

REVIEW ARTICLES

ROYALISM REVISITED*

Laudian and royalist polemic in seventeenth-century England: the career and writings of Peter Heylyn. By Anthony Milton. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007. Pp. xii + 255. ISBN 978-0-7190-6444-9. £55.00.

Royalism, print and censorship in Revolutionary England. By Jason McElligott. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007. Pp. x + 274. ISBN 978-1-84383-323-9. £55.00.

Royalists and royalism during the English Civil Wars. Edited by Jason McElligott and David L. Smith. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. xiv + 252. ISBN 978-0-521-87007-8. £60.00.

Royalists and royalism during the Interregnum. Edited by Jason McElligott and David L. Smith. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010. Pp. viii + 267. ISBN 978-0-7190-8161-3. £60.00.

Parliaments and politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate. By Patrick Little and David L. Smith. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. xiii + 338. ISBN 978-0-521-83867-2. £58.00.

The crown's servants: government and civil service under Charles II 1660–1685. By G. E. Aylmer. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Pp. xvi + 303. ISBN 0-19-820826-X. £78.00.

Politics, transgression, and representation at the court of Charles II. Edited by Julia Marciani Alexander and Catherine MacLeod. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2007. Pp. xix + 268. ISBN 978-0-300-11656-4. £40.00.

Roger L'Estrange and the making of Restoration culture. Edited by Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. Pp. xvii + 236. ISBN 978-0-7546-5800-9. £60.00.

Debates in Stuart history. By Ronald Hutton. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. Pp. viii + 239. ISBN 1-4039-3589-0. £20.99.

Royalism is scarcely more susceptible to easy generalizations than is puritanism. Should we agree with Johann Sommerville that ‘absolutism’, appropriately

* Reflecting the books under review, this essay concentrates on English royalism, rather than Scottish, Irish, British, or archipelagic themes. I am very grateful to George Southcombe and the anonymous readers for this journal for their comments. All the views expressed are nevertheless my own.

broadly defined, was a significant part of its ideological DNA, or else with James Daly that, with only a minimal number of exceptions, 'all the royalists were what S. R. Gardiner called constitutional royalists'?¹ Would we be wise to follow David L. Smith in attempting to delineate a taxonomy of 'distinct and separable attitudes' within royalism, or to accept Paul Seaward's view that 'it is questionable' whether such an endeavour 'will ever be really fruitful'?² Similarly, was Gerald Aylmer right to 'express some scepticism' about popular royalism 'as a subject for historical research'?³ Joyce Lee Malcolm and Andy Wood would both say 'no', but would then divide on the motivations underlying expressions of plebeian royalist sentiment.⁴ Is it useful to assert that 'English royalism was first of all English', or more productive to follow R. W. K. Hinton's now venerable emphasis on the extent to which the English did not inhabit 'an island in thought', but moved in European-wide intellectual frameworks, established not least by Bodin?⁵ Were more royalists motivated to defend the Stuarts by a sense of religious duty emanating from a shared biblicism – Daly's 'thoroughly Protestant Englishmen' – or by the kind of profound personal obligation that was deeply rooted in early modern honour codes?⁶ If the latter, should we accept that intellectual arguments were not really an important part of royalism at all, and that it was primarily a phenomenon that reflected day-to-day realities, experience, and social fact, rather than 'high-minded brilliance'.⁷ Finally, and perhaps most problematically of all, to what extent do the answers to such questions vary according to which part of the seventeenth century the historian considers? Although we have good synoptic accounts of the institution

¹ J. P. Sommerville, *Royalists and patriots: politics and ideology in England 1603–1640* (2nd edn, Harlow, 1999), esp. 'Revisionism revisited: a retrospect'; J. W. Daly, 'Could Charles I be trusted? The royalist case, 1642–1646', *Journal of British Studies*, 6 (1966), p. 43. Cf. Glenn Burgess, *Absolute monarchy and the Stuart constitution* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1996).

² David L. Smith, *Constitutional royalism and the search for settlement, c. 1640–1649* (Cambridge, 1994), ch. 1, esp. pp. 9–11; Paul Seaward, 'Constitutional and unconstitutional royalism', *ante*, 40 (1997), p. 227.

³ G. E. Aylmer, 'Collective mentalities in mid-seventeenth-century England: II. Royalist attitudes', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 37 (1987), p. 29.

⁴ Joyce Lee Malcolm, *Caesar's due: loyalty and King Charles, 1642–1646* (London, 1983); Andy Wood, 'Beyond post-revisionism? The Civil War allegiances of the miners of the Derbyshire Peak Country', *ante*, 40 (1997), pp. 23–40. See also Mark Stoye, *Loyalty and locality: popular allegiance in Devon during the English Civil War* (Exeter, 1994).

⁵ J. W. Daly, 'The origins and shaping of English royalist thought', *Historical Papers/Communications Historiques* (1974), p. 15; R. W. K. Hinton, 'Government and liberty under James I', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 11 (1953), p. 62; idem, 'Was Charles I a tyrant?', *Review of Politics*, 18 (1956), pp. 69–87, esp. pp. 70–6.

⁶ Daly, 'Origins and shaping', p. 25; Jerrilyn Green Marston, 'Gentry honour and royalism in early Stuart England', *Journal of British Studies*, 13 (1973), pp. 21–43. For a recent account, see Brendan Kane, *The politics and culture of honour in Britain and Ireland, 1541–1641* (Cambridge, 2009).

⁷ Aylmer, 'Royalist attitudes', p. 30; James Daly, 'The implications of royalist politics, 1642–1646', *ante*, 27 (1984), p. 755; Marston, 'Gentry honour and royalism', p. 23. See also Michael Mendle, *Dangerous positions: mixed government, the estates of the realm, and the making of the Answer to the six propositions* (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1985).

of parliament, republican thinking, and puritanism that transcend the tumultuous mid-seventeenth-century decades, it is harder to identify such an account for royalism.⁸ The traditional dividing line of 1660 continues to affect research. Older generations examined the 1640s and 1650s as a kind of seed-bed for the Tory party, and recent work has tended to unite successive crises around recurring ideological fears, but the extent to which 'royalism' endured during the Restoration has not commanded significant attention, certainly in comparison to the fate of outcast puritans.⁹

None of the nine books to be reviewed here individually effects a paradigm-shift in scholarly understanding of royalism. Nevertheless, when taken cumulatively the work of the forty-seven scholars displayed within them does offer a valuable sense of the range of royalist experience and expression over a timescale stretching from the 1620s to the 1680s. These were clearly so sufficiently various and chronologically contingent that it is tempting to appropriate Christopher Haigh's plural approach to sixteenth-century religious change and talk of seventeenth-century English royalisms.¹⁰ Overall, though, a sufficient kernel of consolidated matter emerges to resist a conceptual understanding based purely on the siren words so beloved by many literary critics – multivalency, complexity, and ambiguity – and instead hold on to some sense of an holistic royalist world.¹¹ This becomes all the more important now that so many historians are turning their attention to royalism after several decades in which parliament and puritans dominated academic research. As well as reflecting a predictable movement of the historiographical plough towards less well-tilled pastures, the realignment reflects two welcome intellectual shifts to which I will return in the conclusion: a broadening of the parameters of political history, and a concern to inter-relate different parts of a seventeenth century carved up by academic hyper-specialization during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. It will be argued that current work on religious cultures and royalism offers some particularly intriguing avenues for tracing continuity and change across England's 'short seventeenth century' (c. 1625–c. 1688/9).

⁸ David L. Smith, *The Stuart parliaments, 1603–1689* (London, 1998); Jonathan Scott, *Commonwealth principles: republican writing of the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 2004); John Spurr, *English puritanism, 1603–1689* (Basingstoke, 1998).

⁹ K. G. Feiling, *A history of the tory party, 1640–1714* (Oxford, 1924); Jonathan Scott, *England's troubles: seventeenth-century English political instability in European context* (Cambridge, 2000). For a telling specific incident from the 1670s, see Robert Beddard, 'Wren's mausoleum for Charles I and the cult of the royal martyr', *Architectural History*, 27 (1984), pp. 36–45.

¹⁰ Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: religion, politics, and society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993).

¹¹ Cf. Jerome de Groot, *Royalist identities* (Basingstoke, 2004), where royalism is described as 'a complex discourse of loyalty' and 'an amorphous collection of attitudes, complex and indistinct' (pp. xv, 1).

