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SOCIETY
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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Early Modernists,

Welcome to the eleventh edition of our bulletin. We've had a good summer term at the society: Dr Eliane Glaser spoke to us about Cromwell and the Jews, and Prof. Peter Burke about the rhetoric of autobiography in 17th-century Europe. I'm typing this on the morning of his event, so I can't comment on it yet, but as our last speaker for this academic year I am sure that he will provide a marvellous finale!

The committee are busy at present planning the third annual student conference, 'Revolution and Evolution' which is scheduled for 25th July. The response to the call for papers has been tremendous, with students contacting us from as far afield as Newcastle and Dublin. It promises to be a rewarding day and I hope to publish the programme very soon. Our AGM is scheduled for July too: it will either happen straight after the conference or on Friday 31st July, more details to follow. Finally, stop press: I'm busy working on next year's programme and am delighted to report that Quentin Skinner has agreed to return to Birkbeck at Christmas and speak about Hobbes, and David Starkey has agreed to speak to us in June about the Reformation and royal ritual.

Please don't forget that the committee is always happy to hear suggestions from members, be they connected to a speaker that you have in mind that you'd like us to book, or another type of event such as a trip to the theatre or a gallery etc. Suggestions can be e-mailed to our secretary Laura Jacobs at l.jacobs@english.bbk.ac.uk

With best wishes,

Stephen Brogan

President, Birkbeck Early Modern Society

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hca/current/societies/#earlymodern>

<http://www.emintelligencer.org.uk/>

THE BULLETIN: EDITOR'S WELCOME

Welcome to Issue Eleven of the *Birkbeck Early Modern Society Bulletin*. This edition continues with the usual mix of a wide and lively range of articles, reviews and forthcoming events.

I was delighted to receive a review of Salmon Rushdie's novel '*The Enchantress of Florence*', particularly as the review was written in New York and sent from Sydney! I have always been a great admirer of Rushdie since reading '*Midnight's Children*' and this was reinforced with his stance in the face of a fatwa. I believe that the Rushdie case marks out the true democrat from the pretend one. There are some who only oppose extremism if it is carried out by the USA or a European power instead of opposing all extremism whatever the colour or creed of the perpetrator.

This edition contains three articles on visits to places of interest. This section is an ideal vehicle for contributions from members, so if you have been to a battlefield, a stately home or somewhere with early modern connections why not send in an article describing your experience?

Another topic could be crime and punishment in the early modern period. If, like me, you have suffered at the hands of cowboy builders, you might think that we would be well served by the reintroduction of some forms of sixteenth-century justice.

The summer is upon us with Wimbledon and test match cricket dominating our television screens. It is also the ideal time to visit some historical places of interest. Whatever your plans I hope that you have a fantastic summer. The next issue will be out in the autumn of 2009.

John Croxon
Editor
johnmcroxon@googlemail.com



RECENT EVENTS

Professor Susan James
‘When Does Truth Matter? Spinoza on Philosophy and Religion’
16th January 2009, Clore Building Room 101



Susan James received her B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Philosophy at the University of Cambridge. She taught for two years at the University of Connecticut before returning to Cambridge, where she held a Research Fellowship at Girton College, and then a Lectureship in the Faculty of Philosophy. Professor James moved to Birkbeck in 2000 and has been a visiting Fellow at the Humanities Research Centre of the Australian National University, at the Institute for Advanced Study of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

For her lecture to the Birkbeck Early Modern Society Dr James spoke about the Dutch philosopher Baruch de Spinoza and his fascination with such questions as what are the passions and what role do they play in human life? In his book *Ethics*, Spinoza gave a highly original account of what it is to be human and Professor James explored the connections between passion and politics as a central concern.

Spinoza was one of the most important philosophers, and certainly the most radical, of the early modern period. His philosophy combined a commitment to Cartesian metaphysical and epistemological principles with elements from ancient Stoicism and medieval Jewish rationalism forming highly original concepts. His extremely naturalistic views on God, the world, the human being and knowledge led to a moral philosophy centred upon the control of the passions leading to virtue and happiness. His philosophy laid foundations for a strongly democratic political thought and a deep critique of the pretensions of Scripture and factional religion.

Drawing upon her extensive research and knowledge, Professor James gave a fascinating insight into Spinoza, his philosophical ideas and how those ideas were received in his own time. Her lecture was entitled '*When Does Truth Matter? Spinoza on Philosophy and Religion*', Professor James spoke of the ideas that caused such controversy in Spinoza's lifetime, how they came to influence later generations, and she emphasised how Spinoza really was an early and highly important philosopher of the rational Enlightenment and how his views still have real relevance in the modern world.

The lecture was well received and produced a lively discussion and a series of intelligent questions and answers.

In conjunction with this talk Professor James has a book due out later this year entitled the '*Tractats Theologico Politicus*' in which she will argue in greater depth many of the themes which she discussed at this event.

The Birkbeck Early Modern Society would like to thank Professor James for a lively, erudite and entertaining talk.

John Croxon

**Rethinking Anglo-Jewish History:
Cromwell's Readmission of the Jews and English Law**

Dr Eliane Glaser, Birkbeck

Department of English and Humanities

May 21, 2009



In the late 19th Century the Anglo- Jewish community promoted Cromwell's alleged re-admittance of the Jews to England in 1656 as a founding moment in communal history. The "readmission" was celebrated as a quintessentially English act of tolerance, the communal myth of origin feeding into the myth of a long standing tradition of English toleration. Dr Eliane Glaser, author of *Judaism without Jews: Philosemitism and Christian Polemic in Early Modern England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), began her fascinating talk by exploring the tenacious myth that Oliver Cromwell readmitted the Jews to England in 1656 after the expulsion in 1290 on the basis of a royal decree.



In fact Jewish readmission proceeded informally. The community's first synagogue, Bevis Marks, was established in 1701. In 1753, the so-called "Jew Bill," which allowed members of the community to become naturalized citizens, was passed by Parliament only to be repealed a year later. By 1858 the Jewish emancipation movement won the right to serve in Parliament, yet these milestones have been overshadowed by the narrative that Cromwell readmitted the Jews to England.

