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The Republican Dilemma:
Rhetoric, Violence, and Representation in Early Modern England

by

Joseph David Mansky

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requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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English

and the Designated Emphasis

in

Renaissance and Early Modern Studies

in the

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Victoria Kahn, Chair

Professor Oliver Arnold

Professor Shannon Stimson

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Abstract

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Joseph David Mansky

Doctor of Philosophy in English

with a Designated Emphasis in Renaissance and Early Modern Studies

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Victoria Kahn, Chair

This dissertation argues that English literature refigured the central dilemma of Renaissance republicanism: should tyranny be met with submission or with violence? For poets and playwrights, I contend, representation offered a third way. Faced with the twin specters of tyranny and civil war, writers like Philip Sidney, Shakespeare, and Robert Herrick imagined new forms of political representation that might effectively balance rulers against ruled. “Poesy” was itself the vehicle for this political critique. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, there was no distinct concept of political representation. Members of parliament instead borrowed the mimetic vocabulary of neoclassical rhetoric and poetics to describe their own acts of representation. That vocabulary, however, affirmed a clear hierarchy: word over image, representation over represented. Neoclassical theorists asserted the aesthetic and even epistemological primacy of their poetic representations, while MPs used the fiction of popular presence to efface the constituents whom they supposedly represented.

I argue that literature contested this absolutist construction of representation. If the hierarchical tropes of neoclassical poetics proved influential, so too did other models of literary—and political—representation. From the narrative and ideological “variety” of Sidney’s *Arcadia* to the clamorous commons of Shakespeare’s histories to the polyvocal poetry of Herrick’s *Hesperides*, English literature could represent an embodied, and at times radically inclusive, politics of participation. Even Ben Jonson, who in his Roman plays struggled to defend the hierarchies of neoclassical representation, solicited popular judgment by writing for the commercial theater. In these writers’ “feigned commonwealths,” however, enfranchisement often seems like the effect or cause of bloodshed; and in England’s own commonwealth, ideological polarization and ultimately civil war threatened to dissolve the barrier between speech and violence altogether. Yet from the Renaissance to the present, the possibility of separating rhetoric from violence has remained the positive condition of republicanism, and the promise of literature.

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This dissertation is dedicated, finally, to Emily Xiao.

Introduction

The Republican Dilemma

“Was Brutus justified in killing Caesar?” For Renaissance schoolboys, this was quite literally an academic question. The influential humanist educator Philipp Melanchthon cited it as one of those historical *controversiae* through which students would hone their skills of argumentation *in utramque partem*, on both sides of a question.¹ Yet if there is any truth to Hobbes’s claim that “one of the most frequent causes of [rebellion against monarchy] is the Reading of the books of Policy, and Histories of the antient Greeks, and Romans,” then this grammar school exercise soon found practical application. Writers like Gabriel Harvey insisted that England was no Roman *res publica*. “Many things were said and done in the Roman Republic,” Harvey protests, “which it would be absurd to do in a kingdom and nowadays.”² But early modern England had its fair share of antique Romans. In one writer’s estimation, Elizabeth “truly meriteth the true title of *Caesar*.”³ James, styled “Englands Caesar” upon his accession, embraced the label and even worked to “foster an image of himself as Julius Caesar.”⁴ The Elizabethan counselors William Cecil and Nicholas Bacon were, according to the Catholic polemic of the 1570s, “two English Catilines,” and decades later the Gunpowder plotters were even “worse then Catilines.”⁵ In the 1640s, one could find among the supporters of parliament the “English *Brutus*” or, alternatively, a brace of “English *Catalines*.”⁶

¹ Philipp Melanchthon, *Melanchthoniana Paedagogica*, ed. Karl Hartfelder (Leipzig: Teubner, 1892), 9: “Iurene C. Caesarem Brutus occiderit?” (my translation). On the pervasive influence of argument *in utramque partem* on Renaissance culture, see Joel B. Altman, *The Tudor Play of Mind: Rhetorical Inquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); and Victoria Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism in the Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

² Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985), 369; Gabriel Harvey’s annotation of Livy, translated in Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, “‘Studied for Action’: How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy,” *Past and Present* 129 (1990): 66.

³ E. N[isbet], *Caesars Dialogue* (London, 1601), sig. B2v, quoted in Markku Peltonen, “Citizenship and Republicanism in Elizabethan England,” in *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, vol. 1: *Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 85-106, esp. 85.

⁴ Henry Petowe, *Englands Caesar. His Maiesties most Royall Coronation* (London, 1603); Samuel Rowlands, *Aue Caesar. God saue the King* (London, 1603); Paulina Kewes, “Julius Caesar in Jacobean England,” *The Seventeenth Century* 17.2 (2002): 155-86, esp. 162.

⁵ *A treatise of treasons against Q. Elizabeth, and the Crowne of England* ([Louvain], 1572), sig. L4r; *His Maiesties speach in this last Session of Parliament [...] Together with a discourse of the maner of the discouery of this late intended Treason* (London, 1605), sig. E4v, quoted in Rebecca Lemon, *Treason by Words: Literature, Law, and Rebellion in Shakespeare’s England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 139. On the figure of Catiline in the *Treatise of treasons*, see Peter Lake, *Bad Queen Bess? Libels, Secret Histories, and the Politics of Publicity in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 69-93.

⁶ *Mercurius Britannicus*, no. 5 (13 June 1648), 35, quoted in David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

Debates about political violence in the Roman republic, then, were also debates about the legitimacy of tyrannicide in Renaissance monarchies.⁷ For persecuted Catholics, militant Protestants, and parliamentary partisans, England's monarchy *was* at times tyrannical, and the assassination of Julius Caesar provided an exemplary model of republican resistance. The author of the influential Huguenot tract *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos*, written under the pseudonym Stephanus Junius Brutus, assumes the mantle of the famous tyrant-slayers who shared that family name. With an eye to the persecution of Protestants in France, the *Vindiciae* condemns Julius Caesar and praises his assassins as men who “performed the office of good citizens by snatching up weapons against Caesar.”⁸ On the other side of the confessional divide, the Jesuit polemic *A conference about the next succession* (often attributed to Robert Persons) cites Caesar's assassination and the ensuing reign of Augustus as proof “that common wealthes haue chastised somtymes lawfully ther lawful Princes...and secondly that this hath fallen out euer, or for the most part, commodious to the wealpublique.”⁹

Unsurprisingly, the authorities and their supporters took a very different view of king-killing, past or present. The message of *An Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* is as clear as its title: “that kinges and princes, aswell the evill as the good, do raigne by Gods ordinaunce, and that subjectes are bounden to obey them.”¹⁰ The untimely ends of Caesar's assassins thus prove, as one writer asserted in the wake of the Babington Plot of 1586, that “Gods vengeance” awaits those who “laye violent handes of annoited Kinges.” In his rebuttal to the *Conference's* defense of rebellion, John Hayward similarly notes that the murder of Caesar was by no means “commodious to the wealpublique” but instead sparked “a long cruell and doubtfull warre” that dragged on for twenty years.¹¹ In an age of religious persecution and growing ideological polarization, Melancthon's grammar school exercise became an urgent republican dilemma: should tyranny be met with submission or with violence?¹²

1999), 177; Edward Symmons, *A vindication of King Charles: or, A loyal subjects duty* (s.l., 1648), sig. Ff3v.

⁷ Robert S. Miola, “Julius Caesar and the Tyrannicide Debate,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 38.2 (1985): 271-73. On the conflicting views of Caesar in early modern England, see Freyja Cox Jensen, *Reading the Roman Republic in Early Modern England* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 136-62.

⁸ Stephanus Junius Brutus, *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos: or, concerning the legitimate power of a prince over the people, and of the people over a prince*, ed. and trans. George Garnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 152.

⁹ *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of Inghland* ([Antwerp], 1594 [vere 1595]), sigs. D8r-v, E4r. On the manifold connections between Catholic and Protestant resistance theory, see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 2:113-348.

¹⁰ *Certain Sermons or Homilies (1547) and A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion (1570)*, ed. Ronald B. Bond (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 210-11.

¹¹ George Whetstone, *The censure of a loyall subiect* (London, 1587), sigs. E2r-v; John Hayward, *An answer to the first part of a certaine conference, concerning succession* (London, 1603), sig. Ilr.

¹² On the deepening ideological divides of early Stuart England, see Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, eds., *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics, 1603-1642* (London: Longman, 1989); and J. P. Sommerville, *Royalists and Patriots: Politics and Ideology in England, 1603-1640*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1999).

Rhetoric and the Literary Choice

This dissertation recovers a third choice, what I call the rhetorical or “literary” choice. From Sidney to Herrick, I argue, poets and playwrights offered the rhetoric of political representation as an alternative to tyranny and violence alike. These writers suggested that representation could mediate between submission and revolution, could effectively balance rulers against ruled. In manuscript, in print, and above all on the London stage, their popular fictions showed an increasingly polarized nation how to negotiate ideological difference.

For the early moderns, however, rhetoric inflicted its own kind of violence. Classical and, especially, Renaissance rhetoricians described words as weapons that could dominate and even subjugate one’s audience.¹³ This absolutist conception of rhetoric fostered hierarchies of representation in both poetics and politics. My first chapter contends that *enargeia*—the ability of language to conjure an image—was the master trope of those hierarchies. Authorized by the linguistic fiction of presence, poets and politicians alike asserted the absolute primacy of their representations. Instead of giving the represented a voice, Renaissance representation thus threatened to elide them altogether.

Yet there was another side to the rhetorical tradition. Rhetoric, after all, was an art designed for the Athenian democracy and the Roman republic. Plato’s *Gorgias* thus describes oratory as the source not only of rule over others but also of popular freedom.¹⁴ In *De Oratore*, Cicero similarly asserts that rhetoric fosters both freedom and domination: in all free nations (“in omni libero populo”), we learn, the art of rhetoric alone has ruled the state (“dominata est”).¹⁵ Renaissance rhetoricians reiterated this ambivalence, although often with a more negative, Tacitean view of liberty (*libertas*) as license (*licentia*).¹⁶ Juan Luis Vives, for example, asserts that “the orator was lord (*dominatus est orator*)” in those republics where “eloquence came upon crowds of people...puffed up by the air of liberty (*libertatis quadam aura tumefactas*).”¹⁷ If the republican vision of oratory dwindled under Renaissance monarchies, it by no means vanished entirely.¹⁸

¹³ Wayne A. Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men’s Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Markku Peltonen, “Rhetoric and Citizenship in the Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I,” in *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England*, ed. John F. McDiarmid (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 109-28.

¹⁴ Plato, *Gorgias*, in *Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias*, trans. W. R. M. Lamb (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), 452d. See Bryan Garsten, *Saving Persuasion: A Defense of Rhetoric and Judgment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 2.

¹⁵ Cicero, *De Oratore*, trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 1.8.30.

¹⁶ Tacitus, *Dialogus de Oratoribus*, trans. W. Peterson, rev. M. Winterbottom, in *Agricola, Germania, Dialogus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), 36-41, esp. 40.

¹⁷ Juan Luis Vives, *On the Causes of the Corruption of the Arts*, in *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric*, ed. and trans. Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 84; Vives, *De disciplinis libri XX* (Antwerp, 1531), sig. N4r.

¹⁸ Wayne A. Rebhorn, “Rhetoric and Politics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Rhetorical Studies*, ed. Michael MacDonald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 387-96; Markku Peltonen, *Rhetoric, Politics and Popularity in Pre-Revolutionary England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Peltonen, “Rhetoric and Citizenship.”

At once absolutist and republican, Renaissance rhetoric underpins the ideological debates that I trace through English literature and culture. English poesy, haunted by the specter of civil war, sometimes reaffirmed the hierarchies of Renaissance representation. Indeed, at a time when choosing members of parliament was more selection than election—when the proceedings of the House of Commons were, officially, secrets of state—it is easy enough to see why the cultural elite should have been so eager to turn representation into replacement.¹⁹ But rhetoric, as Plato, Cicero, and Vives all acknowledged, could liberate as well as dominate. Informed by this republican rhetoric, the texts that I study contested (if only implicitly) the absolutist force of language itself.

The tropes of poetic representation thus came to model new, and often more inclusive, forms of political representation. In Sidney's *Arcadia*, I argue in Chapter 2, what one early modern critic called "variety" is both a narrative and a political principle. Digressions and interruptions insistently disrupt the erotic escapades of the royal protagonists with popular politics and republican ideologies. The next two chapters turn to the London stage. With its embodied fictions and popular audiences, the theater quickly became the prime venue for the constitutive tensions of representation. Shakespeare's popular dramaturgy, I contend, literalizes the fictions of Renaissance representation. The English commons of 2 *Henry VI* rely not only on their representatives' rhetoric but also on their own voices (and bodies) to make themselves heard (Chapter 3). Jonson's *Catiline*, by contrast, struggles to defend the hierarchies of neoclassical representation from the looming threat of populist violence—and of popular stagecraft. By dramatizing the irresistible force of Ciceronian *enargeia*, Jonson subordinates spectacle to speech and represented to representative (Chapter 4). My final chapter jumps forward to a moment when civic strife was not a lesson of the past but a bloody fact of the present. The poetic debates of Herrick's *Hesperides*, I argue, at once reproduce and mediate the political polarization of mid-seventeenth-century England. Herrick puts royalists and parliamentarians into conversation, figuring political representation as a dialogue that just might be able to bridge England's deep ideological divides. By the 1640s representation had thus become deeply entangled with conflict, and even with bloodshed. But for these early modern writers, disentangling speech from violence was precisely the challenge of republicanism.

Representation and Republicanism

To claim that "republicanism" was central to English literature in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is no longer uncommon (if still controversial).²⁰ Over the past two decades, scholars such as Julie Sanders, David Norbrook, Andrew Hadfield, and Patrick Cheney have recovered literature's deep engagement with republican ideas well before the outbreak of

¹⁹ Mark A. Kishlansky, *Parliamentary Selection: Social and Political Choice in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Oliver Arnold, *The Third Citizen: Shakespeare and the Early Modern House of Commons* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), esp. 47-75.

²⁰ For important critiques of the attempts to identify republican or quasi-republican ideas in pre-civil-war England, see Blair Worden, "Republicanism, Regicide and Republic: The English Experience," in *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, ed. van Gelderen and Skinner, vol. 1, 307-27; and Johann P. Sommerville, "English and Roman Liberty in the Monarchical Republic of Early Stuart England," in *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England*, ed. McDiarmid, 201-16.

civil war in the 1640s.²¹ The more “republicanism” critics find, however, the less clear it is what the term actually means. These scholars all acknowledge this difficulty: “republicanism” was “a slippery and complex term” (Sanders); it was “not a fixed entity” (Norbrook) and “not a monolithic concept” (Hadfield).²² Yet critics do venture to say what they believe republicanism was. For Norbrook and Cheney, republicanism denotes advocacy of “a state which was not headed by a king and in which the hereditary principle did not prevail in whole or in part in determining the headship.”²³ Sanders labels this “the modern understanding,” instead asserting that “a republic implied a mixed form of government.”²⁴ Hadfield, building on the work of Markku Peltonen, stretches the term the furthest. Peltonen defines republicanism as “a cluster of themes concerning citizenship, public virtue and true nobility” as well as “a more specific constitutional stance.” Hadfield goes further, listing six “elements and languages” that together constitute the republican tradition: “a rhetoric against tyranny,” “a strong commitment to the humanist programme of educational reform,” “a stress on the need for virtue in government officials or magistrates,” “a keen interest in histories of the [Roman] republic,” “the language of natural rights,” and “the importance of offices and positions of responsibility held by ordinary citizens/subjects.”²⁵

Largely missing from this scholarly conversation is one particular concept and practice: political representation. When representation does appear in the literary republicanism of pre-civil-war England, it is often in dire straits—“doomed to failure,” “difficult to discern,” or even, in Oliver Arnold’s incisive account, itself met with “skepticism, bleakness, and despair.”²⁶ There

²¹ Julie Sanders, *Ben Jonson’s Theatrical Republics* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1998); Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*; Andrew Hadfield, “Was Spenser a Republican?” *English* 47 (1998): 169-82; Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe’s Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). More recently, see James Kuzner, *Open Subjects: English Renaissance Republicans, Modern Selfhoods, and the Virtue of Vulnerability* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011); and Daniel Cadman, *Sovereigns and Subjects in Early Modern Neo-Senecan Drama: Republicanism, Stoicism and Authority* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2015).

²² Sanders, *Ben Jonson’s Theatrical Republics*, 2; Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 18; Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, 52.

²³ Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 17; Cheney, *Marlowe’s Republican Authorship*, 5. Both are quoting Zera S. Fink, *The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth Century England* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1945), x.

²⁴ Sanders, *Ben Jonson’s Theatrical Republics*, 2.

²⁵ Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 2; Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, 52-53.

²⁶ Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, 183; Cheney, *Marlowe’s Republican Authorship*, 6; Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 4. The exceptions come almost exclusively in Shakespeare studies. Hadfield argues that Shakespeare, “more than any of his contemporary playwrights, was especially interested in how political institutions functioned, who they represented, and how individuals came to occupy offices of state” (*Shakespeare and Republicanism*, 53). But Hadfield’s Shakespeare is ultimately far less interested in the possibilities of these institutions

are good reasons why this should be the case. While today we understand representation as the essence of a republican polity, in early modern England the two concepts were quite distinct and sometimes even at odds. Of Hadfield's six "elements and languages" of the republican tradition, only the emphasis on office-holding requires some form of representative politics. Patrick Collinson's influential account of the "monarchical republic" of Elizabethan England describes above all an "aristocratic republicanism": at moments of crisis, privy councilors and MPs imagined how they might govern without a monarch.²⁷ The "Janus-faced" character of Renaissance rhetoric only exacerbated the tension between republicanism and representation. The humanist education in rhetoric may have fostered civic consciousness and turned monarchical subjects into quasi-republican citizens, but rhetoric was also understood as a tool of the political elite, to be used for governing, and even subjugating, those same common people.²⁸

If republicanism did not necessarily entail representation in early modern England, then the reverse was true as well. Representation, in politics as well as poetics, was imagined as hierarchical, absolutist, and even antithetical to popular agency. Electoral practice substantiated this theory: few elections before 1640 were seriously contested at all.²⁹ Political representation thus remains marginal to accounts of pre-civil-war republicanism. According to both literary critics and historians of political thought, a recognizably modern theory of representation emerged only in the ferment of the civil wars. The "modern" or "democratic concept of representation," Norbrook asserts, "was first formulated" in the mid-1640s.³⁰ Quentin Skinner takes issue with the prevailing view that Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651) is "the first extended and systematic discussion of representation in English"—but only to relocate that claim to the parliamentary theorists of the previous decade.³¹

than in their demise (154-83). Cheney examines Marlowe's "republican representation," which he defines as "both the *literary representation* or mimesis of republican thought in literature, and *political representation through the process of government*." Yet, Cheney admits, "we will find it difficult to discern a republican form of government in Marlowe's works"—and so he directs his attention toward the former aspect of "republican representation," to "a specifically literary representation" (*Marlowe's Republican Authorship*, 6). Annabel Patterson, in *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989), devotes a chapter to political representation and republicanism in *Coriolanus* (120-53). Arnold, in *The Third Citizen*, examines Shakespeare's plays alongside contemporary representational practices in the House of Commons. For Arnold, representation is the essence of republicanism—and Shakespeare offers a devastating critique of both.

²⁷ Patrick Collinson, "The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I," in *Elizabethan Essays* (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), 31-57; John Guy, "The 1590s: The Second Reign of Elizabeth I?" in *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade*, ed. Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1-19, esp. 14.

²⁸ Rebhorn, "Rhetoric and Politics," 388; Peltonen, "Rhetoric and Citizenship."

²⁹ Kishlansky, *Parliamentary Selection*.

³⁰ Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 141.

³¹ Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 14; Quentin Skinner, "Hobbes on Representation," *European Journal of Philosophy* 13.2 (2005): 155-84. Yet the *Leviathan* still looms large: over a decade after Skinner's important article, we still find Hobbes being called "the first systematic theorist of political representation" (Mónica Brito Vieira, "Performative Imaginaries: Pitkin versus Hobbes

Yet, I will argue, it was precisely because the modern concept of representation was only just starting to emerge that fiction could become the prime site for rethinking representative politics in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The word “representation” itself was not yet a political term of art. It described instead the kind of visual or symbolic presence conjured by the arts—by painting, drama, and poetry.³² When MPs claimed to assume the diverse “persons” of the common people, or when they called parliament a “lively representation” of the realm, they were appropriating a literary vocabulary.³³ Putting on others’ “persons” or *personae* (Latin for masks) was the actor’s trade; producing a “lively representation” was the goal of the rhetorician, painter, and poet. This poetic language made the fiction of popular presence, not any sense of democratic accountability, central to parliamentary representation. But literature—and, especially, drama—troubled this absolutist construction of representation. MPs and political theorists borrowed the hierarchical tropes of neoclassical representation at the very moment when those tropes were being contested by the burgeoning tradition of English poesy. At stake in these literary experiments, then, was the future of political representation itself. And at the risk of anachronism—but with careful attention to the texture of the poet’s “feigned commonwealths”—we might label that future “republican.”³⁴

on Political Representation,” in *Reclaiming Representation: Contemporary Advances in the Theory of Political Representation*, ed. Vieira [New York: Routledge, 2017], 25-49, esp. 26).

³² Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, 243-48; Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 266-67. There was also, of course, the religious discourse of representation (applied, for instance, to the Eucharist and the incarnation), which is beyond the scope of this study.

³³ *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. T. E. Hartley, 3 vols. (London: Leicester University Press, 1981-95), 3:433; *Commons Debates 1628*, ed. Robert C. Johnson et al., 4 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977-78), 2:7, quoted in David Harris Sacks, “Parliament, Liberty, and the Commonwealth,” in *Parliament and Liberty from the Reign of Elizabeth to the English Civil War*, ed. J. H. Hexter (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 85-121, esp. 87. See Chapter 1 below.

³⁴ For the idiom of the “feigned commonwealth,” see Sir Thomas Smith, *De Republica Anglorum*, ed. Mary Dewar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 144; Philip Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, in *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan van Dorsten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 86-87; Ben Jonson, *Discoveries*, ed. Lorna Hutson, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online*, gen. ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 741, accessed at <https://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/>.

1. Speaking Pictures, Silent People

“In the simile or comparison,” the early modern literary theorist William Scott asserts, “there must be proportional answerableness and sympathy in some quality or affection betwixt the things representing and the things represented.”¹ This principle of geometric likeness and shared feeling (“proportional answerableness and sympathy”) would, in the ensuing centuries, come to underpin theories of political representation. In the 1640s, Henry Parker described the “composition of Parliaments” as “geometrically proportionable” and insisted that there ought to be no “enmity and antipathy...betwixt the Representatives, and the Body, of the Kingdome represented.” And in the *Federalist Papers*, Alexander Hamilton stressed the need for “due sympathy between the representative body and its constituents.”² The vocabulary of representation thus migrated from art to politics.

But Scott’s emphasis on “proportional answerableness and sympathy” suggests a parity between representation and represented that was largely absent from early modern poetic and political theory. Philip Sidney maintains that the poet is “not bound to follow the story” but instead has the “liberty either to feign a quite new matter or to frame the history to the most tragical conveniency.”³ Here, the “things represented” (the “story” and “history”) are decidedly subordinate to the “things representing,” to the poet’s language itself. Members of the Elizabethan and Jacobean House of Commons similarly claimed that their own act of representation transcended the limits of likeness. William Hakewill, for instance, asserted in 1601 that MPs could even in some sense become the common people whom they represented. “Yf the matter which is spoken of touche the poore,” he proclaimed, “then thincke me a poore man he that speakes; sometymes, he must be a lawyer, sometymes a paynter, sometymes a marchante, some tymes a meane artifcyer.”⁴ As the poet “frame[s] the history to the most tragical conveniency” and the MP morphs into those very much unlike himself, the principle of likeness gives way to a very different logic of representation. “Sympathy” and “answerableness” imply a reciprocal relation between representatives and represented. Sidney and Hakewill, by contrast, emphasize the absolute power of the representation, its ability to “feign a quite new matter” and become what it is not.

Recent scholars have commented on the antagonisms and exclusions inherent in this idea of representation. Leonard Barkan argues that “mimesis is by its very nature a discourse of competition—or, at the very least, of comparison...The agonistic relations that mimesis establishes between representation and thing represented generate in turn the theoretical

¹ William Scott, *The Model of Poesy*, ed. Gavin Alexander (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 81. For more on Scott’s treatise, see Chapter 2 below.

² [Henry Parker], *Observations upon some of his Majesties late Answers and Expresses*, 2nd ed. (London, 1642), sigs. C4r, B2r; Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist*, in *The Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers*, ed. David Wootton (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003), 217.

³ Philip Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, in *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan van Dorsten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 114.

⁴ *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. T. E. Hartley, 3 vols. (London: Leicester University Press, 1981-95), 3:433. See Oliver Arnold, *The Third Citizen: Shakespeare’s Theater and the Early Modern House of Commons* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 89.

contrasts—or contests—among different media of representation.” Barkan finds these contests dramatized in Shakespeare’s theater, where “the relative powers of language and visuality are being perpetually tested.”⁵ But if Shakespeare declines to adjudicate between word and image, neoclassical poetic theory came down decisively on the side of the former. Writers like Sidney and Jonson sought to restrict the scope of the visual on the Renaissance stage, to replace spectacle with speech. Oliver Arnold has persuasively attributed a similar structure to parliamentary representation. Elizabethan and Jacobean MPs, he contends, maintained the “fiction of the people’s presence” in the House of Commons precisely by “excluding the people” themselves.⁶ In poetry and in politics, fictions of presence were mobilized to supplant the things—or people—represented.

In what follows, I trace these hierarchies of poetic and political representation to their common roots in the rhetorical tradition. I argue that the figure *enargeia*—the ability of language to conjure an image—was the master trope of Renaissance representation. Poets and MPs alike deployed the vocabulary of visual presence to describe their own acts of representation. But *enargeia*, for both classical and Renaissance rhetoricians, was above all a means of persuasion: its goal was not merely to depict an image but to convince the orator’s audience that the thing depicted really had transpired before their eyes. Early modern poetic theorists and members of parliament reproduced this confusion between word and thing, insisting on the epistemological and even ontological primacy of their representations over the things and people represented. Representation became replacement.

Holger Schott Syme has discerned a similar logic throughout what he terms early modern England’s “culture of mediation.” Ranging from the courtroom to historiography to the theater, Syme discovers “a surprising preference for narrative over experience and for authorized representation over unmediated presence.” Authority, in Syme’s account, was thus produced from mediation and deferral, from “a dialectic of presence and absence.”⁷ Yet poetic and political authority, I argue, was constituted not just dialectically but also polemically. The theories of representation that I discuss below do sometimes imply a “dialectic” or “interplay,” but they more often affirm a clear hierarchy: word over image, representation over represented.⁸ The cultural preference for mediated presence emerges as a strategy of exclusion, a way to empower the representation or representatives at the expense of the represented. If *enargeia*

⁵ Leonard Barkan, *Mute Poetry, Speaking Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 154. See Barkan, “Making Pictures Speak: Renaissance Art, Elizabethan Literature, Modern Scholarship,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 48.2 (1995): 326-51. On the tensions between word and image in Renaissance drama, see also Jonas Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); Michael O’Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theater in Early-Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare’s London*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 102-16; and Richard Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009).

⁶ Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 69.

⁷ Holger Schott Syme, *Theatre and Testimony in Shakespeare’s England: A Culture of Mediation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 221, 14.

⁸ Syme, *Theatre and Testimony*, 14.

made poetry—and parliament—a “speaking picture,” it at the same time reduced the represented to silence.⁹

Rhetoric, Mimesis, and Representation

For the early moderns, Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* provided the foundational account of rhetorical representation. Through “what the Greeks call *phantasiai*,” Quintilian writes, “the images of absent things are presented (*repraesentantur*) to the mind in such a way that we seem actually to see them with our eyes and have them physically present to us.” This *enargeia* or *repraesentatio*, as Quintilian later terms it, is an illusion, a matter of “seeming.” Yet the representation affects us as powerfully as unmediated presence: “Emotions will ensue just as if we were present at the event itself.”¹⁰ Such verbal illusions are essential to the force of oratory. According to Quintilian, a speech cannot achieve “total domination (*plene dominatur*)” if it “goes no further than the ears, and the judge feels that he is merely being told the story of the matters he has to decide, without their being brought out and displayed to his mind’s eye.” As a figure for this invasive power, *enargeia* epitomizes the classical and early modern “conception of language as a quasi-physical force which penetrates into the mind of the listener.”¹¹ Quintilian thus links representation to domination.

Enargeia, then, emerges from a rhetorical tradition deeply committed to the force, and even the violence, of language. Words were weapons, classical and Renaissance rhetoricians asserted; rhetoric was a tool of domination. Cicero, for example, compares speech to “a weapon either employed for use, to threaten and to attack, or simply brandished for show,” and Henry Peacham labels figures of speech “martiall instruments both of defence & inuasion.”¹² But, as Wayne A. Rebhorn points out, even for a staunch republican like Cicero the orator’s violence was “Janus-faced”: “One face offered a free republican rhetor engaged in combat with other rhetors; the other face made him a ruler who controlled an audience.” In Renaissance

⁹ The dictum that poetry was a “speaking picture” and painting “silent poetry”—ascribed by Plutarch to Simonides, reiterated in the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and invoked by Horace’s famous “ut pictura poesis”—was often repeated in the Renaissance. Plutarch, *Moralia*, vol. 4, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), 346f; [Cicero], *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, trans. Harry Caplan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), 4.28.39; Horace, *Ars Poetica*, in *Satires; Epistles; The Art of Poetry*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 361. On this concept and its rhetorical foundations, see Wesley Trimpi, “The Meaning of Horace’s *Ut Pictura Poesis*,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973): 1-34; Heinrich F. Plett, *Enargeia in Classical Antiquity and the Early Modern Age: The Aesthetics of Evidence* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); and Barkan, *Mute Poetry, Speaking Pictures*.

¹⁰ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell, 5 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 6.2.29, 8.3.61, 6.2.32.

¹¹ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 8.3.62; Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 128.

¹² Cicero, *De Oratore*, 2 vols., trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 3.54.206; Henry Peacham, *The garden of eloquence* (London, 1593), sig. AB4r.

monarchies, Rebhorn convincingly argues, the absolutist face came to predominate.¹³ Peacham only puts the case most pointedly when he terms the orator “the emperour of mens minds & affections.” Classical rhetoricians praised *enargeia* in particular for its ability to “dominate” its audience and, to quote Quintilian once more, “penetrate to the emotions.” Longinus went so far as to assert that this technique could “enslave (*douloutai*)” its listeners.¹⁴

The hierarchy of *enargeia* is thus twofold: it subordinates both the listener and direct visual experience itself. As Quintilian argues, this figure persuades by convincing the orator’s audience that they have seen what they have only heard; word replaces image and rhetoric stands for evidence. Rhetoric, in fact, *is* evidence: according to Quintilian, if we want to present “false statements as true” then we must “make them seem as vivid as possible (*videantur quam evidentissima*).”¹⁵ The illusion of sight—this seeming vividness—produces credibility. Indeed, the rhetorical division of “proofs” into the *entekhnoi* (artistic or artificial) and the *atekhnoi* (inartistic or inartificial) puts the illusionistic force of language on equal epistemological footing with documentary evidence. The class of “artificial” proofs, Quintilian writes, “is entirely within the scope of our art, and comprises various means of creating belief (*ad faciendam fidem*).”¹⁶ *Evidentia* (the Latin term for *enargeia*) is evidence; rhetoric manufactures belief.

It is difficult to exaggerate the formative influence of Quintilian’s account of *enargeia* for early modern rhetorical theory. For many writers, Quintilian was “the ultimate authority,” and his analysis of *enargeia* was reproduced and widely disseminated in popular rhetoric textbooks by the likes of Rudolph Agricola and Desiderius Erasmus.¹⁷ Agricola, for instance, echoes Quintilian’s claims that through *enargeia* or *evidentia* “the facts seem not to be told us, but to be happening (*non enim narrari res sed agi videtur*),” and that we are thus affected “just as if we were present at the event itself (*si rebus ipsis intersimus*).”¹⁸ “When an image of all the thoughts and passions involved has been created,” Agricola writes,

so that the speech makes things seem not to be spoken, but done (*ut non dici sed agi uideatur res*), and when the mind of the auditor, by means of a certain stark image, has been transported into the midst of the crush and stir of events (*uelut medium se ipse intra actum iactationemque rerum constituit*), then all the credit must be given to language

¹³ Wayne A. Rebhorn, “Rhetoric and Politics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Rhetorical Studies*, ed. Michael MacDonald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 387-96, esp. 388; Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men’s Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

¹⁴ Peacham, *The garden of eloquence*, sig. AB3v; Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 8.3.62, 68 (trans. modified); Longinus, *On the Sublime*, trans. W. H. Fyfe, rev. Donald Russell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 15.9 (trans. modified).

¹⁵ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 4.2.65. See Lorna Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 126.

¹⁶ Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J. H. Freese (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 1355b-1356a; Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 5.8.1.

¹⁷ Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric, 1380-1620* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 22.

¹⁸ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 9.2.43, 6.2.32.

since everything has been done by its power rather than by the nature of the things themselves (*id quoniam sit orationis uirtute, non rerum natura*).¹⁹

It is not the things themselves (*res*) that produce the illusion of presence, Agricola emphasizes, but instead their representation in speech (*oratio*). And as orator dominates audience, *oratio* replaces *res*.

In the Renaissance, *enargeia* was not only one of the orator's most potent weapons but also the central trope of neoclassical poetics. Sixteenth-century literary theorists repeatedly deployed the idiom of *enargeia* to define the nature and aims of poetry. The classical definition of *enargeia* as "putting something before our eyes (*sub oculos subiectio*)" proved particularly influential.²⁰ Poets, we learn in the literary theory of the Italian humanists, "place things before our eyes in such a way that we seem to see them and to touch them (*ut intueri ac tractare illas uideamur*)."²¹ As Heinrich Plett observes, in the neoclassical tradition "*enargeia* is closely connected with *mimesis*." Tasso, for example, argues that "imitation...tries to represent [human actions] with effective and expressive words and ones apt to place clearly before the physical eyes the things represented (*chiaramente dinanzi à gli occhi corporali le cose rappresentate*)."²² Even as he links *mimesis* to *enargeia*, Tasso boldly discards the qualifying "seeming" (*videri*) of his classical and humanist predecessors. The things represented, he suggests, somehow become physically present in their linguistic representation.

In *De Copia*, Erasmus finds in dramatic representation a similar slippage between virtual and real presence. Through *enargeia*, he notes, "messengers' speeches (*narrationes nunciorum*) in tragedy...take the place of a real scene (*vice spectaculi subiiciuntur*)." *Narratio* replaces *spectaculum*; the "real scene" becomes an effect of language. "Nor does it matter for this convention," Erasmus adds, "whether the narrative is true or false."²³ As Terence Cave remarks, "*enargeia* overrides the distinction between 'true' and 'false' representation. The linguistic surface renders with equal colour and evidence the face of real things and of imaginary things."²⁴ Tragic messenger speeches may serve to preserve artistic decorum, but they also subordinate immediate visual experience. The representation alone is compelling evidence—*evidentia*—of the events that have allegedly transpired offstage.

¹⁹ Rudolph Agricola, *Three Books Concerning Dialectical Invention*, in *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric*, ed. and trans. Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 55-56; Agricola, *De inuentione Dialectica Libri Tres* (Strasbourg, 1521), sigs. Y4r-v.

²⁰ Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, 9.2.40; Cicero, *De Oratore*, 3.53.202. See Baxter Hathaway, *The Age of Criticism: The Late Renaissance in Italy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962).

²¹ Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 1:387; see also 244-45, 411.

²² Plett, *Enargeia in Classical Antiquity*, 101; Weinberg, *History of Literary Criticism*, 1:206.

²³ Desiderius Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum comentarii duo*, trans. Betty I. Knott, in *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 24, ed. Craig Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 578-79; Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum*, ed. Betty I. Knott, in *Opera Omnia*, vol. I-6 (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1988), 204.

²⁴ Terence Cave, "Enargeia: Erasmus and the Rhetoric of Presence in the Sixteenth Century," *L'Esprit Créateur* 16.4 (1976): 8.

Ben Jonson crystallized this hierarchy of representation in his posthumously published translation of Horace's *Ars Poetica* (itself the source for Erasmus's remarks). Jonson's Horace remarks:

to the stage at all thou mayst not tender
Things worthy to be done within, but take
Much from the sight, which fair report will make
Present anon.

non tamen intus
Digna geri promes in scaenam multaque tolles
Ex oculis, quae mox narret facundia praesens.²⁵

In the Latin, the adjective “praesens” (“present”) clearly modifies “facundia” (“fair report”), and so, as modern commentators point out, “the presence of the reporter or report is emphasized; he or it, not the action, is presented.”²⁶ Jonson's translation, however, defies the grammar of the Latin, attributing “presence” not to the “fair report” but to the actions that have been “take[n] / ...from the sight.” That is, he translates the feminine, nominative, singular “praesens” as if it were modifying the neuter, accusative, plural “quae” (“[things] which”). This tendentious rendering suggests that the *enargeia* of theatrical narration effectively supplants direct action, creating a verbal illusion that makes the spectacle as present to the audience as if it had happened onstage. Jonsonian *enargeia*, as Erasmus puts it, thus “take[s] the place of a real scene.”

