to return to his parliament, and England would once again make sense and start moving forward once more.

Unity was a common theme among astrologers. Booker called for an end to division, and for unity amongst the English:

It is high time we unanimously conjoyn in the City, in [the?] Countrey, in the Army, throughout the whole Kingdom; for a [City?], a Countrey & a Kingdom, nay, a house divided cannot stand nor [pro]sper: and in an Army, if the Souldiers be in mutiny, how can [?] oppose the common enemy?¹⁷

Only by being united could England be strong. By working together, England would could work to protect itself. In his 1648 and 1649 almanacs, John Vaux issued a similar plea 'To all Christian Professors', urging them to 'all speak one thing... [and] knit together in one mind, and in one judgement'. Peace and unity

¹⁵ Authorised (King James) Version, Matthew 24:12.

¹⁶ Lilly, *Prophetical History*, sig. A4v.

¹⁷ John Booker, *Uranoscopia... for the yeare of Christ, 1649*, sig. C7r.

can be achieved if the English 'avoid foolish questions and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vaine'.¹⁸ These questions at the heart of England's divisions were useless and motivated by pride, thus good Christians would steer clear of such endeavours and seek to reconcile the country.

Thus for these astrologers, agency was emphasised as a way to heal the divisions. In the case of Vaux and Booker, this involved every man behaving more charitably and peacefully, whereas for Lilly, peace depended on Charles himself. Conversely, George Wharton placed little emphasis on agency, and explained the troubles as the result of a malignant conjunction in the heavens.

Conjunctions

Conjunctions had direct impact on the fortunes of Charles and England. In his 1644 almanac, Wharton cited a previous conjunction as the reason for England's troubles:

I shall desire them to remember that Greater and more notable Conjunction ... which happened at Westminster the 3. of November, 1640: and to consider seriously whether (next to our sinnes against Almighty God) that was not the cause of all these horrible Distractions, and Miseries, which have eversince happened, and wherein this Kingdom is now involv'd.¹⁹

¹⁸ John Vaux, *Vaux 1648 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord God 1648* (Printed by M.B. for the Companie of Stationers; second part: Printed by J. Young for the Company of Stationers, [1648]), Wing (2nd ed) / A2609A; Vaux, *Vaux, 1649 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the year of our Lord God 1649* (Printed by T.R. and E.M. for the Company of Stationers, 1649), Wing / A2610. This plea for togetherness is not included in Vaux's 1652 almanac, perhaps because the unity was achieved or no longer even possible.

¹⁹ George Wharton, *Naworth. 1644. A New Almanack, and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 1644* (Printed at Oxford: by His Majesties command, by Henry Hall, 1644), Wing (2nd ed) / A2673, sig. C8r.

This conjunction of 1640 was directly responsible for the tumult evident in English society:

For not sooner had they met... Murders followed, Perjuries were committed: All the false Prophets in the Kingdome were convened, tumultuous Sects, heresies, & Schismes were tolerated, nay defended: The service of God neglected, Churches prophaned, and defaced, The Monuments of the dead violated: Not one that had but so much as the look of a Scholar, but vilified, scorned, and imprisoned. The King and his Royall Consort forced to fly and separate themselves for safeguard of their lives. His Forts and Castles seized upon; His Baby, Magazines, and Revenues taken from him, and all imployed to take away his life.²⁰

The conjunction, along with the sins of the English, sparked the troubles. Wharton listed the many instances of trouble, including religious division, crime, and the repudiation of academic and traditional authority. However, it was also another conjunction that would bring about an end to England's miseries:

And no question, but as that Conjunction in November was the Cause of all these mischiefes so will this in February 1642. be the fore=runner of a through Reformation indeed, throughout this Realme, by a timely purging it of all sectaries, Brownists Anabaptists &c. And by bringing the Authors of this bloody Warre to condigne punishment.²¹

Wharton believed that this later conjunction of 1642 would naturally bring about an end to England's miseries. Unlike Vaux and Wing, the role of sin and repentance was very much underplayed. Wharton only mentioned England's 'sinnes against Allmighty God' in passing, focusing instead on explicating the effects of conjunctions.²² In this vision of time to come, Wharton saw no real

²⁰ Wharton, *Naworth*. 1644, sigs. C8r-v.

²¹ Wharton, *Naworth*. 1644, sig. C8v. Dated 'Octob. 26. 1643.' Condigne means fitting or worthy.

²² Wharton, *Naworth*. 1644, Wing (2nd ed) / A2673, sig. C8r.

agency on the part of historical actors. God working through the stars was responsible for the troubles in England, and God would also be the one to clear England of sectaries and bring peace back to the land.

Ordained miseries

At the same time, Lilly also advocated a similar astrology-based explanation for the war, wherein the stars were responsible for ordaining misery for England. In his 1644 almanac *Merlini Anglicus* Lilly described the conjunction of Mars with Saturn, remarking:

When could these rules [of Mars's astrology] have been more aptly applied, then in these distempered times; the cause or provocation which now incites to kill, was formerly in a time of peace concluded in wrangling words, in this sense understand me.²³

The outbreak of hostilities was thus in part due to the distemper that reigned in England, a condition of the present times that plagued relations between the English. It escalated disputes that would otherwise have been settled through argument and debate, turning disagreement into outright war. This sentiment of a qualitatively different present was reinforced elsewhere in the tract, where Lilly declared that the English were living through 'an outrageous time and of warre it selfe'. Furthermore, they had to expect even more sorrow, for 'our disturbances... as yet are not come to their height'. Lilly explained that these 'sufferings [were] more sharp and terrible by reason' of the 'Comet in 1618, whose operation [was] now strongly in full force over all England'.²⁴ The

²³ William Lilly, *Merlinus Anglicus Junior: the English Merlin revived; or, his Prediction upon the Affaires of the English Common-wealth, and of all or most Kingdomes of Christendome this present yeare, 1644*. By W.L. Published according to order (Printed by R.W. for T.V. and are to be sold by I.S. in Little Britaine, 1644), Wing (2nd ed), A1919, E.50[27], sig. B3r. Henceforth *Merlinus Anglicus Junior*... 1644.

²⁴ Lilly, *Merlinus Anglicus Junior*... 1644, pp.17-8.

conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in 1642/3, and Mars being the 'Lord of the yeare', were also cited as reasons for his dire predictions of warfare to come.²⁵ These astrological miseries were destined to come, but Lilly occasionally reminded his readers of God's ability to intervene: in October the 'last grand opposition of Sol and Saturne' continues the misery, but 'without Gods mercies our sorrowes increase', while in December the 'yeare ends not our troubles without Gods great mercie'.²⁶ With England's fate in the hands of the stars and God, the people had little agency to prevent their misery.

1645's *Anglicus, Peace, or No Peace* continued Lilly's trend of attributing England's misery to the stars:

But sith Mercury is Peregrine, and applies to a square of Mars, without a miracle (and we have now but few) all Treaties, or goodnesse by Treaties, for the present seem to be fruitlesse; for Mars poysons and intoxicates all good pretences, and we differ upon I know not what curiosities.²⁷

This distemper and poisoning of goodwill meant that peace would not be forthcoming, and Lilly was pessimistic that the war would end anytime soon. It was 'the will of a few, that we still fight', but also 'the desire of thousands, [that] we fight no more'. He predicted that 'without doubt, [if] the hand of God did not preven[t] the course of the Stars, and their signification', then there must be 'fierce and bloody action in the Vernall quarter of the yeer'.²⁸ Once again, the stars had in store misery for England, and if God did not intervene such misery

²⁵ Lilly, *Merlinus Anglicus Junior*... 1644, p.18.

²⁶ Lilly, *Merlinus Anglicus Junior*... 1644, pp.21-22.

²⁷ William Lilly, *Anglicus, Peace, or No Peace, 1645 a Probable Conjecture of the state of England, and the Present Differences betwixt His Majestie and the Parliament of England now sitting at Westminster, for this present yeer, 1645* (Printed by J.R. for John Partridge and Humphrey Blunden ..., 1645), Wing / L2207, p. 5. Henceforth, *Anglicus, Peace, or No Peace, 1645*.

²⁸ Lily, *Anglicus, Peace, or No Peace, 1645*, p. 23

would have to ensue. These astrological miseries were set in stone and could not be avoided, and as Lilly explained in *Anglicus, peace or no peace* (1645):

He was the worst of men, that advised his Maiestie to decline his presence from Westminster, and his Parliament there residing; Let that man die childlesse, and his hoar head not go to the Grave or the Sepulchre of his fathers in quiet. But this was decreed long since, and he the instrumentall means of an unhappie Scourge to the English and Scottish people.²⁹

While it was an individual that supposedly convinced Charles to leave London, it was God's will that it should happen, and that England should descend into misery. Lilly elaborated in *The Starry Messenger*:

I cannot shorten those Miseries I see depending on this Influence, or convert the Signes fixed into moveable: for the Evils portended, are to be maliciously permanent. A crooked and perverse Generation of men, hath cunningly ensnared all or most part of Europe, in these preposterous Wars now on foot. Lord God of heaven, direct the heart of some wise man to salve these grievous Maladies.³⁰

These miseries were effected through men, and while such suffering was ordained, God had the prerogative to help soothe the effect. The idea that God could intervene brought hope and comfort to Lilly's readers.

Comforting promise of prosperity and paradise

Lilly also attempted to comfort his readers by explaining the purpose of the troubles, thinking that this would reassure them and help them persevere

²⁹ Lily, *Anglicus, Peace, or No Peace*, 1645, sig. A4v.

³⁰ William Lilly, *The Starry Messenger; or an Interpretation of that strange Apparition of Three Suns seene in London, 19. Novemb. 1644. being the birth day of King Charles. The effects of the eclips of the sun, which will be visible in England, 11. August 1645...* (Printed for John Partridge and Humphry Blunden, and are to be sold at the signe of the Cocke in Ludgate Streete, and the Castle in Cornhill, 1645), Wing / L2245, E.288[17], p. 34.

through. He explained that the troubles were due in part to tyrannous rule in England:

The providence of Almighty God doth so order the affaires of this troublesome age, by guiding the Celestiall influences according to his immutable Decree, that all excesse in tyranny, government, command, or exercise of illegall commande, must yeeld to justice, to a troubled and disturned kinde of Justice. All imperiosnesse in rule, all strict and hard Lawes incoached upon the Subject by tyrannous Commanders, must either have a period or disturbance.³¹

In this explanation, the troubles were the result of God's intervention through the stars. His intervention restored justice and righteousness in England, and the troubles England was experiencing were merely a side-effect of God's actions. Thus, while the troubles meant misery, they were also a comforting sign that God was actively working to defeat tyranny. Lilly believed that by describing what miseries were to come, men would be better prepared to survive them:

The generall good do I aim at, and that men foreknowing the evils to come, might more patiently abide them, and with lesse trouble of minde receive them.³²

By understanding that these troubles were mandated by the stars, men would be better able to receive them in the right mind, and to bear them with the knowledge that the troubles had some purpose or reason to them. Lilly served as the interlocuter, arming his readers with requisite knowledge to help them understand the times. Lilly also provided comforting words of a better future:

³¹ William Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline, foretelling to all Nations of Europe untill 1663. the Actions depending upon the Influence of the Conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, 1642/3. The Progresse and Motion of the Comet 1618. under whole Effects we in England, and most Regions of Europe now suffer ...* (Printed by John Raworth, for John Partridge, and are to be sold at the Sun in Pauls Church yard, 1644), Wing (2nd ed) / L2221, E.13[1], p. 85.

³² Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, sig. A4r.

I am sorry; we must suffer yet a while; and sorrow; but let us not despaire, we that are true English; for looke how many single yeares we are afflicted, so many scores of yeares I know shall be added unto us for restoration of our misfortunes.³³

The English would be recompensed for their suffering with many more years of prosperity in the future, where 'the English shall branch into many families'.³⁴

Lilly buttressed his narrative of astrologically ordained miseries with a promise of a happy future for England. Unlike Wing and Vaux, this happiness was guaranteed by the heavens. Writing early on in 1644 before the Parliamentarians gained the upper hand, Lilly acknowledged the difficult times England was undergoing:

Were it not for the malicious Quadrature of Mars to Saturn: Aprill 30. 1645... we might I say expect a mitigation of war, penury, plundring, misfortune, and other destructive miseries, and sicknesses them afflicting us, and approaching to disturb us more fiercely; but that malignant Aspect, preventing the pious intentions of the honest Protestantine party, seems to keep on foot preceding mischiefs, and by the conniving of a distempered and dissembling Religious faction, our happinesse is impeded.³⁵

The troubles were caused and sustained by the heavens, which empowered troublemakers and prevented the well-meaning from creating peace. However, good news was to come in the years that followed. 1646 would see 'some better

³³ William Lilly, *A Prophecy of the White King: and Dreadfull Dead-man Explained. To which is added the Prophecie of Sibylla Tibvrtina and Prediction of Iohn Kepler: all of especiall concernment for these times. By William Lilly student in astrology. Ob peccata mutat scepra Deus, variata Reges. Published according to order.* (Printed by G. M. and are to be sold by John Sherley and Thomas Underhill, at the Golden Pellican in little Brittain, and Bible in Woodstreet, 1644), Wing (2nd ed) / L2240, E.4[27], p. 5. Henceforth *A Prophecy of the White King*.

³⁴ Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, sig. b4r.

³⁵ Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, p. 107.

attonment amongst us', and 'some Treaties or foraign Embassadours may arrive to intercede, and compose our unluckie differences'. In 1647,

if there were then no underhand dealing, juggling, shirking, and dissembling fellows in request; we might hope well, and that with some trouble we should sensibly taste the fruits of peace, or have a glimpse of it... [From] 10. of August 1648... the people have not enough seen their own folly, they sturdily resist an incroaching Clergie, and Gentry... in January 1649... we have strong confidence of being cured of our distempers... behold, 1650. in May... do promise us a setled beginning of much happinesse, if we over-do not: its not good to be over-wise.³⁶

Peace was always a possibility, and indeed it was ordained by the stars. Whether it could be achieved depended on the interference of agitators in England, and on the cooperation of good men in resisting the bad. No matter what troubles England was undergoing, Lilly assured his readers that peace was just around the corner. This possibility increased with time; peace became more likely as one moved further into the future. England would find peace by 1650, and in 1658 'we English are pretty quiet, and in a good posture', and they would 'now begin to ballance, or one for us, or we for all'. This peace then found perfection by the end of the 1650s:

In the years 1659 and 1660 Saturn and Jupiter make the three Sextile Aspects out of signes of long Ascensions... this their friendly Salutation comforts us in England, every man now possesses his own Vineyard; our young youths grow up to mans estate, and our old men live their full years; our Nobles and Gentlemen roote again: our Yeomanry many years disconsolated, now take pleasure in their Husbandry; the Merchant sends out ships and hath prosperous returnes; the Mechanick hath quick trading, here's almost a new world, new laws, some new Lords: now my

³⁶ Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, p. 109.

Country of England shall shed no more tears, but rejoyce with, and in the many blessings God affords her annually.³⁷

Lilly described England as an almost paradisiacal state where nothing could go wrong, with no sickness and prosperity for all. This vision, only fifteen years into the future, was ordained by the motion of the heavens. This prosperity was not subject to obstruction by men, unlike in the 1640s where troublemakers could play an interfering role. This was paradise on earth, which Lilly emphasised by leading right after with a reference to the paradise from Revelation:

Revel. 21. *And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more Sea: After which time God will wipe away all teares from the eyes of his people; there shall be no more death, neither sorrow or crying; neither any more paine, for the first things are passed away. Finis.*³⁸

Like the earthly paradise of 1659/1660, in heaven there would be no more crying or sorrow. This was a narrative of steady progression towards paradise: first the resumption of peace among the English, followed by paradise and prosperity on earth, and then eventually to heavenly paradise itself. Written over the course of 1644 when Parliamentary fortunes were unclear, this was an unambiguously optimistic prediction in a text that also declared England's 'condition' as being 'now very low'.³⁹ In the following year, he reiterated that 'the Heavens manifest clearly that the Parliament shall prevaile, and his Majesty and his party decline'. Despite the threat of 'some outlandish Forces' from overseas, Lilly was 'not

³⁷ Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, p. 111. This is in sharp contrast to his prediction for the Continent, which in the 1650s would see turmoil and the downfall of the pope.

³⁸ Lily, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, p. 112.

³⁹ Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, sig. b4v. Lilly dated two of his sections, the foreword 'April. 17. 1644', a concluding letter 'Octob. 16. 1644.', while Thomason dated his printed copy 'Octob: 16'.

fearfull', for there would be 'strange alterations, ... if not overthrow of that Party or Parties, that Country or Kingdom... &c.'. Parliament's success was ordained, and 'within a few yeers the whole world shall stand amazed at the production of a now scarce nor existent conception'.⁴⁰ Thus while men had the agency to quicken England's progress towards peace, the country's ultimate fate was already decreed by the stars. To Lilly, the stars promised mundane happiness for England, an earthly paradise.

As the 1640s came to a close, Lilly continued to see England as a divided and disordered nation. God thus intervened to hasten England's path to peace. In his almanac for 1649, he cites the rise of the Army as a political force as God's doing:

Two yeares have been spent in our fruitlesse Divisions, at which God himselfe seemes now angry, and therefore hath raised up the spirits of the Souldier to endeavour that very Reformation and settlement of the Common-wealth, which our intrusted Members themselves of this Parliament should have made their chiefe worke.⁴¹

Peace would only be had should 'men now in authority dealt candidly', but instead 'dissimulation, self-ends, preferment, bribes, friendship, choaks our longing desires'. Those in power were not giving the Army and its soldiers their due, and thus 'The abused Souldiery are inforced to be angry'.⁴² Lilly began to

⁴⁰ William Lilly, *Anglicus or, An Ephemeris for 1646. Delivering Mathematically the Successe of this Yeers Actions, between the King and Parliament of England. With astrologicall aphorismes, expedient for physitians and others, usefull for students in this science. To which is added The nativity of Prince Rupert.* / By William Lilly student in Astrology (Printed by T.B. for John Partridge and Humfry Blunden, and are to be sold at the Cock in Ludgatestreet, and in Cornhill, 1646), Wing (2nd ed) / A1876, E.1175[2], sig. A4v.

⁴¹ William Lilly, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris. Or Generall and Monthly Predictions upon Severall Eclipses and Celestiall Configurations for the yeare 1649.* / By William Lilly, student in astrology (Printed for J. Partridge, and H. Blunden, 1649 [i.e. 1648]), Wing (2nd ed) / A1881, E.1173[3], sig. A3r. Henceforth, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris... for the yeare 1649.*

⁴² Lilly, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris... for the yeare 1649*, sig. B3r.

exhort and encourage his countrymen to take up arms against the enemy. The Engagement, which caught Lilly by surprise, led him to call upon Englishmen to join the Army and to be sensible about a great mutation in the works:

Who ever therefore hath naturall English blood in him, let him take part with the Army under the Lord Fairfax, and with the Parliament; so shall he live and have a being, and doe his owne Prince and Kingdome service, and restore England to its pristine glory; at present much Eclipse by some snarling Scottified people of late encroaching us. And certainly here is some greater works neer at hand, then onely the dispute of Customes or divesting some great ones of their Estates, by reason of the transmutation of the *Auge* of Mars, who is Significator of this Kingdome.⁴³

While Lilly had always been vocal in his support for Parliament, he had not issued such a call to arms. It was more characteristic for him simply to state his confidence that Parliament would prevail against its enemies. However, now the English people had a bigger role to play in effecting the peace by joining the Army. In his 1649 almanac, Lilly urged his readers to support the Army:

Absolutely the souldier or sword is rampant this year, or either gives Lawes or straines hard for it, to setile the Kingdome in a very judicious posture, not wronging the civill Magistrate or the just Lawes of the Kingdome, but regulates their exorbitancies; let no mans heart faile, the work of God is going forward.⁴⁴

The Army was now God's tool in spreading justice and in correcting wrongs. All good Englishmen should thus join the Army, or simply put their faith in them. Lilly republished the same words in his 1649 tract, released in January and

⁴³ William Lilly, *An Astrologicall Prediction of the Occurrances in England, part of the yeeres 1648. 1649. 1650. concerning these particulars...* By William Lilly, student in Astrologie (Printed by T.B. for John Partridge and Humfrey Blunden, and are to be sold in Blackfriars going into Carterlane, and at the Castle in Cornhill, 1648), Wing (2nd ed) / L2211, E.462[1], p. 40.

⁴⁴ Lilly, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris... for the yeare 1649*, sig. G3r.

subtitled *Whether, or No, His Majesties Shall suffer Death this present Yeere 1649*.

Additionally, he decried the MPs who

retarded the Armies pay and money, of purpose to destroy them and cut the throats of all those honest soules, who conscientiously ingaged for the Kingdomes good, and no intention (I hope) to destroy Monarchy as is falsely suggested, but to regulate it and obtain those just rights we were borne unto.⁴⁵

The Army would play an important role in helping England achieve happiness and stability, and it was a force that Lilly told Parliament to ‘Cherish and countenance... else [they] perish and the Kingdom is undone’.⁴⁶ Throughout his discussion, it is clear that Lilly treated the Army as an extension of God’s hand. Agency laid not with the Army, instead they were divinely inspired to perform his work in England. His encouraging men to join the Army was more of a test of patriotism than of empowerment. It is also striking that Lilly did not quote any astrological evidence for his assertion that the Army was carrying out God’s will. Instead he cited the rise of the Army itself as evidence of God’s supposed anger with Parliament. The Army was godly if it pursued godly aims, and the equivalence would hold until evidence proved his supposition wrong.

Time as Rhetoric

Warnings from heaven

Astrologers used ideas of time, both present and future, in order to convince readers to act in particular ways. In *The Starry Messenger* (1645), Lilly explained

⁴⁵ William Lilly, *A Peculiar Prognostication Astrologically Predicted according to Art: VWhether, or no, His Majestie shall suffer Death this present yeere 1649. / The Possibility thereof discussed and divulged, by William Lilly, student in astrologie* (Published for generall satisfaction, 1649), Wing (2nd ed) / L2237, E.537[15], p. 3.

⁴⁶ Lilly, *An Astrologicall Prediction of the Occurrances in England*, sig. A2v.

that the appearance of three-sun apparitions heralded imminent punishment: 'These three Suns shew acceleration of what hath mercifully a long time been forborn, and that now, after so many Warnings, divine Providence will not be deluded by the struggling, or frail and brittle policie of man'.⁴⁷ This was an extraordinary measure by the 'Angels', who were 'willing [that] we should discern something'. Why else 'was it made visible', if 'there was no necessity of it'?⁴⁸ God's wrath had been stayed through his mercy, and the appearance of the three-suns was a sign to all of Europe that His patience was wearing thin: 'The very true meaning of these three Suns, is to inform every Common-wealth of Europe, that they are hastening to either their Confusions, or unavoidable Dangers'.⁴⁹ Lilly felt it his duty to speak out against sin, and that it was his godly duty to alert his readers of God's true intentions:

God is angry we will see nothing; but more angry, because, though some do see and perceive, and know to what Ruine we are hastening; yet, like mute statu's, they are silent in this great necessity of the State, and close up their mouthes, lest they should utter Verity.⁵⁰

While God was angry at sin, he was even angrier at those who knew their dire condition and refused to spread the message. As an astrologer trained to read and interpret the signs, Lilly considered himself God's fearless messenger to the powers that be.⁵¹ Having heard the message, his readers were now to take it upon themselves to act and spread the message, thus alleviating England's

⁴⁷ Lilly, *The Starry Messenger*, p. 15.

⁴⁸ Lilly, *The Starry Messenger*, pp. 19-20. These were probably parhelia, formed when sunlight is refracted through ice crystals in cirrus clouds. For more on the weather, see Vladimir Janković, *Reading the Skies: a Cultural History of English Weather, 1650-1820* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

⁴⁹ Lilly, *The Starry Messenger*, p. 18.

⁵⁰ Lilly, *The Starry Messenger*, p. 17.

⁵¹ This would presumably include other astrologers, who were among the mute.

condition and saving it from danger. The message of the apparition was directed to

All you Emperors, Kings, Princes, Rulers and Magistrates of Europe... it premonisheth you, above all other People, to make your peace With God in time: You shall every one of you smart, and every one of you taste (none excepted) the heavie hand of God, Who will strengthen your Subjects with invincible Courage to suppress your Misgovernments and Oppressions in Church or Common-wealth: Nor shall War cease, or the Sword of God leave persecuting you or your Off-springs, untill this great Work is perfectly done.⁵²

In England's case, Lilly was 'doubtfull' that there was 'as great Treason in hatching... as either the Armada in 1588... or Gunpowder-Plot in 1605'. There was still nonetheless 'a second Massacre in agitation'. Lilly was confident that England would survive this tribulation: 'and yet I faithfully believe we shall really overcome it, and maturely, and in good sadnesse, take lusty Vengeance on the Contrivers, &c.'. ⁵³ As the astrologer and messenger of God's truth, Lilly played an essential role in this entire operation. Having deduced England's condition of grace with God, he communicated to Englishmen the severity of the situation and how to turn the tide. In so doing, Lilly was in a position to judge the magnitude of the trouble – in this case 'a second Massacre in agitation', though not on as massive a scale as in 1588 or 1605. Lilly also assured his readers of their success, based on his faith in English resolution and strength. Thus, although danger lay ahead for the nation, Lilly retained a sense of optimism for the future, based on astrological evidence.

Three years later in 1647, the state of England was so abhorrent that the heavens arranged themselves to reflect their disgust. Lilly cited this pattern in the skies

⁵² Lilly, *The Starry Messenger*, p. 20.

⁵³ Lilly, *The Starry Messenger*, p. 20.

as evidence of a dire state of affairs. Addressing the outbreak of the Second Civil War, Lilly explained that Charles ‘was misled by those Commissioners ill councell given unto him’, and that the invasion of the Scots ‘was solely occasioned by the plottings and Agents of the Scottish Commissioners, and their Factors in the City, with Citizens, and some collapsed Members of Parliament’.⁵⁴ In the same work Lilly drew up a scheme of the heavens on 28 February 1647/8, calculated for the time of a three-suns apparition. In this Lilly saw

a sad and distempered position of Heaven, double-bodied Signs culminating and ascending, five Planets in opposition to each other; the very time of this fatall Appearance [of the three-suns] it self happening neer unto the time of the full Moon, as if the Planets and Stars of Heaven and the angry Tutelary Angels of this Kingdom were all swelled with horroure and amazement, and themselves in confusion and disorder, to see this lamentable Nation so divided, so betrayed, so bought and sole, and made, as it were, the Scene or mark of villany and perjury by our own selves, our own Councils and Instruments.⁵⁵

The heavens and the angels it represented were poised in abject horror at the treachery of Englishmen, and the ungodliness of betrayal and self-inflicted harm. In doing so, the stars’ positions reflected the disordered state of the English nation. This was a unique instance: the stars had always been a one-way influence on the affairs of man. The betrayal of certain Englishmen during the time of the Engagement affected Lilly to such an extent that he posited that the heavens themselves recoiled in response to earthly affairs. While the false suns portended great mutations and changes in kingdoms, as well as harm to princes, it was not apocalyptic in nature. As Lilly put it in *The Starry Messenger* (1645):

Surely the world is not yet at an end: But whosoever shall see, or have the unhappinesse to survive the two or three yeers succeeding, will wonder

⁵⁴ Lilly, *An Astrologickall Prediction of the Occurrances in England*, sig. A3v.

⁵⁵ Lilly, *An Astrologickall Prediction of the Occurrances in England*, p. 13.

at the strange Metamorphosis and Catastrophe of Humane Chances in Christian Common-wealths, where Jesus Christ is professed with so much pretended-Zeal, but his Doctrine practiced with so slender Devotion.⁵⁶

Likewise, Lilly wrote two years later in his *Merlini Anglici* for 1647, 'without doubt the time of a full reformation is not at hand, no, we are still flesh and blood, even we of these reforming times'.⁵⁷ In this sense, Lilly's vision of the future was restricted to the mundane, and not the supernatural events of the apocalypse.

Apocalypse and calls for repentance

Lilly's position was in stark contrast to John Vaux's, whose almanacs discussed the apocalypse from as early as 1632. He believed that the world was at an advanced age, and that they were much closer to the end than the beginning:

Now, if we duly consider, and well observe the yeares of late, with divers historicall relations thereof, we may easily remember, that most of the signes of the worlds period are already past, and some few only remaine.⁵⁸

The following year, Vaux published a set of verses entitled 'A Prediction or Premonition this yeere, 1633', heralding the end of days:

The end of all things is at hand, / And therefore woe vnto that Land, /
That shall not now with speed begin, / To turne to God, and shake off

⁵⁶ Lilly, *The Starry Messenger*, p. 24.

⁵⁷ William Lilly, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris 1647. Delivering a Probable Conjecture of such Passages as are prefigured by the Influence of the Stars, to concerne the Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland. With monthly Observations. ... By William Lilly student in astrology.* (Printed by T.B. for John Partridge and Humphrey Blunden, and are to be sold at the signe of the Cocke in Ludgate-street, and Castle in Cornhill, 1647), Wing (2nd ed) / A1879, E.1150[2], sig. A3v.

⁵⁸ John Vaux, *Vaux 1633 a New Almanacke and Prognostication for the yeere of our Lord God 1633, being the first from the bissextile or leape yeere : Calculated for the Meridian of the ancient city of Durham, where the pole is mounted aboue the horizon almost 55 degrees ... / by Iohn Vaux ...* (Printed for the Company of Stationers, [1633]), STC (2nd ed.) / 522.13, sig. C3r.

sinne. / For Nation doth 'gainst Nation rise, / And fearefull signes
appeare in skies, / Of that same day that's comming on, / Which many
one least thinke vpon. / Deferre not therefore but conuert / Today, and
harden not your heart, / Left that you cry, when time is gone, / O Lord,
that we had not so done. / For then the Lord will stop his care, / And your
complaint by no means heare.⁵⁹

In this passage Vaux framed the apocalypse as an imminent event, and sounded a call to his readers to abandon sin and turn towards God. Its arrival, even if it cannot be computed exactly, added a sense of urgency. Vaux also spelt out the consequences, namely that God would abandon those who chose to remain sinners. God's window of opportunity for repentance closed with the apocalypse, and those who did not mend their ways in time had only themselves to blame. Vaux included a discussion of the date in the pages that followed. Taking the Fall of Man as a parallel to the Second Coming, Vaux argued that 440 years remained before the apocalypse. Considering the fact that 'the signes forewarning vs of that day, are daily in our sight', and that 'the Lord will shorten [the duration] for his Elect sake', to Vaux the apocalypse was not centuries away. It was imminent and repentance was immediately necessary. In his next almanac for 1634, Vaux published a separate prognostication, this time predicting the exact year of the apocalypse:

And if the comming of the Flood in the daies of Noe, were Anno mundi, 1656. So ('tis most likely) shall also the comming of the Sonne of Man bee Anno Christi, 1656. / But the day of the Lord will come as a Thiefe in the night, in the which the heauens shall passe away with a great noyse, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat the earth also and the workes that are therein shall be burnt vp, 2 Pet. 3. 10. / Watch therefore, for ye know not what houre your Lord doth come, Mat. 24. 42.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Vaux, *Vaux 1633*, sig. C3r.

⁶⁰ John Vaux, *Vaux, 1634 a New Almanacke and Prognostication, for the yeere of our Lord God, 1634, being the second from the bissextile or leape yeere : Calculated for the Meridian of the ancient*

Citing Noah's great flood as precedent, Vaux determined 1656 to be the most likely year of the Second Coming. However, he added a rejoinder that reminded his readers that the exact day and hour cannot be known. Thus, even though the year 1656 provided a useful and concrete deadline for sinners, they still did not have an exact cut-off date. This would have left his readers both comforted but also wary of their own status. Vaux's next reference to the apocalypse came eight years later in his almanac for 1642:

Courteous Sir, A Prognostication, (according to the Etymology of the word) ought to foreshew and prophesie something to come; as a premonition to prevent the danger ensuing. It hath pleased Almighty God in his great mercy to give us many signes and fore-tokens of his comming. Some whereof I mentioned in my Prognostication Anno 1633, which is yet to be seene. But such are our stony and impregnable hearts, as nothing will enter, untill the Lord is a suddaine call us to an account, then it will be too late for us to desire a longer day.⁶¹

In this passage, Vaux explained that his prognostications were written to warn his readers of impending danger. Once again, he preached that danger to one's soul could be avoided if they were to stop sinning. However, writing after the onset of armed conflict, Vaux expressed a newfound sense of pessimism. Compared to his previous treatments of the apocalypse, this passage emphasised the suddenness of the Second Coming. This was probably in response to a readership he saw as recalcitrant, and to a nation more steeped in sin than in 1634.

city of Duham [sic], where the pole is mounted above the horizon almost 55. degrees / by Iohn Vaux of Saint Hellen Awckland., Printed for the Company of Stationers, [1634], STC (2nd ed) / 522.14, sig. C4v.

⁶¹ John Vaux, *Vaux, 1642 a New Almanacke and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord God 1642 : being the second from the leap-yeare : Calculated for the Meridian of the ancient city of Durham ... / composed by John Vaux ...* (Printed by Iohn Dawson for the Company of Stationers, [1642]), Wing / A2608, sig. B2r.

Vaux's reference to a nine-year old prediction is intriguing on several counts. Almanacs were ephemeral, and at the end of the year they were disposed and burned for heating. Readers were not necessarily loyal to particular astrologers: Isabella Twysden, a Royalist, bought different titles every year, several of which were written by parliamentary astrologers.⁶² However, based in Durham and having tailored his almanacs for the city specifically, Vaux probably had a local following. His 1636 and 1637 editions did not mention the apocalypse, while the editions for 1639-1641 are no longer extant. It is possible that the outbreak of war led Vaux to include such discussions in his almanacs. If we survey the surviving almanacs from 1642-3, 1648-9, and 1652, we see extended treatments of the apocalypse. His 1643 work stated that the 'Antichrist [is] long since discovered', and that 'the day of our redemption draweth neer'.⁶³ Using a similar method as in the 1633 edition whereby 'one day of the Lord be as a thousand yeares', Vaux was sure that 'by this reckoning, that we have not one houre left us to repent in'.⁶⁴ At the conclusion of the work, Vaux advised his reader thus: 'As th'old yeare ends, the new begins, / Begin new Lives, shake off old Sins'.⁶⁵

The 1648 and 1649 editions contain the same exposition on the apocalypse, namely that the 'Forewarned time is still approaching neer', and that based on the precedent of 'Noah's floud', taking 'Five hundrethfifty to years three times fold', it can only be concluded that 'The dreadfull day of Doom is drawing

⁶² Capp, *Astrology*, p. 65. Capp posits that Twysden may not have been able to get Wharton's underground title.

⁶³ According to Vaux the Pope was the Antichrist, among several other Antichrists. John Vaux, *Vaux, 1643 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord God 1643 : being the third after the leape yeare : Calculated for the Meridian of St. Hellen Awckland, within the county of Durham ... / composed by Joh. Vaux ...*, (Printed by R.O. & G.D. for the Company of Stationers, [1643]), Wing / A2609, sig. B3r.

⁶⁴ Vaux, *Vaux 1643*, sig. B2v.

⁶⁵ Vaux, *Vaux 1643*, sig. C4r.

neer'.⁶⁶ In the 1648 almanac Vaux stood by his date of 1656: 'If th' ancient books which I have read, / May (for a truth) be credited: / There are not full eight years to spend, / Before the World come to an end.'⁶⁷ The 1649 edition also differs by concluding with the verses from the original 1633 premonition. Vaux did not acknowledge them as such, simply titling the section 'The Conclusion, with a Premonition'.⁶⁸ Through the 1630s and 1640s and closer to 1656, Vaux became more precise and insistent that the apocalypse was drawing near. His message was constant: sinners be warned, the final judgement was soon and would come as a surprise.

A small window for repentance

The extent of agency in Vaux's discussions was restricted to the individual, securing his happiness in a supernatural paradise, and not here on earth. Vincent Wing, however, declared that the entire country's sins would have to be accounted for, and that England's state of sin correlated directly to the ills it would suffer in the future. In an uncharacteristic excursion into political commentary, Wing wrote in the concluding pages of his 1649 almanac:

tis my earnest desire that this sick and languishing Kingdom may return & enjoy her former peace and tranquility, but I much doubt it, the whole land is so froward and profane even *Cap à pe*.⁶⁹

Wing explained that 'the sad and direfull events' of the 1640s were the result of astrological influences, namely the solar eclipse of 1639 and the lunar eclipses

⁶⁶ Vaux, *Vaux 1648*, sig. B5r; Vaux, *Vaux 1649*, sig. B4r.

⁶⁷ Vaux, *Vaux 1648*, sig. B5v.

⁶⁸ Vaux, *Vaux 1649*, sig. C1r.

⁶⁹ Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ. 1649*, sig. C7v. 'Cap à pe' is the French term *cap-à-pie*, meaning 'from head to toe'.

that followed. However, from the year 1649 onwards, from 'the positure of the heavens, no great evils [were] theatned' for England. He added that:

absolutely if our sins do not hinder, and cause further judgements to tumble upon our heads, wee may now expect a good and happy issue of our long continuing troubles and intestine differences. *Quod faxit Deus*, but if no amendment, desolation will follow; *Quod avertat Deus*.⁷⁰

This meant there was a sliver of hope for England, if only its people would stop sinning. Wing was not optimistic, citing a lack of repentance:

I am sure if we look no farther, but upon the confluence and ugly nature of sin, which never so universally reigned, as in these our dayes, we may justly fear Gods anger is still against us; how many warning hath hee given us of late, time after time? First, he sent his lesser judgements amongst us, and then his Sword, which hath eaten flesh and drunke blood in abundance, yea we all know it hath swept away even many thousands soules, and yet we see none truly amends, nor condoles our unhappy differences, but still covet for the things that perish.⁷¹

The country having suffered much in the intervening years, Wing expressed his hope that 'there might be concord and agreement in Religion, and more love, and good neighbour-hood amongst us'.⁷² However, he listed the sins that continued to abound amongst the populace:

Doth not pride, covetousnesse, envy, malice, swearing, whoring, prodigality, lack of charity, & profanation of the Lords Day superaboundaries, doth not all kind of Sects and Schismes more abound then ever: When was the world so wickedly value, and so vainely wicked as now adayes: Doth not with all the contempt of good learning, good lawes, good Magistrates, & good government ... doth not the contempt of

⁷⁰ Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ*. 1649, sig. C7v.

⁷¹ Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ*. 1649, sigs. C7v-C8r.

⁷² Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ*. 1649, sig. C8r.

good Religion, good Piety, good Charity, and all goodnesse, argue and import Destruction and Misery to ensue.⁷³

The only way to avoid the fate of being ‘destroyed with Sodome and Gomorrah’ was for ‘all from the highest to the lowest cloath our selves, in sack-cloath and ashes’, and to ‘turne unto the Lord in all humility and humble obedience’.⁷⁴ The year 1649 thus presented a chance for the English to end their troubles.

Astrologically there were no more ill effects; the troubles were now solely God’s punishment for sinful behaviour. Despite this opportunity, Wing was convinced that the English would continue to sin in unprecedented numbers.

Perhaps sensing the scale of his rhetorical task, Wing concluded by invoking eternal damnation. Referring to the parable of the Ten Virgins, Wing pushed the temporal horizon from the present to an apocalyptic judgement in the end-times: ‘that when the Bridegroom shall come, we may (like the five wise Virgins) have Oyle in our Lampes, and be found watching’.⁷⁵ The moral of the parable was that one should always be ready for the Second Coming and Final Judgement. By concluding with this parable, Wing framed the current judgement against the apocalypse, enlarging the stakes from just the present suffering to the spectre of eternal suffering. The English needed to repent not just to end the current troubles, but also to save their souls in eternity.

Having ended on a rather sober soteriological note, Wing inserted a final set of verses, reminding his readers that God was still on their side. God could avert any mundane harm that came their way on the condition that they repent:

⁷³ Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ. 1649*, sig. C8r.

⁷⁴ Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ. 1649*, sig. C8r.

⁷⁵ Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ. 1649*, sig. C8r.

What though the Heavens, and Heavenly lights this yeare / Do threat our Nation, and whole Hemisphere; / Tis God alone, that can avert their ire, / And can confound what ere our foes conspire. / Lets now therefore, abandon sinne and vice, / And hate all vile, and filthy avarice; / Then sure the evils the Starres to us presage / Shall turned be, and then O happy age. / But if that yet we will not warned be, / Nor now at last repent with Ninevie / But still persist in all our sinfull wayes, / We must then see but few more peacefull dayes.⁷⁶

England's sinfulness displeased God, who would allow malignant stars to take effect, and would let England's enemies succeed in their plots. If the English renounced their sinful ways, God would negate the stars and grant England happiness and peace. This was a common rhetorical trope. Wharton used a similar line of reasoning, arguing for a connection between England's sins and its immediate future:

The mightie ruler of this Universe, / At whose command the heavens have staid their course, / Can turne away the evill that threatned is, / If we repent of what we doe amisse. / For nothing doth his ire so soone appease, / As true devotion joyn'd with laud and prayse. / But if in sin we doe continue still, / And more and more provoke his heavenly will, / The stars (his instruments) must execute, / What he (to warne us) caus'd them but to threat. / Sin not, and then although the heavens doe loure, / God can protect thee by his Sovereigne power.⁷⁷

The stars served as warning of future punishment, which could only be stayed by God, who in turn could only be appeased by repentance and devotion. While all three astrologers both stressed the importance of repentance, Wharton emphasised God's protection as the key attraction, whereas Wing promised the

⁷⁶ Wing, *Speculum Uranicum, Anni æræ Christianæ. 1649*, sig. C8r.

⁷⁷ George Wharton, *Naworth, 1642 a New Almanacke and Prognostication for the yeere of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, 1642 : being the second from the bissextile or leape-yeere, and from the creation of the world, 5591 : referred most especially to the Meridian and Latitude of the Ancient city of Durham ... / by George Naworth ...*, Printed by Iohn Dawson for the Company of Stationers, [1642?], Wing / A2671, sig. C2v.

hope of peace and a 'happy age'. Although Vaux also predicted happiness, it was of the eternal happiness of heaven and the afterlife, not Wing's version of mundane happiness on earth.

The future used as threat

The idea that Parliament's triumph was inevitable was an important part of Lilly's rhetoric. Addressing England in general, Lilly advised in his 1647 almanac that the English should 'Submit to the times, disturb not the Parliament, or dispute their proceedings, no, not in thought; in their well doing consists thy happinesse'.⁷⁸ Reluctant Englishmen need not engage or support the Parliament; all they had to do was abstain and allow Parliament to do its work. Without their involvement, Parliament would succeed in its goals and work to their benefit. Parliament's inevitable victory also meant that the royalists were on the wrong side of history, and Lilly used the spectre of the future to reproach them in an effort to change their minds. Lilly asked Charles to 'put it into [his] heart to consider [his] present and future condition, if [he] reject[ed]' Lilly's advice to return to London.⁷⁹ In 1644 he addressed the 'Nobles, Knights and Burgesses' who joined the Royalists to the 'perpetuall infamie of [themselves] and posterities':

Beleeve me, I see a hideous storme ready to fall upon you; I see the teares of your Wives, of your children, of your friends lamenting your lost and forlorne Condition... When in time to come your children shall see your

⁷⁸ Lilly, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris* 1647, sig. F8r.

⁷⁹ William Lilly, *A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophetes concerning these present times, with Modest Observations thereon. The nativities of Thomas Earle of Strafford, and William Laud late Archbishop of Canterbury, His Majesties great favorites; astrologically judgements upon their scheames; and the speech intended by the Earle of Strafford to have been spoken at his death. / By William Lilly student in astrologie.* (Printed for John Partridge and Humphrey Blunden, and are to be sold at the signe of the Cocke in Ludgate Streete, and the Castle in Cornhill., 1645), Wing (2nd ed) / L2217, E.309[28], sig. A2v.

goodly Mansion Houses a meere lump of rubbage, and aske whose that stately house had been, and have answere from the barbarous Clowne; it was my Lords, it was Sir Thomas: Who drew his sword most unnaturally against the Parliament of England, and therefore his house is pulled downe and his posterity hated? Will not these Words and that sad object rent a strong heart in pieces? I pray God you be Wise in time.⁸⁰

The disgrace that came from supporting the King would span across the years, and their infamy would last through the ages. The ruins of their house would be left as a testament to their actions, and for future generations to gawk and learn of their ill-advised actions. Time would be unkind to the losers of this dispute between King and Parliament, and in this case Lilly was certain that royalists will be on the suffering end. To the divines, Lilly had a similar message about the future. Based on the closeness of Mars to Jupiter in 1647, he judged that:

full of hopes [the divines] will be, and hard will they rugge and struggle, but I am fearfull (yet care not) that those peaceable days or commanding times they so much expect to have wholly to themselves, are not neere at hand.⁸¹

According to Lilly, the stars would provide victory to only the Parliamentarians, and not the clergymen who were seeking to rule over other Englishmen. Using his astrological knowledge to portray a dystopian future, as well as outright denying the possibility of another, Lilly used the spectre of the future to convince his opponents to change their course. To scare his readers on the

⁸⁰ William Lilly, *Supernaturall Sights and Apparitions seen in London, June 30. 1644. interpreted. With a Mathematicall Discourse of the now imminent Conjunction of Iupiter and Mars, 26 July, 1644. the Effects which either here or in some neere Countries from thence may be expected. By Will. Lilly. Imprimatur John Booker.* (Printed for T.V. and are to be sold by I. S. in Little-Brittaine, 1644), Wing (2nd ed) / L2249, E.4[5], sig. A2r.

⁸¹ Lilly, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris 1647*, sig. F6r.

dangers of religious differences, Lilly gave voice to yet another dystopian possibility in *Anglicus, Peace, or No Peace* (1645):

Shall we never discern the Factious? Must England be ruined to satisfie the Schismaticall? If we trample down Monarchy, the fall of the Nobility follows, then of the Gentlemen, and last of all, cutting of Throats amongst our selves: Such a thing was long since prophesied. Lord God, let it not be in our age.⁸²

This domino theory magnified the danger of the present troubles. The present suffering was nothing compared to the total collapse of society into a Hobbesian state of nature. Written for the month of January 1645, this was a warning for both that month and more generally. The situation had the potential to devolve significantly, but if these differences were resolved, England would be safe. This threat thus provided an impetus for readers to seek peace.

Prophecy as rhetoric

While primarily an astrologer, Lilly also compiled and published old prophecies that he thought spoke to England's present condition. These were meant as warnings to Charles. In *A Prophecy of the White King* (1644), Lilly laid out a vision of peace that came with the end of monarchy:

and then the white and noble King shall dye.... Afterwards the chicken of the Eagle shall build his nest in the highest rock of all Brittain, but thall neither live till he is old nor die young... When this chicken of the Eagle pacified this Kingdome is dead, the Nobility and Gentry will suffer no injury to be done to any man.⁸³

⁸² Lilly, *Anglicus, Peace, or No Peace*, 1645, p. 57.

⁸³ Lilly, *A Prophecy of the White King*, p. 9.

Lilly made sure to 'finde not' whether Charles was the White King, but the charge was clear enough in his foreword, where he made the comparison between his present time and the troubles that the White King brings:

You see what stormes, what miseries, what cruell Warres our Nation is once like to suffer by the meanes and procurement of a King called a White King... He brings over strangers to destroy us... At this time, here are some, doubt a French Army in Flanders: Do not feare them.⁸⁴

While Lilly did not identify Charles as the White King, the equivalences he made between them served to warn Charles of the consequences of his actions. The White King and his heir were prophesised as the last kings of their kingdom, after which monarchy would be extinguished. If Charles were to behave like this White King, he would only bring an end to the English monarchy. Lilly pressed the same point with another set of prophecies in 1645:

It is conceived the [Lion] represents King Charles, now Raigning, who... hath endeavoured to rule like a Lyon; that is, according to his owne will and pleasure, or solely by the Prerogative royall... Certainly, if at this present, we consider the estate and condition of his Majesty and his foregoing Raigne, we may justly feare the sequel will be most miserable; according to the tenour of this and many other Prophecies.⁸⁵

This 'first Prophetie, of the Italian Monke' predicted that after the Lion there shall be no more kings, or 'None'. Lilly also referred to an 'ancient Prophetie of the Scottish Nation', 'delivered in the dayes of James the fourth', simply stating 'Goe tell the King, after James, James, after him one, and then none'. Lilly interpreted it thus: 'There succeeded James the fifth, then James the sixth, now King Charles; after whom, God knows who shall.'⁸⁶ Once again, Lilly drew

⁸⁴ Lilly, *A Prophecy of the White King*, p. 6.

⁸⁵ Lilly, *A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophecies*, p. 5.

⁸⁶ Lilly, *A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophecies*, p. 6.

direct parallels between the prophecies and Charles's situation. His purpose was clear in his response that followed:

How improbable these predictions seeme to be, considering the plentiful Issue his Maiesty now hath, and the many Children of the Queen of Bohemia I leave to be well considered; and how great and fearfull a judgement it must be, if it should so happen this Kingdome to be deprived of so many of the royall Race, &c. God Almighty put it in the heart of our Soveraigne to repent and returne to his Parliament, that thereby he may vacat the words and sense of this prophesie and some others.⁸⁷

Lilly was offering Charles a choice: Charles could reconcile with Parliament and thus prove that these prophecies did not refer to him. Or he could stay his course, fulfil the prophecies, and bring an end to the monarchy altogether. In the conclusion to his discussion Lilly cited a passage from William Camden's history of Britain:

The race or Issue of the most valiant men and noblest Families, like the off-spring of plants hath their stringing up, their flowring and maturity; and in the end begin to fade, and by little and little to dye utterly.⁸⁸

This passage about mortality reinforced Lilly's point that Charles's monarchy could be easily extinguished, and that it was even naturally ordained that his family would come to an end. In the light of these prophecies and Camden's observation, Charles's position was precarious, and he needed to take decisive action to save both his monarchy and family. Having reviewed a multitude of prophecies, Lilly concluded that 'All old prophecies do intimate a final subversion of Monarchy in England'.⁸⁹ Lilly had put forth a provocative case that these prophecies referred to the present time, leaving it to Charles to prove

⁸⁷ Lilly, *A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophecies*, p. 6.

⁸⁸ Lilly, *A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophecies*, p. 6.

⁸⁹ Lilly, *A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophecies*, p. 39.

that these prophecies represented not the present, but some undetermined time in the future.

Attitudes to prediction and the future

The nature of astrological knowledge

How confident were astrologers about their ability to predict the future?

Wharton conceded that astrologers were often wrong, and that their work would be inevitably criticised by future generations:

experience doth shew, that there be many errors, which although at first they were so little, that [past astrologers] were not sensible, yet tract of time hath discovered them palpably: And I doubt not, but those that shall live in another Age, will find errors in the exactest Observations of our best Astronomers, and reforme them, as they have reformed those which lived in the last Age.⁹⁰

There was thus a continuous line of criticism and refinement of astrological knowledge. Wharton saw himself in a long line of astrologers, each generation correcting the work of the former. It was a certainty that future generations will find further mistakes, and rectify the body of knowledge for the better.

However, men could never come to perfect knowledge of the heavens and the impact of the stars:

For so it is that God seeing this curious inclination of us, mortall creatures, to pry so farre into his secrecies, hath ban'd us with ignorance of some things, with uncertaintie of others: so that yet never man breathing upon the face of this mortall Globe, could ever attaine the

⁹⁰ George Wharton, *No Merline, nor Mercurie but a New Almanack after the old Fashion, for the year of our Redemption 1647 ... : wherein likewise a few of the many Grosse Errours and Impertinences of Mr. William Lilly are plainly discovered, modestly refuted, and the Author vindicated from his former Aspersions : calculated exactly for the honourable Citie of York ... / by George Wharton ...*, [York : s.n.], 1647, Wing / A2674, sig. B8v.

certaine and perfect knowledge of the Motions, much lesse of the influences of the Celestiall Orbes and Luminaries.⁹¹

The role of the astrologer was thus to guide his readers to the best of his ability, warning them of what the stars portended and thus what can be done about it. In Vaux's worldview where sinfulness was the dominant theme, the stars acted as 'Gods subordinate Magistrates', who 'threaten[ed] and denounce[d] his fearfull iudgements upon us here on earth, unlesse we obey his will here, as they doe in heaven'.⁹²

The stars thus promised punishment to come for the sin that was constant on earth. Repenting would bring one back to the right side, and help one avoid the judgement otherwise portended. On the other hand, Wharton was less concerned with sin, but similarly acknowledged the ability of God to intervene with mercy. In his prognostication for August 1641:

For certain 'tis, great winds with haile or thunder, / By Mars and Saturne,
'bout St. Magnes day / Will happen, if Divine power doe not hinder, /
And keepe the malice (which they threat) away. / But oft it chanceth that
Gods sparing hand / Makes fooles presume when least they understand.⁹³

If the stars exerted their influence, harm could come to men. However, God could intervene as he pleased against the stars, in this case out of mercy. Wing expressed this sentiment even more generally:

For my own part I have said nothing but what the rules of Astrologie
inform me, and that I have authour for, which may come to passe,

⁹¹ Wharton, *No Merline, nor Mercurie* ... 1647, sig. B7v.

⁹² Vaux, *Vaux* 1648, sigs. C1v-C2r; Vaux, *Vaux* 1649, sig. B8r.

⁹³ George Wharton, *Naworth, 1641 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 1641 : being the first from the bissextile or leape-yeare, and from the creation of the world, 5590 ... : Calculated and compsed according to Lawfull Art for the latitude and meridian of the ancient Citie of Duresme ... but may very well serve (without sensible error) the most parts of Great Britain / by George Naworth...* (Printed by J.N. for the Company of Stationers, 1641), Wing / A2670, sig. C3v.

unlesse the Almighty dispose otherwise, and so frustrate the portents of Heaven.⁹⁴

God was free to do as he pleased. While astrologers could interpret the stars, they would never be able to predict God's interventions. Lilly agreed that providence overruled the stars, but also added the notion that astrologers were fallible men who could err:

The Planets and Stars are ministers not masters: Expect not that all accidents shall precisely happen to a day or a Weeke, do not We first fir the ground, then sow, and after some expiration of time gather a crop: its impossible for the weaknesse of man at all times to hit the certaine day, or Weeke of many accidents, sometimes we do, or very near, but not constantly: God keepes and reserves to himselfe many secrets, of which man hath no knowledge; he alters and changes time, seasons, and what he pleaseth, When, and where he Will, so that we predict nothing but With this limitation, the hand of Almighty God considered or not impeding or preventing nature.⁹⁵

Here, Lilly described the limitations of astrology. Predictions were subjected to the interplay between the stars' influence and God's providence. Furthermore, it also took time for the stars' influence to manifest, and God's providence. Lilly compared God to a physician, and the stars were 'his Intrumentall medicines, and drugs; their motion his time he gives in operation'.⁹⁶ Having accounted for this delay, should an astrologer fail in his predictions it meant God intervened to make it so: 'If I failed in my Prognostick, God perhaps reserves the honour for

⁹⁴ Vincent Wing, *Wing 1647 An Almanack and Prognostication for the yeer of our Lord God 1647, being the third from bissextile or leap-yeer, and from the creation of the world 5596 ... : Calculated (according to art), for the Meridian and Latitude of North-Luffenham in Rutland ... and will aptly serve all the middle parts of England, and without sensible errour the whole Kingdom / by Vincent Wing...* (Printed by Io. Legatt for the Company of Stationers, 1647), Wing / A2794, sig. C4v.

⁹⁵ Lilly, *Merlinus Anglicus Junior...* 1644, sig. A2r.

⁹⁶ Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, p. 94.

some more worthy man, and so blinds my senses, or permits not me to see so much truth, as I should.'⁹⁷

Confidence in predictions

Charles's Engagement with the Scots in 1647 was one such case where Lilly was caught off-guard. He explained himself in his 1648 tract *An Astrological*

Prediction:

I foresaw the many and sad defections since happened unto the Parliament, I hoped they would have been lesse; I was sensible of a divine Providence overpowering the Stars, else the better Party in Scotland had prevailed, & we had not this yeer been invaded: but God reserved unto himself the unchangeable Decrees of Kingdoms, and I perceive by his sometimes checking or retarding, at other times his hasty putting in execution the influence of the Planets, that man hath not yet attained so full a perfection in Astrology, whereby he might without fallacy give a determinable and positive judgement.⁹⁸

Having been taken by surprise, Lilly concluded that astrologers still had much to learn and discover. Furthermore, as a man he was blinded by his emotion and prejudices:

yet forasmuch as it did not appear fully unto me this Scottish defection, I was sparing, perhaps my weaknesse (which I willingly acknowledge) might be occasioned by my affection, overballanced with their former merit.⁹⁹

In this case, Lilly's failure was a result of the inadequacy of astrological knowledge, as well as his own mortal failings. However, having identified the reasons for his oversight, Lilly argued that he was on the right track: 'I was very doubting of the Scottish faith, all along'. His error was thus a lesser one of

⁹⁷ Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, p. 94.

⁹⁸ Lilly, *An Astrological Prediction of the Occurrances in England*, sigs. A3v-A4r.

⁹⁹ Lilly, *An Astrological Prediction of the Occurrances in England*, sig. A4r.

magnitude. In this way, Lilly retained full confidence in his ability to predict the future, barring providence and his own errors of judgement. Lilly thought that time would be the arbiter of his ability:

These few notions I leave to Posterity, that they may see what actions immediately succeeded the apparition of the three Suns... which whether the preceding discourse in some measure maketh not good, I must leave to future times to judge of.¹⁰⁰

Lilly held the same opinion in *England's Propheticall Merline* (1644), where he seemed more confident of his prognostications' staying power:

Some will say Merline was a Prophet, time will make it appeare I am no lier... Many of my judgements are obscure, part whereof shall not be fulfilled during this generation; a time will come, and he will appeare, that will publish more then the world yet knoweth, or shall know of me, and will thank our age for what I have done, and will hereafter (God permitting) doe.¹⁰¹

Although there is a slight difference in tone, it is clear Lilly remained confident in his astrological abilities despite the Engagement.

Wharton was likewise confident of his ability to predict the future. In the late 1640s, Wharton struck a cautiously optimistic tone, forecasting peace in the near future. In his 1647 almanac, he wrote:

But what (may every man say) shall we yet groane under the miseries of an unnaturall Civil Warre, and see no end thereof? Shall we never have peace? Yes, we shall in part, but not fully this yeare: We may have a glimpse thereof at home, but what occasions we may have abroad, God onely knowes: I verily beleeeve, that from this yeare, England will begin to flourish againe; but to say we shall have a firme or settled Peace this or the next yeare, I dare not.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Lilly, *An Astrologicall Prediction of the Occurrances in England*, p. 26.

¹⁰¹ Lilly, *Englands Propheticall Merline*, sig. B3r.

¹⁰² Wharton, *No Merline, nor Mercurie ... 1647*, sig. B5r.

The positions of Jupiter and Mars gave him no 'ground to pronounce and expect a speedy conclusion of Peace'. This was further buttressed by his observation that 'The Warres ended not with the Surrender of Oxon &c', that the Cavaliers had not negotiated a final peace. However, the Moon's position gave him some hope for reconciliation, for it 'sheweth but an inclination to, and a desire of Peace, by some well-minded people, that have not so many private and sinister ends, as some others have by the continuance of the Warre'.¹⁰³ The heavens thus gave Wharton a glimmer of hope that England could put its troubles behind. This hope for an end to war was also evident in his 1648 almanac, where Wharton cited the position of Mars as bringing the end to the troubles:

It is not now to be feared, a farre worse is past. The Peoples eyes are opened, and see now where they are, and whence they have wandered, &c. The later part of this Yeare, and the beginning of the next will produce wonders.¹⁰⁴

Now that the people had been relieved of their blindness, they would see their waywardness and correct their path towards reconciliation. Furthermore, the opposition of Saturn and Mars in October 1647 signified punishment for the rebellious officials of London:

I say again, as once I did before in *Bellum Hybernica*: You Judges, Officers, and Magistrates [of London], who have betrayed or forsaken your Master, and perverted the Law to serve your owne wills, expect to

¹⁰³ Wharton, *No Merline, nor Mercurie ... 1647*, sig. B5v.

¹⁰⁴ George Wharton, *No Merline, nor Mercury but a New Almanack after the old Fashion for the year of our Redemption, 1648 being the bissextile or leap-yeare and from the creation, 5597, containing a Compendious Chronology of all the Battles, Sieges and other Remarkable Conflicts, which have happened in this Kingdom since the begining of those Unhappy Troubles with other Notes necessary for such a Work, calculated and composed for the latitude meridian of the famous burrough of Kirkby-Kendall in the county of Westmorland / by George Wharton*. (Printed for the author, 1648), Wing (2nd ed) / A2675, sig. C5v.

render an Account of your Actions: I unfainedly protest you are all strongly threatned.¹⁰⁵

Wharton was certain that the future would bring punishment to the rebels. His prediction thus called for them to beware and to desist, a warning that they would be held accountable for their rebellious activities. This reckoning was possible because the people of London would reconcile with Charles, as signified by the culmination of Leo in the Sun in June 1648: 'By this time the Cavaliers will have a better esteeme from the City of London. And His Sacred Majesty shall be in a condition to governe, etc.'¹⁰⁶ According to Wharton, the people would thus awaken from their delusions and begin to seek peace with Charles. These events would prove Lilly wrong, and bring him to account for his lies and mischief:

And although Lilly delude the World with such an impious and groundlesse conceit of his, as the subversion of the English Monarchy, yet shall the Actions of this and the next Yeare render him a meer Lyer, and no lesse than a grand Incendiary betwixt his Maiesty and his People.¹⁰⁷

Wharton was fully confident that the future would prove him right, and debunk Lilly's prediction that monarchy would cease. Lilly would be exposed as a 'Quack, whose only aime and constant endeavours' were to steal from the poor and 'simple sort of People' through sensationalism. Wharton chose to 'willingly leave him in his Ignorance', and let the future prove Lilly wrong. From these almanacs, we see that despite not knowing when peace would finally reign,

¹⁰⁵ Wharton, *No Merline, nor Mercury ... 1648*, sig. C5v. 'Unfainedly' is 'unfeignedly'.