I

Anthony Milton has made a shrewd choice of subject by turning to examine the career of Peter Heylyn, a man whose pathologically argumentative character led him to charge into the polemical lists repeatedly between the early 1620s and his death – ‘diminutive, skeletal and partially blind’ (p. 216) – in 1662. In the process, Heylyn demonstrated consistent ‘committed support for royal authority’ and disdain for the pretensions of parliament to enjoy any independent privileges (pp. 224–5, 131–2). At the opposite end of the ideological spectrum to men like Gerrard Winstanley, Heylyn rejoiced in the existence of a Norman yoke restraining the people, gained by conquest in 1066, and inherited by Charles I. On this basis he argued that ‘the power of making Laws ... is properly and legally in the King alone’ (p. 132). Such views were inextricably connected to a deep-seated suspicion of ‘popularity’, and particularly to a belief that puritans appealed to the people as part of a pervasive plot to undermine all duly constituted authority (pp. 19–29, 93–8).¹²

Small wonder that Richard Baxter damned Heylyn as one of those people who ‘speak of blood with pleasure’, while an antagonist who always remained within the Church of England, John Hacket, derided him as the ‘General Wrangler’ (pp. 1, 47). At the high-point of his fame and success during Charles I’s personal rule, William Prynne was, characteristically, courageous enough to label Heylyn ‘as impudent, as shamelesse, as active an instrument of mischief & as great an incendiary for his yeares as any living in our Church’ (p. 61). Even other Laudians thought Heylyn too confrontational for the good of their cause, and when the Scottish crisis electrified the political world the government made use of other, more moderate, pens. All such comments are supremely ironic bearing in mind that more than anything else Heylyn wished Laud to make ‘the Jerusalem of the English Empire, like a City which is at unity within it selfe’ (p. 24).

Perhaps Anthony Milton’s greatest single achievement in this superb book is to present Heylyn as a real person with complex agendas and not simply a nightmarish figment of the English anti-clerical imagination. This is achieved by exceptionally sensitive and well-informed readings of each of Heylyn’s published works in their contexts, as well as sustained use of the three near contemporary biographies available to us. On this basis, Heylyn’s position within a spectrum of Laudian beliefs is more clearly pin-pointed than ever before. He was, for instance, less hard-line than Pocklington on the precise placing of the altar and the need to engross substantial areas of the church for

¹² For helpful considerations of this burgeoning theme in recent scholarship, see Joad Raymond, ‘Describing popularity in early modern England’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67 (2004), pp. 101–29; Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, eds., *The politics of the public sphere in early modern England* (Manchester, 2007); Thomas Cogswell, Richard P. Cust, and Peter Lake, eds., *Politics, religion and popularity in early Stuart England: essays in honour of Conrad Russell* (Cambridge, 2002).

the use of clergy through intrusive altar rails (p. 99). Nor did he follow Jeremy Taylor's implication that bishops were sufficiently exalted beings that they might constitute the only true priesthood (p. 119). But he was unbending when it came to the legal rights and corporate powers of the Church of England. Here, Heylyn was unafraid to take his views to a logical conclusion, however shocking to contemporaries. Taking aim at Foxe's *Acts and monuments*, as well as the whole puritan tradition of criticizing the Church of England as 'but halfly reformed', Heylyn proudly asserted historical continuities with several aspects of the pre-Reformation church, championed the orderly nature of the Elizabethan Reformation, and savagely indicted what he saw as the excesses of the Edwardian period. On this basis he could even boldly state in his *Ecclesia restaurata* (1661) that it was not 'an infelicity to the Church of England' that Edward VI had died young, because he was 'ill-principled in himself, and easily inclined to embrace such counsels as were offered to him' (pp. 198–204).¹³

In a work dedicated to Charles II this was almost absurdly incendiary stuff. Yet to understand Heylyn's mind by the 1660s, Milton skilfully explores the impact of the 1640s and 1650s on his understanding of the world. In 1643, Heylyn had argued in print that plots against the church were most dangerous, and most insidious, *within* Charles I's court, rather than amongst his parliamentary opponents. He decried the temporizing advisers who 'would persuade S. Paul to part with S. Peters keys, so he may still hold the sword in his hand; or to speake more plainly, to purchase the peace of the Commonwealth with the ruine of Gods Church' (p. 127). These anxieties were not assuaged by subsequent events. By the 1650s, Heylyn's physical and intellectual circumstances were such that Milton queries whether 'royalist' is an appropriate label for him: bereft of a living, and suspicious about Charles II's character and outlook, he even went so far as to dedicate a published work to Oliver Cromwell (pp. 146, 149, 162–3). When the Lord Protector's death led Heylyn to reaffirm his commitment to the Stuarts, he nevertheless continued to criticize Charles I for his inconstancy to the church (pp. 171–3). Small wonder that he received no new promotions after the Restoration: he hardly fitted into Charles II's hopes for a broad settlement that would have incorporated Presbyterians within the Church of England. This left him with the time necessary to continue his reflections on the nature of the church in a series of historical works that Milton deftly explores in the context of Heylyn's overall intellectual trajectory. The extent to which he picked at scabs in these histories was not calculated to endear Heylyn to a regime keen to bury the past through legislative means, notably the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion (1660).

¹³ For the difficulty that many writers faced in trying to make sense of the Edwardian period, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor church militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London, 1999).

A key theme of Milton's book, and one that is extended in Jason McElligott's monograph, is how we should attempt to understand the nature of polemicists in the seventeenth century. Milton is keen to establish that Heylyn was no mere lackey or hired pen (pp. 4, 43–4, 52–3, 122, 124, 233–4), and emphasizes the extent to which he disliked journalism per se thanks to a high sense of himself as a literary writer, one whose youthful interests—inspired by Martial—had focused on satirical verse (pp. 11–12). For all his early efforts to attract patronage, Milton demonstrates that Heylyn was not taken to the heart of the Laudian establishment. Contrary to myth, he was never Laud's chaplain (pp. 233–4), but was simultaneously far too much of a clericist to attract support from lay powerbrokers at court, either before the Civil Wars or after 1660. More positively, Milton makes the eminently sensible argument that Heylyn sought to shape opinion in accordance with his own hopes and beliefs, rather than simply parroting what his superiors wished to hear (though he sometimes did that too). Motivated by his zeal for the Laudian church, Heylyn's output was formidable: more than 2,000 printed pages in 1656–60 alone. He certainly attracted numerous and bitter replies from a wide range of authors, and just as evidently relished the contest.

But for what, ultimately, did Heylyn stand? Milton's two core conclusions reach out beyond his individual case-study, and will need to be considered by all scholars in the field. The first is that Heylyn's defence of the independent authority of the church necessarily created problems for Laudians' relations with kings of England. Where did the latter's powers end? Heylyn's critiques of Edward VI and Charles I showed an unwillingness simply to follow the supreme governor whatever he chose to do.¹⁴ Secondly, Milton uses Heylyn to demonstrate the instabilities within 'the' Laudian movement, especially between those keen to construct the identity of the Church of England through a close engagement with patristic texts, and those more comfortable with a process of selectively emphasizing aspects of the sixteenth-century English Reformation. Due to the length and varying circumstances of his career, it should hardly be surprising that Heylyn's output defies consistent characterization. Milton's consistently thoughtful, witty, and elegant study sets new standards for all scholars working on the complex overlap between anti-puritanism and royalism.

II

For his part, McElligott delves into the murky world of royalist news-books produced by a 'fifth-column of polemicists' in London between 1647 and the

¹⁴ For an early taster of a forthcoming major reconsideration of this theme, see Jacqueline Rose, 'Royal ecclesiastical supremacy and the Restoration church', *Historical Research*, 80 (2007), pp. 324–45.

highly successful commonwealth crackdown on the print trade by June 1650 (p. 1). In doing so he has written a first monograph that combines an impressive grasp of a vast and slippery corpus of material with a set of arguments that are no less aggressive and polemical than those deployed by the nine journalists whose work he explores. Anyone who has studied seventeenth-century news-books will be impressed by McElligott's efforts to analyse more than 530 issues of fifty-one surviving titles. He argues convincingly that the seriality of these texts 'allows us to track the deployment and development of images, ideas, arguments and tropes at regular intervals over ... time' (p. 19). Aiming 'to re-think the nature of political allegiance during the Civil Wars' (p. 2), McElligott consistently decries what he regards as an excessive scholarly concentration on elite royalist factions, pointing instead to the 'vibrant, pugnacious royalism' of the news-books and their socially diverse audience (p. 5). Unafraid of highly sexualized and scatological polemic, McElligott's journalistic heroes are presented not as systematic and consistent political thinkers, but ruthless tacticians whose 'sole aim' was to convince their audience (p. 8). This was just as well, since the bewildering twists and turns of Charles I's policies, and the consequent rapid shifts of military allies, left his journalistic supporters executing a number of breathtaking *volte-faces*, notably over the loyalty or otherwise of different Scottish and Irish groups as they moved in and out of the royalist camp (pp. 68–82). Only an emphasis on the king as 'the life of the Law of the Land' remained consistent over time, with stress relentlessly being laid on the reciprocal nature of English laws and the liberties of the subject (pp. 82–92).¹⁵ Thus, for McElligott, absolutists were 'almost as rare as hens' teeth' within the royalist world, making it necessary for historians to be sensitive to different shades of opinion *within* the constitutional royalist penumbra (p. 18).