Decades before Jonson's translation, Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poetry* brought this neoclassical theory to a vernacular audience. Sidney argues that the poet is superior to both the philosopher and the historian because the former can offer only precepts, and the latter only examples. “Now doth the peerless poet perform both,” he asserts, yielding to “the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul so much as that other doth.” The philosopher's “grounds of wisdom,” then, “lie dark before the imaginative and judging power, if they be not illuminated or figured forth by the speaking picture of poesy.”²⁷ “The speaking picture of poesy,” like the vivid illusion of *enargeia*, thrusts an image before what Quintilian calls “the eyes of the mind (*oculi mentis*).”²⁸ Sidney's language of “illumination” and “figuring forth” even evokes the etymology of *enargeia* itself. As George Puttenham points out, the word comes from the Greek “*argos* [‘bright,’ ‘shining’] because it giveth a glorious luster and light.”²⁹ Sidney thus links mimesis to *enargeia*, and underscores the invasive violence of both. “Strike,” “pierce,” “possess”—such is the action of poetry upon its hapless audience.

²⁵ Horace, *Horace His Art of Poetry*, trans. Jonson, 260-63; Horace, *Horatius De Arte Poetica*, 182-84, both in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online*, gen. ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

²⁶ C. O. Brink, *Horace on Poetry: The “Ars Poetica”* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 247.

²⁷ Sidney, *Defence of Poetry*, 85, 86.

²⁸ Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, 8.3.62. Sidney himself uses the phrase “eyes of the mind” in his discussion of the “unspeakable and everlasting beauty” made vividly present in the psalms (*Defence of Poetry*, 77).

²⁹ George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 227.

Sidney does acknowledge that poetry cannot actually conjure visual presence. In his famous definition of “poesy,” he is careful to note that we may only term poetry a “speaking picture” if we are to “speak metaphorically.” “Poesy,” Sidney writes, “is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in the word *mimēsis*—that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth—to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture.”³⁰ Across this chain of descriptors, however, visual presence increasingly resides in language. “Representing” indicates the making present of something that is absent; “counterfeiting” describes poesy as a copy of that absent image; “figuring forth,” as the later phrase “illuminated or figured forth” suggests, defines poesy as direct visual presentation. Finally, the absent image is fully absorbed by language in the metaphor of the “speaking picture.” If poesy begins by “representing” something absent, it ends by replacing that absent thing with what Sidney calls the “feigned”—not just fictive but also fabricated—“image of poetry.”³¹

For Sidney as for Jonson, this poetics of replacement grows most tendentious when applied to the theater. Sidney attacks the elasticity of time and space on the contemporary stage. “Many things may be told which cannot be showed,” he acerbically comments, “if they know the difference betwixt reporting and representing...and so was the manner the ancients took, by some *Nuntius* to recount things done in former time or other place.”³² Messenger speeches—for Erasmus the prime example of neoclassical *enargeia*—turn “representing” into “reporting.” Sidney thus strives, as Barkan puts it, to “disentangle *enargeia* poetics from theatrical realization.”³³ Yet the vocabulary of the *Defence* undermines this distinction between “reporting” and “representing.” “Representing,” after all, is precisely what poetry does in Sidney’s own definition of mimesis. Even as he pits verbal against visual representation, Sidney reveals their theatrical collaboration.

This ambivalence lurks throughout the neoclassical tradition. As early as Aristotle’s *Poetics*, dramatic theory subordinated spectacle to language. Yet, as Dennis Kennedy observes, there is an equally long “popular” tradition that “elevated the visual” above the verbal.³⁴ From Horace to Sidney to Jonson, poetic theorists struggled to cope with the energies of popular stagecraft. Horace, for instance, discusses the *enargeia* of messenger speeches only after noting (in Jonson’s translation) that “things that run / In at the ear do stir the mind more slow / Than those the faithful eyes take in by show.” Even here, however, the preference for spectacle is ambiguous. Horace’s Latin describes those stirring sights as “put before the faithful eyes (*oculis subiecta fidelibus*),” a clear echo of *enargeia*’s “putting before the eyes” (*sub oculos subiectio*).³⁵ Indeed, a later apologist for drama—writing very much in the popular tradition—would identify the union of word and image as the peculiar power of the theater. In his *Apology for Actors* (1612), Thomas Heywood cites the maxim that poetry (in his rendering, “Oratory”) is a “speaking picture” and “painting...a dumbe oratory” in order to argue that each on its own is

³⁰ Sidney, *Defence of Poetry*, 79-80.

³¹ Sidney, 87.

³² Sidney, 114.

³³ Barkan, *Mute Poetry, Speaking Pictures*, 142.

³⁴ Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Stephen Halliwell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 1450b15-21, 1453b1-13; Dennis Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 5.

³⁵ Horace, *Horace His Art of Poetry*, trans. Jonson, 255-57; Horace, *Horatius De Arte Poetica*, 181. See Brink, *Horace on Poetry*, 246.

insufficient. “Neither,” he writes, can “shew action, passion, motion, or any other gesture, to moou the spirits of the beholder to admiration.”³⁶ Those spectacles subordinated by neoclassical poetics always threatened to return—especially in the bodies of the actors (commoners all) who took the stage day after day in early modern London.

But the logic of *enargeia*, as Syme suggests, pervaded even this embodied, spectacular brand of representation.³⁷ In his *Apology*, Heywood attempts to convey the power of embodied spectacle precisely through *enargeia*. He ecstatically catalogues the heroic feats made present on the Renaissance stage:

to see a *Hector* all besmered in blood, trampling vpon the bulkes of Kinges...To see a *Pompey* ride in triumph, then a *Caesar* conquer that *Pompey*: labouring *Hanniball* alieue, hewing his passage through the Alpes. To see as I haue seene, *Hercules* in his owne shape hunting the Boare, knocking downe the Bull, taming the Hart, fighting with Hydra, murdering *Gerion*, slaughtering *Diomed*, wounding the *Stimphalides*, killing the Centaurs, pashing the Lion, squeezing the Dragon, dragging *Cerberus* in Chaynes, and lastly, on his high Pyramides writing *Nil vltra*, Oh these were sights to make an *Alexander*.³⁸

“Trampling,” “hewing,” “hunting,” “knocking downe,” “taming,” “fighting,” “murdering,” “pashing,” “squeezing”: these vivid participles conjure the violent exploits of Heywood’s classical warriors. Heywood’s language works to make Hector, Hannibal, and Hercules as present to his readers as they were to him on the early modern stage. And that theatrical presence relies on the same confusion between representation and represented as is the essence of *enargeia*. In the theater, Heywood argues, we are as powerfully affected “as if the Personater were the man Personated.”³⁹ The bare “as if”—the *tanquam* or *videri* of neoclassical rhetoric and poetics⁴⁰—is all that stands between representation and replacement.

From Poetry to Parliament

Renaissance poetics, I have argued, put tremendous pressure on that “as if.” So too did political theory. In 1559, John Aylmer found in parliament the “image”—or even the embodiment—of England’s “mixed constitution.” England’s government, he claims, is not purely monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, but instead “a rule mixte of all these...Thimage wherof, and not the image, but the thinge in dede, is to be sene in the parliament hous, wherin you shal find these .3. estats. The King or Quene, which representeth the Monarchie. The noble men, which be the Aristocratie. And Burgesses and Knights the Democratie.”⁴¹ Aylmer’s correction—“not the image, but the thinge in dede”—is telling. Parliament does not just represent but actually *is* England’s three estates. As Aylmer enumerates these estates, “representing” slides into “being.” The king or queen only “*representeth* the Monarchie,” but then the nobility “*be* the Aristocratie.” When Aylmer arrives at the third estate, the “Burgesses and Knights” simply stand in apposition to “the Democratie,” leaving the reader to supply either verb, “representeth” or “be,” indifferently.

³⁶ Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors* (London, 1612), sig. B3v.

³⁷ Syme, *Theatre and Testimony*, 130-31.

³⁸ Heywood, *Apology for Actors*, sig. B4r.

³⁹ Heywood, sig. B4r; italics mine.

⁴⁰ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 6.2.32, 8.3.62; Erasmus, *De duplici copia*, trans. Knott, 577; *De duplici copia*, ed. Knott, 202; Weinberg, *History of Literary Criticism*, 1:245, 387.

⁴¹ John Aylmer, *An harborowe for faithfull and trewe subiectes* ([London], 1559), sigs. H2v-H3r.

Members of the early modern House of Commons, Oliver Arnold has shown, insistently repeated this conflation of representative and actual presence. In 1572, one MP labeled himself and his fellows “the whole bodie of the realme assembled in the high court of Parliament”; in 1593, another (Francis Bacon) claimed that because “all men are here present representatively,” anyone may be considered legally present in fact (“*coram*”).⁴² “By transforming the Commons from a body that represents the whole realm into the body of the whole realm itself,” Arnold argues, “representational ideology excludes the people from the political institution that they supposedly empower. The members of the Commons no longer stand for but take the place of the people of the realm.”⁴³ Thomas Smith describes this alienation of power when he writes that parliament “representeth and hath the power of the whole realme both the head and the bodie. For everie Englishman is entended to bee there present.”⁴⁴ This fiction of popular presence justifies the transfer of power from the body of the realm to its parliamentary representation.

In parliament as in the theater, representation thus threatens to subsume the represented. The logic, and even the vocabulary, of *enargeia* spread from rhetoric and poetics to parliamentary politics. The word “represent” itself, when Aylmer and Smith used it in the mid-late sixteenth century, was not yet a political term of art. Indeed, they were among the first to apply it to parliament at all. In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, “represent” instead described the literal or symbolic “making present” of the sort that occurs in painting, in the theater, or in poetry.⁴⁵ This mimetic meaning still pertained to political representation well into the eighteenth century. John Adams, for example, asserted in 1776 that “the representative assembly should be an exact portrait, in miniature, of the people at large,” and in 1788 the anti-Federalist Melancton Smith remarked that “the idea that naturally suggests itself to our minds, when we speak of representatives is, that they resemble those they represent; they should be a true picture of the people.”⁴⁶ Parliament, in the earlier accounts, similarly conjures an image of the realm. Aylmer, as we have seen, labels parliament the “image” of England’s mixed state—or rather, “the thinge in dede.” And in 1628, Sir Thomas Coventry called parliament “the lively representation of the wisdom, wealth and power of this whole kingdom.”⁴⁷

⁴² *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. Hartley, 1:316, 3:122, quoted in Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 73, 4-5.

⁴³ Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 74.

⁴⁴ Sir Thomas Smith, *De Republica Anglorum*, ed. Mary Dewar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 79.

⁴⁵ Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 243-48; Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 266-67.

⁴⁶ John Adams to John Penn, Jan. 1776, in *The Works of John Adams*, 10 vols., ed. Charles F. Adams (Boston: Little, Brown, 1850-56), 4:205, quoted in Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, 60; Melancton Smith, “Speeches of Melancton Smith before the New York Ratifying Convention,” in *Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers*, ed. Wootton, 42-58, esp. 50. See Eric Slauter, *The State as a Work of Art: The Cultural Origins of the Constitution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 128-37.

⁴⁷ *Commons Debates 1628*, ed. Robert C. Johnson et al., 4 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977-78), 2:7, quoted in David Harris Sacks, “Parliament, Liberty, and the Commonwealth,” in *Parliament and Liberty from the Reign of Elizabeth to the English Civil War*, ed. J. H. Hexter (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 85-121, esp. 87.

“Lively representation” was itself the definition of *enargeia*, and the essence of early modern poetics. The rhetorician Abraham Fraunce speaks of making an absent person “present” through speech “fully and liuely represented,” and in his treatise on painting Franciscus Junius, translating Quintilian, describes the effect of *enargeia* as “a lively representation.”⁴⁸ Poets, as discussed above, defined their art in similar terms. William Scott, for instance, says that poets (and painters) are in the business of “lively representing...images of the works of nature or reason,” and one mid-seventeenth-century poet similarly concludes that “Poesie only is an Art of lively representation.”⁴⁹

When MPs and political theorists spoke of “representing” or “representation” in parliament, they were thus importing a principle of simulated presence robustly theorized by neoclassical rhetoric and poetics. It should come as no surprise how readily politicians appropriated this discourse. After all, poets and politicians received the same grammar school education in rhetoric, and recent studies of parliamentary oratory have shown that this education did not go to waste.⁵⁰ Poets, moreover, were politicians, and politicians were poets. From Philip Sidney to John Donne to Andrew Marvell, some of the most influential literary figures of the age served in the House of Commons. Parliament, to borrow Jacob Burckhardt’s famous phrase, was imagined “as a work of art.”⁵¹

More specifically, parliament became a kind of “speaking picture.” It was a “lively representation,” an “image,” and—in the 1640s—a “picture” of the realm.⁵² Motivating this political representation was the same “enargistic” logic that governed Sidney’s “feigned image of poetry” or Heywood’s “pictures drawne to the life” in the theater.⁵³ Hakewill invoked precisely this power of dramatic mimesis when he claimed that MPs could become the people for whom they spoke. “We must laye downe the respectes of our owne persons,” he admonished, “and put on others’ and their affections ffor whome wee speake, / ffor they speake by us.” The term “person,” as Hobbes would later point out, comes from the Latin *persona*—the mask worn by

⁴⁸ Abraham Fraunce, *The Arcadian Rhetorike* (London, 1588), sigs. G2r-v; Franciscus Junius, *The painting of the ancients* (London, 1638), sig. Qq2v. See Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 6.2.32.

⁴⁹ Scott, *Model of Poesy*, 6; Leonard Willan, *Orgula: or, The fatall error* (London, 1658), sig. A2v.

⁵⁰ Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 215-52; David Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Markku Peltonen, *Rhetoric, Politics and Popularity in Pre-Revolutionary England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁵¹ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S. G. C. Middlemore (London: Penguin, 1990), 19-97. The idea of “the state as a work of art” underpins many important studies of literature and politics in early modern England: see, for instance, Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); and Henry S. Turner, *The Corporate Commonwealth: Pluralism and Political Fictions in England, 1516-1651* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

⁵² Richard Overton, *An appeale From the degenerate Representative Body the Commons of England assembled at Westminster* (London, 1647), sig. B2v.

⁵³ Heywood, *Apology for Actors*, sig. B3v.

actors on the stage.⁵⁴ And just as in Heywood's account, the line between "Personater" and "Personated" was tenuous indeed. "They speake by us": so the "speaking picture" of parliament appropriated, and thereby silenced, the voices of the common people.

Representation and Absolutism

During the turmoil of the 1640s, there was some effort on both sides to rethink this hierarchy of representation. The royalist John Spelman, for instance, sharply questioned Henry Parker's claim that parliament was "vertually the whole kingdome it selfe."⁵⁵ "At least nine parts of the Kingdome," Spelman observes, "neither doe nor may Vote in their election"—including the clergy, tenant farmers, propertied women, and even "all that have not 40. s. per annum freehold Land." Spelman then pointedly reveals the hierarchy implicit in Parker's assertion: "why should the might and vigour of these being farre the major part, be over mastred, and concluded by the Votes of those that are deputed by a miner number of the people?...how doe they then represent all?"⁵⁶ On the other side, Levellers disillusioned with parliamentary rule asserted that the House of Commons represented the people through "but a Power of trust, (which is ever revokable, and cannot be otherwise)," and thus "to represent...doth not import (as some would have it) to be an absolute *Iudge* or *Vmpire* in all things."⁵⁷ Both royalist and radical refused to reduce the English people to their representation in parliament.

Yet as the defiant parenthetical "as some would have it" suggests, many writers did attribute absolute power to the people's representative(s). Even the Levellers, as Rachel Foxley remarks, "were...problematically attached to the idea of the House of Commons *being* the people."⁵⁸ Aylmer's equation of "image" and "thing," of "representing" and "being," was thus codified in the polemic of the 1640s. Writers as ideologically disparate as Henry Parker and Thomas Hobbes, I will argue, deployed the logic of *enargeia* to subordinate the people to their representative—whether that representative was an assembly or a monarch.

This literary-rhetorical genealogy of representation is perhaps most clear in the work of Hobbes.⁵⁹ In the *Elements of Law*, Hobbes reiterates the classical and neoclassical principle that vivid illusion, not objective truth, most effectively elicits belief and emotion. Erasmus, as discussed above, even wrote of dramatic *enargeia*: "nor does it matter for this convention whether the narrative is true or false." As Hobbes puts it, for the purposes of persuasion "it is no matter whether the opinion be true or false, or the narration historical or fabulous. For not truth,

⁵⁴ *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. Hartley, 3:433; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985), 217.

⁵⁵ Parker, *Observations*, sig. D2v.

⁵⁶ John Spelman, *A view of a printed book intituled Observations upon his Majesties late Answers and Expresses* (Oxford, 1643), sig. D2r. See Quentin Skinner, "Rethinking Political Liberty," *History Workshop Journal* 61 (2006): 160.

⁵⁷ *A remonstrance of Many Thousand Citizens, and other Free-born people of England* ([London], 1646), sig. A2r; William Ball, *Tractatus De Jure Regnandi, & Regni* ([London], 1645), sig. C2r.

⁵⁸ Rachel Foxley, *The Levellers: Radical Political Thought in the English Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 70.

⁵⁹ See Mónica Brito Vieira, *The Elements of Representation in Hobbes: Aesthetics, Theatre, Law, and Theology in the Construction of Hobbes's Theory of the State* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

but image, maketh passion; and a tragedy affecteth no less than a murder if well acted.”⁶⁰ *Enargeia* forges a decisive—if, for Hobbes, troubling—link between rhetoric and poetry, history and fable, fact and fiction. “The lesson,” Mónica Brito Vieira writes, “is clear: whenever the striking realism of representations makes them dissolve into what they represent, the frontier separating truth from fiction is blurred, and the one easily taken for the other.”⁶¹ From Quintilian to Erasmus to Hobbes, the power of the verbal “image” made representation a form of replacement.

In a late chapter of *Leviathan*, Hobbes elaborates his theory of the “image” through what amounts to a typology of representation. He writes: “An IMAGE (in the most strict signification of the word) is the Resemblance of some thing visible.” This includes “Seemings of visible Bodies to the Sight,” from reflections in a pond to apparitions “in our Imagination, and in our Dreams,” as well as those poetic fictions that resemble only “some Phantasticall Inhabitants of the Brain of the Maker.” Images, however, are not only mimetic. “In a larger use of the word Image,” Hobbes continues, “is contained also, any Representation of one thing by another. So an earthly Sovereign may be called the Image of God: And an inferiour Magistrate the Image of an earthly Sovereign.”⁶² As the examples suggest, this is the kind of image that for Hobbes authorizes sovereign power. Hobbesian representation seems, in Hanna Pitkin’s terms, more “symbolic” than “descriptive”—founded in mediated presence rather than visual similitude.⁶³

But these two modes of representation—“resemblance” and “representation” proper—are by no means mutually exclusive. “And thus an Image in the largest sense,” Hobbes concludes, “is either the Resemblance, or the Representation of some thing Visible; or both together, as it happeneth for the most part.”⁶⁴ This union of “resemblance” and “representation” is precisely embodied by the famous frontispiece of *Leviathan*. A crowd of docile, miniature subjects forms the body of the looming sovereign. This (male) sovereign literally resembles the masses whom he represents, and he also, as Hobbes makes clear, “beareth their Person” and acts in their name.⁶⁵ It is through “personating,” then, that resemblance slides into representation. In a chapter on “PERSONS, AUTHORS, and things Personated,” Hobbes recalls the dramatic and rhetorical roots of this concept. “*Persona* in latine,” he observes, “signifies the *disguise*, or *outward appearance* of a man, counterfeited on the Stage...and to *Personate*, is to *Act*, or *Represent* himselfe, or an other; and he that acteth another, is said to beare his Person, or act in his name.”⁶⁶ To bear the person of the English people is not just to act in their name but also, as the frontispiece suggests, to assume—if only metaphorically—their “outward appearance.”

For Hobbes, the blurring of resemblance and representation has decidedly absolutist consequences. The sovereign, like Hakewill and his fellow MPs, speaks not just for but *as* the people.⁶⁷ As Victoria Kahn argues, Hobbes turns “the vulnerability of the mimetic concept (that

⁶⁰ Thomas Hobbes, *The Elements of Law Natural and Politic*, ed. Ferdinand Tönnies, 2nd ed. (London: Frank Cass, 1969), 1.13.7.

⁶¹ Vieira, *The Elements of Representation in Hobbes*, 134.

⁶² Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 668, 669.

⁶³ Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, 60-111.

⁶⁴ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 669-70.

⁶⁵ Hobbes, 71, 227.

⁶⁶ Hobbes, 217.

⁶⁷ See Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 88-89.

the sign can never fully represent the signified)...into a positive strength.”⁶⁸ Where mimesis ends, absolutism begins. “Nothing the Sovereign Representative can do to a Subject, on what pretence soever, can properly be called Injustice, or Injury,” Hobbes contends, “because every Subject is Author of every act the Sovereign doth.” It is precisely this fiction of authorship that gives the “Sovereign Representative” absolute power over every subject. Hobbes asserts that “every one...shall *Authorise* all the Actions and Judgements” of the sovereign “in the same manner, as if they were his own.”⁶⁹ Hobbes’s “as if,” like the “as if” of Renaissance poetics, identifies the illusion of (authorial) presence as the constitutive fiction of representation.

In Vieira’s apt description, this is “representation as poiesis” rather than “representation as mimesis.” Mimesis, she claims, locates authority in the represented, “which is granted not only priority, but also superiority over its representation.” By contrast, Hobbes “saw that creativity marked out representation as a dynamic force...Rather than being tied to the authority of what is represented, pictorial representation and symbols have their own sovereignty.”⁷⁰ For Vieira, this understanding marks a sharp break in the history of representation: it is a “distinctively modern,” “new representative relation” that overthrew the “priority traditionally assumed by mimetic theories of representation.”⁷¹ But Hobbes was not the first to blur “resemblance” and “representation,” mimesis and poiesis. In the *Defence of Poetry*, Sidney not only defines poetry as *mimēsis* but also derives the name of the poet from the Greek *poiein*, “to make.” He acknowledges that “there is no art delivered to mankind that hath not the works of nature for his principal object,” but praises poetry precisely for its ability to create rather than copy nature. “Only the poet,” Sidney writes, “disdaining to be tied to any such subjection...doth grow in effect another nature.”⁷² This creative power, I have argued, reflects a long rhetorical and poetic tradition that located authority in the representation, not in the represented. Hobbes’s hierarchy of representation is thus not so much a “new representative relation” as the culmination of an earlier relation—and one that had already begun to migrate from poetics to politics.

But if Hobbes’s absolutist theory of representation has its roots in the previous century, it is in the previous decade that his most immediate interlocutors are to be found. Quentin Skinner has shown that Hobbes adopted the “political vocabulary” of his parliamentary opponents in order to rebut their own theories of representation.⁷³ For the parliamentarians as for Hobbes, this vocabulary engages both “resemblance” and “representation.” Henry Parker, for example, asserts in his pamphlet *Jus Populi* that “the Parliament is indeed nothing else, but the very people it self artificially congregated, or reduced by an orderly election, and representation, into such a Senate, or proportionable body.”⁷⁴ Representation produces resemblance: through the art of election, “the very people it self” is reduced to a smaller, yet still proportional, body. As Parker admits,

⁶⁸ Victoria Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism in the Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 169.

⁶⁹ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 228-29, 264-65. See Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism*, 170.

⁷⁰ Vieira, *The Elements of Representation*, 235; Vieira, “Performative Imaginaries: Pitkin versus Hobbes on Political Representation,” in *Reclaiming Representation: Contemporary Advances in the Theory of Political Representation*, ed. Vieira (New York: Routledge, 2017), 25-49, esp. 44.

⁷¹ Vieira, *The Elements of Representation*, 237, 239.

⁷² Sidney, *Defence of Poetry*, 77-78.

⁷³ Quentin Skinner, “Hobbes on Representation,” *European Journal of Philosophy* 13.2 (2005): 155-84, esp. 168.

⁷⁴ [Henry Parker], *Jus Populi* (London, 1644), sig. D1v.

however, “the Parliament differs many wayes from the rude bulke of the universality.” So that “the vastnesse of its owne bulke may not breed confusion,” he writes in another tract, “by vertue of election and representation, a few shall act for many, the wise shall consent for the simple.”⁷⁵ There may be a “proportionable” resemblance between parliament and people, but representation also produces difference: the few replace the many, the wise speak for the simple.

But also “by vertue of election and representation,” the few are not only the few. Parker acknowledges that “there is an Arbitrary power in every state,” and so “if the State intrusts this to one man, or few, there may be danger in it; but the Parliament is neither one nor few, it is indeed the State it self.”⁷⁶ The few do not just act for the many; they also become the many. For Parker as for Hobbes, this “artificial” unity of representation and represented, of “image” and “thing” (to use Aylmer’s terms), underpins absolutism.⁷⁷ Because parliament is “the State it self,” Parker claims, its arbitrary power can pose no danger—just as “every man has an absolute power over himself; but because no man can hate himself, this power is not dangerous.”⁷⁸ Parker’s parliament is what Hobbes would call the “Sovereign Representative,” which can do no injustice or injury to any subject “because every Subject is Author of every act the Sovereign doth.” Parliament becomes Leviathan.

Spelman was not the only one to argue that this “parliamentary absolutism” belied Parker’s own claims for parliament’s “proportionable” resemblance to the people.⁷⁹ The Leveller Richard Overton insisted in 1647 that representation was impossible without mimetic resemblance—something that was sorely lacking in the current parliament. “Certainly tyrants and oppressors cannot be the Representers of the Free-men of *England*,” he remarks,

for such as is the represented such and no other must the figure or representation be, such as is the proportion, countenance and favour of the man, such and so must be the picture of the man, or else it cannot be the picture of that man, but of some other, or something else, as the picture of a grim, meager, frowning face is, not the picture of an amiable, friendly smiling countenance; so tyranny neither is nor can possibly be the Representor of Freedome.⁸⁰

While for Parker representation leads to resemblance, for Overton it is the other way around: resemblance is the precondition of representation. An image, or a political assembly, cannot be considered a representation unless its “figure” matches that of the represented. Through this pictorial metaphor, Overton refuses to collapse representation and presence. Parliamentary representation, he argues, is (at least for the moment) actually *mis*representation. Overton thus

⁷⁵ Parker, *Jus Populi*, sig. D1v; Parker, *Observations*, sig. B4r.

⁷⁶ Parker, *Observations*, sig. E1v.

⁷⁷ On representation and absolutism in Parker and Hobbes, see Victoria Kahn, *Wayward Contracts: The Crisis of Political Obligation in England, 1640-1674* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 96-97; Vieira, *The Elements of Representation*, 150; Skinner, “Hobbes on Representation”; and Lorenzo Sabbadini, “Popular Sovereignty and Representation in the English Civil War,” in *Popular Sovereignty in Historical Perspective*, ed. Richard Bourke and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 164-86.

⁷⁸ Parker, *Observations*, sig. E1v.

⁷⁹ On Parker’s “parliamentary absolutism,” see Michael Mendle, *Henry Parker and the English Civil War: The Political Thought of the Public’s “Privado”* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁸⁰ Overton, *An appeale*, sig. B2v. See Sabbadini, “Popular Sovereignty,” 180-81.

holds the representatives and represented up for comparison and finds little resemblance. “Proportional answerableness and sympathy,” to quote Scott’s *Model of Poesy*, there was not.

Representation, however, had long exceeded the bounds of resemblance. It was not “proportional answerableness and sympathy” but instead *enargeia*, the compelling fiction of presence, that authorized poetic and political representation in the early modern period. For a couple of pre-civil-war MPs, as for Spelman and Overton seventy years later, the math didn’t quite check out. “Your number of Parliament men,” the sometime MP Arthur Hall remarked in 1576, “are fewe to the huge multitude of them whose consents are bounde by your agreemente.” For Hall, this numerical discrepancy effectively subjugates the “huge multitude” to their “fewe” representatives. In a breathless catalogue, Hall describes representation as a form of domination:

They commit vnto your considerations their libertyes, not only of person but of liuing, their goods, their lands, their liues, their attainders of bloud, al that they haue, shal haue, or can haue, their wiues & children alre dy borne, their posterity to come, whose inheritaunce to accrew by discente & honor from auncient predecessors too bee inuested with, they yeelde into your hands, and not only to binde them hereafter to stand to your doome and decree from time to come, to allowe of your possitiue direction not alreadye passed, but also submit themselues and all before recited, vnto what you shall dispose of it.⁸¹

“Commit,” “yeelde,” “binde,” “doome,” “decree,” “submit”: this is the language of absolutism. The common people are not only absent from the House of Commons, but also wholly subordinate to their representatives. Hall thus demystifies the parliamentary rhetoric of *enargeia* and representative presence, starkly revealing the hierarchy at the core of early modern representation.

Representation: Paradox, Ideology, Crisis

This power structure continued to vex political thinkers well into the eighteenth century. The challenge of republicanism—for the Levellers, for the anti-Federalists—was to ensure that political representation did not elide the represented.⁸² In the wake of postmodernism and deconstruction—and in the wake of the grassroots protest movements of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries—we are acutely aware of the exclusionary violence inflicted by the normative hierarchies of representation. For Louis Marin, “representation and power share the same nature”—even, or perhaps especially, in the case of language, that most pervasive representational system. “To speak,” Barthes writes, “is not, as is too often repeated, to communicate; it is to subjugate.”⁸³

Deconstruction worked to turn this “violent hierarchy” into the constitutive paradox of representation. “The sign,” Derrida writes, “represents the present in its absence”; it “defers

⁸¹ Arthur Hall, *A letter sent by F.A. touchyng the proceedings in a priuate quarrell and vnkindnesse* (London, 1576), sigs. E2r, E2v. See Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 72, 110-11.

⁸² On the Federalist and anti-Federalist debates about representation, see Bernard Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 108-31.

⁸³ Louis Marin, *Portrait of the King*, trans. Martha M. Houle (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 6; Roland Barthes, “Lecture in Inauguration of the Chair of Literary Semiology, Collège de France, January 7, 1977,” trans. Richard Howard, *October* 8 (1979): 5.

presence” yet “is conceivable only on the *basis* of the presence that it defers.”⁸⁴ For Paul Ricoeur, representation has a “bipolar structure”: it is at once a re-presentation and a substitution, a “making present” and a “standing for.”⁸⁵ Yet how can the thing represented be made present when it is in fact absent? Across the domains of aesthetics, historiography, and political theory, postmodern thinkers have grappled with this question. “*Mimesis* necessarily entails the absence of that which it purports to represent,” comments the literary critic Terence Cave; “representation literally means...to make something *present* that presently is *absent*,” writes the philosopher of history Frank Ankersmit; “representation,” the political theorist Hanna Pitkin observes, “means the making present in some sense of something which is nevertheless not present literally or in fact.”⁸⁶

If postmodern theory—and even democracy itself—hinges on the generative potential of this paradox, early modern poetics and politics often sought to elide it altogether. Through *enargeia*, “standing for” becomes “making present”; the representation takes the place of the represented. *Enargeia* thus encapsulates not so much the paradox of representation as (to turn to a different theoretical context) the workings of Marxist “ideology”: “in all ideology men and their relations appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*.” Paul Ricoeur describes this as “the paradigm or model of distortion as reversal.” “Ideology’s first function,” he adds, “is its production of an inverted image.”⁸⁷ Refracted through the lens of *enargeia*, the represented seem to appear in the form of their representatives. The “speaking picture” of poetry or parliament figures the distorted image of ideology.

But while *enargeia* may have been the master trope of Renaissance representation, its dominance did not go uncontested. An emergent “culture of fact,” characterized by an emphasis on empiricism and impartiality and a suspicion of linguistic surfaces, rejected rhetorical illusionism in favor of documentary evidence.⁸⁸ In Shakespeare’s theater, the newly discordant epistemologies of evidence and *evidentia* underwent perhaps their most searching interrogation. Othello’s demand for “ocular proof” of Desdemona’s infidelity is tragically satisfied by Iago’s

⁸⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 41; Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 9.

⁸⁵ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 230. See Williams, *Keywords*, 266-67.

⁸⁶ Cave, “Erasmus and the Rhetoric of Presence,” 5; Frank Ankersmit, *Meaning, Truth, and Reference in Historical Representation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 159; Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, 8-9. For other useful overviews of the paradox of representation, see Christopher Prendergast, *The Triangle of Representation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 1-16; and Peter G. Platt, *Shakespeare and the Culture of Paradox* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 140-44.

⁸⁷ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, in *Collected Works*, vol. 5, trans. Clemens Dutt et al. (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 36; Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed. George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 4. See Victoria Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric: From the Counter-Reformation to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 238-39.

⁸⁸ Barbara J. Shapiro, *A Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).

vivid descriptions. “Now do I see ’tis true,” Othello proclaims, when he has in fact seen nothing at all.⁸⁹

Even for the early moderns, then, there was “no representation without taxation,” to quote W. J. T. Mitchell. Mitchell writes: “Every representation exacts some cost, in the form of lost immediacy, presence, or truth, in the form of a gap between intention and realization, original and copy.”⁹⁰ In Syme’s account of the early modern “culture of mediation,” however, “immediacy,” “presence,” and “truth” are precisely the effects of representation. “The best kind of presence was a function of absence,” he claims. Syme thus rejects the critical commonplace that the early modern period “witness[ed] a crisis of representation,” instead contending that England’s literary, legal, and political cultures all “relied thoroughly on deferral, mediation, or representation as engines of authority.”⁹¹ But this is to take early modern gestures of authorization at their word—something that, at the very least, a few dissenting voices from Arthur Hall to John Spelman refused to do. And in the pages that follow, I will endeavor to add a few more well-known names to that list, beginning with Sidney himself.

⁸⁹ Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. A. J. Honigmann (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1997), 3.3.363, 447. See Joel B. Altman, *The Improbability of Othello: Rhetorical Anthropology and Shakespearean Selfhood* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 183-205.

⁹⁰ W. J. T. Mitchell, “Representation,” in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 11-22, esp. 21. See Robert Weimann, *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse*, ed. David Hillman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 196.

⁹¹ Syme, *Theatre and Testimony*, 63, 2.

2. “Variety” and Republican Violence in Sidney’s *Arcadia*

For William Scott, two works above all exemplify “variety,” the second of the four poetic “virtues.” Those works are Heliodorus’s Greek romance *Aethiopica* and Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia*. “Variety,” Scott writes,

is as well in the conveyance—in wrapping and inverting of the order of the same things...and this is the poet’s special privilege—as also in the additaments of new accidents and devices. In the first, of *order*, the poet must have especial regard that the breaking off and change of narration for the time and matter befit, and hinder not the easy passage and the distinct receipt of the whole discourse...In this kind of orderly order Scaliger worthily commends Heliodorus for a well-contrived invention as a pattern. For my part I think it plain Sir Philip Sidney in the general gate of conveyance did imitate him, and I think it as plain that he exceeds both him and all other for a delightful easy intricateness and entangling his particular narrations one with another, that makes them as it were several acts, every one having a kind of completeness in itself, the final issue so much more welcome by how much it is by the difficulties and interruptions hid and held aloof from the longing mind.¹

As Scott points out, “variety” is a virtue of both plot events (“accidents and devices”) and their narrative order (“conveyance”)—or, to use the terminology of modern narrative theory, of both “story” and “discourse.”² Scott then reproduces the judgment of his primary source, Julius Caesar Scaliger’s *Poetices Libri Septem*, and cites Heliodorus’s *Aethiopica* as a prime example of variety in the “wrapping and inverting” of the story. But Scott also inserts his own opinion: Sidney, he affirms, did not merely imitate Heliodorus’s method of “conveyance” but thoroughly surpassed his model. According to Scott, the *Arcadia*’s “entangl[ed]...narrations,” its incessant digressions and “interruptions,” render it the new paragon of narrative “variety.”

This chapter recovers the politics of “variety” in Sidney’s *Arcadia*. In particular, I want to account for the persistent feeling among scholars that politics often seem like an interruption in the romance. Critics have long argued that the *Arcadia* was written for “moral and political” ends and that it is even, as Edwin Greenlaw claims, an “Elizabethan allegory.”³ Sidney himself ran in militant Protestant circles sympathetic to the doctrine of tyrannicide, and scholarship has amply documented the *Arcadia*’s deep engagement with monarchomach (“king-killing”) theory.⁴ Yet

¹ William Scott, *The Model of Poesy*, ed. Gavin Alexander (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 36-37. On Scott, see “William Scott’s *The Model of Poesy*,” special issue, *Sidney Journal* 33.1 (2015).

² On “story” and “discourse” in narrative theory, see Kent Puckett, *Narrative Theory: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 4-12.

³ William Dinsmore Briggs, “Political Ideas in Sidney’s *Arcadia*,” *Studies in Philology* 28.2 (1931): 138; Edwin A. Greenlaw, “Sidney’s *Arcadia* as an Example of Elizabethan Allegory,” in *Anniversary Papers by Colleagues and Pupils of George Lyman Kittredge* (Boston: Ginn, 1913), 327-37. The first critic to make this claim, as I discuss below, was Sidney’s own friend Fulke Greville: see *A Dedication to Sir Philip Sidney*, in *The Prose Works of Fulke Greville*, Lord Brooke, ed. John Gouws (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 10.