¹⁰⁶ Wharton, *No Merline, nor Mercury ... 1648*, sig. C6r.

¹⁰⁷ Wharton, *No Merline, nor Mercury ... 1648*, sig. C6r.

Wharton was confident in the arc of the future: the future would bring justice, vindicate his predictions, punish the rebels, and expose charlatans like Lilly.

On the other hand, Vaux was much more agnostic on the question of the future, and whether men could accurately prognosticate. Towards the end of the 1640s, Vaux warned that men's fortunes were uncertain and constantly subject to change. In his 1648 almanac, he published a set of verses in Latin:

Nihil in rebus humanis stabile sit. / Lusus fortunae variatur imagine
Lunae, / Crescit, decrescit, constans, consistere nescit. / Aenigma.¹⁰⁸

Vaux republished the same verses in 1649, and appended his translation in English:

The course of fortune altereth soone, / Even with the image of the Moone,
/ Increasing and decreasing, she / Nere knoweth, constant how to be.¹⁰⁹

Men's game of Fortune was a riddle: nothing in the affairs of men was stable, fortune constantly shifted like the phases of the moon. One had to constantly keep watch and always be aware of his situation. Vaux emphasised this message on his title page in verse:

If all things fall out well this yeare, / The next we need not much to feare.
/ But all's not gold that seemeth so, / Dissembled Peace will breed us
Woe. / The Serpent lurks under the fairest floure, / Till he, to work his
end, can spie an houre.¹¹⁰

Appearances of peace could be deceiving, and like men's fortunes could turn on a dime. Vaux, presumably writing in the last quarter of 1648, would thus be referring to the peace that came with Charles's capture and the Newport

¹⁰⁸ Vaux, *Vaux 1648*, sig. A2r.

¹⁰⁹ Vaux, *Vaux 1649*, sig. A2r.

¹¹⁰ Vaux, *Vaux 1649*, sig. A1r.

negotiations. Vaux cautioned that such a peace was illusory and uneasy, and that discord could erupt once more. For Vaux, the late 1640s was a time of great uncertainty.

What remained certain was the coming of the apocalypse, and the continuous progression of time. Vaux compared this progression to the Second Coming with the seasons:

By Harvest, when the leaves doe fall, / Is shew'd the last end of all: / And aged Winter, liveless, cold, / Inclotheh us in earthly mould: / The Spring revives us after death, / And gives unto us a new breath: / And Summer doth foreshew that state, / Which shall remained withouten date.¹¹¹

The fall represented the end of mortal life, and the winter, one's burial in the earth. The subsequent spring signified a resurrection with the Second Coming, and the splendour of this new life was displayed by the summer. This date remained shrouded in mystery, but it was always coming closer, as inevitable as the procession of the seasons.

It is telling that despite his ability to read the heavens and make prognostications of the future, Vaux only wrote at length about the apocalypse, the one event he was sure would transpire in the future. The apocalypse was ordained by God, and it stood above the vicissitudes of contemporary politics. Astrologers like Wing and Seth Partridge were similarly reluctant to wade into political prognostications. In his 1647 almanac, Wing's only political comment was a rebuke of Wharton:

The [Cavalier] faction already looks very forlorn... it prospers not... this year will break the neck of it; surely M. Wharton, or Naworth himself cannot think otherwise: if he do, we shall all smile at his folly; but I hope

¹¹¹ Vaux, *Vaux 1649*, sigs. B1v-B2r.

he will be better informed, and no longer delude the Popish party and their adherents with fopperies: I heartily wish him, and M. Wharton... not to vent any more absurdities, nor to contend any longer with M. Booker and M. Lilly in point of Astrologie (who are very famous therein) and have already crackt his credit. But I'll return to my present purpose, from whence I have a little digressed.¹¹²

Wing thought that politics was a digression from his task of providing more mundane advice. In the 1648 edition, Wing declared himself 'loth... to intermeddle with such weighty matters', simply hoping for reconciliation in politics and religion. Wing reasoned that since men were unable to know exactly the 'true place and motion of the starres and Planets', we are much less able to 'prognosticate and iudge of their effects'.¹¹³ Partridge did not explain why he neglected the subject of political prognostications:

Concerning the effects of these great Eclipses, which assuredly are of great concernment, I will not say any thing, but onely refer the Reader to the excellent and laborious Works of those two famous Luminaries of Astrologie, Master Booker, and Master Lilly, in whose Works they shall assuredly finde abundant satisfaction.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Wing, *Wing* 1647, sig. C4r.

¹¹³ Vincent Wing, *Wing* 1648 *An Almanack and Prognostication for the year of 1648 being the bissextile or leap-year and from the creation of the world 5597, wherein is contained many usefull pleasant and necessary Observations being very delectable and are easie to be understood of all sorts of Men ... Calculated (according to art) for the Meridian and Latitude of Belvoir-Castle in Lincolnshire whose Longitude is 20 deg, 0 min, Latitude 52 deg, 52 min and without sensible error may serve the 3 Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Iceland / by Vincent Wing*. (Printed by Io. Legatt for the Company of Stationers, 1648), *Wing* (2nd ed) / A2795., sigs. C7v, C8r.

¹¹⁴ Seth Partridge, *Partridge*, 1649 *an Almanack and Prognostication of the Worlds Redemption, 1649, and of the creation, 5642, being the first after bissextile or leape year : calculated and principally referred to the meridian of the most honourable city of London, whose scituation is in longitude 24 degrees and 20 minutes, and in latitude 52 degrees, 32 minutes, and may serve indifferently for the whole kingdome of England / composed and made fit for the use of all sorts of men in generall by Seth Partridge ...* (Printed by M.B. for the Companie of Stationers, [1649]), *Wing* / A2048, sig. B6v.

Partridge referred interested readers to Lilly and Booker, explaining that he 'found a great deal of certainty' in their work.¹¹⁵ By doing so, these astrologers could remain above the fray of politics, and in Vaux's case, avoid censorship of his work.

On the other hand, Wharton explained the heavens and astrology as a way to get closer to God:

as all things created are understood, so especially it should seeme the Celestiall Bodies to be intended; for these with their beauty, magnitude and multitude: and with the perpetuall stability, and wonderfull variety of their invariable motions, doe in marvellous manner commend the goodnes and wisdom of our glorious God, and doe exceeding much draw us (I speake by experience) to the love, admiration, and knowledge of him, according to that excellent Testimony of the Kingly Prophet: The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Heaven sheweth his handyworke.¹¹⁶

By studying the heavens as an astrologer, one would appreciate the perfect qualities of God, and come to know him better. Similarly, Lilly thought of astrology as 'not only Divine, but most profitable' because it dealt with the heavens, as well as the future.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Partridge, *Partridge*, 1649, sig. B6v.

¹¹⁶ Wharton, *Naworth*, 1641, sig. C2r.

¹¹⁷ William Lilly, *The VVorld's Catastrophe, or Europes many Mutations untill, 1666. The fate of Englands monarchy untill its subversion. Government of the vvorlde under God by the seven planetary angels; their Names, times of Government. An exact type of the three Suns seen in Cheshire and Shropshire, 3 April 1647. Their Signification and Portent, astrologically handled. / By VVilliam Lilly student in Astrologie: who is, amicus patria, & veritas amator. To which is added, A Whip for Wharton.* (Printed for John Partridge and Humphrey Blunden, and are to be sold at the Cock in Ludgate-streete, and at the Castle in Cornhill, 1647), Wing (2nd ed) / L2252, E.387[1], p. 4.

Faith and Providence

When there was little evidence of God's favour, Lilly asserted his own strong belief and faith that the Parliamentarians were doing God's work. In *White King* (1644), Lilly expressed confidence in God's favour towards the parliamentarians:

Hitherto the Lord himselfe hath fought our battles; I observe by the best and truest relations, We have not had on the Parliaments side one victory of any consequence, but in our hearts We first despaired of the successe... but especially be at unity amongst our selves: so shall we have no cause to feare, the Turke, Antichrist, French, Spanish, Irish, & c.¹¹⁸

Despite the lack of any outstanding success on the parliamentary side, Lilly was outwardly confident that God was on their side. Unity was also essential in ensuring that England remained strong against its enemies. Writing in 1646 for the next almanac, Lilly remained steadfast in his belief that England would continue: 'For this Kingdome of England is not ordained untill the Worlds end to be any more Conquered: wee shall give, but not receive Lawes, &c.'¹¹⁹ Lilly used the notion of providence to support his prognostications, even when evidence was not forthcoming. When the tide of battle eventually turned, astrologers were happy to equate victories with signs of divine will. John Booker took the defeat of the Scots in 1648 as evidence of God's favour:

let us never forget the late invasion of the Scots... oh that men would see and admire those wonder-[ful] things, how God hath smitten them in all places, and even mira[culo]usly delivered this poor Kingdom in such a conjuncture of time, ... there was a universall conspiracy and confederacy of the... enemy, both by land and Sea!¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Lilly, *A Prophecy of the White King*, p. 6.

¹¹⁹ Lilly, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris* 1647, sig. F2v.

¹²⁰ Booker, *Uranoscopia*, ... 1649, sig. C7r.

Like Lilly's supposition that the Army's rise was God's will, Booker took the Scots' defeat as a sign of God's favour towards the Parliamentarians.

Conclusion

While astrologers agreed that England was plagued by division and an unnatural civil war, many of them neglected to explain how the troubles came to be. From what we can glean, Wharton and Lilly believed that the heavens played a vital role in the breakdown of order, whereas sin was more of an afterthought. Order would be restored by virtue of the stars' movements as well; both Wharton and Lilly predicted that England would recover through the influence of planets. Lilly also embarked on a mission to comfort his readers through various methods. He highlighted the deterministic nature of the stars, and the great promise of paradise on earth, as well as merciful God's ability to intervene. In so doing, both Wharton and Lilly minimised the role of agency in their predictions. While men had the ability to quicken or impede peace, the stars had already ordained England's fate.

Astrologers employed time in their rhetoric, warning and cajoling their readers to change their behaviour. Wing and Vaux invoked the apocalypse to convince their readers to repent from sin, which was wholly responsible for the troubles. Lilly similarly wielded the spectre of the future, reproaching royalists and Charles for their actions. Using astrology and old prophecies, Lilly dared royalists to suffer the dire consequences he set out. Like Wharton and Wing, Lilly focused on the mundane happiness that would come with peace in England, whereas Vaux focused on a supernatural paradise.

Additionally, while all astrologers stressed the importance of being in God's good graces, they differed on the mechanism through which peace would be gained. For Vaux and Wing, happiness was garnered through repentance. They were confident that if men were no longer sinful, their punishment would end, and peace would return. On the other hand, Wharton thought repentance would bring God's protection from malignant stars. Peace and happiness were gained by being under God's umbrella, rather than as a respite from punishment. This difference can be attributed to Wharton's insistence on the strong influences of the stars, and a worldview that focused not on the afterlife.

Throughout this time, astrologers were confident in their ability to read the stars and to write predictions. While Wharton and Lilly were cognisant that astrological knowledge was imperfect, having added the necessary disclaimers and the qualification that God could intervene, both writers were happy to continue publishing their political prognostications. Conversely, astrologers like Vaux and Wing, while confident of their abilities, elected to leave politicking to other writers. Vaux highlighted the fickleness of fortune, and like Wing and Partridge, focused on providing more mundane information for his readers. In the absence of supporting astrological evidence, Lilly simply cited his faith and beliefs to support his prognostications. In this vein, he declared from a sense among the soldiery that God was fighting with the Parliamentarians, and also that the Army was God's tool for effecting his will. When Parliament began to win the war, Lilly and Booker cited these victories as evidence of God's favour and providence.

2. Almanacs and Astrologers after the Regicide

In this chapter we examine how the astrologers handled the impact of the regicide, and how the event shaped their visions of time and the future.

Ordained change

In the aftermath of the regicide, astrologers sought to reassure their readers that massive change was natural and ordained by God. Writing in his 1653 almanac, Wharton explained that:

The First Cause [of political change] is God, the Creator and Governour of all things... the Constitutions, Governments and Conservations of Humane Communions and Societies, or Republicques, are not so in the Power of Men, but depend wholly upon the First and Supreame cause.¹

It was thus an illusion that the recent great changes were due to the work of men. All changes on the level of government and society were the result of God's initiative, and in line with his plan for England. Change was also a natural phenomenon. Wharton explained how 'there usually falls out some one or other Mutation in Empire', which came 'at the end of every 30th year' because its leaders and governors 'leave their station'. 'New ones succede them', and are after another '30 yeares more' themselves replaced. New blood bring change by 'introduc[ing] New Customes, and Opinions, in the Commonwealth'.² The

¹ George Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae 1653 presenting the English and Roman kalendar, Planetary Motions, Passions and Positions, Meteorologicall Observations, Chronologicall Collections, and Judgements Astrologicall, &c. Respecting the Meridian, and Latitude of Kirkby-Kendall; where the Vertex is distant from the Aequator, 54.50'. and whose Longitude, is, 18.00'. By Geo. VVarton, Esq.* (Printed by J. Grismond, for the Company of Stationers, 1653 [i.e. 1652]), Wing (2nd ed) / A2668, E.1348[4], p.33.

² Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae 1653*, p.34.

recent events of the past were merely part of a long line of such changes, and not out of the ordinary. Furthermore, it was also God's general scheme that all kingdoms and polities mutate and eventually end:

Moreover, it is certaine, that as God hath appointed fatall Bounds and Limits of time to all Empires, &c. so hath He the like Bounds and Limits to all other particular places; and when any change of Empires, &c. is imminent, He commonly raiseth up some Great Heroes, whom He useth as Organs, to Punish or amend them: yet first revealeth such future changes, by certaine Signes, and Prodigies.³

In this account, God effected political change through certain persons, while also signalling his intentions through the heavens. While Wharton didn't name any particulars, he was writing to remind his readers of the base causes of political change, in response to 'a Generation of Men so enclin'd to Novelty'.⁴ His purpose was thus to caution his readers against an apocalyptic reading of the times. There were signs in nature that could be observed and understood, and they told a clear story:

Wee observe not only sundry changes and Translations of Kingdomes, whilst these or these Planets Raigne, and beare Rule with others: but also that upon the whole surface of the Earth, there is nothing perpetuall, and by comparing of Times and Places perceive Siccity chang'd into Moisture, Moisture to Siccity; some Countries destroyed others increased by Waters. Thus He... changeth Countries and transferres Kingdomes at his pleasure: yet seeing hee hath engraven in the Booke of Nature (and chiefly in Heaven, which measureth times) the Motions and Mutations of all things, things that be Invisible, even his own eternall Power, for the greatest part; yea and exposed Heaven unto our view, that it might be Signs of present and future things.⁵

³ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p.34.

⁴ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p.33.

⁵ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p.35.

However, the stars were not simply signifiers of change. The heavens were also the Second Cause through which political change was wrought. While God was the First Cause, the Second Cause was 'the Motion and Influence of the Planets and Starres' on humans on earth:

Heaven... most effectively operates upon a Human Body, best agreeable to it selfe, and so also on the Body both of the Prince himselfe and his subject: to wit, so, as that it changeth the Temperaments of Mens Bodies, and with those Temperaments their manners or conditions and the manner or conditions of Princes and Subjects being changed, a Mutation of the Common-welalth [sic] followeth.⁶

Change in the Commonwealth resulted from a change in the temperaments of the Prince and his subjects, which was in turn caused by the stars and their influence. The motion of the stars was directly responsible for the downfall of the English monarchy:

There is no other Change of the Absis of any Planet falling out in our time, save onely the Absis of Mars, and this happened (according to Billialdus) in the latter end of the yeare 1647. which was from Leo to Virgo: and what a strange mutation ensued the yeare following, viz. A dissolution of the English Monarchy, &c. ... Kingdomes and Governments, Faith, Religions and Opinions of Men are changed when the Auges [or Absides] of the Planets are changed from one Signe to another... Now all Men know... that Aries is the Ascendent, and Mars (Lord thereof) the Significator of England.⁷

As Wharton succinctly translated, 'Changes of the Absides alter Kingdomes, Regions and Religions'.⁸ It is striking how little individual agency was allowed for in Wharton's account. God, through the motions of the stars, caused

⁶ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, pp.34-5.

⁷ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, pp.36-7. The absis/apsis is the aphelion or perihelion of a planet's orbit. Square brackets original.

⁸ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p.36.

kingdoms to rise and fall. The latest upheaval in England was thus part of God's longstanding plan to change the polity, and not a new development in the history of man. Wharton's picture of the universe and its future was finely ordered, constantly in flux but predictably so. This was in direct contrast to the millenarian and apocalyptic visions, which saw the world order overturned in a new era for man. Furthermore, by attributing political change to natural processes, Wharton denied that the Parliamentarians had any real power or agency to effect political change. They had committed a great sin by killing Charles, but events panned out not because of their will, but because of forces outside their control.

John Booker similarly remarked on the eternal mutability of society and polity, but placed the recent events in a larger scheme of God's plan to remove tyrants all across Europe. In the section for November 1652, he mused:

Poore men are little shrubs, Rich men tall Trees, / Those scape
sequestering storms, so doe not these. / In all this world, all's fickle,
nought is firme: / Laws, Cities, Empires have but here their Term, / Time
flits as wind, doth as A Torrent run. / Who knows what ill haps ere a
setting Sun.⁹

Power and influence shifted with the times, moving from one seat to another. Those who were in power would be most susceptible to the vicissitudes of time, suffering the most in their downfall. This sense of natural decay and growth coexisted with a narrative of astrological influences and God's intentions. In his 1651 almanac, Booker remarked that:

⁹ John Booker, *Coelestiall Observations or an Ephemeris of the Planetary Motions, their Various Aspects, Conjunctions, and Configurations, to the Moon, and amongst themselves. ... By John Booker student in astrology & physick*. (Printed by R. Cotes, for the Company of Stationers, 1652), Wing (2nd ed) / A1333, E.1349[2], sig. B6v.

God hath a quarell with all Nations: The German Caesars, the Kings, Princes and Potentates of the Earth, have been trod under foot; the Irish Os and Maes with their Kernes; the Scotch Lairds and their Red-shanks... the English Gentry with their Plough men; the tall Cedars and low shrubs; yea, and all sorts of Trees in the wood of the whole Universe have been lopped, and I feare many branches more will be hewen down, and some plucked up root and all within a few yeers: Both Gog and Mogog, the Tyrant Turke, and pompous Pope must downe; the three grand Ps. Pap. Prel. and Pres. the pest and poyson of the rest of the Alphabet, that have been so Calamytous to the world, must downe. This last Saturnine revolution hath produced wonderfull mutations in the World; O the admirable succeeding times! Before Mars hath made seven changes, or danced seven Zodiacall rounds, there will be scarce a King in Christendome.¹⁰

According to Booker's account, Saturn's effect had been to upset governments all across Europe. Since God was responsible for the motion of the stars, it was also God's plan that those in power be unseated. Such changes would serve to remove ungodly and tyrannous rulers.

This impulse to situate the regicide within a larger plan was shared by other astrologers. Lilly remarked on the essential role of providence in the dissolution of the English monarchy. In *Monarchy or No Monarchy* (1651), he concluded that:

truly I may almost say, that that corrupt Common-prayer Book was the sole and whole occasion of all the miseries and Wars that since that time have happened in both Nations: Had his Majesty first indeavored the imposition of that lame Booke upon the English, most men did beleieve we had swallowed it, and then the Scots must have done it afterward.¹¹

¹⁰ John Booker, *Celestiall Observations, or, An Ephemeris of the Planetary Motions their various Configurations, Aspects and Conjunctions ... by John Booker ...*, (Imprinted by F.K. for the Company of Stationers, 1651), Wing / A1332, sig. C1r.

¹¹ William Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy in England. Grebner his prophecy concerning Charles son of Charles, his greatnesse, victories, conquests. The northern lyon, or lyon of the north, and chicken of the eagle discovered who they are, of what nation. English, Latin, Saxon, Scotish and Welch prophecies concerning England in particular, and all Europe in generall. Passages upon the life and*

In Lilly's estimation, the English clergy were too lackadaisical to protest such an imposition. Thus:

doubtlesse the great hand of God was in it, that those rude Scots first broake the Ice, and taught us the way to expell an insulting Priesthood, and to resist the King, he indeavoring by unwarrantable meanes to intrude things contrary to the Divine Law of allmighty God upon our Consciences.¹²

In this reading, Lilly identified God's providence in Charles's decision to impose the prayer book in Scotland. The subsequent wars and changes in government resulted from this one decision. It was thus providence that led England down the path to regicide and the abolition of monarchy, the necessary conclusion to that first providential decision of Charles. Vincent Wing similarly situated the monumental change as part of a larger scheme, but in his narrative, this was an ongoing act of rebellion against Scottish servitude. In his almanac for 1652, Wing commented on the state between the two nations:

my opinion is (and it's grounded upon Astrologie too) that this present posture of the heavens, threatens much division and debate to be still between the two nations of England and Scotland; that Kingdome (I say) must never more Lord it over England, her yoke is AEgyptian-like bondage, and for their former treachery, is, and will ever be hatefull to all true English hearts. As they of late years domineer'd (as it were) over the English nation, thorow some mens perfidiousness, so shall they smart for those exorbitancies, by the hands of the valiant English, who like a stout, couragious and warlike people, shall totally abandon the Scottish-servitude, and requite them by deed of armes for their former insolencies;

death of the late King Charles. AEnigmaticall types of the future state and condition of England for many years to come. / By William Lilly, student in astrology. (Printed for Humfrey Blunden, dwelling at the sign of the Castle in Corn-hill, 1651), Wing (2nd ed) / L2228, E.638[17], p. 93.

¹² Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 93.

nevertheless the legall actions of the honester sort of Scots, I much honour.¹³

In this passage, Wing referred to the treachery of the Engagement, and also to an ongoing effort to leave Scottish rule. Charles's monarchy was not English, instead it was an extension of Scottish oppression and domination. Ending the monarchy was simply one step in England's move away from Scottish slavery; the momentous change of the regicide was part of a larger emancipatory project. Astrologers thus explained the regicide and regime change by recourse to larger structures of time. For Wharton, it was the natural consequence of God's plan to decline and renew polities, whereas for Lilly and Booker and Wing, they emphasised a larger divine plan to unseat tyrants and free England from servitude. Such rhetoric explained and placed the recent past within larger stories of change. These provided a sense of direction and purpose and were ultimately comforting narratives in a time of upheaval.

A different time

Astrologers nonetheless acknowledged the great changes of the period. They felt acutely that they were living in a different phase of time. This in turn meant that the English needed to act differently. In the dedication for his 1650 almanac, Wharton remarked:

¹³ Vincent Wing, *Ouranizomai, or, An Almanack and Prognostication for the year of our Lord, 1652 being the bissextile or leap-year, and from the creation of the world, 5601 : wherein you may behold the State of the whole year ... : calculated according to art, for the Meridian and Latitude of North-Luffenham in Rutland ... / by Vincent Wing...* (Printed by J.L. for the Company of Stationers, 1652), Wing / A2823, sig. C6r.

Sir, It is not usuall to dedicate Almanacks, and that's the reason I doe mine. The times enforce me to this singularity: for, till now, I never affected it.¹⁴

For Wharton, recent events had changed the complexion of the times, causing him to also change his behaviour. John Vaux, curate of St Helen's in County Durham, shared a similar sense that he was being altered with the times:

Tempora mutantur, & nos mutamur in illis. / The times are changed as you see, / And we in them much changed be.¹⁵

Placed as the concluding verses of his section on the nearing apocalypse, it referred to the state of the world, which was 'now lame, and very ancient, and in manners and fashions faileth and greatly halteth'.¹⁶ While Vaux had previously discussed the apocalypse and the year of the Second Coming, his almanac for 1652 departed from his pre-regicide tracts in several ways. The second expository sections of 1648 and 1649 editions were titled:

A Prognostication For the time to come, as well as for the time present. Wherein is contained divers perpetuall Tables, and infallible Rules for rectifying and framing of the year, fit to be continued for the observation of Scholars, and other that delight in Art.¹⁷

¹⁴ George Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack, for the year of Christ, 1650. Being the second after the bissextile: and from the creation, 5599....* By Capt. George Wharton, student in astronomy. , (Ex officina fidelissima, senatui cruentissimo diametrice opposita:, anno 1650), Wing (2nd ed) / A2665, E.1323[1,2], sig. A3r.

¹⁵ John Vaux, *Vaux. 1652 Diarium Seu Calendarium, a Day Book: or, A New Almanack for the year of the Worlds Redemption, 1652. ... Composed and made by John Vaux of S. Hellen Auckland, anno aetatis ..., 77.* (printed by Gartrude Dawson for the Company of Stationers, [1652]), Wing / A2611, sig.C3v.

¹⁶ Vaux, *Vaux. 1652*, sig. C3v.

¹⁷ Vaux, *Vaux, 1648*, sig. B2r; Vaux, *Vaux, 1649*, sig. B1r. Previous editions were simply titled 'A Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord God, _____. Being the ____ after the Leape-yeare. Wherein is contained divers perpetuall Tables, and infallible rules, fit for the observation of Schollers and others.'

In contrast, the 1652 edition was titled:

A Prognostication for the time present, and future, according to the Sacred Scriptures, penned and published by the Prophets, and holy men of God. Wherein is contained many usefull, pleasant, and profitable Observations and Tables.¹⁸

Firstly, the focus was now on the present, rather than the future. Even though the 1652 edition was still formatted as an almanac, the information was to be used to inform immediate action, rather than to plan for the future. Secondly, there is a shift in emphasis towards scripture. Vaux was a minister, and while the Bible informed his earlier almanacs, this is the one instance in which scripture was referred to in the title. This was accompanied by increased detail in his calculation of the date of the apocalypse. The 1648 and 1649 editions contained one and two pages respectively of commentary warning of the apocalypse. These were copied unchanged from year to year, with the 1649 edition drawing its additional page from the 1643 edition. Conversely, the 1652 edition contained more than three pages of original commentary and calculation. This included scriptural justification for the calculation:

*The end of all things is at hand, 1 Pet. 4. 7. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, Mat. 24. 36. Nevertheless it is permitted by holy Scripture to enforce by some conjectures and similitudes, whereby to attain and come to the age or year of Christs second coming, (the day and hour abiding alwayes unknown.) Our Lord hath invited and drawn us for to search and observe by a certain similitude or parable.*¹⁹

This was followed by an exegesis on the similarities between Noah and Jesus, from which Vaux concluded that:

¹⁸ Vaux, *Vaux*. 1652, sig. C1r.

¹⁹ Vaux, *Vaux*. 1652, sig. C2r.

from Adam unto the flood be passed 1656 years, it is likewise true, how the end of the world shall be approaching to the like year of our Lord, 1656. It is near at hand, for there remaineth now no more but 4. yeares; yet for as much as no man knoweth the abbreviation of the said time.²⁰

The previous mention of 1656 as the year of the apocalypse was in his 1643 edition, where he took Jesus to be the Second Adam.²¹ While we have lost some of the intervening editions (1638-1641, 1644-1647, 1650-1651), it is clear from the surviving editions that references of the apocalypse were uncommon and often perfunctory.²² The 1643 edition featured a similar but shorter exegesis, while the 1648 and 1649 editions contained only short apocalyptic verses that were recycled from previous editions. The 1652 discussion thus represented a marked increase in Vaux's engagement with the apocalypse. There are several possible explanations for this, first being that the year 1656 was on the horizon. However, this does not explain why the 1648 and 1649 editions engaged less with the apocalypse than the 1643 edition – we would have expected more urgency as 1656 came closer. A second, more personal explanation is that Vaux had been ejected from his living. Vaux had been a minister for St Helen's in Durham for thirty-four years before being forced to leave in 1650.²³ It is plausible that this loss, along with the shock of the regicide and regime change, highlighted the changed times. This would explain Vaux's detailed exegesis in 1652. Wing was similarly compelled by recent events to declare his time the end times:

If we do but diligently consider the times now present, and compare them with those immediately preceeding [sic], we may plainly see that these are the last times which are spoken of in the holy Scriptures, and

²⁰ Vaux, *Vaux*. 1652, sig. C3r.

²¹ Vaux, *Vaux*, 1643, sig. B2r.

²² See Capp, *Astrology*, p. 382 for a complete list of Vaux's titles. His apocalyptic prediction of 1633 was referred to occasionally.

²³ Capp, *Astrology*, p. 335.

that the universall consumnation of this earthly fabrique is neer at hand,
before which will be a catastrophe & change of things, but in what
manner it's hard to guesse.²⁴

It seemed self-evident to Wing that the immediate past resembled the events described in scripture. Such comparisons were current among members of English society, most notably the Fifth Monarchists and other millenarians.²⁵ However, Wing demurred from conjecturing the exact mechanisms through which the apocalypse would occur, commenting that these could not 'be Geometrically demonstrated'. Even though he did not have a positive description of these changes, Wing remained confident that great changes were just over the horizon. Writing in 1653, two years after his initial observation, he declared after surveying the stars that 'we are like to see as eminent alterations and changes upon the Earth, as our eyes ever yet behold'.²⁶

Without Charles, England's future was thrown into confusion and danger. In his 1652 almanac, in the usual place where the king's reign start-date would be printed, Wharton inserted these verses:

The Law is good, and needs no Reformation, / It takes no Bribes, nor
sleepes a Long vacation: / Delays no suites, Disdaines not to imbrace / A
John-an Oakes, or John-a Stiles his Case: Yet since the Pilot's Dead, and
stormes doe threat, / (Rocks being neare) the Wreck must needs be
great.²⁷

²⁴ Wing, *Ouranizomai*... 1652, sig. C7v.

²⁵ Bernard Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men* (London: Faber, 1972), passim.

²⁶ Vincent Wing, *Olympia Domata, or, An Almanack and Prognostication for the year of our Lord, 1653 being the first from bissextile or leap-year, and from the creation of the world, 5602 ... / by Vincent Wing ...* (Printed by J.L. ..., 1653), Wing / A2802, sig. A5v.

²⁷ George Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris 1652 containing the English calendar, and Daily Motions of the Planets, &c. in Longitude, in Latitude: their Manifold Passions and Positions. Chronologicall notes, Meteorologicall observations, and Judgements Astrologicall, &c. The Astronomicall calculations properly respecting the Latitude and Meridian of Kirkby-Kendall, where the Pole-arctique is elevated 54. degr. 50. min. and whose Longitude (counted from the Canary*

Although England and its systems were stout and functional, without its king the country was doomed for destruction, especially with the troubles Wharton saw on the horizon. This was further complicated by a sense of confusion plaguing the country. For July of the same year, Wharton mused on their inability to recognise friend from foe:

What Mutiny is this? and then what Fight? / Who gets the day? and next,
who's in the Right? / Great and hard questions! But a harders this, /
Where be our Friends, where are our Enemies? / Well! 'tis no matter;
Mars will have the day, / For Iove retreats, In English, Runs away.²⁸

In this atmosphere of confusion, Wharton placed himself as a lonely champion for the royalist cause. In his estimation, the times were dire because few souls would give up their lives for the cause. In his 1651 almanac, he addressed a set of verses to the 'Sowre-Criticks, that By-standers are', as well as the 'Grave-Chairmen... whose attentive Eare... beleevs all true', of which the most pertinent are:

These times afford few Martyrs, and those few / Scant would be Martyrs,
if they could eschew... Had FOX but writ his Volumes in this Age, / His
Book of Martyrs had not fill'd a Page: / England (I fear) would scarce
have spar'd him one / Old-Latimer, to make a Martyr on.²⁹

The lack of martyrs and public enthusiasm for the royalist cause continued to rankle Wharton, and he continued publicly to condemn the lackadaisical in his 1652 almanac: 'But when we / Dissolved [our monarchy], (so were they overcome / With Panique Feare!) both Men and Beasts were dumbe'.³⁰ The

Islands) is 18. degr. 0. min. By Capt. George Wharton student in astronomy. , Printed by J. Grismond for the Company of Stationers, 1652 [i.e. 1651], Wing (2nd ed) / A2667, sig. A3v.

²⁸ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris* 1652, sig. C3v.

²⁹ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris* 1652, sigs. A2r-A2v.

³⁰ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris* 1652, sig. A3r.

populace was seemingly cowed by the shock of regime change, to the point that they would meekly accept the changes foisted on them. Wharton's criticism was also directed to his royalist allies, whom he thought were directionless:

What Lowd Dissention's this we softly heare / And Dread, 'twixt Saturne
and his Counciller? / Who's that gives Back? what Ioviall-Fooles are they
/ Must needs command, before they can obey? / Divide and Rule is
Maciavells: Take heed! / For though He dy'd long since, here's yet his
seed.³¹

Wharton bemoaned the lack of organised royalist resistance, and argued that they should rally around Charles II and take their lead from their new king. Believing that opposition to the Commonwealth was disorganised and lacking, Wharton put himself out as a leading royalist voice, hoping to cajole a shocked public and royalist sympathisers to act. He pointed out that there was clearly a successor to Charles, and that though the regicide had happened and brought forth a time of confusion, the royalists were not directionless.

As a staunch royalist, Wharton considered the regicide a horrific event that went beyond the pale. In his 1650 almanac, he addressed 'the High and Mighty, the Tyrants Triumphant, at Westminster', for whom he could not even find a suitable name:

Gentlemen, I cannot call you, since you drench'd your Hands in His
Bloud, who was the Fountaine of all our Earthly Honour and happinesse,
the Life & Light of the Land... Not Country-men, who have (so Nero-
like) inhumanely ripp'd up the Bowells of your Naturall Mother, and
exposed her Nakednesse to the view of the Pittillesse World... For
certainly none of you are of the right English Race, in that all of you
degenerate so farre from the true English Nature.... Or if you be; the
most prodigious Monsters that ever the Earth groaned under... Let After-
ages impose a Name suitable to your Merits, for surely this cannot. In the

³¹ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris 1652*, sig. C7v.

Interim, it shall suffice me, you know whom I speak to; and that I speak what I know.³²

In this preamble, Wharton attempted to confront the regicides for their actions. His inability to even find a name or proper way of addressing them, and his leaving it to future generations, evinced a state of shock and unsettledness that he had yet to reconcile. The execution was evidence of a world turned upside down:

From yeare to yeare I have fore-warn'd you of the Judgments threatned and impending, for your horrible Impieties. And though I had been silent; yet methinks the generall Fate of all Rebellions (especially such as this is) that Summes up all items, in this Totall [The Barbarous Murder of Gods Anointed] had been enough to informe what you might trust to; but that 'tis too apparent we are wheel'd about to those times, wherein Sacriledge is counted Reformation; Rebellion, Devotion; Murder, Justice; and Traytors consecrated Saints and Martyrs.³³

The regicide made clear that the times were different, and that these times were characterised by an inversion of normal customs and morals. Wharton thus signed off as 'The Admirer of your Treason and Tyranny'.³⁴ These men, led by their pride, now had only their destruction to contemplate:

And indeed you have not been more Turke-like tempted with Successe in your Actions (from which you still concluded, though very weakly, that God own'd your Cause) that Heaven hath been mercifull (I may say) in tempting you with so large a time of Repentance: But sithence you have despised the Mercy, and neglected the Opportunity; it is much to be feared, the Mercy and time of that Mercy, are both forfeited.³⁵

³² Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, p. 19.

³³ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, p. 19. Square brackets original.

³⁴ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, p. 20.

³⁵ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, p. 20.

By executing Charles, the regicides had repudiated the mercy and the opportunity for repentance. This act had sealed their fate:

This I write in Charity to you, to the end, that (although you can have no hopes to escape a Temporall, yet) your indeavours may be to avoid the Eternall punishment due to your wickednesse: And that's as much as can be desired, or pray'd for.³⁶

Punishment in the form of suffering on earth was now certain, because they had murdered God's anointed. Yet they might have a chance to redeem their souls in the afterlife, a concession offered perhaps in jest or simply out of ignorance of God's will. Nonetheless, Wharton was sure that the grandees and the Commonwealth were headed to failure and disaster:

For, I will not search into the secret Will of God: So far as 'tis manifested either in his Word, or works, shall satisfie me; And by their Rules (if I understand either) your Common-wealth, together with your selves are (even now) falling to nothing.³⁷

Wharton refused to inquire into the role of providence in Charles's death; instead he chose to affirm his belief that the new regime was destined to fail. He insisted earlier in the same work that 'God and Nature promise us Deliverance; and if the Devill be not Crampt, or in a Lethargy, he will pay them their wages before the next Revolution'.³⁸ He nonetheless attempted to rationalise and memorialise Charles's death. In a trope that most clearly presented itself in the popularity of the *Eikon Basilike*, Wharton equated the humanity of kings with that of Christ:

I've said y' are Gods: who dare you Tyrants call, / Since (Good or Bad)
y'are His Vice-gerents all? / But you shall Dye like Men: This I allow, / For

³⁶ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, p. 20.

³⁷ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, p. 20.

³⁸ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, p. 9.

Men must Dye: so did our Saviour too. / When once the Rulers, Priests,
and People crye / Away with Him; Pilat must Crucifie.³⁹

Charles's death, like Christ's, was possible because he was mortal and subject to the whims of misguided people. If even Christ could die in this manner, Charles's death would be sensible in God's plan. This regicide was still no less shameful, and Wharton wished that the passage of time would emphasise the Christ-like character of Charles's death. In his discussion of the ages of man in his 1653 almanac, Wharton wrote of the present and future England:

Our State have bin Reforming Twelve long years, / The Church, Court,
Countrey, City (Haire, and Eares:) / Should they the English Kalendar
Omit / 'Twill be forgot when they began to sit: / Ages to come, who Thirst
to Celebrate / Their Famous Deeds, shall finde them without Date; / And
know no more, when Charles or Strafford Dy'd. / Then some, when
Christ was Borne, or Crucify'd. / Perhaps mistake the Persons with the
Times, / Finding so like, their Sufferings, and their Crimes.⁴⁰

Wharton hoped that the current Parliamentary regime would forget to put the exact date of their beginning in the English national calendar, such that future generations would be unable to commemorate any of their actions. The victories on the battlefield and the changes in government would be forgotten and unreachable by future Englishmen. These deeds would include the executions of Charles and Strafford, who would in turn be conflated with Christ, and they would in turn be remembered as perfect Christian martyrs. This was the construction of a 'uchronia', an imagined future that allowed Wharton to discount present-day realities of defeat.⁴¹ This was also evident in his 1652

³⁹ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, sig. A5v.

⁴⁰ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p. 7.

⁴¹ See Andy Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions and the Making of Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 210-2; Buchanan Sharp, 'Popular Political Opinion in England, 1660-1685', *History of European Ideas* 10 (1989), pp. 13-29.

almanac in his section noting the feast dates of the year: 'These Feasts were once held sacred amongst Men: / Old Folks may live to see them so agen'.⁴² In this, Wharton kept alive the possibility that the old order and reverence for custom would be restored, perhaps so quickly that the oldest generation would live to see it.

Conversely, Lilly sought to convince his readers that Charles's death was both predictable and fortunate. In *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, Lilly observed how Charles 'died in the beginning of his Climactericall yeare, fatall many times where killing directions in the Nativity threaten'.⁴³ His passing was also England's fortune. Lilly narrated Charles's biography, noting various instances of evil. For example, he cited Charles's wet-nurse's opinion that Charles 'was of a very evill nature even in his infancy', 'willfull, and untankfull'.⁴⁴ He was such an 'enemy to blood before the Wars', and Lilly attested that he had:

heard it from the mouthes of many very worthy Gentlemen, whose hap it was to serve him in the late Wars, that they did beleieve, had he, viz. the King by Armes conquered this Parlament, he would have proved the greatest Tyrant the English Nation ever had to rule them.⁴⁵

According to Lilly, even the royalist commanders under Charles recognised his tyrannical nature, and thus sought a negotiated settlement rather than outright military victory.⁴⁶ While he was not a papist, Charles was apparently complicit in his father's death.⁴⁷ It was therefore a fortunate turn of events for all Englishmen that Charles was prevented from exercising his tyranny. Lilly also

⁴² Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris* 1652, sig. A2v.

⁴³ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 74.

⁴⁴ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 75.

⁴⁵ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 78.

⁴⁶ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 78.

⁴⁷ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, pp. 83-5.

argued that Charles's downfall and death mirrored his crimes. Lilly recounted the case of a petitioning citizen who shouted his opposition to bishops, when:

the Citizen being more tongue then Souldier, was wounded, and I have heard, dyed of his wounds received at that time; it hath been affirmed by very many, that in or neer unto that place where this fellow was hurt and wounded, the late KINGS Head was cut off, the SCAFFOLD standing just over that place.⁴⁸

The regicide was thus in part Charles's reckoning for his misdeeds as king, almost a repetition of a past event. Lilly also identified 'the wonderfull Providence of Almighty GOD' in 'rais[ing] Essex to be a scourge for his Sonne [Charles] whose Father [James] had so unjustly abused him'.⁴⁹ Charles's misfortunes on the battlefield were also meant to be:

All the remainder of his life after this August 22. 1642. was a meere laborinth of sorrow, a continued and daily misfortune, unto which it seems Providence had ordained him from the very entrance of his Reigne.⁵⁰

He was such an unfortunate king, 'o that one may truly say, he was *Regum infaelicissimus*'. Before his death, 'severall Prodegies appeared almost in every year after 1644'.⁵¹ Charles's bad luck and the various portents that appeared were all signs of God's disfavour, as well as his own tragic trajectory. As Lilly put it: 'For my part I doe beleieve he was not the Worst, but the most unfortunate of Kings.'⁵² Furthermore, Lilly argued that Charles had chosen to fulfil the prophecy of the White King, thus causing his own downfall. Lilly highlighted

⁴⁸ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 106.

⁴⁹ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 111.

⁵⁰ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 114.

⁵¹ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 118.

⁵² Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 118.

various points at which Charles had the agency to do otherwise. These include his choosing of white for his coronation robes against the advice of his courtiers:

The occasion of the Prophets calling [Charles] White King was this, the Kings of England antiently did weare the day of their Coronation purple clothes, being a colour onely fit for Kings... contrary unto this custome, and led unto it by the indirect and fatall advise of William Laud Archbishop of Canterbury, hee was perswaded to apparell himself the day of his Coronation in a White Garment, there were some dehorted him from wearing the white apparel, but hee obstinately refused their Counsell.⁵³

Charles was also recorded as being so impatient to become king that he placed the crown on his head himself, instead of waiting for the Archbishop. This allegedly prompted the Spanish ambassador to say it was 'an ill Omen'.⁵⁴ Charles's death thus resulted from a combination of his misfortune, his ill actions, and God's disfavour.

Time as Rhetoric

Booker and Lilly predicted change to come in the future, but the change they saw involved the English nation and its salvation, as well as the need for Englishmen to continue fighting. Writing in 1649 for his 1650 almanac, Booker reminded his readers that Ireland and Scotland had yet to be subdued. In the section for April, he observed: 'Ireland's not yet at quiet, nor can wee. / Sit still at home, till that reduced be'. Booker assured the soldiery that the 'fighting stars [were] Strong on [their] sides'.⁵⁵ In the next month, he continued:

⁵³ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 39.

⁵⁴ Lilly, *Monarchy or No Monarchy*, p. 40.

⁵⁵ John Booker, *Uranoscopia Britannica., or, An Almanack and Prognostication for the yeare of Christ 1650. and from the Creation, 5643. and the Second after bissextile or Leapeyear or a Prospective Glasse wherein you may Behold the State and Condition thereof from the Solar Ingresses various Configurations, Aspects, Conjunctions, Planetary Motions, as also the Eclipses of the*

Their Boggs canot protect them, their Commanders / At home, their help
from Spaine, France, Rome, & Flanders / will nought availe them, Now o
hone they cry / It is in vaine to withstand Destiny.⁵⁶

Booker evinced a sense of fatalism in predicting the downfall and eventual subjugation of Ireland. Their defeat was aided by both the stars and their effect, as well as providence and destiny. For the months of June and July that follow immediately after, Booker shifted his attention to the Scots:

They say a Scottish mist when 't once begins / Will wet us Englishmen
unto our skins; / It may be so: but we'r provided better, / We have clothes
upon our backs, and nere the wetter. / They are in deepe and private
consultation, / We know them wel, why should we fear that Nation?⁵⁷

The Scots were not an enemy to be feared, for they were distracted and the English were well-prepared. Furthermore, according to 'Scotlands Horoscope' in July, 'their Trade thrives poorly, [and a] Mountains labour breeds a Mouse'.⁵⁸ The country was thus weak, and England had no need to worry about a threat from the north. As in Ireland's case, the stars played a role in Scotland's disorder. England was thus set on a path of success, superiority, and security. In his 1651 almanac, Lilly expressed a similar sense of confidence in England's direction, but with a recognition of the costs and losses incurred. He predicted the death of a 'some worthy Patriot or eminent Souldier', but then continued to reassure his readers:

Luminaries and their Effects astrologically handled. Calculated exactly for the Meridian of the honourable & populous city of London. Whole [brace] latitude longitude is [brace] 51 24 deg. [brace] 32 20 minutes yet so composed that it will agree to any part of Great Brittain / by John Booker. (Imprinted by F. K. for the Company of Stationers, 1650), Wing (2nd ed) / A1354A, sig. A7v.

⁵⁶ Booker, *Uranoscopia Britannica*... 1650, sig. A8v.

⁵⁷ Booker, *Uranoscopia Britannica*... 1650, sig. B1v.

⁵⁸ Booker, *Uranoscopia Britannica*... 1650, sig. B2v.

I perceive a generall sadnesse approaching, and the People seldome lament [the death] but for such as deserve well of them. Be chearfull England, we have many such; the Work designed is but beginning, more must dye ere the Worke goe forward, or be brought to perfection.⁵⁹

Like Booker, Lilly envisioned a future wherein England would eventually be successful. This path to 'perfection' included certain costs, which could take the form of the death of leading personalities. These deaths, while regretful, should be welcomed as they were part of a greater scheme. England was now starting on its providential path towards glory and happiness, and this death was merely one step of many in that direction.

In addition, Lilly took stock of the current situation and argued that while much had been achieved, there was still much at stake. In his 1652 almanac, he addressed 'the supream Authority of this Nation, the Parliament of the Common-wealth of England', calling them 'Men of Honour'. He credited their 'brave and undaunted Spirits, that durst attempt so high, so great Mutations in a Kingdome wherein no less than 25 Kings and Queens had successively reigned'.⁶⁰ These 'men of admirable resolutions' were 'guided' in their actions 'by Divine Counsell'. They had suffered infighting, personal losses, and 'so many Treasons', but had since beaten their enemies and 'brought our selves and people of this Nation into a secure Harbour'. Referring to the upcoming elections, Lilly observed that providence had now decreed that 'another Generation' of MPs would take up the mantle, to 'finish that Great Building,

⁵⁹ William Lilly, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris or, Astrologicall Predictions for the year, 1651*. By William Lilly, student in astrology. (Printed for the Company of Stationers, and H. Blunden at the Castle in Cornhill, 1651 [i.e. 1650]), Wing (2nd ed) / A1883, E.1343[2], sig. E7r.

⁶⁰ William Lilly, *[Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652.]*, [London : printed for the Company of Stationers, and H. Blunden, 1652], Wing (2nd ed) / A1884, E.1349[5], sig.A2r.

whose foundation [the outgoing MPs had] with so great industry layd'.⁶¹ Charles's execution marked the beginnings of a new English nation, one that threw off the bondage of monarchy. This was an England being rebuilt with stronger foundations, an England that was unafraid of Scotland and powerful enough to subjugate Ireland. These visions of the future served to encourage readers to take part in the great project of England post-monarchy.

Settledness

The victory over Charles II and the Scots at Worcester in September 1651 brought a sense of finality and permanence to the Commonwealth. Writing in October 1651, Lilly assured his readers that 'Englands worst is well-neer run, / The loud Pipe stopt, the Fife, and Drum'. England's military success meant that the people 'may safely buy Houses, purchase Lands, either Crown, Bishops, Deans, or Delinquents, with full confidence of possessing [their] Purchases, untill Doomes-day'. The confiscation and sale of these lands was justified as punishment against traitors:

There's no scruple in the Parliaments Title, Kings did the same to Traytors, as now our State; Henry the 8. sold Abbies and Munkeries, we Bishopricks & Deaneries, the possessors were most part Lubbers and Droans, did God no service; Ergo, there's not a word of Sacriledge in the sale of these Lands.⁶²

Lilly cited Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries as a legal precedent for the State's sale and granting of confiscated lands. Military success had now placed the Commonwealth on par with the monarchs of old, able to dispense justice and punishment on traitors of the state. The State now also had the power

⁶¹ Lilly, *[Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652]*, sig. A2r.

⁶² Lilly, *[Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652]*, sig. A3r.

to forgive transgressions and show mercy to its former enemies. Lilly appealed to those in power to show its mercy by proclaiming an 'Act of Grace so earnestly desired', which would pardon 'the old Cavaliers' who did not 'appear for the young King'.⁶³ Throughout this preface, Lilly recognised that England had clearly moved to a different, post-war footing. It was now a time to consider how to win the peace, which Lilly thought should start with mercy and reconciliation. His present-minded discussion had a clear focus on the immediate future.

According to Lilly, the English had been seized by a love for novelty since the 1640s, 'for so the Heavens at present incline us'. It was in this spirit that Lilly embraced the election of a new parliament:

But old things must now be layd aside, the whole Nation are in expectancy of a New Parliament; very greedy of Novelties and changes wee are... so were the Jewes of old in craving a King; so wee in 1639. and 1640. were stark mad to have a Parliament: God was angry with the Jewes for their Rashnesse, and thousands of our Nation repent their forwardnesse in promoting the Convention of this Parliament.⁶⁴

Although novelty was not a godly trait, it was the result of astrological influences that had changed the temper of the English people. For surrendering to such inclinations, the people were repentant. Lilly believed that the desire for novelty still reigned, even after the regicide and the abolition of monarchy:

Nor King, or Parliament, or Army, or Presbytery, or Independencie will please us long; New Light, New Devises. What shall the God of Eternity do to satisfie every one of us? What shall this present Authority do? or that which shall succeed hereafter to give every Curious fancy content? Oh people of England, be wise unto sobriety; seek the glory of God, and not your selves; supplicate Almighty God, that he permit his ministring

⁶³ Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. A3v.

⁶⁴ Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. A4r.

Angels (not Priests) to direct you, when you do Elect new Members of Parliament for a succeeding Parliament.⁶⁵

In Lilly's view, the English seemed to flit from one idea of rule to another in their need for novelty and fancy. Hence, he cautioned his readers against their inclination to elect according to their base desires. They should instead seek divine guidance and be sober in their decision-making. In doing so, they should 'do what [they] do conscientiously, and nothing rashly, or in a giddy humour'.⁶⁶ His other piece of advice was to 'unanimously reverence the great Authority [of Parliament] it self', to 'maintain and support its greatnesse and Majesty with a Venerable Reverence'. To Lilly, the greatest threat to Parliament would be its usurpation by the Army or the clergy. He thus cautioned his readers to 'above all things keep up the Parliaments Supremacy above the Souldier or Divine'.⁶⁷ In his prognostication for 1652, Lilly addressed 'the Souldiery' in an attempt to forestall their predicted involvement in the elections:

I smell the Souldier will be Active: Oh Men of Warre be yee quiet, let us elect freely, let no Officer or Governor... interpose their Commands for Election of such as themselves please: the more freedome of choyce we have, the better Men we shall Elect: doe not impede or disturb.⁶⁸

The Army was to 'move in that Spheare God hath placed [them] in', as 'the Parlament [moves] in theirs, the Souldier in his, [and] the Divine in his'.⁶⁹ By attempting to influence the elections, the Army would be overreaching and interfering with the divinely ordained separation of powers. Lilly was confident that the right balance was reached, now that Parliament was in power. Any

⁶⁵ Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. A4r.

⁶⁶ Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. A4v.

⁶⁷ Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. A4v.

⁶⁸ Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. B1v.

⁶⁹ Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. B1v.

intrusion by the Army would upset that balance and cause more trouble down the line. Lilly expressed similar concerns about the clergy in his *Annus*

Tenebrosus (1651):

we must expect such sudden changes in these our times, as no Age in former time could parallel; and these sharp and bitter Contentions are assuredly to have their beginning from Religious pretences, or breach of Customes: but alas, Religion in many is but the Foyl; Self-ends, next to the decrees of Providence, being the only Incendiary, and sole cause in every Mutation; one arme of flesh pulling down another, and thus it will be as long as Priests have any hand in temporal affairs or Councils.⁷⁰

The cause of turmoil throughout Europe was thus not religion per se, but the clergy who used religious controversies and disputes as an excuse to intervene and gain power in government. Mutations in government occurred because these clergymen were allowed to take up positions of power and thus interfere with civil governance for their own gain. Lilly's recommendation was thus to ensure that the new Commonwealth would be free of undue influence from either the Army or these selfish power-hungry priests.

There was also a sense that England was ready to settle down in its newly-found peace. In Lilly's estimation, the people themselves 'grow weary of War, and desirous to settle their Estates certain'. Now as they began 'to be sensible of their Liberties, nothing [would be] willingly submit[ed] unto any Novell Thing that smels like Tyranny'.⁷¹ Lilly warned 'Magistrate or Souldier' against attempting

⁷⁰ William Lilly, *Annus Tenebrosus, or The Dark Year or Astrologicall Iudgements upon two Lunar Eclipses, and one admirable Eclips of the Sun, all visible in England, 1652. Together with a short method how to judge the effects of eclipses. / By William Lilly, student in astrologie.* (Printed for the Company of Stationers, and H. Blunden at the Castle in Corn-hill, 1652), Wing (2nd ed) / L2209, E.656[23], p.10.

⁷¹ Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. B2r.

to interfere in the election, and he cited the downfall of Prince Charles as evidence of the people's power:

If so great a misfortune do befall this unhappy Gent'eman, who is a King and is descended of Kings, let it give warning unto those whether Souldiers or Magistrates who Lord it over their fellow Creatures, their greatnesse being built onely upon the uncertain breath of the people, themselves being neither by Discent of Kingly Race or any generous blood worth mentioning. Let us come nearer againe unto our own Commonwealth, in this Revolution.⁷²

The election was thus an opportunity to reach a more perfect Commonwealth. However, it was an equally dangerous time for the Commonwealth, in which the electorate could vote insensibly and the Army could interfere. Thus, Lilly saw the need to write and warn his readers of the danger that lay ahead, and to advise them on how best to act. In so doing, Lilly could guide England towards peace and settledness.

Old ways are good ways

For royalist astrologers, the rampant desire for novelty was the cause of the disastrous turmoil, and they warned that punishment was to come. Writing in the months after the regicide, Wharton penned an angry tirade as the preface for his 1650 almanac:

Touch me not Traytor! for I have a Sting / For all but such as long & serve the King / I am no Temporist: nor can I brooke / The Pocket of a Bradshaw, Steele, or Cooke; / Or any Regicid' that liveth: I / Disdaine all Harbours of Disloyaltie. / URANIA is Divine! And (to be cleare) / I serve no Mortall, but the CAVALIER. / If then thou be'st not one, pray let me lie, / Vntill thou can'st affect, as well as buy.⁷³

⁷² Lilly, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652*], sig. B3r. Lilly calls Prince Charles the 'Scottish King'.

⁷³ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack... 1650*, sig. A1v.

In these verses, Wharton expressed his defiance and eternal loyalty to the cavalier cause. This was in contract to the 'Temporist', who would have followed the times and changed his allegiance accordingly. Instead of seeking refuge in 'Harbours of Disloyaltie', Wharton would rather sail out in the open water for his cause. In the years to follow, Wharton continued to believe that novelty-seekers and time-servers were responsible for regime change:

the Causes of the Mutations Inclinations and Eversions of Empires, Kingdomes and Commonwealths; and the rather because (as I suppose) Time never produced an Age so full of Prodigies, nor a Generation of Men so enclin'd to Novelty, as now the Present; wherein every day presents a New Enquiry, every Moneth a fresh vicissitude.⁷⁴

Writing in 1652, Wharton bemoaned the lack of traditionalists and steadfast defenders of the old way. The desire to try new ways and forms of government had led to the regicide and abolition of monarchy, and Wharton saw the same spirit still in action, with changes still happening in the Commonwealth. John Vaux similarly sought to convince his readers to return to the old ways, which were the godly ways. In his 1652 almanac, he cited various scriptures:

Repent yee, for the Kingdome of Heaven is at hand. Mat. 3.2. Thus saith the Lord, stand in the wayes, and behold, and aske for the old way, which is the good way, and walke therein, and ye shall find rest for your soules. Jerem. 6.16.⁷⁵

The old way was the good and godly way which would bring eternal happiness in the end time, as opposed to the new ones that novelty-seekers were pursuing, which would only bring punishment. For Vaux, God had foreshadowed his anger and wrath through eclipses and changes in the stars:

⁷⁴ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, sig. E1r.

⁷⁵ Vaux, *Vaux*. 1652, sig. C1r.

Changes in Commonwealths, wars & c. divers times are by Eclipses, blazing stars &c. foresignified, which we have seen plentifully signified in our time, to the great terror and amazement of this kingdome and others ... by the will and appointment of God do foresignifie such things as fore-runners of the wrath of God... but we like stiffe-necked people nothing regard Gods handy-work, and though his judgements have a long time been in the land, and great calamities still seem to impend and hang over us, yet none truly amends, nor condoles our unhappy differences, but still covet for those things that perish.⁷⁶

It was clear from his reading of the heavens that punishment had been dispensed and more was imminent, and that God had already extended his grace by giving England advance warning. However, prideful and stubborn people refused to acknowledge the message that God was giving. By keeping to their course and seeking out the transient and the new, England could only expect to suffer. Vaux's mission was to clarify and repeat this message, and he spelt out the stakes clearly:

Let us now at last repent with Niniveh, and amend our wayes, and speedily call upon our mercifull God, lest he suddenly consume us with Sodom and Gomorrah in the heat of his heavy wrath and indignation. Let us without delay turn into the Lord, asking remission of our manifold sins committed against him, so iniquity shall not be our ruine.⁷⁷

Vaux put it starkly that England had to change its ways, to switch its course away from its current direction, lest it incur sudden destruction. Immediately after, Vaux repeated the apocalyptic verses from his 1649 almanac, which like his prose, emphasised the suddenness of God's wrath and the apocalypse in

⁷⁶ Vaux, *Vaux*. 1652, sig. C5v.

⁷⁷ Vaux, *Vaux*. 1652, sig. C6r. 'Niniveh' should be the Assyrian city of Nineveh, which was judged and punished by God in Isaiah 10:5-19.

general.⁷⁸ Since one could not be sure about the timing of the punishment, one should strive to be always in God's good graces.

Continued confidence in Astrology

Astrologers generally continued to have confidence in astrology and their ability to read the stars. They continued to cite their observations of the stars as support for their predictions. For example, Wharton reiterated in 1651 that

As the Starres of Heaven are the most excellent Characters of the Divinity, Power, Wisdom, and Glory of their Creator, in that they are written and engraven by the Finger of God himselfe (the Father of Lights;)... so amongst the Caelestiall ... the Doctrine of Eclipses takes precedency, because that from their Observations, the Primary Foundations of the whole body of Astronomy are confirm'd, Evinc'd, and Demonstrated.⁷⁹

Such a statement is not unlike any that Wharton had previously published before the regicide. Wing similarly continued to trust in his ability to read the heavens, while still remaining reticent to discuss politics:

Although many contingencies may naturally be deduced from the Position of the Coelestiall bodies, touching the state of Kingdoms and Common-wealths, as their prosperity, subversion, and the like, which the Astrologer, by the very insight of nature, may oftentimes foresee, as not only history, but these present times do testifie: yet nonethelesse, lest I should soar too high, and be thought extravagant, I shall levell my pen in the inquiry of such matters as are more pertinent to our purpose, and shall deliver nothing but what I have both Authour and ground for in Astrologie.⁸⁰

The tone of the writing remained rather similar to his pre-regicide almanacs, in that Wing acknowledged the various types of predictions that could be done

⁷⁸ Vaux, *Vaux*. 1652, sig. C6r.

⁷⁹ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris* 1652, p. 79.

⁸⁰ Wing, *Ouranizomai*... 1652, sig. C5v.

with astrology, and then restricted himself to discussing only mundane matters. For more political work and information on eclipses and their effect on politics, the reader was referred back to Lilly and Booker:

A very few years will produce wonders [from the solar eclipse] ... what [the effects] will be in particular... I think no mortall man can fully foresee, however for a more ample determination of the effects, I referre you to M. Bookers Astrologicall observations of this year, where I hope you will receive much satisfaction.⁸¹

In this time of a new Commonwealth, Wing chose to retain his approach to and flavour of astrology. Like Wharton and Lilly who continued to publish political astrology, Wing remained rather apolitical in his writing. Astrologers were thus remarkably constant in their style and approaches across the years of change and turmoil.