McElligott is not content, however, simply to explore the internal themes and arguments of the news-books. He also turns his attention to the nature of the royalist underground network in London; parliament's efforts to crush that network; and what those efforts reveal about the broader nature of censorship in early modern England. In all these areas, he castigates modern academics for failing to understand the day-to-day realities of the world his authors inhabited, pointing instead to the fists, boots, blood, and broken bones that were the daily diet of many 'underground' writers (pp. 219, 153, 198). McElligott's own moxie is never in doubt. J. P. D. Cooper does not understand propaganda (p. 9); Jerome de Groot's argument that royalists were uncomfortable addressing a wide audience is 'too neat and convenient' (pp. 42–3); Andrew Pettegree's understanding of what motivated early modern customers to buy books is faulty (p. 44); Jonathan Scott is mauled for comparing royalism with dementia (p. 121 n. 93); and, most persistently of all, Jason Peacey's work is

¹⁵ For a later period, see Tim Harris, 'Tories and the rule of law in the reign of Charles II', *Seventeenth Century*, 8 (1993), pp. 9–27.

taken to task (e.g. pp. 64, 103, 129, 169 n. 77).¹⁶ The latter's efforts to attribute anonymously published texts to particular authors is subjected to fierce criticism, with McElligott stressing instead the impact of difficult working conditions and collaborative practices on most royalist news-books (pp. 100–5). This is powerful, and frequently convincing, even if it fails to appreciate the broader horizons of Peacey's meticulous investigation of networks and publishing intentions. Also significant is the effort to take seriously Marchamont Nedham's royalism, rather than simply consigning this to an unfortunate blip in an otherwise sophisticated republican career (pp. 111–25). Most effective of all is the careful charting of the different phases of repression that parliament inflicted on those who wrote and produced the news-books. Only after the passage of a long and detailed Printing Act in September 1649 was sufficient focus maintained on the physical presses themselves to crush the royalist underground's publications. (McElligott is, however, scarcely more persuasive than his predecessors when it comes to explaining why it took so long for parliament to hit upon the most effective means of stifling hostile publications: p. 170.) The regime's success in 'turning' Nedham to the new government's cause represented the 'death-knell' for the old newsbooks in 1650 (pp. 181–2).

It is the final chapters of McElligott's book that seem designed to excite the most polarized debate. Here he is keen both to expose the flaws in most previous work on censorship – where 'the injudicious use of cross-disciplinary approaches has created a terrible intellectual muddle' (p. 186) – and to create a 'new model' to take its place. McElligott makes numerous useful criticisms of what he sees as a developing 'new orthodoxy' that places too much emphasis on the weakness of the English state and its reliance on the Stationers' Company; reifies manuscript sources as better indicators of 'reality' than printed texts; and uses the relatively small number of prosecutions to bolster the case for a relatively un-repressive regime. Like any good controversialist, McElligott exaggerates some of his opponents' frailties, and at times creates too much of a homogeneous 'other' to challenge. Nevertheless, his core arguments carry weight. The punishment of malefactors did not have to be widespread: as a qualitative exercise, severe penalties on a few unfortunates might deter or restrain large numbers. The Stationers' Company was crucial, but it did not need to be a unified body to be effective – a relatively small number of committed partisans could move mountains, particularly when they acted in concert with other individuals and bodies from outside the company. McElligott's 'new model' follows on naturally from these points. Rather than simply relying on a process of 'cultural negotiation and persuasion', there really was a core English state capable of imposing itself (pp. 211–15). This it chose to do in a discriminating way, cracking down hard on those publications it deemed

¹⁶ The asperity of McElligott's comments is unfortunate bearing in mind the scale of Peacey's achievements, especially in the formidable *Politicians and pamphleteers: propaganda during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Aldershot, 2004).

most offensive. Far from acting on any grand theory of censorship, McElligott points instead to a 'grubby pragmatism' (pp. 218–19) focused more on low-level intimidation and violence, and less on dramatic court-cases. Enlivened by some striking imagery, rendered idiosyncratic by sudden references to Lenin and Gramsci, and shot through with a low regard for many fellow scholars, McElligott's book is sure to earn him the attention of authorities scarcely less keen to defend their intellectual positions than was the Rump Parliament.

III

Much of McElligott's impatience with the past historiography of royalism is repeated in the introductions to the two volumes of essays he has edited with David L. Smith, and which mostly emanate from a major conference held in Cambridge in 2004.¹⁷ Again, readers are encouraged to turn decisively away from social elites and to recognize the importance of 'contingent and personal factors' in issues of allegiance across a broad social background (I, p. 8). Rather unusually, these introductions do not hesitate to flay the shortcomings of the volumes they preface, even to the extent of explicitly singling out for criticism the work of particular contributors, notably David Scott (I, pp. 5, 11–12), but also Ann Hughes and Julie Sanders (II, pp. 12–13). This is a curious approach to editing, not least as the criticized essays are in reality amongst the most distinguished in the two volumes. Indeed, for all the talk of 'a quantum leap in our understanding' (II, p. 3), prospective readers need to be braced for how patchy these essay collections are – one, more select, volume would have been preferable. Just as McElligott and Smith are keen to present royalism as a 'spectrum' of belief and experience (I, pp. 11–12), so we may approach the twenty essays brought together by the editors.

At one end of the spectrum we find the wild and the woolly. Mark Kishlansky could never be accused of ambiguous writing, and in an essay on Charles I and the Short Parliament he continues to expound his courageous view that almost everyone has fundamentally missed the merits of a king put to death by his own subjects.¹⁸ Here, we meet with a monarch who was 'willing to meet his subjects more than half way'; who was frank, ingenuous, and sincere; and who 'ventured every conceivable concession in every possible way' (I, pp. 31–2, 39). This is vigorous stuff. Certainly it offers a strong sense of what the view must have looked like through Charles I's eyes, which is far from uninteresting, even if, as an analysis of the wider business of politics in 1640, it remains unconvincing.¹⁹

¹⁷ In what follows, the volume dealing with the Civil Wars will be labelled (I), and the interregnum (II).

¹⁸ See his 'Charles I: a case of mistaken identity', *Past and Present*, 189 (2005), pp. 41–80; and the ensuing 'Debate', with contributions by Clive Holmes, Julian Goodare, and Richard Cust, in *Past and Present*, 205 (2009), pp. 175–237.

¹⁹ Kishlansky thus offers a blunter variant of Kevin Sharpe, *The personal rule of Charles I* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1992).

Not to be outdone by Kishlansky, Sean Kelsey offers a revised take on his thesis that Charles I's trial was intended to function as an extended piece of negotiation, one that went spectacularly awry because the king failed to play his allotted role.²⁰ Thus, having frequently argued that the regicide was a contingent accident, in "A no-king, or a new": royalists and the succession, 1648–1649', Kelsey suggests that almost the only people who wanted the king dead were 'not a few' royalists (I, p. 193). Superficially, there is something to be said for such a view, at least if we accept that the king was a fundamental liability to his own side. And yet the predictably immense weight of the blow that regicide inflicted on royalist morale surely vitiates against an analysis based on the sense of new opportunities and the potential merits of Charles II. Kelsey's own language ultimately comes to suggest how tenuous his overall case is when in the final paragraph we meet with a host of cautious qualifiers: 'at least the glimmer', 'To some extent', 'At least some' (twice), 'may have' (twice), 'at the very least' (I, pp. 212–13). Compared to the essays of Kishlansky and Kelsey, James Loxley's – on royalism, theatre, and 'the political ontology of the person' in post-regicide writing – defies easy description. According to Loxley, 'to speak of political ontology is to focus on ways in which the composite or complex notion of "king" can be reduced, polemically and with much immediately at stake, to supposedly more primary notions or elements that might well draw on non-monarchical forms of political and more broadly philosophical thought' (II, p. 152). This is Loxley at his most pellucid, and much of the rest of the essay is a trial to read. John Milton would have had far more time to produce poetry if royalist authors had written as persuasively as this.

Much more straightforward are a run of essays by established authors, each of which offers either a useful summary of pre-existing bodies of work, or a helpful addition to a particular theme. Ian Roy brings a lifetime of immersion in the sources to an exploration of the extent to which hostile stereotypes of royalists matched reality, in the process introducing the splendid fictitious (alas) character, Agamemnon Shaglock van Dammee (I, p. 106). Similarly, Michael Mendle adds to his lengthy interest in the pressure-points within the notoriously poorly defined English constitution. In particular, he teases out what he describes as the 'royalist origins of the separation of powers', from the debates triggered by the *Answer to the xix propositions*. For his part, Blair Worden examines Andrew Marvell's royalism in the context of 'The new political language which emerged after the regicide' (I, p. 222).²¹ In doing so, he contrasts Marvell with Nedham and Harrington, both of whom enjoyed greater faith in parliamentary institutions and republican theory (I, pp. 223–35).

²⁰ For a recent demolition of Kelsey's core arguments which broadly restates traditional understandings of events in Nov. 1648–Jan. 1649, see Clive Holmes, 'The trial and execution of Charles I', *ante*, 53 (2010), pp. 289–316.