⁴ See Briggs, “Political Ideas in Sidney’s *Arcadia*”; James E. Phillips, “George Buchanan and the Sidney Circle,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 12.1 (1948): 23-55; Irving Ribner, “Sir Philip Sidney on Civil Insurrection,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13.2 (1952): 257-65; Martin

some of the most perceptive commentators on the politics of Sidney's *Arcadia* acknowledge that political events and ideas can appear tangential to the trajectory of the plot. The two versions of the *Arcadia* "depict a world of pastoral retirement and romantic dalliance," Richard C. McCoy writes, "yet politics still intrude, even in *Arcadia*." "Politics, it is true, can sharply interrupt the love story," Blair Worden concedes.⁵

This impression, I argue, is not accidental. Recent critics have located interruption at the core of Sidney's art: Gavin Alexander argues that the *Arcadia* "is based on a structure of interruptions," and Jenny C. Mann contends that the plot is "constructed out of a series of interruptions."⁶ As Alexander and Mann note only in passing, Sidney derives this narrative technique from romance—and in particular, as Scott and other early modern writers pointed out, from the "variety" of Heliodorus's *Aethiopica*.⁷ Labeled an "ornate, spectacular, rhetorical, sentimental, fortuitous medley" by an early twentieth-century critic, Greek romance typically relates the episodic adventures of a pair of lovers who face calamity after calamity but ultimately, through some sort of *deus ex machina*, are reunited and safely embedded in a larger community.⁸ Along the way, sudden catastrophes inevitably interrupt the protagonists' journeys, and nested narratives interrupt the linear progress of the story.

Bergbusch, "Rebellion in the *New Arcadia*," *Philological Quarterly* 53.1 (1974): 29-41; Martin N. Raitiere, *Faire Bitts: Sir Philip Sidney and Renaissance Political Theory* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1984); Blair Worden, *The Sound of Virtue: Philip Sidney's "Arcadia" and Elizabethan Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 82-96; Tracey Sedinger, "Sidney's *New Arcadia* and the Decay of Protestant Republicanism," *SEL* 47.1 (2007): 57-77; and Victor Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance: Philhellene Protestantism, Renaissance Translation and English Literary Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 168-224.

⁵ Richard C. McCoy, *Sir Philip Sidney: Rebellion in Arcadia* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1979), ix; Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*, 5.

⁶ Gavin Alexander, *Writing after Sidney: The Literary Response to Sir Philip Sidney, 1586-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 48; Jenny C. Mann, *Outlaw Rhetoric: Figuring Vernacular Eloquence in Shakespeare's England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 91.

⁷ Alexander, *Writing after Sidney*, 48; Mann, *Outlaw Rhetoric*, 103. On Sidney's debt to Heliodorus, see John Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, ed. Hoyt H. Hudson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935), 41; Samuel Lee Wolff, *The Greek Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1912), 262-366; A. C. Hamilton, "Sidney's *Arcadia* as Prose Fiction: Its Relation to Its Sources," *English Literary Renaissance* 2.1 (1972): 29-60; Victor Skretkowicz, "Sidney and Amyot: Heliodorus in the Structure and Ethos of the *New Arcadia*," *Review of English Studies* n.s. 27.106 (1976): 170-74; Steve Mentz, *Romance for Sale in Early Modern England: The Rise of Prose Fiction* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006), 73-103; Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance*; Elizabeth B. Bearden, *The Emblematics of the Self: Ekphrasis and Identity in Renaissance Imitations of Greek Romance* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 66-99; and Christine S. Lee, "Sidney's Two Roads to *Arcadia*: Romance and the Narrative of Experience," *Sidney Journal* 31.2 (2013): 77-105.

⁸ Wolff, *The Greek Romances*, 235. See B. P. Reardon, *The Form of Greek Romance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

For Sidney, this chapter contends, Heliodoran “variety” is at once a narrative and a political principle. Again and again, episodic digressions disrupt the closed ecosystem of pastoral retreat and aristocratic romance with accounts of tyranny, rebellion, and other hot-button political issues that were very much on the minds of the “forward Protestant” faction of Elizabeth’s court.⁹ And in these political interruptions the common people often play a substantial role, either as victims of tyranny or even as deliberative agents. The motor of this popular enfranchisement, however, is invariably violence. It is above all the bloody exploits of the princes Pyrocles and Musidorus that, at least in the *New Arcadia*, reform commonwealths across the Mediterranean and Asia Minor. The *Arcadia* thus vividly illustrates the republican dilemma: submit to tyranny or rise up in violence? Given Sidney’s deep ties to international Protestant resistance—from his efforts to organize a league of Protestant states in the late 1570s to his death fighting Spanish “tyranny” in 1586¹⁰—the choice may have been an easy one. Yet as the body count rises and (in the *New Arcadia*) civil war breaks out, revolution seems little better than submission. The *Arcadia*’s narrative “variety” pointedly questions both options, leaving the reader with only the prospect of continued popular intrusions into what Sidney calls “the life...of government” (*Old Arcadia*, 351).¹¹

Sidney was not alone in his effort to link Heliodoran narrative to Protestant political theory. From the first printed edition of the *Aethiopica* in 1534—dedicated to the senators and patricians of the republic of Nuremburg—Protestant republicans and constitutionalists saw their own concerns reflected in the geopolitics of the romance. Victor Skretkowicz has exhaustively surveyed this appropriation of Heliodorus, and of Greek romance more broadly, by what he calls “European philhellene Protestant political theory.” For Skretkowicz, Sidney the Protestant partisan falls squarely within this tradition: the *Arcadia*, he argues, is a “parable” advocating “a coherent monarchomachist policy intolerant of political and domestic tyranny.”¹² Yet as Robert E. Stillman suggests, such allegorical interpretations—advanced by critics from Greenlaw to Worden to Skretkowicz—threaten to elide the political (and confessional) complexity of Sidney’s romance.¹³ Indeed, the virtue of “variety,” not to mention the constitutive incompleteness

⁹ On “forward Protestants,” see Patrick Collinson, “Puritans, Men of Business and Elizabethan Parliaments,” *Parliamentary History* 7.2 (1988): 187-211. Recent research on Sidney and his international milieu has produced a more sophisticated account of Sidney’s faith and politics, but the general contours of Sidney’s activist and interventionist Protestantism still hold. See, for instance, Roger Kuin, “Querre-Muhau: Sir Philip Sidney and the New World,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 51.2 (1998): 549-85; Brian C. Lockey, *Law and Empire in English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 47-79; and Robert E. Stillman, *Philip Sidney and the Poetics of Renaissance Cosmopolitanism* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008).

¹⁰ Roger Howell, Jr., “The Sidney Circle and the Protestant Cause in Elizabethan Foreign Policy,” *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 19.1 (1975): 31-46; Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*.

¹¹ All quotations from the *Old Arcadia* follow *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Jean Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).

¹² Heliodorus, *Heliodori Historiae Aethiopicae libri decem* (Basel, 1534), sigs. a1v-a4r; Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance*, 111-65, 224.

¹³ Robert E. Stillman, “Philip Sidney and the Catholics: The Turn from Confessionalism in Early Modern Studies,” *Modern Philology* 112.1 (2014): 123. See also Stillman, *Poetics of Renaissance Cosmopolitanism*, esp. 63-122.

of the *Arcadia* itself, does not seem conducive to any coherent position, monarchomach or otherwise.

To describe the politics of “variety” in the *Arcadia*, I’ll turn briefly from Sidney and Scott to a more recent, no less perceptive reader of Greek romance: Mikhail Bakhtin. In his essay “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel,” Bakhtin coins the term “chronotope” to denote “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships” in literature. The chronotope, Bakhtin believes, “defines genre and generic distinctions, for in literature the primary category in the chronotope is time.”¹⁴ His essay thus works to recover a “historical poetics” of the European novel through a typology of its chronotopes, beginning with Greek romance. In the *Aethiopica*—as well as in the romances of Achilles Tatius and Longus—the essential chronotope is one of “adventure-time.” “Adventure-time,” as Bakhtin defines it, is the “extratemporal hiatus between two moments of biographical time,” namely the gap between the meeting of the lovers and their inevitable reunion. “‘Suddenly’ and ‘at just that moment’ best characterize this type of time,” Bakhtin observes, “for this time usually has its origin and comes into its own in just those places where the normal, pragmatic and premeditated course of events is interrupted.”¹⁵

According to Bakhtin, it was only in the historical novels of the seventeenth century that “the fates of nations, kingdoms, and cultures” were caught up in this adventure-time.¹⁶ But in the *Arcadia*, the “extratemporal hiatus” during which the story takes place is precisely a hiatus in monarchy. Basilius, duke of Arcadia, abruptly retires to a pastoral retreat and takes the entire royal family along with him. This abdication soon spawns more political disruptions: popular rebellions, regime change, and, in the *New Arcadia*, geopolitical conflict and civil war. Even after the restoration of Basilius at the end of the *Old Arcadia*, future interruptions loom in the political life of Arcadia and its Mediterranean neighbors. The unfinished *New Arcadia* takes this “variety” to the extreme. As Pyrocles and Musidorus wander across Asia Minor battling tyrants and reforming governments, the reigning principle is not providence but “variety”—or, in Bakhtin’s terms, the logic of “*random contingency*.”¹⁷ This logic precipitates political violence as well as popular enfranchisement, civil war as well as conciliar monarchy. “Variety,” then, does not so much resolve as insistently restage the republican dilemma. And in a world governed by contingency, Sidney shows, “variety” is a virtue in politics no less than in poetry.

The Politics of Interruption in the *Old Arcadia*

Ironically, the originary interruption of the *Old Arcadia* springs from Basilius’s desire to master contingency itself. As his daughters Pamela and Philoclea come of age, the duke yearns to “know the certainty of things to come, wherein there is nothing so certain as our continual uncertainty” (5). Ignorant of this maxim, Basilius journeys to Delphos and receives a riddling prophecy from the oracle that bodes ill for his family and his state. “To prevent all these

¹⁴ M. M. Bakhtin, “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a Historical Poetics,” in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 84-258, esp. 84-85.

¹⁵ Bakhtin, “Forms of Time,” 90-92.

¹⁶ Bakhtin, 96.

¹⁷ Bakhtin, 92. On the nexus of romance, contingency, and republicanism, see David Quint, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

inconveniences of the loss of his crown and children,” the duke temporarily abdicates and leaves his trusty advisor Philanax in charge (6). “Fortune,” though, has other plans. Pyrocles and Musidorus end up in Arcadia soon after “this strange solitariness had possessed Basilius” (11). There, by “either evil or good fortune,” Pyrocles stumbles upon a painting of the royal family and falls in love with the image of Philoclea (11). Before long, Pyrocles and Musidorus have disguised themselves as an Amazon and a shepherd, respectively, and infiltrated Basilius’s hideaway.

Adventure-time thus begins when monarchy ends (or at least pauses). Basilius’s abdication sets into motion all the chance events and complications that constitute the body of Sidney’s romance. At stake for Basilius, and for Sidney, is the state of Arcadia itself. Particularly troubled by the penultimate line of the prophecy—“And in thy throne a foreign state shall sit”—the duke repeatedly enjoins Philanax to defend his borders with care (5). Basilius, we learn, puts his advisor in charge of “the government of the country, and in especial manning of his frontiers”; he urges Philanax “especially to keep narrow watch of the frontiers” (6, 9).¹⁸ The contingencies that Basilius seeks to anticipate, then, are not just personal but also political.

With his family and his state seemingly secured, Basilius—along with the narrative—retires to the secluded lodges “where he was daily delighted with the eclogues and pastimes of shepherds” (9). The disguised princes begin their courtships of Philoclea and Pamela; Basilius and his wife Gynecia both fall in love with Pyrocles (the duchess easily piercing the prince’s Amazonian disguise); and Musidorus must cope with the bumbling rustics who keep watch over Pamela. Amidst these erotic entanglements and comic complications, it’s easy to forget about the threat of foreign invasion, and even about the domain of politics itself. Basilius forgets, and so does Gavin Alexander when he argues that “Basilius is very barely a study in pacific government and isolationism, and far more a great comic creation whose retreat allows a superbly plotted pastoral drama to unfold.”¹⁹ The initial trajectory of the *Arcadia*, from international politics to pastoral retreat, prompts readers like Alexander to set political analysis in opposition to romance narrative.

Before long, however, the “variety” of romance disrupts Sidney’s tale of aristocratic eroticism and pastoral comedy with the subversive energy of popular politics. In the second book of the *Arcadia*, Gynecia has gotten Pyrocles (now Cleophila the Amazon) alone and is about to confess her desire “*when suddenly* the confused rumour of a mutinous multitude gave just occasion to Cleophila to break off any such conference” (123; italics mine). Bakhtin identifies such “link-words”—“suddenly,” “at just that moment”—as the syntactic expression of adventure-time.²⁰ In Greek romance, these words characteristically interrupt the course of the narrative with a new clause and a new adventure. A few examples from Heliodorus’s *Aethiopica* (in Thomas Underdowne’s 1569 translation) suffice to illustrate this “breaking off and change of narration,” as Scott terms it: “After we had ended the greatest parte of our viage, a tempest *suddainely* arose, and a vehement winde...caused us to leave our determined Journey”; “*While wee yet* talked of these matters, one came to us in haste”; “*As soone as* they came neare to the Lake, and were aboute to take Boate, they spied a bande of Armed men rowinge over to the

¹⁸ On Sidney and international law, see Lockey, *Law and Empire*, 47-79; Christopher N. Warren, *Literature and the Law of Nations, 1580-1680* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 31-61.

¹⁹ Alexander, *Writing after Sidney*, xxx.

²⁰ Bakhtin, “Forms of Time,” 92.

Ilande.”²¹ In the *Arcadia*, Basilius’s abdication is retrospectively described with just such a marker of temporal disjunction: the duke “did so *suddenly* without the advice or allowance of his subjects, without either good show of reasonable cause, or good provision for likely accidents, in the sight of the world put himself from the world” (358; italics mine).

As the “mutinous multitude” claws its way into the story, the syntax of “variety” interrupts not only the Arcadian monarchy but also the pastoral, erotic plot that is itself an interruption in Basilius’s rule. Sidney at times doesn’t seem to have much sympathy for this “many-headed multitude,” this “unruly sort of clowns” who strike about “like enraged beasts, without respect of [Gynecia and Cleophila’s] estates or pity of their sex” (131, 123-24). But the popular rebellion nonetheless forces a “breaking off and change of narration”—and one that disrupts the Arcadian idyll with Sidney’s own Protestant politics. Just when the rebels have chased everyone back into the lodge and are casting around for fire to burn down the gates, Sidney suddenly abandons his noble protagonists. “But before I tell you what came thereof,” he writes, “methinks it reason you know what raging motion was the beginning of this tumult” (126). Sidney holds the reader in suspense as he jumps back to narrate the initial stirrings of unrest in Arcadia’s currently monarchless monarchy.

Alcohol and licentious “table-talk,” it turns out, were to blame. “Chafed with wine and emboldened with the duke’s absented manner of living,” the inhabitants of a local town began to question his eccentric behavior (127). Sidney condemns this “winy conference” in which “railing was counted the fruit of freedom” and whose participants “thought their knowledge notable because they had at all no knowledge to condemn their own want of knowledge” (127). But these commoners’ “far-fetched constructions” are fetched from doctrines that, at least for Sidney, were in fact quite close to home. They ask:

what were the shows of his estate if their arms maintained him not? Who would call him duke if he had not a people? ...[A] strange woman had now possessed their prince and government; Arcadians were too plain-headed to give the prince counsel. What need from henceforward to fear foreign enemies, since they were conquered without stroke striking, their secrets opened, their treasures abused, themselves triumphed over, and never overthrown? ...Since the country was theirs and that the government was an adherent to the country, why should they that needed not be partakers of the danger, be partakers with the cause of the danger? “Nay rather,” said they, “let us begin that which all Arcadia will follow. Let us deliver our prince from foreign hands, and ourselves from the want of a prince.” (127)

At the very least, these mutinous Arcadians have their facts right. “A strange woman” has indeed possessed their prince: Basilius desperately confesses to Pyrocles/Cleophila that his love has caused “a prince unconquered to become a slave to a stranger” (96). As Blair Worden points out, this is precisely the language used by opponents of Elizabeth’s prospective marriage to the Catholic Duke of Anjou, brother of Henry III of France.²² “Can it be saufe,” asks John Stubbs in

²¹ Heliodorus, *An Aethiopian Historie*, trans. Thomas Underdowne (London, 1569), ff. 14r, 37r, 63v; italics mine. Sidney likely was familiar with Underdowne’s translation: see Wolff, *The Greek Romances*, 360; and Tomas Hägg, *The Novel in Antiquity* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 197-201.

²² Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*, 99-101. See also Gordon Zeeveld, “The Uprising of the Commons in Sidney’s *Arcadia*,” *MLN* 48.4 (1933): 209-17; and Andrew Hadfield, *Literature*,

his fiery pamphlet *A gaping gulf* (1579), “that a straunger and Frenchman, should as owner possesse our Queene?” And Sidney himself, in his 1579 letter against the Anjou match, reminds the queen that her sister Mary “had made an odious marriage with a stranger, which is now in question whether your Majesty should do or no.”²³

To justify their resistance, the Arcadians translate into the vernacular those theories of popular sovereignty that were circulating in Sidney’s international milieu.²⁴ For all their confessional differences, resistance theorists from the radical Calvinist George Buchanan to the Jesuit Juan de Mariana located sovereignty in the people, not in the monarch.²⁵ Buchanan, for instance, argues that sovereignty (“imperium”) resides in the people alone, and thus even once the people have given that authority to a monarch they still have the power “to dictate to him the extent of his authority (*imperii modum*).”²⁶ Or as Sidney’s mutinous mob puts it, “the country was theirs and that the government was an adherent to the country”—and so “why should they that needed not be partakers of the danger, be partakers with the cause of the danger?”

The supposedly “far-fetched constructions” of the Arcadian people, then, come from a political discourse that Sidney was sympathetic to, and even articulated himself in his letter to the queen.²⁷ “Your inward force,” Sidney pointedly reminds Elizabeth, “consisteth in your subjects.” Sidney divides those subjects into Protestants and “Papists” and asserts that it is the former who, “as their souls live by your happy government, so are they your chief, if not your sole, strength.”²⁸ Compare the rhetorical questions of Sidney’s rebels: “what were the shows of his estate if their arms maintained him not? Who would call him duke if he had not a people?” Sidney’s letter locates Elizabeth’s power principally—and, as the qualifying phrase “if not your sole” suggests, even exclusively—in her Protestant people. “These, how their hearts will be galled, if not aliened, when they shall see you take to husband a Frenchman, and a Papist,” Sidney warns.²⁹ And the Arcadian mob shows what might happen next.

Romance “variety” thus introduces not just a new “accident” or “device” but also a new, and highly topical, political ideology. Rebellion interrupts pastoral fantasy; the rebels’ (and

Politics and National Identity: Reformation to Renaissance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 161.

²³ [John Stubbs], *The discoverie of a gaping gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed by an other French mariage* (London, 1579), sig. C2r; Sidney, *A Letter Written by Sir Philip Sidney to Queen Elizabeth, Touching her Marriage with Monsieur*, in *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan van Dorsten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 55. On the composition and circulation of Sidney’s letter, see H. R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts, 1558-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 100-101, 151-52.

²⁴ See Hadfield, *Literature, Politics and National Identity*, 160.

²⁵ Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 2:189-348, esp. 347. See also Daniel Lee, *Popular Sovereignty in Early Modern Constitutional Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

²⁶ George Buchanan, *A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship among the Scots: A Critical Edition and Translation of George Buchanan’s “De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus,”* ed. Roger A. Mason and Martin S. Smith (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 54-55.

²⁷ See Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*, 158.

²⁸ Sidney, *Letter*, 47.

²⁹ Sidney, 47-48.

Sidney's) assertion of popular sovereignty disrupts the aristocratic solipsism of the love-stricken protagonists. When princes run around pretending to be shepherds, Sidney suggests, it is the state that suffers.

Pyrocles disperses the mob with a well-timed speech, but the people of Arcadia are by no means gone for good. As the fourth book draws to a close, Basilius's abdication nears its logical extreme: the end of monarchy itself. Basilius has (apparently) been poisoned by his wife, Pyrocles and Musidorus are accused of treason, and the princesses too fall under suspicion. Even as Philanax struggles to restore order, the narrative shifts once more from the amorous escapades of the royal protagonists to the political agency of the people. Sidney presents this moment of popular disorder—"already was all the whole multitude fallen into confused and dangerous divisions"—as a lesson about the failings of monarchy:

There was a notable example how great dissipation monarchal governments are subject unto; for now their prince and guide had left them, they had not experience to rule, and had not whom to obey. Public matters had ever been privately governed, so that they had no lively taste what was good for themselves, but everything was either vehemently desirous or extremely terrible. (320)

The logical inference is that in a more stable government "public matters" would not exclusively be "privately governed." Sidney need not have looked far to find such a state. Early modern England, historians have argued, was itself a "monarchical republic" or an "unacknowledged republic" in large part due to the prevalence of officeholding. Mark Goldie estimates that (in the seventeenth century) there were 50,000 parish officers at any moment, and so—with term limits and mandatory rotation—up to half of all adult men would have participated in governance over any given decade. Not just the local gentry but also shopkeepers, yeoman, and artisans held office, and even "illiteracy was no barrier."³⁰ In a romance about the love lives of princes and princesses, Sidney affirms the value of wide political participation, even—or especially—in a monarchy.

The "adventure-time" inaugurated by Basilius's abdication ultimately produces wide political as well as narrative "variety." As "an extreme medley of diversified thoughts" descends upon the Arcadians, the people begin to debate the very constitution of their state: "some there were that cried to have the state altered and governed no more by a prince; marry, in the alteration many would have the Lacedemonian government of few chosen senators; others the Athenian, where the people's voice held the chief authority" (320-21). For a moment, even pure aristocracy and democracy are possible. Sidney seemingly deflates these radical alternatives by describing their advocates as "rather the discoursing sort of men than the active, being a matter more in imagination than practice" (321). As Worden points out, Sidney appears to disparage this "discoursing sort of men": "for [Sidney], 'action' is virtue, 'practice' the test and fulfillment of 'philosophy precepts.'"³¹ But therefore to assert, as David Norbrook does, that here "republicanism emerges rather as an easy academic indulgence" is to misunderstand the place of

³⁰ Mark Goldie, "The Unacknowledged Republic: Officeholding in Early Modern England," in *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, ed. Tim Harris (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2001), 153-94, esp. 161, 163. See Patrick Collinson, "De Republica Anglorum: Or, History with the Politics Put Back," and "The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I," both in *Elizabethan Essays* (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), 1-29, 31-57.

³¹ Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*, 237-38.

the “imagination” in Sidney’s poetics.³² In the *Defence of Poetry*, Sidney mocks the notion “that before poets began to be in price our nation had set their hearts’ delight upon action, and not imagination.” For Sidney, imagination produces, and even itself is, a kind of action: the poet’s “ideas” are “imagined” yet “not wholly imaginative,” working “substantially, not only to make a Cyrus...but to bestow a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyruses.”³³ Sidney acknowledges that aristocracy and democracy may be remote from Arcadia’s—or England’s—monarchy, but he does so with a wink to the imaginative work of the *Arcadia* itself.

All these political interruptions might be interpreted as (mere) narrative devices, largely subordinate to the pastoral love plot. The rebellion in book two, for instance, ratchets up the sexual tension by delaying Gynecia’s confession of love, and the “monarchal dissipations” of book four set the stage for the *deus ex machina* resolution that will consummate the royal marriages and restore Basilius to the throne. In Bakhtin’s view, this is the usual function of the public and the political in Greek romance. “Social and political events gain meaning in the novel only thanks to their connection with private life,” Bakhtin argues, and so these “events are illuminated...only insofar as they relate to private fates.”³⁴ Alexander endorses a similar view of the *Arcadia*. While “there are many opportunities for digressive political analysis,” he contends, “very few are taken”; the political turmoil springs not from “ideological schism” but from “personal love and hate” and “family strife.”³⁵ Yet as the interruptions mount, the people—and the republican ideologies that they represent—press in from the margins. If only intermittently, the erotic (mis)adventures of the royal protagonists matter insofar as they have plunged the state into chaos. It is thus these princes and princesses, not Sidney himself, who believe that “social and political events” have meaning solely in relation to their own private lives. And although the narrative inevitably returns to the love lives of the protagonists, the “variety” of romance means that the next disruption is never far away.

The End of Romance

In William Scott’s account, however, Sidney’s interruptions aim primarily toward closure. Not only does the “entangling [of] his particular narrations” give each act a “kind of completeness in itself,” but all the “difficulties and interruptions” ultimately serve to make “the final issue so much more welcome.”³⁶ Tim Whitmarsh discerns precisely this tension between “the contrary narrative drives towards resolution and deferral” within the structure of Greek romance. The central issue of the romance plot, Whitmarsh argues, is “how the disruptive energy of narrativity relates to the normative drive towards the aristocratic marital *telos*.”³⁷

³² David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 12.

³³ Philip Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, in *Miscellaneous Prose*, ed. Duncan-Jones and van Dorsten, 105, 79.

³⁴ Bakhtin, “Forms of Time,” 109.

³⁵ Alexander, *Writing after Sidney*, xxx.

³⁶ Scott, *Model of Poesy*, 37. Alexander agrees with Scott, at least when it comes to the *Old Arcadia*: “Even aposiopesis and interruption, only occasional in the original *Arcadia*, are contained by wholeness and completion” (*Writing after Sidney*, 45).

³⁷ Tim Whitmarsh, *Narrative and Identity in the Ancient Greek Novel: Returning Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 180.

This too is the question raised by the conclusion of the *Old Arcadia*. Just when all seems lost for the royal protagonists—Basilus is “dead”; Philoclea and Pamela have been arrested; Gynecia, Pyrocles, and Musidorus are condemned to death—Basilus suddenly awakens from his death-like slumber. Once the duke learns “how these intricate matters had fallen out,” he quickly adopts a providential perspective. “Remembering the oracle, which now indeed was accomplished,” and “considering all had fallen out by the highest providence,” Basilus reconciles with Gynecia and weds his daughters to Pyrocles and Musidorus (416).³⁸ This providential resolution comes straight out of Heliodorus.³⁹ At the end of the *Aethiopica*, the Ethiopian king Hydaspes is preparing to sacrifice his future son-in-law Theagenes when he is finally persuaded that the gods do not in fact favor human sacrifice. “Seeinge that these thinges benne thus appointed by the wil and pleasure of the Goddes,” Hydaspes (in Underdowne’s translation) spares Theagenes and weds him to his daughter. The priest Charicles, in another phrase echoed by Basilus, then “remembred him selfe of the Oracles answeare at Delphi, and sawe that fulfilled in deede.”⁴⁰

Sidney thus seems to reproduce faithfully the “aristocratic marital *telos*” of Greek romance. In the final lines of the *Aethiopica*, the royal family rides off “to accomplishe the secreter affaires of wedlocke in the citie for more solemnities sake”—and “thus endeth the *Aethiopian* historie of *Theagenes* and *Cariclia*.”⁴¹ But as Whitmarsh argues, the final closure of Greek romance cannot totally subdue the digressive energies of what came before. “Even if the protagonists’ stories are over,” he observes, “there are other sympathetic characters in the romance whose unresolved narratives transect the primary ones.”⁴²

Sidney makes this tension explicit by foregrounding those “unresolved narratives,” that “disruptive energy of narrativity,” at the end of his romance. While the *Aethiopica* concludes with the royal marriage, the last sentence of the *Arcadia* embarks on a different course:

But the solemnities of these marriages, with the Arcadian pastorals full of many comical adventures happening to those rural lovers, the strange story of the fair queens Artaxia of Persia and Erona of Lydia, with the prince Plangus’s wonderful chances, whom the latter had sent to Pyrocles, and the extreme affection Amasis, king of Egypt, bare unto the former, the shepherdish loves of Menalcas with Kalodoulus’s daughter, and the poor hopes of the poor Philisides in the pursuit of his affections, the strange continuance of

³⁸ Curiously, critics have taken Basilus’s faith in “providence” as Sidney’s own view. Robert E. Stillman, in *Sidney’s Poetic Justice: “The Old Arcadia,” Its Eclogues, and Renaissance Pastoral Traditions* (Lewesburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1986), writes that Basilus “discovers with new-found insight that ‘all had fallen out by the highest providence’” (224). S. K. Heninger, Jr., in *Sidney and Spenser: The Poet as Maker* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), does not even acknowledge that Basilus is the one to make this observation: “Sidney’s readers, especially in retrospect after *being told* that ‘all had fallen out by the highest providence,’ should have recognized the hint of that providence in this oracle which Basilus so perversely misinterprets” (451; italics mine). Given that Basilus misread the oracle’s prophecy so badly in the first place, I think skepticism about his interpretive powers is still warranted. See McCoy, *Rebellion in Arcadia*, 131-32.

³⁹ Hamilton, “Sidney’s *Arcadia* as Prose Fiction,” 45.

⁴⁰ Heliodorus, *An Aethiopian Historie*, ff. 148v, 149r.

⁴¹ Heliodorus, f. 149v.

⁴² Whitmarsh, *Narrative and Identity*, 212.

Klaius's and Strephon's desire, lastly the son of Pyrocles named Pyrophilus, and Melidora the fair daughter of Pamela by Musidorus, who even at their birth entered into admirable fortunes, may awake some other spirit to exercise his pen in that wherewith mine is already dulled. (417)

With this metanarrative gesture, Sidney reveals "highest providence" to be a compositional technique, the product of his "pen." And even this teleology he destabilizes by calling on others to continue his ultimately unfinished tale. The digressive adventures yet to come sprawl across social classes, across political structures, and across geographies—from the "comical adventures" of "rural lovers" in Arcadia to the personal and political entanglements of the rulers of Persia, Lydia, and Egypt to the "admirable fortunes" of the protagonists' offspring. All these adventures, all these "wonderful chances" and "admirable fortunes," promise to disrupt the providential—and monarchical—*telos* with the random contingency of Bakhtinian "adventure-time."

At least in the form in which it first reached print in 1590, the *New Arcadia* does away with that *telos* altogether. Sidney had finished revising only the first half of the romance when he died in 1586. He deleted little and added a lot: the new material alone is longer than the entire *Old Arcadia*.⁴³ The revisions bring Sidney's work closer still to the digressive structure of Greek romance. Like the *Aethiopica*, the *New Arcadia* begins *in medias res*, tells much of its story through nested narrations, and makes chance interruptions the engine of the plot.⁴⁴ Interruption and incompleteness not only are narrative principles but also describe the state of the text itself.⁴⁵ Whether by accident or by design, the revised third book breaks off in the middle of a civil war and in the middle of a sentence, with the royal marriages nowhere in sight. This was the end of the *New Arcadia* as published by Sidney's friend Fulke Greville in 1590, and the Countess of Pembroke's 1593 edition produced a narrative lacuna by grafting the final books of the *Old Arcadia* onto this abrupt ending.⁴⁶

So Sidney answers his own call for "some other spirit to exercise his pen," but he gives no end to the incomplete stories invoked at the end of the *Old Arcadia*, or even to the new adventures themselves. This chronic incompleteness evidently worried Scott. "Sir Philip Sidney," he protests, "was (without doubt) too artificial to have intended his story or narration farther than to the knitting up of the two royal couples' fortunes...for their virtues and affections with the issue was the main scope of his whole invention."⁴⁷ But for another reader of the *Arcadia*—one who knew Sidney very well indeed—"the main scope" of the romance far exceeded the royal couples. Greville, in his biography of Sidney, asserts that his friend's

⁴³ Mann, *Outlaw Rhetoric*, 110n52.

⁴⁴ Skretkowitz, "Sidney and Amyot"; Hägg, *The Novel in Antiquity*, 200.

⁴⁵ Alexander, *Writing after Sidney*, 46-48.

⁴⁶ *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia, written by Sir Philippe Sidnei* (London, 1590), sig. Zz8v; *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia. Written by Sir Philip Sidney Knight. Now since the first edition augmented and ended* (London, 1593), sig. Ff3r. On the complex textual history of the *Arcadia*, see Woudhuysen, *Circulation of Manuscripts*, 299-355; Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*, ed. Victor Skretkowitz (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), liii-lxxxii; and Joel B. Davis, *"The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia" and the Invention of English Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

⁴⁷ Scott, *Model of Poesy*, 73-74.

intent and scope was to turn the barren philosophy precepts into pregnant images of life, and in them, first on the monarch's part, lively to represent the growth, state and declination of princes, change of government and laws, vicissitudes of sedition, faction, succession, confederacies, plantations, with all other errors or alterations in public affairs; then again, in the subject's case, the state of favour, disfavour, prosperity, adversity, emulation, quarrel, undertaking, retiring, hospitality, travel and all other moods of private fortunes or misfortunes.⁴⁸

Scholars have identified this expansive—and decidedly political—“scope” as an essential characteristic of the *New Arcadia*. “The revisions,” Nancy Lindheim observes, “seem to indicate a simultaneous growth in Sidney's sense of the existence and needs of the people on the one hand, and of the extraordinary range of competence demanded by kingship on the other.”⁴⁹ As Scott's anxiety attests, Sidney's “variety” threatens to exceed the royal marriages that, for Scott, are the proper end of romance.

The *New Arcadia*: “Variety” and Violence

In the *New Arcadia*, then, the “aristocratic marital *telos*” often seems impossibly distant. A Laconian peasant uprising in book one; tyrant-slaying from Phrygia to Paphlagonia in book two; an Arcadian civil war in book three—these digressions radically augment both the frequency and the scope of the political interruptions. This “variety,” as in the *Old Arcadia*, results directly from the suspension of monarchy. Indeed, “absent” monarchs are something of a motif throughout the revised work: just as Basilius has adopted “an absented manner of living” in his pastoral retreat, Helen, queen of Corinth, admits her own “absence and folly” in deserting her country to pursue her unrequited love for the prince Amphialus (291, 60).⁵⁰ In the absence of monarchy, “adventure-time” grows ever more capacious—socially, geographically, and politically.

Suspensions of monarchy, however, spark not just “variety” but also violence. Throughout its meandering narrative, the *New Arcadia* insistently dramatizes forms of political resistance. This conjunction of “variety” and violence has troubled students of the *Arcadia*'s politics. For many critics, the romance's civil wars and rebellions show that Sidney espoused the radical Protestant (and, in particular, the Huguenot) doctrine of tyrannicide. For others, the *Arcadia* engages with monarchomach theory only to reject it decisively. Still others find Sidney to be deeply ambivalent about rebellion, tyrannicide, and the proper limits of monarchy.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Greville, *A Dedication to Sir Philip Sidney*, 10-11.

⁴⁹ Nancy Lindheim, *The Structures of Sidney's “Arcadia”* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 129. See also Jeff Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 173-205. On the term “scope” in Sidney's poetics, see Stillman, *Poetics of Renaissance Cosmopolitanism*, esp. 63-122.

⁵⁰ All quotations from the *New Arcadia* follow *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*, ed. Skretkowitz.

⁵¹ In the “pro-tyrannicide” camp, see Briggs, “Political Ideas in Sidney's *Arcadia*”; Bergbusch, “Rebellion in the *New Arcadia*”; Stillman, *Poetics of Renaissance Cosmopolitanism*, 211; and Skretkowitz, *European Erotic Romance*, 168-224. In the “anti-tyrannicide” camp, see Ribner, “Sir Philip Sidney on Civil Insurrection”; and Raitiere, *Faire Bitts*. For Sidney's ambivalence, see McCoy, *Rebellion in Arcadia*; Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, 92; Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*, 227-52.

This variety of scholarly stances reflects the *Arcadia*'s own variety. Again and again, the forces of chance redirect the narrative to the civil and international conflicts that roil Sidney's Mediterranean nations. In the first book, for instance, Musidorus washes up on the shores of Laconia, a country wracked by a protracted civil war between its gentlemen and peasants ("helots"). Musidorus makes his way to Arcadia, but "some ill-pleasing accident" soon brings him back to Laconia (26). Recuperating at the house of the Arcadian noble Kalander, Musidorus learns that his host's son Clitophon "chanced to be at a battle which was to be fought between the gentlemen of Lacedaemon and the helots," and was there captured by the latter party (26). Musidorus, of course, is eager to help—and to learn more about "the estate of the helots" (34).

Contingency—an "accident" or "chance"—thus marks the irruption of the oppressed peasants of Laconia into the romance. While Kalander's servant condemns the rebels as "a base multitude full of desperate revenge," we get a rather different picture from "a man well acquainted with the affairs of Laconia" (30, 34). This learned informant explains that the helots were a kind of people, who having been of old freemen and possessioners, the Lacedaemonians had conquered them, and laid not only tribute but bondage upon them, which they had long borne till of late (the Lacedaemonians through greediness growing more heavy than they could bear, and through contempt less careful how to make them bear) they had with a general consent, rather springing by the generalness of the cause than of any artificial practice, set themselves in arms. (34)

Scholars have debated whether this is a domestic rebellion against tyranny of the kind advocated by Protestant resistance theory, or whether it is instead "the struggle of a conquered people who had formerly been free to overthrow its conquerors and regain its lost liberty," like the Dutch Revolt in which Sidney lost his life.⁵² Both contexts, I believe, are at play. The infamous Huguenot tract *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos*—variously attributed to Philippe Duplessis-Mornay and Hubert Languet, both friends of Sidney—notes that tyrants treat their subjects like "slaves" and stresses that "the consent of the whole people is required" for a rebellion to be justified.⁵³ But Sidney's language of "bondage" and "general consent" also resonates deeply with England's own history as a conquered nation. In the wake of the Norman Conquest, Holinshed relates, the people of Kent chose to defy the "vnaccustomed yoke of seruitude and bondage" and, "with a common consente," resolved to rise up against William the Conqueror.⁵⁴ For Sidney's helots, for the Huguenot monarchomachs, and for Holinshed's Anglo-Saxons, political resistance is properly founded in the consent of the common people.