Astrology under siege

While Wharton had always been critical of his professional opponents like Lilly and Booker, in the post-regicide years he wrote of astrology as being under siege by amateurs, which included the parliamentarians. In his 1650 almanac, Wharton wished that his almanac be touched by no one but royalists:

I presume (at leastwise I hope) my Booke will be handled by few (it offends me, if any) but those of the Royall Party: And such (I know) are generally Noble, ingenious, and Charitable. The Saints, Base, Illiterate, and Envious, not capable or Worthy of Instruction; much lesse of any acquaintance, or familiarity, with your constant Friend and Fellow-sufferer, George Wharton.⁸²

Rather than appeal to the reading public in general, Wharton sought to restrict his audience to royalists, who he thought shared the same woes. This was a

⁸¹ Wing, *Ouranizomai*... 1652, sig. C4r.

⁸² Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, sig. A4v.

marked change from his pre-regicide work, which he published for a wider readership, hoping to convince them that his opponents were wrong. Non-royalists were too ignorant and corrupt to understand the art of astrology, much less appreciate Wharton's own work. Further on in the same work, he derided Booker for his 'manifest Errors and defects', and also turned his ire to various authors of ephemerides, 'most [of which] be extant are very Erroniously Printed... the Authors themselves... without a Competent Skill and Care in Him'.⁸³ The lack of accurate ephemerides, in which future heavenly motions were calculated and described, meant the 'Annual A-B-C-Darians, who can neither observe the Motions, nor Read the language of the Stars, yet must be piddling once a year though in other Mens names'.⁸⁴ Such authors include the one that counterfeited Wharton's own almanac the previous year, who Wharton would 'have either go to School, or give Over'.⁸⁵ These writers who built upon the errors of others' ephemerides were 'worse than Purblind' and could not divine the actual message of the stars. In a similar bind were 'the Rebels', every one of whom had 'Argus his eyes, and as many hands as Briareus'.⁸⁶ They would thus be unable 'to discern a tenth of the miseries allotted them, nor to withstand or avoid them one twelvemonth longer'.⁸⁷ In other words, royalists were much more adept at purveying the truth from the stars, as compared to their political rivals. The parliamentarians, though victorious, were essentially blind to the future and would not be able to prepare themselves for the

⁸³ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, sig. D4r.

⁸⁴ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, sig. D4v.

⁸⁵ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, sig. D4v.

⁸⁶ Argus and Briareus were classical figures of myth. Argus, or Argos, was a giant with many eyes, usually one hundred. Briareus, or Aegaeon, was one of three Hecatoncheires. These giants each had one hundred arms and fifty heads.

⁸⁷ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, sig. D6v.

problems on the horizon, for the 'mischiefe [that] is threatned them from every corner of the universe'.⁸⁸ Thus, in his preface to his 1652 almanac, he cautioned the reader accordingly:

I shall take it for granted, that such as intend to reape benefit by this or any other Ephemeris, are competently acquainted with the Theories of the Planets, &c. Otherwise they may sorrily do as they are taught, and yet not know what they do, or be able to correct their own, or their Authors errors. And therefore I shall advise every one whose Genius prompts him to the study of this Curious Science, not to breake in rudely at the Windowes, or force his enterance at unusuall Avenues, but civilly to containe himselfe within the beaten path that leads to Urania's Palace, and pause a while at the Threshold of the Fabrique, before he salute so faire and incomparable a Lady.⁸⁹

Throughout this preamble, Wharton called for caution and a respect for custom. This was in line with the general dislike for novelty, which was considered dangerous and unthinking. As we have seen earlier, writers from both sides including Lilly and Vaux have written against novelty. However, only Wharton considered the impact of novelty on the practice of astrology. While he retained a strong confidence in his skill, Wharton also clearly felt a need to fulminate on the existence of frauds and those inept in astrology. Such discussions became more wide-ranging after the regicide, targeting not just his old enemies Lilly and Booker, but also the nameless authors who Wharton thought were disrespecting and misrepresenting the art. Wharton's increased anger at these frauds was linked to his idea that society had abandoned true astrology to its own detriment:

⁸⁸ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack*... 1650, sig. D6v.

⁸⁹ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris* 1652, p. 23. Ephemerides here referred to a twelve-month almanac with more details on star movements.

But 'tis much to be fear'd, This Malignant and [to Schollers] most Ingratefull Age (the so long wish'd-for and present opportunity being slighted) will either defraud it self and Posterity of so great a Benefit, or else retard the same for some more Myriads of Heavenly Revolutions, or at leastwise scorne to see it now compleat and perfect: when verily this Science is more Divine then all other Naturall Sciences; Howbeit, through the want of Demonstration, and Abuse, it hath hitherto undergone the Contempt and Hatred of Ignorant Men.⁹⁰

The current dire condition of society was intimately linked to society's blindness towards astrological wisdom. Astrology was 'so excellent, so Abstruse & Curious a Science, which not one of 1000 [of its detractors was] able to comprehend'.⁹¹ To this end, Wharton even cited Lilly's work and called him 'my Approved friend'.⁹² While this later tirade from 1653 was aimed at 'a Proud and Peevish Generation of Purblind Sycophants, who stile themselves Ministers of the Gospell', it is clear that Wharton was similarly defending astrology as a fount of important knowledge and authority in 1650.⁹³

Lilly drew up a similar defence against clerical objections 'in a time wherein we find Astrology much spoken on, much preacht against, much labour taken to overthrow it for eve, root and branch, without distinction'.⁹⁴ He argued that English astrologers followed a 'Christian Astrology' that renounced 'a fatall necessity of all actions'.⁹⁵ He added that disagreements between astrologers were overblown: 'Where the Question is not Controversiall, I hold a Papists

⁹⁰ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p. 62. Square brackets in original.

⁹¹ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p.52.

⁹² Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p.41. In 1650, Wharton was rescued by Lilly from prison at the behest of Lilly's royalist friend Elias Ashmole. While he promised not to write anything against Parliament, his later almanacs continued to make royalist appeals.

⁹³ Wharton, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae* 1653, p.41.

⁹⁴ Lilly, *Annus Tenebrosus*, sig. *2v.

⁹⁵ Lilly, *Annus Tenebrosus*, sig. *3v.

judgment as good and sound as a Protestants.⁹⁶ Even his arch-rival's work and skills were embraced in the same work, and he called 'Captain Wharton an excellent Calculator'.⁹⁷ It appears that the regicide did not affect these astrologers' confidence in writing their prognostications.⁹⁸ On the contrary, Wharton became even more jealous of their privileged position, arguing that post-regicide England needed more astrological guidance.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have surveyed astrologers and the ways they understood the turbulent times they were living in, and how their senses of temporality changed in response to the execution of Charles. We can draw several conclusions. The first conclusion concerns the timescales that these astrologers were using. The civil war convinced them that they were living in unnatural times. In explaining England's situation, astrologers invoked different frames of time. Lilly, Wharton, and Booker predicated their accounts on short scales of time: the war was a result of Charles's wrong actions, or the transitory effects of stars, or the temporary and contingent nature of God's punishment for sin. Others like Vaux took the war as a sign of a long-term march towards the apocalypse. However, in the aftermath of the regicide, astrologers all sought to place the execution and subsequent political changes in larger narratives and schemes of time. They uniformly insisted that the event, disruptive as it was, was nonetheless comprehensible once put in context of larger plans in motion.

⁹⁶ Lilly, *Annus Tenebrosus*, sig. *4v.

⁹⁷ Lilly, *Annus Tenebrosus*, p. 7.

⁹⁸ I have also surveyed the union list of published almanacs in Capp's *Astrology and the Popular Press*: there appears to be an increase in one-off almanacs written in 1649 for 1650, perhaps in response to a perceived desire for direction and guidance.

The narrowing of timescales towards larger structures of time can be attributed to three reasons. Firstly, it reveals an anxiety to normalise the regicide and downplay its unsettling nature. Secondly, and perhaps most vital to astrologers, by co-opting the unexpected regicide into long-term narratives, astrologers could reassure both themselves and their readers of their continued ability to predict the future.

Thirdly, astrologers' accounts of time after the regicide shifted towards the present. They focused on the present time as a time of flux and change, whether instigated by God's will, natural patterns, or brave Englishmen. The present moment took on a new significance as a time for action and changed behaviour. It was qualitatively different from the time before, and represented the next step of the schedule, be it the reconstruction of England or the impending apocalypse. This is arguably an essential counterpart to the long timescales of change. Astrologers needed to acknowledge the disruptive nature of the regicide, even while rationalising it within a larger narrative.

3. Histories and Historians

In this chapter we examine the visions of time and the future in the works of three historians: Sir Edward Peyton, Thomas Fuller, and Joshua Sprigge.¹ Sprigge was an Independent minister who strongly supported the Army. Employed by Fairfax as a chaplain, he followed the troops on their campaigns and wrote a history of their successes in *Anglia Rediviva* (1647). He eventually fell out of favour with the grandees due to his principled opposition to the regicide in January 1649 with *Certain Weighty Considerations*. His other publications consist of collections of sermons, which I have also included in this investigation.² Sir Edward Peyton was an MP for Cambridgeshire in the parliaments of the 1620s, fighting for Parliament at Edgehill. He was captured and incarcerated at Banbury Castle, and his family lost £400 worth of household goods to the royalists. He penned two major tracts before his death in 1652: *The High-way to Peace* (1647), a conciliatory text to bridge differences between the warring parties, and *The Divine Catastrophe* (1652), a virulently anti-Stuart history that justified the regicide.³ I have also considered his other less significant works. Lastly, Thomas Fuller was a clergyman and prolific royalist historian. He was appointed by Charles in 1644 as chaplain to the Princess Henrietta, and eventually moved to London where he preached in the late 1640s.

¹ Sir Edward Peyton should not be confused with his second son and namesake. Subsequent references to Peyton refer to elder Sir Edward Peyton.

² Ian J. Gentles, 'Sprigg [Sprigge], Joshua (bap. 1618, d. 1684), Independent minister', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 4 October 2008 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26177>, accessed 8 June 2019].

³ Richard L. Greaves, 'Peyton, Sir Edward, second baronet', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 3 Jan 2008 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22077>, accessed 8 June 2019].

His first major work, *The Historie of the Holy Warre* (1639), recounted the medieval crusades. Other major publications include *The Holy State* (1642), *Abel Redevious* (1651), *The Church History of Britain* (1655), and various collections of sermons.⁴ Horrified by the regicide, Fuller gave up his research into England's worthies for some time, before devoting himself to writing throughout the Interregnum.⁵ Fuller was a moderate who supported episcopacy and a balanced constitutional settlement.⁶ For our purposes I have surveyed his work from *Holy Warre* to *Church History*.

Reckoning with the present troubles

Writing during the civil war, historians used naturalistic explanations to explain how England had descended into conflict. Sir Peyton used the metaphor of disease in his reckoning of the civil wars. He wrote *The High-way to Peace* (1647) hoping it would 'prove an antidote to cure the violent distempers', and that it might 'induce an universall peace'. The work set out to be 'a glasse to behold the pestilent disease of great Brittain'. This would allow the 'Phisition' to 'judge better of a Patient', akin to how 'a distempered man is more sensible of folly, by seeing Bedlam'. One could then understand the 'mortal cause' of the wars and what 'may be avoided in this Climate'.⁷ Peyton singled out two groups of troublemakers in the present time: those who 'by clandestine plots... and

⁴ W.B. Patterson, 'Fuller, Thomas', ODNB, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 3 Jan 2008 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10236>, accessed 8 June 2019].

⁵ W.B. Patterson, *Thomas Fuller: Discovering England's Religious Past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 137.

⁶ Patterson, 'Fuller, Thomas'.

⁷ Sir Edward Peyton, *The High-way to Peace: or, a Direction set forth for the Composing of those Unhappy Differences betwixt King, Parliament, Army, City, and Kingdomes : shewing the Sad Effects these Distractions have brought upon the Whole Island. / Published for the Honour and Love he beares to his Native Countrey, by Sir Edvvard Peyton, Knight and baronet.* ([s.n.], Printed in the yeere 1647), Wing (2nd ed) / P1953, E.411[12], sig. A2r.

pamphlets unrecoverable' tried to 'make Parliamentary Authority despicable, [so] that no physick can help the distemper', and those who were 'ambitions Solons' seeking to 'new modell the State' and change government completely. The latter sought to 'heale an ulcer by a sword thrust through the bowells', which Peyton concluded 'may kill the body, and not cure the Tumor'.⁸ In this confusion, Parliament, 'the best of all since the conquest', engaged in a 'just defensive warre' to cure 'a sicknesse almost incurable'. By doing so it 'free[d] the Nation from slavery'.⁹ Having 'clean[ed] the Church from rubbish, and drosse', Parliament had brought England to 'a new tropicke': now 'the time is come, all Mountaines to be abased, and obstacles taken away', and there was to be 'a new light and sunshine' in the country.¹⁰ Through the use of a naturalistic explanation, Peyton portrayed Parliament as the champion of the body politic. Parliament had helped restore the country to a healthy state, and Peyton's history helped by identifying the remaining opposition which threatened to derail the coming of a new age of peace. England was standing on the cusp of a new age, Peyton appealed to his readers to help secure the great future ahead.

Joshua Sprigge placed the Army and its successes within a similar narrative of disease and cure. He observed that 'sicknesses and distempers in mens bodies, appearing in the greatest height and threatning, is the very Crisis and forerunner of Recovery'. Likewise, the Army was raised when 'the Parliaments affairs was never since these Warres more low and declining', and it served as the medicine for England's ills and the vehicle of its recovery, hence the title of his text *Anglia Rediviva*. This recovery was even more remarkable considering

⁸ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. A2v.

⁹ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. A2v.

¹⁰ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sigs. A2v-A3r.

‘the disadvantage of a long-continued Peace for 80 yeares’, a time in which rot had set in. The Army, fashioned out of the English themselves through the ‘goodnesse of God’, allowed this ‘English Rot again to bud with Honour’.¹¹

This long-term view was essential to Sprigge’s narrative of the civil war and how it came to be: ‘Englands misery [was] to be reckoned from a longer date then this late discovery.’ Sprigge argued that the long time of peace before the wars had allowed ‘Principles of Misery, and seeds of Diseases in the Body politique’ to strengthen. However, God had endowed England with ‘a sound and healthy constitution and temper, able (if not obstructed) to conflict with and expell all burthensome humours, and correct all vitious dispositions to Tyranny’.¹² The disease nonetheless continued to plague the country, ‘and did appear in a higher way of opposition and contest to strengthen it self, and to overcome its antidote’ of parliament. This induced ‘Nature’ to use more ‘vigorous and industrious actings to defend it self’ and led to ‘the calling of this second Parliament’. The ‘Malignant party’, understanding itself to be under great existential threat, resorted to leaving the vital part and the ‘strong motions and workings of the Heart’ for ‘some remoted members of the Body. There, it regrouped and ‘caus[d] an inflammation of those parts’. The disease now hoped to infect the rest of the body, ‘at last choosing to sacrifice all rather than to be corrected at all’. Parliament, which Sprigge considered ‘the Heart of this Kingdome’, met the threat of ‘the distemper in the way it had put it self’ in opposing ‘fire to fire, force to force, sword to sword’. This response, ‘as by the

¹¹ Joshua Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva Englands recovery being the History of the Motions, Actions, and Successes of the Army under the immediate conduct of His Excellency Sr. Thomas Fairfax, Kt., Captain-General of all the Parliaments forces in England / compiled for the Publique Good by Ioshua Sprigge ...* (Printed by R.W. for Iohn Partridge ..., 1647), Wing / S5070, sig. B4v.

¹² Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. B1r/p. 1.

opening of a Vein', would 'breath out the Distemper, though with the losse of some Blood'.¹³ In Sprigge's reading, the outbreak of the civil wars was thus precipitated by Charles's move to Oxford and the raising of banners for an all-out conflict. His retreat away from Parliament, 'being no longer able to endure at so neer a distance' the corrective workings of the heart, set him on the path of war.¹⁴

According to Sprigge, the situation was most dire just before the outbreak of war. The disease had 'driven on far, and well neer accomplished the great designe of an Absolute, Arbitrary, and Tyrannicall Government'. Aided by the Pope, Charles and his courtiers attempted to alter the religion of Britain. They were handicapped by 'The Troubles of Scotland, and the Parliaments of both Kingdomes', who 'unexpectedly crosse and interrupt this grand designe' by executing Strafford and prosecuting Charles's 'Companions and Partisans'. Hence Charles sought to 'overthrow the proceedings and power of the Parliament', and when his attempts were frustrated, he resorted to encouraging 'secret practices and bands' of men in Scotland and 'a Rebellion... in Ireland'. This escalated to his attempted arrest of MPs in parliament, 'an example not to be paralleled in the story of any Age'.¹⁵ Thus in Sprigge's narrative, the disease was a long time coming. Born through peace and to be overcome through war, the war was inevitable, but it had to be waged to save the nation. Sprigge matched parts of his naturalistic narrative with tangible events and characters, associating the disease with the king, his supporters, and the papists. Parliament, their enemy, would hence be the cure. By describing the Army as a

¹³ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sigs. B1v-B2r.

¹⁴ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. B1v.

¹⁵ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. B2r.

natural panacea to a diseased England, Sprigge justified its existence and its actions. This was an existential struggle for the survival of the nation which was facing a threat unprecedented in its history.

The role of sin

However, such naturalistic narratives did not explain the root cause of these troubles. The base cause was commonly identified as sin, which was threatening to bring even more punishment. Peyton identified danger to the English in the form of God's oncoming wrath:

I beseech all to consider, the cause of our danger is the wrath of God which hanges over our heads (as a dismall cloud) ready to discharge upon us for so many horrid opinions, and blasphemies; as swearing, prophanation of Sabbaths, drunkennesse, fornication, adultery, will-worship, formality, hatred, malice and liberty to do what pleaseth sence, thought never so contrary to the eternall Law, the least of which are heavy enough to pull downe the greatest judgement, namely sine punished in committing of sin; O that wee could (with Ieremy) shed a foundtaine of teares!¹⁶

The English people's long list of sins angered God and threatened even more punishment to come. Peyton pointed out how self-evident it was that 'it [was] not the maglinity of the ayre [that] causeth the Plague', or 'plotting' or 'warre'. It was their 'grievous sins, and want of love' that led to 'these evils'. Hence the solution would be to 'leave [their] transgressions, and be charitable to the other'. 'Hatred' for each other brought only 'division' and 'distraction, whereas people's inherently 'tender consciences' were 'sooner convinced by sweetnesse then severity'. Peyton thus called for the competing religionists, namely the Brownists, Anabaptists, Protestants, Presbyters, Independents, and Papists, to

¹⁶ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B1v.

‘all reason together with mildnesse’.¹⁷ This manner of working out the truth and confuting error was best, and it would light up God’s path towards ‘the noone day of understanding’ and avoid the ‘twilight of error and mistake’.¹⁸ Peyton’s prescription for peace was thus Christian charity and love towards one’s religious enemies. Repenting and being godly would save the country from the sickness it was currently suffering and lead it to peace. To do so was everyone’s responsibility; every person had the agency to right the situation.

Thomas Fuller also drew attention to the relationship between sickness and sin, namely that physical sickness was a result of one’s sin. Writing about personal health, he explained that ‘all sicknesses of the body proceed from the sinne of the soule’. While he acknowledged the physical antecedents, ‘that the Lethurgy ariseth from the coldnesse of the braine’, the ‘cause of all these causes’ was still sin. Today’s sickness was a result not only of sins ‘lately committed [that] still lye fresh bleeding on our consciences’, but also ‘those wee have committed long agoe, and which processe of time hath since scarred over’.¹⁹ Fuller provided various ways of diagnosing which sin was responsible for which illness, arguing that God’s punishments fit the sins that provoked them.²⁰ However if one could not determine which sin was responsible, one should repent for every transgression. Repentance cured all ailments. Hence Fuller reminded his readers

¹⁷ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B1v.

¹⁸ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B2r.

¹⁹ Thomas Fuller, *Ioseph’s Party-Coloured Coat containing, a Comment on part of the 11. chapter of the 1. Epistle of S. Paul to the Corinthians. Together with Severall Sermons: namely, 1 Growth in Grace. 2 How farre Examples may be Followed. 3 An Ill Match well broken off. 4 Good from Bad Friends. 5 A Glasse for Gluttons. 6 How Farre Grace may be Entayled. 7 A Christning Sermon. 8 Faction Confuted. By T.F.* (Printed by Iohn Dawson, for Iohn Williams, and are to be sold at his shop, at the signe of the Crane, in Pauls Church-yard), 1640, STC (2nd ed) / 11466, sig. M1r.

²⁰ Fuller, *Ioseph’s Party-Coloured Coat*, sigs. M3r-v.

that the punishment of sickness should be understood as a blessing, for 'God oftentimes with his Saints commuteth eternall torments into temporall punishments'. Being punished in this world meant 'hee might not be angry in the world to come'.²¹ Suffering on this earth would remind Christians to repent before it was too late.²²

Similarly, the nation's suffering, in the form of 'a wasting Warre', was the result of the country's sins. 'God could no longer be Just, if we were Prosperous.'²³ Fuller counted himself lucky that he had 'suffered [his] Share in the Calamities of [his] Countrey', which were inescapable since all were 'ingaged... in Sinning'. He postulated that had he 'poised [him] self so politickly betwixt both Parties, that [he] had suffered from neither', he would have suffered doubly.²⁴ It was necessary to suffer for one's sins, and the war was a way for the English to face up to their sins. Fuller highlighted in his 1642 sermon various 'hindrances to Peace', the 'generall hindrance' being the 'many nationall sinnes of our kingdome being not repented of'. These sins were not restricted to the Royalists or Parliamentarians; both sides had pious members but also those who were sinners.²⁵ 'Of particular hindrances', Fuller ranked 'the Romish Recusants' as the leading cause of the war:

the Popish party perceived that the strength of England consisted in the unity thereof... and that it was impossible to conquer English Protestants,

²¹ Fuller, *Ioseph's Party-Coloured Coat*, sig. M4v.

²² Fuller, *Ioseph's Party-Coloured Coat*, sig. M4v.

²³ Thomas Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times, Consisting of Personall Meditations. Scripture Observations. Historicall Applications. Mixt Contemplations.* / By Thomas Fuller. , Exeter : Printed for Thomas Hunt, 1645, Wing (2nd ed) / F2425, E.1142[1], sig. L5v.

²⁴ Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, sigs. L5v-L6r.

²⁵ Thomas Fuller, *A Fast Sermon Preached on Innocents Day by Thomas Fuller, B.D. Minister of the Savoy.* (Printed by L.N. and R.C. for John Williams at the signe of the Crowne in Saint Pauls Church-yard, 1642), Wing (2nd ed) / F2423, E.86[16], sig. C1v.

but by English Protestants... to set our selves against our selves, first to divide us, then to destroy us.²⁶

Civil war would weaken the country, leaving it vulnerable to foreign Catholics to engineer England's destruction. The other cause was schismatics, whose actions caused discord to arise between co-religionists in England. Fuller promised that these individuals, along with those who profited from the war, 'surely... will visit their offences' in time to come.²⁷ While these proximate causes were important, the nation's collective sins remained the main cause of the war. In *Good Thoughts in Bad Times* (1645), Fuller remarked upon how despite being close in purpose and in their pronouncements, parliament and king had 'a great Gulf, and vast distance betwixt them which our sinnes have made'.²⁸ This was 'a great curse of God upon us to make a constant misunderstanding betwixt our King and his Parliament; whilst both professe to levell at the same end'.²⁹ He also asked his readers to consider how 'the complexion of the warres [looked] a most strange and different hue from other [wars]': the 'wars of Germany' saw less suffering, whereas England was consumed entirely by its civil war.³⁰ God had intervened to create conflict in England as punishment for English sins. Fuller wanted his readers to understand the signals God was giving by creating such an incomprehensible event, and to repent before it was too late. Like Peyton, Fuller thought it was everyone's responsibility to suffer their punishment and to repent for their sins. Once they served out their

²⁶ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. C2r.

²⁷ Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, sig. C3r.

²⁸ Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, sig. G8r.

²⁹ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. D2r.

³⁰ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. D1v.

sentence, the country could return to peace. Both writers invested agency in their readers to turn the situation around.

Providence, or God's intervention

Sprigge also saw the hand of God in the events of the civil war, but primarily in the rise and the success of the Army: 'their Actions have been nothing else, but a Copy of the Wisdom, Power, Providence, and love of God put forth in men'.³¹ He set out his history as a showcase of the 'integrity' and Godliness of the Army, which was 'more conscionable then covetous'.³² While focused on this task, he alluded to the overarching role of providence:

You may not expect here an History, beginning with our late unhappy Wars; but (that which is better) it ends with them... And therefore this Peece (though last acted, yet) being first intended in Providence, may well be first committed to History, as containing that Point, whereinto, as into its Center, all the former Actions did thrust; If any have a story of them to bring forth, this doth not at all prevent, but prepare for it.³³

Providence brought England to its present condition, and it was responsible for all that had happened. For Sprigge, the Army and its series of unparalleled triumphs were clearly God's providence at work. The Army was to bring glory to God through their work. In his introduction, Sprigge professed an aversion to including 'Artificial stuffe of feigned speeches' and other similar adornments, believing that 'the glory of the Story' did not require 'the Trappings of Words'.³⁴ This extraordinary story needed no embellishment, and he asked his readers to reflect on what he saw as the singular nature of the Army's success:

³¹ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. A3v.

³² Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sigs. li4r and Oo1v/pp. 247 and 282.

³³ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. B3v.

³⁴ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. B4r.

You that have travelled in all Stories both ancient and modern; whose Mindes are so greatned, as that you will look upon no small things; Tell me, ... Did you ever read such a Story as this?... Did you ever read (setting Israels warres in Canaan aside) of so many Actions, so considerable, done in so short a time? Such Vnamity in Councils, such Concord in Leaders, such Successe upon Endeavours, such Feare upon Enemies?³⁵

For its success in Cornwall, the Army was also compared favourably to Hannibal's crossing of the Alps. This victory, 'which History can hardly parallel, and Posterity will scarce beleieve', came despite the bad weather and being outnumbered by the Royalist troops.

Sprigge drew upon alternate visions of the future – counterfactuals – to impress upon his readers the importance of these victories. Victory at Cornwall 'by this good hand of God upon [the Army]' prevented the Royalist cavalry from regrouping and protracting the war.³⁶ Elaborating on the necessity of the victory at Naseby, Sprigge sketched out a counterfactual future:

Of how great consequence this Victory was to the whole Kingdom: That it may the better appear, let us take a view of it, and suppose we beheld it through the counter-perspective of the contrary event, as if the Enemy had had the victory, and we been beaten... not only this Army, the only guardion of the Kingdom, lying on a heap... also our party in the West ruined, and the enemy there like a violent Torrent, carrying all before him. Me thinks I see the King and Goring united, making a formidable Army, and marching up to the Walls of London, incouraging their souldiers, as formerly, with the promise of the spoyle of that famous City... what could have ensued worse or more! (of London).³⁷

³⁵ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. B4v.

³⁶ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. Gg3r.

³⁷ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. G1r.

In this vision of the future, a Royalist victory at Naseby would ruin the Army and secure the Royalists' position. Their dominance would eliminate any remaining opposition and eventually lead to the besieging of London itself. For Sprigge, the success of the Army helped avert the destruction of parliament and the nation itself. As the manifestation of providence, it was thus God's will that Parliament would win the war and that the nation would be saved. The Army was also the answer to England's long-term ills. By intervening thus, God had set England on a path to greater happiness in the future. This is in stark contrast to Fuller's view, where repentance was still wanting, and the people of England had much to do to secure a happier future. God had not yet forgiven the English, and he was still punishing the country for their own good. To Sprigge, England was already saved. The Army and its victories were prime evidence of England's happy state with God.

Special moment of enlightenment

According to Sprigge, God's intervention had brought a new light to shine upon England. Sprigge believed that England was in a special moment of time, wherein his countrymen were filled with clarity. The metaphorical 'light is broken in upon us', and Englishmen 'see that Ordinances are nothing without the Lord'. Merely following the letter but not the spirit of God's words was not enough; observances did not have 'Gods Appearance in them'.³⁸ Conversely, Fuller was suspicious of those who 'now adayes... talke[d] of a great light, manifested in this age more then ever before'.³⁹ While acknowledging that 'wee

³⁸ Joshua Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory being an Account of Certain Discourses Lately Delivered in Pancras, Soperlane, London / by Joshua Sprigge*. (Printed for Giles Calvert, 1648), Wing / S5076., sig. L7r.

³⁹ Thomas Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation. Preached at the Church of the Savoy, last Fast Day, July 27. 1643. / By Thomas Fuller B.D. and minister there*. (Printed by T.B. for John Williams, at

Modernes have a mighty advantage of the Ancients' in that what they had created 'may be ours', he discounted any 'transcendent extraordinary miraculous light, peculiarly conferred on our Times'. There was nothing special about the age in terms of enlightenment, in fact if anything Fuller ventured to opine that 'such a light is kindled from Hell'.⁴⁰ Fuller was unsure and unwilling to discuss the idea that 'Christs corporall visible kingdome' would 'come within a few yeares'.⁴¹ He could not decide primarily because he did not 'know the reasons of [his contemporaries'] opinions' that the Second Coming was imminent.⁴² Having only heard apocryphal stories, he was wary of new ideas. He warned it is 'not... safe to be familiar with strangers at first sight', and that 'this Tenent is strange' like others 'set commonly afoot with these few last yeares'.⁴³

In response to talk of the Second Coming, Fuller asked his readers simply to 'all provide for that perfect Reformation in the world to come'.⁴⁴ This perfect Reformation is when 'Christ shall present the Church his Spouse to God his Father', and the Church would be 'without spot... or wrinkle', from either 'mans corruption... [or] times continuance'. There would only be correct 'judgements reformed from error' and correct 'affections reformed from mistaking their object, or exceeding their measure'. All sin within the 'soule and body' would be 'reformed... to sanctity'.⁴⁵ Fuller did not give a timescale for this reformation,

the signe of the Crowne in Pauls Church-yard, 1643), Wing (2nd ed) / F2462, E.63[3], sig. D4v.

⁴⁰ Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sigs. D4v-E1r.

⁴¹ Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sig. E1r.

⁴² Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sig. E1r.

⁴³ Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sig. E1v.

⁴⁴ Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sig. E2r.

⁴⁵ Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sig. E2v.

asking his readers to simply ‘wait all the dayes of our appointed time, until [the] change come’.⁴⁶ Nonetheless this vision was one of certainty in the distant future, where all would be right and all things proper and godly.

Order, harmony, and balance

To bring an end to civil war, these historians also prescribed the resumption of order and proper social roles. Sprigge argued that there was rationale and purpose in the correct order of things. He identified ‘the fleshy Administration’ as this mortal world, which one had to traverse before reaching the ‘spiritual Administration’ that is God’s realm.⁴⁷ Each administration had its purpose,

usefull in their time, in their order and place, and the one doth lead unto the other in a way of ascending still; and as the hand cannot say unto the foot, I have no need of thee; so neither can the highest administration say to the lowest administration, I have no need of thee.⁴⁸

Sprigge extended this metaphor to the body politique. All ‘members of the body’ should ‘do their office in their several places, without disputing and murmuring’, whether that meant being ‘Nurses’ or ‘Stewards’ or ministers. By working our stations on earth diligently, we could achieve peace; since God had created the body to have ‘variety of parts’ and to work harmoniously, there would ‘not be these breaches among us’ if we were to perform our God-given duties.⁴⁹

Sprigge applied this logic of balance when faced with the regicide. Sprigge felt that the execution of Charles would be a grievous mistake. He addressed his arguments to the High Court in *Certain Weighty Considerations*, published just

⁴⁶ Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sig. E2v.

⁴⁷ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sig. I8r.

⁴⁸ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sig. K8v.

⁴⁹ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sig. L1r.

days before the execution. He argued that the people themselves were equally responsible for the outbreak of civil war. The people were 'selfish' and 'divided' themselves 'from the good and greatnesse of the King'.⁵⁰ This was in violation of God's design of the polity, wherein 'King and people [spring] from one root' and '[issue] from one fountain'. Both parties 'subsist and have a glorious interest in each other'.⁵¹ Sprigge acknowledged that this picture of harmony seemed farfetched, but assured his readers by comparing the relationship between King and people with God and his church:

The King shall not have an envious eye against his people, nor the people against the King; each shall be satisfied with their own... that they not the lesse for the others having much. This it is between the Lord and his Christ, this it is between Christ and his Church; and thus it shall it be between Kings and their People. We have seen and convers'd with these Relations only in their weakness, and so cannot beleeeve this of them; But the Lord hath a portion in these things, He made them not in vain, they shall be Restored. The Creature (yea, this Creature Magistracy or Polity) shall be delivered into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.⁵²

By God's design, both parties were built to be in balance. By setting up this basic premise, Sprigge hoped to convince his readers that the people should act graciously towards Charles and thus restore this divinely-ordered balance. It was God's plan that this balance would eventually be restored, and Sprigge was warning the judges to be on the right side of history.

⁵⁰ Joshua Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations Humbly Tendered and Submitted to the Consideration of such of the Members of the High Court of Justice for Tryal of the King, as they shall be presented unto. There being onely one hundred of the Copies appointed to be printed for that purpose By Josuah Sprigge*. (Imprinted at [s.n.], 1648 [i.e. 1649]), Wing (2nd ed) / S5071, E.540[13], sig. A3v.

⁵¹ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. A4r.

⁵² Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. A4v.

In this narrative of balance, Charles was not the sole instigator of the wars. The wars only began because 'the Lord hath thrown [England] into the Furnace', sending fire 'to consume the men of Sechem'. It was 'the Lord, under whose mighty hand we [had] suffered all these Wars', who judged England sinful and hence deserving of punishment.⁵³ As Sprigge observed:

A Kingdome is not so easily, nor ordinarily set on flame by Civill Warrs without the speciall hand of God, the Causes are long a working, and the matter was long a gathering: If the Lord had not sent an evill Spirit universally among us, it was not the Exorbitancy of the will of one man, as ye say the King is that could have throwen us into these flames; The Lord used the King as an Instrument of his wrath towards us, and us as Instruments to powre wrath upon him.⁵⁴

The wars were thus God's plan to punish both King and people, using them to inflict a painful lesson in humility on each other. Both King and people were 'evill': Charles 'could have brought no evill upon [the people], had not [they] had it in [them]'. The kingdom and government had collapsed 'under the weight' of their fleshly sin, 'and so fell and withered was gathered and burnt'.⁵⁵

God, however, intended his judgement to be 'purifying, not destroying'. Those on the High Court were to be 'not only Tormentors, but Judges'.⁵⁶ This meant 'not seek[ing] satisfaction on one another, other then by being examples to each other of a better carriage grounded on a better principle and union for the future'.⁵⁷ The correct course of action would be to 'compare the King and his government' to Christ's relationship to Man, and thus 'shew him his failings his

⁵³ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. A4v.

⁵⁴ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B1v.

⁵⁵ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B1v.

⁵⁶ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B1r.

⁵⁷ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B2r.

narrownesse of Spirit and principle not comprehending his people in himselfe'. This would also pull the king, the 'firebrand', out of 'the fire of Tyranny over his people'. Charles would forgo 'recriminati[on]' and stop the negative cycle from perpetuating.⁵⁸ The judges and the people would also need to 'confesse to him [that they] have beene in the dark too, and not seeing the person and majestie of the Lord in him'.⁵⁹ Sprigge hoped that by acting gracefully, 'the love of God that comes forth in [them] to save [Charles would] provide better things in him'.⁶⁰ Sprigge was thus appealing to the judges to be the bigger person and initiate the path towards restoring balance and peace to the country.

However, this was all dependent on the judges accepting the significance of their actions. To this end, Sprigge reassured the judges that the role of magistrates was to 'save and remit capital Crimes as well as to punish them, when it is for the Common-wealth'.⁶¹ He added that he remained cognisant of the king's 'great and high provocations... as well as his former miscarriages in Government'. However, Sprigge believed that Charles would 'accuse and judge himself more than' any other man should God will it. Furthermore, 'al the wickedness he hath done' was from his flesh, and every other Englishmen is equally guilty of such sin.⁶² Sprigge also compared the practical merits of executing Charles, concluding that it would cause more 'great evils to ensue from home, from abroad', more so than the 'mischiefes prevented' by his death.⁶³ Finally, he appealed to a sense of providence: if the judges spared the

⁵⁸ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B1r-v.

⁵⁹ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B1r-v.

⁶⁰ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B4r.

⁶¹ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B3v.

⁶² Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B3r.

⁶³ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B4r.

King and he were to return to tyranny, the people would be 'content' because 'it may be [the people] must travaile of him a second time'.⁶⁴

Thus, at the cusp of the regicide, Sprigge named the High Court responsible for the future of the nation, now at a critical juncture. Their decision could restore the proper harmony of England, or condemn the polity to more suffering and war. England's future was contingent on this one decision, and Sprigge hoped to impress upon them the momentous significance of their actions, and the importance of showing grace and contrition for their sins against the King and God. The notion of balance was used here to advocate against the extreme action of regicide. The judges now had the power to help restore balance to the polity, and Sprigge appealed to their hopes for a better future.

Focusing only on the future

Peyton also predicated his idea of the English polity on balance and interdependence. He highlighted the symbiotic relationships between Parliament, Army, the City, and the Country. Parliament safeguarded the City's liberties and charter, and the City's citizens provide money for Parliament. The City and Country were 'branches from the tree of one roote', the former exporting 'their forraine commodities' to the country, and the latter selling their agricultural produce to city folk. Parliament and the City provided legality and supplies for the Army, which in turn was obedient and ensured the security of trade and commerce.⁶⁵ Peace between these factions was the best state they could achieve. England and Scotland were similarly built for mutual peace: if they were at war there would be much destruction as 'Scotland [would] hatch a

⁶⁴ Sprigge, *Certain Weighty Considerations*, sig. B4r.

⁶⁵ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B2v.

portal to let in forraine enemies', whereas the English were 'hardy' and 'with an invincible Army, who God hath blessed'.⁶⁶

Peyton believed that the English polity itself was also made of interdependent factions: 'the composition of our government is partly Monarchial, partly Aristocraticall, and will not admit of a dominion solely in the people'. In the same way that 'the Phylosophers Stone' turns base metal into gold and silver but not vice versa, 'no more can the Soveraigne power be transferred on the people, nor the right of the people converted to the Soveraigne'. Power of the sovereign unchecked would lead to tyranny, the converse would bring 'Anarchy' and 'toll confusion'. In this system, 'the Lawes are Judges betwixt King and Subject, and Subject and Subject'. With law, 'Kings may governe their Subjects with equity and justice' and protect their 'lives and estates', and subjects would respect and obey the sovereign. Without laws, 'the Kingdome will perish, rich tread downe the poor, widow and fatherlesse will lose their right, people be oppressed, property utterly lost, and Religion will turn Atheisme'.⁶⁷ Peyton's idea of English government emphasised the proper order and function of monarchy and people. Peace would only be gotten and preserved if power and responsibilities were to be allocated and adjudicated properly.

Peyton emphasised the importance of harmony and interdependence through a litany of metaphors. He referred to 'The Common-wealth' as 'a body (wherein are head and members) and King and Subjects' who should 'have a sympathy and fellow feeling one of anothers wants'. Being part of the same body, both

⁶⁶ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B3r. Peyton did acknowledge the Scots' 'threaten[ing the English] with Declarations', but he was confident that Parliament had enough forces to handle the situation, and even Charles would side with England for its comparative wealth, against a country 'that sold him'. Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B3r.

⁶⁷ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B4r.

parties should hence 'communicate to each other all the good they can'.⁶⁸ Peyton also celebrated the fact that they were different and in a hierarchy, but still important in relation to each other. King and subjects were compared to musical notes, all of which 'make a harmony of love, depend on, and sweetly relate to others'. They were also alike 'stars' of 'severall magnitudes' which 'agree in quality and nature with the seven Planets'. Peyton also related the body politic to 'the heavens', where 'God is supream', and the 'Arch-angels, and Angels' were 'minist[er] to each other'.⁶⁹ Harmony was as inherent in the English polity as in any of God's creations. Peace would come by recognising this harmony and the natural order of things.

Peyton then asked his readers to focus on the future, and to ignore the past. Peace was possible and the conflict was not intractable. Peyton advised his readers 'not to looke so much to errors past', and to forgive one's enemies. He hoped that 'King, Parliament, City, Countrey, Army, and Scotland' would 'unite in love, and joyne together against forraine and domestick enemies of the State'. With peace, 'riches may increase, the Kingdome may be well governed, [and] Religion flourish'. If war were to continue, Britain would be 'like a great animall... which doth nothing but destroy it selfe, when two so brave Kingdomes shall lay violent hands and murther one another'. The country had to look 'forwards', and 'carry [them] selves like wise, and brave men'. If they lived in the past and sought 'to punish others', they risked 'receiv[ing] a blow' that would 'take away power of punishment, and life it selfe'; the 'quarelling Knave' would 'win a Catastrophe in our State'.⁷⁰ Here Peyton was comparing

⁶⁸ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B4v.

⁶⁹ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B4v.

⁷⁰ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B4v.

two possible futures, one of peace and prosperity, and the other of dystopia, war, and death. Only by forgetting the past and uniting for the future could England and Scotland defend themselves from threats. On the contrary, not following God's command to 'love one another with respect' would lead to civil wars, foreign invasions, and senseless destruction.⁷¹

A closing window of opportunity

The theme of mutual dependence and harmony also animated Fuller's *The Holy State* (1642). In this text, Fuller set out a vision of society that is highly structured and ordered into roles. This ideal society would only function if each member played their role with proper respect and humility. For example, the soldier should not indulge in duels, as by representing themselves in a duel they usurp the king's right to represent them against the enemy.⁷² Similarly, yeomen served an important function in sustaining the kingdom with their husbandry and dispensing of justice.⁷³ Fuller also advocated dressing to fit one's station, noting with disdain 'the riot of our age, wherein (as Peacocks are more gay then the Eagle himself) subjects are grown braver then their Sovereigne'.⁷⁴ Proper behaviour and humility were essential to the maintenance of hierarchy and order in Fuller's ideal state.

In this ideal state kings were like Gods. Charles was 'a mortall God', who had the power to impose his will on England as he saw fit, and to give it the purpose he desired. Harking back to creation, Fuller explained that 'this world at the first

⁷¹ Peyton, *The High-way to Peace*, sig. B4v.

⁷² Thomas Fuller, *The Holy State by Thomas Fuller ...* (Cambridge: Printed by Roger Daniel for John Williams ..., 1642), Wing / F2443, sig. R1v.

⁷³ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Q4r.

⁷⁴ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Y2v.

had no other Charter for its being, then Gods Fiat', and that 'Kings were the same in the Present tense'.⁷⁵ Kings had to be good men to be good kings, and Fuller enumerated Charles's godly qualities, calling him a 'gracious Sovereigne' who was 'pious' and 'attentive in hearing the Word, preaching Religion with his silence, as the Minister doth in his speech!'.⁷⁶ The glory of the king was so awesome that Fuller's 'sight failes [him] dazell'd with the lustre of Majestie'.⁷⁷ Through the king lay the path to happiness in all the land. Having asked God to bless 'the king [with] thy judgements', Fuller asked that God 'smite through the loins of those that rise up against his Majestie' and for 'the Crown [to] flourish'. 'Subjects' should instead take care of the royals 'for their good' and serve with 'a proportionable cheerfulness and alacrity'. This would ensure that 'the happinesse of Church and State may be continued'.⁷⁸ The king was the conduit through which the land's peace and happiness could be secured, and subjects had to play their part by serving the king, rather than fighting against him. By rebelling against Charles, Parliament had broken this balance. Their actions were the cause of England's misery, as well as their own. The solution was thus to restore Charles to his place, to the benefit of both sides. 'All that wee desire to see', said Fuller, 'is the King remarried to the State'. The king, or 'the Bridegroom', 'will bee carefull to have his portion paid, His Prerogative', and the bride's 'joynter [would also be] settled', and this was 'the liberty of the Subject'.⁷⁹ Should those in power, in this case Parliament, restore Charles to his

⁷⁵ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Yy3r.

⁷⁶ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. ZZ1r.

⁷⁷ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. ZZ1r.

⁷⁸ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. ZZ1v.

⁷⁹ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. D1r.

rightful place as head of the nation, one would find that his subjects would have the liberty they wanted.

Fitting this model of society, Fuller strongly championed moderation in all matters, as well as balance. For example, in serving God one had to be devoted and relentless, but also to be prudent and not unaware of their own safety.⁸⁰ Those born with defects were recompensed by nature, or were more godly in character.⁸¹ Cautioning against rashness, Fuller advised that one should 'make no Persian decree which cannot be revers'd or repeal'd; but rather Polonian laws which (they say) last but three days'.⁸² Moderation should also apply in matters of religion, and one's position should remain constant; Fuller compared it to finding an acquaintance 'in a great Fair', advising it better to stay at 'some principall place there, then by traversing it up and down'.⁸³

Fuller was confident that someday the moderate position would prevail, even if at present such moderation could lead to suffering: 'such moderate men are commonly crush'd betwixt the extreme parties on both sides'.⁸⁴ However as godly saints, they must be prepared to 'suffer, and must take it patiently'.⁸⁵ Moderation would keep saints constant in their religion, free from violent controversy, and retain their energy for the real work of God rather than schismatic quarrels. 'The Moderate Man, sticks to his principles, taking Truth wheresoever he findes it... the Truth... [that] he hath warily chosen, [he] will

⁸⁰ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Dd1v.

⁸¹ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Cc3v.

⁸² Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Z1v.

⁸³ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Dd3r.

⁸⁴ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Dd3v.

⁸⁵ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Dd3v.

valiantly maintaine.'⁸⁶ And eventually, having 'thriftilly treasur'd up his spirits for that time', the moderate man will be courted by the extreme, for 'once in an age the moderate man is in fashion'.⁸⁷ 'And time will come, when Moderate men, shall be honoured as Gods Doves, though now they be hooted at, as Owles in the Desart.'⁸⁸ The moderate person was held onto truth, unlike the immoderate controversials who, in following fashions, lose the truth. Fuller painted an image of a future where the morally upright were recognised and celebrated for their steadfastness. This was his way of encouraging his readers to stick to their principles, despite the present challenges.

It was imperative that the wars ended sooner than later, before England was irretrievably condemned. As a minister, Fuller was most wary of how war made 'a Nation more wicked'. In times of conflict, 'it is difficult to say... the Lords Prayer for that Petition, *And forgive us our trespasses, as wee forgive them that trespassed against us* [italics original]'.⁸⁹ It was more difficult to be godly and to practise Christian behaviour 'in these distracted times' of war.⁹⁰ In wartime, one's 'corrupt nature... is likely to be worse', and 'if these times continue', Fuller worried that 'wee shall neither say the Lords Prayer, nor beleieve the Creed, nor practice the Commandements'. One could not 'receive the Sacraments' when one spills the blood of one's brother in war.⁹¹ These fellow Christians, now slain,

⁸⁶ Thomas Fuller, *Truth Maintained, or Positions delivered in a Sermon at the Savoy: since traduced for dangerous: now asserted for Sound and Safe*. By Thomas Fuller, B.D. late of Sidney Colledge in Cambridge. [...] *With severall letters, to cleare the occasion of this book*. (Printed at Oxford [i.e. London : s.n.], anno Dom. 1643), Wing (2nd ed) / F2474, E .36[9], sig. C3v.

⁸⁷ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Dd4r.

⁸⁸ Fuller, *Truth Maintained*, sig. C4r.

⁸⁹ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. A4v.

⁹⁰ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. A4v.

⁹¹ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. B1r.

were 'living Temples of the Holy Ghost' who have been 'causelesly and cruelly destroyed'.⁹²

The war would also turn the English against other co-religionists, in this case the Protestant brethren in Ireland who 'have long swom against the tide'. They would also be a casualty of this war, for 'our distraction would hasten their finall destruction'. Should 'these times... continue', 'England Mother' will come to begrudge the Protestants in Ireland, just as a mother would begrudge even her own children in times of famine.⁹³ Furthermore, 'the differences, and distentions betwixt Christian Churches' will eventually 'breed in Pagans, such a disrelish of our Religion'.⁹⁴ Thus Fuller concluded that 'warre makes a Land more wicked ... destroyes Christian people, and disgraces Christian profession'.⁹⁵ It 'threatens temporall ruine to our Kingdome', but even more dangerously, 'it will bring a generall spirituall hardnesse of hearts'. Should the war continue for long, the country would suffer 'the departure of charity'.⁹⁶

Peace could only come if every person in the country seeks to mend their ways, and 'with a speedy, serious and general repentance, remove the crying sinnes of our Kingdome', for it was these sins which 'bane all peace amongst us'.⁹⁷ One had to stop addressing their enemies with 'phrases of contempt and reproach', and petition king and parliament, the 'Gods on earth' to come to terms with each other.⁹⁸ The country had to act quickly, 'least the physick come too late for

⁹² Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, sig. H1r.

⁹³ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. B2v.

⁹⁴ Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, sigs. G4r-v.

⁹⁵ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. B3v.

⁹⁶ Fuller, *Truth Maintained*, sigs. C1v-C2r.

⁹⁷ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. C3v.

⁹⁸ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. C3v, C4v.

the disease'.⁹⁹ Fuller emphasised that every English person had to participate in this effort towards peace:

But suppose the Sea should break into the Land, it is not the endeavours of a private man can stop it... No, the whole Country must come in, children must bring earth in their hats, women in their aprons, men with handbarrowes, wheelbarrowes, carts, carres, waines, waggons, all must worke least all be destroyed... So when a generall deluge and inundation of Gods anger seaseth upon a whole Kingdome, it cannot be stopt by the private endeavours of some few, but it must be an universall work, by a generall repentance; all must raise bankes to bound it. Till this be done, I am afraid we shall have no peace, and to speak plainly I am afraid we are not yet ripe for Gods mercy... we are too proud hitherto for God to give peace to.¹⁰⁰

Fuller believed that even the war had not humbled the English: 'we are proud in our poverty', and 'too stout... to crave pardon of God'.¹⁰¹ Yet it was not too late, for 'our sinnes are not sweld so high' that there is no turning back. The 'hope of Peace' remained, especially with 'the multitude of good people in this land', who 'assault and batter Heaven with the importunity of their prayers'.¹⁰²

Furthermore, Fuller saw 'Gods proceedings hitherto' in England to 'be judgements rather of espostulation then of exterpatation', and that God had 'manifest[ed] an unwillingness' to 'destroy the Kingdome'. Should the English 'in any reasonable time... compound with him by serious repentance', if they 'would understand the signes of his anger, before it break out upon [them]', then peace could be had.¹⁰³ Thus, God's worst was yet to come, and Fuller proposed

⁹⁹ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. C4v.

¹⁰⁰ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. D1r.

¹⁰¹ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. D1r-v.

¹⁰² Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. D3r.

¹⁰³ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sigs. D3v-D4r.

that the English had a window of opportunity to seek God's forgiveness and to change their sinful ways.

Despite his efforts to enlighten his readers about the causes of their suffering, Fuller believed that the English would continue to sin. In his 1645 work *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, Fuller observed:

Most men are so busie about worldly delights, they are not at leisure to listen to us [ministers], or read the Letter [of God's Word], but thus, alas, runne headlong to their own Ruine and Destruction.¹⁰⁴

Similarly in his 1642 sermon, he appealed to the 'old men', who were not 'so addicted... to toys and Christmas sports', to be 'wiser... and more sensible of the sinnes and sorrowes of the State'. He also hoped that ministers would be equally sensible and 'mourne whilst [sinners] are in their mirth', such that 'if [they] keep a sad Christmas, they may have a merry Lent'.¹⁰⁵ This message of penitence was consistent with his advice in 1640 where, referring to an individual's illness, Fuller advised the sufferer to 'learne patience under Gods afflicting hand, when hee layeth any sicknesse upon us'. One should 'patiently endure a burning Fever; for wee have all deserved Hell-fire' that had now been avoided.¹⁰⁶ The English should, like the sick individual, recognise their sin and wait out their temporal punishment. Writing in 1643 in the wake of the outbreak of the war, Fuller consoled his readers that

the only Good Token of these Times is, That they are so extreemely Bad they can never last long. God give you a sanctified Impression of your Afflictions, neither to sleight them nor sink under them.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, sig. G11r.

¹⁰⁵ Fuller, *A Fast Sermon*, sig. A3v.

¹⁰⁶ Fuller, *Ioseph's Party-Colovred Coat*, sig. N1r-v.

¹⁰⁷ Fuller, *Truth Maintained*, sig. A4v.

The suffering that the English were experiencing would pass eventually, and it was measured to help them repent rather than to torment.¹⁰⁸ Fuller thought that God would always reward the godly, no matter their circumstances on earth. In *The Holy State*, he commented that 'God sometimes seemingly leaves his Saints' when they die, but he '[casts] their souls down to hell, to rebound the higher to heaven'.¹⁰⁹ One had to be grateful to God for sending affliction, and be comforted 'that another world will pay this worlds debts'.¹¹⁰ Hence, suffering should be welcomed as an opportunity to secure a better and happier future.

Nonetheless, Fuller advised that repentance should come sooner rather than later. This short horizon of action was emphasised in Fuller's *Collegiat* (1643), where he discussed how the opposing sides must come together through 'a mutuall confiding... so that they must count the honesty of others as their onely hostages'. However, he recommended that 'the sooner it be done, the easier' it would be, for the relationship between the warring sides would only deteriorate with time.¹¹¹ Fuller assured his readers that the ability lay within the English themselves to find peace: 'O the miserable condition of our Land at this tyme, God hath shewed the whole World, that England hath enough in it selfe to make it selfe happy or unhappy, as it useth or abuseth it.'¹¹² Fuller wished to assure his readers and himself that they had the inner strength to be godly. Using a metaphor that must have resonated with his readers, Fuller observed how 'Unruly Souldiers command poor People to open their doors, other wise

¹⁰⁸ Fuller, *Truth Maintained*, sig. A4v.

¹⁰⁹ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. N2r.

¹¹⁰ Fuller, *The Holy State*, sig. Hh1v.

¹¹¹ Thomas Fuller, *A Sermon Preached at the Collegiat [sic] Church of S. Peter in Westminster, on the 27 of March, being the day of His Majesties inauguration by Thomas Fuller*. (Printed for John Williams ..., 1643), Wing / F2465, sig. C4v.

¹¹² Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sig. E1v.

threatning to break in', and remarked that 'those in the house' would have found it 'easie to keep them out' if they had 'know[n] their own Strength'.¹¹³ However, because these 'silly Souls' were 'affrighted, they obey, and betray themselves to their Violence'. In this way, each person fell to Satan or indeed themselves in their sin. Peace was possible if the people took heart and decided to take action.

Fuller detailed a hypothetical future that came through the people's actions. One of the ways to change the future for the better was through prayer, which would bring about Charles's return to London: 'Let us pray faithfully, pray fervently, pray constantly, pray continually... that our Text may be verified of Charles in Prophetie, as by David in History'.¹¹⁴ In other words, Fuller hoped that the sermon itself would become a prophecy, brought about by faith and devotion, and ultimately fulfilled by Charles's providential return. The act of setting down these thoughts into a sermon was to lay out a path to happiness, a concrete narrative with detailed steps to Charles's return, which could focus the laity's thoughts and prayers towards a tangible course of events. Fuller looked forward to the time when 'our King shall returne to his owne house in peace'. Fuller's advice to his readers, 'in one word', was to 'desist from sinning, persist in praying'. By doing so they could put this entire situation in the past: 'then it may come to passe that this our Use may once be antedate'. In this possible happy future, this sermon would be seen 'as a Harbinger [sent] before hand to provide a lodging in your hearts for your joy against the time' when Charles returned.¹¹⁵ By illuminating and detailing how the present would look in the future, Fuller

¹¹³ Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, sig. C7r.

¹¹⁴ Fuller, *A Sermon Preached at the Collegiat*, sig. D3r.

¹¹⁵ Fuller, *A Sermon Preached at the Collegiat*, sig. D3v.

gave this happy future a sense of reality. Listeners and readers could now picture the future in which Charles was back in London, how the sermon they had just read or heard would be retrospectively seen as prophetic or a prelude. Fuller was cognisant that the path to Charles's return was not straightforward. Relating the immediate past, he noted that 'just... when our hopes of a happy peace had bin ready to arrive, some envious unexpected obstacle hath started up'. However, this obstacle should not dishearten the English, rather they should 'cry louder in [their] praier'. There was already 'the least mite of hopes', for 'our King is partly come... in his proffer of peace'. One should 'date [their] day from the first peeping of the morning starre, before the Sunne be risen'.¹¹⁶

To illustrate the consequences of inaction, Fuller used the scriptural example of Ephesus. England had descended into war because of 'her sinnes' as well as the sins 'which this war hath caused'. This 'hath equalled Ephesus in faults committed'.¹¹⁷ This was referring to Christ's call in Revelation for the Ephesians to remember Christ and to put him at the centre of their church, rather than a mechanical observation of the faith.¹¹⁸ Fuller thus wrote to 'shew the danger likely to cease on us, if not providently diverted by speedy repentance'. Referring once again to Ephesus, he argued that 'we shall be like Ephesus in future punishment', and that 'the candlestick will be removed out of his place' should England not repent quickly.¹¹⁹ In other words, if the English miss this opportunity, the Gospel would leave the kingdom forever.

¹¹⁶ Fuller, *A Sermon Preached at the Collegiat*, sig. D3r.

¹¹⁷ Thomas Fuller, *Feare of Losing the Old Light. Or, A Sermon Preached in Exeter. By Thomas Fuller, B.D.* (Printed by T.H. for Iohn Williams, at the signe of the Crowne in Pauls Church-yard., 1646), Wing (2nd ed) / F2424, E.341[22], sig. D1r.

¹¹⁸ Revelation 2:4-7

¹¹⁹ Fuller, *Feare of Losing the Old Light*, sig. D2r.

Furthermore, Fuller emphasised that England must look past its doctrinal differences that led to violence. It was acceptable to have a Church with error: 'no Church in this world can be free from all Faults'.¹²⁰ A perfect Church was 'impossible to be practised', even Luther admitted 'he never knew good order in the Church [to] last above 15 yeares'.¹²¹ Fuller explained that 'Mans minde' was 'in constant motion', and that 'when it cannot ascend higher', it would 'not stand still' and hence 'it must decline'. The Church must thus always be in the process of rising or falling, and never perfected on earth. Readers should take heart and reform their internal expectations, rather than being fixated on the external forms of the Church. A focus on internal reformation also helped insulate against worldly setbacks. Fuller's *A Sermon of Contentment* (1648) emphasised an internal victory over worldly achievement.¹²² Since heaven was 'not of this world', 'what the world counts gain, is losse... [and] what the world counts losse is gaine'. In a time when the royalist position seemed unstable, the only victory that mattered was 'not carnall but spiritual, not temporal but eternal'.¹²³

A predetermined future

Sprigge gave similar advice in his collection of sermons *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory* (1648). He argued that one should be focused on internal reformation, rather than external and cosmetic changes. He identified the desire

¹²⁰ Fuller, *Feare of Losing the Old Light*, sig. B2r.

¹²¹ Fuller, *A Sermon of Reformation*, sig. D4v.

¹²² Fuller's retreat from changing worldly affairs in favour of an internal reformation is more fully detailed in my previous thesis. Meng Yan Wong, 'Caesura's Consequence: Historians' Conceptions of the Future after the Regicide of Charles I (1649)', unpublished BA/PhB thesis, National University of Singapore and the Australian National University, 2014, pp. 22-34.

¹²³ Thomas Fuller, *A Sermon of Contentment by T.F.* (Printed by J.D. for John Willams, 1648), Wing / F2460, sig. C3v.

for religious reform, 'a spirit of prayer', which 'powred forth upon the people of God' and fomented war. He then reflected on the gains of the '6 or 7 years past', wherein 'cities & counties' were not 'cast... into Classes, and Provinces', and they had 'put new names of Pastor and Teacher upon [their] Ministers, instead of the old names of Priests and Deacons'. The purging of 'a few superstitious Ceremonies... out of [their] Parish Assemblies' and these other gains were merely superficial, and were 'the delusions of your adversary the Devil'. The external changes were sufficient to deceive the faithful that they 'have the prize', that godly progress had been made.¹²⁴ Sprigge warned against such a conclusion, for 'the kingdome and government of Jesus Christ is not outward, formal, & shadowy, but inward, reall, and powerfull'.¹²⁵ Like Fuller, Sprigge believed that the truth that mattered was internal.

However, Sprigge also made extensive use of external evidence in understanding the time they lived in. For example, he was certain that the Second Coming was imminent. To Sprigge, 'Christs second appearance' was 'now but a cloud of a hand-breadth' away. This was clear because 'the symptoms of it are upon the world', including 'the shaking of heaven and earth, the confusion and unsetlednesse that dwells on the face of all our affairs'.¹²⁶ These external signs indicated that the 'Lord Himselfe will shortly preach Himselfe'.¹²⁷ The country was in a panic, men 'cry out of fear... of destroying Religion, [and were] pulling down Ordinances' in the face of Christ's return.¹²⁸ People would also backslide, because 'there is usually an Apostacy that comes

¹²⁴ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sigs. B4v-B5v.

¹²⁵ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sigs. B5v-B5r.

¹²⁶ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sig. B6r.