²¹ See also Blair Worden, *Literature and politics in Cromwellian England: John Milton, Andrew Marvell, Marchamont Nedham* (Oxford, 2007).

Daniel O'Neill's experiences of exile provide material for Geoffrey Smith, and a development of his important book on *The cavaliers in exile*.²² Rejecting easy polarized stereotypes of the exilic life in terms of intellectual cultivation or dire poverty, Smith notes the extent to which 'Exile was the making of Daniel O'Neill', thanks to his slippery skills as a patronage broker and 'fixer' within the highly factionalized court (II, pp. 121, 112, 114).²³ Ann Hughes and Julie Sanders offer a different perspective on the experience of exile: that experienced by royalist women in the Low Countries in the 1650s. In a subtle and nuanced account derived from an impressive engagement with northern European archives, they demonstrate women's defiance of the English republican regimes through religious and cultural patronage: 'Displacement and exile highlighted the importance of female agency in maintaining networks in unfamiliar contexts' (II, p. 129). Anthony Milton expands on Peter Heylyn's critique of Charles I's kingship, noting – *pace* Andrew Lacey – that scholars need to incorporate such negative perspectives into their treatment of the developing martyr cult.²⁴ For Heylyn, the publication of *Eikon basilike* showed most of all that the king 'put his own search for virtue before his duties as king' (II, p. 97).

Amongst the remaining contributors, Rachel Foxley examines the relationship between royalists and the New Model Army during the crucial year 1647. Although noting the extent to which 'civil war politics was a constant game of political recalculation and reorientation', Foxley reaches the commonsensical conclusion that the fundamental principles of each group were simply too different to allow real co-operation, despite a shared sense of hostility to the Presbyterians in parliament (I, pp. 155, 167–71). Helen Pierce adds to the burgeoning interest in picturing politics and society in early modern England, not least in her own very fine recent book, *Unseemly pictures*.²⁵ Here she examines the vitality of printed images of Charles I during the Interregnum as part of a wider 'cultural continuity of the monarchical, rather than republican, image of rule' (II, p. 84).²⁶ Other aspects of cultural royalism are explored by Marcus Nevitt and Jan Broadway. The former looks at the 'radically conservative poetics' (II, p. 176) of John Quarles, the (much) less talented son of Francis Quarles, whose reworking of the Lucrece narrative aimed to refute one strand

²² Geoffrey Smith, *The cavaliers in exile, 1642–1660* (Basingstoke, 2003). See also his recent *Royalist agents, conspirators and spies: their role in the British Civil Wars, 1640–1660* (Aldershot, 2011).

²³ See now also Nicole Greenspan, 'Charles II, exile, and the problem of allegiance', *ante*, 54 (2011), pp. 73–103.

²⁴ Andrew Lacey, *The cult of King Charles the Martyr* (Woodbridge, 2003).

²⁵ Helen Pierce, *Unseemly pictures: graphic satire and politics in early modern England* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2008). See also the excellent publicly accessible website: www.bpi1700.org.uk/index.html, accessed 24 Jan. 2011.

²⁶ See also Kevin Sharpe, *Image wars: promoting kings and commonwealths in England, 1603–1660* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2010); Laura Lunger Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell: ceremony, portrait, and print, 1645–1661* (Cambridge, 2000). Cf. Sean Kelsey, *Inventing a republic: the political culture of the English commonwealth, 1649–1653* (Manchester, 1997).

of anti-monarchical discourse. Nevitt argues that the highly derivative character of Quarles's writing was an important part of his popularity – in this sense he offered a reassuring continuity with Quarles senior at a time of rapid and unsettling change (ii, pp. 175–6). Broadway develops her important work on antiquarian scholarship during the Elizabethan and early Stuart periods into the 1650s, focusing on William Dugdale's *History of St Paul's* (1658).²⁷ Dugdale's character as 'a pragmatic, domestic Royalist' was influenced by his need to support an enormous family, but Broadway nevertheless demonstrates that the socially restrictive world of weighty scholarship was not as heavily policed by the regime as McElligott's more widely dispersed news-books. This latitude allowed Dugdale to present an idealized image of St Paul's – which in reality was seriously dilapidated – to rally royalist morale for better times ahead (ii, pp. 204, 209). Jason McElligott moves farther afield, examining a purported declaration by the governor and inhabitants of Virginia as a study in Interregnum polemic. This 568 word text appeared in the frequently scurrilous and fanciful news-book *The man in moon* in January 1650. Although acknowledging that this scarcely noticed document could be a fake, McElligott chooses to argue for its significance as a possible indicator of the social range and depth of royalist sentiment in Virginia. D'Maris Coffman offers a far greater weight of evidence when she examines the career of the earl of Southampton as a means to identify the lessons for Restoration government of Interregnum finance. Coffman achieves her goal of a modest rehabilitation of Southampton's previously low reputation as an administrator, pointing to a substantial paper-trail indicative of his vigorous activity and reflection in the early 1660s. In an intriguing conclusion, she argues that Southampton's moderate royalism led him to champion systems of raising revenue that placed indirect limits on the king, whilst inadvertently leaving the records necessary for more aggressive ministers in the 1680s to exploit the wealth of the kingdom on a far greater scale (ii, pp. 247–8).

If some of the essays in these volumes prove to be disappointing, and a number of others are useful pendants to wider projects, several nevertheless stand out as major contributions to the field. Pre-eminent amongst these is a startling piece by Kenneth Fincham and Stephen Taylor on 'Episcopalian conformity and nonconformity, 1646–1660'. Drawing heavily on more than a decade of labours for the Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540–1835,²⁸ Fincham and Taylor take as their starting point the fact that more than 75 per cent of the English clergy were *not* ejected from their livings during the 1640s and 1650s. For all the attention that has been paid to the principled

²⁷ Jan Broadway, *'No historie so meete': gentry culture and the development of local history in Elizabethan and early Stuart England* (Manchester, 2006).

²⁸ Publicly accessible at www.theclergydatabase.org.uk/index.html, accessed 24 Jan. 2011. See also Arthur R. Burns, Kenneth Fincham, and Stephen Taylor, 'Reconstructing clerical careers: the experience of the Clergy of the Church of England Database', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 55 (2004), pp. 726–37.

hardliners like Hammond, Sheldon, and Sancroft, the fact remains that most clergy engaged in a 'protracted process' of conformity (II, p. 23). Indeed, extrapolating from numbers distilled out of the surviving exhibit books, they estimate that around 3,500 clergy sought and gained episcopal ordination during this period, 94 per cent of which work was undertaken by just nine bishops, three of whom were members of the Irish episcopate (II, pp. 29–31). Such statistics will take a long time to digest in full, but for now Fincham and Taylor suggest that the link between episcopalianism and royalism was 'much less close' than usually thought (II, p. 35).

If Fincham and Taylor turn a number of cosy assumptions on their head, other authors demonstrate an impressive ability to develop and nuance existing knowledge. Barbara Donagan lays out the 'varieties of royalism', in a dense but thought-provoking essay that is also one of the few explicitly to consider ideological change over the century, ending with the claim that events after 1660 ensured significant discontinuities with the royalism of the 1640s (I, p. 88). Malcolm Smuts views the emergence of the royalist party through the prism of the court, and with the aid of a European perspective (and archival base). Smuts ably argues that divisions between Hyde's legalistic views, and the less inhibited arguments of Goring, point to the extent to which European political values were infiltrating some members of the English elite and causing divisions within what had been a common court culture (I, pp. 63–5).²⁹ This can be made to fit with David Scott's discussion of 'counsel and cabal in the king's party, 1642–1646'. Rejecting the argument that the king lost the first Civil War as a result of a lack of resources, Scott points instead to the heavy price of factionalism and mistrust at court, much of it rooted in a conflict between those pursuing absolute military victory (with foreign aid) and others content to see greater political compromise and accommodation. He argues that these views can be mapped on to broader schools of Machiavellianism and Tacitism, although he is cautious enough to acknowledge the difficulty of demonstrating deliberate and conscious appropriations of these intellectual tools by given individuals (I, pp. 128–34).³⁰ Such close attention to a single person's rhetorical strategies can, however, be traced in Charles I's letters – a rich source, ably explored by Sarah Poynting. For all the king's (false?) modesty – 'ye know I am ill at words' (I, p. 139) – Poynting shows the considerable literary complexity of his correspondence, and also the variety of his styles of self-presentation to different men. Hearteningly, she is also honest enough to acknowledge the total failure of all Charles's impressively deployed rhetorical figures within the realm of practical politics (I, p. 147).

²⁹ See also R. Malcolm Smuts, *Court culture and the origins of a royalist tradition in early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, PA, 1987).