In 1655, Menasseh ben Israel, Rabbi of the overcrowded Amsterdam community arrived in England in order to persuade Cromwell to readmit the Jews. Menasseh used mercantile arguments as well as appealing to a prevalent strain of millenarianism at a time when many believed that the Apocalypse would take place in 1656 preceded by a return of the Jews to England. Cromwell convened a conference to debate Menasseh's petition but the outcome was inconclusive.

Nonetheless, Jewish historians have since argued that a Jewish community was established during 1656. Eliane Glaser explained that the relationship between Jewish re-entry and Cromwell's Whitehall conference was, in fact, far from straightforward. She showed how the issue of Jewish readmission was utilized, or perhaps hijacked, in discussions on the separation of church and state, and by both sides in debates on need to codify the common law.

Laura Jacobs

VISITS

Petworth House **Sussex**



Owned by the Percy family since 1150, Petworth House in Sussex, was rebuilt during the late 17th and early 18th centuries by Charles Seymour, 6th duke of Somerset who had married Elizabeth Percy in 1682. Using her money, he used royal craftsmen to rebuild and refurbish the property. His formal gardens were replaced in the 1750's by Capability Brown's landscape. Petworth's golden age occurred during the ownership of George O'Brien Wyndham, 3rd earl of Egremont who, between 1763 and 1837, paid host to a whole generation of British artists, most notably Turner, and created a wonderful collection of art works now available to be viewed by the general public through the ownership of the National Trust.

The west face of the house was entirely re-built between 1688 and 1702, whilst the north face sports eighteenth-and-nineteenth century additions. The 6th duke of Somerset only re-fronted the left-hand end of the east front which means that the different building styles favoured at Petworth over the centuries are clearly visible. The chapel is the oldest surviving part of the house, built in 1309, its rough stone exterior walls contrasts sharply with the classical appearance of the rest of the property. The chapel is the most complete interior, apart from the cellars, to survive from the medieval manor house, but the Gothic windows are the only real indication of the early English style. The plaster ceiling, the marble floor, and the magnificent woodwork were all installed in the late-seventeenth century.

Petworth boasts a large number of rooms so I will only describe a few of these. The Square Dining Room was originally part of a larger Servants Hall. The present dining room was constructed 1795 with the panelling installed in 1799. The yellow Siena and white Carrara marble chimneypiece is mid-eighteenth century. The room features four paintings by Van Dyck, including the one of Thomas Wentworth, 1st earl of Strafford that is presently loaned to the Van Dyck exhibition at Tate Britain.

The Marble Hall was built as the main entrance to the house for the 6th duke. The Purbeck marble is complemented by the wooden panelling and presents an impressive grand Baroque room.

The Grand Staircase was conceived as a palatial transition from the state apartments on the ground floor to the bedrooms upstairs. Fire gutted the original staircase which was replaced in the nineteenth century. The lower part of the hall contains wall paintings depicting classical scenes.

The Carved Room was around half its present size when it was constructed by Grinling Gibbons in 1690 and the carvings are exquisite. Further carvings were later added in Gibbons style and the effect is superb. Paintings by Turner (one of Petworth Park), and one by Van Dyck plus others add interest.

The Red Room contains various paintings including a number by Turner, Van Dyck, and one by Titian.

The North Gallery has been extensively restored and contains some wonderful paintings, particularly by Turner. It also includes a couple of late-Georgian paintings by James Northcote presenting the old Tudor propaganda story of the princes in the tower. There is also some beautiful sculpture, a mixture of antique Roman and neo-classical.

As can be seen, the house contains a fine collection of paintings and sculptures, featuring a host of British and European artists. In particular, it contains a large number of paintings by J. M. W. Turner who had a particular connection to the house and visited upon a number of occasions, and who painted aspects of the house and parklands.

The house, like most National Trust properties is worth a visit and Capability Brown's landscaping makes for impressive viewing, but it is the art work that impresses the most. For someone like myself, who is a great admirer of Turner, Petworth is a delight to view.

John Croxon

Audley End
Hertfordshire



Audley End, looking across the water



The Great Hall



The Kitchen Garden

The Benedictine priory of Walden was founded in 1140 and in 1190 Richard I raised its status to that of an abbey. Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries King Henry VIII gave Walden Abbey to Sir Thomas Audley, who transformed it into his mansion, Audley End. Audley rose from humble origins to hold high office. Intelligent, shrewd and ruthless, Audley, a lawyer by training, proved willing to serve Henry in a variety of ways, as one of those overseeing England's break with Rome, as Lord Chancellor he gave legal authority to Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon, he passed the death sentence upon Sir Thomas More, and presided over the trial of Anne Boleyn. Receiving the abbey as part of his reward, Audley demolished most of the church whilst retaining the nave and inserting three floors into it.

Audley End passed into the powerful Howard family and it was Thomas Howard, first earl of Suffolk who rebuilt it into a palatial Jacobean house with the express purpose of providing accommodation to visiting royalty. However, within four years of its completion Suffolk had fallen from favour and suffered imprisonment and a crippling fine, and over the following centuries the owners were first compelled to sell the house to Charles II and then, after buying it back, to drastically reduce and alter the house.

Despite its problems, Audley End remains one of England's grandest country homes with over 30 lavishly decorated rooms to enjoy and explore. Sir John Griffin Griffin (sic) created an elegant suite of reception rooms with the help of Robert Adam and had Capability Brown landscape the park.

The sumptuous interior is largely due to the third Baron Braybrooke who inherited Audley End in 1825, filling it with treasures including paintings by Masters such as Holbein and Canaletto. A rare set of English tapestries by Soho weaver Paul Saunders is now displayed after 30 years in store.

On a blazing hot summer day in June we drove up the drive, sweeping past the front of the house on the way to the car park. Driving my black Mercedes, the allocated courtesy car after some nice person slammed into the side of my Alfa, it felt like we were arriving for a weekend retreat when the house was in its heyday.