¹²⁷ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sig. B7v

¹²⁸ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sig. M4r.

before the full accomplishment'. Just as the people of Israel '[fell] back in the wilderness', Sprigge foresaw that 'many Christians [would] enter into Ordinances, in the Spirit, and fall back into the flesh'.¹²⁹

The external world also featured in Sprigge's understanding of the progression of time. The external form was an essential part of one's spiritual journey towards God: one had to progress from 'the fleshy Administration, before you can come under the spirituall Administration'.¹³⁰ One had to finish one's path in a previous administration before one could move onto the next one. This was exemplified by Christ's death, which allowed him to become 'Justified in Spirit'. This was why God allowed suffering in the world, for 'God brings forth glory to his people by affliction, tribulation and dying'. Only when 'comforts go away in the flesh, ere they come in the Spirit'. Death was necessary, for 'while the flesh lasts upon them, the Spirit is not broken forth'.¹³¹ Only having travailed the flesh could the spirit truly be. The external world was not to be discounted; the external serviced the final internal goal of salvation. What distinguishes Sprigge from Fuller is in the timing of action: while both agreed that England had to suffer its punishment, Fuller felt that the situation was urgent and the English had to repent within a window of time before the situation deteriorated, whereas Sprigge had no such worry. Instead, he appealed to a fixed future.

Sprigge sought to give comfort in *Solace* by highlighting that 'all the affairs of his Church' were foreseen and organised by God, and that

all their times and changes, mercies and miseries, the administration of Christs Kingdom, is a set form, even as a Song is; it cannot vary a Title

¹²⁹ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sig. O2v

¹³⁰ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sig. I8r.

¹³¹ Sprigge, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory*, sigs. L5v-L6r.

from the Counsel of God, no more then a verse can without lameness or hobbling.¹³²

This meant that 'what ever befalls' the reader, his 'sins cannot hinder any good determined from coming in its order, place & time, nor can bring any evil upon them unseasonably or uncertainly'.¹³³ This meant that people need not be overly worried about what the times would bring them, because their future was all already determined in God's master plan. There would be no unseasonable or unplanned diversions from this path. However, Sprigge refused to discuss what the future would look like. In the concluding pages, he emphasised that 'Times and Issues are in the Hand of God', and that since 'we cannot know what is to come, let us look over and recount with thankfulness what God hath done for us'.¹³⁴ The future was unknown, and the end-point of God's plan with the civil war was not set or particularly obvious.¹³⁵ This was in stark contrast to Fuller, whose advice was predicated on the ability of the English to change the future.

All three historians explained the outbreak of war through long-term narratives of disease, sin, and deliverance. Naturalistic metaphors helped to identify the scale of the problem, and for the parliamentarians Peyton and Sprigge, these metaphors usefully assigned blame to certain parties by equating disease and bodily dangers to the King and his followers. For both Peyton and Fuller, national sickness was the result of sins on both sides. Such reasoning enjoined every English person to act to turn the country around. In direct contrast,

¹³² Joshua Sprigge, *Solace for Saints in the Saddest Times from the Consideration of the Happy Temperature and Lovely Composure of all Times and Providences as to Gods Glory and their Good : held forth in a Brief Discourse on the First Words of the Canticles / by Joshua Sprigg*. (Printed for Giles Calvert, 1648), Wing / S5075, sig. C1r.

¹³³ Sprigge, *Solace for Saints*, sig. C1v.

¹³⁴ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. Ss3v.

¹³⁵ Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, sig. Ss3v.

Sprigge asked readers to abstain from action. He believed God had intervened to set England on a predetermined path. England was already on a path of salvation and a new light had broken in on the country. Parliament's present state of victory and dominance were divinely justified, and the English should thus abstain from acting against Parliament.

These historians believed that the kingdom was fundamentally structured with order and interdependence, but they used the same idea in different ways.

Sprigge thought balance would be eventually restored no matter what, hence the High Court judges should initiate a return to the balanced polity.

Conversely, Peyton envisioned a dystopia to encourage readers to unite across political boundaries, while Fuller argued that subjects would have their liberty once Charles was restored to power.

These historians expressed different visions of the future, and they invested different levels of agency in their readers. Fuller was confident that he and other principled people will be proven right and celebrated someday in the future.

However, England was in a precarious position: the country was on a timer, and all needed to repent to prevent irreparable harm from happening. In direct contrast, Sprigge thought that the future was fixed and should not be worried about. The present suffering was a lesson and a reminder of England's sinfulness. Peyton struck a middle ground: he offered a path to peace and believed it possible for the English to choose peace over conflict, if only they focused on the future and forgot the past.

Post-regicide

The regicide emplotted

Peyton felt energised by the regicide to write his tract. On his title page of his history, he announced his purpose: to reveal 'the most secret and Chamber-abominations of the two last Kings', hence 'vindicat[ing]' the 'overthrow' of Charles.¹³⁶ Peyton responded to the regicide by grounding the events of the recent past in a long 'Tragical History'.¹³⁷ He observed a pattern of God's warnings, including the plague that followed Charles's accession to the throne. The 'dismal plague of 5000 dying every week' was 'God pointing to us... as a Schoolmaster, to warn us to repent of our abominable sins'. If such an 'admonition' was not enough to 'reform us, he would scourge us with an Iron Rod'.¹³⁸ The Civil War was thus God's punishment for all the accumulated sins of 'those Delinquents, who [had] raised this storme against the Commonwealth'.¹³⁹ According to Peyton, God had waited to punish these sins, 'transferring occasions from one season to another' and 'call[ing] sinners into reckoning, when they have least memory of them'. This point of reckoning was when God 'appointed this thrice honourable Parliament the instruments' of his action.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Sir Edward Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe of the Kingly Family of the House of Stuarts or, a Short History of the Rise, Reign, and Ruine thereof. Wherein the most Secret and Chamber-abominations of the two last Kings are Discovered, Divine Justice in King Charles his Overthrow Vindicated, and the Parliaments Proceedings against him clearly justified, by Sir Edward Peyton, knight and baronet, a Diligent Observer of those Times.*, Printed for Giles Calvert, at the black Spread-Eagle at the west-end of Pauls, 1652, Wing (2nd ed) / P1952, E.1291[1], sig. A1r.

¹³⁷ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 72.

¹³⁸ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 47.

¹³⁹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 143.

¹⁴⁰ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, pp. 142-3.

God had waited and suffered England's toleration of monarchy for centuries, finally intervening to stop Charles who had gone too far. England had a long history of princes, and hence of tyranny. With a long lineage of monarchy from the 'Plantagenet, Theodor or Tedor' to the 'Stuart', 'Great Britain ha[d] been elevated... to so high a Tree of Tyranny as she was afore the late wars'.¹⁴¹ Princes' desire to 'mak[e] themselves absolute Governours' seemed to change 'according to the humour of times, and inclination of the Guiders of the Stern'.¹⁴² Thus, the Stuarts brought tragedy upon themselves by going further than other princes. According to Peyton, King James 'plotted the ruine of Parliaments' because they had 'ratified' his mother's execution. James supposedly passed on this vengeance to his son, leaving it to Charles to bring parliaments to an end. Such 'devillish advice' was 'thrust upon a wilful Prince with an inconsiderate fury', and 'hurried [Charles] on with the whirlwinde of passion' in seeking out ways to destroy Parliament.¹⁴³ Charles's actions in the 1630s 'disordered' affairs of the nation, exiled 'all wise counsels', and destroyed 'the reputation of a pious State'.¹⁴⁴ All this while, 'the sins of this Nation multiplied against the Divine Majesty', but God 'seemed to be deaf'.¹⁴⁵ It was only with the imposition of the 'Common-Book of Prayer on the Scots' that 'at last he heard the prayers of the Saints'. The act was Charles's attempt to reconcile with Rome, but it was 'so Diametrically opposite to the Kirk, and disposition to the Nation' that God

¹⁴¹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 1.

¹⁴² Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 1.

¹⁴³ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 2.

¹⁴⁴ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 8.

¹⁴⁵ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, pp. 8-9.

finally intervened.¹⁴⁶ Charles's actions brought his own downfall; the regicide was the clear outcome of Charles's own behaviour.

Peyton also downplayed the regicide by establishing the 'fraile condition of the Imperiall family of the Stuarts'.¹⁴⁷ It did not help that the Stuarts themselves were base and of bad moral fibre. Peyton narrated the failings of King James and his son. He reiterated the claim that Prince Henry was poisoned to death by James himself, who came 'to suspect the Prince might depose him; especially knowing he was not begot of his body'.¹⁴⁸ James was also 'more addicted to love males then females', and 'sold his affections to Sir George Villiers' who 'erected many Monopolies' and 'break up the Parliament of *decimo octavo*'.¹⁴⁹ His Queen Anne was reported to have had an abortion, with the foetus remaining within her body and eventually causing her death.¹⁵⁰ James also 'allowed dancing about May-poles, and so winked at breaking the Sabbath; a vice God curseth everywhere in a Scripture'.¹⁵¹ Charles fared no better. He dismissed Parliament to save the Duke of Buckingham from charges of James's murder.¹⁵² Charles also allegedly attended Mass and reconciled with the Pope, with whom he agreed to 'reduce England to Popery'.¹⁵³ By accelerating his project of tyranny, he himself sparked the Civil War because he accelerated his project of tyranny. Having tasted 'the sweetness of his invasselling the People', Charles 'ran violently to

¹⁴⁶ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 9.

¹⁴⁷ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 71.

¹⁴⁸ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 28. See Alastair Bellany and Thomas Cogswell's *The Murder of King James I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015) on the lineage of these accusations first suggested by the papist George Eglisam in *The Forerunner of Revenge* (1626).

¹⁴⁹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sigs. C6v, C7r-v, or pp. 28-29, 30, wrongly numbered 31.

¹⁵⁰ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sig. C7v, or p. 30, wrongly numbered 31.

¹⁵¹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sig. C8r, or 31, wrongly numbered 30.

¹⁵² Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 40.

¹⁵³ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 53.

destroy his subjects', 'following too hastily his precedents direction', 'instead of pacing it'.¹⁵⁴ It was precisely this 'which brought him afore his time to the block, the desert of Tyrants'.¹⁵⁵ Charles had gone further than his predecessors, and thus brought the regicide upon himself.

Sensing the magnitude of the event, Peyton argued that God not only allowed the regicide, he also caused it and the subsequent regime change. The sinfulness of the people at the top led God's to 'sen[d] so such misery upon these three Kingdomes'. He fashioned 'such a fatal Catastrophe to turn the spoakes of the Wheel upside down, rais[e] the humble out of the dust, and abas[e] the proud and high-minded'.¹⁵⁶ The world was turned upside down in 'this revolution', but only at the behest of God.¹⁵⁷ Peyton asked his countrymen to 'cease from wondering at Gods work', arguing that 'for if a Sparrow fals not to the ground without his special providence, then much less is wanting in turning topsy-turvy principalities and kingdomes'. For God to abstain from such a momentous event would be to unravel all of society: people would assume that 'there were no God to punish sin, nor reward the righteous', and they would 'devoure one another'.¹⁵⁸ Such 'mutation by a heavenly providence punishing sinners for sin' affected 'all men and their affaires', and 'the wheel turn[ed] greatness from top to bottome'.¹⁵⁹ Charles's 'downfal' was 'justly imposed by Providence from

¹⁵⁴ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 48.

¹⁵⁵ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 48.

¹⁵⁶ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sig. E3r.

¹⁵⁷ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, pp. 71-2. The term 'revolution' most likely refers to the duration of a year, not a political revolution, even though the latter definition was beginning to see some use in this period. See Ilan Rachum, 'The term "revolution" in seventeenth-century English astrology', *History of European Ideas* 18:6 (1994), pp. 869-883.

¹⁵⁸ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 128.

¹⁵⁹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, pp. 70-1.

above', a punishment direct from God for the 'heavie weight of sin'.¹⁶⁰ Peyton summarised this theme in the subtitle of this tragic history: 'Divine Justice in King Charles his overthrow vindicated'.¹⁶¹

On the other hand, Parliament only succeeded because they were on God's side. The King had erred in sinning, and those who 'concur with him, they are punished'. If Parliament had sided with Charles, 'God would have been revenged on them' as well.¹⁶² He reminded England that Charles was 'a Tyrant', and that 'if the king would destroy his people', they would no longer be 'his subjects' or 'bound to obey'.¹⁶³ Furthermore, since the King was no longer a protector, he became a common man without kingly privileges.¹⁶⁴ The 'Divine revolution' that had occurred was 'brought instrumentally' by the 'wisdom and direction' of MPs, as well as 'his heavenly Providence'.¹⁶⁵ Peyton thus absolved the regime of any guilt or responsibility for the regicide, placing God as the sole author of events.

The promise of future salvation

Having opposed the regicide, Sprigge surveyed England's poor state after Charles's death. He bemoaned how the 'glory and mystery' of Christ were 'so miserably mangled now adaies', and announced to the English that 'the time is come' where 'all things are dying into their Originall', which he defined as 'their first root and principle'. These included 'All Ordinances, whether they be... civill or spiritual', and 'all relations... Oeconomicall or Politicall'. The present

¹⁶⁰ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sig. A4r.

¹⁶¹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sig. A1r.

¹⁶² Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 80.

¹⁶³ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 80.

¹⁶⁴ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 105.

¹⁶⁵ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sigs. A3r-v.

state of affairs was corrupted, and it was decaying because the country had 'converst with them after the flesh', rather than 'having the spirit and power of them in us'. These ways bore the weight of 'the manifold sinnes and miscarriages of men', and they had now '[sunk] into the wrath of God, there to be purified before they be restored'.¹⁶⁶ In this 'Autumne of the world', all of 'Creation travails, and is in paine' from the 'bondage of vanity and corruption which our flesh detaines it in'. The world is suffering from the weight of men's mistakes and 'groanes to be delivered'.¹⁶⁷ Despite his disappointment, Sprigge ventured to explain why the regicide happened. He drew a direct connection between England's failure to respect the fundamental order of society and the suffering they were experiencing at present. The English had 'not converst with the pure Image of Righteousnesse in their Kings, and Magistrates', while 'Wives have not seen the Lord and his love in their husbands'. In not respecting the holiness of these positions and relationships, 'a fire is come forth... mutually to consume one another'.¹⁶⁸ This logic harked back to his discussion of harmony before the regicide; the regicide did not alter his idea of the ideal polity.

Although Sprigge opposed the regicide, like Peyton, he asked his readers to understand the event as a symbol of larger processes of the world. He reminded his readers of the wider context of God and salvation. In a sermon about 'The Blessed Death', Sprigge thought that death was a release from sin, a beneficial transformation that ought to be celebrated. According to him, it was 'by the

¹⁶⁶ Joshua Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus, the Lord is risen being some Account of Christ, what and where he is, of the Glory and Mystery of his person and office so Miserably Mangled now adaies : wherein also as in a Glasse may be seene the Image and Proportion of all the Waies and Workes of God in the Kingdomes of the world / according to the measure of the light of things brought forth in Joshua Sprigge*. (Printed for Giles Calvert, 1649), Wing / S5072, sigs. A1r, A6r.

¹⁶⁷ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A6r.

¹⁶⁸ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A6v.

power of the Lord that we dye', and that only through his 'glory... shining upon us' could one 'put out the light of these appearances, wherein we did live before'. God showed that this mortal life was actually that which 'slay us & crucifie us'.¹⁶⁹ Indeed he surmised, 'Blessed are they that dye'.¹⁷⁰ In this view, the period of living was a 'baptisme' for what came after. One had to go 'Throrow suffering in the flesh' before one could go 'into that... spirituall and glorified estate in the spirit'. Christians had to be content with 'that joy and glory' before them, but also 'be content to suffer losse in it'.¹⁷¹ Fuller similarly wrangled with the necessity of loss in his first publication after the regicide. *The Just Mans Funeral* (1649) was a funeral sermon, published in November 1649, described the death of righteous men as a prerequisite for the Second Coming. Like Sprigge, the regicide was framed as a necessary part of a larger plan that would lead to salvation.¹⁷²

England's bad situation was a sign of God's favour. In his exegesis of Revelations 1:7, Sprigge remarked on the unhappiness of 'these times' which 'may seeme to contradict this same hope of the Saints in the Lords coming'. He argued that these misfortunes, or 'Clouds that are upon the world', were 'evidence' that Jesus was indeed returning, 'for he cometh with Clouds' as per Revelations 1:7.¹⁷³ These clouds 'obscure the firmament' and 'darken the earth', but only because 'the Lord comes... with darknesse... in a darkning

¹⁶⁹ Joshua Sprigge, *A Further Testimony to the Glory that is near being the Summe of what was delivered in Publique on several texts / by Joshua Sprigge*. (Printed for Giles Calvert ..., 1649), Wing / S5074, sig. G2v.

¹⁷⁰ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. G1r.

¹⁷¹ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sigs. G3v. 86.

¹⁷² Fuller's post-regicide works and its attitudes to time are more fully explored in Wong, 'Caesura's Consequence', pp. 22-34; Patterson, *Thomas Fuller*, p. 137.

¹⁷³ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. B1v.

dispensation'. This served to overshadow 'all created glory... on earth', and 'all those lights' that the people had previously enjoyed. These 'Ordinances' and 'graces' lose the 'beauty, and light, and lustre' that they formerly had with Christ's return.¹⁷⁴ According to Sprigge, Jesus sought to 'destroy this Temple' on earth, 'overshadow this comfort' and thereafter bring his followers to greater 'comfort in [Christ's] self'.¹⁷⁵ God was destroying this world and all that was good on purpose, so that he could elevate Christians to a greater plane.

God was also responsible for the unusual and unexpected events to come. According to Sprigge, 'the Lord... hides himself in the low and meane appearances of Saints' so he could 'judgeth the world' and '[make] strange alterations in the world' without being noticed.¹⁷⁶ Such events and despair would only continue worldwide:

And in divers other places, There shall be distresse of Nations, mens hearts failing them for feare, clouds covering the state of all things, as they do at this day. What clouds do dwel upon al things, upon all ranks of men, upon al the affairs of men; I need not point you to them, you see them, you know not what will become of these things, your comforts are clouded, your affaires are clouded; Christ comes in the clouds.¹⁷⁷

Across borders, men will anguish over the bad state of affairs that plague every aspect of society, much like the present moment in England. This miasma of despair was universal, affecting all men, and could not be escaped. Sprigge also cautioned that they could not know what the future held, at least here on earth, but this was all God's doing in preparation for the Second Coming. The opposite

¹⁷⁴ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. B7r.

¹⁷⁵ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. B7v.

¹⁷⁶ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. B8v.

¹⁷⁷ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. C1r.

held true: 'if you would not have clouds' and the 'world is serene and cleare', then 'you must not have Christ'.¹⁷⁸

Sprigge asked his readers to cast their eyes to the promise of the future. The present darkness was part of God's bigger plan to break the world to make a better one. Sprigge described Christ's 'delight' in 'blind[ing] the world', and his desire to be present when his faithful least expect him to be.¹⁷⁹ 'When things [were] out of order, they must be taken all to pieces before they can be set in order.' In other words, Christ must 'dissolv[e]' the world 'before it can be cast in a better mould'.¹⁸⁰ Even then, this project of rebuilding had to be initiated by the people's sins against God. This journey towards perfection only began when 'corruption hath took its course against the Lord'. Sprigge likened this to the Crucifixion, where 'Christ could not shew love enough to us, if he had not first let us pierced him'.¹⁸¹ Similarly, Christ could not have 'save[d] us' had we not 'first killed' him.¹⁸² Sprigge listed the multitude of wounds we had inflicted on Christ, including having 'other Lovers', 'set[ting] up men' like 'Paul, Apollo, [and] Cephas', and creating 'Ordinances' and 'call[ing] this Reformation... the new heaven and the new earth'.¹⁸³ Hence it was the mortal condition and sinfulness of this world that prompted the move to the eternal plane. Sprigge incorporated a shocking event like the regicide into a greater narrative of God's plan; dastardly setbacks like the regicide were essential to God's plan to

¹⁷⁸ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. C1v.

¹⁷⁹ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. C2v.

¹⁸⁰ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. C2r-v.

¹⁸¹ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. C4r.

¹⁸² Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. C4r.

¹⁸³ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. C5r.

disassemble and rebuild England into a greater form. The regicide was shocking, but it should be celebrated as an opportunity rather than a loss.

Patience in suffering

Sprigge focused his attention firmly on the future: 'But my subject is the Resurrection, and We hope for a new Heaven, and a new Earth, wherein Righteousnesse shall dwell'.¹⁸⁴ He was confident that today's suffering was God's decision, and that hence the English should have faith everything would work out. These 'relations', he explained, belonged to God and he 'hath chosen' to put them 'in the furnace of affliction'. In time 'he will purify them, and restore them to us, and within us'.¹⁸⁵ He thus advised patience, telling his readers to 'looke for this [time], and wait for it', when 'the Truth of things... do proclaim it selfe to be in us'. In this time, the people will be brought 'into perfect union' with Truth, and all would be right with the world. In this paradise, 'Kings [shall] nourish their People as their owne Children... And we shall see all beauty, all excellency, strength and sweetnesse acting forth'.¹⁸⁶ However, this time of paradise could not be rushed. It was God's prerogative to decide when this fire of affliction would end:

And, till then, we labour in the fire for very vanity; we sowe the winde, and shall reape the whirl-winde, while we thinke by changing Formes, or removing Persons, to procure rest and happinesse to our selves; yea, We deny the Lord, while we so imagine, who onely can make us a good assurance of these things in and by assurance of these things in and by himselfe living in us, and in our Relations.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A6v.

¹⁸⁵ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A6v.

¹⁸⁶ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sigs. A6v-A7r.

¹⁸⁷ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sigs. A7r-v.

Sprigge wrote in response to the external changes he observed in the present, arguing that such external changes were illusory and that pursuing them denied God's role as the real agent of change. Pursuing a policy of effecting these external changes would only bring disaster because this was an exercise in vanity, rather than humble obedience before God. Human efforts at reformation were useless without God's involvement: 'For Except the Lord build the house' and 'keepe the City', the builders 'labour in vaine' and 'the Watchman watcheth but in vaine'.¹⁸⁸ Unless God himself 'cut off and depose all selfish darknesse, usurpation and unrighteousnesse within us', taking away our internal corruption, 'it will be very little availe to cut off the branches'.¹⁸⁹ Sprigge's prescription was to leave all the reforming to God, who in his own time would fix people internally. In contrast, mundane efforts at external reformation were discouraged and spurned as narcissistic exercises that would only bring more harm than good. While he did not name Charles as an example, 'removing Persons' alluded to the regicide, and hence eliminating Charles if only to 'procure rest and happiness' was one of these exercises in vanity. In this 'state of darknesse', one had to be careful about external appearances and observances.¹⁹⁰ Corruption was internal: that which was 'within us' was responsible for making ordinances and relations 'weake and unprofitable'.¹⁹¹ Only when 'the Lord hath burnt up' this corruption and 'brought forth the true Image and paterne of things within us', could the English 'be happy in any outward appearances or representations'.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A7v.

¹⁸⁹ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A7v.

¹⁹⁰ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A7r.

¹⁹¹ Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A6v.

¹⁹² Sprigge, *Christus Redivivus*, sig. A6v.

Hence, peace could only be found from within. In 1649, Sprigge published a collection of his sermons and texts entitled *A further testimony to the glory that is near*. In the preface he discussed the joys of being in communion with God. With God saints find a perfect ‘record’ of themselves ‘on high’, with whom they ‘dwell and converse’ and ‘groan to be delivered into’.¹⁹³ It was where they would ‘retire’ to ‘when grieved and vexed in the life below’, and recover from ‘al the wounds and sicknesses received and contracted, in the flesh’. This communion would help Saints see ‘God in every state of things’, comforting them and making every situation feel ‘easie’, ‘for as it is his it cannot be uneasie’. Difficult situations on Earth should not worry Saints, since ‘we are content with the things we have’ and ‘nothing can adde to, nor detract’ from the ‘infinite good and sweetnes’ of God. Sprigge thus pronounced that Saints would ‘always live full of joy’, and that they looked forward to dying, ‘be it ever so soon’.¹⁹⁴ Even in a dystopic future when ‘the King of terroures’ would ‘shoot his arrows’, Saints ‘cannot be driven out of our life’; while in communion with God and one’s true soul, they were ‘planted in the heart and centre’ of their life.¹⁹⁵

Fuller also decided after the regicide to focus on the spiritual welfare of the people. He felt that the wars had led to a ‘thinnesse in Eminent Divines’.¹⁹⁶ The English Church was now weak and undefended, an issue he tried to address explicitly with *Abel redivivus* (1651). The work featured role models of the

¹⁹³ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. A3v.

¹⁹⁴ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sig. A4r.

¹⁹⁵ Sprigge, *A Further Testimony*, sigs. A4r-v.

¹⁹⁶ Thomas Fuller, *Abel Redeivivus, or, The Dead yet speaking the Lives and Deaths of the Moderne Divines / written by Severall Able and Learned Men (whose names ye shall finde in the epistle to the reader), and now digested into one volumne ...* (Printed by Tho. Brudenell for John Stafford ..., 1651), Wing / F2400, unpaginated epistle, p. xii, cited in Wong, ‘Caesura’s Consequence’, p. 31.

English Reformation for a time when 'most [were] at a loss' and did not know 'how to behave themselves'.¹⁹⁷ Unsure of what was to come, and of God's plans for the future, Fuller sought to foster a robust and godly society in preparation for any eventuality.¹⁹⁸

Advocating passivity

To Peyton, now that Parliament was officially in charge the time of the Stuarts and sinfulness was over, and a new period had begun. Recounting the late 1630s where 'Bribery the nurse of Justice was so rife' and when God 'brought on us a lamentable war', Peyton referred to these as happening 'in those days'.¹⁹⁹ Now that God had set England on the right path, Peyton advised his countrymen to 'Be subject to the higher powers: for they are of God'. Having been put in place by 'the command of God', he pleaded with his people to 'respect those set at the Helme, whom God hath made instruments of our happiness'.²⁰⁰ It was only through God's will that 'out of the ashes of intended ruine', they had now been 'made the Source of so glorious a State as now is planted on our English Stage'.²⁰¹ This 'Commonwealth' was God's creation, and made glorious enough to 'consummat[e] the fulness of the Gentiles' and becoming the 'home of the Jews' as 'foretold in the Scriptures, to be performed in the latter Ages of the World'.²⁰²

¹⁹⁷ Fuller, *Abel Redivivus*, unpaginated epistle, pp. x-xi, cited in Wong, 'Caesura's Consequence', p. 33.

¹⁹⁸ Wong, 'Caesura's Consequence', p. 34.

¹⁹⁹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 60.

²⁰⁰ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 76.

²⁰¹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 11.

²⁰² Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, pp. 11-12.

Peyton advocated a passive attitude in this new time. He was cognisant that many opposed Parliament, especially due to the regicide. He advised his readers that 'naturally we are hooded, and cannot see that God hath done miraculous work'. He assured them that Parliament was 'Gods instruments' rather than 'men', and that they were here to 'execute his will', taken straight out from 'the shop of his Almighty work-house' and set to 'accomplish his determination'. Perhaps in anticipation of thoughts of rebellion, he added that only God could retire them: these instruments were 'not to be laid aside, till by Gods appointment they turn into the tyring-house'.²⁰³ Now that God had installed them with 'Parliaments valourous success', it was not the people's prerogative to overthrow those in power.²⁰⁴ Moreover, the present moment was a time for healing:

Consider, therefore, O England, that they do as wise Physitians are accustomed, afore the perfect remedy of patients consumption, advise not to action, imployment, and troubles in affaires, till restored to strength and vigor.²⁰⁵

Now that England had taken the remedy of regicide and Parliament was fully in control, Peyton advised the English to rest and let the remedy take full effect. The country needed to be passive, and simply wait for its condition to recover naturally. Peyton portrayed a future in which England would be strong and powerful once more, but only if it let Parliament rule in peace, undisturbed by dissent. The English should 'profit from the storm past, reduced by Gods providence to a calme'. The regicide and the subsequent settlement were God's

²⁰³ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 76.

²⁰⁴ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 76.

²⁰⁵ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 138.

‘great miraculous deliverance’, which he hoped his countrymen would ‘make a pious use of’.²⁰⁶

Looking to the future, Peyton believed that it was ‘probable that the determination of God... to destroy all Monarchy in Christendome’.²⁰⁷ His instrument for this purpose was Cromwell. Cromwell was ‘a prodigy’, created by God ‘to perform’ what God had planned ‘to bring to pass in this Stuarticall Catastrophe’.²⁰⁸ He was ‘equal to Alexander the great’ in ability and stature.²⁰⁹ Perhaps more importantly, Cromwell was a sign of God’s plan for the future. He was

a Star placed by God amongst all the military Forces of Europe... to be a glorious Sun and a Prometheus for to bring in a heavenly light for all Europe to behold more clearly Gods will and determination, which will be more sensibly and visibly known after the next years great Eclipse, to inlighten not onely the Cavaliers, but also Europe, what Gods purpose is to act future ages; in which course it is behoovefull for every Christian to observe, that he may manage his affaires accordingly, to the glory of God and his owne safety.²¹⁰

England’s present would become Europe’s future. The events in England would be replicated in the Continent, the exact details of which will become clear shortly in the next year. By placing English history and its future as a template for Europe, Peyton diminished the disruptiveness of the regicide. The event was should not be inconceivable because it was within God’s plan, and similar events might occur in Europe too. Hence Peyton added ‘a gentle admonition to all Princes of Europe, to give over tyranny’ and to ‘submit to the power’ of God.

²⁰⁶ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, pp. 73-4.

²⁰⁷ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 125.

²⁰⁸ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sig. K6v/p. 140, wrongly numbered 138.

²⁰⁹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sig. K7r/p.141, wrongly numbered 139.

²¹⁰ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, sig. K7r./p. 141, wrongly numbered 139.

Having seen God's disapproval and punishment of English tyranny, these princes should act to 'prevent a showre of Gods vengeance impending [sic]', which Peyton warned is already 'ready to dissolve and pour downe upon their heads'.²¹¹ The 'shipwreck' of the Stuarts was a sign that tyrants and oppressors 'whall not avoid a tempest of Gods anger for precipitation'.²¹²

Conclusion

Noting Peyton's use of George Eglisham's *The Forerunner of Revenge*, Bellany and Cogswell conclude that 'Eglisham had given the English Republic a usable past'.²¹³ The claim that Charles was responsible for the murder of his father provided a scurrilous, and probably unconvincing, justification for regicide and the end of monarchy.²¹⁴ Convincing or not, Peyton's use of *The Forerunner* was only part of a larger temporal strategy to support the regicide and regime change. Peyton attributed the massive changes in England solely to God, whose will was undeniable and could not be opposed. The regicide and England's abolition of monarchy were part of that larger plan, which would eventually see God destroying monarchy all over Europe.²¹⁵ Sprigge and Fuller, who opposed

²¹¹ Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 144.

²¹² Peyton, *The Divine Catastrophe*, p. 71.

²¹³ Bellany and Cogswell, *The Murder of King James I*, p. 488.

²¹⁴ In his review, Blair Worden disagrees that Eglisham's tract and its claims that James was poisoned were particularly influential or accepted as true, even in the Interregnum. B. Worden, 'As bad as Poisoned', *London Review of Books* 38:5 (2016), pp. 18-20. Bernard Capp similarly notes that the regicides were motivated more by Charles's actions in the 1640s than the 1620s. B. Capp, 'Alastair Bellany and Thomas Cogswell. *The Murder of King James I.*', *The American Historical Review* 123:2 (2018), pp. 639-40.

²¹⁵ Unlike other supporters, Peyton did not use the metaphor of balance to justify the regicide. This may be because he had previously advocated for the king as an essential part of English society, a concept repudiated by other supporters after Pride's Purge. The latter blamed Charles and monarchy for unbalancing the balance between Parliament and the people. Sarah Barber, 'Belshazzar's Feast: Regicide, Republicanism and the Metaphor of Balance', in Peacey, ed., *The Regicides of Charles I*, pp. 95-7.

the regicide, did not write detailed explanations for the event. When they discussed the execution, they subsumed its contingent nature into more general principles: Sprigge attributed it to the factions overstepping their responsibilities, while Fuller used it to discuss injustice in the world.²¹⁶

All three writers encouraged passivity in worldly affairs. Breaking from his pre-regicide position where he encouraged readers to make peace, Peyton now asked his readers to go along with God's crusade, reasoning that any opponents would be easily overwhelmed by his will. Furthermore, England's panacea in the form of Parliament's rule needed time to take effect. Fuller, who had sought peace by asking sinners to repent, continued to encourage an internal reformation. Sprigge reasoned that one could not possibly end their afflictions prematurely, since its length was determined by God alone. All three accounts provided little agency to their audience. The English were now spectators in large ongoing narratives, directed by forces outside their control.

While all three continued to believe in an underlying order to reality, Sprigge and Fuller shifted their emphasis away from England's constitution towards the more ineffable reality of the soul and salvation. Certainty was to be found internally, rather than the external world. Their visions of the future shifted concomitantly, with a clear lack of verifiable details. With the final salvation of the soul as the endpoint of their narratives, the timescale was indeterminate, and they demurred from providing any concrete observable details. Instead, progress was measured from within, and in terms of faith and conscience. They also asked their readers to focus on the future, where eventual victory would be

²¹⁶ Fuller did not mention Charles by name, resorting to biblical allusions to make the connection. Patterson, *Thomas Fuller*, p. 137.

found. This was probably pragmatic: the ugly present and its losses can be stomachied if understood as down-payment for a better future. Their focus on internal rather than external validation is probably derived from this choice to focus on the future. Conversely, Peyton's vision of the future promised large-scale political changes in the Continent.

4. Royalist Newsbooks

In this and the following chapter, I examine newsbooks written before and after the regicide. This chapter will discuss the literature and methodological concerns when working with these sources. It then proceeds to survey the background of three royalist writers of newsbooks, namely Marchamont Nedham, George Wharton, and Samuel Sheppard. I then examine their newsbooks for their use of time and the future.

Jason Peacey has written on the difficulty of determining the authorship of newsbooks. Evidence of authorship may come from internal references to the author's identity, contemporary official inquiries, and comments by other contemporaries. Scholars have also attempted to identify the authors through a stylistic comparison to their non-journalistic prose, however in many cases this is impossible since many authors did not leave such prose. The *Moderate* is one such case.¹ Newsbooks were also often jointly authored. Henry Walker of *Perfect Occurrences* thought of himself as the 'compiler' of the title, rather than the sole author and creator. Nedham and Mabbot served as co-authors in *Britanicus* and the *London Post* respectively. The printers themselves took on a significant role in the text and content, with the authorities choosing to go after them and editors over the journalists themselves, also it is also possible that printers, with their bulky presses, were easier targets.² Cotton has observed how booksellers like

¹ Jason Peacey, 'The Management of Civil War Newspapers: Auteurs, Entrepreneurs and Editorial Control', *The Seventeenth Century* 21:1 (2006), p. 101.

² Peacey, 'The Management', pp. 102-3; Jason McElligott believes we know much less about royalist printers because they left little evidence, even compared to authors who could be replaced. McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 127.

Humphrey Blunden and Robert White worked with printers to compete with each other in the market, and that they often hired the authors to write the content. However, it was the authors themselves who 'established the character of a newsbook', and they also owned the copyright for the title.³ Jason McElligott has come out strongly against the effort to attribute authorship of royalist newsbooks. He cited the collaborative nature of the text, harassment from the authorities in the late 1640s, and the mediatory role of the compositor in altering the text while typesetting as particular problems. While he accepts the use of 'sound historical and bibliographical sources and methods', he rejects the use of internal evidence and stylistic comparisons, calling any such attempt 'anachronistic guesswork'. He points out that royalist authors 'shared a common stock of arguments, jokes and motifs', and that they occasionally copied each other's phrases and ideas. Nonetheless, McElligott assumes that the vast majority of issues were written by a small group of nine royalists, as not many people could have worked to 'strict deadlines' while being on the run.⁴

Where newsbooks are sparse on editorials and the background of its writers are unknown, we may draw conclusions based on the choice of materials in the titles themselves. It is reasonable to draw links between the content of a publication to its author, printer, and seller. For example, Amos Tubb surveyed the printing output of various printers and booksellers like Robert Ibbitson and Hanna Allen. Citing their decisions to print and hawk anonymous pamphlets and petitions, he identified how each individual evidenced a consistent ideological profile across years.⁵ Noticing the short shrift given to the Levellers'

³ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 18-9.

⁴ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, pp. 99-105.

⁵ Amos Tubb, 'Independent Presses: The Politics of Print in England During the Late 1640s', *The Seventeenth Century* 27:3 (2012), pp. 387-312.

Large Petition and Colonel Rainsborough's funeral, Frank draws the conclusion that Collings, editor of *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer*, did not approve of the Levellers.⁶ Raymond similarly drew conclusions based on editorial decisions to include certain material in newsbooks. For example, in his examination of Border's *Perfect Weekly Account*, he cited the inclusion of 'an opinionated letter from Dover' as the editor's way of 'foreground[ing] his own beliefs'. This was a way to weave in their opinion into the reportage itself.⁷ Similarly, Raymond cited Walker's placement of the list of MPs secluded during Pride's Purge, noting how it appeared 'as an appendix to the document printed above it'. He concluded that Walker was 'gesturing towards his own approval' of the Purge.⁸ The inclusion of petitions and speeches helped create a dialogue between different viewpoints, with the conversation guided silently by the editor who chose and arranged the content.⁹ In his study of the more outspoken *Moderate*, Curelly concludes that the newsbook included petitions to 'serv[e] a definite purpose'. The published petitions supported the editorial position, while also 'trigger[ing] a dialogic response' that led to more petitions being published in turn. There might also have been a commercial motive for publishing petitions about soldiers' grievances, which would have helped to 'increase the newspaper's market share and [to] outsell rival publications'.¹⁰ While editors might have included petitions they did not agree with, it was usually clear when

⁶ Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 170.

⁷ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 172.

⁸ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 178.

⁹ Elizabeth S. Wheeler, *The Rhetoric of Politics in the English Revolution, 1642-1660* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1992), p. 79; Raymond, *Invention*, pp. 131-2. Raymond refers to the early newsbooks of 1642, but the same may be said of later newsbooks in our period.

¹⁰ Laurent Curelly, *An Anatomy of an English radical newspaper: The Moderate (1648-9)* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), pp. 199-200.

that was the case. The length of the extract published, as well as its arrangement vis-à-vis other items, either resonated with the themes of the newsbook or appeared as an 'isolated piece of news'.¹¹

Knowing the exact authorship of these newsbooks is not ultimately necessary for our analysis. Historians have often sought to identify the authors behind the newsbook, but Raymond points out that their identities were 'less important than the larger-than-life figure of the mercury itself', aided by their characteristic anonymity. The newsbook itself 'had a collective, social identity' that would only suffer 'if too solidly attached to an author'. With an 'independent identity', the newsbook was 'a larger, more public figure' than the people behind it.¹²

McElligott makes a similar point about royalist newsbook writers, arguing that they 'subsumed their identity into a collective', and even adapted their style to suit 'the particular persona' of the title itself.¹³ As Curelly put it, newsbooks 'developed distinct identities according to what news items they included and how much space their editors gave them'.¹⁴ It is these corporate identities and persona that I track in these chapters, and their conceptions of time and the future as they shift with the events around the regicide.

Censorship was an issue for both royalist and parliamentary newsbooks, with all the royalist titles being unlicensed. However, more pressing issues such as political division in London and royalist insurrections often took attention away from cracking down on unlicensed titles. There was also no central coordination

¹¹ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, p. 95.

¹² Raymond, *Making the News*, p. 21.

¹³ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 104. Curelly is thinking along the same lines in his take on Gilbert Mabbot and the *Moderate*, with the title serving only to make profit and not as a vehicle for Mabbot's ideology. See below.

¹⁴ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, p. 95.

until September 1649, when the regime finally made it a priority and successfully clamped down on unlicensed material.¹⁵ In licensed parliamentary newsbooks, writers would use metaphors and stories taken from classical sources and folklore, which their readers would understand and a lenient licenser would let slide.¹⁶ The regulation of printing, established by ordinance in June 1643, also stemmed the pirating of titles like Pecke's *Diurnall*, allowing licensed newsbooks the chance to flourish and develop their own unique character and identity.¹⁷ Cotton had noted how 'the censor... rarely attempted to pierce the thinnest disguises'.¹⁸ Thus in our period of investigation, censorship played a minimal role in restricting expressions of non-orthodox thought in newsbooks, within reason. The radical *Moderate*, for example, had little problem publishing every week.

Marchamont Nedham was the author of the influential *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, a royalist newsbook. Known for combining his wit and jocular style with serious political analysis, Nedham began writing for Parliament in 1643 with *Mercurius Britanicus*. *Britanicus* was a response to the royalist *Mercurius Aulicus*, which was gaining popularity throughout the kingdom. Nedham's vicious mockery and criticism of Charles led to his imprisonment in 1646. In 1647, he met Charles in person and pledged to support the royalist cause. His *Pragmaticus* began in September 1647 and became extremely popular.¹⁹ *Pragmaticus* spawned many

¹⁵ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, pp. 157-8, 176-7.

¹⁶ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 331-2.

¹⁷ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 29.

¹⁸ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 333.

¹⁹ Raymond, 'Nedham [Needham], Marchamont (bap. 1620, d. 1678), journalist and pamphleteer', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 17 Sept 2015 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19847>, accessed 8 June 2019]. See also Blair Worden, "'Wit in a Roundhead": The Dilemma of Marchamont Nedham', in *Political Culture and Cultural*

counterfeits because of its popularity. Through an in-depth analysis of the linguistic traits and news content, Peacey has determined the provenance of various incarnations of *Mercurius Pragmaticus*. These include issues written by Nedham, Sheppard, and Wharton.²⁰ McElligott has argued specifically against Peacey's attempt at attribution, but I disagree with his overly pessimistic view on this account.²¹ Peacey points out that Nedham had helpfully collated in 1661 the opening verses of all the newsbooks for which he was responsible. Furthermore, both Nedham's style and coverage of events in late 1648 were singular, even though both Wharton and Sheppard tried to mimic Nedham's caustic language. Wharton's version did not copy Nedham's editorial style either, with verses inserted throughout the text. These authors also had different favoured enemies who they consistently insulted.²² These specific sources of evidence were unchallenged by McElligott in his argument against attribution, and they do address his concerns about shared vocabulary, in that the counterfeits were tonally and structurally different. Furthermore, McElligott agrees with at least Nedham's authorship of several issues until January 1649 when he was forced to flee from London.²³ Hence, for this chapter, I have accepted Peacey's attributions for the purposes of my analysis.

A fellow veteran of newsbooks, Samuel Sheppard was a writer and probably a Presbyterian minister based in London. While he had parliamentary leanings and thought highly of Cromwell, Charles's capture in 1646 provoked him to

Politics in Early Modern England: Essays Presented to David Underdown, eds. Susan Amussen and Mark Kishlansky (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 315-6.

²⁰ Jason Peacey, "'The counterfeit silly curr': Money, Politics, and the Forging of Royalist Newspapers during the English Civil War', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 67:1 (2004), pp. 50-6.

²¹ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, pp. 99-105.

²² Peacey, 'The counterfeit silly curr', pp. 33-5.

²³ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 115.

write for the royalists.²⁴ He penned a play titled *The Committee-Man Curried* in 1647, which portrayed parliamentarians as corrupt individuals, and he contributed to the writing and editing of various royalist newsbooks including the *Mercurius Melancholicus*, *Pragmaticus*, *Elencticus*, and more. It is difficult to ascertain the extent of Sheppard's involvement and his role in many of these publications. He was imprisoned in June 1648 and released by the end of July.²⁵ Raymond identified Samuel Sheppard as the author of the four-issue revival of *Mercurius Aulicus* in 1648, and Peacey has separately determined that Sheppard was responsible for a series of counterfeit *Pragmaticus* issues in February 1649.²⁶ We thus use these samples for the purpose of our analysis.

George Wharton, whose almanacs we examined previously, first began editing *Mercurius Elencticus* with Sheppard in 1647. Without his own sources at Westminster, his issues were filled with attacks on Parliamentary astrologers, more so than the news itself. Frank noted his 'long-winded' style, 'feeble' poetry and the 'intrusive' use of classical allusions.²⁷ Raymond similarly summarised Wharton's work as 'pedantic and dull' compared to other writers.²⁸ For our analysis I have chosen to focus on the set of seven consecutive issues of *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, which were published in January and February 1649.²⁹ Peacey has previously ascertained that Wharton was most likely the writer of

²⁴ Hyder E. Rollins, 'Samuel Sheppard and His Praise of Poets', *Modern Philology* 24:4 (1927), p. 520.

²⁵ Andrew King, 'Sheppard, Samuel (c. 1624–1655?), writer', *ODNB*, 23 Sept 2004; online edn, 23 Sept 2004 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25347>, accessed 8 June 2019].

²⁶ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 61; Peacey, 'The counterfeit silly curr', p. 36.

²⁷ Frank, *Beginnings*, pp. 141–2.

²⁸ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 57.

²⁹ Conversely, *Mercurius Elencticus* ended its run on 9 January 1649, and there are only two post-regicide issues possibly by Wharton, the later one being an exact copy of Wharton's *Pragmaticus*. Frank, *Beginnings*, pp. 163–4; Peacey, 'The counterfeit silly curr', pp. 35–6.

these newsbooks, with its last issue being exactly the same as the week's issue of *Elencticus*.³⁰

Pre-regicide

Structural decline

In the first issues of *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, Nedham sketched out a picture of England beset by structural decline and the destruction of old institutions. In his first publication of the *Pragmaticus* in September 1647, Nedham explained the decline as the result of a country seeking novelty. Before the troubles when 'we liv'd in Peace', the English felt that 'A King would not content us'. They thus 'hire[d] the Scot to all-be-Parliament us', and hence 'downe went King and Bishops' ostensibly to 'advance the Crowne and Kirke'. This continued to spiral into further decline when the Church was 'Rob'd' and the Crown 'sold'. Now England saw a 'more Religious sort' taking over to 'crush the Jockies downe'; the descent into trouble begetting even more trouble.³¹ He embellished this account in a later volume of *Pragmaticus*, incorporating a cyclical explanation of the descent into civil war. He observed how 'Long Peace' brought about 'a Plentie', and 'Plentie brought forth Pride', through which came 'Faction' where 'men were set in Parties to divide'. The offending faction was 'the new-form'd Priests' who 'first led the way', saying 'it was no Sin by Force to drive the King away'. With the consent of 'the Citie' and 'the Lords and Commons', the Church

³⁰ Peacey, 'The counterfeit silly curr', pp. 35-6. Peacey cites his arrest in March 1649 based on Wharton's ODNB entry, but the entry only states an arrest on 13 March 1648, subsequent escape on 26 August 1648, and a re-arrest in November 1649. Capp, 'Wharton, Sir George'.

³¹ Marchamont Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus Communicating Intelligence from all Parts, touching all Affaires, Designes, Humours, and Conditions, throughout the Kingdome, especially from Westminster and the Head-quarters*. ([s.n., 1647-1649]), 369.101, E.407[39], sig. A1r.

went down in an effort to 'advance the Publique Faith'. This finally led to 'a Warre and Taxes' that 'inslave[d] a free-borne People'. This would then continue, resulting in the destruction of both 'Crown and Steeple'.³² In these accounts, Nedham sketched a history of repeated mistakes over the past decade that were leading England into a death spiral. England would eventually lose everything, including its king and its Church.

If the past was littered with mistakes, the present situation was nothing less than hellish. The 'Monsters which are told in story' were 'risen now no less prodigious, than of old'. The biblical evil men 'Cain and Judas' had returned 'in Visards most divine', and they were now feeding 'upon a Kingdom's Curse, and prey[ing] upon the King'.³³ The streets were now ringing with 'loud Cries of Oppression', 'while Theeves... walk[ed] in Goldenchaines, and pick-pockers passe[d] for the only Statesmen'. Nedham recommended that the reader 'be drunk with spleene' as 'the madnese of this Age require[d] so desperate a Cure'. Yet he professed that he was 'not angry': he was filled only with 'pitty' for the men responsible who 'dreame that vengeance sleeps' while they do their evil on the country.³⁴ Despite the dire state of the nation, Nedham remained confident that the evil would be punished for their crimes, and that justice would be meted out eventually.

In his survey of royalist newsbooks, McElligott observed how royalists used polemic based on nature, focusing on the role of hierarchy and fixity. Rebelling against the king was as unnatural as trying to usurp the sun, which both Charles

³² Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.103, E.410[4], sig. C1r.

³³ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.107, E.412[16], sig. G1r.

³⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.107, E.412[16], sigs. G1r-v.

I and Charles II were compared to.³⁵ On the other hand, Parliamentarians were 'pests and noxious animals', and commonly compared to 'caterpillars' and the Egyptian plague. Such 'figural oppositions' clearly placed the rebels as anathema to the proper natural order, to be eliminated before England could prosper once more.³⁶ McElligott notes how these metaphors were not necessarily internally consistent or even logically sound. Their power lay in 'evok[ing] hopeful associations and emotions'.³⁷ In the same way, these temporal metaphors provided for readers an easy way to understand how England found itself in a civil war. While the idea of a death spiral did not induce hope, it could at least provide a sense of direction and certainty to readers, and writers like Nedham could offer suggestions and solutions. By framing the situation temporally, they could offer the royalist cause as the antidote to England's troubles.

Explaining the present

Nedham presented the current situation as part of a longer planned descent into chaos and godlessness. The present state of immorality was the goal of the new government at hand. Enemies both internal and external were working to create a new godless England by tearing the old England down. It was the 'Scot and Jesuite' who first 'joyn'd in hand' to preach that 'Subjects ought to have Command, and Princes to Obey'. 'The Scotch-man' then went on to declare that to have 'No Bishop' was 'a godly thing', and also promoted the reformation of state 'by Murther', whereas the Independent 'resolve[d] to have No Church'. With the 'King Dethron'd', the 'Subjects bleed' and 'the Church [has] no abroad'.

³⁵ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 52.

³⁶ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, pp. 53-5.

³⁷ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 53.

Nedham concluded by surmising that these antagonists were 'all agreed, that sure there is No God'.³⁸ The new government and the society it wished to create would be Godless, with no space for king or the faithful. This was echoed in his volume over Christmas 1647, where Nedham bemoaned how 'the Crowne is vanish't with our Quiet', and where he bid 'Christmas farewell' since it and other 'merry-daies [were] done' with the new regime. These individuals would 'keep Feasts all the yeere', leaving 'Our Saviour' with 'none'. In other words, the regime had usurped religion in the country and placed its own agenda in the centre of public life.³⁹

By Christmas the next year the situation became personally dire to the King, and Nedham was described a world already changed beyond recognition. He lamented that 'Gone are those Golden daies of yore, when Christmas was an high day'. Christmas itself was 'turn'd into good Friday', such that the happy day 'when the King of Kings was borne' bringing 'Salvation' was turned by the regime into a sad one, where 'they [strove] to Crucifie in scorne his Vice Roy, and their King'. The 'ancient Feast' had now been 'put down' and replaced with an appetite 'of a Crown, [and] Princes in Sacrifice'. In this time 'No Pow'ers [were] safe' and 'Treason's a Tilt', where the 'mad Sainted Elves boast, where Royall blood is spilt'. These previously subordinate figures would 'all be Kings Themselves' in this new world.⁴⁰ In this changed world hierarchy had disappeared and nothing was revered. This state of affairs was so dire that even the Dutch had 'a compassionate Resentment' for Charles, while other sovereign states worried about 'so dangerous a Precedent against Soveraign Princes'.⁴¹ The

³⁸ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.105, E.411[8], p. 33.

³⁹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.115, E.421[15], sig. P1r.

⁴⁰ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.239a, E.477[30], sig. Eee1r.

⁴¹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.239a, E.477[30], sig. Eee3v.

dystopian future predicted in 1647 was already coming true, and Nedham set out to warn his readers of what was to come.

Warnings of dystopia

In the near future, the new government would erode all past norms and turn England into a military state. Nedham advised that 'if some may have their will', 'the time must come... when the Supreme Councell shall be devoured by the Councell generall'. The 'three Estates' – 'Royall, Ecclesiasticall, and Civill' – would be '[shrunk] into the Military'. Power would 'be translated from Corporations, Mayors, and Constables, into Garrisons, Colonells, & Marshalls'. Nedham remarked that this was the obvious outcome that would come to pass, since 'the Corner-stone of this new Common-wealth is laid by a Vote for 30000. standing Forces'.⁴² With the Army making the decisions, Nedham warned it was only time before England would lose its norms and turn into a rule by the sword.

Writing in November 1647, Nedham set out a potential date for this destruction. Observing how Parliament was to be dissolved in September 1648, he warned the Commons and Lords to 'amend before September' when 'your Souldiers Swords shall then you All dismember'. This was a punishment from God who 'guards the Royall-Seat' and is the King's 'Avenger'. In God's mercy, the members were given 'Time and Day to cast Accompts', before 'one by one' they would be made to 'soundly pay'.⁴³ The elected assembly that replaced the Houses would deliver the wishes of 'the giddy multitude (that monstrous Beast)' in all matters, which would spell disaster for the nation. With different

⁴² Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.104, E.410[19], sig. D1v.

⁴³ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.108, E.413[8], p. 57.

interests and 'severall Parties' disagreeing, 'those which are strongest shall carry it, and cut off the heads of those in Parliament that are not of their owne Opinion', and hence 'farewell Peace forever'. Other consequences included the end of monarchy, since 'it is not an earthly man that must reigne upon this holy-hill of Zion', and the end of 'all Lawes', since 'they will never agree what Lawes to retain' or come to any agreement on new laws, 'unlesse... the soueraigne Hob-nailes will drive all one way, and so come to a miraculous agreement'. Furthermore, the representatives would follow what 'their Consciencs dictate to be the will and minde of God... [to] knock downe all Order and Government in the Church'.⁴⁴ The 'Lords and Gentry' too were to disappear, since 'no Tenure, Estate, Charter, Degree, Birth or Place' will be used to 'conferre any exemption from the ordinary course' of the law.⁴⁵ Nedham set out this dystopic vision to explain the ramifications of Parliament's plans for the future, predicting both a painful end for the current members as well as a sorry and lawless condition for England in the coming year. This was to be 'another kind of Government than the Kingly', wherein 'the King, whom they reckon but for one of their Officers of State', was not above the law but 'shall be called to an Accompt'.⁴⁶ Thus the regime was 'very busie in drawing up an Impeachment' against the King, led by men 'of Cain's persuasion' whose 'Iniquities are more then can be forgiven'. These men were now 'follow[ing] the example of [Ben Jonson's] *Catiline*' in 'attempting greater' sins to keep 'safe' their 'Ills', which would only spell future disaster for monarchy and England in general.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.108, E.413[8], p. 62

⁴⁵ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.108, E.413[8], p. 63.

⁴⁶ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.108, E.413[8], p. 63.

⁴⁷ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.108, E.413[8], p. 63.

As McElligott has observed, Royalist newsbooks did not harp on the king's humiliations while in captivity. They knew that their target audience would be swayed by the argument that ancient laws and liberties were at stake, and that the king was their best defence against the rebels. Charles stood against the rebels' innovations and would rather die than allow the rebels to run amok with their army.⁴⁸ In February 1648, *Pragmaticus* sketched out a future of constant conflict. The English would suffer as slaves, as the Indians did under the Spaniards. Parliament, having gained power through the Army, would also never disband the latter. The English could only expect 'Robbery, rapes, and Warres' to come, until Charles was restored to power.⁴⁹ These would not have convinced those who lived under royalist control during the First Civil War, but would have appealed to Londoners who lived under the rebels and with their taxes.⁵⁰ The newsbooks could not and did not promise that Charles would keep his promises.⁵¹

Nedham warned that the persecution of Charles portended trouble for Parliament themselves and their allies. If the Army and its supporters could 'but crush [Charles]', they would similarly 'squeeze [MPs] to some purpose'. Once Charles was 'down, and the Adjutators become [their] Soveraignes, [they] shall know no Law but that of the Sword'. Furthermore, these new overlords were already 'peeping into the Stocks of [their] several Halls and Companies', eyeing

⁴⁸ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, pp. 88-90.

⁴⁹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, 369.120, E.424[7], sig. 2v, cited in McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, pp. 90-1.

⁵⁰ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 90. This betrays the newsbooks' metropolitan focus.

⁵¹ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 91. McElligott also comments that, with the stereotype that Charles was untrustworthy, the authors preferred not to discuss Charles and promises.

the MPs' wealth in anticipation.⁵² The Army would also take over London and eliminate its ancient liberties. Its previous quartering 'in the Suburbs, even in the King's own House and Stables' was an attempt to 'trie the Pulses of the City'. In their attempt 'to inslave the Kingdome', they had made the City 'jaded out of al their Priviledges', and they would soon attempt to 'suddenly remove] their Liberties and Estates' too 'when the Lawes of the Kingdome must give place to that of the Sword'. Then, we would witness 'a brave world', where the 'Lord Mayor's horse shall be mounted by a Trooper', and the Mayor 'himsel[e] ridden by a Governor', the 'Guild-Hall ... made [into] a Store-house' and 'the Aldermen but Collectors of Contribution'. Even the citizens themselves would lose their property, with their houses becoming 'Inne[s]' and the people themselves becoming hosts and providing 'Capons and Cawdles' to 'our free borne Conquerors'.⁵³ Nedham placed this threat in the immediate horizon of his readers, warning them that should the current trajectory continue, disaster would befall his readers in London. As Nedham argued, 'for now or never, the Foundation of our New Jerusalem must be laid', and London was the best spot since it has long been sympathetic and supportive with 'so many warm mentions'.⁵⁴ The City's past support had doomed it to be the starting base of the Army's rule by the sword, and Nedham, promoting himself as a helpful messenger, was warning the City of its own dire future.

In the first of four newsbooks published in August 1648, Samuel Sheppard struck a similar tone about London's coming punishment. He described the regime as monsters that were devouring those responsible for creating it:

⁵² Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.109a, E.414[15], sig. I4v.

⁵³ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.118a, E.423[2], sig. S4r.

⁵⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.118a, E.423[2], sig. S4r

London was now 'with Child', fathered by 'a pretty witty Independent lad'. These 'monstrous Hydra's', numbering 'no lesse then thousands at one birth' were about to 'tare' through 'their Mother[s] ... bowels'. Their arrival would doom both 'the Puritanicke' and 'the old Presbyterian pimp', who had brought 'the Independent' in only to 'cuckold him'. Together, they were 'a cursed brook' who were trying 'to lick a Tyrant lumpe into a forme Majestick'. These people were also 'damned Quackes' who asked for 'more blood, more blood' to relieve 'a Feaver' through 'a bloody sweat or bleeding drench'. They prescribed that the 'Head' be 'well bled', and then 'the body' to 'soundly bleed to free the Head agen'. Sheppard differed from Nedham in that he saw no future where London could avoid its destruction. As the mother of these 'Bastards', London was equally 'damn'd'. If their creation, their 'Mammon', did not destroy London, Charles himself 'must... without thee', or he would 'nere raigne agen'.⁵⁵ In other words, London was destined for destruction. The 'Heavens have decreed' that these 'Traytours... must adjourne from Earth to sit below... [in] Hell'. It was Sheppard's express purpose to bring the news of their impending destruction 'from the angry skie', as 'Thunderd from Joves supreamall Majesty'.⁵⁶

Charles's fate was intertwined with the country's, and the first step towards a safer future was through Charles's reinstallation. Already at present, the country was set adrift in a 'Storme' of 'Factions' that 'Billowed, rage and tosse' bringing 'Death [with] ev'ry Wave'. Without a 'Pilot' in the form of the king, 'our Sun and Moone no beames create' and the 'Stars [were] disperst'. The king's demise would bring about the demise of the country itself: 'such as was his, will be our

⁵⁵ Samuel Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus. Communicating Intelligence from sll Parts of the Kingdome, especially from Westminster, and the Head-quarters*. ([s.n.], 1648), 274.1, E.457[5], p. 1.

⁵⁶ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 2.

Fate, we must all Shipwrack't be'.⁵⁷ Hence, to save the country, one had to save Charles first. As Nedham reminded his readers, 'wee all fare as well as our King', who was 'the most unfortunate (though the most Rational, Pious, Gracious, and Conscientious) of all men living'.⁵⁸ His imprisonment and incapacitation would bring disaster to the state. While 'Princes may be, like other men, imprison'd and kept under a while', like 'Fire in Clouds' that eventually 'appeare in Thunder... so Monarchs, by their own confin'd, cause Earth-quakes in the State'.⁵⁹ Punishment would also come to the regime if they persisted in their 'heav'nly Cause'. This had first begun with 'noble Strafford's blood', and the rebels seemed determined that the cause 'must now on the King's [blood] be founded'.⁶⁰ He warned them that they would suffer a similarly fatal fate should they try, for 'Kings are Gods on earth', and that 'those which pull them downe' will suffer 'no lesse than Death' in 'temper[ing] with a Crowne'.⁶¹

A 'novel' regime

To convince his readers that the regime's plans were bad for them, Nedham constantly alluded to the new Cromwellian regime as a new Israel. In his account of debates in Parliament to nominate 'the chiefe Officers of England and Ireland', he remarked on how 'the government of old Israel' was being 'set up in our new', wherein 'Cromwell and Peters' were akin to 'Moses and Aaron', who

⁵⁷ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.116, E.421[29], sig. Q1r.

⁵⁸ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.116, E.421[29], sig. Q4v. Nedham also attempted, probably unconvincingly, to declare the people's love for Charles: 'His Sepulcher will be in the hearts of this present Age'. Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.116, E.421[29], sig. Q4v.

⁵⁹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.117, E.422[17], sig. R1r. Nedham is unclear on whether this was to be a real seismic event or a metaphorical earthquake in the polity. It may be that he intended for readers to fear both.

⁶⁰ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.118a, E.423[2], sig. S1r.