Like the Arcadian rebellion in book two, then, the helots' uprising introduces ideological as well as narrative "variety." The aristocratic bias, first articulated by Kalander's servant and often shared by Sidney himself, persists. Even our sympathetic informant must concede that the rebels have, in their "bestly fury," indiscriminately slaughtered "many of the gentry, for whom no sex nor age could be accepted for an excuse" (34). And it is only through the leadership of a noble captain—Pyrocles himself, it turns out—that the helots' fury has given way to "a mean of

⁵² Ribner, "Sir Philip Sidney on Civil Insurrection," 259. See also Bergbusch, "Rebellion in the *New Arcadia*," 32-34; Hadfield, *Literature, Politics and National Identity*, 164.

⁵³ Stephanus Junius Brutus, *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos: or, concerning the legitimate power of a prince over the people, and of the people over a prince*, ed. and trans. George Garnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 108, 41.

⁵⁴ Raphael Holinshed, *The Laste volume of the chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande* (London, 1577), sig. t2v.

good government” (34). Such aristocratic heroism, however, is disrupted (if only parenthetically) by a much broader view of political life. To rescue Clitophon, Kalander’s “faithful servants” summon “all his friends, followers, and tenants (Philanax the governor refusing to deal in it—as a private cause—but yet giving leave to seek their best redress so as they wronged not the state of Lacedaemon)” (26). Despite Philanax’s caution, this “private cause” is deeply entangled with Mediterranean geopolitics. Kalander’s supporters win admittance to the helots’ city by disguising themselves as Arcadian rebels, “no less oppressed by their lords and no less desirous of liberty than [the helots]” (35). If the rescue attempt begins with the (illusory) prospect of an international alliance, it ends with one too: after a bloody battle, Pyrocles convinces the helots to release Clitophon “lest the king and nobility of Laconia...should hope by occasion of this quarrel to join the Arcadians with them” (39). The civil violence endemic to Laconia threatens to spread.

At least in this episode, the result of political violence is republicanism. The helots, through a peace treaty brokered by Pyrocles, regain their freedom and win equal citizenship. “Yourselves are made by public decree freemen,” Pyrocles tells them, “and so capable both to give and receive voice in election of magistrates; the distinction of names between *helots* and *Lacedaemonians* to be quite taken away, and all indifferently to enjoy both names and privileges of Laconians” (41). The treaty entirely dissolves the class hierarchy and institutes an egalitarian republic.

So the Laconian episode enters the narrative by chance, proceeds through violence, and ends with political reformation. This is the pattern of Pyrocles and Musidorus’s adventures in book two of the *New Arcadia*. Various characters (including the princes themselves) interrupt the pastoral love plot with digressive accounts of the princes’ heroic exploits. In these embedded tales, Pyrocles and Musidorus wade into political disputes across Asia Minor. “Adventure-time” expands, seemingly without end: no sooner have the princes completed one quest than they are “called away by another adventure” (209). Through this extreme “variety,” the princes—and perhaps Sidney too—endeavor to outdo those two exemplars of romance vagrancy, Odysseus and Aeneas.⁵⁵ Pyrocles and Musidorus actively seek to test their virtue, “thinking it not so worthy to be brought to heroic effects by fortune or necessity (like Ulysses and Aeneas) as by one’s own choice and working” (179).

Yet in the sprawling chronotope of Greek romance, the prevailing logic is not “one’s own choice and working” but instead contingency—“fortune or necessity.” And so it is solely by accident that Pyrocles and Musidorus end up in Asia Minor in the first place. On their way to Byzantium, a shipwreck—“the normal means of transportation” in Greek romance, as Northrop Frye aptly puts it—intervenes.⁵⁶ “Fortune fails” the princes (166), leaving them adrift on a single timber until another accident arises:

But so fell it out that, as they were carried by the tide...Musidorus seeing, as he thought, Pyrocles not well upon the board, as he would with his right hand have helped him on better, he had no sooner unfastened his hold but that a wave forcibly spoiled his weaker hand of hold. And so, for a time, parted those friends, each crying to the other; but the noise of the sea drowned their farewell. (168-69)

⁵⁵ On Odysseus and Aeneas as models for Renaissance romance, see Quint, *Epic and Empire*.

⁵⁶ Northrop Frye, *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 4. For a contrasting, providential view of the shipwrecks of the *New Arcadia*, see Mentz, *Romance for Sale*, 77-90.

“But so fell it out”: this impersonal phrase marks the paratactic syntax of “adventure-time,” the “and then” structure of Geek romance.⁵⁷ Throughout book two of the *New Arcadia*, such narrative disjunction leads to still more political revolutions. The shipwreck, for example, just happens to send Pyrocles to Phrygia, where the reigning “tyrant” decides to put him to death (170). “The day was appointed, and all things appointed for that cruel blow,” but even as the execution looms the same phrase once more interrupts: “But so it fell out that his death was prevented by a rare example of friendship in Musidorus” (171). Musidorus now shows up to take his friend’s place on the scaffold, and the tyrant readily accepts. Pyrocles mounts a desperate rescue attempt, and just when things look grim “*it happened that one of the soldiers...having received a light hurt, ...went back with as much diligence as he came up with modesty; which another of his fellows seeing, to pick a thank of the king, strake him upon the face*” (173; italics mine).

This violence, as in the Laconian civil war, ends in political reformation. A free-for-all erupts; some cry treason, and the tyrant flees. One thing quickly leads to another in a sentence that careens into a full-blown revolution:

wherewith a bruit, either by art of some well-meaning men, or by such chance as such things often fall out by, ran from one to the other that the king was slain; wherewith certain young men of the bravest minds cried with loud voice, “Liberty!”; and encouraging the other citizens to follow them, set upon the guard and soldiers as chief instruments of tyranny; and quickly (aided by the princes) they had left none of them alive—nor any other in the city who they thought had in any sort set his hand to the work of their servitude; and, God knows, by the blindness of rage killing many guiltless persons. (174)

From the cowardly soldier to the well-timed rumor, “chance” above all drives the rebellion. Sidney seems sympathetic to the cry of “liberty” and the slaughter of the “chief instruments of tyranny,” but the “blindness of rage” of the Phrygian people, like the “bestly fury” of the helots, strikes down the “guiltless” and the guilty alike. In any event, it is now Musidorus’s turn to reform a commonwealth. With the tyrant slain, “the whole estates of the country with one consent gave the crown and all other marks of sovereignty to Musidorus” (174-75). Musidorus, however, cedes the crown to a virtuous “aged gentleman” next in the line of succession—“but with such conditions, and cautions of the conditions, as might assure the people with as much assurance as worldly matters bear, that not only that governor, of whom indeed they looked for all good, but the nature of the government, should be no way apt to decline to tyranny” (175). The people may have overthrown the tyrant, but it takes a prince to institute a new, and stringently limited, government. In Musidorus’s own words, he and Pyrocles “well established those kingdoms under good governors” (179).

Yet Sidney suggests that those reformed states may not be so “well established” after all. As McCoy argues, the princes’ violent interventions grow ever more precarious throughout the *New Arcadia*.⁵⁸ Even the first of these “well established” commonwealths, the egalitarian republic of Laconia, proves short-lived. In the final books of the composite 1593 *Arcadia*, we learn in passing that civil war has erupted once more between the helots and the nobility. The Lacedaemonian king “refused to perform the conditions of peace as extorted from him by rebellious violence,” and so as soon as Pyrocles left war broke out “more violently than ever

⁵⁷ Frye, *The Secular Scripture*, 47-49.

⁵⁸ McCoy, *Rebellion in Arcadia*, 138-64. See also Sedinger, “Sidney’s *New Arcadia*,” 67.

before.”⁵⁹ Pyrocles’s republican settlement thus falls victim to the constitutive incompleteness of the *New Arcadia*. In Sidney’s romance, “rebellious violence” is as much a problem as a solution.

Nowhere is this truer than in the third book, when civil war descends on Arcadia itself. Basilius sallies forth from his pastoral retreat only after his sister-in-law Cecropia, aspiring to place her son Amphialus on the throne, has kidnapped his daughters (and his beloved Amazonian Pyrocles). If Sidney ambivalently criticized the violence of the people in the first two books, now he unambiguously interrogates the violence of the nobility. The first battle begins with a chivalric flourish: the brave youth Agenor recklessly charges Amphialus, couching his lance “as careful of comely carrying it as if the mark had been but a ring, and the lookers-on ladies” (339). But this is war, not one of those Elizabethan tourneys in which Sidney himself sometimes starred.⁶⁰ Amphialus, struck with pity for Agenor’s “youth and beauty,” tries to divert his weapon but “the pitiless lance...with an unlucky counterbuff full of unsparing splinters lighted upon that face far fitter for the combats of Venus, giving not only a sudden, but a foul death, leaving scarcely any tokens of his former beauty” (339-40). Bad luck ruptures the chivalric fantasy with a “foul death.”

Agenor’s “foul death” is the first of many. As Clare R. Kinney puts it, Sidney’s “narration initially stylizes and aestheticizes the battle, but eventually lays bare its material consequences.” What begins “decked so bravely with rich furniture, gilt swords, shining armours, pleasant pencils” ends “universally defiled with dust, blood, broken armours, mangled bodies” (345). Yet Amphialus, Kinney notes, stubbornly clings to the chivalric delusion.⁶¹ He singles out Musidorus in a combat “worthy to have had more large lists, and more quiet beholders” (345). Even as the two princes exchange blows, an “old governor of Amphialus” stabs Musidorus in the thigh and kills his horse. Amphialus cries “that he dishonoured him,” but the old knight chides his former ward for fighting like “a private soldier” while Basilius has begun to cut off their retreat (345-46). Amphialus, however, does not take this lesson to heart. Met with a chivalric challenge, he eagerly resolves to display his valor in a series of duels that indeed have “more large lists, and more quiet beholders.” The old governor rebukes the prince once more for “rather affect[ing] the glory of a private fighter than of a wise general,” but Amphialus takes no heed (366).

Unsurprisingly, this aristocratic pursuit of private glory ends poorly for princes and state alike. This is a lesson Sidney evidently learned from his friend and mentor Hubert Languet. In a 1578 letter, Languet sharply criticizes Sidney for wanting to fight the Spanish in the Netherlands. “You,” Languet informs Sidney, want to join the war out of “desire for praise and glory, and in order to have an opportunity to publicize some proof of your valour.” But, according to Languet, no “private man” can properly judge whether a cause is just. He thus condemns Sidney, and all “those born into great families,” for believing “that in nothing will you cover yourselves with greater glory than in the slaughter of many men.”⁶² Sidney here sounds a lot like Amphialus,

⁵⁹ Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans (London: Penguin, 1987), 790.

⁶⁰ On Sidney and the Accession Day Tilts, see Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), 88-94.

⁶¹ Clare R. Kinney, “Chivalry Unmasked: Courtly Spectacle and the Abuses of Romance in Sidney’s *New Arcadia*,” *SEL* 35.1 (1995): 36.

⁶² *The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Roger Kuin, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2:865-66. See Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*, 283.

who “affect[s] the glory of a private fighter” and who, in the midst of “mangled bodies,” seeks only “a worthy subject to exercise his courage” (345). Even Pyrocles and Musidorus, who in the *New Arcadia*’s second book set off “privately to seek exercises of their virtue,” are complicit in the aristocratic glorification of violence (179). Through the Arcadian civil war, Sidney radically critiques the cult of violence to which he himself at times subscribed.

Poetry, History, Republicanism

The *Arcadia*’s “variety” ultimately dramatizes a range of perspectives on political violence. Resistance theory, it is important to recall, was itself quite heterogeneous. The Huguenot writers insist that tyrannicide is not lawful for private individuals (*privati* or *singuli*), only for the people as a whole (*universi*)—or rather, only for those elite magistrates and nobles who represent the people. Buchanan, however, makes the radical claim that individuals (*singuli*), no less than the whole people (*universi*), may legitimately resist a tyrant.⁶³ And of course, the Elizabethan orthodoxy rejected resistance altogether: as the *Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* instructs, “kinges and princes, aswell the evill as the good, do raigne by Gods ordinaunce, and...subjectes are bounden to obey them.”⁶⁴ All of these ideologies percolate throughout the *Arcadia*. Even a single episode sustains opposing interpretations: the princes’ exploits in Laconia and Phrygia—where popular resistance finds aristocratic leadership—could exemplify the Huguenot stance or, as Languet’s critique of “private” intervention suggests, exactly the opposite. No single ideology seems adequate to the “variety” of Sidney’s romance.

For Sidney, the republican dilemma—submission or rebellion?—is thus a narrative as well as a political problem. The “expansiveness of his revisions,” as Tracey Sedingler argues, reflects “Sidney’s republican crisis.” In Sedingler’s view, however, this expansiveness tends toward “horrific violence”; it is a symptom of “the decay of the republican ethos.”⁶⁵ But although the *New Arcadia* breaks off during a brutal civil war, this is only one of many possible outcomes. Elsewhere in the story, tyrants are slain to the acclamation of the commons; limited monarchies and even republics are instituted; and virtuous rulers are restored. These resolutions often prove contingent, but that is precisely the point: in the literally endless chronotope of the revised *Arcadia*, and in Sidney’s fractured Europe, the story of republicanism was still being written.

For the early modern readers of Heliodorus—Sidney included—Greek romance told that story in a particularly capacious way. The *Aethiopica*, notes Vincentius Obsopoeus in his preface to the first printed edition, is “various” not just in its *argumentum* but also in the forms of government, the “uarias Reipublicae formas,” depicted within. Obsopoeus, however, associates this variety not with poetry but with history (*historia*): it is history that displays “the whole life of our ancestors, as well as the manners, customs, states, [and] various forms of government of many peoples.”⁶⁶ Yet as the title of Heliodorus’s *Aethiopian Historie* reminds us, Renaissance

⁶³ Brutus, *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos*, 45-50, 59-60, 157-58, 168-72; Buchanan, *Dialogue on the Law of Kingship*, 152-53. See Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2:302-48.

⁶⁴ *Certain Sermons or Homilies (1547) and A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion (1570)*, ed. Ronald B. Bond (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 210-11.

⁶⁵ Sedingler, “Sidney’s *New Arcadia*,” 73, 59.

⁶⁶ Heliodorus, *Historiae Aethiopicae*, sigs. a3r, a3v; my translation: “maiorum nostrorum uitam omnem, adde multorum populorum mores, ritus, instituta, ciuitates, uarias Reipublicae formas.” See Skretkovicz, *European Erotic Romance*, 115.

“histories” could be either fact or fiction—or, as Sidney himself points out in the *Defence*, both.⁶⁷ “Even historiographers (although their lips sound of things done, and verity be written in their foreheads),” Sidney remarks, “have been glad to borrow both fashion and, perchance, weight of the poets.” These borrowings include speculative psychologies, conjectural details of battles, and invented orations attributed to “great kings and captains.”⁶⁸

But history and poetry do not only meet in these embellished accounts of noble generals and their wars. In a letter to his brother Robert, Sidney claims that the historian must sometimes become “a Poet in painting forth the effects, the motions, the whisperings of the people.”⁶⁹ Poetry enters history to imagine popular agency. This too is the *Arcadia*’s contribution to the story, and the history, of republicanism. At those moments when the narrative veers closest to the fraught geopolitics of early modern Europe, the people burst into the story—and their whisperings grow to a shout.

⁶⁷ Heliodorus, *An Aethiopian Historie*, trans. Underdowne. See William Nelson, *Fact or Fiction: The Dilemma of the Renaissance Storyteller* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); Donald R. Kelley and David Harris Sacks, eds., *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Blair Worden, “Historians and Poets,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68.1-2 (2005): 71-93.

⁶⁸ Sidney, *Defence of Poetry*, 75. On the interpenetration of history and poetry in Sidney’s writings, see Elizabeth Story Donno, “Old Mouse-eaten Records: History in Sidney’s *Apology*,” *Studies in Philology* 72.3 (1975): 275-98; Arthur F. Kinney, “Sir Philip Sidney and the Uses of History,” in *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture*, ed. Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 293-314; and Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*, 253-65.

⁶⁹ *The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 2:1007.

3. The Noise of the People: Rhetoric and Representation in *2 Henry VI*

Sidney's historian, "a poet in painting forth the effects, the motions, the whisperings of the people," might equally describe many of the English playwrights who turned their attention to English and Roman history in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Andrew Hadfield argues that "republican themes, ideas and subjects" flourished on the stage in the 1590s and early 1600s, and Andy Wood has found in the 1590s a rich subgenre of plays about "popular rebellion."¹ Motivating this vogue, these scholars suggest, were a series of ideological, economic, and political developments: the Elizabethan succession crisis and growing interest in Tacitean or "politic" history (Hadfield), as well as the food shortages, rampant inflation, and onerous taxation of the "hungry 1590s" (Wood). Both Hadfield and Wood locate Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*, likely written and first performed in the early 1590s, squarely in the midst of these concerns.²

Indeed, the burgeoning body of scholarship on the republican, populist, or even "radical" Shakespeare returns again and again to *2 Henry VI*—and in particular, to the figure of Jack Cade.³ For the New Historicists, Cade's rebellion was a prime example not just of subversion but, above all, of containment. "Dissident sentiments are first evoked," Phyllis Rackin writes of the revolt, "then discredited and demonized as sources of anxiety, and finally defused in comic ridicule and brutal comic violence." Richard Helgerson likewise contends that Shakespeare "wanted to efface, alienate, even demonize all signs of commoner participation in the political nation."⁴ By contrast, recent critics have argued that the Cade scenes, as Chris Fitter puts it, "render subversiveness more attractive and immune to ideological containment than is usually surmised." The rebels' precise social and economic grievances, the echoes of other medieval (and early modern) revolts, the carnivalesque challenge to class hierarchy—in the crisis of the 1590s, these popular energies would have resonated deeply with Shakespeare's heterogeneous audiences.⁵

¹ Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 65; Andy Wood, "Brave Minds and Hard Hands: Work, Drama, and Social Relations in the Hungry 1590s," in *Shakespeare and the Politics of Commoners: Digesting the New Social History*, ed. Chris Fitter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 84-101, esp. 85.

² Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, 103-29; Wood, "Brave Minds and Hard Hands." On the "crisis of the 1590s," see M. J. Power, "London and the Control of the 'Crisis' of the 1590s," *History* 70 (1985): 371-85; Ian W. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 9-11.

³ See Annabel Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*; Chris Fitter, *Radical Shakespeare: Politics and Stagecraft in the Early Career* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Jeffrey S. Doty, "Shakespeare and Popular Politics," *Literature Compass* 10.2 (2013): 162-74; and Fitter, ed., *Shakespeare and the Politics of Commoners*.

⁴ Phyllis Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 219-20; Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 214.

⁵ Fitter, *Radical Shakespeare*, 53. See Thomas Cartelli, "Jack Cade in the Garden: Class Consciousness and Class Conflict in *2 Henry VI*," in *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*, ed. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (Ithaca: Cornell

But Jack Cade's is not the only rebellion in 2 *Henry VI*. Even as Cade has become the (anti)hero of the "radical Shakespeare," the play's earlier moments of collective action have attracted far less attention. This chapter focuses on one of those moments: the commons' revolt against the duke of Suffolk in the third act. In this uprising, I will argue, we might discern a Shakespeare who is "radical" not just in his attention to popular protest but also in his efforts to reimagine political representation. Suffolk has the people's beloved Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, murdered; an angry mob then bursts into the palace and forces King Henry to banish Suffolk. Shakespeare adapts this scene, like much of the first tetralogy, from the English chronicles of Hall and Holinshed. Yet in the chronicles, the popular revolt against Suffolk is quickly thwarted. It is then not the commons of England but instead the House of Commons that ultimately compels the king to banish Suffolk.⁶ Shakespeare seems to do away with political representation, embodying parliamentary speech in the commons run amok.

As Oliver Arnold notes, however, "the people's participation in Suffolk's banishment is hardly unmediated."⁷ The earl of Warwick first states the people's grievances, and the commons remain just offstage as the earl of Salisbury delivers an extended speech in their name. Three decades ago, Annabel Patterson identified Salisbury's oration as "a speech of crucial importance for Shakespeare's conception of popular protest." Salisbury, she argues, is the people's "ventriloquist," their "sincere advocate." For Patterson, the success of this speech reveals Shakespeare's "conditional approval of the role of popular protest in the play—conditional, that is, on rightful motives, a basic loyalty to the crown, and a proper spokesman."⁸ Arnold, however, vigorously challenges this account. He contends that Salisbury and Warwick "manipulate the people's passionate hatred of Suffolk for their own self-interested ends." Arnold thus situates 2 *Henry VI* within a broader Shakespearean critique of political representation. "In Shakespeare's canon," he claims, "there is not a single exception to this rule: when they invest representatives with their voices, the people lose both power and their capacity to articulate cogently their aims and desires."⁹

Yet we can only sustain this claim if we privilege a certain kind of political rhetoric. At least for the ruling elite, the danger of popular politics was not cogent articulation of one's aims and desires but instead, as Wood puts it, "noise": "threatening, anonymous collective speech."¹⁰ If this disorderly clamor, as in Cade's rebellion, easily devolves into mob violence, it also enables commoner—and bloodless—participation in politics. Salisbury may speak for the

University Press, 1994), 48-67; Ellen C. Caldwell, "Jack Cade and Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part 2*," *Studies in Philology* 92.1 (1995): 18-79; Fitter, *Radical Shakespeare*, 46-129; Stephen Longstaffe, "The Plebeians Revise the Uprising: What the Actors Made of Shakespeare's Jack Cade—Or, Laughing with the English Radical Tradition," in *Shakespeare and the Politics of Commoners*, ed. Fitter, 124-45; and Wood, "Brave Minds and Hard Hands."

⁶ Raphael Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, 2nd ed. (London, 1587; repr., 6 vols., London, 1807-8), 3:220; Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York* (London, 1548; repr., London, 1809), 218-19.

⁷ Oliver Arnold, *The Third Citizen: Shakespeare's Theater and the Early Modern House of Commons* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 92.

⁸ Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, 48.

⁹ Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 94, 12.

¹⁰ Andy Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions and the Making of Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 115.

people, but the people refuse to disappear as they seethe and shout on- and offstage. Political representation in *2 Henry VI* relies on the constitutive tensions between threat and persuasion, noise and rhetoric, the represented and their representatives.

To find a model for this noisy, participatory brand of representation, we need only step outside the confines of St. Stephen's Chapel, where the House of Commons assembled in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In Chapter 1, I showed that the absolutist ideology of representation that Arnold recovers in parliament was part of an even broader cultural logic of *enargeia*: the programmatic statements of Renaissance rhetoric, poetics, and politics characteristically subordinated spectacle to speech and the represented to their representatives. This hierarchy, however, ran up against the embodied realities of dramatic and political practice in early modern London. Shakespearean representation, as Richard Meek, Leonard Barkan, and Holger Schott Syme have argued, relies precisely on the generative "interplay," "contests," or "dialectic" between verbal report and visual presence.¹¹ A corresponding interchange between represented and representatives took place around St. Stephen's. Although the proceedings of parliament were supposedly *arcana imperii*, secrets of state, Chris R. Kyle has convincingly shown that the boundaries between parliament and people were far more permeable than previously thought. Not only did manuscript and, in the seventeenth century, printed transcripts widely disseminate parliamentary business, but the doors of St. Stephen's routinely failed to keep out members of the public. Alongside parliament's chambers in Westminster Palace were courts, booksellers, scribes, taverns, and private dwellings; crowds daily pressed and jostled around the entrances to the House of Commons.¹² If the ideology of parliamentary representation hinged on the fiction of the people's presence, the mass of bodies just outside St. Stephen's threatened to make that fiction a reality.

This, I argue, is what happens in the first rebellion of *2 Henry VI*. Shakespeare literalizes the fiction of political representation: the people, with their bodies as well as their voices, explicitly authorize the rhetoric of their representatives. It is no accident that in the chronicles this scene took place in parliament. In the "parliament hous," Aylmer had written in 1559, is to be found the "image" of England's "rule mixte"—or rather "not the image, but the thinge in dede."¹³ Shakespeare radically embodies this slippage between "image" and "thing," turning the enabling (and exclusionary) fiction of parliamentary representation into a swarm of angry people who vociferously insert themselves into the deliberations of the nobility. At least for a moment, *2 Henry VI* thus promises to restore the represented to representation.

¹¹ Richard Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 5; Leonard Barkan, *Mute Poetry, Speaking Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 154; Holger Schott Syme, *Theatre and Testimony in Shakespeare's England: A Culture of Mediation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 14.

¹² Chris R. Kyle, *Theater of State: Parliament and Political Culture in Early Stuart England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), esp. 109-17. See also Kyle, "Parliament and the Palace of Westminster: An Exploration of Public Space in the Early Seventeenth Century," *Parliamentary History* 21.1 (2002): 85-98; and Kyle and Jason Peacey, "'Under Cover of So Much Coming and Going': Public Access to Parliament and the Political Process in Early Modern England," in *Parliament at Work: Parliamentary Committees, Political Power and Public Access in Early Modern England*, ed. Kyle and Peacey (Rochester, NY: Boydell, 2002), 1-23.

¹³ John Aylmer, *An harborowe for faithfull and trewe subiectes* ([London], 1559), sig. H3r.

The Sound of Representation

“*Noise within. Enter Warwick, and many Commons*” (3.2.121 sd).¹⁴ So enter the people into the palace of Henry VI—and into the movement of history. From the moment they explode onto the stage, Shakespeare’s commons make themselves heard not only through their own “noise” but also through an aristocratic representative. This noisy representation, I show in this section, reflects both the historiography and the practice of parliament in early modern England.

In particular, the chronicles’ accounts of the events leading up to Suffolk’s banishment reveal a similar alignment, and even identity, between the people and their representatives. Holinshed (echoing Hall) reports that in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of King Henry VI, “the commons of the nether house”—that is, the House of Commons—moved to impeach Suffolk for treason. Suffolk denies the charges, but convinces no one, least of all the chronicler: “none [were] fullie excused.” Queen Margaret, “doubting some commotion and trouble to arise, if he were let go vnpunished,” has the duke (her lover) committed to the Tower for a month.¹⁵

Yet upon Suffolk’s release “some commotion” swiftly breaks out: “the commons in sundrie places of the realme assembled together in great companies.”¹⁶ Up until this point in the story of the duke’s fall, Holinshed largely reproduces Hall’s description of the Commons’ actions. Here, though, he significantly alters Hall’s characterization of both the people and their representatives. For all Suffolk’s misdeeds, Hall nevertheless condemns the “commons”—of the realm and of the lower house alike—for taking matters into their own hands. It was “the furye of the mutable commons” that drove the popular unrest, Hall writes.¹⁷ After the authorities defuse this incipient rebellion, the narrative (in both versions of the story) shifts from what Hall terms the “mutable commons” of England to “the commons of the lower house.” Parliament adjourns to Leicester, where the Commons, “not forgettyng their olde grudge,” demand that Suffolk be punished for giving up England’s holdings in France.¹⁸ Hall denigrates these “commons” too. King Henry sees no way to “appeace...the continual clamor of the importunate commons” but to comply, and so he banishes Suffolk “to appease the furious rage of the outragious people.”¹⁹ In Hall’s telling, the clamorous “commons”—presumably those “of the lower house” who have just moved against Suffolk—are no less noisy and disorderly than the people whom they represent.

While Hall disdains the “furye,” the “rage,” the “continual clamor” of both Commons and commons, Holinshed largely omits the censorious language of his source. In Holinshed’s account, the thwarted popular revolt begins not because Suffolk’s release “incensed the furye of the mutable commons” (as Hall writes), but because it “so much displeased the people.” And according to Holinshed Henry banishes Suffolk “to appease the peoples furie,” not “to appease

¹⁴ All quotations of the play are from *King Henry VI, Part 2*, ed. Ronald Knowles (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1999), cited parenthetically.

¹⁵ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 3:218-220. See Hall, *Union*, 217-18. On the relationship between Hall and Holinshed, see Scott Lucas, “Holinshed and Hall,” 203-16; and Henry Summerson, “Sources: 1577,” 61-76, esp. 69-72, both in *The Oxford Handbook of Holinshed’s “Chronicles,”* ed. Paulina Kewes, Ian W. Archer, and Felicity Heal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

¹⁶ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 3:220; Hall, *Union*, 218.

¹⁷ Hall, *Union*, 218.

¹⁸ Hall, *Union*, 219. See Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 3:220.

¹⁹ Hall, *Union*, 219.

the furious rage of the outrageous people” (Hall).²⁰ Holinshed, like Hall, aligns the people’s ire with the demands of the House of Commons. Decidedly unlike Hall, however, he displays little scorn for their joint effort to influence the king. Shakespeare’s *2 Henry VI*, I’ll argue below, dramatizes both historiographical stances. The nobility often echo Hall’s contempt for the people, but the people also get to speak for themselves, directly as well as through political representation. And as in both Hall and Holinshed, it is the unruly bodies of the people that lend force to the rhetoric of their representatives.

In the chronicles, the rebellious clamor of the commons thus readily penetrates into the halls of parliament. The same was true, as Kyle has shown, at the Palace of Westminster in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. If in St. Stephen’s Chapel MPs sought “to secure unprecedented isolation from the public and to maintain secret proceedings,” this aim was often frustrated.²¹ Indeed, their insistence that the Commons’ proceedings be sealed off from the public only underscores the constant threat of popular disruption. In *The Order and Usage of the Keeping of a Parlement in England*, John Hooker describes the customary job of the sergeant-at-arms: “to keep the Parlement door, that no thrust, presse, or noyse, were made there, by meanes wherof the Parlement might be letted, and that such thrust, preace or noyse might be avoyded.”²² In the bustling Palace of Westminster, banishing “such thrust, preace or noyse” from parliament proved quite difficult.

The threat of noise, however, did not only come from outside St. Stephen’s. King James himself evidently complained that the Commons “voted without order, nothing being heard but cries, shouts, and confusion.”²³ Applauding, hawking, spitting, murmuring, hissing, shouting, stamping, wailing—all these sounds could be heard in the early modern House of Commons.²⁴ At times, MPs themselves became part of the “thrust” or “press” jostling at the doors of parliament. For the opening of parliament in 1593, a crowd of MPs gathered outside the House of Lords. They had come, as was customary, to hear the speech of the Lord Keeper, Sir John Puckering. But they found the door shut fast. The cramped space where the members of the lower house were allowed to stand had already filled up with “those that had gotten in before privately,” and Puckering was now “gone a good stepp into his oracion.” “Discontented here with,” the members “murmured so loude that the noise came to her Majestie’s hearing, who presentlie commaunded the dore to be lett openn.”²⁵ Such ceremonial occasions were often plagued by overcrowding: the noisy crush of several hundred MPs—not to mention the spectators who (illegally) found their way in—made it difficult if not impossible to hear the

²⁰ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 3:220; Hall, *Union*, 218, 219.

²¹ Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 47.

²² John Hooker, *The Order and Usage of the Keeping of a Parlement in England*, in *Parliament in Elizabethan England: John Hooker’s “Order and Usage,”* ed. Vernon F. Snow (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 141.

²³ “Minutes of the Despatches of Diego Sarmiento de Acuña to Philip III,” in Francisco de Jesús, *El hecho de los tratados del matrimonio pretendido por el Principe de Gales con la serenissima infante de Espana Maria*, ed. and trans. Samuel Rawson Gardiner (London, 1869), 288.

²⁴ Kyle, *Theater of State*, 36-55.

²⁵ *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. T. E. Hartley, 3 vols. (London: Leicester University Press, 1981-95), 3:62. See Henry S. Cobb, “Descriptions of the State Opening of Parliament, 1485-1601: A Survey,” *Parliamentary History* 18.3 (1999): 314; and Kyle, *Theater of State*, 41

speeches. Physical confrontations in the House of Commons or at the doors of the House of Lords were not unheard of.²⁶ England's parliament could be as cacophonous as its people.

Periodic efforts were made to rein in the noise of the Commons. In particular, the Crown would often admonish the lower house not to abuse its traditional freedom of speech.²⁷ Three days after the disgruntled MPs "murmured" their way into the House of Lords, the Commons returned to the upper house to present their speaker, Edward Coke. Coke concluded his ceremonial oration with the customary petition for the Commons' "auncient" privileges and liberties. Puckering, in the name of the Queen, granted "priveledge of speech" but cautioned, "yow must know what priveledge yow have, not to speake everie one what he listeth or whatsoever cometh in his braine to utter that. But your priveledge is 'I' and 'No.'"²⁸ The Crown reduces freedom of speech to two words: "Aye" and "No." Yet as we have seen, the Commons—and the commons—could make themselves heard without any words at all. "Freedom of speech might be curtailed," Kyle writes of the lower house, "but noise could not be silenced."²⁹

The Noise of the People

So it goes for Shakespeare's commons in *2 Henry VI*. Early in the play, several aggrieved citizens gather with petitions for Gloucester, the Lord Protector. "No communicative practice for sending messages from the periphery to the center," David Zaret notes, "had greater legitimacy than petitioning."³⁰ But this legal outlet for commoner speech is quickly cut off. When one of the petitioners mistakes Suffolk for Gloucester, their complaints find a singularly unsympathetic audience. Suffolk and Margaret read the petitions, the most topical of which takes aim at the duke himself: "Against the Duke of Suffolk, for enclosing the commons of Melford" (1.3.20-21). The enclosure of common land was a perennial object of petitioning and protest in Tudor and early Stuart England.³¹ Unsurprisingly, Suffolk and Margaret have little time for this complaint. In the folio, the queen "tears the supplication" and cries, "Away, base cullions!" (1.3.40 sd, 41). This aristocratic rejection of popular speech is even more pointed in the first quarto. In the earlier

²⁶ Kyle, *Theater of State*, 40-41, 53-54, 111-12.

²⁷ J. E. Neale, "The Commons' Privilege of Free Speech in Parliament," in *Tudor Studies Presented [...] to Albert Frederick Pollard*, ed. R. W. Seton-Watson (London: Longmans, Green, 1924), 257-86, esp. 278-79; G. R. Elton, *The Parliament of England, 1559-1581* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 342; and David Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 135-37.

²⁸ *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. Hartley, 3:66, 68.

²⁹ Kyle, *Theater of State*, 55.

³⁰ David Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early-Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 81. See also Annabel Patterson, "A Petitioning Society," in *Reading between the Lines* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 57-79.

³¹ Andy Wood, *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2002); John Walter, "Public Transcripts, Popular Agency and the Politics of Subsistence in Early Modern England," in *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy and Subordination in Britain and Ireland*, ed. Michael J. Braddick and John Walter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 123-48. Wood, in *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics*, suggests that "the most common cause of riots during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, was the enclosure of common land" (82).

version, Suffolk himself “teares the papers” and mocks the petitioners, “So now show your petitions to Duke *Humphrey*. / Villaines get you gone and come not neare the Court, / Dare these pesants write against me thus” (sig. B2v).³² Suffolk’s class prejudice is clear: “villaines” and “pesants” do not belong anywhere near the halls of power.

Speech (and petitioning) might be curtailed, but noise will not be silenced. After Gloucester’s murder in the third act, the people return with a vengeance. Heralded by that “noise within,” Warwick and “many Commons” take the stage (3.2.121 sd). Even as Warwick and Salisbury speak for them throughout this scene, the commons’ “noise” persists. The folio records another stage direction for “noise within” (3.2.235 sd), and in the quarto the commons twice cry, “downe with *Suffolke*, downe with *Suffolke*” (sigs. E3v, E4r). When Salisbury delivers an extended oration in the name of the people, they punctuate his speech with still more shouts: “An answer from the King, my Lord of Salisbury!”; “An answer from the King or we will all break in!” (3.2.270, 278). Shakespeare, as Dominique Goy-Blanquet points out, here blurs “the parliamentary and the rebellious forms of protest” from the chronicles.³³ Yet as in the chronicles, rebellious protest does not just intrude into parliamentary deliberation: popular noise is itself the force behind the rhetoric of representation.

Through a particularly suggestive analogy, Warwick underscores the threat of violence expressed by the noise of the people. Warwick informs the king that “the commons, like an angry hive of bees / That want their leader, scatter up and down / And care not who they sting in [Gloucester’s] revenge” (3.2.125-27). The (originally Virgilian) “commonwealth of bees” was a common trope in the literary and political discourse of early modern England.³⁴ In *Henry V*, for instance, the Archbishop of Canterbury describes “honey-bees” as “creatures that by a rule in nature teach / The act of order to a peopled kingdom.”³⁵ Bees, however, were not only a reassuring image of monarchical order. They might obey, but they might also sting. In a sermon translated by Arthur Golding, Jean Calvin notes that “when Bees are angrye, they sting men: and they regard not whether men be too strong for them, but they fly vpon them with such choler and furie, as they cannot but be astonished.”³⁶ Some writers even praised this single-minded furor. Thomas Churchyard, in *Churchyards Challenge* (1593), turns to the animal world to find instances of that “mutuall agreement” sorely lacking in “men in Court”: “the Bees seeing but one of their fraternity troubled or angry, fly all in a swarme on euery thing offends them, and vseth such fury for reuenge, that they sting and hum out of measure.”³⁷ For Churchyard, at least, the collective violence of bees is evidence of their exemplary social cohesion.

³² All quotations of the first quarto come from the facsimile reproduced in *2 Henry VI*, ed. Knowles, 376-407.

³³ Dominique Goy-Blanquet, *Shakespeare’s Early History Plays: From Chronicle to Stage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 60.

³⁴ Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, 120; Richard Grinnell, “Shakespeare’s Keeping of Bees,” *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 23.4 (2016): 835-54. See Virgil, *Georgics*, in *Eclogues; Georgics; Aeneid, Books 1-6*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, rev. G. P. Goold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 4.1-280.