The first building that we viewed brought us back to earth, the Service Wing. In the unlikely event that my ancestors had been here then the service wing would be where they were. English Heritage have re-created the service part of the house, with actors taking the roles of kitchen and laundry staff. It was really interesting to see the hard work endured by the staff and contrasted greatly with what we were about to view.

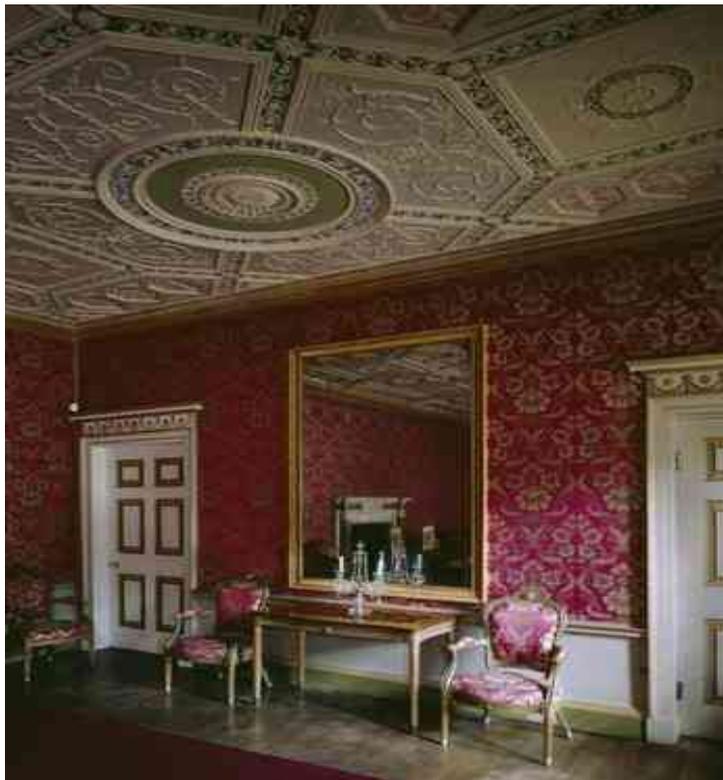


The Kitchen

The sheer size of Audley End will ensure that I do not describe every single room. I have therefore selected a few to give you an insight into the house. Visitors are requested to view the house starting and finishing with the Great Hall. Here, one of the many EH staff gave a brief but thorough synopsis of the history of the house and its owners. Built at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Great Hall rises through two stories, and is lit by five large windows. Highlights include the beautiful Jacobean oak screen and the plaster ceiling contains family crests separated by oak beams. The hall, like all almost all the rooms contain numerous portraits. Visitors are offered a picture catalogue to consult as they wander around. For those Civil War enthusiasts amongst you I can report that, despite some difficulty, I managed to locate a portrait of Sir Henry Ireton near the staircase.

The Saloon contains a stunning plaster ceiling and recesses in the walls which house family portraits. Furniture and soft furnishings introduced in the 1820's include an Axminster carpet, a circular Regency-period centre table and a rectangular rosewood sofa table.

The Drawing Room was created from two rooms and is decorated with Dutch, Flemish and Italian paintings including a Canaletto, whilst the walls are hung with red flock wallpaper.



The Drawing Room

The South Library contains the remnants of an original Jacobean ceiling and frieze and a neoclassical chimneypiece by Robert Adam. The white and gold bookcases have adjustable shelves to accommodate outside volumes.

The Chapel is a rare surviving example of the late eighteenth-century Gothic style, with all its furniture intact. This room is essentially a decorative interpretation of the Gothic style with its wooden columns, plaster painted to imitate stone, and an oilcloth floor painted to simulate a Portland and Breman stone pavement.

The Dining Room was originally two Jacobean rooms, the plaster ceilings and friezes of which were retained when the dividing wall was removed. Family portraits hang on the walls.

The Little Drawing Room is a richly decorated intimate room, with decorative painting on the walls, ceiling, doors and shutters, created by Robert Adam with the idea of a neoclassical interior.

The Butler's Pantry is part of the service area and it is here that the silverware was and still is kept, and where the butler would sleep at night in order to protect it.

The Picture Gallery and the Lower Gallery house the natural history collection. A mesmerising and bemusing display of stuffed birds and animals collected in the nineteenth century by the Honourable Richard Neville. Most are British species shot at Audley End or on neighbouring estates and mounted by professional taxidermists. Despite not really being to my taste it is still an incredible sight and reflects an age when there was little concern for wildlife and certainly not by the aristocracy. Perhaps on the part of the latter that hasn't really changed!

Once you have completed your tour of the house there is much more to see outside. A gorgeous summer day gave us the opportunity to wander around the beautiful nineteenth-century parterre with its magnificent floral displays and central fountain. There was also the chance to imagine ourselves back in Victorian times as we took a turn around the organic walled Kitchen Garden growing original fruit and vegetable varieties as well as abundant displays of fragrant paeonies.

Audley End was easily one of the best of the many stately homes that I have visited and I would strongly recommend it. I have only one small criticism and that is the lack of choice in the restaurant. Sandwiches and pastries were on offer as were soup, salads and quiche, but no hot main courses. Perhaps it was because most English Heritage properties are ruins and they don't usually need to bother with food, but with so much grown in the gardens at Audley End surely the restaurant could provide a more comprehensive choice of food?

That said, we thoroughly enjoyed our visit. A large number of staff meant that there was a guide in almost every room and every single one was helpful, knowledgeable and enthusiastic.

Before leaving, the day was made complete by viewing a cricket match in the grounds. As we drove away looking back across to the house, the cricketers in white on the lush verdant grass led our eyes onto the water which in turn led to the lawn and the house standing aloof and majestic against the clear blue sky.