⁶¹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.118a, E.423[2], sig. S1r.

were 'assisted by the Adjutors as the seventy Elders'.⁶² This 'new Israel' was being set up in 'the same frame as the old', namely in having 'no King' and where 'every man did what was right in his own eyes'. This 'new Commonwealth' was to be 'a brave world', where 'the Saints Rampant reduced our wives, our daughters, our Estates into a holy community'.⁶³ This was to be a kingless communal society based on the ostensibly scriptural justifications, including that 'marriage was but an Ordinance typicall to the first Adam, and is now abolished in the second', or that the term 'Subject was a heathenish invention' that meant monarchy was heathenish as well.⁶⁴

Furthermore, to build the new regime England had to be destroyed. In describing a new 'Agreement of the People' in December 1648, he commented that this treatise was 'the Corner-stone... of the new Building', which itself 'must be raised out of the ruines of King, parliament, and Kingdome.' This 'whimzybras' would lead to 'the rooting up of Monarchy, and the Fundamentalls of Parliament', while 'destroying the Lawyers for Vermin' and removing 'al the ancient Course and Courts of Iustice'. The Church would be turned 'Topsy-turvy by an universall tolleration of Athesm, Heresy & Impiety'.⁶⁵ Nedham mocked this idea of a new government, calling it a 'golden Age' where 'King Cromwell (as Iohn Lilburne called him)' would defraud the nation by raising taxes for the Army.⁶⁶ England would be unrecognisable once the new regime had remade the country into an alien society.

⁶² Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.103, E.410[4], sig. C4r.

⁶³ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.109a, E.414[15], sig. I1v.

⁶⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.109a, E.414[15], sig. I1v.

⁶⁵ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.238a, E.476[35], sig. Ddd3v.

⁶⁶ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.103, E.410[4], sig. C2v.

Sheppard spoke of the present age from the vantage of the future. Like Nedham, he established the atrocious nature of the regime. This age was a 'prity age', wherein 'justice [was] turned into injury, piety into perjury'. The people's 'lives and liberties' were now in 'the hands of a most odious and detestable pack of rebellious Traytours'. The regime was such a malice that if God had 'thought of a Parliament' to punish the 'Pharoahs obstinancy', he would not have 'needed... to have sent such swarme of lice and flies'; 'one such Darby house Iuncto' would have been enough to drive the Pharoah 'out of himself, and his Kingdome too'. Sheppard opined that having committed such atrocities, 'this Parliament' should live on as 'a Proverbe and a by-word' for the English 'to posterity'. He hoped that 'the name of this Parliament' would be used 'for ever' as a 'bull-beare, and hobgoblin to fright and amaze children'.⁶⁷ In doing so, Sheppard focused attention on the future, picturing how future generations would remember the regime as a warning from the past. He described the regime's actions in verse, comparing them to Icarus with 'their wings of wax', which would 'melt like snow [and] burne like the purer flax', before plunging 'headlong'. He called on the future authority to 'name a River to memoriall' so that 'fame may show to our Posterity' the ignominious deaths of 'those monsters of disloyalty'.⁶⁸ He envisioned how future generations would remember and mythologize this singular present moment and the Civil War. This was a perspective from a future time, and one that distinguished itself from the present. It was a time when the regime only existed in memory, and its actions served only to discourage future rebels.

⁶⁷ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 3

⁶⁸ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 7.

By creating this temporal distance between the present and this imagined future, Sheppard insinuated that the present regime was on the verge of collapse. In all four issues of these newsbooks, he declared on the title page that these were 'Printed in the week, in which the Saints looke bleake, 1648'. In all except the fourth issue, Sheppard defied convention by not printing the week the issues were covering.⁶⁹ Joad Raymond observed that this type of subversion of typographic convention was popularised by play-pamphlets. For example, a series of three such pamphlets from April to May 1648, titled *Mistris Parliament*, were 'Printed in the yeer of the Downfall of the Sectaries' or 'Printed in the Yeer of the Saints fear'. Similarly, *The Parliaments Scrich-Owle* from June 1648 was 'Printed in the first year of the decease of King Oliver 1648'.⁷⁰ While Raymond has highlighted the satirical aspects and the recursive relationship between newsbooks and play-pamphlets, the temporal implications of these pronouncements are unmistakable when placed in newsbooks. The play-pamphlets were not bound to a periodic publishing schedule, unlike newsbooks. Since the *Aulicus* was printed weekly, it is reasonable to expect readers to know that the latest issue would cover the most recent week or fortnight, hence less need to inscribe the issue's date range. However, Sheppard also expected this series of newsbooks to be collated into a larger publication, as evidenced by the running page number across all four issues. It is likely that Sheppard's break with convention stemmed from a desire to make a statement about the precariousness of the regime's position. The end was coming for them, and hence every week signified a potential turning point for royalists and the restoration of monarch. By refusing to date his publications, Sheppard was not

⁶⁹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 1; 274.2, E.458[24], p. 9; 274.3, E.460[9], p. 17; 274.4, E.461[5], p. 25.

⁷⁰ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 205.

simply indulging in satire; each weekly issue highlighted the fluidity of the present-day and the potential for a new future.

There is evidence of Sheppard's desire to focus on what was to come rather than the past. He elected not to pursue an 'exact narration of... so fatall an History' of the regime, believing that their present 'wofull conditions' were instructive enough in this regard. Instead, he chose to 'show' how the regime was 'now on the highest pinnacles of their Babell', and how 'they may now pack up their tooles' and leave their project 'lest a halter be brought them instead of a hatchet'.⁷¹ Now that they were at their peak of their hubris, 'the height and depth of this their joyalty', these malefactors were seeking to save their skin as their schemes collapsed around them. The people, through the 'vox populi', were 'ready to cut them short of... their momentary pompe'.⁷² They were in 'a declining condition' and doomed by its own hubris.⁷³ The 'forgers of the cause' had spent 'almost eight yeares' to create 'a pretty Antimonarchiall Idoll', and they 'now' sought to 'give it life' in the fashion of 'Prometheus', even if the venture would 'endanger their own' lives'.⁷⁴ Sheppard proclaimed himself 'unwilling to unmaske any of [the regime] in particular', even though 'they [were] still dying their tongues in bloodred blasphemy'. However, he warned that 'Heaven and earth [were] now provoked against them', and now that they had been 'weighed in the ballance, and found too light', they must decline. With 'one King... much more worth ten thousand mechanick Rebels', it was clear that 'Monarchy must overturne the scale'.⁷⁵ Sheppard thus expressed confidence

⁷¹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], pp. 3-4.

⁷² Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 11.

⁷³ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 6.

⁷⁴ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 3.

⁷⁵ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 6.

that the regime would fall, and monarchy would surely return to its proper place. This would also be effected through 'the common people', who tire of the infection that was the regime. Sheppard predicted that the people would 'shake off these quotidian agues, and perennial feavours' that they were suffering and had left them 'bedrid' for 'so long'. He was confident that 'in time', the people would 'cuagle the disease into a remedy'.⁷⁶ The regime was not even fit to be called a parliament. They were 'a meere Monster without a head', a group of 'perjured impeached villaines' made of 'schisme and sedition, incorporated with rebellion' as well as 'ignorance, and misgrounded zeale'.⁷⁷ Thus Sheppard was confident that the people themselves would rise against the regime. The English would not let these rebels 'gull' them of their 'God', 'goods', 'King', 'Lawes', 'liberty and property'. They would 'whip and strip them, hawke and hunt them', and 'destroy them'.⁷⁸

According to Sheppard, in 'the little Globe of our English Microcosme', the decent and 'true byrds of the feather' were already 'hooting and hunting the dismall Owle of our accursed night', the creature responsible for 'cloud[ing] the dawning of our Aurora' and 'obscur[ing] Phoebus' and its light.⁷⁹ In this view, the regime was an aberration of the natural order of things. Their rule was also a transient one, with the polity reverting to the norm and eliminating the regime akin to how a body recovers from an illness, and to the inevitable daybreak at the end of night.

⁷⁶ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 11.

⁷⁷ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 10.

⁷⁸ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 10.

⁷⁹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 12.

Sheppard's accounts of news from the front supported such an optimistic view. The siege of Colchester was holding out against a tiring Parliamentary army, the 'Northern affaires promise[d] good success to the regall party', and the royalists defeated 'Lambert and all the lamb-like Wolves under his command', killing over '800. of his Saints'.⁸⁰ Furthermore, a Scottish army had joined up with 'Sir Marmaduke Langdale' in order 'to inthroned his Majesty, and to pluck downe Independency'.⁸¹ In light of Charles's supposed triumphant return, Sheppard warned Londoners that they now had the chance to make amends. He observed that they would 'not crave pardon' until 'they [were] forced to do it with ropes about their necks'. He declared that 'the time approacheth nigh', for the 'Tyrants' will soon 'no longer... rule Sols bright carre, nor guide the day', and 'the Gods shall thunder them at once to Hell'. Hence, he suggested that Londoners 'addresse [them]selved to his Majesty' before 'the sunne be set of [their] everlasting doome'. By returning to Charles's side, the king would 'bury all [their] former Acts in oblivion'.⁸² This logic seemed clear to 'the Kingdome', which had begun 'to see that there can be no end to these happy distractions, nor settlement of a firme and stable government' with Parliament and the Army in charge. He backed this assertion with a recent anecdote, where 'William Lenthall Speaker of the House of Commons' was chased and 'hunted about the streets' by ordinary people, including 'Oysterwomen, Apple-women, and yong boyes'. Lenthall was saved by 'four File of Musketeers', whose intervention stopped 'his braines' from being 'beat out'. Sheppard ended with an exhortation to 'ye Samsons' to 'rise... and at once destroy these perjur'd villaines which this

⁸⁰ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 7.

⁸¹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], pp. 7-8.

⁸² Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 13.

Land annoy', 'cursed rebels [of] such a damned kinde' the likes of which they would not find even in 'all Hell'.⁸³

A precarious regime

Nedham also spun a similar narrative of an unstable regime, reassuring his readers that the regime was susceptible to even the smallest shock, especially from the Army. In November 1647 he described how the regime neglected to deal with Charles because 'Peace is the least thing they aime at'. Instead, their 'chiefe care' was to 'keep faire with the Army' so they could 'pick up the Profit of the whole Kingdome'. When a letter detailing Colonel Hewson's regiment and its order 'to March into the City to Quarter' came to their attention, Nedham recounted their hasty attempt to forestall their progress. He remarked on the precarious nature of their hold of power, invoking 'the wheele of Fortune' to explain 'how a single Letter, intimating but the Advance of one poore Regiment [made] 'em shiver and Trot'.⁸⁴

Similarly, in Sheppard's view the regime's demise was as natural as natural phenomena. Writing metaphorically, he described how 'from thickned ayre strange starr's appear[ed]', which now 'threat[ened] shipwracke to our State'. Continuing with the natural metaphors, he cited 'Plague' and 'comets' as signs that 'th' immortall Gods' themselves were 'at oddes' with the regime.⁸⁵ The stars and heavenly bodies boded well:

And if a spiffy and gloomy horrizon deceive not my observation, I never saw setting-Sun promise a fairer day; Charles his Waine circumvend with a more bright stelliferous traine; whilst the fallant North-starre seemeth to direct the hopelesse Marriner to his wished Port; and each star with

⁸³ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], pp. 15-16.

⁸⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.110a, E.416[19], pp. 7-8.

⁸⁵ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 9.

other reflecting their most delectable brightnesse on Queen Lunas Carre, beautifying the Atlantical Pole with an unexpected glory, enlightening earths darkest dungeon with a more transcendent light then before.⁸⁶

Sheppard was not known to have astrological leanings. He decried astrologers and their art, even though he collaborated with George Wharton on *Mercurius Elencticus*.⁸⁷ Nonetheless, Sheppard made the point with these celestial allusions that England had only good fortune in its immediate future in the form of a failing regime.

Sheppard also referred to members of the regime as 'bloody regicides', and he argued that 'guiltlesse bloud' had already been spilled and was crying for 'vengeance'. The 'miseries' of the kingdom were 'thus destin'd', and 'nought but bloud, [could] bloud appease'. In order to 'free our land [and] procure our peace', the English had to 'Hang up those Rogues' of the regime. Only with this blood 'sacrifice' would 'th'incensed Dieties' be appeased'.⁸⁸ It is striking that Sheppard used the term regicides to describe members of the regime for two reasons. First, the event that paved the way for the regicide, Colonel Pride's purge of Parliament, would not occur for another four months. Peace treaty negotiations were also underway, even though Sheppard decried these talks as 'flattering whirlwinds' aimed at co-opting royalists.⁸⁹ McElligott notes how regicide had been used as a scare tactic in royalist propaganda 'since the very start of the 1640s'. Even in early 1648, it is unclear whether the royalist newsbooks believed regicide was actually possible.⁹⁰ While they wrote that the rebels were seeking to murder the king from the very beginning, McElligott

⁸⁶ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 12.

⁸⁷ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 193; Andrew King, 'Sheppard, Samuel', ODNB.

⁸⁸ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], p. 9.

⁸⁹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.1, E.457[5], p. 6.

⁹⁰ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 87.

concludes that it was more likely just a rhetorical tactic to raise the stakes and slander the parliamentarians. The royalist authors probably only realised the regicide was a real possibility at the end of 1648.⁹¹ As Sean Kelsey has shown, many of those who signed Charles's death warrant were only convinced in the days leading up to the event itself.⁹² It is safe to say that the regicide was impossible before Pride's Purge, which was instigated in the real fear of a settlement with Charles. Second, the rationale of blood guilt used by supporters of the Army against Charles was used here to indict the regime itself. Charles's blood had certainly not been spilled, thus Sheppard would have been referring to other innocent blood. He did think, or at least portrayed, the regime as capable of killing Charles. He laid out their plans thus:

For a King is not so soone massacred as imagined, a Crowne so soone devoured as desired, a freeborne people so soon enslaved, as a hide bound Assembly of villaines would have them so: They'l fall short of those golden Mountaines they proposed to themselves, their raigne is but short, the scales turned, the Saints droupe, and drop like dung on the Earth.⁹³

In this account, the regime was set on villainous acts of tyranny and atrocities like regicide, the abolishment of monarchy, and the enslavement of the English. However, these plans would not materialise because the regime would not survive long enough to see these plans through.

According to Nedham, the regime itself was aware of its own frailty. He recounted how 'the Houses [debated]... an Ordinance... for security to the Souldiers upon Bishops, Forrest-lands, Excise' and other forms of income. This

⁹¹ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 88.

⁹² Clive Holmes summarises Kelsey's arguments in Holmes, 'The Trial and Execution of Charles I', pp. 289-316.

⁹³ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24], pp.11-12.

was because 'it [was] not impossible but the Tide may turne with the humors of the People in short time', and the regime and its supporters would have 'little Security'. As Nedham argued, such legislation was an acknowledgement by the regime that their power was fleeting.⁹⁴ In his commentary on the appointment of Rainsborough as the Vice-Admiral of the Navy in January 1648, Nedham interpreted the event in a similar way. The regime was 'providing against a rainy day', such that 'when the storme begins upon Land', the regime need not 'seeke of Shipping for transportation'. When this storm does come to pass, the regime would evacuate to the Americas 'to catch Whales, and convert the Nations, and set up their new government among the Bevers and Monkies'. This new 'Sanctuary for all the oppressed' would 'take up a Wildernesse-condition' and their people would 'wander abroad to doe penance... in Sheepe-skins and Goat-skins', even up to 'the fourth generation'.⁹⁵ This allusion to Moses leading the Jews to Canaan was no doubt sarcastic on Nedham's part, itself playing on the self-professed saintliness of his opponents in the regime. Nevertheless, he was here portraying a regime in crisis, with its leaders themselves cognisant enough to try and safeguard their own future against the regime's inevitable decline.

The regime was ill-fated because it did not have a central unifying force. Nedham conceded that this 'new Kingdome may last' for 'some such time' through some 'old patching and contriving to tack the Limbs of it together... [to] make it a solid Body'. However he argued that this effort was ultimately ill-fated and 'can never be done' because 'a dozen Factions' could not be reconciled 'into one opinion and designe', as much as 'all humours' could not be made 'into the

⁹⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.115, E.421[15], sig. P3r.

⁹⁵ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.118a, E.423[2], sig. S2r.

same nature' or 'all Elements into one'.⁹⁶ Laws, upon which 'many thousand particular persons' and their 'livelyhood[s]' depended, would be unsettled and confused by the constant change from factional politics.⁹⁷ These factions were currently united in fighting the English people, 'their malice smother[ing], and prey[ing] on us'. However even now the factions were beginning to bicker. Nedham published in December 1648 the matter of Colonel Eyers 'the Governor (and a prime Leveller)' refusing to 'yield [Charles] up' to Parliament. He took this as evidence that 'next they'll devour each other'.⁹⁸ Ambition and jealousy would bring 'no end of Rebellion', with 'every aspiring person' using 'the same principles and pretences' against the 'last Rebels attained to dominion'. According to Nedham, this was exactly what happened in England in the past, and an indication of its possible future. The King and the Houses 'quarrel'd' on 'the same Terms' that 'the Army [do] now with the Houses, in defiance of their authority'. Following that, if 'the Grandees of the Army... establish themselves in the intended Tyranny' and justify it with 'the same Principle of changing Government at the pleasure of the People', 'in a short time' others 'of the same aspiring humor' would use the same logic to overthrow the Grandees themselves. Without hereditary kings that bring about 'peaceable Government', England would be doomed to 'groan under the burden of successive Tyrants, and [to] be tormented with Vsurpation upon Vsurpation, and Rebellion upon Rebellion in Infinitum'.⁹⁹ Nedham presented his readers with two possible Englands, one on a path to self-ruination and eternal misery, and the other a

⁹⁶ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.118a, E.423[2], sig. S1v.

⁹⁷ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.236, E.476[2], sig. Ccc1v.

⁹⁸ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.238a, E.476[35], sig. Ddd4v.

⁹⁹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.236, E.476[2], sig. Ccc1v.

tried-and-tested system of monarchy, a stable predictable system where power was passed through blood.

Confidence in eventual justice

Nedham was confident that 'now we must have Peace againe'. Consoling those who found themselves 'vext' by the situation, he argued that monarchy would soon be restored, 'For, if without the King these [regimes] reigne, then high down they goe next'. Peace and stability would return eventually, because a government without a king would lead to its own destruction.¹⁰⁰ Their downfall would come within the readers' lifetime; Nedham declared that 'He that does live, shall see another Age', wherein the 'Follies' of Parliament were 'stript and whipt upon the Stage'.¹⁰¹ Responding to Parliament's attempt to censor him, Nedham expressed how he was unafraid because he was 'confident of [his] own strength in the Justice of [his] Cause'. He added that 'those who have opprest all Royall men' would only 'bee conquer'd by a Loyall pen'.¹⁰² Similarly, Nedham was confident that Charles would eventually return to power. Like Christ, Charles was 'crucifi'd' and 'as dead, is gone away'. However, through God, Charles would have a 'resurrection' in the form of 'a new Coronation-day'.¹⁰³ When Charles escaped from captivity in November 1647, Nedham proclaimed that 'in spite of all their Traps [Charles] shall shortly rule againe'.¹⁰⁴ The regime's attempt to keep their 'businnesse' under 'a continued silence' was also similarly doomed, for 'the truth whereof will appeare as bright as the Sunn'.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.101, E.407[39], sig. A1r.

¹⁰¹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.104, E.410[19], sig. D4v.

¹⁰² Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.105, E.411[8], p.40.

¹⁰³ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.109a, E.414[15], sig. I1r.

¹⁰⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.110a, E.416[19], p. 1, sig. K1r.

¹⁰⁵ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.113, E.419[22], sig. N3v.

Even though 'now the Crowne be theirs', as long as Charles had 'patience' and simple 'a while resigne', the crown 'shall be [his]' eventually.¹⁰⁶ Commenting on a session on Parliament when they brought 'Committee-men, and Treasurers to accompt', Nedham declared that the MPs themselves would be 'at leisure to give in theirs too at Doomsday'.¹⁰⁷

Even without visible signs, Nedham was convinced that providence was already working to indict the regime for its crimes. Writing in February 1648, he observed that though '[he sees] no visible hand upon the wall, writing their doome', he was confident that justice was coming:

me thinks I behold the finger of Providence, pointing their period in secret Characters and proclaiming to all the world that themselves and their actions are al found too light in the balance (as they suppose the same of his Majesty) and that their Kingdome is numbered and finished. Why is it else, that the hearts of the people are alienated from them in all parts of the Kingdom? The truth whereof would soon be manifested, if they had the same opportunity and means with the men of Pembroke-shire in Wales; who are resolved to stand it out to the last man for Kingly power, being backt with an impregnable Castle, and as resolute a Governour.¹⁰⁸

The garrison in Pembroke-shire were attuned to providence and God's wishes, thus supporting the King by holding out against the regime.¹⁰⁹ The people, in opposition to the leaders of the regime, knew the right course of history because they knew God's will. The regime is then the opposite: a Godless and unwise government that is pursuing the wrong path.

¹⁰⁶ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.120, E.424[7], sig. V4v.

¹⁰⁷ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.239a, E.477[30], sig. Eee3v.

¹⁰⁸ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.121, E.426[6], sig. X4v.

¹⁰⁹ This garrison was stationed in Pembroke Castle under Colonel John Poyer. My thanks to Professor Andrew Hopper for this information.

The destruction of the Engager Army at Preston by 19 August 1648 caused Sheppard to despair in his third newsbook of August:

Shall Charles our Noble King a vassall be, / To base borne Rebels, and
their Anarchy? / Shall London still be Bawd to these Damn'd slaves, /
Whose Mammon wracks our State on Stygian waves? / And shall free
Brittaines still in Bondage sleepe, / And be a prey to Wolves? (like simple
sheepe) / If this must be, come Pluto and thy Imps, / Forthwith confound
those selfe-inslaving Pimps: / Or else sweet Death convey us to thy
Cell, / Where we secure, may from such Tyrants dwell.¹¹⁰

In a world where the regime reigned triumphant, death was preferable. Yet even in the light of this defeat, Sheppard continued to mark the publication date as 'the weeke, in which the Saints looke bleake'.¹¹¹ Furthermore, he felt empowered to speak out, explaining his 'boldnes in this kind' as coming 'from an ardent desire... to undeceive' the people of England who were unable 'to judge aright... the goodnesse, either of [Charles's] Person, or government'. Such 'ignorant well-meaning people' had been 'seduced' by 'certaine Trybunes'. This was 'no marvell', because this was 'the most horrid Rebellion' that England had suffered 'since the Gospel first tooke roote in the Kingdome'.¹¹² Sheppard's tone was markedly less optimistic in this issue. Referring to the past, he observed how the 'English world' had been 'throwne... off the wheeles' by 'Reformation', while 'our new whimsies of Religion have ushered in the old principles of Rebellion and Treason'.¹¹³ The regime would seek only to impoverish the people and 'Make men forsake their God and Sovereigne too'. Hence, Sheppard wrote

¹¹⁰ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.3, E.460[9], p. 17. Once again, Sheppard neglected to date the issue. Thomason marked his copy 'August 22th'.

¹¹¹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.3, E.460[9], p. 17. Perhaps it was the laziness of the printer in neglecting to change the typesetting.

¹¹² Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.3, E.460[9], p. 18.

¹¹³ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.3, E.460[9], p. 19.

to 'send... a warning peece to forewarne' his readers 'of future dangers, which will inevitably ensue' should 'King Tom rise with conquest before Colchester'.¹¹⁴ However it was still not too late. He believed that Londoners were still more powerful than the regime, and that they should not 'suffer the Sectaries to strengthen themselves till they be able to out-awe' London and 'the suburbs too', at which point they would 'be brought like patient beasts to the slaughter house'. Sheppard ended his issue declaring that 'this [was their] doome' if they did 'not free [them] selves the sooner from their Tyranny'.¹¹⁵

In his subsequent and last issue of the August 1648 run, Sheppard doubled down on his defiant approach. He remarked that 'the Saints [were] on a suddaine still' with 'their mock-reports' of victories that they had 'blason'd forth with Eccho shrill'. These were meant to make him 'still of their impieties'. Sheppard shrugged these off, taking it as his duty 'to let them know heav'ns have decreed to scourge them without pittie', and that 'Traytors and Rebels all must bleed, both Parliament and Citty'.¹¹⁶ According to Sheppard, the regime had not been negotiating with Charles in good faith, 'intend[ing] a Treaty, or any Addresse' to him 'as much as they yet dreame of their suddaine ruine and destruction'. Such destruction 'may [yet] come upon them (like a gust) with a vengeance', and thereby 'eclipse their greatnesse ere they are aware'.¹¹⁷ Despite these pronouncements of doom, Sheppard appeared to have lost the sense that the regime's collapse was imminent. Instead he simply reiterated his belief that the 'doomesday of their horrid and Rebellion' would 'hath its period', and

¹¹⁴ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.3, E.460[9], p. 21.

¹¹⁵ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.3, E.460[9], p. 24.

¹¹⁶ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.4, E.461[5], p. 25.

¹¹⁷ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.4, E.461[5], p. 26.

‘inevitable destruction’ would ‘[befall] them’.¹¹⁸ While their downfall was certain, it was no longer as close at hand as it was before.

Sheppard was not blind to Charles’s poor position. However, like many other royalists, he cast the king as a virtuous paragon in spite of his situation. Charles was ‘brave’, and his ‘honour’ continued to ‘shine bright as the day’. In the same way that ‘water quencheth not hot flaming fier’, but instead ‘makes it blaze the higher’, the ‘nearer’ virtue rises to ‘the skie’, ‘the lower ‘tis suppress by Tyranny’. Charles’s precarious position served only to increase the virtue of ‘brave Charles’, who continued to ‘reflect [honour] on us in thy Majesty’.¹¹⁹

Even in the darkest hours, Nedham remained hopeful and confident that the tide would turn imminently. Writing in December 1648 when ‘his Maiesty [was] at the lowest’, Nedham continued to cite the news of ‘new Confederacies... forming to defie the Remonstrance’. Similar news of resistance to the regime could be ‘expect[ed] suddenly from Wales’, and that ‘if the Prince were once with his Ships in Ireland’ then ‘perhaps Heaven provided a timely Scourge, to correct the monstrous Impudence of [the] military Remonstrance’. It was at this point when the King was at rock-bottom and ‘their Impiety... at the highest’ that ‘a dore of hope’ would open ‘for his deliverance from a barbarous Captivity’, as well as the release of ‘his Subjects from Slavery’. Nedham’s message was that the English should simply ‘stand firm’ and not cave in, for ‘Pride and Rebellion still doe fore-run a Fall’ and the ‘Saintships’ would go ‘down’ eventually.¹²⁰ Hence for the new year, he warned the regime that while ‘Old Sack and Things must passe away... so shall all your new’. The regime would not have lasting

¹¹⁸ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.4, E.461[5], p. 28.

¹¹⁹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Aulicus* 274.2, E.458[24] p. 12.

¹²⁰ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.236, E.476[2], sig. Ccc4v.

power: 'the new may serve a yeare to view', not unlike 'an old Almanack'. The Saints were simply 'a Nine-daies-wonder', since a cause 'that damns the Lawes, and turns all upside-downe' was itself 'a damn'd Cause'. Hence the English can 'cheare this merr'y New-yeare... for Charles shall weare the Crowne'.¹²¹

Regicide as negotiation

Nedham's poise of confidence did not falter even with talk of regicide in December 1648. He reasoned to his readers that the King would be safe because it was in Cromwell's interest to retain some semblance of England's institutions. 'When time serves', Cromwell and the King's fate were tied together, and hence 'his own reason must needs prompt him to shield that sacred head'. Without the King and the institution of monarchy, 'the Members' could have 'no ease, health, nor safety'. In this Cromwell was opposed to 'the Levellers', the both of whom could 'as soon combine as fire and water, their ends being so differ'. Hence, Nedham predicted that Charles would be co-opted into an oligarchy. Charles would be 'in for a share with them' and hold a position of prestige among the other oligarchs, akin to being the duke of Venice.¹²² He explained in detail:

If he will doe as they would have him; that is, yield up his Crowne and Dignity, send this Church a begging, part with his Negative voice, root up the Fundamentalls of Parliament, establish a perpetuall State-Junto, or Senate after the Venetian Modell, wherein none but the Grandee-Brethren shall be admitted, and content himselfe with a Share among them, as a Duke, or Lord President, then he shall bee bugbear'd no longer with publique Triall and execution, but be brought to London, to help to damne the only remaining Enemies, Presbyterians and Levellers.¹²³

¹²¹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff1r.

¹²² Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.239a, E.477[30], sig. Eee1v.

¹²³ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff1v.

This 'would be the design', even if the execution was not assured and 'yet in the clouds'.¹²⁴ It was also a trade-off and Charles would have to compromise, with his voice diminished and his enemies made into co-rulers.¹²⁵

Nedham added mention of a letter that was apparently being passed around in the Army, which purportedly argued against killing Charles and thereby losing control over the monarch. Prince Charles, still outside of Parliament's control, would inherit the throne and Parliament would lose leverage over negotiations to settle the country. According to Nedham, the letter itself was 'beleev'd a Trick of Cromwells own' in an attempt 'to try the Temper of his Journey men', and to 'give them a stop in this Caress of Madness'.¹²⁶ In Nedham's mind, Cromwell and other moderate personalities would save the King and prevent the execution.¹²⁷ Man of the 'leading men [were] knowne to be so rationall, that it was absur'd to imagine, they should voluntarily throw away that main Advantage', namely 'the possession of the Kings Person'. Should Charles become 'defunct', others would 'have an influence upon the Prince' rather than themselves. Hence 'they dare not, and cannot (without wilfull madnesse) touch the Life of his Majesty'.¹²⁸ Thus 'if things hit right', Charles would 'once more attaine the Crowne'.¹²⁹ In doing so, Nedham expressed his strong belief – or perhaps bravado – that at least Cromwell and some of his compatriots would act in their rational self-interest and save the King for their own sakes. Through this

¹²⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.239a, E.477[30], sig. Eee1v.

¹²⁵ Nedham was holding on to his hope of an alliance between Charles and the Grandees, which he enunciated earlier in *The Case of the Kingdom Stated* (1647). Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 306.

¹²⁶ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.239a, E.477[30], sig. Eee3v-4r.

¹²⁷ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.239a, E.477[30], sig. Eee4v.

¹²⁸ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff1v.

¹²⁹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.239a, E.477[30], sig. Eee4v.

reasoning he assured his readers that Charles was not in terrible mortal danger, and that he might even regain the crown.

In this light, talk of a potential trial and execution was simply meant 'to fright [Charles] downe... to their owne Termes'. Parliament's voting to 'try and execute him', as well as their plan to 'set up the young Duke of Glocester' were 'signified unto his Majesty' to try and convince him to acquiesce.¹³⁰ Yet Nedham warned his countrymen to be wary; in the meantime 'the Kingdome must never looke Peace'. He advised that the Duke of Gloucester would be used as a puppet 'to carry the shadow of a King', all while the regime secured their authority. Once 'all [was] sure', they would 'lay him to sleepe in convenient time with his Forefathers'. However, if they let him 'live and have Issue', it was 'a means to sow seeds of dissention in the Royall Family', to cause 'perpetuall Broyles between the Brances', and to 'revive new feuds', including 'those ancient ones betwixt York and Lancaster'. The latter had '(for many years) brought a Deluge of Blood and Desolation upon the Kingdom'. Hence, he instructed 'o yee Commons of England' to 'give eare and regard', for 'if their Counsels turne this way, then begins their Misery and Slavery', and possibly 'also the Destruction of his Majesty'. After laying out these dire possibilities, Nedham immediately reassured the reader, saying that 'but all are not mad-men amongst them'.¹³¹

Nedham built his case that regicide was merely a scare tactic. He explained that because Charles was resistant to pressure and '[would] not Answer', Parliament would ramp up the pressure by 'sentenc[ing] Him the very first day', leaving them 'a whole moneth to worke upon Him with threats of Death every

¹³⁰ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff3r.

¹³¹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff1v-Ff2r.

moment'. In his estimation, Parliament's 'only Designe upon his Majesty' with 'this accurst mockery of Triall and execution' was to 'bend him to their own Cue'.¹³² He recognised the danger that 'the mad dogs among them [might] dare proceed in earnest' with 'the devellish Parricide', but he was certain that 'both Heaven and Earth will conspire to revenge such barbarous Impiety'.¹³³ Those who 'dare' do something 'so impudent... [would] have their names in red letters set in the Devills Calendar to all Posterity'.¹³⁴ Nedham remarked that it was these same people who 'intend[ed] to crucifie their King' that were also advocating for the readmittance of Jews into England. King-killing was akin to Christ-killing: it was 'no marvell' that these would-be regicides 'should shake hands with them that crucified their Saviour'.¹³⁵

Amidst the discussion of regicide in December 1648, Nedham warned his audience to wake up to the danger posed by the regime. He noted how the regime had already 'voted the city-chaines downe', and that 'next goes the Gates'. Calling his readers 'yee dull Beast', he asked if they would 'indure this' assault on their rights. Soon, the regime would 'have at [their] Estates, and at length [their] Necks'.¹³⁶ The decline of the monarchy was paralleled by the degradation of the people. According to Nedham, Charles recognised that his fate and the people's rights were intertwined. Charles would not seek to 'secure his life' and 'quit his Crowne' through 'the Tryall'. He would 'rather... die a thousand deaths for his Posterity and People's sakes in whose Affections hee

¹³² Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff3r. Similar evidence for this idea of the trial as negotiation can be found in Sean Kelsey's article 'The Death of Charles I', *The Historical Journal* 45:4 (2002), pp. 727-54.

¹³³ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sigs. Fff3r-v.

¹³⁴ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff4v.

¹³⁵ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff4v.

¹³⁶ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff4v.

hath so large an Interest'.¹³⁷ If even the king was willing to lay down his life to prevent the regime's dystopia from coming true, the people should be similarly cognisant of what was at stake. Nedham predicted that this realisation would surely come about should the regicide happen: 'a sad and swift Revenge shall pursue [the regime] by the Joynt Forces of his three Kingdomes'.¹³⁸ This was not only a threat to those who 'dare execute what they pretend', but also an expression of Nedham's belief that a unprecedented regicide would finally incite the people into action. Thus, in his last words before the regicide, he proclaimed in verse a warning: 'Then let the boldest Traitors know, His Fall / Will bee the prologue to their Funerall'.¹³⁹ The slumbering beast that is the people would finally awake and overthrow the regime, should they go through with their plan to execute Charles.

Possibly sensing that the demand for news was great, a counterfeit of *Pragmaticus* began its run in January 1648. Its authorship has been attributed to the royalist George Wharton on stylistic grounds, and because its run ended abruptly in March 1649 when Wharton was arrested.¹⁴⁰ While Nedham sought to explain to his readers why the regicide would not happen, Wharton took a different tack in threatening the regime with the consequences of their action. He declared that his writing was a 'Satyrick Whip-coard' that he hoped would 'sting [their] cauterized Consciences a little with some more rugged and serious Reprehensions'. This would hopefully prevent 'ye obdurate Rebels at Westminster' from pursuing the execution.¹⁴¹ Calling Fairfax and Cromwell the

¹³⁷ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff4v.

¹³⁸ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff4v.

¹³⁹ Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.240b, E.537[20], sig. Fff4v.

¹⁴⁰ Peacey, 'The counterfeit curr', pp. 35-6.

¹⁴¹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh1r.

‘Monopolizers of Rebellion’, Wharton warned that ‘the Loadstones of [their] unjustifiable Actions’ would surely ‘attract Heavens judgements’, and that they will ‘Crowne [their] Saturday heads with Everlasting Vengeance’.¹⁴² Individuals like them would not escape punishment even after death, for ‘Innocent Blood’ would one day cause them to ‘be summon’d from [their] stinking Sepulchres’ to answer for their ‘horrid Treason’.¹⁴³ As they had ‘Try’d the King’, they would find that ‘the Devill will Try’ them. The country would know ‘Brave Times’ with ‘this base Rebell Rout, which will ‘light the Devill to our woe’. He foresaw that the regime’s leaders ‘mayst be hang’d when Charles is dead’.¹⁴⁴ With such ‘a Sacrilegious Act’, the rebels ‘pull downe the Sacred Ordinance of God’. These individuals would surely not ‘prosper thus in this Hellish Enterprize’, for ‘heaven’ would ‘timely step in and avenge the Quarrell of his Viceregent’.¹⁴⁵

Wharton appealed to all factions to work against the regicide, even those in the regime itself. With regicide, England was to be ‘a glorious Monarchy degraded to a base Democracy’.¹⁴⁶ Charles was ‘Englands Glory’, ‘our Sun’ that would now ‘set in a Crimson Cloud’. Wharton lamented the possibility of losing ‘our Charles and King at one blow’, with ‘no Heire, no Successor’. The heavens themselves would mourn for Charles, with the ‘fixed Starres’ as ‘Torches to this Funerall’. This ‘Dismal Night’ will surely be followed by ‘the Last Day’, with the ‘Frame of Heaven and Earth... dissolv[ing], and tumbl[ing] into the First Chaos’.¹⁴⁷ This apocalyptic tone served to emphasise the severity of the

¹⁴² Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh3r.

¹⁴³ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg2v.

¹⁴⁴ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh1r.

¹⁴⁵ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh1v.

¹⁴⁶ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh3r.

¹⁴⁷ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg4r.

regicide's consequences to the reader, but more specifically the regime itself. He immediately continued addressing 'the Actors of this great Ruine', who he foresaw would not 'long survive it'. They would find that they had 'brought down an Old House upon [their] Perjur'd Heads', with the 'Upper and Lower Roof slid[ing] with this Great Samson'.¹⁴⁸ In time to come, the regime would come to regret the regicide. They would eventually 'look for a dismall day' when they would seek 'a drop of that sacred Oile of Kingly Unction' to sooth their 'Wounds of [their] festered Consciences'. What they 'now... take to be [their] grievance', they would 'wish for... one day'.¹⁴⁹ The regime's cause was so wrong that someday in the future, even they would recognise their error and seek to redeem themselves. In this vision of the future, regicides would become ardent supporters of monarchy.

Wharton also warned foreign parties that England's misfortune would spread outside of its borders. 'All Christendome is like to be concern'd in this sad example', with France already 'over Shoo's in Blood', and possibly 'over head and Eares' by the next year. The French had not heeded the 'warning' presented to them 'by our Miseries', and hence 'could not prevent their owne'.¹⁵⁰ The regime was also in the business of 'undoing Kingdomes', like Ireland through their 'neglect'. 'France too' lay within their sights, simply because they had

¹⁴⁸ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg4r.

¹⁴⁹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh1v.

¹⁵⁰ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg4r. This was probably in response to news of the Parliamentary Fronde, reception of which is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, and also in Laurent Curelly, "'The French, those Monkeys of Mankind": the Fronde as seen by the newsbook *Mercurius Politicus*', *XVII-XVIII* 69 (2012), pp. 29-50.

‘great... spight and malice against their Sovereigne’ that they would seek ‘as farre as he dare claime a Title’.¹⁵¹

The regicide would also bring trouble for the people themselves, but Wharton assured his readers that justice will be dispensed. Wharton thought it ‘strange’ that the ‘Common People’, who formed ‘the Body’, ‘should expect Life or health when their Head is taken off’.¹⁵² Some of the English deserved their punishment though, specifically the ‘baaling Priests of the Presbyterie’. They had no one to ‘thank... but [them] selfs... for this present Affliction that’s fallen upon [them]’. Wharton argued that all of England ‘must curse [them] for the sad calamity’ the people are experiencing, because the Presbyterians ‘first flesh[ed the] Army with Victualls, Money, Arms, [and] Plate’, and provided them with ‘Cart-loades of meat, drink and clothes’. They had ‘let in this Trojan Horse’, and now they were getting the ‘just reward of [their] folly, Cowardize, Treachery and Rebellion’. In this dire situation, Wharton believed that justice still reigned ‘in all Ages’. In the case of the Presbyterians, it ensured that ‘Treason [was] rewarded... with Treachery’. Now they would suffer the ‘Fate of Acteon’, made into ‘Stagges, and then devoured by [their] owne Dogges’.¹⁵³ The current situation of terror was thus understandable as the result of justice working to punish the Presbyterians. Despite the unprecedented nature of the regime, Wharton assured his readers that eternal principles of justice continued to prevail, and that evil traitors would meet their just rewards.

The traditional order of society would also remain firmly in place and enforced by God. With time, the regime’s actions would prove self-destructive. Wharton

¹⁵¹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh2r.

¹⁵² Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh2v.

¹⁵³ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg4v.

was certain that their 'own Rebellions [would] at last confound [their] souls', and thereby 'lay [them] levell with the ground'.¹⁵⁴ To bolster his point, Wharton reminded the regime that 'Heaven is just', and that it 'will at last showre down heaps of judgements upon [their] Rebellious Souls'. This punishment was to teach the regime that they 'ought not to bring him under, that is set over [them] by his appointment'. Their souls would not only be confused by their rebellious acts, but also suffer from improperly asserting their authority over a superior. Hence for these 'King-judging Rebels', their 'Soveraigns Sufferings' would in turn 'procure [their] woe'.¹⁵⁵ In other words, the potential regicide would not lead to the destruction of monarchical society. Instead, through God's judgement, transgressors would be punished to reinforce the traditional order.

In trying to explain and come to terms with the looming regicide, Wharton rationalised that the regicide was merely a continuation of rebellious behaviour that had come before. Citing the leaders of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 'Jack Straw & Wat Tyler', and the Anabaptist 'John of Leiden' who led the Münster Rebellion of 1534-5, Wharton traced an uninterrupted line of 'Treasons, Murders, [and] Rebellions, that have been acted from the beginning of the world to this Day'. Like the other rebels, the regime was made of individuals whose 'Teethy Quill so bites at Monarchy, and snarles in the very face of Majesty', powered by 'Impudence' from 'Hell it self'.¹⁵⁶ By drawing an explicit link between the regime to past traitors and rebels, Wharton diminished the disruptive nature of the regicide. This 'cursed Age' was only unusual in its success and the blatant nature of its actions. The regime 'hath put in Act what

¹⁵⁴ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh3r.

¹⁵⁵ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh3r.

¹⁵⁶ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg2v.

[Guy] Faux and the rest did long conspire', except that it also 'pretend[ed] to grater Light'. Whereas 'Faux smothered [his treason] in a dark Lanthorne' and 'closely Hatch'd in a Celler', the Saints 'dare attempt at noon Day', and 'openly Act... in a Hall'.¹⁵⁷ Wharton was making the point that the regimes were essentially the same as previous rebels, or 'Saints of the same Stampe'.¹⁵⁸ Other than the fact that they do not pretend or hide away their treason, the regime's activities were nothing new for England. Hence it was not an event that the English should be too worried about. Wharton also downplayed the regicide by describing it as the natural next step for the bloodthirsty members of the regime. Now that their 'souls' had 'been a long time ebriated with the superabundancy of Blood' that they had 'exhausted from innocent hearts', they could not 'acquiesce' until they had taken from 'the richest Veines that the Kingdome can afford'.¹⁵⁹ The king was merely the next logical target for the regime.

By the middle of January, the conclusion to the situation seemed forgone and Wharton continued to naturalise the regicide. In his issue ending 16 January, Wharton voiced how Charles's 'Fate [was] now neer approaching', 'inevitable, unlesse Heaven strike in with an unexpected Rescue'.¹⁶⁰ Two weeks later, he remarked on the regime's determination to execute Charles and wondered if they had 'robb'd the marble of his hardness', or if 'Almighty God [had] sent Pharoahs heart to predominate' in their 'raging breasts'.¹⁶¹ Wharton saw the regicide as 'the Epilogue' to a 'Play thus done' and 'the Worke Finish'd'. All that

¹⁵⁷ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg4r.

¹⁵⁸ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg4r.

¹⁵⁹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh3r.

¹⁶⁰ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.241, E.538[18], sig. Ggg2v.

¹⁶¹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh3r.

remained was 'to wit the Epitaph of a slaughter'd King'.¹⁶² With this metaphor of the play, Wharton normalised the regicide as a natural end to the proceedings. It was a necessity for the epilogue to play out; Charles had to die because it was required by the genre. Moreover, there was a slight chance that God himself had hardened the hearts of the regime. The tragedy of the Egyptian plagues seemed destined to play out in England, causing death and destruction that reached the monarch himself. Wharton held out hope that 'Heaven may prevent... [the] Sceane' from being 'finish'd'.¹⁶³ Such an alternative would see the play abruptly interrupted, rather than changed from tragedy into another form. The stars were also not on Charles's side: in the two January issues of *Mercurius Elencticus*, he remarked that the planets' configurations did not bode well.¹⁶⁴ Thus, although Wharton hoped for the best, he framed the situation before the regicide as an unstoppable force of circumstance that could only be changed by a wholly unexpected and unconventional intervention.

Such a timely intervention could only come from God. He informed the 'Miscreants' that 'three Parts of the Common People curse and detest [their] abhorred Actions', and that people were praying 'that sudden Vengeance, may stop [them]', and prevent them from using their 'Sacrilegious and Murdering Mouthes'.¹⁶⁵ Wharton similarly 'left them to [God] which is a Consuming Fire', who he trusted 'no doubt will in his good time Reign down Vengeance', with 'whole showers of Brimstone and Fire to Mollefy their Obdurate and flinty Hearts'. With his intervention, God would 'clos[e] the Sceane of their Tragaedy',

¹⁶² Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh2r.

¹⁶³ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh2r.

¹⁶⁴ Wharton, *Mercurius Elencticus* 312.58, E.536[31], and 312.59, E.537[27], cited in Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 164.

¹⁶⁵ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh4v.

poetically ensuring that 'the Levell of their owne Pride' was mirrored 'in their owne Destruction'.¹⁶⁶ Thus to Wharton, any intervention would have to come from God himself. All the people and himself could do was to pray and hope for supernatural help, but even then, he recognised that God might only intervene later to punish the regime once the deed was done.

Wharton's tone of resignation was also evident in his description of the conclusion of Charles's trial. Recounting the moment when Charles received 'his Doom, or Sentence, to have His head smitted off his Body', Wharton remarked how he 'imitate[d] his Predecessor in Sufferings'. This was a reference to Christ, rather than James. Charles was said to have mirrored Christ in saying 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they doe'. Embellishing his Christ-like qualities, Wharton concluded by remarking how 'thus Greatness may under Proud Rebels bow'. Yet in this time of great meekness, he declared that 'King Charles was never Glorious till now'.¹⁶⁷ It was only at this point of disaster that Charles achieved his full potential. The regicide was required for Charles to reach his apogee. Put this way, Charles's death was an inevitability to be celebrated.

Before the regicide, Nedham, Wharton, and Sheppard all warned of a dystopic future for England and its people under the regime. They conjured up visions of destruction and warned their readers that their only hope lay in supporting Charles's restoration. The regime was out to build an alien society, which Sheppard argued would be seen by future generations in infamy. All three writers portrayed their confidence in Charles's eventual victory. In the lead-up

¹⁶⁶ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh4v.

¹⁶⁷ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.242, E.540[15], sig. Hhh4v.

to the regicide, Nedham and Wharton strove to assuage concerns by deemphasising its disruptive nature. Nedham dismissed the regicide as merely a threat and tool for negotiation, whereas Wharton framed the events through reference to eternal principles like justice and patterns of rebellion. The present time was not unprecedented, and even if the regicide was to happen, it was merely the expected outcome from past events. When forced to reckon with the inevitability of the regicide, Nedham and Wharton imagined a post-regicide future where the royalists would still win. This would be a triumphant moral victory over the regime, as well as the eventual return of the monarchy. Their belief, or perhaps their brave front, was only strengthened by the regicide.

Post-regicide

A different time

In his first post-regicide newsbook, Wharton described England as a world without direction, but also settled in nature. With Charles 'dead, the Saints have now gott all'. In these times, the 'Blinde Brother' led the 'blinde Sister' and both would 'in a Dry Ditch fall'. However, this was also a world that was restored to some order, albeit new and perverse:

The times already mend, new Acts are ev'ry day, / Now we have Peace
and Truth, the clean contrary way. / Quaffe on, Quaffe on, drink Healths
in Blood, / There is no God nor Devill, / What ere you do is wondrous
good, / Let it be nere so Evill. / Bradshaw is now your King, your Gospel
and your Law, / You need not then be taught by any Preaching Daw. /
King Charles you have made Glorious, / The People are made Free. / But
as ye deal with Him and us, / Old Nick will deal with yee. / Bradshaw

beware, Cromwell be sure sit fast, / For thousands Vow, this yeer shall be
your Last.¹⁶⁸

With Charles's passing came a strange but settled peace. The regicide had placed the regime firmly in control and lording over the English. While there was order and clarity, it was an amoral setting where there was no distinction between good and evil, or between repute and disrepute. In this world of equal opposites, Charles's execution was a glorification of his person, while the people's oppression was now a liberation. The regicide marked the completion of the regime's push for control. Its leaders could 'goe to rest now', since with 'the Fatall Blow... the Kingdome [was] translated to the Saints'; their 'Great and Acceptable Worke [was] done'.¹⁶⁹

Wharton thus recognised the regicide as a significant point of history. Those 'Oathes, Covenants, Protestations... [and] Soleme Fasts for the Treaty' with the King were 'now out of date'. He was 'the Fish' who was 'caught', 'and so the Nett is flung by' after.¹⁷⁰ In his account of 30 January, Wharton described the day as 'more ominous and fatall to all true Protestants then November the Fift', since what was 'then but intended, [was] now Acted'. The regicide was one of 'two such horrible Acts committed in England' that had '[come] forth this day'. The other was 'prohibiting the Proclaiming of his Highness the Prince of Wales' as the new 'King of England, or Ireland, or the Dominions thereof'.¹⁷¹ While he did not explain the equivalence of the two acts, we can surmise from the two acts that Wharton was aggrieved about the regime's disregard for monarchy. They had 'murder[ed] the King', and also prevented his heir from ascending to the

¹⁶⁸ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii1r.

¹⁶⁹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii1r.

¹⁷⁰ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii2r.

¹⁷¹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii2v.

throne.¹⁷² He remarked how the punishment for the latter was death 'and such other Punishments... [that] belong to the Crimes of High Treason'. This was ironic because these punishments belonged on the regime itself, 'the most notoriously known Traytors that ever the Sunne Shin'd upon'.¹⁷³ Wharton thus took offence at the fundamental reinterpretation of treason, chaffing at how loyal support for monarchy was now treachery. Through the regicide and this act of redefining treason, England had been irrevocably changed.

In discussing the execution, Sheppard declined to publish his most visceral reactions. Walking his readers through his thoughts, he wrote how he could have chosen to 'melt [him]self into dolefull expressions for the murther', before finally deciding to 'forbeare it' since 'it hath been formally handled by others'. Instead, he chose to write a short 'memorandum' on Charles, celebrating his 'Wisdome, discretion, knowledge and Profound Learning' unmatched in 'all Christendome'. He decried the ignominious end for such a 'worthy of worthies' at the hands of 'a Mechanick sort of Dunghill wretches'. Sheppard then quickly closed 'this tragicall relation', acknowledging that it 'may not be pleasing' and that it was 'rather augmenting the sorrowes of some', which thus 'occasion[ed him] to leave it'.¹⁷⁴ Instead of delving on the minutiae of the event itself, Sheppard seemed more focused on explicating the implications of the regicide, and how the act reflected on the regime and its intentions. In the pages that followed, Sheppard surveyed the state of English politics and society with the regime in charge. The 'onely things now in action upon the English Theatre' were 'tragick scenes of disloyalty', as well as 'Tyranny, Murder, Cruelty,

¹⁷² Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii2v.

¹⁷³ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii2v.

¹⁷⁴ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Ggg1v.

bloodthurstinesse, Massacre, [and] Villany'. These were 'Cryed up by Rebels and Traytors, as Sanctity, holinesse, and godly proceedings'. This seemed to be 'the Devils designe' which the 'rebellious Conventicle and uncircumcised Iunto at Westminster' were committed to 'drive on' 'withall alacrity and integrity'. These individuals would eventually 'adjourne into the abisse' on the Devil's 'order', 'there to keep Cause with their old brothers in rebellion', including the Leveller Thomas Rainsborough.¹⁷⁵ Alluding to the regime as Jews and in league with the Devil, Sheppard argued that it was now turning Parliament into 'their own Synagogue of Scarlet vipers' with 'none but Officers of the Army' sitting in its ranks. These members were 'alone to bee in the great work of Deformation' and the 'building [of] the new Ierusalem'.¹⁷⁶

Similarly, Wharton took the opportunity to denounce the regime and the implications of the unprecedented event. He lamented how the 'Powers of Nature' would not 'groan [them]selves into a Desolation, or tremble into a second Chaos' at the sight of 'these prodigious Monsters murdering Majesty'. These 'soul-slaying Tyrants' were 'glut[ting] their bloody jawes with [England's] Destruction'. He described the regicide as 'so horrid, so unnaturall and so ungodly an Act'. These 'Desperate Traytors' had outdone even 'the Devill himself', having 'done more mischief, hatch'd more Treasons, [and] acted greater Murders' than he 'knows how to owne or parallel'.¹⁷⁷ Their actions made clear to 'the People' of the 'blessed harmony... between the Devil in hell' and the

¹⁷⁵ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sigs. Ggg1v-Ggg2r.

¹⁷⁶ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Ggg2r.

¹⁷⁷ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246a, E.545[16], sigs. Mmm1v-Mmm2r.

regime, 'his Saints at Westminster'.¹⁷⁸ It was now clear that the regime could not be negotiated with, but that they had to be defeated comprehensively.

Like before the regicide, Nedham's vision of the regime's plan was one of dystopia. Their evilness was now evident even to their own 'Souldiers... especially those they call Levellers', who were aware that they were 'destined to destruction in Ireland', and that their deaths would allow 'Oliver and his grandees [to] ... more easily enslave their friends with the rest of the Kingdom'.¹⁷⁹ The regicide was a decisive confirmation of the regime's intentions:

As they have laid the Foundation of their Tyranny in the blood of the King, so likewise to settle the holy Tabernacle of Derby-house upon the shouldiers of the people, for ever and ever.¹⁸⁰

Charles's death was evidence of the regime's desire and conviction to take over the reins of power for good. Now that the King was dead, their intentions were made clear and the danger they posed was now more concrete and pressing than ever. They had already managed to destroy the foundations of English society. Lamenting the loss of 'Great Charles', Nedham stated that 'our Lawes die'd with Thee', as well as 'our Freedoms [and] our grand Charter'.¹⁸¹ Addressing the 'Brave free-born Blades', Nedham remarked on how 'This Age hath taught [them] that the Sword is Law and Gospel', and that 'Lord Coke and S. Paul with t' King did fall'.¹⁸² Cromwell, the present-day 'Catiline', had

¹⁷⁸ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246a, E.545[16], sig. Mmm2v.

¹⁷⁹ Nedham Marchamont, *Mercurius Pragmaticus (for King Charles II). Communicating Intelligence from all Parts, touching all Affaires, Designes, Humours, and Conditions throughout the Kingdome, especially from Westminster, and the Head-quarters*. [s.n., 1649-1650], 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B3v, henceforth *PFKCII*.

¹⁸⁰ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B3v.

¹⁸¹ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.05b, E.556[5], sig. E1r.

¹⁸² Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.04b, E.555[14], sig. D1r.

‘wrack’t [the Bible] from verse to verse’, and set up ‘the Independent’ to ‘rook the Presbyters with many a puzzling Text’. But even the Independents would ‘Down’ and ‘let’s all Level be’; the dystopia of an undifferentiated society would come true. The only way out was to return to monarchy: ‘Or else restore the King agen, and then we shall be free.’¹⁸³

Energised

The regicide had the effect of energising these newsbook writers. Wharton saw his role as a purveyor of truth. Citing a clampdown on printers and hawkers, Wharton wondered if ‘the Presse’ was not as suppressed, ‘nay more suppress then ever it was in the Bishops dayes’. He argued that the regime’s ‘Tyranny [was] farre worse already’ as they went after ‘the poorest sort’, including ‘the carefull mother’ who tried to hawk ‘a Peny Pamphlet to get a piece of bread’ to feed her ‘hunger-pyn’d Infant’.¹⁸⁴ Wharton alleged that unless they could pay a bribe, these individuals would be imprisoned ‘till they [were] starv’d, and their Children famished without the least remorse or pittty’ on the part of the regime. This ‘cruelty’ was to help ‘suppress Truth’, so that ‘they may Act their Treasons the more securely’ without the populace knowing. Wharton was adamant that ‘Truth will at last prevaile’, and he promised that ‘the more’ the regime sought to hide the truth, ‘the more [his] Pen’ would ‘Discover’ of their ‘Tyranny’.¹⁸⁵ Hence with the regicide and the solidification of the regime’s power, Wharton felt energised to fight against the truth-smothering actions of the regime.

In the light of the regicide, Nedham similarly emphasised the need for him to continue writing his newsbooks. Warning the regime to ‘best take heed how

¹⁸³ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.04b, E.555[14], sig. D1r.

¹⁸⁴ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii4r.

¹⁸⁵ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii4v.

they provoke us', he declared that he was 'for Justice and Righteousnesse', and that 'in time' he would 'ring the Commons such a peale, and give the States so sound a rattle' so that they would discover 'what it is to juggle with the free-borne English'. Yet this judgement and punishment was not yet effected. The regime was too resilient, a 'Tyranny [that was] a very Hydra', that when the people 'thought to have cut off its head with one blow with the Kings', it simply 'got an hundred new heads, with a huge tale or train of petty Tyrannies', as well as 'a sting at the end of it, to wound and poison all our Liberties'. The English would 'never be free... till all the Tie-Dogs in England' were set upon 'Tyranny'. Nedham's newsbooks – 'a quick Cordiall of Intelligence' – would be the 'best remedy for preventi[ng]' the loss of English liberties.¹⁸⁶ It did not 'matter what they threat, or thinke', Nedham declared it was 'honest, just, and good to record the regime's 'Designes into Inke which they have drawn in Blood'.¹⁸⁷

The regicide also prompted Sheppard to produce his own run of the *Pragmaticus*, with the first issue released at the end of February 1649.¹⁸⁸ The scale of the regime's crimes encouraged Sheppard to publish the news. He promised that 'so long as they act Treason', they would find 'their Deeds... laid open to the World'. In a time 'when Rebels dare to Reigne', Sheppard argued that 'Truth must be bold'. His efforts would be proportional to the crimes and their efforts to silence him: 'The more they Rage, the more shall be their paine... The more you roar, the more my Pen shall Rage'.¹⁸⁹ Sheppard also preached disobedience to the regime, warning that those who 'obey' the laws of the

¹⁸⁶ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.01, E.551[15], sig. A1v.

¹⁸⁷ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B1r.

¹⁸⁸ This was numbered 46, purportedly a continuation of Nedham's run which was suspended in January 1649. See Jason Peacey, 'The counterfeit silly curr'.

¹⁸⁹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Mmm2r.

regime were 'voyd of sence and Reason'. By doing so, they were 'betray[ing]... [their] Saviours cause', and were thus 'guilty of high Treason'. These remarkable circumstances had apparently 'rouze[d]' him to 'write againe, to let the Kingdome know' that even 'though Tyrants yet doe rule and raigne, it will not long be so'.¹⁹⁰ Sheppard's message was thus a comforting one: even though the situation seemed dire, the regime would soon collapse and their tyranny would end soon.

An intelligible world

Amidst the turmoil of the regicide, Wharton argued that the world was still intelligible despite the regime's atrocities. He reassured his readers that 'Black Fairfax can clime no further then heav'n will give him leave'. Such bounds of depravity applied similarly to 'Red Cromwell', who 'no more can Murder, nor the Saints more deceive'.¹⁹¹ There were natural limits to their depravity, boundaries that God had willed and that could not be trespassed. Wharton indicated that the regicide was in part caused by non-human factors. It was the work of the 'Stars and Elements' that 'have all conspir'd to work out Discontents'.¹⁹²

Furthermore, the people in the regime remained sensible and logical. According to Wharton, the regime change was orchestrated by an Army cabal seeking to 'overthro[w] Government, Magistracy, the King and his Posterity, the Parliament and the Three Kingdoms'. They were 'like Masterless Hounds [that] doe what they list' and were 'so impudent as to Tyrannize, and force their

¹⁹⁰ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Ggg1r.

¹⁹¹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246a, E.545[16], sig. Mmm1r.

¹⁹² Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246a, E.545[16], sig. Mmm1r.

Masters to what they list'.¹⁹³ Yet even this cabal was subject to limits. Wharton reasoned that 'they must not alwayes look to goe in mischief' as they were weary of 'the People where the supream power recides'. The people were 'of one minde' and would, 'when Occasion fitly ministreth it self', bring the cabal 'to an Account for their Eight yeers Treasons, in breaking their Laws, and murdering their King, &c.'. ¹⁹⁴ Thus, even in the light of an unrestrained act like the regicide, Wharton believed that the cabal was still restrained by its circumstances. It was still a rational group that worked logically towards its own goals and survival.

Reflecting upon the execution itself, Wharton remarked on the vicissitudes of the times and the inevitability of something like the regicide. Having recounted how 'with much constancy', Charles had 'yeelded his body to the block', he observed:

That Mutability is but Times Ensigne; nothing visible is permanent, the most Glorious King, or palmed State, is but the recorded Monument of Vncertainty. England, that but lately appear'd like the bright Moon amongst the Starrs, the most Beautiful of all other Nations, but now alas her light is put out, her beauty faded, and all her glory departed from her.¹⁹⁵

The regicide was a reminder that everything in this mundane world was fleeting, and that change would affect all. Glory, beauty, and perfection were ephemeral, and these would eventually fade and disappear. Placed in this narrative of rise and decay, the regicide was only a matter of time, and a necessary consequence of England's rise to glory. In the coming time, England

¹⁹³ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246a, E.545[16], sig. Mmm1v.