³⁵ Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, ed. T. W. Craik (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1995), 1.2.187-89.

³⁶ Jean Calvin, *The sermons of M. Iohn Calvin vpon the fifth booke of Moses called Deuteronomie*, trans. Arthur Golding (London, 1583), sig. E5r.

³⁷ Thomas Churchyard, *Churchyards Challenge* (London, 1593), sig. K1r.

In the English tradition of popular protest, the bee metaphor was a prime example of what John Walter calls the “rhetoric of violence,” of what Wood terms “threatening, anonymous collective speech.”³⁸ In 1496, for instance, this analogy appears in an anonymous libel against enclosure in Coventry:

Litell small been,
That all about fleen,
They waggen their whyng,
Where as they light,
The been will byte,
And also styng.
Loke that ye do right.³⁹

The bee metaphor here issues a naked threat to the local authorities: “do right” by the commons, or risk being stung. Power resides in the anonymous collective of “litell small been, / That all about fleen,” biting and stinging wherever they might land. Such threats—conveyed by libels, petitions, and grumbling—were common in the popular protests of early modern England. Often, as Walter argues, this “rhetoric of violence” was not so much “a call to arms” as “an invitation to action on the part of the authorities.” Popular threats put pressure on the governing elites by invoking the authorities’ own fears of tumult, sedition, and violence.⁴⁰

A later instance of the bee analogy—one, in fact, roughly contemporaneous with *2 Henry VI*—locates the threat not just in the disorderly bodies of the commons but specifically in the people’s “noise.” In *The Life and Death of Jack Straw*, an anonymous play first printed in 1593/4, Richard II sets out to parley with the leaders of the Peasants’ Revolt—but then suddenly retreats, frightened by the rebels’ “shrikes and cries.” One of the king’s gentlemen describes the scene:

It was a world to see what Troupes of men,
Like Bees that swarme about the hony hiue,
Gan strew the grauill ground and sandy plaine,
That fild the Aire with cries and fearefull noise.
And from the water did an eccho rise:
That pearst the yeares of our renommed King,
Affrighting so his heart.⁴¹

These are Calvin’s and Churchyard’s bees, not Virgil’s (or, for that matter, Canterbury’s in *Henry V*): not members of an ordered commonwealth but, as the king puts it, an “vnorderly” swarm.⁴² For the nobility, the most “fearefull” aspect of this disorder is its “noise.” The shrieks, the cries, the resounding echo—these sounds strike fear into the heart of the king.

Warwick’s bee simile in *2 Henry VI* thus invokes the kind of disorderly, collective violence that the political elite most feared. And Shakespeare’s commons, as we have seen, to some extent bear out this comparison through their shouts and cries. The bee analogy, however,

³⁸ Walter, “Public Transcripts,” 141; Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*, 115.

³⁹ *Tudor Economic Documents*, ed. R. H. Tawney and Eileen Power, 3 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1924), 3:12-13, quoted in Walter, “Public Transcripts,” 141.

⁴⁰ Walter, “Public Transcripts,” 139-46, esp. 145. See also Wood, *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics*, esp. 89.

⁴¹ *The Life and Death of Iacke Straw* (London, 1593 [colophon 1594]), sigs. C3v-C4r.

⁴² *The Life and Death of Iacke Straw*, sig. C3v.

also distorts the rebels' aims, in both *Jack Straw* and *2 Henry VI*. In the anonymous play, Richard interprets the noise of the people as a threat that "they would invade vs all." But this is far from the truth. Right before the king flees, the rebels enter and Jack Straw complains that Richard has reneged on his promise to meet and discuss their grievances: "What means the King thus to abuse vs? / And makes vs runne about his pleasure, and to no end."⁴³ Warwick, like *Jack Straw*'s Richard, anticipates anarchic violence from the people, who "care not who they sting in [Gloucester's] revenge" (3.2.127). The commons' "sting," however, aims resolutely at only one individual throughout the scene: the duke of Suffolk. If the bee analogy encapsulates the popular rhetoric—or, as the case may be, noise—of violence, it also works to denigrate that threat as mindless and undirected.

The commons' noise, Shakespeare suggests, effectively exploits the anxieties of their rulers. After the second "noise within," the king and queen are left practically speechless. "What noise is this?" Margaret asks indignantly; "Why, what tumultuous clamour have we here?" Henry demands (3.2.236, 239). Even Warwick, the people's own representative, interprets their initial uprising against Suffolk as "spleenful mutiny" (3.2.128). This is Hall's language: the chronicler condemns the "continual clamor" of parliament and the "furious rage of the outrageous people." Yet in Shakespeare's characteristically "polyphonic" or "polyvocal" history, this is only one voice among many.⁴⁴ The play gives the people their own voice, embodying parliament's "continual clamor" in what Henry derisively terms the "tumultuous clamour" of the commons. Noise will not be silenced.

Rhetoric and Representation

This popular noise, of course, does not go unmediated. When Warwick compares the commons to "an angry hive of bees / That want their leader," he proceeds to claim that role for himself: "Myself have calmed their spleenful mutiny" (3.2.125-26, 128). And as tensions escalate and violence threatens to break out, Salisbury delivers an elaborate speech for the people. "Sirs, stand apart," Salisbury tells the commons, "the King shall know your mind" (3.2.242). But the people have been revealing their mind all along, shouting and crying against Suffolk. Like King Richard in *Jack Straw*, Henry interprets the people's "tumultuous clamour" as anarchic sound devoid of any coherent grievance. It is only when Salisbury couches that grievance in formal oratory that the king finally comes to understand the politics of the people's noise.

Representation works the same way in the chronicles. Henry does not appease "the furious rage of the outrageous people" (Hall) or the "peoples furie" (Holinshed) until the "commons of the lower house...besought the king" that Suffolk be punished.⁴⁵ In *2 Henry VI*, Salisbury thus plays the role of the chronicles' House of Commons. He addresses Henry:

Dread lord, the commons send you word by me,
Unless Lord Suffolk straight be done to death,
Or banished fair England's territories,

⁴³ *The Life and Death of Iacke Straw*, sigs. C3v, C3r.

⁴⁴ For a few exemplary accounts of "polyphony" or "polyvocality" in Shakespeare's histories, see Rackin, *Stages of History*; Paola Pugliatti, *Shakespeare the Historian* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996); and Igor Djordjevic, "Shakespeare and Medieval History," in *The Oxford Handbook of Holinshed's "Chronicles,"* ed. Kewes, Archer, and Heal, 511-26.

⁴⁵ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 3:220; Hall, *Union*, 219.

They will by violence tear him from your palace
 And torture him with grievous lingering death.
 They say, by him the good Duke Humphrey died;
 They say, in him they fear your highness' death;
 And mere instinct of love and loyalty,
 Free from a stubborn opposite intent,
 As being thought to contradict your liking,
 Makes them thus forward in his banishment.
 They say, in care of your most royal person,
 That if your highness should intend to sleep
 And charge that no man should disturb your rest,
 In pain of your dislike, or pain of death,
 Yet notwithstanding such a strait edict,
 Were there a serpent seen, with forked tongue,
 That slyly glided towards your majesty,
 It were but necessary you were waked,
 Lest, being suffered in that harmful slumber,
 The mortal worm might make the sleep eternal.
 And therefore do they cry, though you forbid,
 That they will guard you, whe'er you will or no,
 From such fell serpents as false Suffolk is,
 With whose envenomed and fatal sting
 Your loving uncle, twenty times his worth,
 They say is shamefully bereft of life. (3.2.243-69)

Salisbury underscores his role as the “substitute,” “spokesman,” or “ventriloquist” of the people, as Patterson variously calls him.⁴⁶ Through the repeated “they say,” Salisbury insists that the words he is speaking are the people’s, not his own. He succinctly lays out this representational logic in the first line: “Dread lord,” he informs Henry, “the commons send you word by me.” In Hobbesian terms, the commons are the “author” of their representative’s speech; as the MP William Hakewill would put it, the people “speake by us.”⁴⁷

For Patterson and Arnold, this often neglected oration is essential to understanding Shakespeare’s dramatization of popular politics. Patterson argues that “the rhetorical ‘They say’ formula identifies Salisbury as ventriloquist, while the dramatic situation ensures his recognition as the people’s sincere advocate.” Arnold, however, contends that Salisbury, like the other Shakespearean characters “who speak for the commons,” is “deceitful, ambitious, self-serving, and contemptuous of the people he represents.”⁴⁸ Shakespeare’s account of political representation, then, seems to depend on the character of the representative: “sincere advocate” or “deceitful” and “self-serving”? Yet in focusing on the credibility of the speaker, both Patterson and Arnold follow the agenda set by Suffolk himself in his brief response to Salisbury’s oration. Suffolk, elitist that he is, sharply critiques Salisbury’s fiction of popular eloquence. “’Tis like the commons, rude unpolished hinds,” he sneers, “Could send such

⁴⁶ Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, 48.

⁴⁷ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985), 217-18; *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. Hartley, 3:433. See Chapter 1 above.

⁴⁸ Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, 48; Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 93.

message to their sovereign. / But you, my lord, were glad to be employed / To show how quaint an orator you are” (3.2.271-74). While Patterson dismisses this claim as further evidence of Suffolk’s “anti-populist bias,” Arnold reaffirms precisely this gap between “quaint...orator” and “commons.”⁴⁹

Lost in this critical debate about the “dramatic situation” is the content of the speech itself. For all its rhetorical sophistication, Salisbury’s oration simply reiterates the message of the commons’ noise: “downe with *Suffolke*,” or else. Unless Suffolk is immediately executed or banished, Salisbury begins, the commons “will by violence tear him from your palace / And torture him with grievous lingering death.” This is no idle threat. As soon as Suffolk tries to dissociate these “rude unpolished hinds” from their “quaint...orator,” the people themselves refute the duke: “An answer from the King or we will all break in!” they cry (3.2.278). Thomas Cartelli thus argues that “what persuades the King to banish Suffolk is less Salisbury’s ventriloquy than the far more direct threat from without that Suffolk will be taken by force if an ‘answer from the King’ is not forthcoming.”⁵⁰

But while this popular threat may astonish and even terrify the king, he remains unable to parse the commons’ clamor without Salisbury’s mediating rhetoric. Salisbury, then, is not so much ventriloquist as translator. To render the commons’ noise in a language the king can understand, Salisbury emphasizes one rhetorical principle in particular: necessity. Necessity has something of a vexed history in the rhetorical tradition. For some rhetoricians, arguments from necessity were the most powerful of all in deliberative oratory—oratory that, like Salisbury’s, aims to “persuade or dissuade, entreat or rebuke, exhort or dehort,” as Thomas Wilson puts it. Wilson, in the first complete English rhetoric, enumerates the arguments commonly used in a deliberative speech, including whether the advised action is “profitable,” “lawful and meet,” or “necessary.” The English rhetorician Leonard Cox instructs the orator to seek out arguments “wherby we may proue that our councell is of suche necessity that it can nat be chosen but they must nedes folow it / for tho argumentes be of farre greater strength than they that do but onely proue the vtility of the mater.”⁵¹

This principle motivates Salisbury’s elaborate justification of the commons’ threat. After reiterating the people’s alleged protestations of loyalty, the earl deploys an extended metaphor to characterize Suffolk’s treachery—and to demonstrate the necessity of the commons’ violence. Even if Henry were to “charge that no man should disturb [his] rest” on “pain of death,” the commons implausibly say through Salisbury,

Yet notwithstanding such a strait edict,
Were there a serpent seen, with forked tongue,
That slyly glided towards your majesty,
It were but necessary you were waked.

⁴⁹ Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, 48.

⁵⁰ Thomas Cartelli, “Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare’s *2 Henry VI*,” in *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Works*, ed. Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard, vol. 2, *The Histories* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 325-43, esp. 338.

⁵¹ Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric (1560)*, ed. Peter E. Medine (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 70, 71; Leonard Cox, *The Art or Crafte of Rhetoryke* ([London, 1532]), sigs. D5v-D6r. On “necessity” in English Renaissance rhetoric, see Markku Peltonen, *Rhetoric, Politics and Popularity in Pre-Revolutionary England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 75-76.

The serpent metaphor makes the commons' threatened action not just profitable but, in fact, "necessary." "And therefore do they cry," continues Salisbury, "though you forbid, / That they will guard you, whe'er you will or no, / From such fell serpents as false Suffolk is." "Though you forbid," "whe'er you will or no": in Salisbury's telling, the people aren't leaving Henry with much of a choice.

Precisely for this reason—because necessity precludes choice—some rhetoricians had long argued that, as Aristotle puts it, necessity "is outside the scope of deliberation." Quintilian similarly asserts that "where there is necessity there is no room for deliberation...For all deliberation is about doubtful things."⁵² In his highly influential rhetoric textbook *Elementorum rhetorices libri duo* (1531), Philipp Melanchthon acknowledges that the necessary and the possible "are omitted in the common precepts [of deliberative oratory], since they seem to be *atekhnoi* [i.e., external to the art of rhetoric]." Yet necessity, he argues, "not only exhorts those who are wavering but even forces those who are unwilling."⁵³ Versions of this claim found their way into English through rhetoricians like Cox and, in the next century, through a 1614 treatise on the principles of negotiation. In a close translation of Melanchthon, the author of *The Dove, and the Serpent* writes that necessity "will not onely moue such as are wauering, but withall enforce such as are vnwilling."⁵⁴ Renaissance orators found necessity to be so powerful for the same reason that classical authorities excluded it from the art of rhetoric altogether: necessity turns persuasion into coercion.

Salisbury's appeal to necessity thus effectively recapitulates the force of the people's noise (and bodies). The people, after all, have already roused Henry by the time Salisbury informs the king that "it were but necessary you were waked." A great, noisy, *atekhnoi* mass of bodies roils just offstage, ready to break in at any moment. As soon as Salisbury translates this threat into a deliberative oration, Henry—in a moment of highly uncharacteristic resolve—quickly complies with the commons' demand. Such is the power of Salisbury's speech that what the king just moments before called "tumultuous clamour" now becomes the "tender loving care" of the commons (3.2.280). Henry tries to save face and gloss over his subjects' blunt threat of violence. "Had I not been cited so by them," he unpersuasively claims, "Yet did I purpose as they do entreat" (3.2.281-82). Salisbury's lip service to the rhetorical norms of monarchy—"Dread lord," his oration began—is evidently all the king needs to reinterpret threat as entreaty, noise as "loving care." Together, popular noise and representative rhetoric achieve what either alone could not.

⁵² Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J. H. Freese (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 1359a; Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell, 5 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 3.8.25.

⁵³ Philipp Melanchthon, *Opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. C. G. Bretschneider, 28 vols., *Corpus Reformatorum* (Halle and Brunswick, 1834-60), 3:446: "praetermittuntur in vulgaribus praeceptis, quia videntur esse *atekhnoi*"; "Necessitas autem non solum dubitantes hortatur, sed cogit etiam invitos" (my translations). On Melanchthon's rhetoric, see Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric, 1380-1620* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 107-20.

⁵⁴ D. T., *The Dove, and the Serpent* (London, 1614), sig. K1r, quoted in Peltonen, *Rhetoric, Politics and Popularity*, 75. On the identity of D. T., see Elizabeth Allen, "Tuvill, Daniel (d. 1660)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

This scene is thus the midpoint not only of the play's action but also of its continuum of popular politics. Near the beginning of *2 Henry VI*, as we have seen, the people's petitions are no match for the dismissive scorn of Margaret and Suffolk. Petitions may have enjoyed great legitimacy in early modern England, but without leverage they are easily silenced. So the people turn instead to their own mouths and bodies. As they run across the stage and clamor just outside the palace, the commons cannot but be heard. The threat of violence, however, remains just that: a threat. "They will by violence tear [Suffolk] from your palace," Salisbury informs the king, "And torture him with grievous lingering death." But thanks to Salisbury's representation, the people need shed no blood. Without noise, Shakespeare's commons are not heard; without representation, they are not understood. The chronicles' parliament has become a chaotic, noisy, mediated, and above all highly successful encounter among the people, the nobility, and the monarch.⁵⁵

Popular Violence and the Mouths of Parliament

If the play's first popular rebellion literally embodies the "representative" or, to use Thomas Smith's term, "entended" presence of the people in parliament, so too does the second.⁵⁶ "My mouth shall be the parliament of England," proclaims Jack Cade (4.7.12-13). And indeed it is: throughout the rebellion, Cade and his fellow rebels speak the very grievances that the chronicles attributed to the House of Commons. Shakespeare's rebels are particularly eager to be revenged upon Lord Saye. The chronicles tell how Cade captured Saye, brought him to trial in London, and then aborted the arraignment by seizing Saye and cutting off his head. Neither Holinshed nor Hall pauses to detail the charges against Saye or to give a reason for Cade's summary justice.⁵⁷ Both chroniclers, however, explain why the commons have it out for Saye during the parliament that brought down Suffolk. At that parliament, the House of Commons "besought the king, that such persons as assented to the release of Aniou, and deliuerance of Maine, might be dylie punished." Those persons include "as principall, the duke of Suffolke," but also "sir James Fines, lord Saie."⁵⁸

Jack Cade and his men insistently level this accusation against Saye. "We'll have the Lord Saye's head for selling the dukedom of Maine," Dick the Butcher exclaims; "Lord Saye hath gelded the commonwealth," adds Cade (4.2.150-51, 154-55). When they capture Saye, the rebels repeat this charge: "Here's the Lord Saye which sold the towns in France," crows one; "What canst thou answer to my majesty for giving up of Normandy?" Cade demands (4.7.17-18, 23-25). The actions of the chronicles' House of Commons once more end up in the mouths, and bodies, of the common people.

This time, however, there is none of the mediating rhetoric that previously rendered popular noise in a language the king could understand. While the petitioning scene in act one showed the limits of speech without noise, Cade's rebellion starkly reveals the danger of collective action without representation. Indeed, the rebels take singular aim at those very

⁵⁵ Shakespeare thus embodies the "mixed constitution"—the blend of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy—that some early modern political theorists located in England's parliament. See Aylmer, *Harborowe*, sigs. H2v-H3r; and Sir Thomas Smith, *De Republica Anglorum*, ed. Mary Dewar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 78-79.

⁵⁶ Smith, *De Republica Anglorum*, 79.

⁵⁷ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 3:225; Hall, *Union*, 221.

⁵⁸ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 3:220. See Hall, *Union*, 219.

rhetorical norms that made Salisbury's oration so compelling to the king. Dick the Butcher urges his fellows to "kill all the lawyers"; the rebels hang the Clerk of Chartham for his literacy; and Cade finds Saye guilty of "most traitorously corrupt[ing] the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school" (4.2.71, 78-101, 4.7.29-30). As Saye begs for his life, Cade sums up the rebellion's antipathy toward eloquence: "He shall die, an it be but for pleading so well for his life" (4.7.99-100).

When eloquence merits death, accommodation between rulers and ruled becomes impossible. Holinshed records that upon receiving a petition from the rebels, the royal council "persuaded the king rather to suppress those rebels by force, than by faire promises."⁵⁹ Shakespeare's Henry VI, by contrast, wants to spare as many of the rebels' lives as possible. "I myself," he resolves, "Rather than bloody war shall cut them short, / Will parley with Jack Cade their general" (4.4.10-12). But Cade has no time for "parley." A messenger rushes in and informs the king that the rebels are about to enter the city to oust Henry as a "usurper," to crown Cade, and to murder "all scholars, lawyers, courtiers, gentlemen" (4.4.29, 35). Cade's rejection of rhetoric precludes any kind of negotiation between the commons and their monarch; he refuses to submit his violence to the rhetoric of representation.

This refusal of mediation makes Cade's violence not only highly destructive but also quite effective. The rebels articulate, and try to redress, some real grievances.⁶⁰ Take, for instance, the accusations they level against Saye. Saye proclaims his "trust...in [his own] innocence" (4.4.58), and the Arden editor concurs: "Shakespeare chose to ignore the implications of corrupt, if not criminal, behaviour in the chronicles and presents Saye as a vulnerable victim, pathetic, sick and frightened of the brutality of the rebels" (4.4.0.3n). But this is to privilege Saye's sententious self-characterization over the rebels' quite specific complaints. Selling Maine and Anjou seems to be reason enough for Shakespeare's rebels to seek his head—and for the chronicles' House of Commons to urge that he be "dolie punished." To this Cade adds a long list of grievances, mingling the farcical with the urgently topical. Saye, Cade claims, has perpetrated such heinous crimes as "erecting a grammar school," introducing printing to England, and building a paper mill (4.7.29-34). Yet Saye has also (allegedly) "appointed justices of peace to call poor men before them about matters they were not able to answer" and then "put them in prison, and because they could not read thou hast hanged them" (that is, because they could not claim the benefit of clergy) (4.7.37-42). To the rebels, Saye represents a criminal justice system weighted heavily against the poor and illiterate. Shakespeare, as Chris Fitter argues, thus breaks with the chronicles "to transform the murder of Lord Saye...into a kind of martial law from below."⁶¹

This violence, however, cuts down innocent and guilty alike. For example, one of Cade's soldiers meets an unexpected demise when he rushes in with a report for his leader, crying "Jack Cade! Jack Cade!" (4.6.7). Cade, who has just decided that "it shall be treason for any that calls me other than Lord Mortimer," orders his men, "Knock him down there!" (4.6.5-6, 8). And so

⁵⁹ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 3:224. In Hall's account, the king and his council reject the petition even more vehemently: the supplication "was both of the kyng, and his counsaill, disdainfully taken," and "it was concluded, that suche proude rebelles, should rather be suppressed and tamed, with violence and force then with fayre wordes or amicable aunswer" (*Union*, 220-21).

⁶⁰ Fitter, *Radical Shakespeare*, 46-129; Cartelli, "Jack Cade in the Garden"; Caldwell, "Jack Cade."

⁶¹ Fitter, *Radical Shakespeare*, 90.

perishes the hapless soldier; so falls the Clerk of Chartham for knowing how to write his own name; so dies (in the Quarto) a sergeant-at-law who seeks “justice” from Cade against Dick the Butcher, who “has rausht [his] wife” (sig. G2v). Cade, as Arnold points out, “is not a would-be king but a would-be tyrant.”⁶²

Cade’s rebellion thus overturns one crucial convention of popular protest in early modern England: protestations of loyalty to the king. Petitioners and libelers, Walter has shown, justified their complaints by invoking “public transcripts” that “ground[ed] legitimacy in the use of power to protect...the subsistence of subordinate groups.”⁶³ The “rhetoric of violence” thus sits somewhat incongruously alongside professions of obedience. In the aftermath of the Midlands Rising of 1607, for instance, a libel attributed to the tenants of Lincolnshire attacked “you gentlemen that rack yo^r rents, and throwe downe Land for corne.” The threat of violence is particularly blunt: “we have agreed even for the comons sake / a bloody enterprise to tak[e]”; “Therefore take ordre som, wch be very good. / or ells as we haue saied, yt shall cost the price of blood.” Yet in between these threats the libel insists that the commons mean “no harme to o[u]^r gracious King Quene Prince or any of those / but to pull downe those hawghty myndes w^{ch} against his Com[mon]^s themselves oppose.”⁶⁴ The libel, Walter notes, thus repeats “back to those in authority a public transcript which identified the king as the ‘poor man’s king’ and enclosers as enemies of both state and people.” And this strategy seems to have succeeded admirably: the libel likely helped to ensure the “effective execution” of the commission sent by the Privy Council to investigate enclosure in Lincolnshire.⁶⁵

The uprising against Suffolk follows this formula, joining the blunt threat to “tear him from your palace” with declarations of the people’s “love and loyalty” for the king (3.2.246, 250). Cade, by contrast, evidently brands Henry a “usurper.” The similar beginnings of these two revolts underscore their radically different outcomes. Both start with an unruly mob and the threat of violence; both ventriloquize parliamentary complaints from the chronicles; both decry oppressive members of the nobility. But without representation—and without the discourse of loyalty—the “rhetoric of violence” erupts in physical violence; threats lead to bloodshed. Shakespeare reimagines political representation as a collaboration between the commons and the aristocracy—and depicts the end of representation as the beginning of war between the classes.

“It Shall be So”: From Cade to *Coriolanus*

An angry mob gathers, determined to see an unpopular noble banished or executed. This man, they feel, is an enemy of the common people; he has insulted, starved, and oppressed them. They cry out against him and threaten violence, but they also rely on a representative to articulate formally their grievances. The verdict: banishment, on pain of death.

This scene, of course, takes place midway through *2 Henry VI* when the people rise against Suffolk—but it also unfolds at the center of *Coriolanus*. Both scenes could be (and have been) labeled a resounding success for the people.⁶⁶ Yet while Suffolk’s banishment and

⁶² Arnold, *The Third Citizen*, 81.

⁶³ Walter, “Public Transcripts,” 128.

⁶⁴ A lineated transcription of this libel appears in the appendix to John Walter, “‘The Pooremans Joy and the Gentlemans Plague’: A Lincolnshire Libel and the Politics of Sedition in Early Modern England,” *Past and Present* 203 (2009): 29-67, esp. 66-67, ll. 2, 12-15, 54-55.

⁶⁵ Walter, “A Lincolnshire Libel,” 64, 59.

⁶⁶ Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, 47-48, 120-53, esp. 132.

subsequent decapitation by pirates are surely good for the state, Coriolanus's exile nearly precipitates the destruction of Rome. So what's different the second time around?

The difference, I will argue, lies not so much with the people as with their representatives. Shakespeare's Roman tribunes speak the absolutist language of Jack Cade. The English rebel decides that his "mouth shall be the parliament of England" in response to Dick the Butcher's request that "the laws of England may come out of your mouth" (4.7.5-6). "I have thought upon it, it shall be so," Cade answers (4.7.11). Over a decade later, "it shall be so" resonates in the mouths of the tribunes Sicinius and Brutus as they cynically stage-manage the citizens of Rome. "Assemble presently the people hither," Sicinius tells an aedile,

And when they hear me say, "It shall be so
I'th'right and strength o'th'commons," be it either
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them
If I say fine, cry "Fine," if death, cry "Death."

· · · · ·

Aedile I shall inform them.

Brutus And when such time they have begun to cry,
Let them not cease, but with a din confus'd
Enforce the present execution
Of what we chance to sentence.

Aedile Very well.

Sicinius Make them be strong, and ready for this hint
When we shall hap to give't them. (3.3.12-16, 18-24)⁶⁷

Sicinius carefully instructs his henchman how to manage the people, reducing their voices to a mere echo of his own: "let them / If I say fine, cry 'Fine', if death, cry 'Death.'" The tribunes' "it shall be so / I'th'right and strength o'th'commons" means the same thing as Cade's "it shall be so...my mouth shall be the parliament of England." A single voice absorbs many, whether by guile or by force: "it shall be so" marks the end of popular participation in government.

Coriolanus recognizes this language as the absolutist demagoguery that it is. As the conflict between Coriolanus and the tribunes comes to a head, Sicinius asserts of Coriolanus's "mind," "It is a mind / That shall remain a poison where it is, / Not poison any further" (3.1.85-87). The word "shall" sets Coriolanus off on a diatribe against the tribunes' linguistic pretensions: he rails at their "absolute 'shall,'" their "peremptory 'shall,'" their "popular 'shall'" (3.1.89, 93, 105). Coriolanus rightly identifies "shall" as the speech act constitutive of political power. He is wrong, however, to claim that this "shall" is "but / The horn and noise o'th'monster's" (3.1.93-94). The exchange between Sicinius and the aedile reveals that this "shall" is the tribunes' own absolutist rhetoric, imposed on the people no less than on their nemesis Coriolanus.

When the plebeians assemble against Coriolanus, their voices have indeed attenuated to an echo. The one time that they do deviate from their script—crying "To th'rock, to th'rock with him"—Sicinius abruptly silences them with a shout of "Peace!" (3.3.75-76). Duly chastened, the citizens play their part. Sicinius pronounces banishment on pain of death, concluding, "i'th'people's name, / I say it shall be so" (3.3.104-5). The tribune reiterates Cade's absorption

⁶⁷ All quotations of the play come from *Coriolanus*, ed. Philip Brockbank (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1976), cited parenthetically. My discussion of *Coriolanus* is indebted to Arnold's treatment of the play in *The Third Citizen*, 179-214.

of parliament: his mouth, he claims, speaks the popular voice. And the people promptly assent: “It shall be so, it shall be so” (3.3.106). The tribune Brutus repeats the verdict: “There’s no more to be said but he is banish’d, / As enemy to the people and his country. / It shall be so!” (3.3.117-19). Right on cue the people again cry, “It shall be so, it shall be so” (3.3.119). The tribunes have successfully reduced the people’s voices to an echo of their own.

Shakespeare adapted—and radically expanded—this cynical demagoguery from his primary source, Plutarch’s *Lives*. Plutarch (in Thomas North’s translation) relates that during the trial of Coriolanus the tribunes arranged for the people “to giue their voices by Tribes, and not by hundreds: for by this meanes the multitude of the poore needy people (and all such rable as had nothing to loose, and had lesse regard of honestie before their eies) came to be of greater force...then the noble honest citizens.” In Plutarch’s account, the tribunes’ scheming ensures that the voices of the “multitude of the poore needy people” carry the vote: “when they came to tell the voices of the Tribes, there were three voices odde, which condemned [Coriolanus] to be banished for life.”⁶⁸ Shakespeare’s tribunes, by contrast, do not merely manage the vote but even script the voices of the people. Like Cade, the tribunes of *Coriolanus* articulate popular (and thoroughly justified) grievances against a member of the political elite; also like Cade, their self-serving, absolutist ambitions threaten to tear the state apart.

The difference between the banishment scenes of *2 Henry VI* and *Coriolanus*, then, is the difference between “they say” and “I say.” Salisbury’s “they say,” even if it is the hollow disclaimer of a cunning politician, attributes independent agency to the commons. And the commons amply display that agency, punctuating Salisbury’s rhetorical set-piece with their own clamorous threats against Suffolk. Sicinius, however, silences the Roman citizens as soon as they start to go off script. The tribunes’ “I say it shall be so” decisively subordinates the voices of the represented to the rhetoric of their putative representatives. Like those members of the House of Commons discussed above in Chapter 1, Shakespeare’s tribunes speak not only *for* the people but *as* the people.

For Coriolanus, the emergence of a “popular” power in Rome heralds civil war. “My soul aches / To know,” he laments

when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter ’twixt the gap of both, and take
The one by th’other. (3.1.107-11)

And so class conflict rages, from Cade to *Coriolanus*. But “confusion” and clamor, as we have seen, were also forms of popular protest that might stop just short of bloodshed. With their voices and their bodies, the commons of *2 Henry VI* force their way into the deliberations of their rulers. Popular noise could devolve into civil war, but it might also realize the participatory promise of England’s “mixed constitution.”

Shakespeare was not the only one to suggest that the tensions between rulers and ruled could be productive as well as destructive. In his *Discourses*, Machiavelli observes that “there are two severall humours in every Republique, that of the Commons, and the other of the Great-ones,” and contends that “all the lawes that are made in favour of liberty, spring first from their

⁶⁸ Plutarch, *The lives of the noble Grecians and Romanes*, trans. Thomas North (London, 1595), sig. X3v.

disagreement.”⁶⁹ This claim, as J. G. A. Pocock notes, was “shocking and incredible to minds which identified union with stability and virtue, conflict with innovation and decay.”⁷⁰ What was “shocking and incredible” to the cultural elite, however, might not have shocked the minds of ordinary playgoers in Shakespeare’s London.

⁶⁹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *Machiavels discourses. upon the first Decade of T. Livius*, trans. Edward Dacres (London, 1636), sig. B10v.

⁷⁰ J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 194. See also Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 1:181-82.

4. “Look no more”: Jonson’s *Catiline* and the Politics of *Enargeia*

At times, Shakespeare even seems ambivalent about what Brutus in *Julius Caesar* calls the “savage spectacle” of republican violence (3.1.223).¹ After Caesar’s assassination, Brutus leads his companions in a grotesque display of patriotism: they wash their hands in Caesar’s blood and smear it all over their swords. “Then,” Brutus continues, “walk we forth even to the market-place, / And waving our red weapons o’er our heads / Let’s all cry, ‘Peace, Freedom and Liberty’” (3.1.108-10). Inspired by this bloody spectacle, Brutus and Cassius gleefully imagine Caesar’s death as the piece of theater that it in fact is. “How many ages hence,” asks Cassius, “Shall this our lofty scene be acted over / In states unborn and accents yet unknown?” (3.1.111-13). “How many times shall Caesar bleed in sport,” Brutus adds, “That now on Pompey’s basis lies along, / No worthier than the dust?” (3.1.114-16). This dizzying metatheater locates the power of dramatic spectacle in repetition: over and over, Caesar will “bleed in sport.” For the conspirators, and perhaps for Shakespeare as well, this bloody scene offers a study in republican freedom every time it is staged. “So oft as that shall be,” Cassius asserts, “So often shall the knot of us be called / The men who gave their country liberty”—even in the monarchy of early modern England (3.1.116-18).

If Shakespeare is ambivalent about the link between theatrical violence and republicanism, there is no question where Jonson stands. In the fifth act of *Catiline His Conspiracy*, Jonson’s Cicero conjures the scenes of slaughter that the Roman republic has narrowly escaped. “This was the spectacle these fiends intended / To please their malice,” he concludes (5.3.186-87).² The conspirator Cethegus seizes on the incipient theatrical metaphor:

Ay, and it would
Have been a brave one, Consul. But your part
Had not then been so long as now it is.
I should have quite defeated your oration,
And slit that fine rhetorical pipe of yours
I’ the first scene. (5.3.187-92)

Jonson’s audience was apparently just as impatient with Cicero’s “fine rhetorical pipe,” and just as eager to see a “brave” spectacle on the stage. In an address “To the reader in Ordinary” printed in the 1611 quarto, Jonson, prickly as ever, informs this reader, “Though you commend the first two acts, with the people, because they are the worst, and dislike the oration of Cicero, in regard you read some pieces of it at school and understand them not yet, I shall find the way to forgive you” (4-7). Jonson aligns “the people” in the theater and “the reader in ordinary” with the bloodthirsty Cethegus, lusting after spectacle and bored by the length of Cicero’s “part.”

Jonsonian dramaturgy and the Roman republic are equally under siege. At least for Jonson, so too was the English state. *Catiline*, as critics have shown, reflects two particular moments of religious and political crisis: the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, and the 1610 assassination of the French King Henry IV by a Catholic fanatic. These events, Ian Donaldson

¹ All quotations of the play are from *Julius Caesar*, ed. David Daniell (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1998), cited parenthetically in the text.

² All quotations of Jonson’s works come from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online*, gen. ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), cited parenthetically in the text.

argues, “gave Jonson a vivid and violent picture of what might eventually happen to a nation so sharply divided over issues of religion.”³

Catiline sets out to purge this violence from the state—and from the stage. In this chapter, I argue that Cicero’s fight to save the republic is also a battle against the kind of spectacular drama that, Jonson claimed, his audiences so enjoyed.⁴ Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, the foundational text of neoclassical poetics, teaches that fantastical or gory spectacles should be made visible only through language, not onstage action. “What so is shown,” Horace (in Jonson’s translation) asserts, “I not believe and hate” (269). As discussed in Chapter 1, Jonson’s Horace instead instructs the dramatist to “take / Much from the sight, which fair report will make / Present anon” (261-63). Horace, at least according to Jonson, here invokes the rhetorical technique *enargeia*: the power of language to conjure an image. Backed by Horace’s authority, Jonson rejects the sensational spectacles of the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage in favor of neoclassical *enargeia*. Cicero’s rhetoric insistently puts images of violence before his audience’s eyes only to prevent their realization onstage. At stake in the political conflict between Cicero and the conspirators, then, is a corresponding set of theatrical and metatheatrical antagonisms: rhetoric versus violence, the verbal illusion of spectacle versus the thing itself, neoclassical versus popular dramaturgy, even Jonson versus his audience.

Jonson’s metatheatrical polemic thus works to reaffirm the hierarchies of representation that I sketched in Chapter 1. Critics like Syme, Meek, and Barkan have argued that the interplay of word and image empowered early modern dramatic representation—including in Jonson’s own comedies and masques.⁵ But in *Catiline* Jonson offers a different, and highly tendentious, answer to the “paradox of representation.” For the early moderns, I have shown, *enargeia* provided a seemingly straightforward resolution to this paradox. Classical and early modern rhetorical theory, as discussed above, described “language as a quasi-physical force which penetrates into the mind of the listener.”⁶ Informed by this theory, Renaissance orators, poets,

³ Ian Donaldson, “Talking with Ghosts: Ben Jonson and the English Civil War,” *Ben Jonson Journal* 17.1 (2010): 13. See also Peter Lake, “Ben Jonson and the Politics of ‘Conversion’: *Catiline* and the Relocation of Roman (Catholic) Virtue,” *Ben Jonson Journal* 19.2 (2012): 163-89.

⁴ Jonson, while certainly biased, was not wholly exaggerating the contemporary preference for spectacle. Against the critical commonplace that plays were meant to be “heard” rather than “seen,” Gabriel Egan persuasively argues that “plays were much more commonly thought of as visual rather than aural experiences” in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (“Hearing or Seeing a Play? Evidence of Early Modern Theatrical Terminology,” *Ben Jonson Journal* 8.1 [2001]: 332). See also Erika T. Lin, *Shakespeare and the Materiality of Performance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 112.

⁵ As Jonas Barish, in *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), aptly puts it: “it is precisely the uneasy synthesis between a formal antitheatricalism, which condemns the arts of show and illusion on the one hand, and a subversive hankering after them on the other, that lends to Jonson’s comic masterpieces much of their unique high tension and precarious equilibrium” (154).