John Croxon

A Visit to Linlithgow Palace, West Lothian, Scotland

June 2009

Linlithgow Palace is perhaps best known as the birthplace of Mary, Queen of Scots in 1542. It was the home of the Stewarts and therefore a Scottish royal palace. The palace has been a ruin since 1746 when a fire destroyed the floors and roof but it is still impressive and there is still much to see of interest.

The main courtyard is dominated by a recently refurbished fountain which was originally commissioned by James V in 1537. This fountain is now fully operational but is only run on Sundays in July and August to prevent erosion of the stonework.

The palace ruins are well labelled and you can explore everything from the brewhouse to the cesspit to the remains of the royal chambers. Unfortunately no one knows for certain in which part of the palace James V and his daughter Mary were born but even without this knowledge there is enough left of the palace to give an idea of how splendid it must have been in its heyday. There are large rooms for banqueting, a chapel, and plenty of carved details remaining. There is also a small exhibition of finds of glass and pottery found in the site. The palace overlooks a peaceful loch and a park. A great place for a picnic!

Allow about an hour and a half to explore the palace and its grounds. Linlithgow is not far from Edinburgh by train or by car.



View of Linlithgow Palace from across the loch



James V's Fountain at Linlithgow Palace: He would not have liked to see the Union Flag flying over the imperial crown at the top of his fountain



Some Fountain Sculptures:

Mermaid, Stag, Lion with Nude Luter

Visiting Linlithgow Palace

Summer Hours

1 April - 30 September, Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun, 9.30 am to 5.30 pm

Winter Hours

1 October - 31 March, Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun, 9.30 am to 4.30 pm

Admission prices (All year)

Adult £5.20, Child £2.60, Concession £4.20

Website: (Historic Scotland)

http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/propertyoverview?PropID=pl_199&PropName=Linlithgow%20Palace

Karen Baston

ARTS REPORT



THEATRE

Marlowe Spring

Dido, Queen of Carthage

The Cottesloe Theatre

The Royal National Theatre



Mark Bonnar as Aeneas and Anastasia Hille as Dido

During the Elizabethan period Marlowe's writing, especially in his plays, had long-lasting influence on the glorious explosion of theatrical invention which manifested itself on the stages of London. However, for many years Marlowe has been the neglected Wunderkind among Renaissance dramatists, admired by academics, but shunned by theatrical administrations, who deem his plays to be either unactable or box office disaster. For years he has been relegated to small scale enterprises. However recently there have been signs of an awakening mainstream interest in his work. *Dido, Queen of Carthage* received a bizarre airing recently at Shakespeare's Globe, *Edward II* a more memorable one, and *Tamburlaine the Great* was presented at the Barbican.

In March, Globe Education mounted a staged reading, with accompanying seminar, of

Hero and Leander in their Read not Dead series, a performance which revealed dramatic potential in one of the greatest narrative poems in the English language. Four actors under the inspired guidance of their co-ordinator Philip Bird, who also played one of the narrators, without either props or costume, unless you count a pair of matching stools, brought the text from page to makeshift and minimal stage in the Nancy Knowles room. Ellie Piercy and Philip Cumbus, both looking suitably young and vulnerable, played Hero and Leander respectively. Hilary Tones joined Bird as second narrator, and the four used voice, movement and expression to bring the piece to life.

At the end of the reading participants who had been complaining during the morning about one or two obviously contrived couplets, were agreeing that within minutes they had accepted Marlowe's verse as a perfectly normal feature of the narrative. Marlowe's is the art that conceals art. While the iambic pentameter may echo the natural rhythm and phrase length of the English language, rhyming couplets are inevitably artificial. They may appear to drop as effortlessly from Marlowe's pen as rain from heaven upon the place beneath, but this is only because he was such a supreme master of the form.

The Royal National Theatre has also chosen to stage Marlowe this spring with a production of *Dido, Queen of Carthage* at the Cottesloe theatre. Unfortunately, the director, James Macdonald, decided to confine the action to a traditional rectangle with staging at one end. This did have the advantage of being able to place the gods above the acting area for the first scene, and allowed for substantial areas to be concealed and opened as required upstage. In addition, the audience doubled as the Mediterranean Sea, so that its members could be addressed directly as the cast gazed across the imaginary waves towards the invisible Italy at the back of the auditorium.

The enormous drawback was the loss of the fluidity which is generally now such a positive feature of Early Modern plays in performance. The static nature of the production was reinforced in the scene where Aeneas recounts his escape from Troy during the banquet scene. Here the entire cast remained seated while the story, beautifully but ponderously spoken, unfolded. This episode provided a sad contrast with that of *Angels in the Architecture* in Soho two years earlier, where the audience, admittedly much tinier, crowded into the banqueting room, allowing Aeneas to range around addressing them individually as he sought release from the horrors of recollection in movement.

Other aspects of the production were much better realised – the music, the imaginative costuming and lighting, and the clarity of diction. The amorality of Marlowe's gods was reinforced with strong performances from Alan David, who also doubled as Aeneas's intrepid lieutenant, Ilioneus, playing a lustful Jupiter, Susan Engel as his vindictive wife Juno, and Siobhan Redmond's delightful personation of a sinuous and sexy Venus.

Among the mortals, Obi Abili gave a powerful account of the steadfast and regal Iarbas doomed by the wayward gods. However the major plaudits, appropriately enough, should be awarded to Anastasia Hille's Dido, who ruptured the stasis threatening the production with a febrile combination of movement, speech and silence.

The programme notes point out that Elissa was the original Phoenician name for Dido and tells us that for original audiences: 'Clearly a queen with a room full of portraits of rejected suitors would strike a chord . . .' How impressed England's Elissa would have been with the model of a queen who loses control of herself and gives away control of her country through an obsessive love for a man who ultimately rejects her is debatable. She had watched her sister do just that and she was far too wily, clever and strong-willed to put herself into such a position.

What is indisputable is Hille's mastery of the stage, the language and the range of emotion required for the character. From the ecstasy of new love to the abjection of love's loss, from sympathetic grief over Priam's death to the distraction of personal grief, her performance was a tour de force. *Dido Queen of Carthage* is often dismissed as an immature work. Performed by immature actors, as it must have been when originally performed by the Children of the Queen's Chapel, its major interest was probably provided by the wonderful poetry. Played by experienced and inspirational actors, it also reveals an emotional depth that is not usually credited to Marlowe.