¹⁹⁴ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246a, E.545[16], sig. Mmm1v.

¹⁹⁵ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii3r.

seemed doomed to suffer. Wharton observed how 'every day adds fresh supply's of Miseries to poor dying England', and that while it had 'enough of Care... [there was] little enough of Cure'. Despite having suffered through 'yeers and moneths', its 'sorrows [were] still beginning, and [their] Calamities ceaze[d] not'. England occasionally saw hope, only to have it dashed by more misery. The latest example of these episodes was the promise for 'a happy reconcilment of King, parliament and People... by a Treaty'. Within a short time these emotions were flipped: 'then we laugh'd, but now we languish; one day we are comforted, the next confounded'.¹⁹⁶ England's hopes were undergoing a constant cycle of ups-and-downs, and the regicide was the latest event to cause dismay. In this model the regicide was not special or unique, it was simply a continuation of miseries that have afflicted England.

Nedham also placed the regicide within a larger arc of time. In his first newsbook after the regicide in April 1649, Nedham characterised 'this Age' as one with 'fine Turns of Tragick Art'. This time was one where 'ev'ry Actor plaies his part, and then runs off the Stage'. First, the 'King and Bishops, brave and stout, stood firm for Church and Lawes' before being 'worm'd and worried out by th' hungry Kirk and Cause'. This faction 'domineer'd a time' and 'sold [the] Church and clip't the Crowne'. They were themselves replaced by 'the jolly Saints', who had 'fetch[ed] the Kirk-men down' and 'slaine' Charles and the 'Lords... like sheep'. Now the people were 'tax't and vext'. Nedham expected this dynamic to continue. It must be that 'the Devil's cramp't, or falne asleep, if their turn be not next'.¹⁹⁷ The logic of this age was not broken by the regicide.

¹⁹⁶ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. lli1r.

¹⁹⁷ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.01, E.551[15], sig. A1r.

Instead, the regicide was a natural outcome of the features of the age, where past actors were replaced and decimated by succeeding ones.

The future foreseen

What did these authors see in the future for England? With Charles dead, it was only a matter of time that England would topple as well. Wharton described the country as 'the building' with its 'Foundation... taken away'. The forecast was ominous: 'the windes begin to blow, and the waves to beate', and England was a 'Restlesse Arke' that was being 'toss'd' in increasingly bad weather. The prognosis was not good for this ship filled with 'uncleane Beasts'; 'the Dove will not returne, neither will the Olive Branch appear.' With the demise of 'the Royall Cedar', it seemed clear to Wharton that 'the Inferior Trees' could only 'expect... to be crush'd and brus'd in His Fall', and finally to be 'hewn down and cast into the fire'.¹⁹⁸

Doom would also befall the regime, which had thus far survived on luck. There was 'a Storme' on the horizon, as foreseen by 'Wise Marinnners' but not by 'those unskilfull Pyrates... at the Helme of the State'. Wharton warned that the regime could not 'expect that the Winde should sit alwayes in one Quarter', or that they would 'alwayes' have the 'smooth and prosperous gales' they had enjoyed thus far. At some point they would topple, and 'the highest climber must look for the heaviest fall'.¹⁹⁹ In this account, Wharton appealed to the idea that change was constant and natural. The regime could not count on their streak of fortune lasting forever, and as unwise individuals, they would not be able to heed the warning signs and handle their changed circumstances appropriately. This rapid

¹⁹⁸ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. iiii1v.

¹⁹⁹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. iiii1v.

descent also came from their hubris. These 'men that unjustly aspire to be Kings or Gods' would suffer 'one turne of Fortunes fickle wheele'. This would remind them 'that they are but wormes', whereas 'the humble soul' who moved 'with sober pace' would have a 'slow discent', allowing them to obtain 'hope and happy Issue both with ease and honor'.²⁰⁰ Those with 'Pride... shall have a fall', and though they 'conquer'd England', they could not 'conquer Hell'.²⁰¹ Wharton was sure that the regime would fail imminently, because 'the Icie Ladder they climbe cannot so many beare'. With the regicide and their apparent triumph, 'they'r on the Top' of this ladder, 'and now's the time' that the situation turns against the regime. 'Some of them' were already 'falling', with 'the measure of their Guilt... pull[ing] them downe' accompanied by the 'Weight of an usurped Crown'.²⁰² The regime's punishment was already in the works. In response to the regime's 'black Deeds', 'King Charls his Blood doth Cry aloud', 'the Gods their gentle Ears have bow'd', and 'the Angry Heavens... doe frown'. The 'Furies' were already 'preparing', and the 'Northern Windes bustle to fling them down' from power.²⁰³ In a mirror image to the regime's imminent downfall, Wharton described Charles as benefitting from his misfortune: 'the neerer He stooped unto the Block, with the more advantage hath he gain'd a blessing'.²⁰⁴ In this vision of the future, those at the top would suffer a tremendous fall, whereas those at the bottom were blessed. Nedham agreed with Wharton's prognostication. By going through with regicide, the regime had sealed their own ignominious fate. These 'Rebels' had removed 'Kings in

²⁰⁰ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii1v.

²⁰¹ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii2v.

²⁰² Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246a, E.545[16], sig. Mmm1r.

²⁰³ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246a, E.545[16], sig. Mmm1r.

²⁰⁴ Wharton, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.243, sig. Iii1v.

Thrones' and 'wage[d] warre against the Powers above'. Kings were 'Gods Tenants', and only God could 'at his Will remove' them'. This 'Royall-sacred bloud of Kings weighes heavie' and would serve to 'scourge rebellious guilt'.²⁰⁵ The regime's downfall was already in the works.

Recovery in motion

After the execution of Charles, Nedham believed that forces were now arrayed against the regime. He identified 'those mistaken Gentlemen of the Presbyterian opinion' as one of the factions who will now turn against the regime. These individuals 'needs abhor those men and courses' who have made 'Religion stoop to policie'. The Presbyterians 'cannot but see the regall interest [as] the only Basis of settlement, safety, and true liberty'. This sentiment was shared by 'all honest hearts' of the nation, who have now 'beg[un] to turn that way now', as evidenced by 'the Cities observing the mock Fast on Thursday'. This fast was 'commanded to procure a blessing to this cursed Foundation laid in the bloud of our King', a trick to '[draw] in the Presbyterian to the guilt of it' and to reconcile 'them and the gallant Levellers to the Independent Founders'. However, it seemed that the fast 'was not observed in any Church of note throughout the City', which brought 'our new States' 'great grief and vexation'.²⁰⁶ On his part, Charles II now '[stood] with open arms to receive [the Presbyterians] upon their Repentance'.²⁰⁷ The Levellers were similarly redeemable; they were 'so much the more tolerable' with 'a little experience... that a just Monarch is the best Guardian of publique Liberty'.²⁰⁸ Furthermore, Leveller ideals were not too far

²⁰⁵ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B1r.

²⁰⁶ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.01, E.551[15], sig. A3v.

²⁰⁷ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.01, E.551[15], sig. A3v.

²⁰⁸ Nedham, *PFCKII* 370.01, E.551[15], sigs. A3v-A4r.

from monarchy. The 'passage... from a popular Government to a well-regulated Monarchy' was actually 'very quick and easie'.²⁰⁹ Not only was it beneficial to return to monarchy, it was also simple and eminently achievable. With the Presbyterians and even the Levellers on the side of Charles II, Nedham depicted an England poised to take down the regime and restore the monarchy.

Sheppard also attempted to enlist the people of 'brave London', asking that they reconsider their support for the regime. Their 'promised Liberty and pristine Freedomes' had been 'violated', thus it was illogical for them to 'no willingly imbrace a tyrannicall Rule' when they had 'once and often... declare[d] against Arbitrary Government'.²¹⁰ However it was not too late to 'collect [them]selves and bee Loyall'. Londoners could still repent and help 'Inthroné' Prince Chalres and thus free themselves 'from this illegal Power that's now upon' them.

Sheppard warned that this had to be concrete contributions to the cause, not simply 'drinking [the] Kings health' or 'banding his Cause in a Tavern'. Instead, 'true Subjects' should 'assist him with [their] Moneys, and let him have [their] second harvest of Iewels and Earrings'. Such aid 'may help him and put him in a capacity to relieve' Londoners from their oppression.²¹¹ Their support would 'purchase' their own 'renowne, when Charles by [their] meanes injoyes his Crowne'. For those who opted not to support the cause, their fate was dire. If their 'owne lawfull King's kept in exile', they would continue to be 'inslav'd with Warre and misery', with 'Fire, Famine, Pestilence' and 'Desolation' continuing to plague the nation. Sheppard promised that 'all these and many more, will still increase', and that the people would 'be hopelesse, er' t'injoy a

²⁰⁹ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.01, E.551[15], sig. A3v.

²¹⁰ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246c, E.546[4], sig. Hhh2v.

²¹¹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246c, E.546[4], sig. Hhh2v.

Peace'. The latter option would also condemn them to be 'rejected' when Charles inevitably regained 'his Fathers Kingdomes'. The choice was thus to support the Prince and thereby prove themselves honourable Englishmen, or to condemn themselves and the country to suffer increasingly while 'poysonous Cockatrices' ran the government, and they were still ultimately unable to prevent monarchy from returning to England.²¹²

On the Continent, Charles II himself seemed poised to make his triumphant return to England. Nedham reported how the prince 'move[d] suddenly from the Hague... from whence his next motion will set Derby-House a tottering like an Earthquake' from the moment 'he first sets foot upon English ground'.²¹³ Once he landed in England he would have no 'need' to 'move any whether else, for 'the other two Kingdoms will suddenly [be] his'. 'Brave Montrose' would secure Scotland, while 'the noble Osmond hath as good as done it in Ireland, where no venomous Creatures can prosper'. The 'Vipers of the States own hatching' were now 'at the last gasp... in Dublin, as well as Ulster'.²¹⁴ In this account, the task of restoring monarchy was already underway and the pieces already in place. Hence, Nedham asserted that royalists would be foolish to compound with the regime.²¹⁵ With Ireland already in Charles's column, it was only a matter of time before Charles ruled as king.

As Nedham asserted before the regicide, the regime seemed to know that their position was inherently unstable. The aforementioned fast in April 1649 was an attempt to secure their future, for they 'fear [that] if they follow Providence any

²¹² Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246c, E.546[4], sig. Hhh3r.

²¹³ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.01, E.551[15], sig. A4v.

²¹⁴ Nedham, *PFKDII* 370.01, E.551[15], sig. A4v.

²¹⁵ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B3r.

longer, it may change to give them a turn out of dores, if not over the Ladder'.²¹⁶ They would also 'play one Prize with the little Duke of Glocester', who would be 'set up a mock-King' once they realise 'they cannot hold out in this pitiful posture of State'. He would 'in hope... strengthen their Party, and appease the People', and once he had served his purpose the regime would 'turn him off again, and send him to Windsor to keep company with his father'.²¹⁷ Nedham also saw their legislation to pardon their enemies as an attempt to shore up their position. Through the 'horrid act' of the regicide they had 'rendred themselves unpardonable', and with 'Revenge coming on' they sought to 'faine foole the world into an opinion that themselves are in a condition to pardon others'.²¹⁸ Nedham reported that one of the regime's own men, 'Cornet Joice... the famous King-plunderer', was possessed 'by the Spirit of Prophecy' and warned Cromwell that 'if God does not break your heart, he will breake your neck; and that suddenly'. Noting that though Joyce was 'an eminent Saint', there was 'no doubt' of the truth of his statement 'for it is written [that] they shall all prophesie one by one, and shoot and hang one another round, if they hold on as they begin'.²¹⁹ Thus by continuing on their path, the regime would eventually destroy itself. He thus advised 'ye Tyrants' in May 1649 to 'giver o're' and to 'no more in Bloud carouse' for 'Vengeance stands ready at the door, and knocks at Derby-House'.²²⁰ With 'a good cause and a gracious God', royalists could 'dye' in peace. On the other hand, 'the Rebell-States know no such Liberty'.²²¹

²¹⁶ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.01, E.551[15], sig. A3v.

²¹⁷ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B2v.

²¹⁸ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B3r.

²¹⁹ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B4r.

²²⁰ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.03, E.546[18], sig. C1r.

²²¹ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.03, E.546[18], sig. C4v.

It was therefore clear to all 'rationall men', whom Nedham asked to 'judg... whether it be not better to submit' to monarchy in the form of 'one excellent Prince', thereby getting 'peace and liberty to the Nation', rather than a continued conflict where 'men ... fight themselves' only to end up in 'Slavery under thirty or forty Tyrants'. Such continued bloodshed and loss of liberties would be 'the only reward of all their services'.²²² While Nedham framed this as a choice, he drew the agency out of the hands of his readers. Nedham put it clearly: 'Now is the time, or never' for his readers to make a choice between Charles II and the regime.²²³ Even if 'ye will not give way to his Majeestie, he hath power enough to make it suddenly'. Charles already had enough support to return to the throne, including the 'Princes of Europe [who] have made it their Quarrel to re-invest him, and redeem' the people of England from the regime who 'have made it their busines to destroy' them. Charles's cause, 'His Affairs and Reputation' were 'both advanced so farr, that the very Dutch Bankers' had 'Faith toward his Majesty' and were now supporting his quest to return to England.²²⁴

Sheppard was similarly sure that the regime would be defeated:

I hope to see our English Rebels brought to the same passe ere long, although they think their Arme of flesh is able to support them, they may be deceived; for hee that could destroy the great Army of Senacherib in one night, is able to overthrow this conventicle of Traytors and swarme of Infernall Locusts.²²⁵

All-powerful God, who had stood by Christians in the past against the Assyrian king Sennacherib, could easily defeat the regime's Army. Sheppard cited the ongoing siege at Pontefract as evidence of royalist success, indicating that 'there

²²² Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B4v.

²²³ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B4v.

²²⁴ Nedham, *PFKCII* 370.02, E.552[15], sig. B4v.

²²⁵ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Ggg4r.

was [no] want for any thing in the Castle', and that 'the Cavaliers [were] able to subsist a twelve months Siege longer, in which time reliefe [would] be certain'.²²⁶ Additionally, the royalist cause was supported by other countries. Now that Charles was 'Murthered', the Dutch were treating 'our young King with more respect then formerly', expressing their disapproval of 'backsliding and sinister dealing' and providing an annual stipend for him.²²⁷ The Scots were also 'putting themselves into a posture of Warre', so that they could 'bid Defiance to England in behalf of King Charles the Second'. They were even willing to 'offer Hostages' to prove 'their Fidelity and Loyalty to him'.²²⁸ The Irish too, with Lord Ormond 'advan't against Dublin', were securing their kingdom for the new king. 'Thus Scotland joynes and Ireland doth agree, to hang Proud Rebels for their treachery.'²²⁹

Sheppard believed that royalist fortunes would change and monarchy would return imminently. In his second newsbook he celebrated the regime's imminent demise:

Laugh Royalists Rebellion Sinks, / And Loyalty begins / T'appeare againe
for Fairfax slinks, / And Cromvvell Snarles and grins. / France, Scotland,
Ireland, Denmark too, / With Holland doe agree / To make those Traytors
t'bend and bow / At Westminster which bee. / Then hast you Tyrants post
away / For if you doe abide, / With hopes to make your flight be Sea /
Youl'e finde ye've lost your Tyde. / God Neptune will not doe you stand
/ But if of him you misse, / Charon will Bote you from England / into
blacke Hells abisse.²³⁰

²²⁶ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Ggg4r.

²²⁷ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Ggg3v.

²²⁸ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Ggg4v.

²²⁹ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246b, E545[15], sig. Ggg4v.

²³⁰ Sheppard, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 369.246c, E.546[4], sig. Hhh1r.

At the then-peak of Cromwell's power, Sheppard foresaw the regime falling apart in the face of royalist opposition. Other nations on the Continent were similarly arrayed in support of Prince Charles and English monarchy. The leaders of the regime itself were aware of its precarious situation and would soon escape across the sea to their deaths. In the light of the regicide, monarchy was poised to return to England.

Conclusion

Before the regicide, Nedham, Wharton, and Sheppard were rather convinced of the royalists' eventual victory. They nonetheless continued to appeal to their readers to see the light and turn against the regime. England was on a path of decline into dystopia, and readers were urged to halt England's descent.

Ironically, the regicide only solidified their belief that their side would win. All three recognised that the regicide marked a high-water point for the regime. It ushered in a new age and exposed the regime's truly evil nature. While tragic, the regicide was also intelligible in the grander scheme of time. Wharton cited astrological reasons and natural limits to their depravity. Both he and Nedham also portrayed the regicide as the consequence of a logic of the age, be it the ever-changing times or the tragic nature of this age.

It is clear that even in the aftermath of the regicide, these royalist writers sketched out a future where the royalists would triumph, and the regime would collapse. The regicide did not alter the fundamental vision of the future portrayed by these newsbooks, other than giving them even more confidence that they were right. The regicide was a confirmation of the regime's dastardly nature, and it also sealed their ultimate fate. All three writers were now even more certain of royalist victory, arguing that sympathy and support now swung

to the royalists. The people, foreign princes, and even the Levellers now stood on their side and supported Charles II's inevitable victory. Whether they truly believed it or not, they wrote of a world that was still intelligible and where normality and monarchy were on the verge of being restored. In this way, while the regicide was a terrible event, the ultimate victory still belonged to the royalists in the future.

5. Parliamentary Newsbooks

In this chapter, I examine the uninterrupted runs of six licensed Parliamentary newsbooks from November 1648 to February 1649. These are *The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer*, *The Moderate Intelligencer*, *The Perfect Weekly Account*, *Perfect Occurrences of Some Passages in Parliament*, *A Perfect Diurnall of the Passages in Parliament*, and *The Moderate*. These newsbooks were selected primarily because they published continuously throughout this period, providing us with the opportunity to reconstruct how the events of the time were understood and interpreted, and presented to their readers. Additionally, I also investigate *The Armies Modest Intelligencer*, a shorter run of five issues from January to February 1649. This chapter begins with a review of the secondary literature on these titles and the individuals responsible for them, before moving on to explore their uses and visions of the future.

Frank identifies Richard Collings as the editor of the *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer*, and believes Collings was responsible for the title for its entire run from 1643 to 1649. Collings was probably a soldier: in April 1643 he announced he was returning to the field to fight for Parliament, and he discussed military matters and was familiar with military tactics.¹ Cotton argues that there was little evidence about the author. He posits that it might have been Captain Thomas Audley, an associate of the *Kingdomes*'s printer Robert White. Audley was arrested along with White for infractions by *Kingdomes* and *Mercurius Britanicus*. Cotton credits Audley as the 'principal informant and tactician' of

¹ Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 36.

White's stable of titles, which also included Dillingham's *Moderate Intelligencer* before the latter took a more Presbyterian line in 1648.² *Kingdomes* abandoned White in June 1646, attacking its former sister title, Dillingham's *Moderate Intelligencer*, and moving to printer Humphrey Blunden.³ McElligott identifies *Kingdomes* as one of the first newsbooks targeted explicitly at a rural audience.⁴ Its editorials 'swam with the tide', seeking to express uncontroversial sentiments, particularly after Pride's Purge.⁵ If anything, the paper is more Presbyterian in its agenda: it supported the doomed Scottish-Presbyterian cause in 1646, and several of its editorials in late 1648 supported the Treaty of Newport.⁶ Frank believes the newsbook was sympathetic of the King's plight, having added 'a few compassionate touches' in his description of Charles's demeanour.⁷ Cotton similarly concludes that *Kingdomes* had begun sympathising with Charles and figuring him as a martyr by early 1647.⁸ While Curelly also identifies Richard Collings as the editor and attributes its approach to him, McElligott expressed his reservations and refers to the author anonymously.⁹ Cotton is also unsure, naming Audley as possibly the writer even after the title moved to Blunden, but not committing to any firm attribution.¹⁰ Despite their disagreement, these scholars have not identified any significant editorial change

² Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 61-2. Dillingham was 'dropped firmly' from White's stable of titles due to 'his Presbyterian views in 1646'. Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 68.

³ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 102-3.

⁴ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 33.

⁵ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 34-5, 11.

⁶ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 174-9; Curelly, *An Anatomy*, p. 11.

⁷ Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 171.

⁸ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 197-8.

⁹ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, p. 34; McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, p. 33. Curelly says the identity of the editor is 'uncertain' as well, but he proceeds to attribute the newspaper's direction and outlook to Collings throughout his argument. Curelly, *An Anatomy*, p. 11.

¹⁰ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 168-9, 198.

throughout its run, particularly after 1646. It is safe to assume, as they have, that the editorial identity remained constant in the period we are examining. I have also hence referred to the writer by the title, rather than by name.

The Moderate Intelligencer, another well-established and ambivalently neutral newsbook, was authored by John Dillingham. Dillingham was an intelligencer in the 1630s for the nobility, and he had ties of patronage with the Earl of Manchester and the Montagu family.¹¹ Raymond detected a shift in Dillingham's attitude towards neutrality in the summer of 1648. This may also indicate a move away from his pro-Cromwellian roots towards 'a pragmatic soft-royalism'.¹² Cotton has found evidence of Dillingham's sympathy for Charles as early as December 1647, where Charles was described as 'a Pilgrim, with cloaths bare'.¹³ He has been characterised as 'neither an Independent nor rigid Presbyterian', but rather a journalist of the Middle Group that could only sit by the side-lines as divisions hardened in late 1648.¹⁴ Curelly sees Dillingham as being prudent in his views, even as he argued against change to the constitutional settlement in December 1648.¹⁵ Frank perceives Dillingham's output as one of 'strict neutrality', with a focus on what was accomplished in Westminster, and not on matters yet to be decided.¹⁶ As to authorship, these

¹¹ Antony N.B. Cotton, 'John Dillingham, Journalist of the Middle Group', *The English Historical Review* 93:369 (1978), p. 819.

¹² Raymond, *Invention*, p. 148, fn. 78.

¹³ Cotton, 'John Dillingham', p. 830; John Dillingham, *The Moderate Intelligencer impartially communicating Martiall Affaires to the Kingdom of England*. (Printed by R.W., 1645-1649), 419.142, E.419[18], p. 1080.

¹⁴ Cotton, 'John Dillingham', p. 834.

¹⁵ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 34-5.

¹⁶ Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 151.

scholars have generally accepted that Dillingham was in control of the *Moderate Intelligencer* throughout our period.

Less well-known is Daniel Border and his *The Perfect Weekly Account*. Border was a scrivener turned journalist, and later a physician.¹⁷ Originally *The Weekly Account*, the newsbook started in 1643 and changed its title in May 1647. It ran continuously until October 1649 except for a short interruption of two months from January 1648.¹⁸ Like several other Parliamentary weeklies, Border took a 'cautious attitude to journalism', choosing to present the news factually and staying away from controversy.¹⁹ Frank similarly notes Border's reticence to express his opinion in the months leading up to the regicide, calling the newsbook 'an adequate but second-rate publication'.²⁰ Cotton has remarked on how contemporaries and competitors complained about Border; he was 'called a liar' and 'remembered as a hack'.²¹ Border was interested in astrology, and featured Lilly's prognostications in his *Kingdoms faithfull Scout*.²² There is little contention that Border was responsible for editing and penning the *Perfect Weekly Account*, and thus I accepted this attribution.

The other more neutral title was *A Perfect Diurnall of the Passages in Parliament*, edited by Samuel Pecke. This popular title began in January 1642 and continued with only occasional interruptions and changes in publishers until 1655. Pecke

¹⁷ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 33.

¹⁸ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 11-12. See Raymond, *Invention*, p. 59 and fn. 186 for a short summary of the bibliographical confusion by Williams and Frank. Cotton first challenged Williams and Frank's conclusion in Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 186-7.

¹⁹ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 11-12.

²⁰ Frank, *Beginnings*, pp. 171-2.

²¹ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 180.

²² Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 185. Lilly's books were printed by Border's printer, Humphrey Blunden, who was also an enthusiastic supporter.

was an uneducated scrivener, and the *Perfect Diurnall* contained few classical allusions. He also focused his energies entirely on the newsbook, seeking 'neither literary fame nor political influence'.²³ Curelly described his reputation as 'a middle-of-the-road journalist who kept clear of religious and political controversies', while Frank called him 'the best straight journalist of the era'.²⁴ After a few months of imprisonment in early 1643 for publishing without a license, Pecke and his printer Francis Coles registered the title in July. *Perfect Diurnall* ran uninterrupted until October 1649.²⁵ Cotton found that Pecke was 'discreet about his opinions', but also that he gave much space to Presbyterian petitions.²⁶ He also noted how 'Pecke had little faith at any stage in the King's good will in negotiations', at least in 1645 and 1646.²⁷ Closer to the regicide, Raymond has ascertained that Pecke was the editor of the issues from December 1648 to September 1655.²⁸ Hence I have chosen to begin my survey of *Perfect Diurnall* from the first issue of December 1648.

Other newsbook editors were more vocal in their affiliation. Henry Walker was the editor of *Perfect Occurrences*, a significant and controversial newsbook title that aligned itself with the supporters of the Army. Walker was involved in the publication of controversial pamphlets, including the first English translation of *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos* and Robert Parson's *Conference Concerning the Succession*. In 1642 he became notorious for throwing his pamphlet, *To Your*

²³ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 24.

²⁴ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, p. 11; Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 172.

²⁵ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 29.

²⁶ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 117.

²⁷ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 119.

²⁸ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 76.

Tents, O Israel, into Charles's coach.²⁹ Walker also published a six-issue run of *Heads of a Diarie* in December 1648 to January 1649, which adhered closely to the Journals of the House of Commons.³⁰ Frank has observed how Walker 'avoided comment on the king's trial', but also that he 'tied together' events from 1642 to those in 1649. In the issue ending 5 January, Walker had included a reference to the King's purchase of new clothes even while the High Court was being negotiated. Frank surmised that Walker meant to illustrate Charles's 'inveterate short-sightedness and self-induced optimism', the same trait that led to the outbreak of civil war in 1642.³¹ Curelly similarly notes Walker's 'sympathy for Independents', but also a reticence by late 1648 to offending the authorities that led to a 'non-committal approach' to his reporting.³² Peacey considered Walker the author of *Perfect Occurrences* in January 1649, while Frank believes he became both publisher and editor by March 1648.³³ Various official records from the courts and parliamentary petitions confirm that he was the author between 1647 and 1649.³⁴ The Hebrew anagrams that preface the issues began in March 1648, and continued throughout our period of investigation, alongside the occasional advertisement for Hebrew lessons.³⁵ This points to a stable editorial identity that we may follow through our period.

²⁹ Jason Peacey, 'Reporting a Revolution', in *The Regicides*, ed. Jason Peacey, p. 163; Cotton, 'John Dillingham', p. 830. Dillingham had protested Parliament's treatment of Lilburne.

³⁰ Frank, *Beginnings*, pp. 166-7. Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5105, E.527[3], pp. 785-6 or sigs. Mmmmm3r-f, incorrectly numbered p. 769.

³¹ Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 167.

³² Curelly, *An Anatomy*, p. 11.

³³ Peacey, 'Reporting', p. 164; Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 150.

³⁴ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 219-20.

³⁵ Frank, *Beginnings*, fn. 75, p. 336. Cotton has ascertained that Walker's Hebrew translations were sound, but also that the prophecies he associated with them 'poor'. Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 242.

Similarly contentious was Gilbert Mabbot, a licenser of newsbooks and an associate of Thomas Fairfax.³⁶ The previous licenser, John Rushworth, was dismissed in March 1647 because of an upsurge in unlicensed print. When an ordinance was passed to control printing in September 1647, Mabbot, previously Rushworth's assistant, was appointed with Fairfax's recommendation.³⁷ His time as licenser was not without controversy: he refused to license John Dillingham's *Moderate Intelligencer* and even launched the *Moderate* in 1648 as a competing title because he disagreed with Dillingham's supposed support for the King.³⁸ Walker also found issue with Mabbot, accusing him of threats and launching an attempt in 1648 to replace Mabbot as licenser, leading to the Lords appointing Walker's friend Theodore Jennings in January 1649.³⁹ Peacey cites political differences as the basis of these controversies; Mabbot's *Moderate* was considered 'extremely radical' with views akin to the Levellers, whereas Walker was more similar to the Independents and the army grandees.⁴⁰ More recently, Curelly has argued that controversy between Mabbot and Dillingham was driven primarily by a commercial motive, with Mabbot and the printer Robert White colluding to profit from the *Moderate Intelligencer's* success. However, with Dillingham's successful appeal to Parliament, Mabbot and White were

³⁶ Peacey, 'Reporting a Revolution', p. 163.

³⁷ McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship*, pp. 154-5. Mabbot became Rushworth's deputy on 26 March 1645, evidenced by his entries in the *Transcript of the Stationers Registers, 1640-1708*, [vol] i, p. 158, cited in Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 31. Along with Rushworth, he was replaced in March 1647 by Sir Nathaniel Brent and his deputy William Newhouse. Cotton, 'London Newsbooks', p. 32.

³⁸ Peacey, 'Reporting a Revolution', pp. 165-6; Cotton, 'John Dillingham', p. 830.

³⁹ Peacey, 'Reporting a Revolution', pp. 165-6; Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 240-1. Jennings eventually succeeds Mabbot as sole licenser in June 1649.

⁴⁰ Peacey, 'Reporting a Revolution', p. 166. See also Curelly, *An Anatomy*; Jurgen Diethe, 'The Moderate: Politics and Allegiances of a Revolutionary Newspaper', *History of Political Thought* 4:2 (1983), pp. 247-79; Roger Howell and David E. Brewster, 'Reconsidering the Levellers: The Evidence of the *Moderate*', *Past and Present* 46 (1970), pp. 68-86.

forced to publish their title as the *Moderate*.⁴¹ As Curelly has observed, the first issues of the *Moderate* were politically moderate, not dissimilar from the *Moderate Intelligencer*. Curelly posits that the *Moderate* only 'evolved' into a radical publication because Mabbot and White realised such a stance would be profitable, in light of the end of the second Civil War and the looming discussions about the settlement of the Kingdom.⁴² He concludes that although the paper featured Leveller principles like popular sovereignty, it was not a mouthpiece of the group. Its editorials were strongly anti-monarchical, diverging from the Levellers in the first half of 1649 when the latter were arguing for a bounded monarchy over the new Commonwealth.⁴³ As for authorship, Peacey considers Mabbot as the 'supervis[or]' of the *Moderate* in January 1649.⁴⁴ Cotton argues strongly against Mabbot being responsible for writing the content, citing among other justifications Walker's silence on the matter, despite waging a campaign to remove Mabbot as licenser. Mabbot also petitioned the Commons on 31 August 1648 to ask for power to suppress 'scandalous Pamphlets', while the same week's *Moderate* preached against any form of censorship.⁴⁵ Raymond believes that 'the editorials were most unlikely to have been written by [Mabbot]'.⁴⁶ Curelly agrees that there is no conclusive evidence that Mabbot himself penned the editorials, but having surveyed the entire run of the *Moderate*, he accepts these were 'written by one and the same

⁴¹ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 22-4.

⁴² Curelly, *An Anatomy*, p. 24. Curelly emphasises that the term 'radical' means against the established order.

⁴³ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 197-8.

⁴⁴ Peacey, 'Reporting a Revolution', p. 164.

⁴⁵ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 258-265. 'In fact, if Mabbot did write the *Moderate* in 1648, then he must qualify as one of the biggest hypocrites of the period.' Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 264.

⁴⁶ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 66.

person'; there is one stable editorial voice throughout.⁴⁷ It is reasonable for our purposes to assume that the authorship of the *Moderate* remained stable throughout our period. Since we cannot positively establish Mabbot as the actual author of the editorials, I will follow Curelly's lead by referring to the author by the title of the newsbook.

In his examination of the *Moderate*, Curelly identifies three phases of editorials. The first, in August and September 1648, argued strongly against the Treaty of Newport and attacked the Presbyterians as traitors, while praising the Independents and the Army. The second, from October 1648 to the regicide, reflected on the political settlement of England and popular sovereignty. Editorials in the October issues referred to the Tudor chroniclers Polydore and Stow in an effort to encourage resistance to tyrants. They narrated events from the reign of the Anglo-Saxon King Dunvallo Mulmutius to William the Conqueror to describe the tyranny of kings, and the way they have oppressed the people's right to sovereignty.⁴⁸ The subsequent editorials from 28 November to 9 January adapted a Jesuit text by Robert Parsons. Published in 1595 as *A Conference about the Next Succession to the Crown of England*, Parsons debated the use of hereditary right to decide the legitimate heir to Queen Elizabeth I. The first part of the text was reprinted by Robert Ibbitson in 1648 as *Severall Speeches Delivered at a Conference*, the same year he printed the monarchomach text *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos*.⁴⁹ Curelly sees *The Moderate's* republication of the

⁴⁷ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 62, 197-9. Cotton draws an exception for the first three issues, noting 'a definite change of both style and policy'. Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 265.

⁴⁸ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 35, 37, 48-9. These were Polydore Vergil's *Anglicae Historiae*, and John Stow's *The Chronicles of England: from Bute unto this present yeare of Christ*.

⁴⁹ Cotton notes that Walker was responsible for *Severall Speeches*, but did not make the connection between the text and the *Moderate's* editorials. Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 250-1, 276-7. *Severall Speeches Delivered at a Conference concerning the Power of Parliament, to*

Ibbitson text as an attempt to legitimise the effort to depose Charles.⁵⁰ Despite being rather unoriginal, the Parsons text was clearly chosen and reproduced for a polemical reason, namely, to justify tyrannicide. The *Moderate* decided that parts of the piece were timely and would resonate in December 1648.⁵¹ These were edited, arranged, and combined with original contributions to make a streamlined and cohesive piece of rhetoric suited for its own purpose. Hence for this analysis, like Curelly, I have assumed that the author is speaking through the edited text, whether reproduced or supplemented.⁵²

Lastly, the *Armies Modest Intelligencer* was a short-lived radical title. Little is known of the author. Frank characterised its first two issues as ‘follow[ing] the Leveller line’, and the subsequent three as more muted and less radical.⁵³ Raymond sees *Armies* as one of several ephemeral newsbooks of assorted political affiliations that appeared before the censorship regime kicked in in September 1649.⁵⁴ Tubb assumes that the newsbook was a mouthpiece of the Army.⁵⁵ Despite a change in title from *Modest* to *Weekly* in its last two issues, scholars have raised no concern or evidence of discontinuous authorship. The issue numbers were continuous, as were the page numbers. It is safe to assume that the title was written by the same individual(s) for all five issues.

proceed against their King for Misgovernment (printed by Robert Ibbitson, dwelling in Smithfield neere the Queens-head-Tavern, MDCXLVIII. [1648]), Wing / P573A.

⁵⁰ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 50-1.

⁵¹ Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 54, 62-3.

⁵² Curelly, *An Anatomy*, pp. 54, 62-3. For reference, I have marked out the sections that I have identified from *Severall Speeches*.

⁵³ Frank, *Beginnings*, p. 175.

⁵⁴ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 72.

⁵⁵ Amos Tubb, ‘Printing the Regicide of Charles I’, *History* 89:296 (2004), p. 514.

Pre-regicide

Safeguarding the future

The licensed newsbooks argued that England's long-term future was in danger of more violence and slavery, and it needed to be safeguarded through a wise settlement of the kingdom. *Kingdomes* portrayed the situation in November 1648 as an aberration from the norm, which had to be corrected for the good of the future. In the issue ending 7 November 1648, *Kingdomes* published a petition by soldiers of the Army asking 'that justice be done upon the principall invaders of our liberties, namely the King and his party'. A settlement should also be made with 'streight bonds' for 'future Kings', to prevent 'the enslaving [of] the people hereafter'. The settlement should also provide 'grounds of encouragement' for those in 'succeeding Generations' to help them defend 'against the like attempt'. By so doing, the soldiers 'might... with chearfulnesse return to our severall Callings, hoping to live in peace'. This chance at settlement was time sensitive, and the country was on the cusp of losing this chance. England was 'almost past hopes of obtaining these things', and the soldiers thought it a disaster that 'all [England's] harvest should end in chaffe'. With the proposed treaty between Parliament and Charles, 'what was won in the field' was about to be 'given away in a Chamber'. The 'late and yet continued distractions' were now concluding with either a 'well or ill closing', and the conclusion would affect both the country 'and our posterity'. It was thus important to secure a good end to the conflict, and to ensure the 'making successful [of] all [the] victories' that God had given the Army.⁵⁶ The petition was also republished by Walker in the 3

⁵⁶ *The kingdomes vveekly intelligencer sent abroad to prevent mis-information.*, ([s.n.], Jan 1643-Oct 1649) 214.284, E.470[10], p. 1138.

November issue of *Perfect Occurrences*, and Border in the 8 November issue of *Perfect weekly account*.⁵⁷ In republishing the soldiers' petition, Walker, Border, and *Kingdomes* enunciated the concern that the future was in danger of being lost. Another soldiers' petition, republished in the *Kingdomes* issue ending 14 November and *Weekly Account* ending 15 November, asked that 'the Supreme power... be declared and determined', so that 'the want thereof may not be the ground of future [wars]'.⁵⁸ *Kingdomes* also summarised a further 'Declaration of the Army', which requested that 'the Peace of the Kingdome [be] settled upon safer and more righteous grounds', and that the 'future Government' should be based on 'a safe succession' of Parliament as 'ratified' by the people.⁵⁹ This was not unlike a petition published by Border in the issue ending 29 November, from the soldiers of Hewson's regiment, who expressed a 'fear of confusion [of] an Anarchy', from which they 'beg[ged] to be freed'.⁶⁰ These newsbooks transmitted the Army's concern for a permanent and beneficial alteration of government, which would in turn safeguard England's future peace. This peace from a final settlement was to be enjoyed by generations to come, not just the ones alive now.

The *Moderate* echoed the necessity of keeping England's future safe, but rationalised it as a natural reaction to disease, borrowing its reasoning from the

⁵⁷ Henry Walker, *Perfect Occurrences of Every Dayes Journall in Parliament, and other Moderate Intelligence*. (Printed for I. Coe and A. Coe..., [1647-1649]), 465.5096, E.526[23], p. 715; Daniel Border, *The Perfect Weekly Account containing Certain Special and Remarkable Passages from both Houses of Parliament, the General Assembly of the Kingdome of Scotland, and the State and Condition of the Kings Majesty, the Army and Kingdome*. ([s.n., 1648-1649]), 533.34, E.470[15], p. 266.

⁵⁸ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.285, E.472[5], p. 1146; Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.35, E.472[10], p. 277. This was the same petition from soldiers in Fleetwood, Whaley, and Barkstead's regiment.

⁵⁹ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.288, E.475[14], p. 1171.

⁶⁰ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.37, E.474[1], p. 295.

medical terminology of the time. Raymond identifies ‘medical metaphor’ as ‘a central aspect of the satirico-political language’ used by newsbooks of this period.⁶¹ In the issue ending 5 December 1648, the *Moderate* explained that it was only natural and self-preserving for England to remove its monarch. The ‘whole Body’ had ‘more authority then the only Head’. If the ‘Head’ was ‘out of tune’, then the ‘weal-publike’ may ‘cure or purge their Heads’ to prevent them from ‘infect[ing] the rest’. This would apply to ‘a body Civill’, which ‘may have diverse Heads’, and was ‘not bound ever to one’. Even ‘a Body naturall’ would attempt to cut off a ‘sickly head... and take another’ if only ‘it had the same ability’.⁶² The *Moderate* argued that it was both lawful and necessary to remove the head. In a later issue ending 19 December, he quoted historical examples like ‘Ahab and Iezabell’ who were ‘punished by God’, arguing that God’s favour lay in ‘that form of Government which’ the polity chose to place ‘unto it self’. ‘Humane Law’ also taught that ‘the Common-wealth’ gave authority to monarchs, and it could ‘restrain’ and take away their ‘authority’ if they betray ‘the common good of all’. With ‘wicked Princes’ who betrayed their coronation oaths, ‘the Common-wealth [was] not only free... of obedience, or allegiance’, they were also ‘bound’ to try and save ‘the whole body... and take off such evill heads’, which would otherwise cause ‘all [to] come to destruction’.⁶³ In the *Moderate*’s account, it was only natural that the body should act to preserve itself from a future of destruction. Furthermore, by appealing to natural principles, the *Moderate* insinuated that this act would never be seen as wrong; every future

⁶¹ Raymond, *Invention*, p. 59.

⁶² *The Moderate Impartially Communicating Martial Affaires to the Kingdome of England*. (Printed for Robert White, [1648-1649]), 413.2021, E.475[8], p. 177. The text was reproduced from *Severall Speeches*.

⁶³ *The Moderate* 413.2023, E.477[4], pp. 202-3. The text was reproduced from *Severall Speeches*.

age, if faced with a similar situation, would apply the same reasoning and come to the same conclusion that the head be removed.

Pride's Purge as a positive development

The writers were generally pessimistic about the possibility of a peaceful settlement.⁶⁴ Throughout November 1648, both *Kingdomes* and the *Moderate* had little hope for a peaceful outcome. The conclusion of the war in Germany led *Kingdomes* to comment about the situation in England:

The Treaty in Germany is now crowned with the joyes of Peace, they there enjoy their Halcyon times, the Sun doth shine out-right, and the hearts of the people are as unclouded as their Dayes. The Lion and Lamb doe play together, and the Storke roosteth with the Eagle, but neither the long Sessions of our Parliament, nor the late Concessions of the King can (for ought that I can learn) produce, on the sudden, any such happy Establishment to this Kingdome. The King (it is sayd) alegeth that he hath granted too much, the Parliament complaines that hee grants too little; The Army is not pleas'd with either, and doe move that all done by Treaty may come to nothing.⁶⁵

Kingdomes evinced little hope that the treaty negotiations would lead to any suitable outcome, or that England would come to a peaceful settlement any time soon. The only way forward was to find justice by indicting the malefactors of the time. A petition from Norwich and Norfolk was carried by both *Kingdomes* and *Pecke* in January 1649. It expressed their sense of hopelessness even after 'a vast expence of blood and treasure for many years continuance'. It was God's punishment that through 'the restlesse malice of our secret and open adversaries', the country was now 'cast back into as great fears and dangers as ever', and that they had 'no greater security' against the 'evils' they had fought

⁶⁴ Ironically, the one exception may be Walker. Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 251.

⁶⁵ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.287, E.473[33], p. 1161.

against.⁶⁶ They called for justice against Charles and his lieutenants, and a final settlement of the Kingdom ‘for redresse of present, and prevention of future evils’. It was this ‘remisnesse’ which they have ‘upon serious inquisition’ determined to ‘be one of the chieftest causes of Gods so great displeasure’, which had now exhibited itself in ‘the severall judgements now on this Nation’.⁶⁷ In the same issue ending 1 January, Pecke also carried another petition from soldiers in Shrewsbury and Ludlow, wherein they expressed ‘little hope of Peace with God or man’ as long as ‘the Authors of our former and late troubles’ and those responsible for ‘the bloud shed in the three Kingdomes’ remained free and ‘unpunished’.⁶⁸ Furthermore, as the soldiers in Boston explained in their petition, carried in the *Moderate*, ‘publick Trial, and Iustice’ would serve ‘to deter others from the like for the future’.⁶⁹ These steps towards justice and a final settlement would finally bring England away from misery and towards peace.

The petitions carried also argued that the Army was the best chance to secure England’s future. In the issue ending 19 December, the *Moderate* published a petition from the citizens of Bristol, who approved of the Army’s Remonstrance. The Army was ‘the last hopes of [the citizens’] dying spirits’, for ‘the prevalencie of the Royall Faction’ had placed the citizens ‘into great perplexities’ by frustrating their desires for a good settlement. The Army were thus their only hope to ‘avoid [England’s] destruction’. The citizens asked that the Army ‘cease not till the Cedars of Tyrannie be laid even with the ground’, and until the

⁶⁶ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.292, E.536[33], p. 1203.

⁶⁷ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.292, E.536[33], p. 1203; Samuel Pecke, *A Perfect Diurnall of some Passages in Parliament, and from other Parts of this Kingdome*. (Printed for Francis Coles and Laurence Blaikelock..., Jul 1643-Nov 1649), 504.283, E.527[1], p. 2274.

⁶⁸ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.283, E.527[1], p. 2277.

⁶⁹ *The Moderate* 413.2024, E.536[2], p. 214.

country's 'happinnesse... be established upon the pillars of Iudgement and Equity'.⁷⁰ *Kingdomes* similarly justified the events of Pride's Purge through an appeal to the future. It republished the justification given by the Army's officers, who explained to the Commons that they foresaw 'that the condition of the Kingdome [would] not beare delay of settlement one way or other'. They had 'for a long while beheld' the 'divided' and 'corrupted' factions in Parliament, and thus were now 'necessitated unto some extraordinary way to cleere and unite the Councells of the Parliament'.⁷¹ Soldiers from Dover Castle celebrated Pride's Purge 'as an especiall Act of providence' and a 'manifestation of Divine love'. In this letter published in the *Moderate* on 19 December, the country was on the verge of being 'enthralled under a most cruell Yoke, worse then our late Egyptian Bondage'. This intervention was timed to save the country at a critical juncture where England was on the verge of a disastrous future. In the *Moderate's* estimation, the Purge was necessary to prevent the outbreak of another war. In November 1648, the *Moderate* argued that the situation was deteriorating rapidly:

The Treaty's now effected, all's agreed; / Draw, draw for Freedome, or
we'r slaves indeed' / The King's upon escape, looke, looke about you, /
You're all betray'd, and how'l the Cabbs then flout you.⁷²

Parliament had betrayed the people, seeking to 'joyn with our enemies to destroy our freedoms and liberties'. Furthermore it sought to delay its obligations to the Army to stymie them until their 'designe be ripe'.⁷³ The votes in Parliament on 5 December declared the Army's moving of Charles to Hurst

⁷⁰ *The Moderate* 413.2023, E.477[4], p. 211.

⁷¹ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.289, E.476[9], p. 1179.

⁷² *The Moderate* 413.2018, E.472[4], p. 152.

⁷³ *The Moderate* 413.2019, E.473[1], pp. 153, 164.

Castle as 'Treason', which was done 'on purpose to lay a foundation for a new war, which was speedily intended against this Army'. With 'the Basis of a new warre thus laid', it was clear that the Army was put 'upon much necessity, and no less Justice' to arrest the King's supporters and the 'Kingdomes enemies... in Parliament'.⁷⁴ Thus by the *Moderate's* reckoning, the Army's coup helped prevent a disastrous war that was already being set up. Pecke similarly republished a letter from the troops sieging Pontefract. Dated 19 January 1649, the officers' council expressed their satisfaction that the Purge had removed the delinquents whose only 'designe' was to 'betray the kingome [sic] to perpetuall slavery, for their own ends'. To them, Fairfax's actions were 'a manifest token of [God's] presence', which had now successfully destroyed 'those strong destructive counsels' who 'doubtlesse' would have 'soon involved the Kingdome in more Warre and trouble to its utter ruine'.⁷⁵ Without this crucial intervention, England would have a worse future than the fate it was suffering before; existential danger was averted by the timely action of the Army.

Dillingham similarly approved of the Army's intervention, citing that Parliament had not served its purpose. He first inserted his thoughts into his newsbook in the aftermath of Pride's Purge. After describing the event, he attempted to answer concerns on whether 'the courses of the Army [could] be justified'. Asking his readers to 'looke upon former times', Dillingham decried Parliament as a spineless body who had always 'decree[d]... in favour of the conquerour'. If Parliament would 'not determine, or so determine, as divine and humane reason cries shame', then the people 'may intreat their forbearance' and metaphorically 'question the jury upon a palpable miscarriage'. Furthermore,

⁷⁴ *The Moderate* 413.2022, E.476[5], p. 197.

⁷⁵ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.287, E.527[12], p. 2306.

the function of Parliaments was to 'take off the grievances of the subject', and to 'provide against future miseries'. If they had done so, 'there lies no complaint'.⁷⁶ Since Parliament was not fulfilling its role in safeguarding the future, and by their neglect was bringing a worse fate unto England, the Army was carrying out the people's will by removing them from power. The high stakes of the situation were enunciated in a petition reprinted two pages after, written by soldiers under Colonel Pride. It professed the soldiers' willingness to 'die, but not [to] endure to see our Mother England die before us'. The coup was justified as a desire to save England from mortal injury, which would have resulted if Parliament – 'the swaying part thereof ... brought over to the Kings designs' – was allowed to proceed on its path.⁷⁷ The petition amplified Dillingham's point that England would come to harm without the Army's intervention. Border shared the sense that reformation was long overdue, and that Pride's Purge had provided an important opportunity to change matters. In the days after the Purge, Border republished letters that expressed their expectation for some form of intervention, which had not happened in the many years before. The issue of 13 December published a letter from a gentleman from Dover. It expressed how locals expected 'daily... to hear of some eminent action performed by the Army' now that they were 'so near the Parliament'. Previous 'delayes' in the past 'many years [had] proved dangerous', and these had 'brought sundry inconveniences upon the Kingdome'. With intervention from the Army, they hoped that 'all things [would] speedily conduce to a settlement'.⁷⁸ A letter from Exeter in the issue of 20 December also described a 'thirst after intelligence from London, looking for a settlement of the distractions of this Kingdome'. Their

⁷⁶ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.195, E.476[24], p. 1777.

⁷⁷ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.195, E.476[24], p. 1780.

⁷⁸ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.39, E.476[15], pp. 305-6.

attention was focused on Parliament, hoping that it '[would] not take up so much time' to perform their duty.

Walker similarly justified the Purge as a rational and necessary intervention, and he appealed for the country to unite behind the Army's actions. His issue ending 8 December began with a declaration that 'Where Safety is expected, Resolutions must be bottomed'. This was immediately followed by an account of how Scipio's soldiers, 'being unanimous', were triumphant over 'Hanibals Souldiers', who spoke in 'severall languages'.⁷⁹ The message was clear: in these precarious times the people ought to unite in support of the Purge and the Army. Later in the issue, Walker published the Army's justification in removing the 'treacherous, corrupt, and divided Counsels' in the Commons.⁸⁰ In the following issues, he appealed to the past in support of Purge. He recalled the 'fiction' of 'Tiresias of Thebes', who was turned from a man to a woman after 'striking two Adders', and then 'long after' turned back into a man 'by bruising two Seapents'. In contrast, 'all Histories Record, Effeminate Victories, [are] tradgicall to the Conquerors'. Muscular action had to be taken, if not the victorious conquerors would lose their advantage and position. Walker intimated that, unlike in Tiresias's case, there was no way to reverse the harm done if the Purge was not performed. Furthermore, 'Where God hath given power, he exacts improvement'. Since the Army had been blessed with its victories, it ought to make use of its position to enact change. If not, they would incur God's wrath themselves. Walker also alluded to a naturalistic explanation: 'nature can not willingly deny it self safety'.⁸¹ Not only was the Army obliged to purge

⁷⁹ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5101, E.526[38], p. 749.

⁸⁰ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5101, E.526[38], p. 755.

⁸¹ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5102, E.526[40], p. 741.

Parliament, it was only natural that they took the step to secure the country's safety. Published after the ordinance to try the King was read in Parliament, the issue of 30 December began with a rumination on promises and their fulfilment. 'Faire promises prove flatteries; when performances faile.' Instead, the 'best gallantry' was to achieve what was 'permanent and cleare'. Walker was probably referring to the regime's move to try Charles. Walker explained their act by referring to the story of Oechalian King Eurytus and Hercules. The King had promised his daughter to any person who bested him in a duel. However, he reneged on his promise when Hercules won. This led to an invasion which 'caused the King to be slain', and 'the Oechalians were settled another way'.⁸² It was inevitable that those in the right would secure their rewards, and these would be delivered either through peace or through violence. Since the country and the Army had suffered to settle the Kingdom, they had the right to seek justice and a peaceful settlement. If the regime denied the country that opportunity, a future of more bloodshed and violence would certainly occur as the story of Eurytus demonstrated.

Conversely, Walker depicted the Royalists as a group plagued by infighting. In his issue ending 22 December, he remarked on their situation, comparing them to apes:

Apes must be doing, though it be mischief: As the man that had two wives, his old wife pluckt out his black haire, and his young one all his gray, till they made him bald between them. When the Queen of Sidon could not enjoy her ends by the Kings Victory, she her self murdered Sirato her husband. The Cavaliers can not conquer England, and now they quarrell amongst themselves.⁸³

⁸² Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5104, E.526[45], p. 773.

⁸³ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5103, E.526[42], p. 765.

He then published an account of 'the bussle between the Lord Gerbeard, and Dr Goff or Koff', the latter of whom he described as 'An Ape cut'.⁸⁴ These royalists were clearly unfit to rule, and if they were ever reinstated to power, England could be similarly plagued by this infighting writ large. Similarly, Border carried news of the ongoing Parliamentary Fronde in France. In the issue ending 10 January, he described the events there as 'carrying some kind of sympathy with our affaires in England'. He then printed 'a letter from Paris' which noted that King Louis XIV fled the city with the Queen Regent for Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and that this 'sudden action' led the Parlement to send 'strong guards of Citizens... to the several Ports'. Since then, people of 'quality' have 'not only bin plundered', but also 'bin torn in pieces by the Robble'.⁸⁵ While Border made no comment on this news, the violence in France would have resonated with readers in England. It is possible that at this point with most of the kingdom settled, the situation in Paris seemed like one the English hoped to avoid. Seen this way, deferring to Parliament and allowing it to proceed with its agenda would be the best way to avoid similar violence on the streets.

England in constant danger

Even though the coup had secured England's future, there was still much danger ahead. In its issue ending 26 December, *Kingdomes* deviated from its usual practice of avoiding commentary:

This week shall put a full period to the events of this sad and troublesome yeare: O that it may put a period to the troubles of this suffering Kingdome! But indeed that is as farre beyond our present expectations as it is neere to our Desires: The Hand of Warre confined,

⁸⁴ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5103, E.526[42], p. 765.

⁸⁵ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.43, E.537[32], pp. 345-6. 'Robble' presumably means 'rabble'.

that hath torne the face of the Kingdome hath withall removed the persons of all those who were in actual Arms against the Parliament; But this yeare will dive into their hearts, who adhered to them, and they will be found the most dangerous, because the most secret, and as much to be admired for their levity, as they were to be feared for their power.⁸⁶

The imminent end of the year provoked commentary from *Kingdomes*, who also surveyed how the past year had brought 'many great successes'. At the start of the year, the Royalists were rallying in Cornwall and the North, the latter supported by 'an Army of the Scots' that was 'like a Tempest threatned to carry all'. Yet, the Army defeated these challenges, and Parliament settled the 'Tumult in London'.⁸⁷ *Kingdomes* had many thoughts about England's present situation, which he only neglected to publish because they would 'require rather a Volume then to be included in one sheete', and 'the hast of the Presse' precluded him from doing so.⁸⁸ The first issue of the new year similarly contained a wish from *Kingdomes* that the dawn of the 'New-yeare... may be an Introduction to a safe and lasting Peace' for an England which was 'miserable and distracted', and 'the pitty' of her neighbours, when formerly they had been 'the wonder' and 'envy' of these same neighbours.⁸⁹

In the *Moderate Intelligencer*, the situation remained volatile even after the Purge. In a letter from Lincolnshire, an anonymous author stated the grievances of the local residents pertaining to arrears and quartering. Should urgent action not be taken to remedy the situation, 'things [would] come to the same pass they were at in the Barons War', or in 'the contest between York and Lancaster'. This would be disastrous, especially since 'many feare[d]' that 'new troubles [would]

⁸⁶ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.291, E.536[5], p. 1193.

⁸⁷ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.291, E.536[5], p. 1194.

⁸⁸ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.291, E.536[5], p. 1195.

⁸⁹ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.292, E.536[33], p. 1201.

arise'.⁹⁰ The Army's actions had not yet secured a lasting peace. Dillingham's tone turned positive in the light of the news of 23 December that the Commons had now 'ordered a Committee to draw up a charge against capitall Delinquents', including the King. He noted that they were 'to sit day by day, the better to make haste of the businesse', adding that 'this will not admit of delay'. Once they had been charged, 'settlement comes on, and Englands Jubilee begins, and goes on faster then can be imagined'.⁹¹ Getting justice was the first step towards a lasting peace. Furthermore, the process of organising the trial was already bearing fruit. Pecke published a letter from the soldiers at Pontefract, stating how the 'well affected in these parts' were 'rejoyc[ing]' at the 'gallant proceedings against Charles Stuart'. The proceedings also shew that 'the Lords and [Charles] are not Independents'; the Lords were 'private enemies more dangerous then publike', but now their allegiance had been revealed. Like Dillingham, the letter advised 'expedition', which would 'prevent much corrupt mediators' that 'other Monarchs' were about to send 'to turn justice aside'. These monarchs were afraid that Charles's trial 'might prove an ill president to them for the future'.⁹²

The *Moderate* shared the sense that England was still in peril. In the issue ending 16 January, he argued that justice had to be dispensed swiftly as time was of the essence. He warned that 'Procrastination in Peril, is the Mother of ensuing

⁹⁰ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.196, E.477[14], p. 1796.

⁹¹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.197, E.536[18], p. 1802. These terms are not reflected in the Commons Journal, and are likely Dillingham's own observations. See 'House of Commons Journal Volume 6: 23 December 1648', in *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 6, 1648-1651* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1802), pp. 102-4. [<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol6/pp102-104>, accessed 29 March 2019].

⁹² Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.285, E. 527[6], sig. 13L2r.

Misery'. What was originally non-fatal could eventually cause death.⁹³ In the same issue, a petition from Hertford to Fairfax shared a similar sense of urgency, asking 'for the speedy settlement of our almost ruined Nation', that 'Justice... be administered to all', and for offenders punished to provide 'presidents to future Generations'.⁹⁴ Pecke republished a letter from 'Somerton' in his issue ending 8 January, carrying a dire warning to readers. The author recounted how Parliament had allowed locals 'to raise forces, and joyn our selves in association with the Army'. This was being done in a 'speedy' fashion, and he expressed hope that 'all the honest party in the Kingdom' may be similarly 'put to their shifts', so as to 'provide for their own securities'. However, he wished that 'all other Counties... would begin betimes', since if they let the 'opportunity... slip, it may be too late'. Their enemies were already planning to dash their 'hopes of quietnesse and peace in this Nation'. The 'Presbyterian Ministers' were looking to 'preach down the power of God in his Ministers' and to stymie 'this Reformation... in Church and State, the benefit whereof our childrens children will have cause to blesse us for'.⁹⁵ Furthermore, while

the grand Delinquent of the Kingdom (Charles Stewart) is to be brought to speedy justice (for which we have much cause to blesse God) we shall finde his party as active as the other, and though the Presbyters made but a seeming, though a reall and absolute conjunction with their Brother Malignants for the carrying on of his Trayterous interests, yet we feare you will find them this next Summer declaratively joyn with them, for revenge of this Army, and all that have adhered to them: And therefore it

⁹³ *The Moderate* 413.2027, E.538[15], p. 249.

⁹⁴ *The Moderate* 413.2027, E.538[15], p. 252.

⁹⁵ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.284, E.527[4], p. 2283. 'Somerton' is probably Somerton near Langport, Somerset. The latter raised clubmen for Fairfax in 1645, the history of which would explain this suggestion for a local association. My thanks for Andrew Hopper for the suggestion.

is high times for all honest men in the severall Counties to associate betimes, before it is too late.⁹⁶

The threat had not been subdued, and the royalists would rise again in time. It was important that the English remained aware and wary of the threat looming just over the temporal horizon.

The threats could also come from abroad. Dillingham published a letter from his correspondent in Dublin, warning that 'the divisions in England [would] undoe all'. The 'enemies' of England were now 'harbouring' in Ireland, and if they were not reduced, 'in time they may make England too hot' for the regime themselves.⁹⁷ Similarly, the Edinburgh correspondent reported that the Scots 'looked upon' the regime's actions 'with wonder'. The 'royall party' in Scotland, which consisted of an overwhelming majority, would not hesitate to return to arms against England, 'yet durst they not stir if you in England have peace' and if the regime 'settle [England] in a contenting way'.⁹⁸ Peace and unity in England was key to a peaceful future, both to prevent an invasion in Scotland and to forestall enemies in Ireland.

Effecting change through constancy and justice

Proper lasting change could happen if the people supported the Parliamentary regime wholeheartedly. Through his newsbooks, Border asked his readers to remain constant and unwavering in their support. In the section for 12 December, a Tuesday, Border inserted a section stating how he 'had almost forgotten' to describe 'a Sermon preached' before Parliament the previous Sunday, thinking the message important enough to recount. The 'Gentleman

⁹⁶ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.284, E.527[4], p. 2283.

⁹⁷ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.201, E.539[13], p. 1859.

⁹⁸ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.201, E.539[13], p. 1859.

that preached, preached faith and constancy', and cited several 'presidents' that were 'too large to be inserted in [the] sheet'.⁹⁹ Border went on to describe the content of the sermon: the preacher 'instanced' the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the Book of Daniel, who were saved by God after being thrown into a 'fiery furnace'. The children were delivered from harm by God because of their devotion to him. While Border questioned 'whether the cause' of the Parliament '[was] the same', he acknowledged that 'doubtlesse there is the same God'.¹⁰⁰ Border also included in the next issue of 20 December a letter from Essex that similarly extolled constancy. The 'well affected in [those] parts' hoped that Parliament would not meet 'obstructions' while they 'acted anew as formerly', though they were sure that 'any great work (especially of good)' would face some 'opposition'. The letter encouraged Parliament to remain strong in its convictions, citing the wisdom of Solomon: 'What thy hand hath to do, do it with all thy might.'¹⁰¹

In trying to secure support for the trial against Charles, Walker reminded his readers of what Charles had done once before and might do again in the future. In his reporting of Parliament's move to try the King, Walker reminded his readers of Charles's original crime against Parliament. In the issue of 5 January, he noted how on 3 January 'The Commons finished the great Order for tryall of the King', and then that it 'proceeded to a Declaration' on how 'the Legislation power' lay solely in the Commons. Immediately after Walker inserted: 'Jan. 4. 1641. The King came to seize the five Members.'¹⁰² By doing so, Walker reminded his readers that, in acting against the Commons, the King was

⁹⁹ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.39, E.476[15], p. 312.