³⁰ See also David Scott, 'Rethinking royalist politics, 1642–1649', in John Adamson, ed., *The English Civil War: conflict and contexts, 1640–1649* (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 36–60; Paul Seaward, 'Clarendon, Tacitism, and the civil wars of Europe', in Paulina Kewes, ed., *The uses of history in early modern England* (San Marino, CA, 2006), pp. 285–306.

Far plainer was the abuse hurled at successive Stuart monarchs by their subjects. David Cressy's recent work has laid out a smorgasbord of vitriol to feast on, most of it mined from legal records.³¹ But as Lloyd Bowen's fine essay, 'Seditious speech and popular royalism, 1649–1660', makes clear, such no holds barred criticism of authority could also be deployed as a key part of royalist discourse. Taking issue with David Underdown's presentation of popular royalism as pure 'reflex' (II, pp. 44–5), Bowen turns instead to an examination of the critical languages and political stereotypes he believes were critical in constructing royalist identity. What these reveal is that members of the 'middling sort' were especially prominent in expressing critical opinions of the republican regimes, and did so with the aid of a clear sense that those regimes represented an interruption of lawful authority (II, pp. 47–54). Perhaps because of the social weight of their critics, Bowen suggests that the republican authorities were highly discriminating about which pieces of seditious speech to pursue, and frequently preferred not to enquire too closely.

IV

How can we understand the nature of those republican regimes, and their relations with a wider royalist world? When Hugh Trevor-Roper turned his attention to the theme of 'Oliver Cromwell and his parliaments' the results were scintillating. His satirical pen was not slow to draw comparisons rooted in the seventeenth-century *gestalt*. In this particular 'tragi-comedy', Cromwell's irregular and dramatic appearances at Westminster meant he

descended like Moses from Sinai upon the naughty children of Israel, smashing in turn the divine constitutions he had obtained for them; and the surprised and indignant members, scattered before their time, went out from his presence overwhelmed with turbid oratory, protestations of his own virtue and their waywardness, romantic reminiscences, proprietary appeals to the Lord, and great broken gobbets from the Pentateuch and the Psalms.³²

No one could ever put it better than that. In their very sober, almost austere, work, David L. Smith and Patrick Little nevertheless seek to undermine Trevor-Roper's core thesis – that the Cromwellian parliaments failed because of a lack of able management, of the kind Trevor-Roper believed to have been the norm under Elizabeth. Instead, they place the 1650s firmly within a broader revisionist framework: parliaments as irregular events, dominated by the search for consensus, and deeply hide-bound by a conservative outlook perennially in search of precedents to justify activity. In this formulation, the key problem that

³¹ David Cressy, *Dangerous talk: scandalous, seditious, and treasonable speech in pre-modern England* (Oxford, 2010).

³² Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'Oliver Cromwell and his parliaments', in Richard Pares and A. J. P. Taylor, eds., *Essays presented to Sir Lewis Namier* (London, 1956), pp. 1–48; repr. in *Religion, the reformation, and social change* (London, 1967).

undermined Cromwellian parliaments was the grave difficulty of using a national representative assembly to promote a minority radical agenda.

Little and Smith take separate responsibility for particular chapters. Painstaking analyses are provided of the paper constitutions that framed the Protectorates' political lives, as well as elections to and exclusions from successive parliaments. The attitudes of both Oliver and Richard Cromwell towards the role and nature of parliaments within the English constitution are clearly discussed. Solid summaries of substantial existing bodies of literature are provided in chapters dealing with legal and religious reform. Perhaps most welcome are discussions that will offer students reliable guidance through the under-populated field of foreign policy, and the extensive – but atomized – scholarship on Scottish and Irish involvement in English politics. Patrick Little is, of course, particularly well suited to undertake the second task after his important work on that busy kingling and powerbroker, Lord Broghill.³³ Time and again, the authors take care to incorporate events in each of the three Protectorate parliaments into their comments – an effort for which all students pursuing particular people and problems will be grateful.

For all this useful detail and thematic coverage, the book must largely stand or fall by its conceptual framework: how did these parliaments function, and with what success? Little offers a descriptive analysis of the different groups of MPs jockeying for dominance. Rejecting Peter Gaunt and Derek Hirst's emphasis on loose groupings, Little by contrast confidently describes the varying shades of a 'court party' that was often riven with civilian versus military disputes, a Presbyterian group that shifted from opposition to mainstream influence under Richard Cromwell, a relatively small number of aggressive commonwealthsmen, and crypto-royalists. In Little's view, this last group was not prepared to risk short-term anarchy by trying to bring down the Protectorate in the hope of a return to the Stuarts in the long run. Bearing in mind the immense complexity, and elaborate dissimulations, that pervaded politics in the later 1650s, this seems likely to remain a highly debatable contention. Its force is not helped by the authors' broader determination to argue that Richard Cromwell's regime was not doomed to failure.³⁴ Instead, it benefited from a 'chorus of praise' at its beginning that was 'remarkable' and steadily gained in authority until a very sudden collapse of authority in mid-March 1659 (pp. 158–69).³⁵ This is a revisionist step too far, and leads to persistent efforts to figure hostile discussions in parliament not as criticism of Richard Cromwell personally, or the Protectorate in principle, but merely as typical early modern

³³ Patrick Little, *Lord Broghill and the Cromwellian union with Ireland and Scotland* (Woodbridge, 2004).

³⁴ See also Jason Peacey's essays in Patrick Little, ed., *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge, 2007), and idem, ed., *Oliver Cromwell: new perspectives* (Basingstoke, 2009).

³⁵ For a very different – and extremely convincing – picture, see now Jonathan Fitzgibbons, "'Not in any doubtfull dispute"? Reassessing the nomination of Richard Cromwell', *Historical Research*, 83 (2010), pp. 281–300.

parliamentary anxiety about allowing the executive too much independence (e.g. p. 162). If Trevor-Roper described a 'tragi-comedy' in these years, in their conclusion Little and Smith come close to portraying instead an epic triumph of political stability, 'normality', and an 'extraordinary' degree of engagement between parliaments and localities (esp. pp. 298–300). Despite sections devoted to local case-studies, such a line generally requires a heavily 'internalist' approach to parliamentary affairs, based on deep reading in a relatively narrow vein of key sources, notably the diary of Thomas Burton MP. Too little sense is given of the extent to which these parliaments floated uneasily on a boiling sea of conservative and royalist loathing. As John Lambert memorably remarked during debates on the Decimation Tax on 25 December 1656, beyond the walls of parliament royalists were 'now merry over their Christmas pies, drinking the King of Scots' health, or your confusion'.³⁶ In the final analysis, it is only possible to claim that 'The Protectorate Parliaments were not intrinsically flawed' (p. 296) by deliberately setting to one side the seething resentments of the New Model Army. It is hard to accept the authors' distinction between substantial army versus parliament tensions on the one hand, and the intrinsic strength of the Protectorate on the other: these regimes rested ultimately on the sword. No constitution could be stable which could not either accommodate the army's material concerns, or satisfy officers and men that the religious liberties that they had come to value so highly would not be sold down the river by an intolerant Presbyterian group of politicians whose grasp of *Realpolitik* was scarcely more advanced in 1659 than it had been in 1646/7.

V

Books on phases of government and politics tend to have heroes lurking within them. Geoffrey Elton's work frequently dwelled on the skills of Thomas Cromwell, Conrad Russell's studies illuminated the role of the earl of Bedford and John Pym, while Paul Seaward's meticulous account of the 1660s enhances the earl of Clarendon's reputation. Little and Smith often point to the political acumen of John Thurloe. But it is with the quotidian aspects of administration after the Restoration – the lesser personnel, institutions, fees, career paths, and petty corruption – that Gerald Aylmer is concerned in his posthumously published *The crown's servants*. This forms the final part of Aylmer's trilogy of books investigating the composition, assumptions, and efficacy of a developing central administration in early modern England.³⁷ His unparalleled labours in the minutiae of administrative documents that are both voluminous and intrinsically dry have left a generation of historians profoundly in his debt. Yet in *The crown's servants* we learn that had Samuel Pepys got his way in the 1660s,

³⁶ J. T. Rutt, ed., *The diary of Thomas Burton* (4 vols., London, 1828), 1, p. 240.

³⁷ *The king's servants: the civil service of Charles I, 1625–42* (London, 1961); *The state's servants: the civil service of the English Republic, 1649–60* (London, 1973).

none of this work would ever have been undertaken: the great naval administrator wanted Aylmer's direct ancestor, Matthew Aylmer, court-martialled and executed for striking the flag to a Spanish fleet (p. 243 n. 1). For once we can be glad that Pepys was foiled. Aylmer's dissection of those undertaking the business of government under Charles II is far less extensive and substantial than in his previous works, but his labours yield a number of pithy case-studies that will provide the starting points for much further work into the nuts and bolts of Restoration central government. By sampling office-holders at ten-year intervals (1663, 1673, and 1683) Aylmer also examines questions of change and continuity through the kind of detailed prosopographical approach that will be familiar to readers of his earlier works. Cautiously eschewing too straightforward a set of comparisons with other European states, Aylmer ends by describing Charles II's servants as 'more upper-class, less puritan, less self-made, and less committed to ideals of public service than the men of 1649–60' discussed in *The state's servants* (p. 269). In essence, 'the Restoration and its aftermath constituted a successful counter-revolution', but not an exact recreation of the pre-Civil War world (p. 271).