Barbara Wooding

ART EXHIBITIONS

VAN DYCK AT THE TATE



To those of us used to the consistent lighting of Impressionism seventeenth century erratic lighting can be disconcerting but it can also convey a message. Such inconsistency is to be found in Lely's "Two Ladies of the Lake Family", ca. 1660, Tate, cat. 106, where the strong illumination on the sitters in front of a murky landscape background has no justification, not even along the lines of the splotchy sunlight pioneered by Veronese. The two ladies were in the very good next to final section of the exhibition on van Dyck's influence in the seventeenth century. Also in the same section was a better Lely, "Portrait of the Artist with Hugh May", ca. 1675-6, private collection of Lord Braybrooke at Audley End, cat. 107, in which sitters and setting relate to each other in the absence of strong direct light effects equally in the foreground loggia containing the sitters, except for parts of faces, hand, linen and papers, and in the distant view of Windsor Castle. The castle as presented (in which May's drastic and for the date very unusual "pseudo-Romanesque" re-facing of the Upper Ward, from 1675 and therefore barely begun, are not shown) has affinities with Ruidsdael's views of Bentheim Castle (1651, English private collection; 1653, National Gallery of Ireland; Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister) both in the architecture and the dim lighting. It is not inconceivable the two friends, Lely and May, could have seen a recently executed Bentheim Castle in the Netherlands during their visit to the Hague in 1656, to establish contact with the exiled Stuart court. It would be fascinating if May's rounded arches were derived from those in Netherlandish Gothic rather than the Romanesque, so remote in time. The Upper Ward exteriors were almost entirely swept away by George IV but were meticulously recorded by Wenceslaus Hollar. Contrary to what the catalogue says a small fragment of Mays re-facing remains.

Erratic lighting, so persistent in the period, makes more sense when used in an almost symbolic way as in "Robert Rich, 2nd Earl of Warwick", ca. 1633, Metropolitan Museum, cat. 35. The Earl, as shown in the painting, a splendid example of aristocratic nonchalance, was a political opponent of Charles I but hardly dressed like a Puritan,

leaving aside the archetypal black broad brimmed hat. To his way of thinking aristocratic status clearly had to be maintained. His doublet is almost disintegrated by a virtual lightning strike of pure white light and there is a lesser streak on the rich hanging, which is improbably suspended from the rocky seaside cliffs. The division between, on the one hand, the gold hanging and the reddish parts of the attire, and on the other the greyish silver of the sea, sky, doublet and rocks is a characteristic device of later van Dyck's to which we will return. Here there is an overlap, the red petals on the doublet for instance. The strange intrusion of the hanging into Arcadia is not without parallels as in the tapestry under a clothe of honour in Maino's almost exactly contemporary "Recapture of Bahia", 1634-5, formerly the Hall of Realms at the Buen Retiro Palace, now the Prado, also incidentally, among other things, showing a naval commander in front of an engagement.

The noble lord seems to have physically cast aside the armour on the ground while the token Puritan hat dangles from his hand over the almost equally dark armour. Two ships, near the horizon, sailing into a broadside confrontation with each other, could almost be toy boats, one nudged at the stern by the earl's hand. (A seemingly controlling gesture directed at a distant ship can be traced at least as far back as Titian's "Andrians"). The fitful light that illuminates the battle is as nothing to that on the sitter. This is a kind of artistic spotlighting and also flattery, something at which van Dyck was an expert. If there is anything the modern viewer is likely to hold against the artist it is that he showed sitters as they wanted to be seen and if at times he make criticisms they are of the most subtle variety. There is, however, sometimes an underlying solemnity, even in the children, that tells us that life is not all about self-aggrandizement. In van Dyck, as with Velázquez, a friend of his master Rubens, the human has to escape through cracks in a mask of courtly artifice that the artist would never, to use a current term have "challenged". Warwick, the naval commander and anti-court grandee, bestrides the world like a literally enlightened (highlighted) colossus. Boats are apparently little playthings.

Velázquez effortlessly climbed up the court hierarchy producing on the way some of the least flattering, even devastating, court portraits of his master and his family almost certainly without malicious intentions. As he rose the paintings, while ever more brilliant, became fewer. Rubens probably married a much younger upper bourgeois woman as his second wife because, unlike a great court lady he might by then have courted, she would not object to his continuing practice of a "manual" craft at which he continued to work prodigiously until a short final illness. Very late in his short life van Dyck married a Scottish, noble attendant to the Queen contrary to the choice that Rubens made. Sir Anthony's health was already deteriorating and he was becoming more of a designer of tapestries and the like than a painter. Perhaps events saved him from having to make a positive decision. The portraits of Charles were revealing, and the psychological impact backed up by the less talented Daniel Mytens. Bernini was moved to remark perceptively on Charles's character revealed in the van Dyck triple portrait sent as an aid to the creation of a lost bust.

The archetypal van Dyck portrait, perhaps almost a caricature, is "Lord Stuart and his Brother Lord Bernard Stuart, later Earl of Litchfield", ca. 1638, National Gallery, cat. 40, is of what can easily be read as aloof, callow, young aristocrats. The anatomy is elongated and exaggerated and, extraordinarily, the perspective is slightly wrong. The

pedestal on which one of the sitters leans is inconsistent with that of the step on which he stands. Perhaps he could move pedestals around with the effortlessness with which Warwick manoeuvred toy warships. Some of this manifestation of almost super-natural power may not be a conscious strategy for flattering devised by the artist, but it can be commented on as psychologically valid. The silver and gold split in this double portrait, with related accompanying colours, echoes that played out across Warwick and his attributes. The famous double portrait has a good system of spatial cavities in solids that would not disgrace a Donatello sculpture. The most important is under the dramatically projecting elbow, decorated within by the two spirals of the sword hilt like flat patters set off against the back of the cavity. Another cavity is framed by the foremost three of the four legs all close together and emphasized by the boots. Is a tapestry indicated on the wall in the background?