¹⁰⁰ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.39, E.476[15], p. 312.

¹⁰¹ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.40, E.477[13], p. 313.

¹⁰² Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5105, E.527[3], p. 788.

targeting the people themselves. Parliament was, as he reminded on the previous page, 'An Ornament of the peoples trust'.¹⁰³ Should they not try the King and arrange a new settlement to secure their rights, Charles may once again behave like he did before.

Border also enunciated a desire for meaningful change in his newsbook. In the issue of 8 November, Border published a petition from Wiltshire which argued that the 'honourable House' could not 'settle this Common-wealth in solid peace and true freedome' if it did not confirm the 'foundation of Government' or stop the 'oppressio[n]' of petitioners. The 'first cause of all our warres, distempers and miseries' remained unaddressed, with the 'Supream power' still 'undermined'. 'Tithes' and 'Excise' were unchanged, 'remain[ing] in the same or a worse manner' even when compared to previous 'dayes of ignorance, Popery, and Superstition'. These imposed undue 'maintenance' on 'all sorts of industrious people'. If Parliament was to fix these issues, then 'this long distracted Nation may [eventually] be restored' to find its 'peace upon foundations of equall government'.¹⁰⁴ The petition portrayed an England still out of balance, and badly needing a reformation. In his issue ending 20 December, Border published a petition from Warwick that similarly enunciated a bleak future should Parliament not act decisively for justice. The 'nation [would] be desolated', and the name and cause of 'Parliaments' would be 'unavoydably blemished'.¹⁰⁵ Three pages on, Border summarised the petition from soldiers of Dover Castle as asking for 'Delinquents' to be 'punished, and the Kingdom settled'.¹⁰⁶ If justice was not done and the Kingdom not settled, Parliament and

¹⁰³ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5106, E.527[5], p. 787.

¹⁰⁴ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.34, E.470[15], p. 267.

¹⁰⁵ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.40, E.477[13], p. 316.

¹⁰⁶ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.40, E.477[13], p. 319.

the country would suffer in the future. Thus, Border welcomed the execution of justice against incendiaries of the realm. In the issue of 15 November, he welcomed the Commons' vote to try seven 'grand Incendiaries' of the realm. He expressed hope that they would be called to account like 'the late Lord Major Warner', whose 'Funeral [was] to be celebrated' the next day. These were 'delinquents of the same race', and their future prosecution would contribute to the settling of the nation.¹⁰⁷

While generally silent in the issues of November 1648, Dillingham published a petition in the issue for the first week of November. This petition to the Commons from 'the foure Northern Counties at their meeting at Bernard Castle' asked for justice against traitors to England who had brought enemies into the land.¹⁰⁸ Walker published the same petition from 'Byrou neer Pomfret', which called for judges to be sent for 'speedy trials in these Northern Counties' to handle delinquents 'according to Law'.¹⁰⁹ They expressed how they '[knew] no other way under God to prevent a new warre', since 'many Delinquents' had not only returned home, but also 'meet' and were having 'private consultations', 'pretending Articles for their peaceable living at home'. Yet, they were also 'so insolent, that they ride armed to publick places'. Without Parliament's intervention and justice, 'many' locals would 'adhere to them, and justifie their actions, and be ready to rise up in Arms with them upon all occasions'. Justice was necessary to the peaceful settlement and the 'quiet of the North, if not the whole Kingdome'.¹¹⁰ In this account, peace was tenuous and liable to disappear

¹⁰⁷ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.35, E.472[10], p. 273.

¹⁰⁸ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.190, E.470[24], p. 1737.

¹⁰⁹ 'Byrou near Pomfret' is Bryam near Pontefract, West Riding of Yorkshire. My thanks for Andrew Hopper for this information.

¹¹⁰ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5097, E.526[26], pp. 723-4.

if justice was not quickly done. A long-term peace could only be achieved if the traitors were punished for their actions.

Pecke, Border, and Walker republished similar petitions asking for justice, however they also recorded the disciplinary proceedings against soldiers of the Army. For example, Pecke and Walker detailed the punishment of Robert Roe and Henry Matthews, who were sentenced to 'ride the wooden Horse before the Royal Exchange London', and to 'run the Gauntlope... through Col. Dean's Regiment'. They had attempted to extort two Londoners of their money, using their Army credentials to accuse them of 'raising Forces against the Army'.¹¹¹ Border similarly recorded how 'two men rid the woodden Horse... with a paper on their breast', as an 'example' to those who sought to use the 'Souldiers Habit... on purpose to do mischief and have it thought to be done by Souldiers'.¹¹² In his commentary, Walker praised the discipline and justice of the Army:

It will be in vain for Knaves to shelter themselves in the Army, expecting countenance from thence for the least misdemeanour, if the Kingdome were so well disciplined as they, such would scarce find shelter any where. The City of London may take notice how carefull the Army is to preserve the Inhabitants from the least injury attempted by any under the notion of Souldiers, and that justice is impartially done without expedition without charge, upon complaint.¹¹³

In Walker's view, the Army acquitted itself by holding its soldiers to the highest standard of justice. Walker reiterated his point in a later issue, publishing a list of court martials and the punishments given and arguing that there was 'no

¹¹¹ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.282, E.526[44], p. 2270; Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5103, E.526[42], p. 771.

¹¹² Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.41, E.536[10], p. 326.

¹¹³ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5103, E.526[42], p. 771.

favour shewed to any Souldiers that offer wrong to people any where'.¹¹⁴ Border similarly republished in his issue of 6 December an order by Fairfax, which ordered the apprehension and punishment of abusive and careless soldiers that injured civilians in London.¹¹⁵ With the moral high ground, the Army was the right institution to be enforcing justice on malignants throughout the country, including the traitors who brought bloodshed onto the nation.

Parliament would also lose its future credibility if it did not act decisively, with the royalists still scheming against them. In the 15 November issue of Border's *Weekly Account*, a petition from soldiers of Colonels Fleetwood, Whalley, and Barkstead's regiments warned that 'the bloody designes of the Enemies of this Kingdom still continue', even though 'all their forces were supprest'. These forces were 'the more emboldened unto' because of the actions of some in Parliament. Through their influence, 'the innocent bloud' of their 'dearest friends' and brethren had been 'forgotten', 'just Government subverted', and 'petitions slighted'. Through its inadequacies, Parliament was turning supporters away from its cause, and its enemies now '[stole] credit in the hearts of many'.¹¹⁶ In Border's next issue ending 22 November, he carried a petition from the 'well affected' of Tavestock, which enunciated their desire to seek 'justice unto all', so that the delinquents may not 'take advantage thereby, and receive encouragement to act the same things again'.¹¹⁷ Condign punishment must be given to prevent a future reoccurrence of the miseries of the past. Negotiating with Charles was thus playing into the hands of the enemy. Border

¹¹⁴ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5104, E.526[45], pp. 775, 778.

¹¹⁵ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.38, E.475[20], p. 303, sig. Oo4r, wrongly paginated as p. 301.

¹¹⁶ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.35, E.472[10], p. 276.

¹¹⁷ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.36, E.473[13], p. 283.

carried a petition from Colonel Hewson's regiment in the issue of 29 November, which argued that Parliament should not 'make... a forfeiture of our unparalleled mercies' in listening to the will of Charles, who had left the Kingdom 'most unhappy in the whole course of his raigne', and was 'now dashing this Kingdom into pieces againe by his easily discerned subtilities'.¹¹⁸ If Parliament did not hold fast and bring the King to trial, they would be wilfully acting blindly and enabling Charles to bring misery to England once again.

These newsbooks generally put forth the view that action was required to safeguard England's future, whether it be by seeking a new settlement with the King, or intervention from the Army, or bringing delinquents to trial. The present status quo was unacceptable, and if urgent action was not taken or encouraged, much would be lost. One could argue that this conclusion is based primarily on petitions, which by definition demand action and change. While this is accurate, it is undeniable that the petitions featured in these newsbooks asked for the same changes. While there is an element of commercial competition, the newsbooks generally published these petitions in full, and the writers themselves explain or reiterate the same sentiment in other parts of the text. These newsbooks asked for change, and when change was imminent, they sought to prepare and reassure their readers.

Preparing for alteration in government

As the Rump proceeded against the King in early January, Dillingham fleshed out the details of several potential futures for England and offered his views on them. In a marked change from preceding issues, he began inserting prefacing comments at top of his text. In the issue ending 11 January, he expounded on the

¹¹⁸ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.37, E.474[1], p. 295.

difference between 'Monarchy, Aristocracie, and Democratic'. A king was a 'cunning or wise man... set over the people by their consent', seeing that his cunningness would lead to 'their preservation'. It was often the case that the people 'choose or appoynt' the monarch, as 'Conquest' was 'rare, and as rarely stood upon'. An aristocracy would be when 'the Government by Lords and Commons' held 'the same trust the King had'. This 'hath beene' the state of the country in 'divers years past'. However, now the country was moving into a democracy, 'the government of Commons onely, which, *de facto*, it's now coming unto', as apparent by the votes passed by the Commons declaring its bills were the law of the land, even without ratification by the peers and the King.¹¹⁹

Dillingham also summarised the plan to close Parliament in April, and for 'the Representative' to begin in June for six months, noting that in the intervening two months 'the ordinary Representative will be out of capacity' to deal with any 'affair which necessitates the Extraordinary upon emergencies'. This struck 'many' of Parliament's supporters as 'a sad story', since they hoped their efforts 'had built them such Tabernacles' that would have survived through 'their own and [their] childrens lives'. Dillingham advised that 'this alteration in the Persons or Governours must not be understood' as a change of 'power or government'. He also warned that there was no guarantee 'the Government will be better, or the people more happy, more eased'. However, he highlighted the possibility that 'this way... may make this Nation happy above any in the World'. This was a brave new scheme, and it was propelled by a spirit of gallantry that had brought them success thus far: 'for as in the former we might have bin gallant, so no doubt in this, and thus.'¹²⁰ While the plan was new,

¹¹⁹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.199, E.537[38], p. 1825.

¹²⁰ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.199, E.537[38], p. 1826.

Dillingham reminded his readers that new was not necessarily bad, and that the country had bravely broken new ground before to great success. It could be possible that the regime 'shall make use of simple, lean, profuse, prophane, Hypocriticall persons', who would 'aime onely for their own profit' and the country could only 'looke for no better dayes'. However, if the regime installed 'contrary persons', one could 'expect a quiet fitting under the shade of such Vines with dropping fruit'. Dillingham judged that the plan could swing both ways, one outcome with the continued turmoil of the past few years, and another with quiet peace and prosperity.¹²¹ Dillingham's consideration of both potential futures comes in part from his background as a newsletter writer. Cotton has noted his 'impartial frankness' and desire to spell out all possible outcomes, so as to provide his readers with a 'realistic though fatalistic' understanding of the situation. However, such interjections and advice were rarely given.¹²² That Dillingham found it important to provide his views is evidence of him seeing the present moment as a decision or turning point for the country.

To Dillingham, the situation called for more explication and guidance from the past. In his next issue ending 18 January, Dillingham recognised that it was 'seasonable' to 'query' about the 'alteration and change' of government. He thus continued his discussion on 'Government', highlighting 'that they might be altered' the people 'who first gave [Government] life'. He explained that 'the happinesse of a people' was not 'in the alteration of the moade', but rather that of 'men'. He asked his readers to refer to 'instance[s] out of Scripture, Ecclesiastical and Civill Histories and time' when 'Nobles' played 'little or no

¹²¹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.199, E.537[38], p. 1826.

¹²² Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 80.

stroke in government'. If governors turned out 'unable of their former trust', governments could be changed. While 'God did ordain government', this was 'never... binding to all the World'.¹²³ In this account, royal government was not a constant, and change in government happened whenever the need arose. This was obvious from the past and in the present era. Politics like 'the United Provinces, Venice [and] Genoa... at this time' were prime examples where the people governed themselves.¹²⁴ Dillingham outlined a hypothetical case, 'many times put to eminent Royalists... and ever granted', where a King 'who hath a birth claim' decided to 'sell' his people 'as slaves', and their 'liberties or estates to a foreign Prince or power'. It was agreed that 'it were lawfull' for the people 'by force of arms' to alter the government for 'the good of the Commonwealth'.¹²⁵ He concluded that 'there is ground for setting aside' should the King's 'bent of the mind and wil' be to 'overthrow the Liberties of a people'.¹²⁶ Dillingham added that it was 'impossible for the Supreme to do evil' without the aid of his evil counsellors working the levers of law and great office. Hence 'the fairest ground for deposing' was when the governor knew 'the Law' and the 'people's Rights' and yet still 'endeavour the constant violation and subversion' thereof. Without 'clear testimony' that he would 'better in government for the future', Dillingham concluded that 'there seems to be great reason not again to trust that man'.¹²⁷ In this sense, a hereditary claim was no guarantee of an absolute claim to rule. By narrating the theoretical

¹²³ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.200, E.538[21], p. 1838.

¹²⁴ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.200, E.538[21], p. 1838.

¹²⁵ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.200, E.538[21], p. 1837.

¹²⁶ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.200, E.538[21], p. 1838.

¹²⁷ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.200, E.538[21], p. 1838. Unrepentant behaviour included 'stand[ing] upon his justification' and 'hug[ging] the same persons' who helped him defy the law, even 'in his lowest condition'.

underpinnings of the case against hereditary monarchy, and by going through hypothetical cases, Dillingham imparted a sense of normality to the unprecedented proceedings against the King. These discussions, which arose just as Parliament was moving to put Charles on trial, helped normalise their actions and the conclusion of regicide.

In his issue ending 25 January, Dillingham observed that this ‘famous Tragaedy’ and the King himself was ‘now drawing to a period (as most thinke) both of earthly glory and life’.¹²⁸ Dillingham acknowledged the potential unpopularity and the undemocratic nature of regime change. It was ‘necessary in part’ that ‘oppositions have begun oftentimes by one’, usually ‘never to involve all’, and also ‘rarely the Major part of people’. Even so, these ‘actions have been accounted just’ with ‘the supream... laid by as a consequence’. He appealed to the past to justify the actions of the regime: there were ‘plenty’ of ‘examples’ from ‘our Histories, and also of other Kingdoms’.¹²⁹ These minority-led regime changes were not unusual; they were part of a long-established tradition. Dillingham buttressed this claim by inserting a description of the Portuguese installation of John IV of Braganza in 1640. In the issues ending 18 and 25 January, he detailed how John IV was declared the rightful monarch of ‘Portingale’, and that the ‘3 Estates of the Kingdom assembled together’ to confirm his right to reign.¹³⁰ In the latter issue, this segment was inserted immediately following updates of Charles’s trial.

¹²⁸ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.201, E.539[13], p. 1850.

¹²⁹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.201, E.539[13], p. 1849.

¹³⁰ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.200, E.538[21], pp. 1839-40; 419.201, E.539[13], p. 1851.

Acts of regime change were not restricted to the past; they could happen in the future as well. Now the 'true Representative [had] convened' and their plan was 'conceiv'd' to be the 'most durable [and] freest from after danger, and pleasing to the people'. However, it seemed that it was 'the way of England' that the people themselves were 'ever ready to take the Sword', even if they were 'seldome able to manage a revenge'. This was important should the 'Representative' not act for the people, even if they were 'intreated' and 'strong reasons laid before them'. In this case, Dillingham asked if it was 'not better to call another Representative, and another, and another?'¹³¹ The government could be altered without limit if they were unsuitable.

As early as November 1648, the pro-Army *Moderate* began appealing to history to normalise the idea of regime change.¹³² He observed that the people had always been able to choose their own government 'where Conquest hath not hindered'. There was also 'not any one of these forms of government' that 'God, or nature' had commanded. These 'particular formes' were decided by 'every Nation or Countrey, to chuse as they... think best' to 'fit... their Natures, and conditions'. For example, 'the Romans first had Kings', but later 'rejected them for their evill Government'. England was no different:

And will not our own English Nation give cleer Testimony herein? Was it not first a Monarchy under the Brittaines, and then a Province under the Romanes, and after that divided into seven Kingdomes at ones, under the Saxons, and now a Monarchy again under the English by and every since the Conquest.¹³³

¹³¹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.201, E.539[13], p. 1849.

¹³² Cf. Raymond, *Invention*, chapter 1.

¹³³ *The Moderate* 413.2020, E.473[31], pp. 165-166. This text had been adapted and slightly altered by the author, compared to *Severall Speeches*.

The *Moderate* also pointed out examples of regime change in the Bible, concluding hence that ‘the Common Wealth’ should similarly have ‘this authority to chuse, and change her Government’ with any bounds ‘and conditions [as] she pleaseth’.¹³⁴ Regime change was thus not a foreign and disruptive concept. Rather, it was ingrained in Continental and English history, and the Bible as well.

While the *Moderate* took the right of conquest to be an interference, the short-lived newsbook *The Armies modest intelligencer* argued the opposite. The title first appeared in January 1649 while talk of regicide consumed the country.¹³⁵ Published on 26 January, its first issue began by tracing monarchy in England to William the Conqueror. Their title was ‘hereditary from the Conquest’, and the Norman victory was responsible for bringing ‘a great part of the Nobility and Gentry of this Kingdome’. The latter were put in power to reward those who ‘had served him in the warrs’. It then posed ‘the question’, asking ‘how many persons which were not natives of this Kingdome attayed to any estates or preferment’. *Armies* went on to observe how ‘the lawes and customes of Normandy’ had ‘crept into the Iudges Chambers’, and that these laws had not been ‘put into English’ even after so long. *Armies* sarcastically remarked that this was to help ‘the common people... saue their money’, and also ‘avoyd a great deale of trouble and vexation’.¹³⁶ By drawing attention to monarchy’s Norman roots, *Armies* highlighted the fact that the present monarchy was foreign in

¹³⁴ *The Moderate* 413.2020, E.473[31], p. 166. This text is from *Severall Speeches*.

¹³⁵ The title was later renamed as *The Armies Weekly Intelligencer* in its last two issues (18.4 and 18.5). *The Armies Modest Intelligencer. Communicating to the whole kindom [sic], certaine passages in Parliament, the full proceeding upon the Kings triall, debates at the General Councell, vvith varietie of intelligence from several places in England, and other parts of Europe*. (Printed for C. Brook, and are to be sold in the Old-bayley, [1649]).

¹³⁶ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.1, sigs A1r-v.

origin, and that its institutions of nobility and justice were inextricably linked to the Norman conquest. *Armies* then characterised 'the present times' as one where 'the Conquerer [has been] Conquered', before proceeding to recount 'the grievances of the people' with regards to the 'execution of the Laws of this Kingdome'.¹³⁷ Put together, *Armies*'s message was clear: the Norman institutions were foreign and oppressive towards the people, and now that the Army had conquered England, the country could jettison the foreign system by right of conquest. Not only would England return to its pre-Norman state, it would do so using the same justification that the Normans used themselves.

Writers like Border and Walker were at pains to manage expectations of the future, and they emphasised the cautious and step-by-step nature of reformation. Border summarised details from the Agreement of the People, presented to the Commons on 20 January. In his commentary, he emphasised the contingent nature of the Agreement:

These and many other things of like sort, being of a perticular nature, and requiring very perticular and mature considerations, with larger experience in the perticular matters then [the authors] have, and much caution, that by taking away of present evils, greater inconveniences may not ensue, for want of present provisions in the room thereof; and being far from desire or thought to assume or exercise a Law-giving or judicial power over the Kingdom, or to meddle in any thing, save in the fundamental settling of that power in the most equal and hopeful way for common right, freedom, and safety (as in the Agreement), when the matter of publique Justice and settlement shal be over, they will recommend the rest to future Representatives to redresse.¹³⁸

Border presented the Agreement as a cautionary first step in a larger project of reformation. In his account, the Agreement was necessary at this critical point to

¹³⁷ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.1, sigs A1v.

¹³⁸ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.45, E.540[2], pp. 358-9.

bring justice. Once it had secured the country's future, other less urgent specifics would be worked out. Recognising how his newsbook may impact the public view of these deliberations, Walker was sensitive of his potential role in disrupting the settlement of the Kingdom. He declared that he '[would] not do the Kingdome so much Prejudice as to publish any heads of a moddell for Government transacted by the Army', at least not 'before they have concluded them'. All he would list was their goals, namely that 'God may have glory, the Subject Libertie, lawes truly executed, And the Kingdome peace'. He described their work as a complex process that would require a comprehensive approach, and hence 'no part will be totally finished, till all be concluded'.¹³⁹ He further alluded to the discussions of 'the great Modell for Government' in the issue of 5 January.¹⁴⁰

Occasionally, newsbooks would include mention of miraculous or supernatural signs that England was on the right path. In the issue ending 16 January, *Kingdomes* described a miracle in Scotland, an event 'worthy' of his readers' 'observation'. He related that 'last yeer... a woman of threescore and ten yeers of age' was pregnant with child. However, with the 'throng of people' who came 'daily' to see her, and 'the fright of the Warre', the woman 'miscarryed some five months before her time'. One year later, she was now 'great with child againe' with 'a husband three years older then her selfe'. This anecdote was published at the end of the issue, which also covered the trial of the King and the actions of the Rump Parliament, as well as other news from Scotland and abroad. It is interesting to compare this 'miraculous' occurrence to England's condition a year ago and in the present moment. It was uncharacteristic of *Kingdomes* to

¹³⁹ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5103, E.526[42], p. 772.

¹⁴⁰ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5105, E.527[3], p. 781.

insert such an anecdote in his newsbooks. Furthermore, in his summary at the end of the issue, he used three of his eight lines to describe the miracle.¹⁴¹ The mother's experience did also reflect England's condition in the past year and in the present: England had suffered from the outbreak of war, which for the mother caused a miscarriage. However, like the mother newly pregnant with child, England had similarly recovered and was set on a path of miraculous recovery. Samuel Pecke also recorded one instance of a supernatural approval of the Army's work. In the issue ending 1 January, he noted the arrival of 'a woman out of Hartfordshire', who claimed to have 'received something from God in relation to the Armies present proceedings'. She met with the 'Councell' and 'spake much of incouragement to them'. Her visit and words were 'well accepted as coming from an humble spirit', and the council 'lookt upon [her advice] as seasonable'.¹⁴² This episode reinforced the notion that the Army was carrying out the will of God and the people; the commoner was a representative of the people themselves, and God, through the people, gave his approval of the Army and the direction they were steering England toward.

Historical precedents for regicide

According to Parliamentary newsbooks like the *Moderate* and *Perfect Occurrences*, it was not uncommon or immoral to remove bad monarchs from power. The *Moderate* presented a historical analysis on the ability for politics to dethrone and punish their monarchs. He stated that it was 'clear' that 'all Common wealths have in all Ages lawfully chastised their lawfull Princes'. In

¹⁴¹ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.294, E.538[17], p. 1224.

¹⁴² Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.283, E.527[1], p. 2280. This was Elizabeth Poole, the prophetess from Abingdon. Pecke did not include Poole's second meeting on 5 January in his later issue (ending 8 January), where she spoke against regicide. See C.V. Wedgwood, *A King Condemned* (New York: Tauris, 2011), pp. 81, 88-9.

the Bible, the 'two wicked Kings, Saul and Ammon' were removed from power 'and put to death by the people', even though they had been placed on the throne lawfully.¹⁴³ Saul was himself 'elected by God to that Royall Throne', but he suffered death at the hands of the Philistines 'by Gods order... for his disobedience'. Julius Caesar was similarly 'slain by Senators' because he 'had broken all Law, both Humane and Divine'. The *Moderate* added that in this case, Caesar's successor Augustus 'proved afterwards the most famous Emperour that ever was'.¹⁴⁴ Not only was regicide acceptable, it could also lead to glory and prosperity. The *Moderate* also invoked English precedents, namely Edward II, Richard II, and Henry VI, proving that 'lawfull Princes have oftentimes by their Common-wealths been lawfully deposed for mis-government'.¹⁴⁵ By highlighting various instances where monarchs were slain for their misdeeds, the *Moderate* deemphasised the radical nature of regicide.

Perhaps sensing unease among his readers about the decision to put Charles on trial, Walker began his issue of 25 January with the observation that 'Policy is well acted when it centers in good', whereas 'ill ends, produce sad effects'.¹⁴⁶ He backed this statement with references to Leaena and Harmodius and Aristogeiton, and also to Leander of Abydos and Hero of Sestos.¹⁴⁷ Leaena was celebrated as a paragon of virtue because she refused to reveal information

¹⁴³ *The Moderate* 413.2021, E.475[8], p. 177. This text is from *Severall Speeches*.

¹⁴⁴ *The Moderate* 413.2021, E.475[8], p. 178. This text is from *Severall Speeches*.

¹⁴⁵ *The Moderate* 413.2021, E.475[8], p. 179. Raymond argues that this explanation is 'an alternative' to the justification based on necessity and the threat of a new war, thus concluding that the *Moderate* was 'a collaborative enterprise, particularly in the busy weeks of late 1648'. While the newsbook may have been collaboratively composed, the different justifications do not contradict each other, and hence are not proof that the two sections were authored by different and conflicting writers. Raymond, *Invention*, pp. 175-6.

¹⁴⁶ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5108, E.527[11], p. 803.

¹⁴⁷ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5108, E.527[11], p. 803.

about Harmodius and Aristogeiton's conspiracy to kill the tyrants Hippias and Hipparchus. On the other hand, Leander of Abydos defiled Hero, who was a virgin priestess of Aphrodite. Leander perished on a stormy night, while swimming the Hellespont to visit Hero, who subsequently committed suicide in grief. Their treachery against the gods brought them death. Through these references, Walker probably intended to reassure his readers that well-intentioned policies, like putting the King on trial, would only lead to good outcomes. Like the *Moderate*, Walker used historical contextualisation to reassure his readers that regicide was not revolutionary. After all, England would be in its best state only if it was free. Walker illustrated this by alluding to Ganymede, who was 'lightsome' and 'an admiration to all Phrygia' only when he was free and at liberty 'at Harpagia'.¹⁴⁸

As one of two journalists sanctioned to produce a record of Charles's trial, Walker continued to reiterate the historical precedents.¹⁴⁹ In Walker's final report of the trial, he emphasised the role of past precedent in determining Charles's guilt. He highlighted one of Bradshaw's justifications of the Court in a significantly larger print:

The Lord President instanced the Barons Warres, that then they would not suffer Kings to be Tirants. And that if they now will neglect what the Barons of old did so carefully looke to, that they will not be negligent of their duty.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5107, E.527[8], p. 797.

¹⁴⁹ Walker published his account in four separate issues. Peacey, 'Reporting a Revolution', p. 164.

¹⁵⁰ Walker, *Collections of Notes Taken at the Kings Tryall* 4 (Printed by Robert Ibbitson, 1649), Wing (2nd ed) / C5220, E.540[9], p. 7.

Walker thus emphasised that the Court had to proceed against Charles as a matter of historical precedence; not to do so was to innovate and move towards uncharted territory. The regicide was refashioned into a conservative act meant to retain continuity with the past.

The newsbooks began broaching the possibility of Charles's death by December 1648, familiarising their readers with the notion that the King might die. In the issue ending 6 December, Border carried Charles's verbatim response to the Commissioners sent to treat with him. Charles argued that their interests were aligned, 'that in [his] fall and ruine', they would 'see [their] own, and that also near to [them]'. He also expressed how he was 'fully informed of the whole carriage of the plot' against him and his family, and that he was 'afflict[ed]' with the 'sence and feeling... of the sufferings' of his 'Subjects' and the 'miseries that [hung] over [his] three Kingdomes'. In Charles's account, these troubles were brought on solely by 'those who, upon pretences of good, violently persue[d] their own private interests'.¹⁵¹ In the issue ending 20 December, Border recorded Charles's move to Windsor, writing that by moving into a royal residence Charles 'hope[d] from thence to be very shortly reinvented' and reinstated 'to his terrestrial throne', or to be 'translated to that Crown which is Celestial'.¹⁵² Border deemed this significant enough to include in his summary at the end of the issue thus: 'His Majesties sence of the removing him to Windsor (one of the four honours of England) with some predictions what alterations shall happen hereafter.'¹⁵³ In the 3 January issue, he drew parallels between Charles's journey to Windsor and Edward II's carriage to Berkeley Castle after the latter was

¹⁵¹ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.38, E.475[20], p. 299.

¹⁵² Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.40, E.477[13], p. 320.

¹⁵³ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.40, E.477[13], p. 320.

deposed and taken prisoner. Border stated how Edward, who was 'deposed by the people', cried as 'a Barber came, and trimmed the hair of his face'. Charles, 'the King that now is', was similarly 'much moved at his horses falling lame by the way' on his way to Windsor. The replacement steed was 'more nimble of foot', but refused to cross a bridge over a river. Charles 'being not able to rule this unruly creature' had to 'alight... and walke on foote over the bridge'. It was during this 'gentle walke... [that] some observed little drops like pearls to fall from his eyes'.¹⁵⁴ Border thought this anecdote was important enough to feature in his summary of the issue, promising to reveal 'the cause of His Majesties weeping'.¹⁵⁵ The implication of Border's anecdote was clear: Charles would die in captivity, just as Edward II did.¹⁵⁶ Border clearly had sympathy for the King, and as Cotton has shown, Border would later be outspoken in his support for Prince Charles over the regime.¹⁵⁷ Border painted an image of a steadfast Charles whose desires pit him against the nation. In moving to Windsor, Charles's demeanour was unchanged from before, 'seldome... very merry' and expressing neither 'joy or sorrow'. Even though he expected 'a severe charge and tryall', he did 'not shew any great discontent'.¹⁵⁸ At the end of the same issue, Border recorded how Charles was unperturbed to die a martyr in defence of religion

¹⁵⁴ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.42, E.536[37], pp. 332-3/sigs. Qq1r-v, wrongly paginated as 322-3.

¹⁵⁵ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.42, E.536[37], p. 339/sig. Qq4r, wrongly paginated as 329.

¹⁵⁶ Amos Tubb draws the same conclusion from this last anecdote of Charles and Edward II. Tubb, 'Parliament Intends', p. 473.

¹⁵⁷ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 201-2.

¹⁵⁸ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.42, E.536[37], p. 333/sig. Qq1v, wrongly paginated as 323.

and the country, 'so confident is the King in his wayes'.¹⁵⁹ Border commented that it was 'feared' that Charles's 'great aversnesse to the peace of this kingdom' would only 'cause much trouble and distractions to befall his people'.¹⁶⁰

Despite his sympathy and later support for Prince Charles's accession, Border prepared his readers for a future without monarchy. While Charles's trial was being negotiated in Parliament, Border broke from his normal practice of reporting by adding a preface elucidating Parliament's independence from monarchy. In the issue of 17 January, he traced how 'in the time of the Saxons' Parliament existed as 'The great Assembly'. According to Solomon, 'all such Counsels assemble for two ends':

1 For the prevention of the downfall and destruction of a Commonwealth, 2 For the safety and preservation of the people. For this end, Parliaments have been held in England, without the Kings personal presence (and that even since the Conquest) notwithstanding the Maxime in our Norman Laws, that the King never does.¹⁶¹

Parliament was responsible for the people and the Commonwealth, and its purpose meaningful even in the absence of a monarch. Their function was so important that 'parliaments have been called and sate in England' without a King, even in the Norman period. For example, 'divers Parliaments assembled' before Henry VIII was crowned, and 'a Parliament [was] called before K. Charles was crowned', after the death of James I. 'In the yeer of H.8. a

¹⁵⁹ This particular phrase was also used in Walker's issue ending 30 December, which probably means they were quoting from the same dispatch from Windsor. Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5104, E.526[45], p. 779.

¹⁶⁰ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.42, E.536[37], p. 339/sig. Qq4r, wrongly paginated as 329.

¹⁶¹ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.44, E.538[20], p. 349.

Parliament was held in England' while Henry was away 'in Calis'.¹⁶² Border thus concluded that the evidence showed

By all which it appears, that the people of England did meet by their Representatives, and make and enact Laws both in the absence of the King, and in his nonage, before he was crowned and confirmed in his kingly office.¹⁶³

If Parliaments had functioned without monarchs as recently as in the last century, then Parliament could function in a future without monarchy. Border then added a comment on the House of Lords, which he described as 'chiefly meddl[ing] with those things which concerned their own perticular interest'. These Lords were selfish with their time, and sought leave from Parliament 'when they had businesse which did more highly concern themselves elsewhere'. However, since their 'Barronage' required them to remain in the House, 'in many Records we finde petitions to the Parliament, saying, That they were no Barons', and thence 'desiring to be discharged of their attendance'.¹⁶⁴ Thus the House of Lords did not have the people's interests at heart, and they were not serving the true purposes of Parliament. While Border did not comment further, his implication was clear: the Commons was the true Parliament, and it could meet without either the monarchy or the peers to fulfil its function. A future of being governed by just Parliament would be feasible, and not something to be worried about.

Border's extended discussion of Parliament meeting without kings goes against the grain of Cotton's conclusion that Border agitated against the regime in favour of monarchy with Prince Charles on the throne. However, these two

¹⁶² Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.44, E.538[20], p. 350.

¹⁶³ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.44, E.538[20], p. 350.

¹⁶⁴ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.44, E.538[20], p. 350.

conclusions might not be intractable. Firstly, Border could have sought to put his readers' minds at ease in the face of Charles's inevitable death, reassuring them that England would not immediately collapse after the regicide.¹⁶⁵ Secondly, it is difficult to determine how much Border's stance was motivated by commercial concerns. Cotton finds that Border expressed sympathy for the King as early as 1647, but also that Border and the pro-regime Walker 'quite possibl[y]... were at least on friendly terms' before 1649. By that year, it was clear that the two writers were 'fiercely competing for Friday's market'.¹⁶⁶ Border's contrarian stance could be in large part motivated by a desire to out-compete Walker by playing on sympathy for Charles and support for Prince Charles. After all, much of the country were not enthusiastic about the regime and its actions. Furthermore, these sentiments were much louder in Border's two, more disposable, titles, rather than the 'venerable' *Perfect weekly account*, which 'preserved a more cautious diplomacy throughout'.¹⁶⁷ In any case, Border's idea of the best settlement for England could have evolved with events. Also, sympathy for Charles and his circumstances did not necessarily mean Border supported the royal prerogative over Parliament. Border was, after all, not writing an underground royalist newsbook.

The *Moderate* prepared its readers for the regicide by tying it intractably to the future recovery of the nation. The *Moderate* approved when the regime moved to '[draw] up a Charge against the King' on 26 December. He commented that it

¹⁶⁵ Cotton believes that *Kingdomes* was on a similar wavelength as Border, only that *Kingdomes* was much less vocal in its support. See Frank, *Beginnings*, pp. 187-9 for *Kingdomes*'s hidden sympathy for Prince Charles, who in turn was said to have read and admired the title.

¹⁶⁶ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 208.

¹⁶⁷ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 202.

was 'high time' this was 'done', and the King needed to face justice as part of a 'settlement for this Kingdom'. He emphasised that both were intertwined, and that 'if you do not one with the other, we may fear & confusion in the main'.¹⁶⁸ With Charles's trial in the works, the *Moderate* extended his previous analysis on regicide to consider the King himself. Comparing Charles to Saul, he noted that Charles derived his claim 'by Conquest' and was 'never elected King by God, or people'. He had 'raigned as Tyrannically as ever Saul did' and broken the laws 'he swore at his Coronation to maintain'. If Saul 'was slain' even though he was 'elected by God', it would be even more 'lawfull for the people... to bring to Justice Charles Stuart'.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, God had historically rewarded countries for bringing justice to their monarchs. Being pleased that the people had 'execut[ed] his, and their Judgements' on the 'wicked tyrants, God then gave the people 'two good successors after them, viz. Josias'.¹⁷⁰ The Roman Senate had 'slaine Romulus for this tyranny' and was rewarded with 'Numa Pompiline (the notablest King that ever they had)'.¹⁷¹ God's will at the present moment was clear:

can the people of this Nation still argue like Heathens (that see nothing of divine providence) that the alteration of this Tyrannicall, and usurped Kingly Government, will then to the ruine of this Nation, when we see already by the imitating, and first fruits thereof, the very Pope himself, and all the foundations of Antichrist, the Devil himself, and all the Tyrannical powers of the whole world, and dependances thereupon, do already totter and tremble, as if the day of their destruction was at hand.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ *The Moderate* 413.2025, E.536[30], p. 233.

¹⁶⁹ *The Moderate* 413.2026, E.537[26], p. 237.

¹⁷⁰ *The Moderate* 413.2026, E.537[26], p. 237. This text is from *Severall Speeches*.

¹⁷¹ *The Moderate* 413.2026, E.537[26], p. 238. This text is from *Severall Speeches*.

¹⁷² *The Moderate* 413.2026, E.537[26], p. 238.

In this account, the *Moderate* made two points about regicide. First, to perform regicide was to do God's will. Conversely, not to bring Charles to justice was to go against God's desires. Second, God would reward the people for performing his justice. England would prosper if the people went ahead with executing Charles for his crimes. He concluded with a final point:

Were the Children of Israel, and all the Nations upon earth so blessed in executing their Tirannous and Trayterous Princes, and must we be miserable for so doing? Have not we as much Law and right for trying and executing this King, as any other Nation in the world ever had? And how comes the Heathen now to rage, and the people to Imagine a vaine thing, for taking off this Tyrant, as if the like Iustice had never before been executed, or that this is a new thing, and one of the first presidents in the world, though indeed we see it is most frequent, just, and ordinary in all ages, and amongst all People.¹⁷³

The *Moderate* recognised that regicide was unpopular, and that there was much popular resistance against killing Charles. It is clear that the *Moderate's* approach was to inform his readers that regicide was not unprecedented, that it was not an innovation or a novel approach to execute Charles for his crimes. It was not a disruptive and horrible event, because it was common and justified throughout the ages.

As Charles's trial proceeded, the *Moderate* continued reassuring the regime they were doing God's work and securing England's future:

The death of the wicked, is safety to the righteous; and that Judg ought to be considered, that executes not judgment upon the person of the guilty. And though our Laws were formerly like Spiders Webs, to catch the small flies, and let the great ones go; yet shall we now finde that Justice

¹⁷³ *The Moderate* 413.2026, E.537[26], p. 238.

will run down like a mighty stream, and be as impartially executed on him that sits on the Throne, as he on the Dunghill.¹⁷⁴

Justice had to be done, and not even the King could or should escape the judgement that came with his crimes. However, the *Moderate* enlarged the impact of the dispensing of justice. The regicide was not simply punishment for the King's crime. It was also an affirmative gesture that the righteous would be protected and that justice itself was valued. England would now be a just society, markedly different from the corrupt and unjust monarchical society of before. The regicide would harken the start of a new settlement and compact for England, now to be run in accordance with God's will and values. Of the newsbook authors surveyed, only Pecke recorded any popular reaction at Charles's trial. In the issue ending 29 January, Pecke published the transcript of the last day of the trial. Having heard the sentence, Charles was being led out when Pecke noted that 'there was another Cry for Justice and Execution'.¹⁷⁵ Alongside the various petitions republished in these newsbooks, the unidentified person from the multitude served to validate the notion that the regicide was a desired outcome.

Through their discussion of the theoretical bases for regime change and regicide, Parliamentary newsbooks rationalised the changes to government and downplayed the disruptive nature of the looming regicide. Some drew from historical precedents, from the Anglo-Saxons to classical allusions to the Norman Conquest and the medieval kings. These helped them explain their present situation and the regicide as a continuation of past patterns and traditions. Others drew the same conclusions with recourse to principles of

¹⁷⁴ *The Moderate* 413.2028, E.539[7], p. 261.

¹⁷⁵ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.287, E.527[12], p. 2312.

justice and conquest or simply to God's will. In terms of timescales, the newsbooks were focused on justifying the immediate future course of action through an appeal to deep underlying structures of time and patterns. These changes to the polity would have profound effects, safeguarding the future for a long time to come.

Post-regicide

A new stage of time

The newsbooks acknowledged the depth of feelings that accompanied the regicide. *Kingdomes* recognised that people were interested and upset about the regicide. In the issue ending 6 February, he noted that:

This Day it did not rain at all, yet it was a very wet day in severall places in and about the City of London, by reason of the abundance of affliction that fell from many eyes for the Death of the King.¹⁷⁶

The issue continued with detailed coverage of the trial that could not fit in the previous issue ending 30 January. In that previous issue, *Kingdomes* stated he 'knew not which way better to satisfie the expectation of the Readers then to give them an exact account thereof from the beginning'.¹⁷⁷ It was clear that readers were interested in knowing everything about the trial and its progress, a desire that *Kingdomes* fulfilled with transcriptions of the trial and accounts of Charles's actions and movements.¹⁷⁸ The *Moderate* similarly acknowledged the depth of people's feelings and aversion towards the regicide. He explained that this was because justice had been 'corrupted for many years', and that now it

¹⁷⁶ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.297, E.541[17], p. 1241.

¹⁷⁷ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.296, E.540[22], p. 1233.

¹⁷⁸ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.295-297, E.539[6], E.540[22], E.541[17].

had been 'thrice purified, puts the people in thoughts of Cruelty'. England was previously under the rule of unequal laws that protected the strong, adjudicated by 'evil Judges' who 'punish[ed] the purse [and] spared the person'.¹⁷⁹ However, the regicide had sent a strong signal and made a break with the past. The people now see that 'the tallest Cedar hath tasted of [Justice]'s fury', and that a new status quo was upon them:

Thus shall not the wicked be Justified for reward, but punished by severe judgements, and then let the land sing for joy, and the people proclaim peace in their borders, for God hath destroyed the troublers of Israel, and will now delight to cure all the malladies of the Nation.¹⁸⁰

With the regicide, England was now in God's good graces. The country had abandoned injustice for a much better state, and the people were only uncomfortable with the regicide because they were still familiar with the old state. In the *Moderate's* view, such discomfort would soon disappear as the people realised that the country was now settled into a path towards peace and justice. The regicide was not to be mourned, it was the start of a healing process for the nation.

Now that England had moved into a different state of time, the *Moderate* asked that its readers be patient. Arguing that the regime was the people's best chance at peace, he asked his readers to trust the regime. He acknowledged that the people desired the 'Peace and Freedom' that came with 'Victory', and that those who overpromised and 'that perform[ed] not according to trust' would suffer 'the fury of the multitude'. He advised patience and understanding, comparing England's old state to a 'desperate' 'disease'. In this case, 'all remedy [was]

¹⁷⁹ *The Moderate* 413.2031, E.542[11], p. 297.

¹⁸⁰ *The Moderate* 413.2031, E.542[11], p. 297.

endeavoured, by altering the Physitians'. This was a natural reaction, 'so prompt is Nature to preserve it self'.¹⁸¹ In other words, England's regime change was a natural response to the diseased old state. In its desperation for a cure, 'the alteration proves sometimes unfortunate'. However, 'many times' it proved 'most happy'. Furthermore, the body was still ill and 'burthen[ed]'. Hence 'a mutuall amity' between the regime and the people 'cannot be expected' until this 'sickness [was] cured'.¹⁸² The English should therefore have faith that the regime would provide the peace they sought, and the *Moderate* was confident that someday there would be a reconciliation between the people and the regime if only they were patient.

Even the Scots found hope in the regicide, as Walker would have his readers believe. According to a dispatch from Edinburgh published by Walker, while the nobility and the Court in Scotland were 'generally in mourning', the Scots themselves 'do much rejoice (generally) at' the death of Charles. They hoped that with 'their new King [who] is not so wilful as his Father was', they might 'have a flourishing high Presbytery in England'.¹⁸³ Charles's death promised a new start and a new status quo. Regicide was to be celebrated, especially by the people themselves, and pro-regicide writers displayed a wide range of arguments justifying the act.

Appeal to eternal principles

In his first issue after the regicide, Walker appealed to eternal principles from history to justify the act. He began by recounting the story of Hecubus, who had witnessed her son's murder at the hand of the Thracian King Polumestor. She

¹⁸¹ *The Moderate* 413.2032, E.544[10], p. 309.

¹⁸² *The Moderate* 413.2032, E.544[10], p. 309.

¹⁸³ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5112, E.527[24], p. 863.

then 'became her self the Tyrants executioner, and scratched out both his eyes'. In contrast, 'the Laws of Solon were so sweet to the Athenians, that they were never repealed'.¹⁸⁴ In other words, it was warranted to act against authority and tyrants if it was in service of justice. Also, the people would only act if they felt they were being threatened by injustice. As Walker distilled for his readers, 'The peoples preservation is the highest politick'.¹⁸⁵ In his coverage of the trial, he questioned why Charles refused to submit a plea. 'If the King had been guiltlesse of the Charge', he would not 'have suffered the sentence of death' simply 'for want of pleading'. Instead, by challenging the 'jurisdiction of the Court', Charles was 'striking at the peoples priviledges to question Tyrants'.¹⁸⁶ The regicide was warranted because Charles was guilty, and by principles common to all men, the people would only benefit from his death. If history instructs us so, Charles's regicide was intelligible and understandable, and not revolutionary at all.

While Walker looked to history, Dillingham posited that Charles lost power because he went against God. Citing advice given to Charles upon his engagement to Henrietta Maria, Dillingham noted how Charles was warned that if he did not 'advance God's Truth... deliverance [would] come another way'. In working against God, Charles and his 'House shall perish'. This had indeed 'come now to passe'.¹⁸⁷ In summarising his account 'from first to last of this Tragaedie', he observed that 'many had said [that] wilfulnesse hath chiefly occasioned what had befallen'.¹⁸⁸ In this explanation, Charles was always

¹⁸⁴ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5109, E.527[14], p. 813.

¹⁸⁵ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5109, E.527[14], p. 813.

¹⁸⁶ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5109, E.527[14], p. 816.

¹⁸⁷ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.202, E.541[4], p. 1871.

¹⁸⁸ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.202, E.541[4], p. 1872.

doomed to die in such an ignominious fashion. The regicide should have been predictable, since Charles's character and behaviour were clear for all to see.

Also appealing to time-honoured principles, after the regicide *Armies* emphasised the right of conquest as a legitimate method for regime change. The author recognised that people were 'dejected' and 'overwhelmed in a streame they never truly saw', and 'trouble[d]... above measure' about the state of the country, as well as 'the issue and successe thereof'.¹⁸⁹ In response, *Armies* advised its readers that the shape of the future could be determined by the past:

The advice I shall give unto such is with an indifferent eye, to take a view of the Histories of England, where they will finde even from the comming in of Iulius Cesar downward, the Kingdome was chiefly settled by those that wonne it by the sword, when the Danes were Conquered the Government was much altered, especially in those things which were advantageous to the settling of the Kingdomes Peace in relation to the imediate possessours thereof, and this continued untill the comming in of Duke VVilliam, who after he had by force at his first enterance [sic] brought the people to submission as well by violence as the use of other prudent meanes, they agreed unto such Lawes and constitutions as were then propounded by the present visible power.¹⁹⁰

One regime could replace another legitimately through the use of force, particularly in the admirable goal of bringing peace to the country. This was a historically sound, tried-and-tested method of creating centuries of peace. *Armies* reassured those shocked by the regicide that such violence was not unprecedented. Such violence played an essential role in ensuring England's stability, even if it was not always visible. It was true that after the Conquest 'there was a disbanding of Forces', but it was also clear 'that the Lawes then established were maintained by the sword'. There was always the ability 'to

¹⁸⁹ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.2, p. 2.

¹⁹⁰ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.2, pp. 2-3.

raise great forces' to put down rebellions and levy war against Scotland. The government also used violence against individuals. *Armies* cited the example of a man 'hanged drawne and quartered for looking upon the Bishop of Canterburies house at Lambeth', even though 'there was no Law for it' and judges had opined 'against it'.¹⁹¹ The sword was used to enforce the will of the regime in charge, from the single individual to country-wide action. Violence was embedded in the condition and effective running of the polity, and its use should not frighten the people. The regicide was thus not as disruptive an event as it seemed, it was merely the latest display of violence in the pursuit of a better settlement of peace.

In explaining the regicide as necessity, *Armies* used the prospect of peaceful and stable future. The third issue of *Armies* repeated the message of necessary violence, alongside an acknowledgement that the regicide was, at some level, difficult to comprehend. Corrective action should be taken 'when a Kingdome is full of Rents, and shaken in its foundations of Government', so that the country could be '[brought]... into a right frame of Stability'. Ideally, this should be done with care, with 'notice... taken of the seasonableness and fitnessse of the time'. However, in times of necessity, decisive action needed to be taken by those in power. *Armies* cited Bracton's legal doctrine that no time runs against the king, and it stood by its belief that 'in this case... time [should] out-runne the people'.¹⁹² The exigencies of peace required the regicide, even if the people were not prepared for it. *Armies* situated its argument firmly in the future, laying out steps to reconcile the people to these necessary actions. It recognised that a

¹⁹¹ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.2, p. 3.

¹⁹² *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.2, p. 3. Bracton's doctrine was cited as 'Nulla tempus occurrit Regi'.

'State' could only be 'happy in a flourishing condition of peace' if its 'chiefest strength [was]... the hearts and affections of the people'. Hence, it was 'more then requisite that such publique acts... be extended unto high and low, rich and poore', and 'even [to] the enemies to the present settlement'. These would bring everyone 'to confesse with' the regime, 'and Subscribe it is a yeare of Iubilee, the first yeare of England freedome'.¹⁹³ Now that England's future had been secured by a new regime, it was time to heal the nation and bridge the divide caused by events like the regicide. In support of this new status quo, *Armies* republished a 'humble petition of the well affected in the County of Kent', which celebrated 'the late unparalleled actings of this honourable House farre above all other formerly'. The actions of Parliament had 'encouraged' the petitioners 'to beleieve that the yeare of their Nations freedome through Gods blessing upon [Parliament's] indeavours is begun'.¹⁹⁴ *Armie* highlighted the need for unity in its news about Scotland. That country was determined to take revenge on England for Charles's execution, but more importantly 'the losse of their Revenue out of the Crowne', which was used to support 'half... of this pore Nation'. However, it was 'in such confusion' that it was inconceivable that 'they [would] be able to hurt England, unlesse there be a great occasion of difference to invite them'.¹⁹⁵ A settled peace would prevent a potential Scottish invasion, whereas weakness in the form of disunity and continued civil war would bring a preventable war.

Armies also tried to disabuse its readers of the idea that fundamental change was difficult or scary. Addressing concerns of changes to 'fundamentall Lawes and constitutions of the Kingdome', *Armies* clarified that 'every Statute Law

¹⁹³ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.3, p. 3.

¹⁹⁴ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.3, p. 4.

¹⁹⁵ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.3, p. 5. This was also reproduced in Samuel Pecke's *Perfect Diurnall*, 504.289, E.527[19], p. 2322.

heretofore made [was] included' in this category. These statutes were often 'altered or repealed' as it was 'found necessary or expedient by the Law-makers', the only basis of which being that they should be 'tightly grounded upon sound Reason' and that they were also 'agreeable to the word of God'.¹⁹⁶ Hence changes to the laws had always been warranted by present concerns, and future changes should be expected and welcome.

End of monarchy in England

Pro-regicide newsbooks took the regicide as a sign of the future to come. For one, England would no longer have monarchy in its future. This new state would not bear a return to the old ways. The *Moderate* believed that Charles was a 'most miserable' man, 'whose life the wicked' desired, and at 'whose death the righteous much more rejoice[d]'. As the successor to someone this 'wicked', the *Moderate* warned Prince Charles that if he intended 'to lay [the]... yoke [of his father's] sins upon' England, he should 'expect [their] non-submission'.¹⁹⁷

Walker similarly believed that the regicide closed off the future for any more monarchs. Having included the King's speech at the scaffold and described the events of the regicide itself, Walker continued thus:

Those of the Kings Line that now are, or hereafter shall be may sadly lay it to heart, and not aspire to Monarchy, considering what sad successes their Predecessors have had: King Charles is beheaded, his Brother was poisoned; his Sister put to Exile; his Eldest son Exiled, her Eldest son drowned; his Father strongly suspected to be poisoned; his grandfather murdered, and hanged on a tree, and his grandmother beheaded, &c.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ *The Armies Modest Intelligencer* 18.4, p. 25.

¹⁹⁷ *The Moderate* 413.2030, E.541[15], p. 285.

¹⁹⁸ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5109, E.527[14], p. 819.

While Walker probably meant to illustrate how being a monarch would lead to an ignominious death, it is interesting that he placed the regicide on a par with and comparable to previous royal deaths. He overlooked the political contingencies that led to the regicide, in service of drawing a cautionary tale for prospective monarchs. Another effect of Walker's comparison is that the regicide's disruptive nature was deemphasised in favour of continuity. In support of the regime's abolition of monarchy, Walker opened his issue of 9 February with a declaration that 'to subdue a Nation to the will of one man is not warrantable'. He referred to the first Assyrian king 'Belus', to whom 'the first Idoll, that was honoured, was erected'. It was thus 'no marvel that God checkt the Jewes for desiring' monarchy.¹⁹⁹ If monarchy was always detested by God, then the regime was correcting a mistake by removing it from England. Walker thus both minimised and maximised the significance of the regicide: the regicide was not surprising because it was simply the latest example of royal deaths, yet it was also the latest and biggest sign that God disliked monarchy.

Unsurprisingly, the pro-regicide titles the *Moderate*, *Armies*, and Walker's *Perfect Occurrences* explained the reasoning behind the regicide. Walker and *Armies* appealed to longstanding principles from history, whereas the *Moderate* described England as recovering from a terrible disease. These were a continuation of their efforts to delate the disruptive nature of the event. All three titles were also upbeat about England's future. The regicide had initiated a better age, and matters were being set right for the benefit of the people. Although Dillingham was not supportive of the regicide, he offered a dispassionate and fatalistic explanation of Charles's downfall. This was in

¹⁹⁹ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5110, E.527[17], p. 821.

keeping with his past practice, and unlike the pro-regicide titles, he offered no positive vision of the future. Other anti-regicide newsbooks simply consigned the regicide to the past and focused their attention towards England's future.

Ignoring the regicide

In contrast to the pro-regime titles, Border moved on quickly from the regicide and demurred from explaining the rationale behind the execution. Unlike all the other titles, before the regicide Border chose to describe the logistics of the trial and the public reaction to the verdict of the High Court. Border described the preparations at the venue of the trial. In the issue ending 17 January, he had reported how 'a new Barre [was] made in the face of the Court', and that 'on each side... Scaffolds' were being built, 'to be finished by Thursday next'. This was significant enough to be included in his summary for the issue, which promised the reader details of 'the manner of the Bar the King is to plead at'.²⁰⁰ In the issue ending 24 January, he described Charles's journey on the Thames to his trial venue at Whitehall in detail.²⁰¹ Finally, in the issue ending 31 January, he described Charles's refusal to plead, and he published the 'perticular Charge against the King', thinking it would arouse the interest of 'the indulgent Reader'.²⁰² He also reported on the aftermath of the verdict, namely that he could not 'positively set down the certain time when his Maj. will be executed', but also that he was aware of 'Railes making at White-Hall gate' and also 'a Scaffold, which may suddenly be finished'. He added that the 'royall party' believed that 'not a man be found, that will voluntarily be his Executioner'. This he countered immediately after by noting that 'its observable, that many of those

²⁰⁰ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.44, E.538[20], p. 356.

²⁰¹ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.45, E.540[2], p. 361.

²⁰² Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.46, E.540[23], pp. 365-6

formerly in the Kings Army do offer themselves to do it'. Charles himself was 'very sad, especially at the sight of some of his acquaintance, and his children'. Across London, 'Ministers declared their dis-assent' to the outcome of the trial, 'and in their prayer many of the people wept'.²⁰³ Yet, after the regicide Border's first instinct was to move quickly onto other news. In the opening of his issue ending 7 February, he described his treatment of the regicide:

In my last, I told you the Scaffold was building at the Kings owne gate for his execution which was yesterday consumated on which could no man have come with more confidence and appearance of resolution then he did: viewing the block (with the Axe lying upon it) and Iron staples in the Scaffold to bind him down upon the block, in case he had refused to submit himself freely, without being any way danted, yea when the Deputies of that grim Serjeant death appeared with a terrifying disguise the King with a pleasant countenance said he freely forgave them, which is all I thought to have said of his death but that I am advertized that there are yet divers of my friends in the Country who affect the reading of this sheet, which would be somewhat unfinished if I should not here withall send them the Kings last speech upon the Scaffold; and therefore I shall here insert it verbatim.²⁰⁴

Border felt that a quick relation of the execution was enough information, and he had to be persuaded to add additional detail. One could argue that this was simply a fake protest, and that Border really wished to include Charles's speech on the scaffold without appearing too eager. Cotton draws the conclusion that Border was sympathetic to the cause, partly because he devoted all the necessary space required to cover Charles's final moment in full.²⁰⁵ The regicide was not significant enough to warrant a mention in the issue's summary, however, even though Charles's speech and other material on the regicide took

²⁰³ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.46, E.540[23], p. 371

²⁰⁴ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.47, E.541[24], p. 373.

²⁰⁵ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 201.

up three of the issue's eight pages.²⁰⁶ Instead, the summary mentioned the charge against Duke Hamilton, 'Divers new Acts of the Parliament' relating to the settlement of the Kingdom, 'A Letter from Newcastle', and 'a Fleet of Ships coming for London laden with Coales'.²⁰⁷ The regicide was yesterday's news, and Border did not evince any sense that it was a ground-breaking event or that it had much bearing on the future. Border's other references to the regicide immediately following the event were in his second issue, ending 14 February, where he wrote of how the Queen was 'in a deep consumption' and 'much sadder... at the newes of the Kings death'. Charles was mentioned with regards to his interment at Windsor, a short description of under four sentences. This issue's content was devoted primarily to Parliament's actions in the house, news from France, the trials of the Earl of Cambridge and various other delinquents, and the full text of Scotland's proclamation declaring Prince Charles as king.²⁰⁸ The summary of the issue does mention 'The Queens words at the newes of the Kings Death', as well as 'The Inscription written upon the Kings Corps', but the issue as a whole neglected to feature any emotive response from Border or the populace to the regicide.²⁰⁹ While sympathetic to Charles's situation, Border did not think it particularly significant to the future or present-day concerns.

Kingdomes, which like Border disagreed with the regicide, dealt with the event almost identically. Like Border, the issue of *Kingdomes* ending 6 February devoted much space – six of its eight pages – to transcriptions of Charles's trial and the events leading up to his execution. Yet, in the issue's summary, Charles's death is not even mentioned. Instead, it highlights the content of the

²⁰⁶ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.47, E.541[24], p. 380.

²⁰⁷ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.47, E.541[24], p. 380.

²⁰⁸ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.48, E.543[2], pp. 382, 384, 387-8.

²⁰⁹ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.48, E.543[2], p. 388.

last two pages, including the news about the navy, the siege at Pontefract, and the trial of the Duke of Hamilton.²¹⁰ In the section describing the execution, *Kingdomes* did not offer any commentary or any record of reaction from the crowd or from any notable individual.²¹¹ The following issue, ending 13 February, also contained no rumination on the regicide and its impact.²¹² This was similar to Border's approach, which focused on the ongoing issues of the day. Border's issue included updates from France on the progress of the Parlemantary Fronde, including its victory over the King, which 'hath cause[d] the King to yield to' call a 'generall Parliament of the Estates'.²¹³ The other significant discussion concerned the trials of delinquents in the High Court of Justice, which prominently featured in the summaries of these issues.²¹⁴

Pecke was similarly sympathetic, and he also afforded no more attention to the regicide than was necessary. Pecke's first issue after also contained no reaction from the people, only a description of the events at the scaffold. It added the graphic description that the 'Kings head [was then] sowed on, and his corps removed to St James and embalmed'.²¹⁵ It also included an advertisement for *A cordiall for a fainting soule* 'wherein many cases are clearly resolved tending to the consolation of afflicted consciences', and also for *Mercurius Teutonicus*, a collection of 'mysticall writings' by Jacob Böhme containing 'divers propheticall passages concerning the last times'.²¹⁶ Less should be made about these

²¹⁰ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.297, E.541[17], p. 1248.

²¹¹ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.297, E.541[17], p. 1248.

²¹² *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.298, E.542[14].

²¹³ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.50, E.545[20], p. 403.

²¹⁴ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.49, E.544[15], pp. 392-4; 533.50, E.545[20], pp.400-1, 402; 533.51, E. 546[10], pp. 408, 412.

²¹⁵ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.288, E.527[16], pp. 2317-9.