VI

All of this detailed study of the mechanics of government is a world away from recent scholarly concerns with how power was presented, disguised, or understood by contemporaries in the early modern world.³⁸ Riding high from their success curating the well-regarded exhibition *Painted ladies: women at the court of Charles II* at the National Gallery and Yale Center for British Art in 2001–2,³⁹ Julia Marciari Alexander and Catherine MacLeod have assembled a range of essays touching on different aspects of the court of Charles II.⁴⁰ Like many of the cultural forms the book discusses, as a volume *Politics, transgression, and representation* is both beautiful in its appearance and curiously flimsy in substance. Rather engagingly, the first two essays say profoundly different things. Kevin Sharpe anticipates the third volume of his epic study of images of power in early modern England by arguing that Charles II deliberately broke with the recent past, and personified 'a new politics of pleasure' (p. 18).⁴¹ The king promoted a 'new presentation of a royal family larger than the traditional understanding' (p. 8), with a startling and 'revolutionary sexuality' (p. 2)

³⁸ For some bracing recent comments on this trend, see C. S. L. Davies, 'Representation, repute, reality', *English Historical Review*, 124 (2009), pp. 1432–47. (Aylmer does offer brief comments on 'symbols and emblems of state': pp. 243–9).

³⁹ See the catalogue, *Painted ladies: women at the court of Charles II* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2001).

⁴⁰ See also Matthew Jenkinson, *Culture and politics at the court of Charles II, 1660–1685* (Woodbridge, 2010).

⁴¹ Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor monarchy: authority and image in sixteenth-century England* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2009); idem, *Image wars*.

evident in Lely's portraits of royal mistresses. Although Sharpe is eager to present this as a conscious and effective strategy designed as 'an antidote' to the puritan Interregnum (p. 18), Tim Harris's discussion of popular criticisms of the Restoration court is far more convincing. Economic adversity, widespread fear of Catholics in the royal presence, and conventional early modern morality combined to ensure that the rakish and profligate king was savagely criticized by many of his subjects. Rather than Sharpe's upbeat 'new monarchy founded . . . on calculation, interest, and desire' (p. 22), Harris shows a populace unconvinced of the merits of being ruled by a king loved only by 'drunk whores and whoremongers' (p. 35).

Three essays on portraiture and music dominate the bulk of the volume. The editors jointly consider the functions of the 'Windsor beauties' series of pictures in the context of other such collections in princely courts across early modern Europe. Very much an exercise in minute art history, few broad conclusions are drawn: the series of paintings was probably not commissioned as a group, but was quickly arranged and perceived as one. Susan Shifrin's discussion of images of Hortense Mancini, Duchess Mazarin, is no more analytically satisfying. Mancini was portrayed in different ways. This was generally in keeping with Europe-wide traditions. Overall, viewers were exposed to 'a multivalent amalgamation of references to multiple mythologies' (p. 162). Nothing, however, can adequately prepare the reader for the pretentiousness of Andrew Walkling's long essay, 'The apotheosis of absolutism and the interrupted masque: theater, music, and monarchy in Restoration England'. Walkling is a learned and intelligent interpreter of court culture.⁴² But here he is incapable of straightforward exposition, or of using one word when five can be pressed into service. Three entertainments – *The empress of Morocco* (1673), *Dido and Aeneas* (?1687), and *King Arthur* (1691) – are discussed in order to demonstrate the value of masques 'for exploring modalities of kingship and royal authority through the exploitation of the form's iconic qualities and established generic expectations' (p. 206). The value of such an approach has long been obvious for the early Stuart court. But Walkling does his case for the later Stuart period no favours by running away into exceptionally convoluted and over-blown discussions of plot devices, for instance an act of 'phallic bravado', with 'disgorged fluids [oozing] down the shaft of Actaeon's "bending spear"' (which apparently 'brilliantly encapsulates the dual masculinized roles of hunter and lover germane': p. 210). We are repeatedly talked through the hidden structures of meaning in musical scores and dramatic forms, with 'a multi-layered site of meaning' giving way to 'a complex web of signification' with a wearisome inevitability (pp. 214–15). Early in the seventeenth century, Ben Jonson regularly complained that few members of the royal court really understood his masques; early in the twenty-first century we need a better

⁴² For a summary account, see his 'Politics and theatrical culture in Restoration England', *History Compass*, 5 (2007), pp. 1500–20.

argument for the value of minute cultural analysis than that provided by Walkling.

Other contributions are mercifully briefer. Sheila O'Connell examines the depiction of women in popular prints, and finds a generally hostile set of stock stereotypes, expressed in a more conservative and emblematic style than the naturalism favoured in court portraiture. Rachel Weil uses the careers of two duchesses – Portsmouth and Marlborough – to elaborate her critique of Sonya Wynne's argument that secrecy was the key to female political activity in the Restoration age.⁴³ Instead, Weil contends that it was their visibility that rendered female political figures important, since both Charles II and Anne could use the prominence or seclusion of their intimates to signal intentions and preferences. Joseph Roach brings proceedings to a vacuous conclusion with a lightweight piece on 'Celebrity erotics'. This posits the 'public intimacy' afforded by visual representations of rulers – notably funeral effigies and the partially mummified remains of Catherine of Valois, which were kissed and fondled by Pepys during a visit to Westminster Abbey on 23 February 1669 – as 'the sexy version of the worthy but stolid bourgeois public sphere described by Jürgen Habermas' (p. 238). Apart from Harris's essay, the only other redeeming feature of the volume is a typically fluent and thoughtful piece by Steven Zwicker addressing the literary tropes of portraiture in Marvell's *Last Instructions to a painter*. This ably draws attention both to the sheer brutality of Marvell's assault on Restoration court culture, and of the poet's skill in appropriating 'the technical and expressive idioms of the visual arts as a vocabulary for politics and morality' (p. 135). If only more of the contributors could have replicated Zwicker's winning combination of sophisticated close analysis and lucidity of expression.

VII

Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch deserve immense credit for editing an excellent collection of essays addressing different aspects of the career of a bizarrely under-studied, but hugely important, figure in the history of seventeenth-century royalism. Although Roger L'Estrange is best known to historians as a tireless surveyor of the press, and an awesomely fluent polemicist, he was also a talented musician and a skilful translator whose version of *Aesop's fables* is still in print with Everyman today. Like McElligott's news-books, much of L'Estrange's work was 'innately ephemeral', but in an eloquent and impressive essay focused on 1659–62 Lynch demonstrates that its many inconsistencies were 'obliterated by the immediacy and intensity of his rhetoric and his animus' (p. 20). Indeed, so ferocious and persistent were L'Estrange's attacks on puritans just after the Restoration, that he may be seen as 'the antagonistic

⁴³ Esp. Sonya Wynne, 'The mistresses of Charles II and Restoration court politics', in Eveline Cruickshanks, ed., *The Stuart courts* (Stroud, 2000), pp. 171–90.

architect of nonconformist identity' (p. 7).⁴⁴ As Nicholas von Maltzahn demonstrates, this negative shaping role also extended to perceptions of Milton in the Restoration period. L'Estrange ruthlessly, and completely misleadingly, conflated Presbyterians and Milton within a general threat to order and authority (p. 34). He was sufficiently successful that he helped to ensure Milton's reputation as 'a monster of sedition', one that intimidated the early Whigs to such an extent that they rarely invoked his name before the Revolution of 1688/9 (pp. 34, 45). Nor was L'Estrange any fonder of Andrew Marvell. Martin Dzelzainis offers an intriguing close reading of a manuscript version of the *Directions to a painter*, not least to show that L'Estrange viewed scribal publications as being even more seditious than printed works. Ironically, L'Estrange's successes in cracking down on the printing presses helped to ensure that many previously published satirical poems migrated back into the manuscript form he feared so much in order to service a readership excited by the potency of Marvell's writing.