⁶ Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 128.

and historians all relied on *enargeia* to generate compelling illusions of presence.⁷ Yet if *enargeia* solves the paradox of representation, its solution only exacerbates the latent conflict between presence and absence, representation and thing represented. In the wake of poststructuralism, we have come to take for granted this constitutive difference (or *différance*) built into the structure of representation. *Enargeia*, like the Derridean sign, is defined by the dialectic of absence and presence.⁸ But what made this technique so powerful for its early modern practitioners was its ability to elide difference and deferral, to produce “ocular proof” through words alone. *Enargeia* makes an aesthetic and epistemological claim for the priority of word over image; it reinscribes just the sort of “violent hierarchy” that Derridean deconstruction sought to overturn.⁹

For Jonson, who throughout his career “fought unavailingly for the priority of his words” over spectacle, this “violent hierarchy” was in little need of deconstruction.¹⁰ Even at moments in which he seems more sympathetic to the visual, Jonson still posits an antagonistic relationship between poetry and picture, rhetoric and spectacle. He notes in his posthumously published commonplace book *Timber, or Discoveries* that “picture” (visual representation in general) “doth so enter and penetrate the inmost affection—being done by an excellent artificer—as sometimes it o’ercomes the power of speech and oratory” (1085-87). “Picture” and “oratory” struggle for dominance within the spectator/auditor. The epigraph to *Catiline*, adapted from Horace, sets up this very opposition: the poet laments that even the pleasures of the upper classes have passed from the ear to the “incertos oculos,” the “wandering eyes.” As John Peacock observes, “the rivalry of ear and eye works as a dramatic opposition” in the play, and so “*Catiline* is as much a cultural parable as a political tragedy.”¹¹

Enargeia, I argue, drives cultural polemic and political tragedy alike. *Catiline* resolves the paradox of representation by subordinating visual presence to verbal mediation, “making present” to “standing for.” This hierarchy of representation coordinates the play’s tendentious interventions in poetics and historiography. Jonson’s *enargeia* aligns neoclassical poetics with humanist history, producing a novel experiment in dramatic historiography. Scholars have emphasized the interpenetration of history and poetry in the Renaissance, yet English poets and dramatists themselves increasingly set the two arts in opposition.¹² In 1607, just a few years

⁷ Heinrich F. Plett, *Enargeia in Classical Antiquity and the Early Modern Age: The Aesthetics of Evidence* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); Nancy S. Struener, *The Language of History in the Renaissance: Rhetoric and Historical Consciousness in Florentine Humanism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 75-76.

⁸ Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 9.

⁹ Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 41.

¹⁰ Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574-1642*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 173. See also Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare’s London*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 102-4.

¹¹ Joseph Wallace, “The Historical Context of the Epigraph to Jonson’s *Catiline*,” *Notes and Queries* 58.2 (2011): 282-83; John Peacock, “Visual Culture,” in *Ben Jonson in Context*, ed. Julie Sanders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 201-10, esp. 205-6.

¹² Donald R. Kelley and David Harris Sacks, eds., *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Blair Worden, “Historians and Poets,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68.1-2 (2005): 71-

before *Catiline* was first performed and published, the playwright Thomas Dekker informed his readers, “I write as a Poet, not as an Historian, and...these two doe not liue vnder one law.”¹³ Jonson’s innovation was to make poetry and history live under a single law: the law of *enargeia*. Since Hayden White’s *Metahistory* and the “linguistic turn” in historical studies, it has become widely accepted that rhetorical tropes structure representation in historiography no less than in fiction.¹⁴ For Jonson, however, this conclusion has a polemical corollary: even in dramatic fiction, the representational mechanism of history must be primarily verbal, not visual. Through hundreds and hundreds of lines of quite literal translation, Jonson stages a history that attacks the visual epistemology of its own theatrical medium.

Yet in its metaphors of vision, *enargeia* cannot but conjure that which it displaces. It is, after all, the most pictorial of figures: *enargeia*, Erasmus writes, sets its object up “like a picture to look at, so that we seem to have painted the scene rather than described it.”¹⁵ Jonson’s hierarchy of representation thus deconstructs itself, banishing spectacles of violence only to represent them in speech. And in the rhetorical tradition, speech was no less violent than spectacle. Classical and Renaissance rhetoricians often compared words to weapons, and *enargeia* in particular was praised for its ability to “enslave” its listeners.¹⁶ Jonson’s coercive illusionism attempts, recursively, to stabilize the hierarchy that it enacts by subjugating spectacle and spectators alike. But as Ciceronian *enargeia* dominates the senate and the people of Rome, rhetoric increasingly resembles the spectacular violence that it has replaced—and Cicero, the elected consul, increasingly resembles his nemesis Catiline.¹⁷ *Catiline* thus identifies a kind of “mimetic rivalry” within the structure of representation itself: if *enargeia* triumphs over

93. For representative early modern statements, see Philip Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, in *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan van Dorsten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 59-121; and John Marston, *Sophonisba*, in *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, ed. Macdonald P. Jackson and Michael Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), “To the General Reader,” ll. 7-11.

¹³ Thomas Dekker, *The Whore of Babylon*, in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), ll. 23-24.

¹⁴ Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). See Donald R. Kelley, *Frontiers of History: Historical Inquiry in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 215-24.

¹⁵ Desiderius Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum comentarii duo*, trans. Betty I. Knott, in *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 24, ed. Craig Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 577.

¹⁶ Wayne A. Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men’s Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 34-35, 41-42; Longinus, *On the Sublime*, trans. W. H. Fyfe, rev. Donald Russell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 15.9 (trans. modified). See Chapter 1 above.

¹⁷ Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and Their Contemporaries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 196; J. S. Lawry, “*Catiline* and ‘the Sight of Rome in Us,’” in *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, ed. P. A. Ramsey (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval & Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), 395-407, esp. 402-3; Lynn S. Meskill, *Ben Jonson and Envy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 183-84.

spectacle, it is only because Cicero's rhetoric has so successfully made present, and inflicted on his audience, the violence that it excludes.¹⁸

“Under One Law”: *Enargeia* in Theater and History

Among the classical rhetoricians, Quintilian offers the most extended—and, in the Renaissance, the most influential—discussion of *enargeia*. The two longest treatments are to be found in books 6 and 8 of the *Institutio Oratoria*. According to William Drummond, Jonson was intimately familiar with these books: the playwright believed that “Quintilian’s sixth, seventh, eighth books were not only to be read, but altogether digested” (*Informations*, 97-98). In the sixth book, as I discussed in Chapter 1, Quintilian stresses the representational power of *enargeia*. Through *phantasiai* or “visions,” “the images of absent things are presented (*repraesentantur*) to the mind in such a way that we seem actually to see them with our eyes and have them physically present to us.”¹⁹ This illusion of sight and presence is an artifact of language, but it nonetheless appeals to the visual faculty.

Enargeia, originally theorized in the context of forensic oratory as a way to “reproduce the vividness of ocular proof through language,” was also crucial to the mimetic effects of classical poetics and historiography.²⁰ While this rhetorical vividness is the driving principle of Jonson’s dramatic historiography in *Catiline*, the playwright took a drastically different approach in the 1605 quarto of *Sejanus*. To authenticate his earlier Roman play—“to show my integrity in the story” (19-20), as he put it in the address “To the Readers”—Jonson scrupulously documented his sources in the margins. Columns of Latin citations flank the play-text and even spill over into the center of the page; superscript letters in the text direct the reader to the marginalia, interrupting any continuous experience of reading.²¹ Together with the address to the reader and the commendatory verses, the marginalia mark the quarto as a literary artifact, as a piece of historical scholarship ready to take its place among the Latin tomes that it cites. Yet they also puncture the play’s dramatic fiction, shifting the burden of historical proof from Jonson’s verse to those authoritative sources.

In stark contrast, the margins of the 1611 quarto of *Catiline* are completely bare.²² If anything, however, Jonson’s scholarship is even more meticulous. Entire swaths of the play are literal translations of Sallust and Cicero: the “oration of Cicero” that “the reader in ordinary” so disliked takes up some three hundred lines of act four. While the *Sejanus* quarto relied on the “evidence” of its marginal citations to guarantee authenticity, in *Catiline* Jonson turns instead to *evidentia*. According to Carlo Ginzburg, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the primary

¹⁸ I borrow the concept of “mimetic rivalry” from René Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, trans. James G. Williams (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001): “The principal source of violence between human beings is mimetic rivalry, the rivalry resulting from imitation of a model who becomes a rival or of a rival who becomes a model” (11).

¹⁹ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell, 5 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 6.2.29.

²⁰ Kathy Eden, *Poetic and Legal Fiction in the Aristotelian Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 72; Andrew D. Walker, “*Enargeia* and the Spectator in Greek Historiography,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 123 (1993): 353-77.

²¹ Jonson, *Seianus His Fall* (London, 1605). See John Jowett, “‘Fall before this Booke’: The 1605 Quarto of *Sejanus*,” *TEXT* 4 (1988): 279-95.

²² See Jonson, *Catiline His Conspiracy* (London, 1611).

criterion of historical truth began to shift from *evidentia* to evidence, from description to citation.²³ On the cusp of this paradigm shift, Jonson discards scholarly apparatus in favor of a direct re-presentation of history; he returns to the illusionistic method of the classical and humanist historians. Plutarch, for example, famously praised the historiographical *enargeia* of Thucydides, who was continually “striving to make the auditour of his wordes the spectatour as it were of the deeds therein contened.” And in his influential *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, Jean Bodin argues that histories let readers study the causes and the ends of things “as if they were placed beneath their eyes (*quasi sub aspectum positos*)”—practically the definition of *enargeia* in the classical rhetoric manuals.²⁴

Plutarch’s theatrical metaphor suggests a longstanding tropological connection between history and theater. As Erasmus remarks in his popular rhetoric textbook *De Copia*, *enargeia* has often been used by both poets and historians. This rhetorical technique, he observes, is “especially remarkable in messengers’ speeches (*narrationes nunciorum*) in tragedy, for these take the place of a real scene (*vice spectaculi subiiciuntur*) and report something which either cannot be represented on the stage for practical reasons or which is not the sort of thing one wants to represent.” These messenger speeches enforce the hierarchy of neoclassical representation, replacing spectacle (*spectaculum*) with narration (*narratio*). “Nor does it matter for this convention,” Erasmus adds, “whether the narrative is true or false.”²⁵ Terence Cave comments on this passage, “Potential as well as actual occurrences may become the material of *enargeia*: the possible future, no less than the historical past, may be made present in language.”²⁶ *Enargeia* extends the limits of theatrical representation far beyond what can or should take place onstage. In its linguistic surface, history and poetry, past and future, fact and fiction become indistinguishable.

Although Jonson surely knew Erasmus’s textbook, he was even more familiar with the source for this discussion of theatrical *enargeia*: Horace’s *Ars Poetica*. Horace (in Jonson’s careful translation) writes:

to the stage at all thou mayst not tender
Things worthy to be done within, but take
Much from the sight, which fair report will make
Present anon. (260-63)

As I discussed in Chapter 1, this translation transfers the representational power of the theater from spectacle to language, from those things taken “from the sight” to the “fair report.” Such

²³ Carlo Ginzburg, “Description and Citation,” in *Threads and Traces: True, False, Fictive*, trans. Anne C. Tedeschi and John Tedeschi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 7-24.

²⁴ Plutarch, *The philosophie, commonlie called, the morals*, trans. Philemon Holland (London, 1603), sig. Nnnn6r; Jean Bodin, *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, trans. Beatrice Reynolds (New York: Norton, 1969), 10-11; Bodin, *Methodus, ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* (Paris, 1572), sig. a2v. See Chapter 1 above for the classical vocabulary of *enargeia*.

²⁵ Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum*, trans. Knott, 578-79; Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum*, ed. Betty I. Knott, in *Opera Omnia*, vol. I-6 (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1988), 204.

²⁶ Terence Cave, “*Enargeia*: Erasmus and the Rhetoric of Presence in the Sixteenth Century,” *L’Esprit Créateur* 16.4 (1976): 8.

subordination of spectacle characterizes not only classical tragedy but also the neo-Senecan “closet” drama of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. *Catiline* shares many formal features with these plays, including frequent *sententiae* (brief moral sayings), long set-piece speeches, very little onstage action, the use of a *nuntius* (messenger) to narrate offstage events, and a chorus that offers its own limited perspective on the play. “Neo-Senecan drama,” Daniel Cadman notes, “therefore shifts the emphasis away from dramatic action and visual spectacle,” instead exploring the perils of political power and corruption and “interrogat[ing] abstract political and philosophical issues.”²⁷ Jonson wields this neoclassical form in characteristically tendentious fashion, mounting an assault on the commercial theater in its own medium.

Rhetoric vs. Spectacle

In *Catiline*, Jonson thus uses the *enargeia* of his historical sources to contest what he describes in the play’s dedicatory epistle as the vain spectacles of these “jig-given times” (4). Because his own copy of these sources—the 1564 Basel edition of Sallust—survives, we can reconstruct the path from humanist folio to metatheatrical polemic. Jonson’s Sallust bears some resemblance to the *Sejanus* quarto: primary sources are hemmed in by masses of marginal notes and interwoven with extended commentaries. From 1605 to 1611, however, Jonson evidently rethought the relationship between drama and history. In the first quarto of *Catiline*, we see the playwright translating the densely annotated folio of the humanist historian into an illusionistic experience of history on the stage and on the page.

Jonson’s adaptation of Cicero’s speeches provides the most striking example of this scholarly practice. In the fourth Catilinarian oration, Cicero seeks to persuade the senate to execute the captive conspirators by describing what would have happened if they had succeeded in their plot to overthrow the republic. He conjures a hellish vision of Rome in ruins:

I seem to myself to see this city, the light of the whole world and the citadel of all nations, suddenly collapsing into a single sheet of flame. In my mind’s eye I see our country buried with pitiful and unburied heaps of citizens.

Videor enim mihi hanc urbem uidere lucem orbis terrarum, atque arcem omnium gentium subito uno incendio concidentem. Cerno animo sepultam patriam, miseros atque insepultos acervos ciuium.²⁸

In the margin next to this passage, the commentary in Jonson’s edition (authored by Melanchthon) points out that this is an example of “*Hypotyposis*, with which [Cicero] figures and depicts public destruction, the authors of which the conspirators were going to be (*Hypotyposis, qua figurat & depingit publicas clades, quarum autores futuri erant coniurati*).”²⁹ *Hypotyposis* and *enargeia* (or *evidentia*) were often synonyms for classical and Renaissance rhetoricians.³⁰ Drawing on the familiar claim that *enargeia* makes a verbal narrative seem like a painting, Melanchthon uses verbs associated with the visual arts to describe Cicero’s *enargeia*:

²⁷ Daniel Cadman, *Sovereigns and Subjects in Early Modern Neo-Senecan Drama: Republicanism, Stoicism and Authority* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2015), 4.

²⁸ Cicero, *In L. Catilinam Oratio, seu Invectiva IIII*, in *C. Crispi Salustii [...] opera, quae quidam extant, omnia* (Basel, 1564), sig. Yy4v. Translation modified from the Loeb edition, Cicero, *In Catilinam I-IV*, trans. C. Macdonald (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 4.11.

²⁹ My translation.

³⁰ See, for example, Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 9.2.40; Johannes Susenbrotus, *Epitome troporum ac schematum* (London, 1562), sig. F4v.

figurare, to shape; *depingere*, to paint.³¹ But this aesthetic or mimetic effect has a political function. Cicero uses *hypotyposis* to depict “publicas clades,” not merely “public destruction” but the destruction of the republic, *clades rei publicae*. Rather than abstract this figure from its context as an example of rhetorical ornamentation, the gloss emphasizes that nothing less than the republic itself is at stake.

Toward the end of *Catiline*, Jonson inserts this section of the fourth Catilinarian into Cicero’s judicial proceedings against the conspirators. The fate of the republic hangs in the balance as Cicero grandiloquently demonstrates their guilt to the senate. Jonson translates the passage almost word for word but shifts the verbs from the first to the second person:

Think but with me you saw this glorious city,
The light of all the earth, tower of all nations,
Suddenly falling in one flame. Imagine
You viewed your country buried with the heaps
Of slaughtered citizens that had no grave. (5.3.174-78)

Given how closely these lines follow the Latin cited above, the change in person is surely no accident. Jonson transforms Cicero’s personal vision (“*I* seem to myself to see,” “In my mind’s eye *I* see”) into a shared illusion: the orator addresses the senate, “Think but with me *you* saw...” Quintilian defines *hypotyposis* as “the expression in words of a given situation in such a way that it seems to be a matter of seeing rather than of hearing” and adds, “We can form a picture (*imaginamur*) not only of the past and the present, but also of the future or of what might have happened.”³² This counterfactual *enargeia*—a picture of “what might have happened”—is precisely what Cicero presents here. As Melanchthon’s gloss points out, the conspirators “were going to be (*futuri erant*)” the authors of this slaughter. With the imperative “imagine,” Jonson’s Cicero invokes the power of rhetoric to conjure, and thereby frustrate, the future that “might have happened”; he invites his audience to join him in constructing this fantastic vision of the republic in shambles.³³

As the speech continues, it becomes clear that Jonson’s Cicero is less inviting than conscripting his audience into performing this imaginative work. Cicero imagines the conspirator Lentulus “here reigning,” Catiline coming “with his fierce army,” and

the cries of matrons,
The flight of children, and the rape of virgins,
Shrieks of the living, with the dying groans
On every side t’invade your sense. (5.3.179, 181-84)

These sounds of murder and mayhem transport the conspirators’ army right into the senate. Jonson is drawing on what Ruth Webb calls the classical “conception of the human body as permeable” and thus vulnerable to the penetrative force of rhetoric. In his discussion of *enargeia*, Quintilian writes that a speech cannot achieve “total domination” if it “goes no further than the ears, and the judge feels that he is merely being told the story of the matters he has to decide, without their being brought out and displayed to his mind’s eye.”³⁴ Rhetorical domination depends on the illusion of sight, on sensory confusion. Cicero’s rhetoric imitates the (sexual) violence of Catiline’s “fierce army,” violating the integrity of his audience’s imagination by

³¹ See, for instance, Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum*, trans. Knott, 577.

³² Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 9.2.40-41.

³³ See Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature*, 202.

³⁴ Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 98; Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 8.3.62.

forcing a grisly vision before their “mind’s eye.” As Quintilian puts it, only vivid description can “penetrate to the emotions” of the hearer—or, in the words of Jonson’s Cicero, “invade your sense.”³⁵

Such a sensory invasion is precisely what antitheatricalists feared most. In *The Schoole of Abuse*, Stephen Gosson admonishes anyone who “resortes too Theaters too bee assaulted.” There, Gosson asserts, we find music “to tickle the ear,” finery “to flatter the sight,” and effeminate gestures “to rauish the sence”; there, plays “by the priuie entries of the eare, slip downe into the hart, & with gunshotte of affection gaule the minde, where reason and vertue should rule the roste.”³⁶ In keeping with his “deeply rooted antitheatricalism,” Jonson likely would have agreed with much of this, and he certainly condemned those theatrical arts that “flatter the sight.”³⁷ But the power of speech to slip in through the ear, to penetrate the body and even “rauish the sence,” is essential to his conception of theatrical representation. As George Chapman writes in a commendatory verse to *Sejanus*, Jonson’s “lively evidence” (that is, his *enargeia*) turns his “hearers” into “spectators,” and “the sense / That thy spectators haue of good or ill, / Thou inject’st jointly to thy readers’ souls” (97-101).³⁸ Jonson’s *enargeia*, Chapman suggests, is didactic because of, not despite, its penetrative force; whether on the stage or on the page, it injects the audience with the playwright’s own moral sensibility. While Gosson worries that this violation will overthrow “reason and vertue,” for Jonson it starkly separates “good” from “ill.”

In *Catiline*, rhetoric’s seductive illusion of presence thus empowers the eloquent individual to guide and protect the state. The central problem of the play, as Joseph Wallace observes, is “the problem of sight”: “to match intention with an exterior, visible form.”³⁹ Cicero’s *enargeia* solves this problem admirably. “This was the spectacle these fiends intended / To please their malice,” he concludes his speech, rendering the conspirators’ intention visible in language (5.3.186-87). Cethegus’s violent response—his bloodthirsty threat to “slit that fine rhetorical pipe of yours”—proves no match for the overbearing power of *enargeia*. Yet as the invasive force of Cicero’s rhetoric “enforces his will on the citizens of Rome,” the republic seems less and less republican. Indeed, Jonathan Goldberg goes so far as to condemn Cicero as “the mask of republicanism covering absolutism.”⁴⁰

But according to no less an authority than Cicero himself, this tension between republicanism and absolutism is precisely the effect of supreme eloquence. In *De Oratore*, Cicero (through the character of Crassus) paradoxically claims that in every free nation (“in omni libero populo”) the art of rhetoric alone has ruled the state (“dominata est”). Restating this contrast between freedom and domination, Cicero lauds the orator’s power to rule the people, the

³⁵ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 8.3.68; translation modified.

³⁶ Stephen Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse* (London, 1579), sigs. B6v-B7r.

³⁷ Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice*, 132.

³⁸ Chapman adapts this verse from Plutarch’s praise of Thucydides’s *enargeia* (quoted above). See Plutarch, *Moralia*, vol. 4, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), 347a.

³⁹ Joseph Wallace, “Wandering Eyes: Jonson’s *Catiline* and the Problem of Sight,” *Renaissance Drama* 41.1-2 (2013): 101.

⁴⁰ Rebecca Lemon, *Treason by Words: Literature, Law, and Rebellion in Shakespeare’s England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 156; Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature*, 196.

judges, and the senate as both “regium” and “liberale”—characteristic of a king and of the free.⁴¹ Jonson’s Cicero exercises this same quasi-monarchical power: his authoritarian eloquence rules the senate and the people of Rome. And in this Rome there is no place for the conspiracy’s theatrical populism. Jonson stages an antitheatrical, antidemocratic republicanism, a representational politics predicated on the erasure of the represented.

Spectacles of Violence

It is thus easy enough to see why Jonson’s audience preferred the first two acts, before Cicero takes the stage. The arch-orator’s dominant presence in the latter half of the play decisively shifts the dramatic focus from the visual to the verbal. By contrast, the early scenes are filled with the conspirators’ ominous plotting, heralded by stage effects like “*a groan of many people...under ground*” and “*a fiery light*” (1.1.315 sd, 318 sd). As early as the play’s first lines Jonson associates the conspiracy with lurid, spectacular violence. Threatening death and destruction, Sulla’s ghost opens the play in the Senecan tradition popularized by *The Spanish Tragedy*. “Behold, I come,” the spirit intones, “like a pestilence that should display / Infection through the world—which, thus, I do” (1.1.11, 14-15). With the imperative “behold,” the ghost presents itself as a spectacle. Soon, though, it draws the audience’s gaze to a new sight: the “infection” that the ghost “display[s]” is Catiline himself. The ghost’s deictic “thus” points to the theatrical business of drawing a curtain or opening a door, described in the margin of the folio with the stage direction “*Discovers Catiline in his study*” (1.1.15 sd).⁴²

No longer spectacle but stage manager, Sulla’s ghost imbues Catiline with both his theatrical potency and his fantasies of unbridled violence. “All that was mine, and bad, thy breast inherit,” the ghost commands as it begins to list Catiline’s past and future crimes: “incests, murders, rapes”; “lusts, hatreds, slaughters”; “thy murder of thy brother,” and even “the ruin of thy country” (1.1.18, 30, 64, 39, 45). This catalogue of villainy could have come right out of an antitheatrical tract. As Gosson writes, “The argument of Tragedies is wrath, crueltie, incest, iniurie, murther.”⁴³ This claim was not without merit. Kyd’s *Spanish Tragedy* and Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus*—plays, Jonson complained in the induction to *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), that were still popular well into the seventeenth century (79-82)—are filled with murder and mutilation. Plays contemporary with *Catiline* like Middleton’s *Revenger’s Tragedy* and Webster’s *Duchess of Malfi* likewise staged incest, murder, and rape. This violence, moreover, is often self-consciously theatrical. *The Spanish Tragedy* and *The Revenger’s Tragedy* culminate in scenes of elaborately choreographed slaughter carried out through a play and a masque, respectively.⁴⁴ In Jonson’s play, Catiline and his conspiracy embody this theatrical violence. When the conspirators arrive, Catiline and Cethegus reminisce about the good old days of “Sulla’s sway, when the free sword took leave / To act all that it would” (1.1.230-31). Like Sulla’s ghost, they equate “act[ing]” with indiscriminate violence, with “Rome burnt” and bloody “slaughter” (1.1.223, 235).

⁴¹ Cicero, *De Oratore*, trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 1.8.30-32.

⁴² Jonson, *The Workes of Beniamin Ionson* (London, 1616), sig. Kkk6r.

⁴³ Stephen Gosson, *Playes Confuted in fiue Actions* (London, 1582), sig. C5r.

⁴⁴ Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, 4.4; Thomas Middleton, *The Revenger’s Tragedy*, 5.3, both in *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*, ed. David Bevington et al. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002).

For the conspirators watching precludes acting; they want to be a spectacle, not spectators. When a “bloody arm” grasping a torch materializes, Cethegus feels nothing but impatience: “Look no more; / We lose time, and ourselves” (1.1.320, 324-25). According to Cethegus, spectatorship is self-alienating. The conspirators, he suggests, can only find themselves by acting, by staging the foreboding sights and sounds that they as yet only witness. Catiline later agrees, developing the opposition between looking and acting into a theatrical simile. The gluttonous few revel in culinary and architectural luxury, he claims, while “we...like calm, benumbed spectators, / Sit till our seats do crack” (1.1.404-5). Rather than passively watch the play unfold, Catiline calls on the conspirators to get up out of their seats and interrupt the drama, to create their own violent spectacle: “Wake, wake, brave friends” (1.1.409).

But while Catiline may share Cethegus’s bloodlust, he does not display the same hostility toward rhetoric. Translating from Sallust, Jonson gives his villain a speech of around one hundred lines to match Cicero’s notoriously long oration in act four. Catiline’s eloquence, however, has received little comment. According to Sallust, he was a skilled orator; Catiline “possessed adequate eloquence, but too little discretion (*satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum*).”⁴⁵ In Jonson’s copy of Sallust, the commentary glosses this phrase by quoting Cicero himself on the dangers of eloquence without wisdom.⁴⁶ Cicero begins *De Inventione* by asking “whether men and communities have received more good or evil from oratory and a consuming devotion to eloquence.” After weighing the good against the bad, he concludes “that wisdom without eloquence does too little for the good of states, but that eloquence without wisdom (*eloquentiam...sine sapientia*) is generally highly disadvantageous and is never helpful.”⁴⁷ Jonson reproduces and even amplifies Catiline’s dangerously seductive *eloquentia sine sapientia*. The play’s main conflict, then, dramatizes the historical Cicero’s ambivalence: if Jonson’s Cicero represents the right use of rhetoric, Catiline is the perfect example of its abuse.

Catiline is thus Cicero’s inverse. The conspirator, like the consul, exploits the power of *enargeia*—but for opposite purposes. While Cicero’s rhetoric reduces spectacle to a verbal illusion, Catiline conjures visions of excess only to encourage his followers to disrupt them with violence. This bloody disruption, Catiline claims, will be something of a popular revolution. He dwells on the excesses of the wealthy elite in a Rome “engrossed so by a few,” and he rallies his men to “redeem ourselves to liberty / And break the iron yoke forged for our necks” (1.1.347, 344-45). As evil as Catiline’s motives may be, his populist attack on Rome’s corrupt oligarchs is largely accurate, according to both Sallust and Jonson’s Chorus (1.1.550-90).⁴⁸ Catiline’s *enargeia* makes the elite’s prodigality visible to his audience. “It doth strike my soul,” he begins,

To see them swell with treasure, which they pour
Out i’their riots, eating, drinking, building,
Ay, i’the sea, planing of hills with valleys
And raising valleys above hills. (1.1.374, 377-80)

In Sallust, Catiline asks, “what mortal who has a manly disposition can endure that our opponents have a surfeit of riches to squander in building upon the sea and in leveling

⁴⁵ Sallust, *The War with Catiline*, trans. J. C. Rolfe, rev. John T. Ramsey (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 5.5.

⁴⁶ Sallust, *C. Crispi Salustii [...] opera, quae quidam extant, omnia* (Basel, 1564), sigs. c3v, c4r.

⁴⁷ Cicero, *De Inventione*, trans. H. M. Hubbell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949), 1.1.

⁴⁸ Sallust, *War with Catiline*, 12-13.

mountains?”⁴⁹ Jonson’s asyndeton—“riots, eating, drinking, building”—blurs all kinds of profligacy into a heady vision of consumption. But the crucial addition is the reference to sight. Catiline portrays the force that he wants his *enargeia* to exert on his audience: what he “see[s],” he says, “doth strike my soul.”

Against this picture of oligarchic excess, Catiline offers a contrasting vision of “the brave spoil the war brings” (1.1.415). He compares the conspirators to “benumbed spectators” (the theatrical simile is Jonson’s own addition) and cries, “Wake, wake, brave friends, / And meet the liberty you oft have wished for! / Behold: renown, riches, and glory court you” (1.1.409-11). In Sallust, these lines are in the passive voice: “Behold, here, here placed before your eyes (*in oculis sita sunt*), is the freedom for which you have often longed, and with it riches, honor, and glory.”⁵⁰ Jonson transposes this into the active voice: Catiline enjoins the conspirators to “meet” the liberty they yearn for and imagines that wealth and glory “court” them. What was an imaginary spectacle “placed before your eyes” in Jonson’s source becomes a scene in which the conspirators actively participate. Catiline’s *enargeia* aims to transform his auditors from “benumbed spectators” into the actors of his bloody plot. As he declares earlier in his speech, “we should come forth bright axes”—no longer lingering in passive obscurity but instead taking the stage in a blaze of violence (1.1.360).

For all their “ravenous malignity,” Jonson’s conspirators are thus not so different from Shakespeare’s.⁵¹ The conspirators of *Julius Caesar*, as discussed at the beginning of this chapter, stage the “savage spectacle” that Catiline and his crew so eagerly seek (3.1.223). Brutus calls on his companions to smear themselves in Caesar’s blood and wave their “red weapons” in the air while crying, incongruously, “Peace, Freedom and Liberty” (3.1.109-10). Yet if Brutus shares the Catilinarian conspirators’ obsession with theatrical violence, his motives are as virtuous as theirs are malign. “Liberty” and “freedom” may be the watchwords of both playwrights’ conspiracies, but Catiline and his cohorts make their insatiable bloodlust abundantly clear. When Cicero first learns of their plot to overthrow the republic, he marvels that “it so far exceeds / All insolent fictions of the tragic scene” (3.2.24-25). Catiline aims beyond the “lofty scene” enacted by Shakespeare’s conspirators, beyond the “wrath, crueltie, incest, iniurie, murther” that antitheatricalists like Gosson claimed constituted the argument of tragedy. This popular, and populist, theatricality proves to be no match for the consummate orator who, like the eloquent individual of *De Oratore*, defends the republic by dominating it. Yet Cicero’s rhetoric—like Jonson’s neoclassical dramaturgy—seems to thrive on the threat of spectacular violence that the conspirators conjure in the play’s opening scenes. Even as theatrical spectacle gives way to Ciceronian eloquence, this oratory deploys the invasive force of *enargeia* to re-present precisely those images that it has displaced.

Cedant Arma Togae

After the play’s first scene, Catiline’s malevolent theatricality largely vanishes from the stage. The threat of spectacular violence, however, becomes ever more present in language. Near the end of the play, Catiline seizes his last chance to generate the spectacle that has eluded him thus far. Having fled the city, he rallies his army to fight a final, desperate battle against the

⁴⁹ Sallust, 20.11.

⁵⁰ Sallust, 20.14-15.

⁵¹ The phrase “ravenous malignity” is from Algernon Charles Swinburne, *A Study of Ben Jonson* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1889), 57.

forces of Rome. Jonson translates much of the speech directly from Sallust but again adds a theatrical analogy at the climax. Catiline proclaims, “Methinks I see Death and the Furies waiting / What we will do, and all the heaven at leisure / For the great spectacle” (5.4.46-48). At last, the “great spectacle” that the conspirators have dreamed of. For this final act of violence, Catiline envisions a cosmic audience, both infernal and divine—not to mention the spectators in the theater. His recurrent metatheatrical language marks the conspiracy as the engine of the play’s theatricality. All spectacle, all violence, all onstage action will emanate from “Catiline His Conspiracy.”

But Cicero’s rhetoric insistently derails his adversary’s attempts to stage a spectacle—and in the process, as the original audience apparently complained, stymies the dramatic action completely. Jonson is clearly on Cicero’s side. The playwright’s dramaturgy, no less than Cicero’s rhetoric, frustrates the conspirators’ drive toward violence on the stage. Like his protagonist, Jonson submits Catiline’s “great spectacle” to the verbal representation of *enargeia*: instead of the raging battle that Catiline anticipates we get the report of a *nuntius* or messenger, the Roman general Petreius. Such speeches, as we have seen, were the essence of neoclassical *enargeia*: as Jonson puts it in his translation of Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, they make offstage events “present anon”; as Erasmus says, they “take the place of a real scene.” Petreius describes Catiline as the vision of civic destruction that the conspirator had aspired to become: “Catiline came on, not with the face / Of any man, but of a public ruin: / His count’nance was a civil war itself” (5.5.223-25). According to Petreius, the conspirator even attracted the cosmic audience that he desired, with the “Furies” themselves “trembl[ing] to see men / Do more than they” (5.5.236-38). But Catiline only becomes this spectacle of civic violence in a messenger’s speech, after he has already been killed. His “great spectacle” is in the end an artifact of *enargeia*, made present through a rhetorical description rather than onstage action.

Cicero follows the pattern of Jonson’s dramaturgy: he renders the spectacular violence of the conspiracy vividly present not in actions but in words. For example, the consul’s *enargeia* in the fifth act—describing the “cries of matrons,” the “shrieks of the living, with the dying groans / On every side t’invade your sense”—echoes and thus foils Catiline’s plot to bring down half of Rome “and invade the rest / With cries and noise” (5.3.181-84, 1.1.525-26). And Cicero similarly transforms the physical violence of Catiline’s call to “come forth bright axes” into the rhetorical violence of wounding words: “Whom it were fit the axe should hew in pieces / I not so much as wound yet with my voice” (1.1.360, 4.2.222-23). A military invasion becomes the sensory assault of *enargeia*; an axe is no more powerful than a “voice.” Jonson’s play dramatizes the representational logic of *enargeia*, transmuting the anarchic violence of the conspiracy into Cicero’s (and Jonson’s) rhetoric.

In his long—and evidently unpopular—oration against Catiline in the fourth act, Cicero brings this illusionistic force fully to bear on his audience. As critics have argued, the consul “is trying to make Catiline’s guilt immediately obvious and absolutely present to the senators through the power of direct speech”; he “wants to provide his audience with clear, powerful visions that would offer a moment of transformation, when all is revealed.”⁵² Catiline’s mistake is dismissing the power of these rhetorical visions: he condemns Cicero as “a boasting, insolent tongue-man” (4.2.102). Yet Cicero immediately proceeds to crush the conspiracy by the sheer force of his tongue. In his speech, he repeatedly uses the language of visual revelation to put the

⁵² John Michael Archer, *Sovereignty and Intelligence: Spying and Court Culture in the English Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 116; Wallace, “Wandering Eyes,” 103.

conspirators' secret plots before the senate's eyes: "Dost thou not feel thy counsels all laid open?" (4.2.124); "This the Consul sees" (4.2.131); "Thou dost nothing... / ... / But I both see and hear it" (4.2.200-202); "I see 'em, in this Senate, that were with thee" (4.2.211); "I would now send him where they all should see, / Clear as the light, his heart shine" (4.2.348-49); "All shall be clear, made plain" (4.2.386). When Catiline finally gets a chance to respond, he tries to defend himself by positing an epistemological gap between language and truth: "If an oration or high language, fathers, / Could make me guilty, here is one hath done it" (4.2.403-4). Against the weight of some three hundred lines of Ciceronian eloquence, Catiline's protestation that an oration cannot create guilt sounds hopelessly naïve. Indeed, in the rhetorical tradition manufacturing guilt is precisely the goal of "artificial proofs." As Quintilian puts it, this class of proofs "is entirely within the scope of our art, and comprises various means of creating belief (*ad faciendam fidem*)."⁵³ The upshot of this rhetorical theory is to render guilt or innocence the consequence of belief, *fides*—and *fides* is exactly what "an oration or high language" extracts from its audience.