²¹⁶ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.288, E.527[16], p. 2319.

advertisements since they were inserted for profit and possibly outside of Pecke's control, but their thematic resonance to the regicide is remarkable. There is little mention of the regicide and its impact in any of following issues, other than in the regime's statement to Scotland republished in full in the issue of 26 February. Also published by Border in his issue of 28 February, it laid out the case for proceeding 'against that Man of Bloud', namely 'Misgovernment and Tyranny of that King' and their own 'fruitlesse' attempts to seek peace with Charles. They executed Charles for fear of punishment from God for 'the neglect of impartiall execution of justice', and they asked that Scotland refrain from escalating a 'Quarrell' that would bring 'no other advantages, then the entailing upon them and their Posterities a lasting War'.²¹⁷ Like Border and *Kingdomes*, Pecke's title was conspicuous in its lack of comment and justification for the regicide. While Walker, the *Moderate*, and *Armies* felt they had to rehearse the arguments for regicide, those who felt more sympathy for Charles moved quickly onto other news.²¹⁸

Being newsbooks, it is not altogether surprising that their coverage moved onto these trials and the abolition of the House of Lords. The variance lay in their references and linking of these events to the regicide, or lack thereof. Anti-regime titles like *Kingdomes* and Border's *Perfect weekly account* refrained from commenting on the impact of the regicide. When they did bring up the event, they treated it almost apolitically, more like a human-interest story that engaged the emotions rather than politics. Their bare discussion contrasts to the more

²¹⁷ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.291, E.527[25], p. 2341; Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.50, E.545[20], pp. 402-3.

²¹⁸ Border and *Kingdomes* were enthusiastic about the prospect of a negotiated peace with Charles for over a year, giving the negotiations much attention in November 1647. Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 199.

muscular defences and explanations given by pro-regime titles like the *Moderate* and Walker's *Perfect Occurrences*. Even Dillingham, who sympathised with Charles's fate, was moved to venture an explanation for the event. This is in direct contrast to their behaviour before the regicide. Both *Kingdomes* and *Border* had brought up as early as late 1647 the idea that the Army wanted to kill the King, and as noted above, *Border*'s other titles began to evidence hostility to the regime.²¹⁹ Their resumption of regular reporting may be a case of 'regular rhythm perception', a common response to trauma that emphasises the passage of time between a traumatic event and the present moment. The temporal distance created provides reassurance.²²⁰ The case against regicide was also lost, and perhaps these writers sought simply to move onto other battles still being fought, namely their resistance against the regime and its new policies. A clue may be found in *Kingdomes*'s issue of 13 February. The writer segues at the very beginning of the text, linking the previous week's content on 'the End of the King' to the present issue's coverage of 'the End of the Kingdome', or the regime's alteration of the polity into 'a Common-wealth'.²²¹ Seen in this way, the regicide was framed as the first step in the regime's larger project of altering the government of England. This was an ongoing reformation of the state.

Regicide as the first step

To a more substantial extent than *Kingdomes*, the *Moderate* and *Pecke* reproduced material that framed the regicide as the initial start to reformation. Both published a letter from the soldiers at Pontefract, which stated how 'glad' they were to see that 'the tall Cedar is faln so quietly', and how hence 'the Shrubs

²¹⁹ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 198-9.

²²⁰ Lenore Terr, 'Time and Trauma', *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 39 (1984), pp. 639-40.

²²¹ *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligence* 214.299, E.542[14], p. 1249.

may now the more easily be cut off'.²²² The regicide had been achieved without much trouble, and it bode well for future reformation and trials. As mentioned above, Pecke and Border also reproduced a reply from Parliament to Scottish protestations of the trial and execution, in which they justified 'the Course [they had] taken with the late King'. This was also the same course which they 'mean[t] to follow towards others, the capitall enemies of our Peace'.²²³ Charles's trial and execution was simply the first in a series of trials covered in these newsbooks, the subsequent ones being the trials of the 1st Duke of Hamilton and the Earl of Norwich.²²⁴

Walker, a supporter of the regime, was an enthusiastic supporter of these various trials in the High Court. He prefaced his issue of 15 February with the declaration that the 'execution of Law' brought justice, and so doing 'God is glorified, and his people preserved'.²²⁵ He duly reported on the progress of these trials and their sentences.²²⁶ Walker also published a petition from 'the County of Bucks', which asked that the regime 'would proceed to speedy Trial, and publique Justice' for the incendiaries that had led 'to the utter ruine of many hundreds (if not thousands) of Families'. It argued that the kingdom remained unsettled: 'because Justice is not speedily executed upon evill doers, therefore the hearts of the Sons of men are continually set upon mischief'.²²⁷ It also asked that the Lords be removed from power, as their 'interests' were to 'returne [the

²²² *The Moderate* 413.2030, E.541[15], p. 296; Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.289, E.527[19], p. 2322.

²²³ Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.291, E.527[25], p. 2341; Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.50, E.545[20], pp. 402-3.

²²⁴ Cf. Pecke, *Perfect Diurnall* 504.290, E.527[22], p. 2333. Hamilton was referred to as the Earl of Cambridge, and Norwich as Lord Goring.

²²⁵ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5111, E.527[21], p. 833.

²²⁶ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5111, E.527[21], p. 843.

²²⁷ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5111, E.527[21], p. 844.

people] again unto [their] regall and tyranicall bondage'. Furthermore, it asked for a reformation in law and custom, 'That the people of the Nation be made free' and 'Lands wholly cleared and discharged from all manners of Realty and Homage'. These were 'a badge and brute of the Normand slavery'.²²⁸ These were visionary goals yet to be attained, even after the regicide had happened.

The regicide opened the door to justice against not only individuals, but institutions of government too. In his issue ending 8 February, Dillingham detailed the abolishing of the House of Lords. He observed how the monarchy and Lords were 'gone... in two dayes', and 'how easie' it was 'to pull down'. Once again, he cast his eye to future business, stating that 'the next work [was] to set up a Government' where 'the Lords' would be incorporated somehow, 'as will stand wel with their honour'.²²⁹ To Dillingham, regicide opened the floodgate and exposed the fragility of England's old institutions. This was not without sadness on his part. These actions were 'a fatall blow to two of the three Estates, by which this Kingdom and that of Ireland hath been for so many hundred years governed'. He asked that 'the friends of both... to take the same farewell... as the Israelites did of Saul and Jonathan', referring to 2 Samuel 1:24 specifically.²³⁰ He does not print the verse, but it is clear in its intent and reference to Charles: 'Daughters of Israel, weep for Saul, who clothed you in scarlet and finery, who adorned your garments with ornaments of gold'. Dillingham recognised that England was moving into a new time, divorced from

²²⁸ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5111, E.527[21], p. 844.

²²⁹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.203, E.541[27], p. 1884.

²³⁰ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.203, E.541[27], p. 1884. Some of his text is copied in Border's *Kingdomes Faithfull and Impartiall Scout*, 210.02, E.542[2], p. 14. It appears that Cotton's citation is mistaken, 'London newsbooks', p. 202. Daniel Border, *The Kingdomes Faithfull and Impartiall Scout ...* ([s.n.], Feb 1649-Oct 1649), N&S 210.

its past traditions. He mourned this programme of change and reformation, which brought about the passing of the institutions of monarchy and peerage.

We can also find evidence to link the regicide and the subsequent reformation in the choice of rhetoric used. Unique among his peers, the *Moderate* made use of medical metaphors as he did before the regicide. This time, the rhetoric was aimed towards the House of Lords. In the issue ending 13 February, the *Moderate* described the regime's decision to abolish the Lords through the metaphor of disease:

In Order whereunto, the chief Doctors of the Nation this day consult for cure of the greatest, and most dangerous maladies of the whole Kingdom, which lay so deep in the bowels of this Commonwealth, and had so long incorporated it self therein, and compacted so much Malignant humors from the head, and all other parts of the said body to itself, whereby it became so ill disposed, that if special remedy be not taken therein, it would probably in short time endanger to infect the whole body: they debate hereupon whether to administer a violent purge, or a strong Vomit, but finding the operation of all former Purges to prove ineffectual, either for present ease, or absolute Cure, conclude, that the disease being desperate and dangerous, ought to have a desperate cure for its abolition, and therefore Order that a strong Vomit be forthwith applied, but because some were against this strong Potion, and inclined rather to a purgation, they divide upon the question.²³¹

The choice of language and metaphor is strikingly similar to that used to describe the decision to charge Charles and to remove the monarchy. Now that the King was dead, the Commons had moved onto the next big problem for England, which in this case was identified as the House of Lords. Like *Kingdomes*, Pecke, Walker, and Dillingham, the *Moderate* seemed to treat the

²³¹ *The Moderate* 413.2031, E.542[11], pp. 297-8.

regicide as part of a larger project to alter the state, rather than a discrete, one-off event.

An insecure future

Although the regicide was an important step in the process of reformation, there was much left to do, and England's future was not secure until the process was complete. The *Moderate* was discontented with the speed and thoroughness of this project of reformation. In the issue ending 20 February, he noted a 'Declaration' of the past week which kept in place 'the fundamentall Laws of this Nation'. The *Moderate* disagreed with this, believing that the laws continued to keep 'the people of this Nation... under the Normand slavery'.²³² These laws continued to require payments 'to the Crown', and guaranteed the prerogative of the monarch to demand money and resources from his people. The *Moderate* wondered why 'the badges of our slavery (Fealty and Homage)' continued to be 'maintained', and why the Laws had not been 'put into a known tongue'. The system was 'the design of our oppressing Tyrants, and destructive Lawyers' who sought to 'keep the people in ignorance' in order to 'enslave them'. The *Moderate* argued that 'in [this] time of Reformation', England should not remain 'under this great misery'.²³³ He expanded on the necessity to double down on reformation in a later issue, ending 6 March:

To purge the Humor, and not its Cause, is to increase the disease, and leave the Patient in a worse condition; and to promise ease, and procure pain, adds misery to former affliction. If Gods judgements begin first with his own, probably the wicked cannot escape. And if he purifies his children as Gold thrice refined, let not man think to retain his drosse, selfish interest, and prudential policy too long, lest this Refiners flames

²³² *The Moderate* 413.2032, E.544[10], p. 315.

²³³ *The Moderate* 413.2032, E.544[10], p. 315.

consume both drosse and substance in the thrice heated Furnace of his eternal fury.²³⁴

To reform half-heartedly was to make the situation worse. Those in the regime should devote their efforts to a thorough reformation, otherwise all would be lost by God's hand. It was clear that for the past 'eight years', God had 'been pulling down... all the monuments of his just displeasure'. In the *Moderate's* view, the regime was not seeking 'to erect an Idol in defiance of [God's] anger'. If the English 'yet hate to be reformed' and not 'take advantage of [God's] late mercies', then they should fear God's eventual judgement.²³⁵ The regicide was a step in the right direction, but it was not the last act of this reformation. It also did not secure England's future. There was much more left to be done and England's future was still at stake.

Walker communicated a similar sense of urgency and danger. For Walker, the project of reformation included 'proceedings against the Grandees of those Clergy' that had been 'so invertebrate against the Parliament and Army'. He published a letter from Pontefract, which expressed their understanding that corrupt priests were 'the grand Incendiaries of the Kingdom' because they were 'like to involve the Kingdom into another Warre... [through] their bitternesse in the Pulpits'.²³⁶ The ingredients for another civil war were present, and unless the country rooted out these instigators and malignants, England's future was not safe.

For Dillingham, the regicide was not a final act that brought peace to England. Instead, he felt that it opened up possibilities for violence, possibly from

²³⁴ *The Moderate* 413.2034, E.546[8], p. 333.

²³⁵ *The Moderate* 413.2034, E.546[8], p. 333.

²³⁶ Walker, *Perfect Occurrences* 465.5112, E.527[24], p. 856.

vengeful royalists seeking revenge. In his first issue after the regicide, Dillingham announced that he would begin inserting a 'Narrative' of the Thirty Years War. He felt that this account 'may not unfitly be communicated at this time' to England, and he hoped it would achieve two outcomes: that it would 'revive in many mens memories' what they had previously heard, and 'also to perswade all good English hearts' to examine 'the peace' of Germany and hence 'keep off the like length of War and effusion of blood from it'.²³⁷ To Dillingham, the scale of bloodshed and war in Germany was certainly possible in England. Dillingham thus sought to avoid this future by inserting this narrative 'of the many Battels' in his weekly issues.²³⁸ Dillingham also felt that the present moment was one of flux, and that the present condition was susceptible to change. In a later issue, he described how even though 'the chiefe ends [were] kept up here', such an appearance was 'dangerous'; 'the last Somers insurrections' proved to all that this was 'a bleeding argument not yet stopt'.²³⁹ This was thus a timely moment for England to be reminded of the horrors of war, which would come without a proper settlement of peace. The narrative of the Thirty Years War served as Dillingham's rejection of violent methods, but also an admission that England was not settled after the regicide. It did bring about a chance for a permanent peace, and Dillingham worked to ensure that violence was not on the cards.

Border was similarly unhappy with the regime's performance, arguing that there were still issues yet to be addressed. Border republished a petition from 'many thousand poor prisoners for Debt and Surety-ship', who asked for help

²³⁷ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.202, E.541[4], p. 1869.

²³⁸ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.202, E.541[4], p. 1869.

²³⁹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.205, E.545[2], p. 1897.

against 'the cruell oppression of Jaylers'. The petitioners 'beg[ged] a share in that liberty' which the Commons had 'mentioned'.²⁴⁰ Border also devoted the majority of his attention to Parliament's attempts to settle the Kingdom, including the 'setling of the Sheriffs and Justices of the several Counties', and the 'establishment of a Committee or Counsell of Estates'.²⁴¹ These stemmed not from a wish for the regime to do well, but as an issue about which to criticise the regime. Cotton has noted how in April and May, Border's other titles occasionally voiced and published popular complaints of 'Parliamentary inactivity'.²⁴² He finds that after the regicide Border was emboldened and most 'courageous'. His previous sympathy for the King turned into 'growing affection' for Prince Charles, as well as 'outspoken sympathy' for the Levellers, the Diggers and the Derby miners.²⁴³ His stance was most obvious in the *Kingdomes Faithfull and impartiall Scout*, a new title Border started in February 1649. Border also resurrected another title, *Englands moderate messenger*, in April 1649. Younger and more short-lived than the *Perfect weekly account*, the two titles were more conspicuous in their position against the regime, and also against Walker's pro-regime titles as well.²⁴⁴ The *Scout*, for example, featured in September 1649 an anecdote of the re-enactment of the regicide in Hertfordshire. There is also evidence that in the same month, the *Scout* was to propose an alliance between the Scots and anti-regime forces in England including the Levellers, a sentiment that did not make it to press due to censorship.²⁴⁵ The fact

²⁴⁰ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.51, E.546[10], p. 409.

²⁴¹ Border, *Perfect Weekly Account* 533.49, E.544[15], p. 389.

²⁴² Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 204.

²⁴³ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 201-2. Cotton's evidence is gathered mostly from Border's titles other than the *Perfect Weekly Account*.

²⁴⁴ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 202.

²⁴⁵ Cotton, 'London newsbooks', pp. 210-1. For the latter, evidence was gathered from two originals in Worcester College Library, Oxford.

that Border launched two other titles, one immediately after the regicide, supports the hypothesis that Border thought the market fertile for these combative newsbooks. It is clear that, for Border, the future after the regicide seemed wide open and malleable.

Surprisingly, both pro- and anti-regicide writers converged on this process view of the regicide. They saw the regicide as an important first step in a longer programme of changes, differing only in whether the programme was a beneficial or disastrous one. Charles's death did not guarantee peace in England's future. England's future remained malleable and open to change and contestation. This shared vision of the future served both sides well, since both sides could agitate for their own courses of action. The one outlier is Dillingham, who did not support the regicide but desired the best chance at peace which would come not with competition, but rather through caution.

Caution and wariness

After the regicide, Dillingham also looked forward and considered the path ahead. Unlike the other newsbooks, he advocated care and slowness.²⁴⁶ In his first issue after the regicide, Dillingham continued with his rumination on the 'alterations of Kings or Governours'. Posing the question of whether 'there may be cause to set aside' a hereditary monarch, he answered that 'the divine practice' instructed that 'the sins of the Father are not visited upon the childe'. One's attitude to the successor should be formed carefully, keeping into consideration what 'actions of children' were 'done at the command of their

²⁴⁶ Perhaps excluding Pecke's *Perfect Diurnall*, which remained rather cryptic in this period with barely any comment. Drawing evidence from September 1649, Cotton determines that Pecke and *Kingdomes* shared Border's sensitivities. For my part, in this period, there is no conclusive evidence. Cotton, 'London newsbooks', p. 207.

parents'. Dillingham advised caution and 'speciall care' 'not to be hasty in receiving' the successor, especially if such 'an admission' might 'renew the miseries of a people'. Even then, he warned against innovation, 'turbulent designes' or 'any thing that might divert the minds of any'. The guiding principle would be 'to keep off new troubles from the Nations', for which there were 'sure to be no gainers'.²⁴⁷ While Dillingham had always advised caution and consideration of all possibilities, he was not as vocal before the regicide.

With the regicide, Dillingham preached stridently for a passive attitude towards the regime in his prefacing comments about the nature of government. In his issue ending 15 February, he tackled 'the last [issue] left at the alteration or nulling Kingly Government, and the House of Lords'. Dillingham recognised that 'alterations of such high natures' led to 'many inconveniences and troubles', which often 'prove most heavie upon the people, as all Warre is', even though they had 'the least hand in it'. Men should therefore be most careful 'not to intermeddle or side', particularly 'in opposing the present power', since there would be 'no gain to them what ever to others'. Furthermore, peace would not come easily as 'opposition... it's not like sodainly to end'. The succeeding party may also choose to 'govern by the Sword', which would 'prove most sad'. This was contrasted with a government whose 'interest' was 'more immediately involved in the people', and which would 'not stand or be settled' if it had not the people's 'future safety or interest' at heart. Thus, Dillingham concluded that 'a passive posture [would] have most comfort, least hazard'.²⁴⁸ The regime's

²⁴⁷ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.202, E.541[4], p. 1861.

²⁴⁸ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.204, E.543[3], p. 1885.

programme of reformation was risky and controversial, but the best way to avoid complications and violence was by adopting a passive posture.

Dillingham's newfound outspokenness may come from the regicide and the chance of a permanent peace it brought. He observed how at 'the beginning of Wars', the people 'usually [had] a great zeale' in their hearts from their enthusiasm. However, the people began to suffer as the wars dragged on, as 'the poore Germans saw after some years'. Referring to the 'epitomie' of the Thirty Years War in his issues, Dillingham related that 'after a seven years waste of lives and fortunes', many Germans were 'brought... to their graves' by the burden placed on them.²⁴⁹ England had similarly suffered years of war, and the regicide now gave England a chance for a peaceful settlement. However, Dillingham knew that the path ahead would not be easy. He shared that 'new wayes have rubs and rocks', which thus 'occasion much feare'. He advised that 'care' should be taken to prevent a 'change' from 'length[ening] most impositions longer than either desired or intended'. Changes should be arranged so that 'as little as possible will be taken', and the burden be 'so evenly laid' that it would not 'be looked upon as a burthen'.²⁵⁰ Furthermore, news from Scotland published by Dillingham supported his case for a slow and passive approach. His correspondent in Edinburgh sounded a note of cautious optimism, reporting that 'the Kings death' had left the 'great Parliamenteers' in 'deep mourning', and that the Scottish 'Pulpits thunder[ed]' against the regime and the 'blaspheming Army'. Yet the correspondent asked readers to 'not conclude [that] a War with England' was imminent, as 'very many things [had] to be done first, which may take up a yeare time'. Also, Charles II would have to

²⁴⁹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.205, E.545[2], p. 1897.

²⁵⁰ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.205, E.545[2], pp. 1897-8.

‘become a Presbyter’ before war would happen.²⁵¹ While Scotland still threatened war, the invasion was not imminent. Such news supported the passive approach that Dillingham called for.

A different time

For Dillingham, peace was not secured by the regicide, but by the reformation programme it began. Only towards the end of February did Dillingham begin to present the present situation as a time distinct from the previous time. The times were moving from one of change and flux, to one of settledness and permanence. He explicated on the role of passivity in his issue ending 1 March, describing such a ‘posture’ was ‘most secure in times of change, and War’, while also ‘free[ing] most from miseries’. He understood that people had various objections to his stance. ‘Many’ would say that ‘the reformed Divines... preach for action’, to which he answered that these divines were seeking to preserve ‘an expected power over others’. To the charge that at the start of ‘the late War’, Parliament itself ‘stir’d up the people to action’, he answered that ‘that [which] may be good at one time... is inconvenient at another’. Finally, some argued that ‘to be passive [was] to approve’ of the regime’s actions. Dillingham argued that there were two ‘capacities’ for individuals. One, where the individuals did ‘not doe any thing to the prejudice of the present Government’, a ‘common practice’ when a ‘Conqueror... takes Towne or Countries’, and when possession is traded constantly. Individuals would choose to be passive, doing ‘nothing to the prejudice of the present possessor’ but also not approving of the occupier. However, there was also ‘an affirmative Path’ wherein a person chose to ‘subscribe his approbation of the way he is to act in’. These could take the form

²⁵¹ Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.205, E.545[2], p. 1907.

of an oath, like the one Parliament had recently 'agreed upon'.²⁵² The emergence of this method of positive approval was a sign that the previous time was ending. There was to be no more trading of ownership, and the people could now move from a passive stance to a positive subscription to the rule of the regime. Cotton argued that Dillingham's passivity was grudging, but the preponderance of encouraging advice about passivity, as detailed above, argues against this reading. Nonetheless, it is possible that Dillingham understood the 'futility' of posturing against the regime, as Cotton believes.²⁵³ In the eight months that followed, Dillingham continued to argue against other major changes.²⁵⁴ In this sense, the regicide was a shock that had to be ridden out in peace and passivity. However, it was the regime's actions that followed – abolishing the Lords, reformation of government – that led Dillingham to sense a change in the times. Like the other newsbooks in this chapter, the regicide was understood not as a discrete event, but as part of a larger overarching effort to change the nature of English governance.

Conclusion

In terms of timescales, in November and December 1648 parliamentary newsbooks based their arguments on securing England's long-term future. The country was in a bad state, and it could be restored to peace only if a new settlement could be reached. Such a settlement would benefit not just those alive today, but also generations to come. Pride's Purge was considered a step in the

²⁵² Dillingham, *Moderate Intelligencer* 419.206, E.545[26], pp. 1019-20.

²⁵³ Cotton, 'John Dillingham', p. 832.

²⁵⁴ Cotton, 'John Dillingham', pp. 832-3. Dillingham was wholehearted in his support for Cromwell and the campaign in Ireland, even justifying to his readers massacres that had yet to happen.

right direction by those who supported the Army, like the *Moderate*, Walker, and Dillingham. The other less enthusiastic sources, namely Border, *Kingdomes*, and Pecke, nonetheless carried material and petitions that enunciated the view that the coup brought more security to England's future. By January 1648, talk of regicide led these newsbooks to comment about the situation, leading some like Dillingham and the *Moderate* to discuss the principles supporting the case for regicide. Walker and Border similarly drew connections between Charles's plight to historical precedents. These extended the parameters of their normal timescale from current events to the distant past. Whether they supported the regicide or not, these writers attempted to enmesh the regicide within a longer timeframe, presenting the execution as an intelligible and even expected outcome.

Whatever their stance towards Charles's death, these newsbooks all thought of the future in similar ways. First, the regicide was merely the beginning of a larger process of reformation and change. Supporters presented it as ushering a new age for England, a promising sign that England was on the right path to recovery. The regicide was a big step in this path, but it was only one of several in a larger project of reformation. Conversely, opponents demurred from commenting about its significance. While they duly presented accounts of the event, they severed this past event from their discussion of England's state of affairs. When they did mention the regicide, they presented it not as a discrete event but as part of a larger programme of change. Second, this future was malleable to change, and hence they saw it as an open space of competition, for some more so than before the regicide. Even though the regicide had occurred, England's future was still insecure. Writers like Dillingham and Border became more vocal in their writing in an effort to persuade their readers. Supporters

urged the English to stay the path, warning that war and violence could resume, whereas opponents warned cryptically that the regicide heralded similarly drastic changes to come.

The vast majority of the newsbooks' content was concerned with events of the present and immediate past, and this did not change with the regicide. This may be put down partly to the requirements of the genre; one had to remain relevant to compete in a fierce newsbook market. Before the regicide, there was significant discussion of the distant past as writers sought to ground the forthcoming events in historical precedence. Speculation of the future was comparatively rarer, as England approached a regicide that only became more certain as the days went by. After the regicide, discussion of the future became more vocal and varied. Without the prospect of Charles's death as a focus for discussion, newsbooks' opinions about the right path forward became more diverse. Supporters of the regicide continued to justify the event and incorporated it as the basis of a programme of reformation, whereas opponents simply ignored it and left it unexplained, and they moved on to cover other events of the time. Despite their disagreement, these writers all saw the regicide as part of a larger effort to remake England. After the regicide, the horizon of the future became much wider.

Conclusion

In this dissertation I have surveyed the work of astrologers, historians, and newsbook writers to understand how they understood themselves in time, how they saw the future, and how the regicide affected these conceptions. Here I conclude with some observations and discuss their impact on existing scholarship on trauma and time.

Writers of all stripes responded to the regicide in similar ways. In the leadup to the event and in the days after, they uniformly fitted the regicide into larger narratives and schemes of time. With their weekly issues, the process of realisation and coping is most evident in the newsbooks. In anticipation of the regicide, they began reaching out to the past and extending the timeframe of their discussion to classical and medieval history. Astrologers and historians after the regicide similarly used the occasion to discuss the history of the Stuarts, or the role of eternal principles like nature, justice, and providence in England. By making the regicide intelligible, these writers deemphasised the radical nature of the event and negated its disruptiveness.

Was the regicide a traumatic event? The evidence summarised in the introduction clearly evinced a sense of disorganisation and crisis. Why then were these texts so calm in comparison, and why did opponents of the regicide normalise the event despite its clear polemical value?¹ Their attitudes towards the regicide suggest that we should understand these texts as advice literature.

¹ Royalists like Wharton certainly condemned the regime for its immorality and love of novelty, but then they also proceeded to attribute the regicide to non-parliamentarian causes.

These texts spoke from the position of authority: they provided information and news, and they were in the business of providing clarity rather than communicating confusion. Their value lay in making the events of the day intelligible to the reader, hence these publications had to remain logical and explanatory. The authors themselves were used to such a role, as they often held positions of authority; they were doctors, ministers, politicians, and army officers.² These authors took their roles as experts seriously, and they sought to provide a steady guiding hand in turbulent times. We must be careful not to attribute their reactions entirely to commercial motives. After all, any such commercial move was predicated on a perceived desire in the market for direction.

There was clearly a deep-seated desire to find order in the chaos and disruption of the regicide and regime change. The royalist Isabella Twysden exhibited the same impulse to find order in the aftermath of the regicide. Her diaries contain a description of the regicide in an ‘uncharacteristically long and exceedingly haunting’ entry.³ It described a flock of wild ducks flying overhead as the deed was done, and ‘a drake... stopping down and touching his bill on the block’ after Charles’s death. The attending soldiers shot at it, but they missed and the ducks ‘flew a way’.⁴ This account is unique and not corroborated by any others,

² Of the astrologers, Lilly and Booker dispensed medical advice, Vaux was a minister, Wing was a teacher, and Wharton held a captain’s commission. The historians Sprigge and Fuller were ministers, and Sir Peyton was an MP. The newsbooks were written and run by longstanding professional journalists like Sheppard, Pecke, Nedham, and Border.

³ Katherine Gillespie, *Women Writing the English Republic, 1625-1681* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 184.

⁴ Isabella Twysden, ‘The Diary of Isabella, wife of Sir Roger Twysden, 2nd Bart., including notes of public affairs as well as family matters, occurrences of the Civil War, movements of the armies, etc.; 1645, 1647–1649, 1651.’, British Library, Add. MS. 34169, p. 8v, cited (incorrectly as Add. MSS 34, 169-34) in Gillespie, *Women Writing*, p. 184. The same source is transcribed in F. W. Bennitt, ‘The Diary of Isabella, wife of Sir Roger Twysden Baronet, of

and it appears to have functioned as an augury. Katherine Gillespie discusses various ways of reading the augury: the drake's survival embodied monarchy's resilience, or their flight signified the end of monarchy, or the ducks and their cyclical migration represented the cyclical transferral of power. Despite their different implications, all three readings sought to link England's future to 'some natural order'.⁵ The search for order may transcend time: modern victims of trauma similarly seek out particular rationales for why the traumatic event happened, identifying omens and attaching new significance to past events.⁶

In discussing how the regicide was received by contemporaries, this thesis has shone light on how various individuals deliberately created competing memories of the event. They understood the regicide as an event with much symbolic potential, a 'crisis moment' that called out for interpretation not unlike the experience of a natural disaster. This desire to create meaning and memories was enhanced in the post-Reformation period, which as Peter Sherlock argues, was marked by the 'loss of an established narrative for the past'.⁷ Alex Walsham has shown how the Reformation was contested, re-evaluated, and reinvented in later times of crisis.⁸ In the same way, the regicide provoked writers to pen explanatory narratives, like Wing's description of regicide as a step in England's emancipation from Scottish slavery. It compelled them to review the state of the country and how it came to its present condition. The regicide was undoubtedly

Royden Hall, Easy Peckham, 1645-1651', *Archaeologia Cantiana: Being Transactions of the Kent Archaeological Society* 51 (1939), pp. 113-136.

⁵ Gillespie, *Women Writing*, p. 186.

⁶ Terr, 'Time and Trauma', pp. 650-1.

⁷ P. Sherlock, 'Reformation of memory in early modern Europe', in eds. S. Radstone and B. Schwarz, *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2010), pp. 30-40.

⁸ A. Walsham, 'History, memory, and the English Reformation', *The Historical Journal* 55:4 (2012), p. 930-3.

significant, and it changed the complexion of the times. The writers might have disagreed on its meaning and impact, but most acknowledged it signified something and incorporated it within their understanding of time. Supporters of the regime took it as a step in God's greater plan to remake England or the Continent, or as part of a programme of reformation and the quest for justice. Royalist opponents similarly took the regicide in stride, becoming even more adamant that victory was guaranteed for their side. This was possible because they already had narratives of defeat in play, a causality nexus that explained why royalists were failing and parliamentarians were succeeding. In the terms of cultural trauma, the 'trauma process' had already been worked through: the regicide, while unexpected, was in line with their characterisation of the parliamentarians. The regicide also did not fracture the royalists, who all felt equally victimised.⁹ Hence the regicide was easily adapted into pre-existing royalist narratives. In this sense it was not a new trauma, but rather the continuation of an ongoing one, albeit a strong confirmation of their worst fears. Royalists were already psychologically resilient to some extent, and hence there was no seismic shift in terms of how the royalists saw the world. Conversely, it was the parliamentary opponents of the regicide that appeared most affected into silence. The newsbooks by Dillingham and Border, and *Kingdomes* demurred from explaining the event or its significance, preferring instead to move on to newer matters.¹⁰ These parties were not inoculated with reasoned narratives of victory in defeat, as the royalists were.

⁹ This framework is outlined in Alexander, 'Toward a theory of cultural trauma', pp. 13-5.

¹⁰ As previously suggested, their choice to move on could have been a coping mechanism; it was reassuring to create a temporal distance between the event and the present moment. Terr, 'Time and Trauma', pp. 639-40.

Although there were no great shifts in understandings of time, the regicide did affect these ideas in two aspects. First, there was a general loss of agency at least in affecting worldly affairs. Most writers preached passivity or advocated a turn inwards. Part of this change is a consequence of their use of impersonal factors to explain the regicide. A future determined by natural change, the stars, providence, or justice left little scope for individual agency. These findings support Reinhart Koselleck and François Hartog's assertions that the modern concept of an undetermined future was born in the eighteenth century, or at least not with the regicide.¹¹ Regime change and alterations in government and the world were all justified through appeals to God and underlying patterns of reality, and not to the creative energies and unlimited agency of individuals involved. This is not to say that individuals were powerless. Rather, these conceptions of the future provided endpoints and goals for which the individual could invest their energy and support. It was also rhetorically powerful to depict resistance to the plan as futile.

Second, the regicide also had the effect of enthusing all sides of the conflict, with the writers building upon the event to boost their visions of the future. As Barber has observed, Charles's death 'enabled a task of reconstruction to begin'.¹² With the regicide under their belt, supporters of the regime could more confidently speak of reformation and progress towards the end-goal, whether it

¹¹ However, as many have since argued, the search for modernity's starting point is quixotic and complicated by the existence of pluritemporalities. See Stefan Hantß, 'The Fetish of Accuracy: Perspectives on Early Modern Time(s)', *Past & Present* 243:1 (2019), pp. 267-284. Peter Burke summarises Koselleck's view in 'Foreword', in *Uses of the Future in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Andrea Brady and Emily Butterworth (London: Routledge, 2009), p. xvii; François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 106.

¹² Barber, 'Belshazzar's Feast', p. 110.

be God's plan or a struggle for justice. Their ideas of the future became more concrete and confident. Charles's death was proof that such a plan existed and was being followed through. Royalists in turn argued that their characterisation of the regime as evil was confirmed by the regicide. The regicide was clearly a setback. It pushed the horizon of royalist victory further into the future, and it also exacerbated pre-existing tendencies. For some, like Vaux and Fuller, victory was to be found in the apocalypse or the afterlife, and not in this world. Others, like the newsbooks, spoke of certain victory at some undetermined time. Like the pro-regime writers, they evinced a greater sense of confidence in their futures, even though they gave less clues about when and how victory would come about. It helped that their belief was borne out materially: perhaps the largest change for the royalists was how much purchase their views finally got with the regicide. The great outpouring of sympathy for Charles and the adoption of Charles-as-martyr were signs of public opinion shifting to align with the embattled royalists. As many later came to remember, Charles served his cause better dead than alive.

In the variety of responses to the regicide, we may identify strands of all three models proposed by Cavalli. There are elements of a zero-point approach by supporters of regicide with their projects of reformation, but these were nonetheless girded by directions and processes from the past. A few parliamentary opponents tried unsuccessfully to do the opposite and elided over the event, portraying a world that kept moving on. The most dominant approach was that of 'elaboration of memory'. The early moderns did not seek to remove or displace the regicide. They chose instead to confront it and to interrogate its meaning. Perhaps this was the result of a civil war that had

spilled into the ideational realm.¹³ Whatever the reason, their responses to regicide are a testament to the intellectual vibrancy of early modern England.

In his survey of newsbooks, Raymond observed that the regicide seemed not to precipitate any major changes.¹⁴ By paying close attention to the way writers have understood and communicated ideas of time and the future, this thesis has attempted to explain that the regicide served to amplify pre-existing divisions and visions of the future. By forcing writers to explain and thereby fit the regicide within a larger framework, Charles's death provided an opportunity for writers to create, clarify, or strengthen grand narratives and schemes of time. This thesis has also shown the varieties of ways in which early modern writers used time and the future as rhetorical devices to cajole their readers into preferred courses of action. Visions of the future served to empower readers or to coax them into action, but they were also used to disempower readers by declaring a lack of agency on their part. Pronouncements of the future were inevitably political and should be understood as exercises in rhetoric. By examining accounts of the future and uncovering what historical actors deemed possible, historians can arrive at a fuller understanding of their motivations, goals, and behaviour.

¹³ Or indeed started there in the first place. The literature on the Civil Wars as catalyst for an emerging early modern 'public sphere' is extensive and growing, see Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies* 45:2 (2006), pp. 270-292, and J. Peacey, *Print and Public Politics in the English Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁴ Raymond, *Invention*, pp. 179-80.

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Border, Daniel, *The Perfect Weekly Account containing Certain Special and Remarkable Passages from both Houses of Parliament, the General Assembly of the Kingdome of Scotland, and the State and Condition of the Kings Majesty, the Army and Kingdome. , [s.n., 1648-1649], Mar 1648-Oct 1649, N&S 533.*

[Cleveland, John], *Monumentum Regale: Or A Tombe, Erected for that incomparable and Glorious Monarch, Charles the First, King of Great Britane, France and Ireland, &c., in select Elegies, Epitaphs, and Poems, n.p., 1649.*

Diaries and Letters of Philip Henry, ed. Matthew Henry Lee, London: Kegan Paul, 1882.

Dillingham, John, *The Moderate Intelligencer impartially communicating Martiall Affaires to the Kingdom of England.* , Printed by R.W., 1645-1649. Feb 1645-Oct 1649, N&S 419.001-237.

Fuller, Thomas, *A Fast Sermon preached on Innocents Day by Thomas Fuller, B.D. Minister of the Savoy.* , Printed by L.N. and R.C. for John Williams at the signe of the Crowne in Saint Pauls Church-yard, 1642, Wing (2nd ed) / F2423, E.86[16].

Fuller, Thomas, *A Sermon of Contentment by T.F.* , Printed by J.D. for John Willams, 1648, Wing / F2460.

Fuller, Thomas, *A Sermon of Reformation. Preached at the Church of the Savoy, last fast day, July 27. 1643. / By Thomas Fuller B.D. and Minister there.* , Printed by T.B. for John Williams, at the signe of the Crowne in Pauls Church-yard, 1643, Wing (2nd ed) / F2462, E.63[3].

Fuller, Thomas, *A sermon preached at the Collegiat [sic] Church of S. Peter in Westminster, on the 27 of March, being the day of His Majesties inauguration by Thomas Fuller.* , Printed for John Williams ..., 1643, Wing / F2465.

Fuller, Thomas, *Abel Redevivus, or, The Dead yet speaking the Lives and Deaths of the Moderne Divines / written by Severall Able and Learned Men (whose names ye shall finde in the epistle to the reader), and now digested into one volumne ...* , Printed by Tho. Brudenell for John Stafford ..., 1651, Wing / F2400.

Fuller, Thomas, *Feare of Losing the Old Light. Or, A Sermon preached in Exeter. By Thomas Fuller, B.D.* , Printed by T.H. for Iohn Williams, at the signe of the Crowne in Pauls Church-yard., 1646, Wing (2nd ed) / F2424, E.341[22].

Fuller, Thomas, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times, consisting of Personall Meditations. Scripture Observations. Historicall Applications. Mixt Contemplations.* / By Thomas Fuller. , Exeter : Printed for Thomas Hunt, 1645, Wing (2nd ed) / F2425, E.1142[1].

Fuller, Thomas, *Ioseph's Party-coloured coat containing, a Comment on part of the 11. chapter of the 1. Epistle of S. Paul to the Corinthians. Together with Severall Sermons: namely, 1 Growth in grace. 2 How farre examples may be followed. 3 An ill match well broken off. 4 Good from bad friends. 5 A glasse for gluttons. 6 How farre grace may be entayled. 7 A christning sermon. 8 Faction confuted.* By T.F. ,

Printed by Iohn Dawson, for Iohn Williams, and are to be sold at his shop,
at the signe of the Crane, in Pauls Church-yard, 1640, STC (2nd ed) / 11466.

Fuller, Thomas, *The Holy State by Thomas Fuller ...* , Cambridge: Printed by Roger Daniel for John Williams ..., 1642, Wing / F2443.

Fuller, Thomas, *Truth Maintained, or Positions delivered in a sermon at the Savoy: since traduced for dangerous: now asserted for sound and safe. By Thomas Fuller, B.D. late of Sidney Colledge in Cambridge. The particulars are these. I That the doctrine of the impossibility of a churches perfection, in this world, being wel understood, begets not lazinesse but the more industry in wise reformers. II That the Church of England cannot justly be taxed with superstitious innovations. III How farre private Christians, ministers, and subordinate magistrates, are to concurre to the advancing of a publique reformation. IIII What parts therein are only to be acted by the Supreme power. V Of the progresse, and praise of passive obedience. VI That no extraordinary excitations, incitations, or inspirations are bestowed from God, on men in these dayes. VII That it is utterly unlawfull to give any just offence to the papist, or to any men whatsoever. VIII What advantage the Fathers had of us, in learning and religion, and what we have of them. IX That no new light, or new essentiall truths, are, or can be revealed in this age. X That the doctrine of the Churches imperfection, may safely be preached, and cannot honestly be concealed. With severall letters, to cleare the occasion of this book. , Printed at Oxford [i.e. London : s.n.], anno Dom. 1643, Wing (2nd ed.) / F2474, E .36[9].*

‘House of Commons Journal Volume 6: 23 December 1648’, in *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 6, 1648-1651* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1802), pp. 102-4. [<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol6/pp102-104>, accessed 29 March 2019].

The Kingdomes VWeekly Intelligencer sent Abroad to prevent Mis-information. , [s.n.], Jan 1643-Oct 1649, N&S 214-001-332.

Lilly, William, *A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophetes concerning these present times, with Modest Observations thereon. The natiivities of Thomas Earle of Strafford, and William Laud late Archbishop of Canterbury, His Majesties great favorites; astrologically judgements upon their scheames; and the speech intended by the Earle of Strafford to have been spoken at his death. / By William Lilly student in astrologie.* , Printed for John Partridge and Humphrey Blunden,

and are to be sold at the signe of the Cocke in Ludgate Streete, and the Castle in Cornhill., 1645, Wing (2nd ed) / L2217, E.309[28].

Lilly, William, *A Peculiar Prognostication Astrologically Predicted according to Art: VVhether, or no, His Majestie shall suffer Death this present yeere 1649. / The Possibility thereof discussed and divulged, by William Lilly, student in astrologie., Published for generall satisfaction, 1649, Wing (2nd ed) / L2237, E.537[15].*

Lilly, William, *A Prophecy of the White King: and Dreadfull Dead-man Explained. To which is added the Prophecie of Sibylla Tibvrtina and Prediction of Iohn Kepler: all of especiall concernment for these times. By William Lilly student in astrology. Ob peccata mutat scepra Deus, variata Reges. Published according to order., Printed by G. M. and are to be sold by John Sherley and Thomas Vnderhill, at the Golden Pellican in little Brittain, and Bible in Woodstreet, 1644, Wing (2nd ed) / L2240, E.4[27].*

Lilly, William, *An Astrologicall Prediction of the Occurrances in England, part of the yeers 1648. 1649. 1650. concerning these particulars, viz. 1. The effects depending upon the late conjunction of the two malevolent planets Saturn and Mars. 2. What successe may be expected from the present intended treaty between his Majesty and the Parliament. 3. The standing or falling of this Parliament, and the army under the command of his Excellency the Lord Fairfax. 4. Our imminent disturbances generally handled, together with many contingencies to the whole kingdom, London especially. 5. The product of the Scots army: with some observations upon Duke Hamiltons nativity. 6. What may succeed the apparition of three suns in Lancashire, seen of many, the 28. Febr. last. By William Lilly, student in Astrologie., Printed by T.B. for John Partridge and Humfrey Blunden, and are to be sold in Blackfriars going into Carterlane, and at the Castle in Cornhill, 1648, Wing (2nd ed) / L2211, E.462[1].*

Lilly, William, *Anglicus or, An Ephemeris for 1646. Delivering Mathematically the Successe of this Yeers Actions, between the King and Parliament of England. With astrologicall aphorismes, expedient for physitians and others, usefull for students in this science. To which is added The nativity of Prince Rupert. / By William Lilly student in Astrology., Printed by T.B. for John Partridge and Humfry Blunden, and are to be sold at the Cock in Ludgatestreet, and in Cornhill, 1646, Wing (2nd ed) / A1876, E.1175[2].*

Lilly, William, *Anglicus, Peace, or No Peace, 1645 a Probable Conjecture of the state of England, and the Present Differences betwixt His Majestie and the Parliament of*

England now sitting at Westminster, for this present yeer, 1645, an exact ephemeris of the daily motions of the planets : with an easie introduction to the use thereof, monethly-observations, a table of houses, and explanations thereof : to which is added, a modest reply to M. Wharton, and the prognostication of his present almanak printed at Oxford, for 1645 / by William Lilly., Printed by J.R. for John Partridge and Humphrey Blunden ..., 1645, Wing / L2207.

Lilly, William, *Annus Tenebrosus, or The Dark Year or Astrologicall Iudgements upon two Lunar Eclipses, and one admirable Eclips of the Sun, all visible in England, 1652. Together with a short method how to judge the effects of eclipses. / By William Lilly, student in astrologie. , Printed for the Company of Stationers, and H. Blunden at the Castle in Corn-hill, 1652, Wing (2nd ed) / L2209, E.656[23].*

Lilly, William, *Englands Propheticall Merline, foretelling to all Nations of Europe untill 1663. the Actions depending upon the Influence of the Conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, 1642/3. The Progresse and Motion of the Comet 1618. under whole Effects we in England, and most Regions of Europe now suffer. What Fingdomes must yet partake of the Remainder of the Influence, viz. of War, Plague, Famine, etc. When the English Common-wealth may expect Peace, and the City of London better times. The Beginning, and End of the Watry Trygon: an Entrance of the Fiery Triplicity, 1603. The Nativities of some English Kings, and some horary question inserted: / performed by William Lilly, student in astrologie. Printed by John Raworth, for John Partridge, and are to be sold at the Sun in Pauls Church yard, 1644, Wing (2nd ed) / L2221, E.13[1].*

Lilly, William, *Lilli's Propheticall History of this Yeares Accidence, 1642. Or, Newes from the Grammar-school, taken suddenly sick all over with conceite, occasioned by the doctors desperate opinion of her state, finding hoc regnum in the second declension. Wherein is found a preposition for the kings returning Londinum versus, going imediately before the concord. The misery of the times beating into our brains the memory of our first rules, all in one methode, for an everlasting impression of both, never to be forgotten. [s.n.], Printed in the yeare. 1642, Wing / L2205A, E.126[15].*

Lilly, William, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris 1647. Delivering a Probable Conjecture of such Passages as are prefigured by the Influence of the Stars, to concerne the Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland. With monthly Observations. Also a modest Prediction upon the present affaires of Germany, Spaine, Italy, France, and United Provinces. Together with some peeces of Ptolomie in the English tongue. /*

By William Lilly student in astrology., Printed by T.B. for John Partridge and Humphrey Blunden, and are to be sold at the signe of the Cocke in Ludgate-street, and Castle in Cornhill, 1647, Wing (2nd ed) / A1879, E.1150[2].

Lilly, William, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris. Or Generall and Monthly predictions upon Severall Eclipses and Celestiall Configurations for the yeare 1649. / By William Lilly, student in astrology*, Printed for J. Partridge, and H. Blunden, 1649 [i.e. 1648], Wing (2nd ed) / A1881, E.1173[3].

Lilly, William, *Merlini Anglici Ephemeris or, Astrologicall Predictions for the year, 1651. By William Lilly, student in astrology.* , Printed for the Company of Stationers, and H. Blunden at the Castle in Cornhill, 1651 [i.e. 1650], Wing (2nd ed) / A1883, E.1343[2].

Lilly, William, [*Merlini Anglici Ephemeris: Astrological Predictions for ... 1652.*] , [London : printed for the Company of Stationers, and H. Blunden, 1652], Wing (2nd ed) / A1884, E.1349[5].

Lilly, William, *Merlinus Anglicus Junior: the English Merlin revived; or, his Prediction upon the Affaires of the English Common-wealth, and of all or most Kingdomes of Christendome this present yeare, 1644. By W.L. Published according to order*, Printed by R.W. for T.V. and are to be sold by I.S. in Little Britaine, 1644, Wing (2nd ed) / A1919, E.50[27].

Lilly, William, *Monarchy or No Monarchy in England. Grebner his prophecy concerning Charles son of Charles, his greatnesse, victories, conquests. The northern lyon, or lyon of the north, and chicken of the eagle discovered who they are, of what nation. English, Latin, Saxon, Scottish and Welch prophecies concerning England in particular, and all Europe in generall. Passages upon the life and death of the late King Charles. AEnigmaticall types of the future state and condition of England for many years to come. / By William Lilly, student in astrology.* , Printed for Humfrey Blunden, dwelling at the sign of the Castle in Corn-hill, 1651, Wing (2nd ed) / L2228, E.638[17].

Lilly, William, *Supernaturall Sights and Apparitions seen in London, June 30. 1644. interpreted. With a Mathematicall Discourse of the now imminent Conjunction of Iupiter and Mars, 26 July, 1644. the Effects which either here or in some neere Countries from thence may be expected. By Will. Lilly. Imprimatur John Booker.* Printed for T.V. and are to be sold by I. S. in Little-Brittaine, 1644, Wing (2nd ed) / L2249, E.4[5].

Lilly, William, *The Starry Messenger; or an Interpretation of that strange Apparition of Three Suns seene in London, 19. Novemb. 1644. being the birth day of King Charles. The effects of the eclips of the sun, which will be visible in England, 11. August 1645. whose influence continues in force, from January, 1646 to Decemb. 1647. almost two whole yeares; and cannot but be the fore-runner of some extraordinary mutation in most common-wealths of Europe, but principally in England. With an answer to An astrologicall judgement. Printed at Oxford, upon his Majesties present martch. / By William Lilly student in astrologie, Printed for John Partridge and Humphry Blunden, and are to be sold at the signe of the Cocke in Ludgate Streete, and the Castle in Cornhill, 1645, Wing / L2245, E.288[17].*

Lilly, William, *The VVorld's Catastrophe, or Europes many Mutations untill, 1666. The fate of Englands monarchy untill its subversion. Government of the vworld under God by the seven planetary angels; their Names, times of Government. An exact type of the three Suns seen in Cheshire and Shropshire, 3 April 1647. Their Signification and Portent, astrologically handled. / By VVilliam Lilly student in Astrologie: who is, amicus patria, & veritas amator. To which is added, A Whip for Wharton. , Printed for John Partridge and Humphrey Blunden, and are to be sold at the Cock in Ludgate-streete, and at the Castle in Cornhill, 1647, Wing (2nd ed) / L2252, E.387[1].*

Nedham, Marchamont, *Mercurius Pragmaticus Communicating Intelligence from all Parts, touching all Affaires, Designes, Humours, and Conditions, throughout the Kingdome, especially from Westminster and the Head-quarters. [s.n., 1647-1649] Sept 1647–Jan 1649, N&S 369.101-240b.*

Nedham, Marchamont, *Mercurius Pragmaticus (for King Charles II). Communicating Intelligence from all Parts, touching all Affaires, Designes, Humours, and Conditions throughout the Kingdome, especially from Westminster, and the Head-quarters. [s.n., 1649-1650], Apr 1649-May 1650, N&S 370.01-55*

Parr, Richard, ed., *Life of the Most Reverend Father in God James Ussher . . . with a Collection of three hundred Letters, 1686.*

Partridge, Seth, *Partridge, 1649 an Almanack and Prognostication of the Worlds Redemption, 1649, and of the creation, 5642, being the first after bissextile or leape year : calculated and principally referred to the meridian of the most honourable city of London, whose scituation is in longitude 24 degrees and 20 minutes, and in*

latitude 52 degrees, 32 minutes, and may serve indifferently for the whole kingdome of England / composed and made fit for the use of all sorts of men in generall by Seth Partridge ... , Printed by M.B. for the Companie of Stationers, [1649], Wing / A2048.

Pecke, Samuel, *A Perfect Diurnall of some Passages in Parliament, and from other Parts of this Kingdome.* Printed for Francis Coles and Laurence Blaikelock..., Jul 1643-Nov 1649, N&S 504.001-324.

Peyton, Edward, *The Divine Catastrophe of the Kingly Family of the House of Stuarts or, a Short History of the Rise, Reign, and Ruine thereof. Wherein the most secret and chamber-abominations of the two last kings are discovered, divine justice in King Charles his overthrow vindicated, and the Parliaments proceedings against him clearly justified, by Sir Edward Peyton, knight and baronet, a diligent observer of those times.* , Printed for Giles Calvert, at the black Spread-Eagle at the west-end of Pauls, 1652, Wing (2nd ed) / P1952, E.1291[1].

Peyton, Edward, *The High-way to Peace: or, a Direction set forth for the Composing of those Unhappy Differences betwixt King, Parliament, Army, City, and kingdomes : shewing the sad effects these distractions have brought upon the whole island. / Published for the honour and love he beares to his native countrey, by Sir Edvvard Peyton, Knight and baronet.* , [s.n.], Printed in the yeere 1647, Wing (2nd ed) / P1953, E.411[12].

Severall Speeches Delivered at a Conference concerning the Power of Parliament, to proceed against their King for Misgovernment, printed by Robert Ibbitson, dwelling in Smithfield neere the Queens-head-Tavern, MDCXLVIII. [1648], Wing / P573A.

Sheppard, Samuel, *Mercurius Aulicus. Communicating Intelligence from sll Parts of the Kingdome, especially from Westminster, and the Head-quarters.* [s.n.], 1648. Aug 1648. N&S 274.1-4.

Sheppard, Samuel, *Mercurius Pragmaticus Communicating Intelligence from all Parts, touching all Affaires, Designes, Humours, and Conditions, throughout the Kingdome, especially from Westminster and the Head-quarters.* Feb 1649 – May 1649. N&S 369.246b-253.

Sprigge, Joshua, *A Further Testimony to the Glory that is near being the Summe of what was delivered in Publique on several texts / by Joshua Sprigge.* , Printed for Giles Calvert ..., 1649, Wing / S5074.

Sprigge, Joshua, *A Testimony to an Approaching Glory being an Account of Certain Discourses lately delivered in Pancras, Soperlane, London / by Joshua Sprigge. , Printed for Giles Calvert, 1648, Wing / S5076.*

Sprigge, Joshua, *Anglia Rediviva Englands Recovery being the History of the Motions, Actions, and Successes of the Army under the immediate conduct of His Excellency Sr. Thomas Fairfax, Kt., Captain-General of all the Parliaments forces in England / compiled for the publique good by Ioshua Sprigge ... , Printed by R.W. for Iohn Partridge ..., 1647, Wing / S5070.*

Sprigge, Joshua, *Certain Weighty Considerations humbly Tendered and Submitted to the Consideration of such of the Members of the High Court of Justice for Tryal of the King, as they shall be presented unto. There being onely one hundred of the copies appointed to be printed for that purpose By Josuah Sprigge. , Imprinted at [s.n.], 1648 [i.e. 1649], Wing (2nd ed) / S5071, E.540[13].*

Sprigge, Joshua, *Christus Redivivus, the Lord is risen being some Account of Christ, what and where he is, of the Glory and Mystery of his person and office so Miserably Mangled now adaies : wherein also as in a Glasse may be seene the Image and Proportion of all the Waies and Workes of God in the Kingdomes of the world / according to the measure of the light of things brought forth in Joshua Sprigge. , Printed for Giles Calvert, 1649, Wing / S5072.*

Sprigge, Joshua, *Solace for Saints in the Saddest Times from the Consideration of the happy temperature and lovely composure of all times and providences as to Gods glory and their good : held forth in a brief discourse on the first words of the Canticles / by Joshua Sprigg. , Printed for Giles Calvert, 1648, Wing / S5075.*

The Moderate Impartially Communicating Martial Affaires to the Kingdome of England. Printed for Robert White, [1648-1649], Jun 1648-Sep 1649, N&S 413.1171-2063.

Vaux, John, *Vaux 1633 a New Almanacke and Prognostication for the yeere of our Lord God 1633, being the first from the bissextile or leape yeere : Calculated for the Meridian of the ancient city of Durham, where the pole is mounted aboue the horizon almost 55 degrees ... / by Iohn Vaux ... Printed for the Company of Stationers, [1633], STC (2nd ed.) / 522.13.*

Vaux, John. *Vaux, 1634 a New Almanacke and Prognostication, for the yeere of our Lord God, 1634, being the second from the bissextile or leape yeere : Calculated for the Meridian of the ancient city of Duham [sic], where the pole is mounted above*

the horizon almost 55. degrees / by Iohn Vaux of Saint Hellen Awckland., Printed for the Company of Stationers, [1634], STC (2nd ed) / 522.14.

Vaux, John, *Vaux, 1642 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord God 1642 : being the second from the leap-yeare : Calculated for the Meridian of the ancient city of Durham ... / composed by John Vaux ... , Printed by Iohn Dawson for the Company of Stationers, [1642], Wing / A2608.*

Vaux, John, *Vaux, 1643 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord God 1643 : being the third after the leape yeare : Calculated for the Meridian of St. Hellen Awckland, within the county of Durham ... / composed by Joh. Vaux ... , Printed by R.O. & G.D. for the Company of Stationers, [1643], Wing / A2609.*

Vaux, John, *Vaux 1648 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord God 1648 being the bissextile or leape yeare, Calculated for the Meridian of St. Hellen Awckland, within the county of Durham where the pole is mounted above the horizon 54 degrees and 45 minutes / by John Vaux, Printed by M.B. for the Companie of Stationers; second part: Printed by J. Young for the Company of Stationers, [1648], Wing (2nd ed) / A2609A.*

Vaux, John, *Vaux, 1649 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the year of our Lord God 1649 : being the first after the bissextile or leape-yeare : Calculated for the Meridian of Saint Hellen Auckland, within the county of Durham ... / composed by John Vaux ... Printed by T[homas]. R[atcliffe]. and E[dward]. M[ottershed]. for the Company of Stationers, 1649, Wing / A2610.*

Vaux, John, *Vaux. 1652 Diarium Seu Calendarium, a Day Book: or, A New Almanack for the year of the Worlds Redemption, 1652. Being the bissextile or leap-year. Calculated and principally referred for the Meridian and Latitude of the city of Durham, the pole artick being elevated 55 degrees, and may serve without any sensible error for the most part of Great Brittain. Composed and made by John Vaux of S. Hellen Auckland, anno aetatis ..., 77. , printed by Gartrude Dawson for the Company of Stationers, [1652], Wing / A2611.*

Walker, Henry, *Collections of Notes Taken at the Kings Tryall, at Westminster Hall, on Saturday last, Janua. 27. 1648. VVith the Sentence Denounced against the King who is condemned to be beheaded. , Printed by Robert Ibbitson, 1649, Wing (2nd ed) / C5220, E.540[9].*

Walker, Henry, *Perfect Occurrences of Every Dayes Journall in Parliament, and other Moderate Intelligence*. Printed for I. Coe and A. Coe..., [1647-1649], N&S 465.5001-5145.

Wharton, George, *Hemeroscopeion a Meteorologicall Diary and Prognostication for the yeere of Christ 1651, being the third after the bissextile and from the creation 5600 ... : Calculated and composed for the Latitude and Meridian of the famous borough of Kirkby-Kendall in the county of Westmorland / by Capt. George Wharton ...*, Printed by J.G. for the Company of Stationers, 1651, Wing / A2666.

Wharton, George, *Hemeroscopeion Anni Intercalaris 1652 containing the English calendar, and Daily Motions of the Planets, &c. in Longitude, in Latitude: their Manifold Passions and Positions. Chronologicall notes, Meteorologicall observations, and Judgements Astrologicall, &c. The Astronomicall calculations properly respecting the Latitude and Meridian of Kirkby-Kendall, where the Pole-arctique is elevated 54. degr. 50. min. and whose Longitude (counted from the Canary Islands) is 18. degr. 0. min. By Capt. George Wharton student in astronomy.*, Printed by J. Grismond for the Company of Stationers, 1652 [i.e. 1651], Wing (2nd ed.) / A2667.

Wharton, George, *Hemeroscopeion Anniaerae Christianae 1653 presenting the English and Roman kalendar, Planetary Motions, Passions and Positions, Meteorologicall Observations, Chronologicall Collections, and Judgements Astrologicall, &c. Respecting the Meridian, and Latitude of Kirkby-Kendall; where the Vertex is distant from the Aequator, 54.50'. and whose Longitude, is, 18.00'. By Geo. VVarton, Esq.*, Printed by J. Grismond, for the Company of Stationers, 1653 [i.e. 1652], Wing (2nd ed) / A2668, E.1348[4].

Wharton, George, *Hemeroscopeion the Loyall Almanack, for the year of Christ, 1650. Being the second after the bissextile: and from the creation, 5599. Containing many Chronologicall Notes, and other Observations, very usefull and pleasant for all but the saints. Calculated and composed for the Latitude and Meridian of the famous burrough of Kirkby-Kendall in the County of Westmorland. By Capt. George Wharton, student in astronomy.*, Ex officina fidelissima, senatui cruentissimo diametrice opposita; anno 1650, Wing (2nd ed) / A2665, E.1323[1,2].

Wharton, George, *Mercurius Elencticus. Communicating the Unparallell'd Proceedings at Westminster, the Head-quarters, and other places; Discovering*

their Designes, reprovving their Crimes, and advising the Kingdome. , [s.n., 1647-1649]. Nov 1647- Jan 1649, N&S 312.01-59.

Wharton, George, *Mercurius Pragmaticus Communicating Intelligence from All Parts, touching all Affaires, Designes, Humours, and Conditions, throughout the Kingdome, especially from Westminster and the Head-quarters.* Dec 1649-Feb 1649, N&S 369.240A-246A.

Wharton, George, *Naworth, 1641 a New Almanack and Prognostication for the yeare of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 1641 : being the first from the bissextile or leape-yeare, and from the creation of the world, 5590 ... : Calculated and compsed according to Lawfull Art for the latitude and meridian of the ancient Citie of Duresme ... but may very well serve (without sensible error) the most parts of Great Britain / by George Naworth ...* , Printed by J.N. for the Company of Stationers, 1641, Wing / A2670.

Wharton, George, *Naworth, 1642 a New Almanacke and Prognostication for the yeere of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, 1642 : being the second from the bissextile or leape-yeere, and from the creation of the world, 5591 : referred most especially to the Meridian and Latitude of the Ancient city of Durham ... / by George Naworth ...* , Printed by Iohn Dawson for the Company of Stationers, [1642?], Wing / A2671.

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the like not heretofore shewed by any other. Calculated (according to art) for the Meridian and Latitude of the ancient burrough town of Stamford in Lincolnshire, whose Longitude is 20 degr. 10. min. Latitude 52. degr. 41 min. and without sensible error may serve the 3. Kingdoms, of England, Scotland, and Ireland. By Vincent Wing, practitioner in the mathematicks, Printed by J.L. for the Company of Stationers, 1649, Wing / A2824.

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