L'Estrange's own notoriety peaked in the decade leading up to the 'great crisis' of a monarchy he had worked so tirelessly to promote.⁴⁵ Mark Goldie offers a magnificent account of how L'Estrange's serial *The observator* fought to exorcise the Popish Plot in the early 1680s. Something of the success of this effort can be seen in the bitter contemporary description of L'Estrange as the 'scribbler-general of Tory-land' (p. 67), and Goldie is right to place him at the end of a trajectory of royalist engagement with popular print that had its origins in the early 1640s. L'Estrange 'feared that the century's history might repeat itself, first in tragedy and then in farce, regicide by the po-faced godly succeeded by a king stripped naked by charivari Whiggery' (p. 71). Championing the lesser clergy, 'its Ciceronian critique of aristocratic demagoguery' ensured that *The observator* was a 'backbench' publication by a bourgeois author repelled by both a libertine court and a crude multitude (pp. 75, 69, 85). Although a thoroughly metropolitan figure, L'Estrange determined to use 'the loyalism of the provinces to redress the rebelliousness of the City' of London (p. 73–4). It is impossible adequately to summarize this rich and detailed piece of work in such a short space, but for the present purpose it is worth emphasizing Goldie's argument that *The observator* was by no means an 'official' publication, but one that was representative in its assault on notions of mixed monarchy reducing the crown to one of the three estates: 'The anathematising of this doctrine was a defining position for Restoration Royalism' (p. 83). Peter Hinds provides a helpful coda to this essay by continuing his exploration of attitudes towards the

⁴⁴ For an earlier period, see Patrick Collinson, 'Ecclesiastical vitriol: religious satire in the 1590s and the invention of puritanism', in John Guy, ed., *The reign of Elizabeth I: court and culture in the last decade* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 150–70. (I am grateful to George Southcombe for reminding me of this comparison.)

⁴⁵ Tim Harris, *Revolution: the great crisis of the British monarchy, 1685–1720* (London, 2006).

trustworthiness and credibility of information.⁴⁶ L'Estrange's hostility towards the Popish Plot found a particular outlook in a determination to destroy the credibility of the plot witnesses, who he believed were performing 'a *State-Cheat*' on behalf of a republican faction.⁴⁷ Refusing to be intimidated by a growing volume of hostility, L'Estrange merely worked harder, publishing up to four editions of *The observator* a week (pp. 95–101).

Bearing in mind the staggering volume of L'Estrange's published polemic, it is astonishing that he managed to pack so many other things into his admittedly long life (1616–1704).⁴⁸ Anne Dunan-Page explores his activity as a translator of French works in the context of his brief period of self-exile in Holland and exposure to some of the currents of continental Reformed Protestantism. We are increasingly aware of the importance of such European theological and ecclesiological movements for English controversialists in the later seventeenth century.⁴⁹ Dunan-Page shows that L'Estrange's intervention in the controversy prompted by Stillingfleet's *Unreasonableness of separation* offers something of a balancing act to his fiercely anti-Huguenot writings in *The observator* (pp. 117–30). But L'Estrange's linguistic facility also extended to Spanish and Latin. As Line Cottagnies demonstrates, the latter allowed him to produce in extreme old age a translation of *Aesop's fables* as an expression of a pessimistic 'neostoic worldview' that urged 'a passive acceptance of the ways of Providence' (pp. 143–5). Few of those appalled by the Revolution of 1688/9 can have expressed their frustrations in such a long-lasting and fertile way. Andrew Ashbee's prosaic account of L'Estrange's lifetime of engagement with stringed instruments nevertheless pleasingly shows that the aggressive polemicist also preferred 'to engage in pyrotechnics' in his music rather than any 'slower *Descant* or *Binding-Notes*' (p. 165).

L'Estrange's forceful views and personality were also strikingly evident in the typography of his published polemic. In an essay unafraid to range across time from Cro-Magnon man to modern CD-recordings of novels by James Joyce, the late Harold Love offers an exhilarating investigation of L'Estrange's distinctively 'busy' typographical style, which he pleasantly describes as 'a form of... shouting' (pp. 167–8).⁵⁰ Love convincingly argues that the sheer 'busyness' of any given page of L'Estrange's works – the capitalization, range of type-faces,

⁴⁶ Consolidated in his "The horrid popish plot": Roger L'Estrange and the circulation of political discourse in late seventeenth-century London (Oxford, 2010).

⁴⁷ Cf. Claire Walker, "Remember Justice Godfrey": the popish plot and the construction of panic in seventeenth-century media', in David Lemmings and Claire Walker, eds., *Moral panics, the media and the law in early modern England* (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 117–38.

⁴⁸ See the excellent *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, entry by Harold Love.

⁴⁹ Tony Claydon, *Europe and the making of England, 1660–1760* (Cambridge, 2007). Such concerns also animated Peter Heylyn: see Milton, pp. 17–19, 22–4, 91–2, 156–7, 206, 210–13, 231–2.

⁵⁰ See also Harold Love, 'The look of news: popish plot narratives 1678–1680', in John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie, eds., *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain*, IV: 1557–1695, with the assistance of Maureen Bell (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 652–6.

use of emboldened and italicized text – ultimately has three functions. At one and the same time it visually conjures a sense of animated discussion, whilst also perforce slowing down the speed at which the words can be read to a vocal pace. Furthermore, the typography also presents a kind of ‘embedded index’ that facilitates the search for key words (pp. 176–7). Although Love suggests that a modern edition of L’Estrange’s works would be profoundly damaging unless it reproduced the original typography, it is an uncomplicated benefit to have Geoff Kemp’s superb annotated bibliography of those works as a final section to the book. This is a deceptively formidable achievement. As Kemp notes, L’Estrange published around six million words, across several genres. When combined with Kemp’s earlier work on L’Estrange’s paradoxically intense engagement with a ‘publishing sphere’ he hated, this bibliography both consolidates Kemp’s reputation as a major scholar of Restoration print culture, and raises expectations for his monograph on ideas of freedom of the press.⁵¹

VIII

Ronald Hutton resembles Roger L’Estrange in relatively few ways, but one very positive similarity can be found in his possession of a distinctive ‘voice’. For Hutton is part of an endangered species: the serious archival scholar who retains the capacity to communicate with broad publics, not least through an irrepressible enthusiasm for the study of the past.⁵² Reading his *Debates in Stuart history* is a genuinely cheering experience. This is by no means inevitable since Hutton’s historiographical analysis covers the period from the 1970s to the present day: the era when revisionist zeal too often came at the price of increasingly rebarbative debates within the academy; when a rising tide of managerialism inundated many libraries and archives; and when academics felt the nature of their career changing in the wake of budget cuts or Research Assessment Exercises or increasing burdens of administration or a debilitating combination of all three. Yet, although Hutton has an engaging line in light cynicism – ‘By the early 1980s, iconoclasm seemed both to be functionally necessary and professionally safe’ (p. 12) – he manages in this book to present younger scholars, students, and general readers with a sense of Stuart history as a lively and worthwhile field in which the weight of existing scholarship has not crushed the life out of the range of questions to pursue, or the variety of evidence that can be brought to bear on significant questions. After a bracing

⁵¹ Geoff Kemp, ‘L’Estrange and the publishing sphere’, in Jason McElligott, ed., *Fear, exclusion and revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 67–90. See also, idem, ‘Ideas of liberty of the press, 1640–1700’ (Ph.D thesis, Cambridge, 2001); idem and Jason McElligott, eds., *Censorship and the press, 1580–1720* (4 vols., London, 2009).

⁵² For the increasingly politicized theme of ‘public engagement’, see the activities of the Institute for the Public Understanding of the Past, at the University of York, notably a recent conference on the 10th anniversary of Simon Schama’s *A History of Britain*: www.york.ac.uk/ipup/events/schama/tevisualizing-report.html, accessed 24 January 2011.

discussion of 'revisionism' that is both sympathetic and critical,⁵³ Hutton goes on to provide sparkling accounts of recent work on the Civil Wars, early Stuart studies, Oliver Cromwell, Charles II, and the Glorious Revolution.

Although all of these discussions contain insights that will excite discussion, antagonize particular 'big beasts' within the profession, or stimulate readers to rethink their cosy assumptions, Hutton is particularly acute when it comes to successive rulers of England. Mark Kishlansky might ponder the wisdom of the argument that 'It is the clearest mark of Charles [I]'s failings as a leader that he could repeatedly be perplexed by the results of his actions' (p. 88). Oliver Cromwell's 'confident lack of scruple' (p. 109) is dissected through searching analysis of particular texts and incidents in his life. This builds into an extremely convincing account of a ruthless and cunning political operator, who combined a 'mixture of piety, pragmatism, aggression and opportunism' (pp. 106–7). It should be required reading for students, too many of whom now seem inclined to dwell on Cromwell's scrupulous agonies over whether or not to accept the kingship, at the expense of more critical perspectives on a truly remarkable rise to power.⁵⁴ By contrast, the cynicism of Charles II's exercise of power has never been in doubt. Indeed, Hutton professes to have found the grind of writing the biography of such a slippery and disingenuous man 'genuinely depressing' (p. 157). Fortunately, it did not show, and his account remains by some distance the best we possess, even after more than two decades of rapidly intensifying research into the later Stuart period.⁵⁵ In reflecting on the process of writing the biography, Hutton explores the ongoing tensions between popular and scholarly perceptions of the king in a chapter which is none the worse for often being frankly autobiographical. Overall, Hutton has written an enlivening collection of essays that should be pressed into the hands of anyone depressed about the future of academic history in Britain. This is historical writing deft enough to be read rapidly and by a wide audience, yet substantial enough to excite serious reflection amongst specialists.