When Catiline realizes that the senate does not share his contempt for Cicero's eloquence, he has no choice but to accept his banishment. Before he departs, however, he confronts the consul in an abortive display of violence. "I will go," he says, "But—my fine dainty speaker—" (4.2.431-32). The folio's marginal stage direction describes the action that takes place during the pauses marked by the dashes: "*He turns suddenly on Cicero*" (4.2.432 sd).⁵⁴ Cicero apparently flinches, exclaiming, "What now, fury? / Wilt thou assault me here?" But with the senate turned against him, Catiline has already been defeated; his sudden threat of violence dissipates in desperate mockery: "See, fathers, laugh you not? Who threatened him?" (4.2.432-34). As Catiline tries to get off a parting threat, a flurry of voices shout him down: "monster," "parricide," "butcher, traitor" (4.2.442-43). Swords give way to words; or, as the historical Cicero notoriously wrote to celebrate his defeat of the conspiracy, "Cedant arma togae" ("Let arms yield to the toga").⁵⁵

"No Violence"? *Catiline* and Its Afterlife

Arms may yield to the toga, but words prove to be just as coercive as swords. Jonson thus embraces the vigorously absolutist strain of Renaissance rhetoric. While (as in Cicero's *De Oratore*) classical rhetoricians sometimes described rhetoric as an instrument of rule, Wayne A. Rebhorn argues that they "chiefly imagined the art...as a contest among free citizens." By contrast, Renaissance rhetoricians emphasized the regal and imperial power of rhetoric, its ability to subjugate an audience.⁵⁶ As Henry Peacham puts it, the orator "is in a maner the emperour of mens minds & affections," and figures of speech "are as martiall instruments both of defence & inuasion." But swords and words conquer with "great difference": "that with violence, this with perswasion, that with shedding of blood, this with pearcing the affections."⁵⁷ *Catiline* dramatizes this opposition. By "pearcing the affections," Cicero's rhetoric prevents bloodshed; persuasion supplants violence as the prime means of coercion. Catiline misunderstands the force of language

⁵³ Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, 5.8.1.

⁵⁴ Jonson, *Workes*, sig. Qqq3v.

⁵⁵ Cicero, *De Officiis*, trans. Walter Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913), 1.77. In Jonson's copy of Sallust, this phrase even makes the index: Sallust, *Opera*, sig. FF2v.

⁵⁶ Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds*, 23-79, esp. 38.

⁵⁷ Henry Peacham, *The garden of eloquence* (London, 1593), sigs. AB3v-AB4r.

when he claims, “Our objects must be sought with wounds, not words” (3.1.234). Words, as Cicero says in his long speech before the senate, can “wound” as effectively as any weapon. To rely on physical violence—which Catiline increasingly does throughout the play—is to become a “sword-player,” as Cicero contemptuously labels Cethegus (5.3.70). And in a drama dominated by word-players, a “sword-player” doesn’t stand a chance.

One quantifiable measure of Cicero’s triumph over the conspiracy’s theatricality is the frequency with which stage properties appear in the play. At 3.11 props per 1,000 lines, *Catiline* is much closer to the neo-Senecan closet drama that it often resembles than to other plays written for the popular stage.⁵⁸ Yet this low frequency does not tell the whole story. In the first two acts, when the conspirators dominate the action, the frequency is a respectable 7 props per 1,000 lines. The final two acts, however, contain practically no props at all.⁵⁹ Cicero’s *enargeia* purges the stage of what Jonson considered its “theatrical claptrap,” transforming the incipient melodrama of the first two acts into a series of extended speeches.⁶⁰

Jonson, however, by no means disavowed stage properties for good. In fact, *Bartholomew Fair*, one of the next plays that he wrote, “probably requires more props than any other contemporary play.”⁶¹ There are gingerbread men, hobby-horses, and bottles of ale; pears, ballads, and drums; stocks, a booth selling roast pig, and even a puppet theater. The play is thus obsessed with what its Puritan caricature Zeal-of-the-land Busy denounces as “the vanity of the eye” (1.6.62). As Michael O’Connell argues, *Bartholomew Fair* “gathers up all [Jonson’s] ambivalence and doubt about spectacle and about the theatrical enterprise itself.”⁶² *Catiline* offers a decidedly less ambivalent solution to the tension between poetry and picture that preoccupied Jonson throughout his career. But even *Catiline* cannot fully escape the theatrical spectacle that Cicero’s rhetoric attempts to exclude. In the first two acts, praised by “the people,” Jonson deploys the visual resources of popular stagecraft if only to reject them decisively. Cicero’s *enargeia* thus derives much of its persuasive force from the specter of the spectacular violence that it purports to eliminate.

Even Cicero’s rhetorical prowess, then, cannot fully exorcise violence from the play—or from the Roman republic. As many critics have pointed out, Caesar’s impending rise undermines Cicero’s final triumph over the conspirators. Jonson’s Caesar is the malevolent provocateur behind the conspiracy, “an insidious, dangerous cancer which slowly consumes and destroys the Roman Republic.”⁶³ When Caesar and Crassus fall under suspicion, Cicero is wary of their

⁵⁸ Douglas Bruster, “The Dramatic Life of Objects in the Early Modern Theatre,” in *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama*, ed. Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 67-96, esp. 86. See Cadman, *Sovereigns and Subjects*, 149-74.

⁵⁹ Bruster, “The Dramatic Life of Objects,” 86-87.

⁶⁰ Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice*, 135.

⁶¹ Keith Sturgess, *Jacobean Private Theatre* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), 180.

⁶² Michael O’Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theater in Early-Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 124.

⁶³ Domenico Lovascio, “With a ‘Monster’s Heart’: Jonson’s Caesar and the Destruction of Roman Liberty,” *Ben Jonson Journal* 20.2 (2013): 217. See Joseph Allen Bryant, Jr., “*Catiline* and the Nature of Jonson’s Tragic Fable,” *PMLA* 69.1 (1954): 276; Richard Dutton, *Ben Jonson: To the First Folio* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 129-30; Tom Cain, “Jonson’s Humanist Tragedies,” in *Ben Jonson and the Politics of Genre*, ed. A. D. Cousins and

influence and resolves merely to keep a close watch on them. He tells Cato, “I’ll make / Myself no enemies, nor the state no traitors” (4.2.477-78). Toward the end of the play, letters for Caesar (presumably from the conspirators) arrive in the senate, and Cato moves to have them publicly read. Caesar warns, “You’ll repent / This rashness, Cicero”; the consul quickly deescalates the situation, exclaiming, “No violence! Caesar be safe” (5.5.160-61, 163). This commitment to rhetoric over violence, fundamental to Jonson’s dramaturgy and politics alike, will prove fatal to the republic.

If the specter of bitter conflict haunts the end of *Catiline*, partisan violence also colors the play’s afterlife. As civil war raged in the mid-seventeenth century, both royalists and republicans repurposed the anarchic, theatrical violence of Jonson’s *Catiline* for their own literary and political polemic. *The Tragedy of that Famous Roman Orator Marcus Tullius Cicero* (1651), for instance, has been called a republican “sequel” to *Catiline*.⁶⁴ Skipping over the rise and fall of Julius Caesar, the play begins, like *Catiline*, with a Senecan ghost looming over Rome—now not Sulla but Caesar himself. Caesar demands vengeance for his murder, prophesying that a cruel tyrant will subjugate Rome and that the “days of Sulla shall return, and blood / Swim down thy streets” (1.1.41-42).⁶⁵ The ghost concludes his description of the impending slaughter by predicting that Rome will lose its “sacred tongue, / The great patrician of the speaking art” (1.1.56-57). On cue, Cicero enters, ready for his next battle in defense of the republic. This time, the “traitor to the freedom of his country” is Antony (1.2.17). Reminiscing about the feats of his “youth,” Cicero compares this new assault on the state to *Catiline*’s conspiracy: “I have condemned the swords of *Catiline*; / I will not now fear his” (1.2.18, 20-21).

Even as *Marcus Tullius Cicero* consciously echoes the dramatic structure of *Catiline*, the anonymous play aligns the main conflict—Cicero’s words versus a traitor’s swords—with contemporary politics. Caesar’s ghost invokes his “royal power” and the “sovereign command” of his malevolent inheritors (1.1.35, 38), while Cicero praises the “free unforced judgments” of the senate and discerns “some gleam of liberty” in the wake of Caesar’s assassination (1.2.3, 6). Scholars have described this struggle between royal sovereignty and republican freedom as a political allegory, associating Caesar’s ghost with the executed Charles I and Antony with Cromwell. Cicero, according to John Morrill, would thus represent those aristocrats who sided with parliament yet were disturbed by Cromwell’s authoritarianism.⁶⁶ If Jonson’s *Catiline*

Alison V. Scott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 162-89, esp. 182-83; and Warren Chernaik, *The Myth of Rome in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 134.

⁶⁴ Susan Wiseman, *Drama and Politics in the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 74. The following account of *Catiline*’s afterlife is indebted to Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, 74-77; and Wiseman, “‘The Echo of Uncertainty’: Jonson, Classical Drama, and the English Civil War,” in *Refashioning Ben Jonson: Gender, Politics, and the Jonsonian Canon*, ed. Julie Sanders, Kate Chedgzoy, and Susan Wiseman (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 208-29.

⁶⁵ All quotations of the play are from *The Tragedy of that Famous Roman Orator Marcus Tullius Cicero*, in *Drama of the English Republic, 1649-60*, ed. Janet Clare (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), cited parenthetically in the text.

⁶⁶ Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, 76; Dale B. J. Randall, “The Head and Hands on the Rostra: *Marcus Tullius Cicero* as a Sign of Its Time,” *Connotations* 1.1 (1991): 34-54; John Morrill,

shadows any single historical event, it is the Gunpowder Plot of 1605.⁶⁷ This analogy aligns Cicero not with any sort of resistance, aristocratic or otherwise, but with the monarchical establishment. In Jonson's play it is thus Catiline, not Cicero, who rallies his followers to pursue "the liberty [they] oft have wished for" (1.1.410). The conspirator's rhetoric may be specious, but Cicero certainly offers no competing conception of republican freedom. Indeed, Jonson's Cicero is as much a dictator as a champion of liberty.

History, both contemporary and classical, explains this radically altered vision of the Roman republic. Just as inevitably as the Cicero of 1611 crushes the Catilinarian conspiracy, the Cicero of 1651 loses his battle against Antony—and his head. Near the end of *Marcus Tullius Cicero*, Antony and his wife Fulvia enter with Cicero's severed hands and head. This gruesome scene reverses the triumph of rhetoric over violence that Jonson staged decades before: the swords of Antony and his followers silence Cicero's words. Antony orders the murderer to take Cicero's head and hands to the forum and instructs him how to present them to the public:

place them on the rostra, where he vomited
His Philippics against me. Let his head
Be set betwixt his hands, 'twill be a brave
And goodly spectacle. (5.10.18-21)

Pointedly undoing Cicero's eclipse of "spectacle" in *Catiline*, Antony turns the site of public speech into a bloody spectacle. His language echoes that of Jonson's Cethegus, who asserted that the conspiracy's intended "spectacle" of slaughter "would / Have been a brave one" had Cicero not thwarted it (5.3.186, 187-88). Here we see the consequences of such a "brave / And goodly spectacle": Rome's "sacred tongue" silenced for good.

Marcus Tullius Cicero is thus a sustained republican reworking of Jonson's play. More often, however, *Catiline* and *Catiline* end up as models for parliamentarian treason in royalist polemic. Several pamphlet plays published in the late 1640s parodically map Jonson's depiction of the conspiracy onto the supporters of parliament. The second act of *Craftie Cromwell* (1648), subtitled "A Tragi-Comedie," begins with the spirit of John Pym—a deceased leader of the parliamentary opposition—arising from the depths of hell. Just as Sulla's ghost "discovers *Catiline in his study*" at the beginning of *Catiline* (1.1.15 sd), Pym's ghost "discovers *Cromwell sleeping*" and exhorts him to "be bold...and inexorable."⁶⁸

The Levellers levell'd (1647) similarly reproduces the melodrama of Jonson's conspiracy. In the first act of *Catiline*, the conspirators cement their unholy alliance by drinking wine mixed with human blood (1.1.482-504). The "Levellers" Conspiracy, Apostasy, Treachery, Democracy, and Impiety imitate this "horrid sacrament / In human blood," as Jonson's Cicero calls it (3.2.49-50). Conspiracy produces "*Catalines Effigie*" and enjoins his compatriots, "By the fam'd memorie of this brave spirit...who took the horrid Sacrament in blood to levell [Rome's] proud battlements, swear not to lay down armes till King *Charles* be sent to the invisible land, till all Lawes are repealed and abrogated."⁶⁹ The effigy of *Catiline* assumes a totemic quality,

"Charles I, Cromwell and Cicero (A Response to Dale B. J. Randall)," *Connotations* 1.1 (1991): 99-100.

⁶⁷ B. N. De Luna, *Jonson's Romish Plot: A Study of "Catiline" and its Historical Context* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

⁶⁸ *Craftie Cromwell: or, Oliver ordering our new state* ([London], 1648), sig. A4v.

⁶⁹ [Marchamont Nedham], *The Levellers levell'd. OR, The Independents Conspiracie to root out Monarchie* ([London], 1647), sig. A3v.

representing the lurid violence of the Catilinarian conspiracy. Conspiracy concludes the scene by again channeling the bloodthirsty theatricality of Jonson's Cethegus and Catiline: "I long to see / The first Scene acted of this Tragedie."⁷⁰

Given his frequent attacks on the "application" of his works to current events, we might reasonably surmise that Jonson would have hated these polemical uses of his play. "If any yet will, with particular sleight / Of application, wrest what he doth write," Jonson announces in the second prologue to *Epicene*, "They make a libel which he made a play" (11-12, 14). But where there's smoke, there's fire. Despite his protestations that his plays do not reflect particular individuals or events, Jonson often wound up in trouble with the authorities. He was accused of libel for several plays; *Sejanus* won him a trip to the Privy Council for alleged "popery and treason."⁷¹ Indeed, the deliberate vagueness that Jonson (rather unpersuasively) ascribed to his own satirical method—to "spare men's persons and but tax their crimes" (*Poetaster*, 3.5.134)—lends itself particularly well to "application."

Catiline is no exception. Jonson's second Roman tragedy engages extensively with the religious and political conflicts of seventeenth-century England. The play, as noted above, reflects not only the Gunpowder Plot but also Jonson's own return to the Church of England in 1610, in the aftermath of the assassination of Henry IV of France.⁷² Donaldson suggests that this violence, this religious and political polarization, motivated Jonson's return to Roman history in 1611. *Catiline*, he argues, "can be seen as prophesying the shape of things to come in England of the 1640s."⁷³ And so in the 1640s and '50s Jonson's prophetic history was readily appropriated by both sides of the civil war. Ironically, republican and royalist adaptations both took from Jonson's play the spectacular violence that he had attempted to banish. Catiline's malign theatrical energy refused to die.

⁷⁰ Nedham, *The Levellers levell'd*, sig. A4r.

⁷¹ Richard Burt, *Licensed by Authority: Ben Jonson and the Discourses of Censorship* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); Ian Donaldson, *Ben Jonson: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 188-89.

⁷² Lake, "Ben Jonson and the Politics of 'Conversion.'"

⁷³ Donaldson, "Talking with Ghosts," 13.

5. Herrick's *Hesperides* and Constitutional Debate

In a poem “*To All to Whom I Write*” published in his 1616 *Epigrams*, Jonson warns his readers not to expect “strict degrees of rank or title”: “’Tis ’gainst the manners of an epigram: / And I, a poet here, no herald am.”¹ Epigrams evidently license some measure of social, and even political, disordering. This is a lesson that Robert Herrick learned well from his “*Saint Ben*” (604).² As Jonson’s drama echoed through the printed polemic of the 1640s, Herrick chose to print his own literary achievement: *Hesperides*. If Herrick’s collected verse often displays a distinctly “royalist” bent, we would nonetheless do well to recall that strict sociopolitical hierarchy is “’gainst the manners of an epigram.”

Scholars have not labeled Herrick a “herald,” but they often make him seem like a committed royalist first and a poet second. Labeled a “militant” and “extreme royalist” in the 1970s, Herrick is still described as a “staunch royalist” and even as an “ultra-royalist.”³ But how are we to square this consensus with the judgment of Herrick’s nineteenth-century editor Alfred Pollard, who observed that “there is nothing in the *Hesperides* to show that Herrick was a bigoted royalist” and pointed out that “utterances in favour of the divine right of kings and the duty of implicit obedience...are balanced by epigrams which show a much more Parliamentary spirit”?⁴ Few critics since have conceded any “Parliamentary spirit” to *Hesperides*. And yet it is difficult to disagree with Pollard. There are certainly poems that enjoin “*Duty to Tyrants*,” argue that it is “*The Subjects onely glory to obey*,” and claim that a prince “*who may doe nothing but*

¹ Ben Jonson, *Epigrams*, ed. Colin Burrow, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online*, gen. ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 9.

² All quotations of Herrick’s poetry follow *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick*, ed. Tom Cain and Ruth Connolly, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). I generally cite by poem number, including line numbers only for quotations from longer poems.

³ A. Leigh DeNeef, “*This Poetick Liturgie*”: *Robert Herrick’s Ceremonial Mode* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1974), 136; Claude J. Summers, “Herrick’s Political Poetry: The Strategies of His Art,” in “*Trust to Good Verses*”: *Herrick Tercentenary Essays*, ed. Roger B. Rollin and J. Max Patrick (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1978), 172; Line Cottegnies, “‘Leaves of Fame’: Katherine Philips and Robert Herrick’s Shared Community,” in “*Lords of Wine and Oile*”: *Community and Conviviality in the Poetry of Robert Herrick*, ed. Ruth Connolly and Tom Cain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 131; Syrithe Pugh, *Herrick, Fanshawe and the Politics of Intertextuality: Classical Literature and Seventeenth-Century Royalism* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 4. Other affirmations of Herrick’s royalism and Laudianism include Peter Stallybrass, “‘Wee feaste in our Defense’: Patrician Carnival in Early Modern England and Robert Herrick’s ‘Hesperides,’” *English Literary Renaissance* 16 (1986): 234-52; Leah S. Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell, and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 140-68; Achsah Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton: Literature, Religion, and Cultural Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 79-118; and (in addition to Cottegnies’s) many of the essays in “*Lords of Wine and Oile*,” ed. Connolly and Cain, especially those by Nicholas McDowell, Stella Achilleos, and Achsah Guibbory.

⁴ Alfred W. Pollard, “Herrick and his Friends,” *Macmillan’s Magazine* 67 (1892): 143.

what's just, / Rules but by leave, and takes his Crowne on trust" (97, 269, 1103). But we also find verses condemning those "*bad princes*" who "*pill their people*," arguing that "the Power of Princes rests in the Consent" of their subjects, and even suggesting that rulers ought to be elected (826, 1073, 707). Faced with such apparent contradictions, several scholars have recently suggested that *Hesperides*, as John Creaser puts it, is "conspicuously incoherent, with willed disarray as a sequence matched by discontinuity of attitudes."⁵ If selective reading reveals an "ultra-royalist," a broader view finds only ambiguity and incoherence.

But "militant," "extreme," "staunch," and "ultra-royalist" by no means exhaust the range of mid-seventeenth-century royalism. The scholarly conversation about Herrick's politics has largely been governed by what Jason McElligott and David L. Smith term "the simplistic and all-too convenient dichotomy between 'absolutists' and 'constitutionalists.'"⁶ Herrick, however, defies this binary. We thus need a more expansive paradigm of royalism to understand the politics of *Hesperides*. After all, even the king himself was at times a "constitutionalist." Published in 1642, *His Majesties Answer to the XIX Propositions of both Houses of Parliament* explicitly describes England as a mixed state, mapping the elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy onto the king, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons.⁷ Like their king, almost every royalist was in some sense a constitutional royalist. McElligott and Smith contend that the dichotomy of "absolutists" and "moderates" ignores "a whole spectrum of rich and variegated opinion between these theoretical extremes." Royalists, they argue, must have borrowed from both ideological poles "at different times, or perhaps even at the same time."⁸

This is very much the case in *Hesperides*. Some poems seem "absolutist," others "constitutionalist," and still others, as Pollard noted, might even be termed "parliamentarian." But the volume only looks to be incoherent or the work of an "extreme royalist" if we are forced to choose among narrow ideological categories. Ranging across the political spectrum, *Hesperides* instead puts royalists and parliamentarians into conversation. These poetic dialogues at once articulate and critique the tenets of absolutism while exploring forms of monarchy limited by the law and founded in popular consent. Herrick's royalism is thus flexible and inclusive rather than militant and dogmatic. Across his discrepant verses, Herrick reproduces—and sharply interrogates—the political polarization of mid-seventeenth-century England.

Herrick's dialogic poetics and politics, I argue, reflect a particular literary practice that flourished in the early seventeenth century: the collection of verse in manuscript miscellanies.⁹ In the decades before the printing of *Hesperides* in 1648, Herrick's poetry circulated widely in these heterogeneous compilations of verse. *Hesperides*'s own "heterogeneity," as Tom Cain and

⁵ John Creaser, "'Jocond his Muse was': Celebration and Virtuosity in Herrick," in *Lords of Wine and Oile*, ed. Connolly and Cain, 41. See also Leah S. Marcus, "Conviviality Interrupted or, Herrick and Postmodernism," in *Lords of Wine and Oile*, ed. Connolly and Cain, 65-82.

⁶ Jason McElligott and David L. Smith, "Introduction: Rethinking Royalists and Royalism," in *Royalists and Royalism during the English Civil Wars*, ed. McElligott and Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1-15, esp. 11.

⁷ *His Majesties answer to the XIX propositions of both Houses of Parliament* (London, 1642), sig. B1v.

⁸ McElligott and Smith, "Introduction," 11.

⁹ Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 68-69; H. R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts, 1558-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 158.

Ruth Connolly have recently argued, thus strongly suggests that “Herrick is modelling his collection on the genre in which all his verse had hitherto circulated.” But for most critics, miscellanies—despite the generic diversity of their contents—still represent a homogenous, oppositional form of royalism. By printing his manuscript verse, Cain and Connolly contend, Herrick helped make “the published book of poetry a site where royalist community was advertised and sustained.”¹⁰ Scholars have described other miscellanies, both print and manuscript, in similar terms. Arthur F. Marotti suggests that the political verse circulating in manuscript during the late Caroline era and Interregnum “was largely conservative and partisan,” used by “members of an educated Royalist elite...as a form of social and political bonding.” Adam Smyth likewise argues that the printed miscellanies of the mid-seventeenth century “organize[d] themselves as a voice of disenfranchised Royalism.”¹¹ These critics portray the verse miscellany as an expression of royalist community and consensus.

This view, however, has not gone unchallenged. Studies of the early Stuart libel have shown that manuscript miscellanies were often ideologically heterogeneous. Compilers frequently copied verse libels—controversial poems satirizing prominent individuals or commenting on current events—alongside love lyrics, epigrams, and elegies. And these poems, critics have observed, varied as widely in politics as in genre. Andrew McRae, for instance, argues that the compilers of early Stuart miscellanies typically “gather together poems presenting arguments diametrically opposed. The miscellany thus characterizes a culture within which people were becoming increasingly fascinated by the emergent phenomena of political contestation and ideological division.”¹² Manuscript miscellanies emerged from a literary and political culture steeped in habits of argument *in utramque partem*, on both sides of a question.¹³ In *Hesperides*, Herrick imitates this literary structure. The volume’s miscellaneity mirrors the

¹⁰ Tom Cain and Ruth Connolly, “Introduction: Herrick’s Communities of Manuscript and Print,” in “*Lords of Wine and Oile*,” ed. Connolly and Cain, 1-24, esp. 11-13. See also Ruth Connolly, “Print, Miscellaneity and the Reader in Robert Herrick’s *Hesperides*,” in *Readings on Audience and Textual Materiality*, ed. Graham Allen, Carrie Griffin, and Mary O’Connell (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), 23-36.

¹¹ Marotti, *Manuscript*, 125-26; Adam Smyth, “*Profit and Delight*”: *Printed Miscellanies in England, 1640-1682* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2004), 171.

¹² Andrew McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 43; David Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 196-254. On the circulation of libels in manuscript miscellanies, see also Andrew McRae, ed., “‘Railing Rhymes’: Politics and Poetry in Early Stuart England,” special issue, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 69.1 (2006); Alastair Bellany, “Railing Rhymes Revisited: Libels, Scandals, and Early Stuart Politics,” *History Compass* 5.4 (2007): 1136-79; and Joshua Eckhardt, *Manuscript Verse Collectors and the Politics of Anti-Courtly Love Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹³ David Colclough, “Verse Libels and the Epideictic Tradition in Early Stuart England,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 69.1 (2006), makes this point, although he contends that “far from displaying a flexibility of mind that could see two sides to every argument, [libelers’] vituperative outpourings showed just how rigid their sense of right and wrong was” (29). On argument *in utramque partem* and early modern political culture, see Markku Peltonen, *Rhetoric, Politics and Popularity in Pre-Revolutionary England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

fractured political landscape of the civil wars, but the formal imperative of inclusivity brings contrasting views into conversation. Herrick's polyvocal book of poems, I argue, figures politics as a dialogue that just might be able to bridge England's deep ideological divides.

“Twixt Roundhead & the Cavaleire”

I'll first explore how topical poetry could make the manuscript miscellany a site for political dialogue and debate in early Stuart and civil-war-era England. My primary case study will be a mid-seventeenth-century verse miscellany now held at the Huntington Library, HM 16522.

From the death of Robert Cecil in 1612 to the outbreak of civil war in the 1640s, moments of national upheaval prompted waves of libels and counter-libels. After Cecil's death “the libels were relentless”; the assassination of the Duke of Buckingham in 1628 unleashed “a deluge of libels.”¹⁴ These libelous assaults on the posthumous reputations of Cecil and Buckingham were soon met with counterattacks against the anonymous libelers and with eulogies of the fallen statesmen. Poems on both sides were copied in the same miscellany, and even on the same page. Bodleian MS Malone 23, described by Marotti and McRae, collects poems “both eulogizing and vilifying Buckingham.”¹⁵ Verses about Cecil were likewise compiled *in utramque partem*. One miscellany, for instance, includes verses that vindicate Cecil from the libelous attacks: “what can more thy fame and glory rayse? / Than to be raild at by *the* worst of men?” Mere pages later, however, the compiler copied an example of precisely the kind of “rail[ing]” condemned by the earlier poem. This mock epitaph describes Cecil as a shepherd who “very duly, our fleeces did sheere”—until “Atropos payd him (a pox on *the* Drab) / for in spite of his tarbox hee dyde of *the* scab.”¹⁶ Cecil's ignominious end strains the previous poem's assertion that libelous railing only serves to augment his “fame and glory.”

The eruption of civil war radically raised the stakes of political division. It is thus unsurprising that, as Marotti argues, the political poetry in manuscript miscellanies should have increasingly reflected “a Royalist-oppositionist point of view, especially when Royalists were most threatened and imperiled during and just after the Civil War.”¹⁷ But dialogic copying practices persist in even the staunchest of royalist miscellanies.¹⁸ The poems collected in the verse miscellany HM 16522 at first glance seem unambiguously royalist. A seventeenth-century hand even titled it “A Collection of Poems & Ballads in ridicule of the Parliam^{ty} Party during the

¹⁴ Pauline Croft, “The Reputation of Robert Cecil: Libels, Political Opinion and Popular Awareness in the Early Seventeenth Century,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 1 (1991): 54; Alastair Bellany, “‘Raylinge Rymes and Vaunting Verse’: Libellous Politics in Early Stuart England, 1603-1628,” in *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 285-310, esp. 305.

¹⁵ McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State*, 43; Marotti, *Manuscript*, 108-9.

¹⁶ Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.345, pp. 107, 110. On this manuscript, see Arthur F. Marotti, “Christ Church, Oxford, and Beyond: Folger MS V.a.345 and Its Manuscript and Print Sources,” *Studies in Philology* 113.4 (2016): 850-78.

¹⁷ Marotti, *Manuscript*, 126.

¹⁸ As Rory Tanner notes, “examples abound of political verses that appear to have been matched with opposite, answering claims by miscellany makers.” Tanner, “Political Authority, Discourse, and Tumult in the Revolutionary Writing of John Denham,” in *Sir John Denham (1614/15-1669) Reassessed: The State's Poet*, ed. Philip Major (New York: Routledge, 2016), 106-121, esp. 113.

Quarrel with Ch: I.” For Marotti, this miscellany exemplifies the strident royalism of the period’s manuscript verse; for Daniel Starza Smith, it embodies “a community of like-minded Royalists.”¹⁹

The miscellany’s “royalism,” however, is just as complicated as that of *Hesperides*. While most of the manuscript’s verses indeed take aim at the “Parliamentary Party,” that party insistently speaks back. One “English Balad,” for instance, levels scurrilous accusations against a whole cast of characters on the king’s side, from the Earl of Carnarvon to the queen herself. The poet concludes by describing this ballad as a response to the royalist verse that circulated widely in the 1640s:

It is not my profession,
to foole with you in Rime,
But since your best expression,
is railing at this time
I thought to send this little writ,
to let your worships see,
The Roundheads come not short in wit
you’l heare no more from mee.²⁰

“You’l heare no more from mee,” ends the refrain—but this is only the first of several poems that vigorously take the side of parliament and counter the royalist “railing” that often dominates the manuscript. The ballad frames the miscellany not as an expression of royalist community but instead as a lively contest of “wit” between Cavaliers and Roundheads.

Within the miscellany, then, civil war is waged through both battles and ballads. This poetics of division emerges most clearly in a pair of poems ostensibly composed by the same balladeer. The first, titled “A Battaile in Wales,” begins: “List and a story you shall heare / (Hey derry downe downe derry downe) / ’Twixt Roundhead & the Cavaleire.”²¹ Adopting the perspective of the Cavalier, this ballad narrates in the first person plural the breakneck Welsh campaign of April 1645 led by the royalist general Charles Gerard.²² The series of royalist victories begins at “New-Castle Emblem [i.e., Emlyn],” where a “youth” cries “faith haue at all” and

At this same word we gaue a shoute
Hey derry downe &c:
At which the roundheads fac’d about
Hey derry downe &c:
And through the water they did runne
Left all their armes & their great gunne.
Hey derry &c:

¹⁹ Marotti, *Manuscript*, 122-23; Daniel Starza Smith, *John Donne and the Conway Papers: Patronage and Manuscript Circulation in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 130.

²⁰ The Huntington Library, HM 16522, p. 16 (2).

²¹ HM 16522, p. 143.

²² On the events described in this ballad and the next, see Ronald Hutton, *The Royalist War Effort, 1642-1646*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1999), 174-75, 185.

The royalist army marches on through Haverfordwest, Picton Castle, and Carew Castle, routing the Roundheads in similarly comic fashion. After a mock farewell to the parliamentary leaders in Wales, the poem ends with an attribution to “M^r Denham & Pepper the Player.”²³

Pepper’s work, however, is not yet done. The next ballad, titled “His Recantation,” is also attributed to “Pepper.”²⁴ Fulfilling the promise of a story “‘Twixt Roundhead & the Cavaleire,” this poem takes the side of the “Roundhead.” “His Recantation” picks up where “A Battaile in Wales” left off and gleefully recounts the crushing defeats suffered by the royalist forces in Wales after Gerard’s string of victories. The ballad begins:

I tell thee Tom I haue seene a sight,
At *which* in troath I laught outright
To see the game so fall,
The Cavaliers were beaten sore
Last fryday night at Colby more
And quite were routed all.

.

Pepper But wat thee Tom here lyes the Ieere
 Wee haue gott their *Ballet monger here
 That sæ^ung our Embling fight,
 In troath the Rogue was witty there
 And he had best to bee so here
 Or he may chance lye by’t.²⁵

Pepper has apparently recanted under compulsion. Captured by the parliamentary army, the “Ballet monger” must now turn his wit to serve the other side—“or he may chance lye by’t.”

The “Pepper” poems, like the earlier “English Balad,” thus stage a literary civil war to match the military conflict raging at the time. “Answer poetry” was common in manuscript miscellanies, but, as Rory Tanner argues, “the practice took on an overtly political aspect during the civil wars within the literary culture of animadversion that grew up surrounding the division between king and parliament.”²⁶ Poetic division reprised political division. That these dueling poems appear in a largely “royalist” miscellany is, I think, significant. If HM 16522 is the product of “a community of like-minded Royalists,” this community was eager to share poems that contested their most fundamental political commitments. The miscellany’s compilers evidently saw some value—whether literary or ideological—in dialogue and debate.

Herrick’s Political Vocabulary

So too did Robert Herrick. Herrick’s printed miscellany, I’ll argue, reflects the same dialogic approach to the urgent political controversies of mid-seventeenth-century England. Yet any political reading of *Hesperides* can prove challenging to sustain. Many of its poems seem to have little to do with politics at all, let alone with the conflicts of the 1640s. The volume does include a number of explicitly political verses that comment on ideological debates, address prominent political figures, and celebrate the victories (and mourn the defeats) of the king’s party. But these poems are mixed in with moral, lyric, and erotic verses that seem far removed

²³ HM 16522, pp. 144-46.

²⁴ HM 16522, pp. 146, 147.

²⁵ HM 16522, p. 146.

²⁶ Tanner, “Political Authority,” 112. On “answer poetry,” see Marotti, *Manuscript*, 159-71.

from the tumultuous politics of the civil wars. Indeed, the most well-known and frequently anthologized verses are political only insofar as frank eroticism and debauched revelry were associated with royalist community in the seventeenth century.²⁷ Given this wide formal and tonal variety, it seems entirely plausible to claim, as Creaser does, that “the focus is on the individual poem, not on the whole through the part.”²⁸ Across these disparate verses, however, particular themes, and even specific words, recur. This vocabulary, common to Herrick’s erotic lyrics and political poems alike, reveals a deep preoccupation with the tensions between law and liberty, between tyranny and sovereignty.

This vocabulary also reflects the disorderly, inclusive copying practices characteristic of early Stuart miscellanies. Compilers transcribed political poems alongside sonnets and satires, epigrams and lyrics—including Herrick’s own verses. For instance, the compiler of one early-seventeenth-century manuscript copied Herrick’s “*The parting Verse, or charge to his supposed Wife when he travelled*” (465) in between John Hoskins’s infamous “Parliament Fart” libel and Richard Corbett’s topical poem on the Duke of Buckingham and the Spanish Match.²⁹

Embedded in this culture of topical commentary, Herrick’s “*Parting Verse*” offers its own political allegory of tyranny and resistance. “I know a thousand greedy eyes / Will on thy Feature tirannize, / In my short absence,” the poem’s speaker warns his wife. He thus admonishes her to “fly” this tyrannical multitude “lest thou lose thy liberty: / For that once lost, thou’t fall to one, / Then prostrate to a million” (ll. 17-19, 25, 26-28). This leering, misogynistic image of sexual promiscuity multiplies the “thousand greedy eyes” into “a million” lustful bodies. Herrick figures the threat of sexual transgression as the tyranny of what Sidney and (according to a Roman citizen) Shakespeare’s Coriolanus had contemptuously called the “many-headed multitude.”³⁰ But the poem’s allusions suggest that the threat to “liberty” comes not only from the many. If, the speaker informs his wife, “boundlesse Lust” does prevail, yet “banish consent, and ’tis no sinne / Of Thine; so *Lucrece* fell” (ll. 53, 56-57). The rape of Lucretia by the archetypal tyrant Tarquin, of course, instigated the fall of Rome’s monarchy and the founding of the republic.³¹ Herrick’s language of liberty, tyranny, and consent thus evokes the twin threats of mob violence and royal oppression.

In *Hesperides*, “*The parting Verse*” does not appear between two topical poems, as it did in the manuscript miscellany. Herrick’s poetry, after all, for the most part eschews—or rather encodes—immediate topical reference. But “*The parting Verse*” is still followed by a poem that implicitly responds to the preoccupation with tyranny and liberty: “*To his Kinsman, Sir Tho. Soame*” (466). Soame was a London alderman and a staunch supporter of parliament during the civil wars. In 1640, he was imprisoned for refusing to facilitate the king’s forced loan, and he remained a member of parliament until he was expelled from his offices in Pride’s Purge of

²⁷ Smyth, *Printed Miscellanies*, 132-72.

²⁸ Creaser, “Celebration and Virtuosity,” 41.

²⁹ Cain and Connolly, “Introduction,” 11; The Huntington Library, HM 198, part 1, pp. 3-8. On this manuscript, see Marotti, *Manuscript*, 70-72; and Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, 246-47.

³⁰ Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Jean Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 131; Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, ed. Philip Brockbank (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1976), 2.3.16-17.

³¹ On the “republican rape topos,” see Stephanie H. Jed, *Chaste Thinking: The Rape of Lucretia and the Birth of Modern Humanism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 2.

1648.³² Herrick praises Soame as a Roman politician—“a great *Patrician*,” “one of Those Senatours”—worthy of “the *Civick Crown*.” Republicanism, classical and perhaps even early modern, answers the previous poem’s anxiety about liberty under siege. Whether tyranny emanates from the king or from the mob, civic virtue is the antidote.

The sexual crisis of “*The parting Verse*” thus finds a political solution in the lines addressed to Sir Thomas Soame. Throughout *Hesperides*, Herrick’s political epigrams often do just this work: they reflect on the sociopolitical consequences of the erotic “liberty” central to the lyric verse. One brief lyric defends the speaker’s reluctance to marry by describing marriage as bondage: “What man would be here, / Slave to Thrall, / If at all / He could live free here?” (26). Another poem on the same theme elaborates this sexual “freedom”: “Why then, say, what is he / (To freedom so unknown) / Who having two or three, / Will be content with one?” (422). And in the final stanza of “*Corinna’s going a Maying*,” the speaker appeals to this same “liberty” to justify the *carpe diem*: “Come, let us goe, while we are in our prime; / And take the harmlesse follie of the time. / We shall grow old apace, and die / Before we know our liberty” (178, ll. 57-60).