Perhaps not too much stress should be laid on the Puritan/aristocratic contrast of dress. "Sir Thomas Hanmer", ca. 1638, the Weston Park Foundation, Staffordshire, cat. 54, and even the brooding, potentially explosive chief minister in "Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford with Sir Philip Mainwaring", ca. 1639-40, the Trustees of the Rt. Hon. Olive Countess Fitzwilliam's Chattels Settlement, cat. 57, wears sober and silky black, as did in the not too distant past Charles V and Philip II. The "Henrietta Maria", private collection, cat. 19, done soon after van Dyck's arrival to take up his permanent appointment, in dark clothes looks, interestingly, like an Antwerp wife belonging to the haute bourgeoisie. A print after it, cat. 92, was produced as late as ca. 1660 by Pieter de Jode in Antwerp. Could the painting partly have been produced with print production in Van Dyck's native Antwerp in mind and might the black almost Puritan attire be related to this? With gold covered table and tapestry, all on one side this painting yet again, in a limited way, exhibits the divided colour format.

A silver, black and white/gold and red spilt is also to be seen in "Thomas Howard 14th Earl of Arundel with his Grandson Thomas, later 5th Duke of Norfolk", ca. 1635-6, the Duke of Norfolk, Arundel Castle, West Sussex, cat. 38. This time the red is applied to the little boy and behind him is the inevitable gold hanging as in the Warwick portrait. The division between the gold and red side and the rest is not here placed entirely between the two figures. The red and gold are reflected on the side of the Earl's armour to the viewer's right, the breastplate worn by Arundel being divided by the usual central vertical ridge. As in the Warwick there is a crossover of tones from their main zones. The foremost part of the rugged landscape has been concealed by the hanging thrown over it. The bright streak diagonally across Arundel's breastplate rhymes with the string of pearls young Thomas wears across his chest. He grandfather's collar and the grandson's paper also rhyme. By various means the archetypal Italianized nobleman and the little boy are made to partake of each other's physical and perhaps psychological characteristics. However the grandson looks with some trepidation at his grandfather's Earl Marshall's staff, as though it were meant to be applied to bad boys. In an earlier portrait by Rubens (Isabella Stewart Gardiner Collection, Boston), Arundel had held a field marshal's baton without any justification in his career to date other than aristocratic pretension and the precedent of Titian's model for this work "Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino" (Uffizi) in which there are extra batons propped against the wall not held by the sitter. Next to the Arundel double portrait in the exhibition hung, "Algernon Percy, 10th Earl of Northumberland", ca. 1636-8, the Duke of Northumberland, Alwick Castle, cat. 51. The baton of command of this naval person could have pushed the ships into action like Warwick's hand.

What I have above described as a colouristic split, here gold and silver, occurs in its most extreme form in the double portrait of “Charles I and Henrietta Maria and their Two Eldest Children”, (The Greate Peece) ca. 1632, the Royal Collection, cat. 17. In this work the King and his eventual successor are in silver, black or near black, grey and mauve, the Queen and Princess Mary in gold and white. The division here is much more rigid here coming between the two large figures and their matching chairs viewed slightly obliquely so the king’s side intrudes into the queen’s. The two dogs, one black and white the other pale brown, somewhat complicate the division with a canine overlapping, a dog belonging to each scheme. Around the centrally placed finials of the two thrones there is a good abstract pattern of architectural rectangles and curves, almost as in good Modern Art. Again in the Greate Peece there is a golden hanging on the right and the equivalent of a landscape, here a cityscape, on the left. The latter is not wild but shows the murky outlines of St. Stephen’s, Westminster Hall and the old tower in New Palace Yard looming over the Thames and, ominously, the crown and sceptre. If one had some reason to believe van Dyck had any grasp of English politics the hazy background features could be regarded as a premonition.



“Continence of Scipio”, 1620-21

The colouristic and tonal division here seems to be between the male and female as in the double Arundel portrait it is between the ages. The green of the flap of the back of the hanging and of the Prince of Wales’s gown relate the two halves. Two more or less sharply divided areas of colour, which is such a characteristic if van Dyck’s English work can be regarded as having been deployed with important symbolic and psychological intentions. It was not so important in either the Genoese period or in the

rather mushy distribution, but with strong hints of what was to come, in the “Contenance of Scipio”, 1620-21, Christ Church Oxford, cat. 6, which probably belonged to James I’s boyfriend and all-powerful chief minister, Buckingham. Van Dyck in this work deploys colour with more local effects: Scipio’s red cloak casts a human tinge on the nearer of the two faces on the broken entablature, making it a choric onlooker to the drama. It was not just the Impressionists who could use reflected colour. The paired portraits on separate canvasses of Lord and Lady Shirley, 1622, the Egremont Collection, cat. 9 &10, are much more colouristically unified than the later works with many localized effects. His right hand (to our left), for instance, would be lost in colouristic complexity but for the blue ribbons that echo the splayed fingers in a well defined triangular area. Charles I’s hand outlined by the his turned back Garter robe lying on the central vertical of the *Greates Peece* is more successfully emphasized, as it is in that it is placed the vertical halfway line of the painting. Van Dyck can be observed becoming more proficient with accumulated experience. The central intercolumniation above Charles’s hand, somewhat obliquely viewed to mitigate a too exact division of the painting in two, parallel to the colour contrasts anticipates Bonnard’s daring vertical linear divisions of pictures. Shirley’s caftan is of material like that of Warwick’s doublet. The variegated colourist unity of the Shirleys was also applied, in a more limited context, to the first van Dyck portrait of the Earl of Arundel in the exhibition of 1620-1, Getty Museum, Los Angeles, cat. 7. The broad acres of Sussex Downs are like the landscape in Rubens’s later “*St. George and the Dragon in a Landscape*”, 1629-30, Royal Collection, Windsor, while the Earl in his black doublet has many of the attributes of a well educated Antwerp bourgeois of substance who has taken on aristocratic pretensions with ease. Arundel, however, is the real thing, the aristocrat of an old lineage not the descendent of one of Henry VIII’s new men and appropriately wears the “lesser George” of a knight of the Garter. He was also one of the leading cultural figures of the period whose taste and artists, Jones, Rubens and van Dyck, were taken over by Charles I.