IX

It is probably time for authors to stop complaining about the lack of scholarship on English royalism. Distract references to historians' over-emphasis on parliamentarians and puritans sound increasingly shrill when placed alongside the recent deluge of publications of which the books reviewed here form a part. This work draws much of its force from two main scholarly trends. The first comprises the sum total of a very wide variety of efforts to reconceptualize the

⁵³ An earlier version appeared in Michael Bentley, ed., *Companion to historiography* (London, 1998).

⁵⁴ This is not to deny the brilliance of Blair Worden's hugely influential essay, 'Oliver Cromwell and the sin of Achan', in D. E. D. Beales and G. F. A. Best, eds., *History, society and the churches: essays in honour of Owen Chadwick* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 125–45.

⁵⁵ Ronald Hutton, *Charles II: King of England, Scotland and Ireland* (Oxford, 1989).

nature of early modern politics. We are now reasonably comfortable with the existence of court studies, the importance of intellectual cultures of criticism and compliment, and diverse efforts to fathom the social reach of political activity. We have learned a great deal about the literary dimensions of royalist activity, not least as attempts to communicate royalist ideas to those outside of the traditional social elite.⁵⁶ The second trend is that of piecing back together a long-term contemporary experience that had been very seriously broken up by modern hyper-specialization. Much of the running here has been made by historians of either political thinking or religion, and the seventeenth century has been partially reunited by scholars intrigued by ‘commonwealth principles’, ‘puritan whigs’, or – more broadly still – England’s ‘long reformation’.⁵⁷ Thanks to a reversion to the medium- and long-term at the expense of short-term contingencies, we are better prepared to begin to consider the extent to which royalism was an evolving phenomenon.

Most of this is very welcome. But the books reviewed here have also shown up dangers for the developing field arising from a third scholarly trend: the fetishising of complexity. Some scholars seem keen to imprison royalism in a bewildering hall of fairground mirrors, in which faint but distorted outlines of different aspects of royalist experience can be dimly discerned, but in which nothing much can be said beyond ‘it’s complicated’. Avoiding such an ultimately nihilistic approach is vital since oscillating attitudes towards monarchy were obviously at the heart of England’s instability during the seventeenth century. When the poet, John Quarles, noted that his countrymen had ‘No other burden . . . but a King’, he was launching a passionate defence of monarchy against the destructive scheming of ambitious parvenus (McElligott and Smith II, p. 172). When the Rump Parliament passed an Act Abolishing the Office of King because it had proved ‘unnecessary, burdensome and dangerous to the liberty, safety, and public interest of the people’ (17 March 1649), it was fumbling into uncharted territory for an English polity that drew much of its collective identity from monarchy.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Besides those works already mentioned, in the last twenty-five years see also Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and compliment: the politics of literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1987); Lois Potter, *Secret rites and secret writing: royalist literature, 1641–1660* (Cambridge, 1989); James Loxley, *Royalism and poetry in the English Civil Wars: the drawn sword* (Basingstoke, 1997); David Bevington and Peter Holbrook, eds., *The politics of the Stuart court masque* (Cambridge, 1998); Robert Wilcher, *The writing of royalism, 1628–1660* (Cambridge, 2000); Angela McShane Jones, ‘Roaring royalists and ranting brewers: the politicization of drink and drunkenness in political broadside ballads from 1640 to 1689’, in Adam Smyth, ed., *A pleasing sinne: drink and conviviality in seventeenth-century England* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 69–87; Jason McElligott, ‘The politics of sexual libel: royalist propaganda in the 1640s’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67 (2004), pp. 75–99.

⁵⁷ Scott, *Commonwealth principles*; Mark Goldie, *Roger Morrice and the puritan Whigs* (Woodbridge, 2007); Nicholas Tyacke, ed., *England’s long reformation, 1500–1800* (London, 1998).

⁵⁸ S. R. Gardiner, ed., *The constitutional documents of the puritan revolution, 1625–1660* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1906), p. 385.

Much, but not all, and the other critical well-springs – history, law, and religion – each need further attention and examination by scholars keen to enhance the study of royalism without destroying some sense of its totality. In particular, as the current work of Fincham, Milton, and Taylor is so richly demonstrating, the interface between competing visions of the Church of England and royalist politics is especially fertile, although their findings may undermine straightforward claims that ‘Royalists could just as well (and in some cases, rather better) be called Episcopalians’.⁵⁹ It seems likely that the 1650s will prove an increasingly lively field of study as we come to appreciate the intellectually provocative nature of the experience of defeat for royalists, both clerical and lay, amidst a broader ‘failure of godly rule’.⁶⁰ As is well known, the Instrument of Government embedded a striking degree of religious liberty into the constitution of the Cromwellian Protectorate, ‘provided this liberty be not extended to Popery or Prelacy’, phraseology that was repeated in the Humble Petition and Advice of 1657.⁶¹ But the continuing popularity of episcopal ordination uncovered by Fincham and Taylor raises intriguing questions. If the anti-prelatical stance of the Protectorate was seen as immutable, such diligent searching out of surviving bishops by hopeful ordinands would be quixotic indeed. Was it really just a matter of cautious ‘insurance’ against possible regime change? Even if we accept a powerful argument that the Cromwellian church represented ‘the institutional culmination of an Erastian ideological impulse’ over the early modern period, the extent to which that impulse succeeded in burying a vestigial Church of England must remain in doubt.⁶² The rapid resurgence of that church even before formal re-establishment in 1662 has long been recognized.⁶³ In the highly politically unstable years of the later 1650s and early 1660s ongoing research suggests that many people were thinking hard about ecclesiology and allegiance, and coming to very various conclusions, ranging from die-hard Stuart loyalism and episcopalian zeal, to de factoist conformity and compromise.⁶⁴ Such competing agendas help to explain the

⁵⁹ Compare Anthony Milton, ‘Anglicanism and royalism in the 1640s’, in Adamson, ed., *English Civil War*, pp. 61–81, and Glenn Burgess, *British political thought, 1500–1660: the politics of the post-reformation* (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 205.

⁶⁰ Derek Hirst, ‘Locating the 1650s in England’s seventeenth century’, *History*, 81 (1996), pp. 359–83; idem, ‘The failure of godly rule in the English republic’, *Past and Present*, 132 (1991), pp. 33–66.

⁶¹ Gardiner, ed., *Constitutional documents*, pp. 416, 455. See the classic account by Blair Worden, ‘Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate’, *Studies in Church History*, 21 (1984), pp. 199–233.

⁶² Jeffrey Collins, ‘The church settlement of Oliver Cromwell’, *History*, 87 (2002), p. 20.

⁶³ For a local example, see Richard Clark, ‘Why was the re-establishment of the Church of England possible? Derbyshire: a provincial perspective’, *Midland History*, 8 (1983), pp. 86–105.

⁶⁴ For instance, Anthony Milton’s major current Leverhulme-funded project, ‘England’s second Reformation: the battle for the Church of England, 1636–1666’, and forthcoming publications by Fincham and Taylor. See also Judith D. Maltby, ‘Suffering and surviving: the civil wars, the Commonwealth and the formation of “Anglicanism”, 1642–1660’, in

vehemence of religious divisions after 1662 as individuals and communities lurched across testing political and intellectual terrain.

As this discussion suggests, early modern historians would be well advised to continue the encouraging shift towards drawing together the threads of personnel and ideas that run through England's 'short seventeenth century', the period lying between the accession of Charles I and the fall of James II. If the seventeenth century witnessed persistent fears of 'popery and arbitrary government', it also featured continuities of anti-puritanism and defences of royal authority, as any comparison of the recurring motifs in news-books dating from the 1640s and 1680s demonstrates.⁶⁵ That this royalist rhetoric has hitherto tended to be viewed through the relatively narrow lenses of scholarly interest in the potential for 'absolutism' in Stuart England, or the Church of England's repression of Restoration nonconformity,⁶⁶ should not blind us to the broader fact that England's seventeenth-century experience was shaped as much by the interplay of prayer book Protestantism and monarchical authority as by puritanism and liberty.⁶⁷

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Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby, eds., *Religion in revolutionary England* (Manchester, 2006), pp. 158–80.

⁶⁵ Tim Harris, "A saint in shewe, a Devill in deede": moral panics and anti-puritanism in seventeenth-century England', in Lemmings and Walker, eds., *Moral panics*, pp. 97–116.

⁶⁶ John Miller, 'The potential for "absolutism" in later Stuart England', *History*, 69 (1984), 187–207; Christopher Hill, *The experience of defeat: Milton and some contemporaries* (London, 1984).

⁶⁷ Judith D. Maltby, *Prayer book and people in Elizabethan and early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1998); A. S. P. Woodhouse, *Puritanism and liberty: being the army debates from the Clarke manuscripts, with supplementary documents* (London, 1938); John Coffey, 'Puritanism and liberty revisited: the case for toleration in the English revolution', *ante*, 41 (1998), pp. 961–85.