Through epigrams on “*Liberty*,” “*Slavery*,” and “*Rules for our reach*,” Herrick balances this sexual license against a very different model of liberty. “*Liberty*” reaffirms the erotic poetry’s obsession with “liberty” and “freedom” above all. Herrick writes:

Those ills that mortall men endure,
So long are capable of cure,
As they of freedom may be sure:
But that deni’d; a griefe, though small,
Shakes the whole Roofe, or ruines all. (395)

Everything comes tumbling down without the guarantee of liberty. Yet in “*Slavery*” and “*Rules for our reach*,” Herrick links “liberty” to obedience and even to servitude. “’Tis liberty to serve one Lord,” the first epigram informs us, “but he / Who many serves, serves base servility” (887). And the second warns that “Men must have Bounds how farre to walke; for we / Are made farre worse, by lawless liberty” (990). These maxims identify “liberty” not as absolute freedom from rule but instead as virtuous service, bounded by law. So who would be “Slave to Thrall, / If at all / He could live free here?” Evidently anyone who understands that “we / Are made farre worse, by lawless liberty.” Other love poems similarly reject the equation of liberty with sexual promiscuity in favor of the Petrarchan paradox of the lover’s “Freedom in Captivity” (169)—the amorous analogue of the claim that “’Tis liberty to serve one Lord.” Discourses of love and politics interpenetrate, put into conversation by a shared language of liberty and bondage. These dialogues, then, reproduce in print the polyvocal poetics and politics of the manuscript verse miscellany.

Sovereignty, Consent, and the Political Epigrams

The political epigrams may be the most obvious place to look for an account of *Hesperides*’s politics—but they are also among the least studied poems in the volume. With few exceptions, these brief verses have been ignored, denigrated, or selectively cited as evidence of Herrick’s “militant royalism.” John L. Kimmey and Ann Baynes Coiro observe that the

³² On Soame, see Ann Baynes Coiro, *Robert Herrick’s “Hesperides” and the Epigram Book Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 196; Cain and Connolly, eds., *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick*, 2:661.

dominant poetic genre shifts from the lyric to the epigram midway through the volume, but Coiro is the only critic to devote substantial attention to the political poems. Claude J. Summers, A. Leigh DeNeef, and Peter Stallybrass quote a few epigrams out of context in order to illustrate Herrick's supposedly absolutist politics.³³ More recently, Creaser has revived Alfred Pollard's judgment that the latter half of *Hesperides* is an "inferior work," labeling it "barren...of verse of high quality."³⁴ When critics do treat the epigrams, they largely ignore those that are explicitly political.³⁵

On its own, each political epigram doesn't look like much. After all, what literary (or for that matter political) sophistication is to be found in a couplet like the following one "*Upon Kings*": "*Kings must be dauntlesse: Subjects will contemne / Those, who want Hearts, and weare a Diadem*" (1097)? (I'll return to this epigram below.) Even such apparently straightforward statements, however, signify quite differently when read in the context of the surrounding verses. Coiro makes this point convincingly. "Alone," she writes, the epigrams "seem to stand as clear pronouncements, unquestioned beliefs. But placed together, they shift in a mutable and unstable dialogue."³⁶ This section of my chapter recovers the politics of those dialogues. Like HM 16522, I'll show, *Hesperides* works to put into conversation—and even to bridge the ideological gap between—"Roundhead & the Cavaleire."

Herrick's recurrent epigrams on kingship demonstrate this dialogic approach to the political controversies of the 1640s. An epigram on "*Kings*," for instance, asserts a contractual model of monarchy that closely resembles the political theory of Charles's adversaries. In *Lex, Rex* (1644), the Scottish Presbyterian Samuel Rutherford claims that "all men equally are not borne Kings" and that "none are by nature *Kings*." Instead, Rutherford argues, "a King is made by the free consent of the people."³⁷ In Herrick's words, "Men are not born Kings, but are men renown'd; / Chose first, confirm'd next, & at last are crown'd" (707). This epigram does not specify whether the people are the ones who get to do the choosing, but it nonetheless proposes a kind of elective monarchy.

The subsequent moral epigram reinforces the message of "*Kings*." In "*First work, and then wages*," Herrick sententiously informs the reader, "Prepost'rous is that order, when we run / To ask our wages, e're our work be done" (708). This proto-capitalist commodification of labor also suggests that it would indeed be "prepost'rous" for someone to be "crown'd" before being "chose[n]" and "confirm'd." The word "prepost'rous" itself emphasizes the sequential logic of the previous political epigram. George Puttenham translates the rhetorical figure *hysteron proteron* as "the Preposterous" and defines it as "disordered speech" in which "ye...set that

³³ John L. Kimmey, "Order and Form in Herrick's *Hesperides*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 70 (1971): 255-68; Coiro, *Robert Herrick's "Hesperides"*, 174-206; Summers, "Herrick's Political Poetry," 172-73; DeNeef, *Robert Herrick's Ceremonial Mode*, 136; Stallybrass, "Patrician Carnival," 249.

³⁴ Robert Herrick, *The Hesperides and Noble Numbers*, ed. Alfred W. Pollard, rev. ed., 2 vols. (London: George Routledge, 1905), 2:298; John Creaser, "'Times trans-shifting': Chronology and the Misshaping of Herrick," *English Literary Renaissance* 39.1 (2009): 182.

³⁵ See, for instance, Gordon Braden, *The Classics and English Renaissance Poetry: Three Case Studies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 180-96; and Randall Ingram, "Robert Herrick and the Makings of *Hesperides*," *SEL* 38.1 (1998): 127-47.

³⁶ Coiro, *Robert Herrick's "Hesperides"*, 204.

³⁷ Samuel Rutherford, *Lex, rex: The law and the prince* (London, 1644), sig. N3r.

before which should be behind *et e converso*.³⁸ “*First work, and then wages*” thus draws attention to the specific temporal markers in “*Kings*”: “first,” “next,” and “last.” Together, these poems apply proverbial wisdom about work and wages to political theory with radical—or at least anti-absolutist—results.

But it is equally “preposterous,” Herrick elsewhere suggests, to invert the roles of prince and people altogether. “Preposterous is that Government, (and rude),” goes an epigram on “*Ill Government*,” “When Kings obey the wilder Multitude” (536). Popular participation in governance does not mean that the multitude should rule the monarch. After all, as Herrick puts it in one of the volume’s first political epigrams, “Twixt Kings and Subjects ther’s this mighty odds, / Subjects are taught by *Men*; Kings by the *Gods*” (25). Divine right, however, provides no guarantee of royal infallibility. As a later epigram observes, “wee likely see, / Such as the Prince is, will his People be” (759). The “wilder Multitude,” then, could very well be imitating the “ill government” of their monarch.

Herrick’s “royalism” thus ranges from divine right to elective monarchy, from royal supremacy to popular sovereignty. This range at times seems to produce what critics from Coiro to Creaser have described as the volume’s irresolvable ambiguity, its constitutive incoherence. Yet this is not always the case. In the rest of this section, I’ll examine two key clusters of political epigrams near the end of *Hesperides*. Read against one another—and alongside their sources and political contexts—these poems exemplify the dialogic impulse of *Hesperides*. But at least in this dialogue, the result is not ambiguity. Herrick puts constitutionalists and absolutists into conversation only to critique sharply the political theory of the Stuart monarchs.

First comes an epigram on “*Obedience*” with a message far different from the royalist admonition that we might expect from its title:

The Power of Princes rests in the Consent
Of onely those, who are obedient:
Which if away, proud Scepters then will lye
Low, and of Thrones the Ancient *Majesty*. (1073)

This poem is to some extent a bleak response to the civil wars, during which “proud Scepters” and “Ancient *Majesty*” were indeed laid low. If princes need obedience, then Charles is surely in dire straits. But Herrick’s political theory again proves radical—or at least unequivocally constitutionalist. By locating “the Power of Princes” in the “Consent” of their subjects, Herrick reaffirms the contractual model of monarchy articulated in his epigram on “*Kings*.” This is a message of which Rutherford, and of course the parliamentary party, would have heartily approved.

In the subsequent epigram, Herrick once more turns to proverbial wisdom to justify his contractual political theory. Simply entitled “*Another on the same*,” this poem links successful rule to obedience—but now to the obedience of kings, not of their subjects. Herrick writes: “*No man so well a Kingdome Rules, as He, / Who hath himselfe obaid the Sovereignty*” (1074). In *Hesperides*, italic font often marks snippets of verse as *sententiae* borrowed from classical sources.³⁹ This particular epigram adapts the first proverb in Richard Taverner’s 1539 translation of Erasmus’s *Adages*, “*Nemo bene imperat, nisi qui patuerit imperio*. No man can be a good

³⁸ George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 253.

³⁹ See Ingram, “The Makings of *Hesperides*,” 137-38.

ruler, onles he hath bene fyrste ruled.”⁴⁰ Herrick integrates his analysis of popular sovereignty in “*Obedience*” with the Erasmian adage of “*Another on the same*.” The shared title links the obedience of subjects to the obedience of princes—popular consent to limited monarchy.

To suggest that the people could revoke their consent was antithetical to official Stuart political theory. In *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies* (1598), James takes aim at precisely such a contractual understanding of monarchy. James’s erstwhile tutor George Buchanan had affirmed that “there is...a mutual pact (*pactio*) between a king and his subjects,” and so “the one who first goes back on the accord and acts contrary to what he has agreed makes the pact and agreement void.” “If the tie which bound together the king and the people is broken,” Buchanan concludes, “any right belonging to the one who broke the pact is, I think, forfeited.”⁴¹ James stoutly argues the exact opposite. “What lawfull power,” he asks in exasperation, “haue [the people] to reuoke to themselues againe those priuiledges, which by their owne consent before were so fully put out of their hands?” But for James, no “such contract” is made between king and people anyway. And even if there were such a contract, he adds, “God is doubtles the only Iudge,” so the “headlesse multitude” usurp God’s office if they presume to “cast off the yoake of gouernement.”⁴²

By the 1640s, however, James’s successor was in a very different position. In *His Majesties Answer to the XIX Propositions*, the king’s supporters (in Charles’s name) offer a more balanced view of England’s government. The pamphlet, in a move crucial to the history of constitutional thought but ultimately useless (or worse) for the king’s party, describes the “ancient...Constitution of the Government of this Kingdom” as a “mixture” of “Absolute Monarchy, Aristocracy and Democracy.”⁴³ England’s mixed constitution, the pamphlet notes, is to be found in parliament, where “the Lawes are ioyntly made by a King, by a House of Peers, and by a House of Commons chosen by the People.” As the authors explain how power is divided among the three estates so that each may check the others, Charles’s rule becomes a “regulated Monarchy.”⁴⁴

Yet the *Answer* also rejects any suggestion that, as Herrick would write, “the Power of Princes rests in the Consent” of their people. Its authors may embrace the mixed constitution and apply it to parliament, but they insist that the king must be free to act without his subjects’ consent. The nineteen propositions themselves had emphatically, and repeatedly, demanded that Charles submit to the consent of parliament: “no publike Act...may be esteemed of any

⁴⁰ Desiderius Erasmus, *Proverbes or adagies with newe addicions gathered out of the Chiliades of Erasmus*, trans. Richard Taverner (London, 1539), sig. A2r.

⁴¹ George Buchanan, *A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship among the Scots: A Critical Edition and Translation of George Buchanan’s “De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus,”* ed. Roger A. Mason and Martin S. Smith (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 152-53.

⁴² James VI and I, *King James VI and I: Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 80, 81.

⁴³ *His Majesties answer*, sig. B1v. See Corinne Comstock Weston, *English Constitutional Theory and the House of Lords, 1556-1832* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 23-43; Michael Mendle, *Dangerous Positions: Mixed Government, the Estates of the Realm, and the Making of the “Answer to the six propositions”* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1985); and Arihiro Fukuda, *Sovereignty and the Sword: Harrington, Hobbes, and Mixed Government in the English Civil Wars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 24-29.

⁴⁴ *His Majesties answer*, sigs. B1v-B2r.

validity...unlesse it be done by the advice and consent of the Major part of the Councill”; “no marriage shall be concluded or treated for any of the Kings Children...without the consent of Parliament.”⁴⁵ “To grant” the first demand, the *Answer* replies, “were in effect at once to depose both Our Self and Our Posteritie.” And the second, the pamphlet later complains, would reduce the monarch to “a meaner and viler condition then the lowest of Our Subjects.”⁴⁶ So if Charles’s power really did rest in the consent of his people, then—at least according to the *Answer*—he would not be a king at all. England’s monarchy is only so “regulated.”

Herrick’s epigrams on “*Obedience*” thus critique the absolutist, and even the “regulated,” models of monarchy articulated by Stuart propaganda from James to Charles. But these epigrams are not *Hesperides*’s last word on monarchy. Several pages later, Herrick offers some vaguely encouraging verses “*Upon Kings*”: “*Kings must be dauntlesse: Subjects will contemne / Those, who want Hearts, and weare a Diadem*” (1097). On the facing page an epigram entitled “*A King and no King*” suggests just how “dauntlesse” a king must be to avoid his subjects’ contempt.⁴⁷ “*That Prince, who may doe nothing but what’s just,*” Herrick writes, “*Rules but by leave, and takes his Crowne on trust*” (1103). This couplet captures the official Stuart position up until 1642. The key word is “may”: in the *Trew Law of Free Monarchies*, James argues that “the King is about the law” even as he concedes that “a good king will...delight to rule his subjects by the lawe.”⁴⁸ Published six years after the *Answer to the XIX Propositions*, “*A King and no King*” advocates the pragmatic absolutism of an earlier, more powerful Stuart monarchy.

But the fact that these two absolutist epigrams are printed in italics should give us pause.⁴⁹ While few critics would now agree with F. W. Moorman’s claim that “borrowings [from classical authors] are in almost every case honourably acknowledged...by the use of italics,” it is undeniable that the italics, as Randall Ingram observes, “sometimes indicate the most literal translations and most precise borrowings.” Ingram argues that the reader “would expect—rightly—that many italicized *sententiae* would be englished fragments of classical literature.”⁵⁰ The italicized verses thus speak a different voice.⁵¹ On occasion, Herrick even attributes these

⁴⁵ *The humble petition and advice of both Houses of Parliament, with XIX propositions, and the conclusion* (London, 1642), sigs. A2v, A3r.

⁴⁶ *His Majesties answer*, sigs. A4r, B1r.

⁴⁷ Robert Herrick, *Hesperides: or, the works both humane & divine* (London, 1648), sigs. Cc4v-Cc5r.

⁴⁸ James VI and I, *Political Writings*, 75.

⁴⁹ The precise degree of Herrick’s involvement in the printing of *Hesperides* has been the subject of some debate. Stephen Dobranski argues that Herrick likely had little control over the book’s production, while Ruth Connolly discerns “clear signs of authorial involvement.” Most recently, Tom Cain and Connolly have suggested that Herrick could have exerted substantial control over the shape of the volume. In any case, my argument above all concerns the printed book of 1648. See Dobranski, *Readers and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 153-61; Connolly, “Print, Miscellaneity and the Reader,” 168n11; and Cain and Connolly, eds., *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick*, 1:416.

⁵⁰ F. W. Moorman, *Robert Herrick: A Biographical and Critical Study* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1910), 32; Ingram, “The Makings of *Hesperides*,” 137, 146n37.

⁵¹ This was true of early modern typography in general. As Mark Bland argues, italics often “indicate a different voice in the text.” Bland, “The Appearance of the Text in Early Modern England,” *Text* 11 (1998): 97.

italicized *sententiae* to their (typically classical) sources. “*Vertue conceal’d (with Horace you’l confesse),*” goes one epigram, “*Differs not much from drowzie slothfullnesse*” (459). The typographical shifts, with or without such direct attribution, create a distinctly polyvocal effect.

Some of the italicized epigrams, I’ve shown, borrow the cultural authority of figures like Horace or Erasmus in relatively straightforward fashion. But others derive from far more problematic sources. In fact, a number of Herrick’s most stridently absolutist epigrams are set in italics—and in their classical contexts, these maxims are certainly not meant to be taken as good counsel. An epigram on “*Obedience in Subjects,*” for instance, takes its claim that “*The Gods to Kings the Judgement give to sway / The Subjects onely glory to obey*” from a courtier’s flattery of the emperor Tiberius in Tacitus’s *Annals* (269). And in “*Shame, no Statist,*” the admonition that “*He rents his Crown, That feares the Peoples hate*” echoes the perverse reasoning of the Senecan tyrants Oedipus and Eteocles as well as the evil counsel of Jonson’s Sejanus (488).⁵² “*Upon Kings*” and “*A King and no King*” derive from an equally equivocal source: Seneca’s *Thyestes*. The former loosely adapts a line spoken by the chorus, while the latter closely translates the words of the archetypal tyrant Atreus: “Where a sovereign is permitted only what is honorable, he rules on sufferance.”⁵³

Herrick inserts this absolutist advice into a series of four couplets of counsel, reproducing the Senecan context of “*A King and no King*”: a dialogue about the ethics of rule.⁵⁴ In *Thyestes*, Atreus’s defense of absolutism comes during a debate with an attendant. The servant, in a failed attempt to dissuade Atreus from his bloody course of revenge, argues that “where there is no shame, no concern for the law, no righteousness, goodness, loyalty, rule is unstable.”⁵⁵ Herrick begins his peculiarly mid-seventeenth-century version of this dialogue with an epigram appropriately titled “*Warre.*” “If Kings and kingdomes, once distracted be,” Herrick writes, “The sword of war must trie the Sovereignty” (1102). The word “distracted”—drawn apart or separated—underscores the deep divide between king and kingdom. In 1648, the “sword of war” was indeed “tr[ying] the Sovereignty.”

Next comes “*A King and no King*”: “*That Prince, who may doe nothing but what’s just, / Rules but by leave, and takes his Crowne on trust*” (1103). This epigram is the only one of the four set in italics. Here, the tyrant (or evil counselor) speaks. In the midst of civil “*Warre,*” the voice of the tyrant contends, the only solution is absolutism. The following two epigrams continue the dialogue on crisis politics:

Plots not still prosperous.

All are not ill Plots, that doe sometimes faile;
Nor those false vows, which oft times don’t prevaile.

Flatterie.

What is’t that wasts a Prince? example shoves,
'Tis flatterie spends a King, more then his foes. (1104-5)

⁵² Tacitus, *Annals*, trans. John Jackson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1937), 6.8; Seneca, *Oedipus*, in *Tragedies*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. John G. Fitch (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002-4), 2:703-4; Seneca, *Phoenician Women*, in *Tragedies*, 1:654; Ben Jonson, *Sejanus*, ed. Tom Cain, in *The Works of Ben Jonson*, 2.174-75.

⁵³ Seneca, *Thyestes*, in *Tragedies*, 2:388, 214-15.

⁵⁴ The following discussion of these four poems is indebted to Coiro, *Robert Herrick’s “Hesperides,”* 204-5.

⁵⁵ Seneca, *Thyestes*, 215-17.

These couplets variously respond to the tyrant of “*A King and no King*.” The first imagines a political world governed by contingency, in which the virtue of plots or vows is no guarantee of success. In the final epigram, we get a more pointed rebuttal. The real threat to a monarch, this poem suggests, is not a political enemy but rather the flattery of a corrupt court. Indeed, the absolutist advice in “*A King and no King*” could even be the “example” that shows “‘Tis flatterie spends a King, more then his foes.”

At least in this series of epigrams, Herrick’s vision of politics is constitutively dialogic and polyvocal. Different verses speak different voices, all gathered and ventriloquized by the poet. The verse miscellany, by virtue of its miscellaneity, is a non-narrative (and even anti-narrative) genre.⁵⁶ But precisely because it resists any uniform narrative trajectory, this literary form provides Herrick with a vital medium for poetic—and political—dialogue. The verse conversations of *Hesperides*, of course, are inevitably interrupted by the book’s inclusive heterogeneity. For instance, after the two epigrams on “*Obedience*” we encounter a brief dialogue about love and a few comic caricatures of everyday working-class people (1075-79). Yet the miscellany consistently adheres to what Katharine Eisaman Maus terms the “principle of iteration.”⁵⁷ And so just a few pages after the verses on sovereignty and consent we find the four epigrams that take us from “*Warre*” to “*Flatterie*.”

From Poetics to Politics: Writing, Printing, Reading

It would be a mistake, then, to suggest that *Hesperides* is (merely) bitter and escapist, the work of a poet who tries to “evade the reality of the royalist defeat even as he bemoans the anticipated regicide.”⁵⁸ Not only Herrick’s book but also Cavalier poetry in general was once viewed as a form of nostalgic retreat, clinging to the social and sexual values of a beleaguered court culture.⁵⁹ More recently, however, critics have recovered Cavalier poetry’s intervention in the partisan struggles of the civil wars. Coiro argues that during the “political crisis of the mid-seventeenth century...poetry moved out of the circuit of the court and engaged directly in a wider struggle for cultural power.” Cavalier poets, Coiro contends, did not look back helplessly at a vanishing royalist culture but instead plunged into the “cultural battlefield” of the print marketplace.⁶⁰ And this literary battlefield, as we have seen, was by no means restricted to print alone. In manuscript as well as print, battle raged “‘Twixt Roundhead & the Cavaleire.”

But as scholars have studied the political activism of Cavalier poetry, too often “the cavalier” becomes, in the words of James Loxley, “first and foremost a royalist partisan.” Loxley

⁵⁶ See Marjorie Swann, *Curiosities and Texts: The Culture of Collecting in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 184.

⁵⁷ Katharine Eisaman Maus, “Why Read Herrick?” in “*Lords of Wine and Oile*,” ed. Connolly and Cain, 32.

⁵⁸ Claude J. Summers, “Herrick, Vaughan, and the Poetry of Anglican Survivalism,” in *New Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century English Religious Lyric*, ed. John R. Roberts (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1994), 59.

⁵⁹ The paradigmatic example of this interpretation is Earl Miner, who, in *The Cavalier Mode from Jonson to Cotton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), speaks of a “Cavalier winter” (see, e.g., 187, 282).

⁶⁰ Ann Baynes Coiro, “The Personal Rule of Poets: Cavalier Poetry and the English Revolution,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Literature and the English Revolution*, ed. Laura Lunger Knoppers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 206-37, esp. 206, 208.

endeavors to reconstruct the “politically instrumental, self-reflexive poetics” that developed in the 1640s. “What can it mean,” he asks, “to construct a verse practice in accordance with partisan needs?”⁶¹ This chapter inverts Loxley’s programmatic question. I inquire not how “partisan needs” condition “verse practice” but instead how verse practice inflects seemingly partisan positions. I have thus tried to found my analysis not on a particular “royalist” stance but on a specific literary form, the verse miscellany. Given the weight of historical and biographical evidence, we cannot always suspend judgment about an author’s politics. And we might end up in the same place: royalist politics might foster a certain brand of poetics, and, conversely, that poetics might support royalist positions. But we might also end up somewhere else. In *Hesperides*, I have argued, the dialogic form of the miscellany proves ideologically capacious, by no means reducible to “partisan needs.”

It is true that Herrick at times describes his book of poems in staunchly royalist terms. In a poem “TO THE KING,” for example, Herrick subjects his verse to Charles’s political dominion:

If when these Lyricks (CESAR) You shall heare,
And that *Apollo* shall so touch Your eare,
As for to make this, that, or any one
Number, Your owne, by free Adoption;
That Verse, of all the Verses here, shall be
The Heire to This *great Realme of Poetry*. (264)

Herrick here subordinates literary to political judgment. The poetic heir of *Hesperides* will be that verse “CESAR” deigns to choose—to make his “owne, by free Adoption.” “Free Adoption” evokes the political and religious genealogies of monarchical authority: Julius Caesar literally adopted Octavius (later Augustus), and for Calvin “free adoption” (“*gratuita adoptio*”) describes how God alone decides who will be among the elect.⁶² Herrick refigures these temporal and divine inheritances as his own “*great Realme of Poetry*.” Now governed by the authority of the king, the heterogeneous verses of *Hesperides* will in turn be ruled by whichever verse Charles might prefer.

Such recurrent poems to the royal family seem to bind the fate of *Hesperides* to the fate of the monarch. And just a year before the execution of Charles, that fate surely looked grim indeed. But the praise of the king’s party is far from unmixed. Here too the political epigrams foster critical dialogue. Juxtaposed with poems addressed to the royal family, these epigrams comment on, and even sharply critique, the royalist optimism of Herrick’s laudatory verses.⁶³ In a poem “*To the King and Queene, upon their unhappy distances*,” for instance, Herrick laments the separation of Charles and Henrietta Maria but predicts, “’twill come, when / These eyes of mine shall see you mix agen” (79). The next poem, however, rejects this prophetic assurance of royal reunion. In the couplet “*Dangers wait on Kings*,” Herrick suggests that Charles and Henrietta Maria might in fact never “mix agen”: “As oft as Night is banish’d by the Morne, / So

⁶¹ James Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The Drawn Sword* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1997), 1, 3.

⁶² See Jean Calvin, *Institutio Christianae Religionis* (Geneva, 1559), 3.22.7; *The Institution of Christian Religion* (London, 1561), f. 246r.

⁶³ Coiro makes a similar point: the epigrams “puncture with sensible advice the royal poems of praise that they surround” (*Robert Herrick’s “Hesperides,”* 190). See also Swann, *Curiosities and Texts*, 240n165.

oft, we'll think, we see a King new born" (80). Alongside the poem to the king and queen, this proverbial commentary on human fickleness highlights the radical instability of mid-seventeenth-century politics.

Herrick's political epigrams not only answer but also deflate the poems of royalist praise. Later in the volume, a celebratory verse "TO THE KING, Upon his taking of *Leicester*" is soon followed by an epigram on "*Counsell*." The poem to the king opens in an ecstatic mood. "This Day is Yours, *Great CHARLES!*" Herrick exclaims, "and in this War / Your Fate, and Ours, alike Victorious are" (823). Herrick again ties his own fate—and the fate of the English people—to that of the king. "*Counsell*," however, has a very different message: that deliberation and diplomacy are at least as essential as military might. This epigram reflects, "'Twas *Cesars* saying: *Kings no lesse Conquerors are / By their wise Counsel, then they be by Warre*" (825). Herrick pointedly reminds the reader that force is not the only way to resolve conflict. Romanticized royalism once more runs up against practical advice—and against the realities of political life in the 1640s.

Herrick surely engages in the "cultural battlefield" of the 1640s, but not—or at least not only—as a royalist partisan. *Hesperides* instead invites a particular hermeneutic practice well suited to the ideological contestation of mid-seventeenth-century England. We find versions of this method of reading in two writers with very different religious and political commitments: the Anglican divine (and "firm royalist") Clement Barksdale and John Milton.⁶⁴ Barksdale's 1651 collection of verse *Nympha Libethris* includes a brief epigram "*Upon the Histories of the late Wars*." This epigram explicitly links the cultural and military battlefields of the age:

As the *Armies* did against each other fight;
Even so doe our moderne *Historians* write:
Each for his *side*. The *Stationer* says, *Buy both*:
Compare them, and you may *pick* out the Truth.⁶⁵

In *Areopagitica*, Milton proposes a similar hermeneutics. The parliamentarian John Selden, Milton enthusiastically claims, has proved "that all opinions, yea errors, known, read, and collated, are of main service & assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest."⁶⁶ Both Barksdale and Milton suggest that "Truth"—or merely "what is truest"—emerges from critical and comparative reading. Barksdale, however, does not share Milton's optimism. He notes the partisan bias of "moderne *Historians*" who write "each for his *side*," and he identifies the injunction to collect both sides with the "*Stationer*." It is thus not the author or reader who argues for the collation of different opinions but instead the bookseller—who, as the imperative "*Buy both*" reveals, has a vested interest in the readership of printed books.

Yet Barksdale's commercial realism does not preclude the Miltonic model of comparative reading. Indeed, his epigram underscores the importance of critical interpretation at a moment of literary and political division. Barksdale shows how the print marketplace could promote not just ideological extremism but also comparative, and even dialogic, reading

⁶⁴ "Barksdale, Clement (1609-1687)," John Coffey in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁶⁵ Clement Barksdale, *Nympha Libethris: Or the Cotswold Muse* (London, 1651), sig. D6r. See Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 250-51.

⁶⁶ John Milton, *Complete Prose Works*, 8 vols., ed. Don M. Wolfe et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953-82), 2:513.

practices. *Hesperides* does the same. Like “our moderne *Historians*,” Herrick stages the dialogues and debates of the civil wars. His printed book of poems thus thrusts the poetics of division into an emergent public sphere—and suggests how critical reading might negotiate the cultural and political fissures of the 1640s.⁶⁷ *Hesperides* evokes such inclusive practices of reading and writing even through its title: “*Hesperides*: or, the works both humane & divine of Robert Herrick *Esq.*” This was “the first time the term ‘Works’ had been used for a collection of English poetry.”⁶⁸ By collecting and printing his disparate “works” in 1648, Herrick too says: “Compare them, and you may *pick* out the Truth.”

⁶⁷ On print and the early modern “public sphere,” see Alexandra Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); David Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early-Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁶⁸ Cain and Connolly, eds., *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick*, 1: lxxiv. A few earlier collected “Works” contain some poetry (mixed in with drama or prose), but they all count a collection of poems or an extended poetic sequence as a single “Work,” while Herrick’s title suggests that each individual poem, no matter how brief, constitutes a “Work” of its own. See, for example, Ben Jonson, *The Workes of Benjamin Ionsen* (London, 1616), sig. ¶3r; and John Taylor, *All the Workes of Iohn Taylor the Water-Poet* (London, 1630), sig. A1r.

Coda: The Promise of Literature

Aspiring *Cataline* shall be forgot,
 Bloody *Sejanus*, or who ere could plot
 Confusion 'gainst a State, the War betwixt
 The Parliament and just *Harry the Sixt*,
 Shall have no thought or mention, 'cause their power
 Not onely plac'd, but lost him in the Tower.

Thomas Jordan, "*The Players Petition to the Long Parliament, after being long Silenc'd, that they might Play again*, 1642."¹

For Jordan—poet, actor, playwright, and royalist—several stage characters pattern the bloody misdeeds of the Long Parliament.² These include Catiline and Sejanus, who (partly thanks to the influence of Jonson's tragedies) had long been by-words for sedition.³ More unusual is Jordan's other example of dramatic treason: "the War betwixt / The Parliament and just *Harry the Sixt*." No such conflict appears in the chronicles or in any surviving play about the Wars of the Roses. Holinshed and Hall, and for that matter Shakespeare, blame not parliament but the future Richard III for the murder of Henry VI in the Tower.⁴ But the phrase "aspiring *Cataline*" does recall a link between this classical conspirator and the fall of Shakespeare's English king. Richard, in the octavo of *3 Henry VI*, resolves to "set the aspiring *Catalin* to schoole."⁵ The imagined parliament of medieval England takes its place alongside Catiline and Sejanus as an exemplary villain for the 1640s.

Jordan's poem reveals the enduring influence of those representations—at once literary, historical, and political—that I have explored above. In print and in politics, figures like Henry VI and Catiline acquired renewed relevance in the mid-seventeenth century. Even, or especially, the most stridently polemical acts of literary-historical representation were caught up in the bitter cultural conflicts of the civil wars. Ideological division thus marks the afterlife of Jonson's

¹ Thomas Jordan, *A royal arbor of loyal poesie* (London, [1663]), sigs. F7v-F8r.

² "Jordan, Thomas (c. 1614-1685)," Lynn Hulse, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). See Susan Wiseman, "'The Eccho of Uncertaintie': Jonson, Classical Drama, and the English Civil War," in *Refashioning Ben Jonson: Gender, Politics, and the Jonsonian Canon*, ed. Julie Sanders, Kate Chedgzoy, and Susan Wiseman (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 208-29, esp. 212.

³ *Catiline* and *Sejanus* may have failed on the stage, but in print they enjoyed great esteem throughout the seventeenth century. See William Dinsmore Briggs, "The Influence of Jonson's Tragedy in the Seventeenth Century," *Anglia* 35 (1912): 277-337; G. E. Bentley, *Shakespeare and Jonson: Their Reputations in the Seventeenth Century Compared*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), 1:109-12.

⁴ Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York* (London, 1548; repr., London, 1809), 303; Raphael Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, 2nd ed. (London, 1587; repr., 6 vols., London, 1807-8), 3:324; Shakespeare, *King Henry VI, Part 3*, ed. John D. Cox and Eric Rasmussen (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2001), 5.6.

⁵ *The true Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke, and the death of good King Henrie the Sixt* (London, 1595), sig. C8v.

Catiline no less than the poetics of Herrick's *Hesperides*. During the "image wars" of the 1640s and '50s, Jordan suggests, drama remained a key site of contestation.⁶ Plays pattern the present, and the present looks more and more like a play: "Your Tragedies more real are exprest," Jordan informs parliament, "You murder men in earnest, we in jeast." At least for Jordan, life imitates art. And so he imagines royalist victory as a stage direction: "*Enter the King, Exit the Parliament.*"⁷

Jordan's topical use of history—and of theater history—is by no means unusual. As F. J. Levy notes, in the early modern period "the connection between contemporary politics and the writing of history, usually by way of some sort of exemplarity, is nearly omnipresent."⁸ Marx puts the same sentiment rather differently in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*: "The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living."⁹ The representation of the past in the present entails not just didactic exemplarity but also the burden of repetition, distortion, and even violence.

Take, for instance, the fate of Catiline, that archetypal villain in the saga of republicanism. The spectral presence of Catiline (and of *Catiline*), I showed in Chapter 4, haunted the short-lived English republic—and it has continued to haunt fledgling republics ever since. After his execution in 1794, Robespierre was branded "le Catilina moderne," the modern Catiline; in 1800, Alexander Hamilton condemned Aaron Burr as "the *Catiline* of America."¹⁰ Catiline figures the enemy within, the aspiring politician whose violence against the republic can only be met with violence itself. This particular act of historical representation thus seems to license the very violence that it condemns. As Judith Butler writes of the threat, it "registers a certain force in language, a force that both presages and inaugurates a subsequent force."¹¹

If the force of this historical analogy has attenuated, it has not disappeared completely. As recently as 2014, Barack Obama was compared to Catiline on the floor of the U.S. Senate.¹² Our partisan political rhetoric, then, still forcefully accommodates the past to the present.

⁶ I take the phrase "image wars" from Kevin Sharpe, *Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010). See Susan Wiseman, *Drama and Politics in the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); and Elizabeth Sauer, "*Paper-contestations*" and *Textual Communities in England, 1640-1675* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

⁷ Jordan, *A royal arbor of loyal poesie*, sig. F8v.

⁸ F. J. Levy, "Afterword," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68.1-2 (2005): 423. See Paulina Kewes, ed., "The Uses of History in Early Modern England," special issue, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68.1-2 (2005).

⁹ Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, in *Collected Works*, vol. 11, trans. Clemens Dutt et al. (New York: International Publishers, 1979), 99-197, esp. 103.

¹⁰ *M. J. Maximilien Robespierre, surnommé le Catilina moderne*, Bibliothèque nationale de France [Paris, 1794]; Alexander Hamilton, "To Oliver Wolcott, Junior," 16 Dec. 1800, in *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, ed. Harold C. Syrett, vol. 25, July 1800-April 1802 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 257.

¹¹ Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 9.

¹² Philip Bump, "Ted Cruz goes Peak Senate in opposition to Emperor Obama," *Washington Post*, 20 Nov. 2014, www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2014/11/20/ted-cruz-goes-peak-senate-in-opposition-to-emperor-obama/?utm_term=.f537243a86d7.

According to Marx, this is precisely the burden of history: “just when [men] seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle-cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language.”¹³ Ciceros, Catilines, and Caesars process across the stage of history, fighting for (or against) their republics. “No violence! Caesar be safe,” exclaimed Jonson’s Cicero.¹⁴ Cicero’s cry turns republicanism into an unpalatable dilemma: violence or Caesar?

Yet this dissertation has recovered a third option: to choose neither violence nor submission, but instead to craft new rhetorics—and constitutive fictions—of representation. From Sidney’s politics of interruption to Herrick’s poetics of division, literature was itself an answer to the republican dilemma. Religious and political polarization, and eventually civil war, threatened to erode the barrier between rhetoric and violence. But to write literature in early modern England was to insist on their essential difference—and, ultimately, to foster what Butler calls “counter-speech.” “The gap that separates the speech act from its future effects,” Butler argues, “opens up the possibility for a counter-speech, a kind of talking back.”¹⁵ Representation might authorize violence or persecution. Those fictions published and performed in England’s emergent “public sphere,” however, instantiated and invited more unruly kinds of reception.¹⁶ There is perhaps no better emblem of this “counter-speech” than Jonson’s “reader in Ordinary,” who “commend[ed] the first two acts, with the people, because they are the worst, and dislike[d] the oration of Cicero.”¹⁷ Jonson’s popular audiences were evidently unpersuaded by the enargistic violence of Cicero’s authoritarian eloquence—and they were eager to make their skepticism heard. And so from the Renaissance to the present, the possibility of separating rhetoric from violence has remained the positive condition of republicanism, and the promise of literature.

¹³ Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire*, 103-4.

¹⁴ Jonson, *Catiline His Conspiracy*, ed. Inga-Stina Ewbank, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online*, gen. ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 5.5.163.

¹⁵ Butler, *Excitable Speech*, 15.

¹⁶ On print and the early modern “public sphere,” see chapter 5, note 67 above. On theater and the “public sphere,” see Paul Yachnin, “The Reformation of Space in Shakespeare’s Playhouse,” in *Making Space Public in Early Modern Europe: Performance, Geography, Privacy*, ed. Angela Vanhaelen and Joseph P. Ward (New York: Routledge, 2013), 262-80; Steven Mullaney, *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); Joseph Mansky, “‘Unlawfully published’: Libels and the Public Sphere in *Titus Andronicus*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 67.3 (2016): 293-318; András Kiséry, *Hamlet’s Moment: Drama and Political Knowledge in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); and Jeffrey S. Doty, *Shakespeare, Popularity and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

¹⁷ Jonson, *Catiline*, “To the Reader in Ordinary,” 4-6.

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