Divided colour is not the only method used by the mature Van Dyck. The first portrait of Endymion Porter on display, 1628, private collection, cat. 15, has him dressed almost entirely in red. There is a later example of in this case divided tones, also by van Dyck, in a joint portrait with the artist himself, ca. 1633, Prado, cat. 65, and a ca. 1642-5 portrait by William Dobson of Porter and a young attendant, Tate, cat. 97. The “*Katherine Manners, Dowager Duchess of Buckingham*”, 1634-5, private collection, cat. 32, has the sitter in black as the widow of her assassinated husband. Though the brushwork is looser and the tones paler, it returns to the format of Van Dyck’s earlier Genoese portraits. Her sons in “*Lords George and Francis Villiers*”, 1635, the Royal Collection, cat. 33, are in gold and red costumes here are each to one side of a colouristic division without obvious cross references. The fair-haired boy is in red preserving in muted form the artist’s gold and red combination and he is placed in front of a dark green hanging. The golden locks of the boy and white clothe in a restrained way mingle with equivalents across the division. Probably there is a good deal that could be said about the symbolic use of colour. It has specific meanings like the more tangible things in the emblem books of the period and the precise meanings of Le Brun’s facial expressions in the “*Tent of Darius*” and the printed faces of temperaments taken from it. The procedure of mixing of gold and red and white in the two young Buckingham figures, although in clearly defined areas can be found to a far greater extent, more like that of the earlier works, in “*Mountjoy Blount, 1st Earl of Newport and George, Lord Goring*”, ca. 1639, the Egremont Collection, cat. 58. Even here van

Dyck does not return to the colouristic muddle of say the Shirleys. A page in very dark green ties a sash on one of the two principle figures, introducing a clear, almost complete, break between the two of them. The attendant page is an aspect of the single portrait of a military man, such as Caravaggio's "Alof de Wignacourt", 1607, of a Grand Master of the Knights of Malta, or here in this exhibition, the double Howard portrait, already discussed, or Robert Walker's "Cromwell", 1649, Leeds Museums and Galleries, cat. 99. The Howard work complicates the convention in that the "page" is a grandson and heir, not a flunky, if well born. The Walker has a more deferential and peripheral role for the page beside and behind the sitter, tying the sash as in the Newport Goring example. In an instance of well thought out hanging, next to the latter is "Dorothy Savage with her Sister Elizabeth, Lady Thinmbleby", ca. 1635, the National Gallery, cat. 56. In this case the page in a double portrait has become a cupid/putto presenting a basket of flowers in a female equivalent to the canvass of the two gentlemen being armed. Here there is a diagonal white and gold colouristic division with complexities, cross references and green and red blocks of colour at the ends of the main line of separation.



"Lords George and Francis Villiers", 1635

The colours so purposefully distributed between two people or within one person and his setting and attributes were even better represented in the 11 September -10 December 1999 exhibition at the R.A., previously at the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp. This earlier and more ambitious event dealt with aspects of van Dyck that are not well known in England, the non-English portraits, the allegories, mythologies and the religious works. The Tate exhibition had a token English religious painting, the Titianesque, "The Infant Christ and St. John the Baptist", ca. 1638-40, Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire, cat. 28, of which there is another version in the royal collection. It was commissioned by Sir Kenelem Digby, who appeared in the exhibition in a print after van Dyck by Robert van Voerst, cat. 74. There was also a token mythology, "Cupid and Psyche", ca. 1638-9, the Royal Collection, cat 29, and an

allegory “Portrait of Venetia Stanley, Lady Digby, as Prudence”, ca. 1633-4, the National Portrait Gallery, cat 36. Work other than portraits was of course less important in the artist’s English period than earlier. My figures are somewhat debateable as some portraits have attributes of an allegorical, religious or mythological nature placing them to varying degrees between genres.

There was a history painting in form of the “Continenence of Scipio”, already mentioned. On the picture plane, but not in three-dimensional physical fact, the Roman general’s foot touches the fiancés’s ankle as though making a reassuring gesture. Scipio, according to the legend, could have kept the woman for himself but magnanimously gave her back to her betrothed. On a carpet on the ground is an elephant doing battle with huge winged creature. There may be a reference to one of Giulio Romano’s tapestries on Scipio’s campaign in which elephants feature prominently. Seen in a Flemish context van Dyck’s pictures with a story line can look like less vibrant versions of Rubens. The huge Malines/Mechelen Cathedral “Calvary”, taking up much of the east wall of the south transept, and much too big to travel, is very clearly derived from Rubens’s “Le Coup de Lance”, even repeating the Magdalen’s defensive gesture in the absence of the fatal wounding. To Rubens, van Dyck and their Catholic contemporaries such devotional works were the summit and main justification of all their creative activity.

Among the works having the divided colour procedure, with a little crossing over of colours from their areas in the earlier exhibition is “Charles I and Henrietta Maria”, 1632, Archiepiscopal Castle and Gardens, Kroměříž, Czech Republic (cat. fig. 26; R.A. cat. 65), represented in the Tate exhibition by a small copy by John Hoskins, the Duke of Northumberland, Alwick Castle, which can be related to the nearly contemporary van Dyck “Self-Portrait with a Sunflower”, 1633, private collection (cat. fig. 6; R.A.cat. 66). Neither van Dyck was in the Tate exhibition. The self-portrait became emblematic of the earlier exhibition provoking the headline of a review by Adrian Searle in the “Guardian” of 25/5/09, “Portrait of the Artist in a Sweat” and has inspired a very learned book, “The Look of van Dyck”, by John Peacock. Van Dyck shows himself in red looking over his shoulder at the viewer, while fingering a heavy gold chain and pointing to a sunflower. The chain and the frizzy dark hair on a female figure where two of many attributes of Pittura, as set out in Cesare Ripa’s “Iconologia”, 1603 (Peacock, “The Look of van Dyck”, p. 245). These two among many attributes could be included in a portrait as in Artemisia Gentileschi’s “Self-Portrait” (1630, Royal Collection) in which most unusually the subject was appropriately female. Some of the other attributes would hardly have been plausible on a real person. In the case of the van Dyck portrait the chain was also a present from the king, a very real object made into a symbol.

Sunflowers were images of the lover adoring the beloved or the devout soul God. Sunflowers follow the sun and at one stage of their life have at central pattern of intersecting radiating diagonals reproduced by Michelangelo on the Campodoglio pavement in Rome in a possible reference to Apollo, the sun god. If the Michelangelo reference works through the pattern of the flower it was one of the earliest for the flower was an import from the New World. Alternatively the flower could have received its name from existing European patterns associated with the sun. The red gold combination, with which we have become familiar is spread across artist and the

adoring, following flower. As would be the sun or someone basking in its rays van Dyck is warm. A strand of hair plastered across his perspiring brow gave rise to "Portrait of the Artist in a Sweat". The artist is the warm sun and his own flower turns to him, as to a lover or God in an astonishingly egocentric image, or does he treat the blazing flower as a substitute for the broiling sun? Probably as in so much great art contradictory interpretations are virtually obligatory.

Significantly in the "Charles I and Henrietta Maria" the King is predominantly in red, the source of heat, the cooler Queen in white with red ribbon. The history of this image is complicated. It began as a rather stiff painting, ca.1630-2, the Royal Collection, cat. ill. 24, by Mytens, who repainted the queen's head after one by van Dyck. The queen's dress is white in both paintings but Mytens has the king in silvery grey. Charles is in all cases in the act of receiving an olive branch from his foreign Queen. The artist in his own self-portrait becomes the recipient so that the giver and the recipient have been assimilated into each other and the only opposing colours are within the usual red and gold amalgamation. Van Dyck connects himself to the King's red attire with a single slash down to the white padding unlike the several Charles displays and the painter's gold chain is a modest equivalent to the golden regalia behind the King. Given this precedent of symbolically freighted, even cosmic, objects it is hardly surprising that naval commanders seem to be able to move boats. That the sunflower work was not present at the recent event was perhaps no bad thing given that it figured so prominently in the R.A. Exhibition, but it was included as a print, cat. 64, and in an adaptation after van Dyck in a self portrait by Robert Walker, 1640-5, Ashmolean, cat. 98, in which a head and torso of a statuette of Mercury, rather rigidly in profile, takes the place of the huge flower. The torso with foremost arm raised brings to mind a Crucifix, not an appropriate thing in an English painting of this date. In his painting van Dyck may have been making use of standard tropes and material from emblem books, but in making it sweaty and sticky he turns potentially trite allegory into pulsating symbolism.

Compared to van Dyck's warm mutual irradiation with the sunflower, the marriage of Charles and Henrietta Maria is depicted as a cold and formal dynastic union, as it indeed seems to have been in its initial stages if not later. The artist draws on Dutch and Flemish marriage portraits, those of Rubens and both his wives being exceptional examples and even, possibly, Hals "Issac Massa and Beatrix van der Laen", ca. 1622, Rijksmuseum, in which vegetation plays an important symbolic and compositional part. The Rubens's "St. George and the Dragon in a Landscape", 1629-30, Royal Collection, Windsor, in which the princess and the saint have the features of Charles and Henrietta Maria and there is an exchange of an object is an obviously related work. The colours worn are the reverse of those in the van Dyck the Queen in red the King in armour with a small red cape and reflections of red in the armour with white highlights. The mature van Dyck method of colouristic division, and carefully limited cross references appears in the "St. Martin Dividing His Cloak", ca. 1621, Royal Collection, in the cloak, a split section from being severed, unites contrasted groups of soldiers and the poor, red highlights appearing on the soldier saint's armour and in the shadows of the beggar's back. Van Dyck shows himself in sunflower self-portrait in the pose in reverse of Lord Bernard Stuart in the famous double portrait where there is a literally golden "brother", not a sunflower, as the object of the figure looking over his shoulder asks us to contemplate. Van Dyck's meanings become clearer when poses, attributes are compared across several pictures. The higher brother in gold, on a step and against a

pedestal becomes an adored object, view by his sibling with detachment. The Tate exhibitions poster girl, “Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle”, 1637, the Trustees of the Rt. Hon. Olive Countess Fitzwilliam’s Chattels Settlement, cat. 43, is again in a looking over the shoulder pose but less assertive conforming to the usual type casting of female sitters in this period.

Van Dyck in his self-portraits seems less confident in his bearing than Rubens being both febrile and nervous, if implicitly arrogant and self-regarding in the sunflower work. It is possible that the husband in the “Contenance of Scipio” is a self-portrait of the same period as the relatively early work hung next to it. the “Self-Portrait “, ca. 1620, Metropolitan Museum, cat. 5, perhaps unfinished. The costume in the later “Self-Portrait”, ca. 1640-1, private collection, cat. 67, is just a little like the archaising Burgundian dress in Vermeer’s “The Art of Painting”, 1670s, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. It is also similar to that worn by the known sitter in “Thomas Killigrew and Another Gentleman”, 1638, the Royal Collection, cat. 47, but the van Dyck version has more slashes and looks more fashionable or antiquated. Perhaps van Dyck’s temperament enabled him to capture that aspect of Charles, King and Martyr that has become iconic. Penetration of Charles’s psyche no more than in the case of Velázquez implies criticism. In “Charles I on Horseback with M. Saint-Antoine”, 1633, the Royal Collection, cat. 21, the middle aged groom looks up like a besotted saint experiencing a heavenly vision, while the royal helmet is held by the groom as in some of the portraits of the type with a boy page. The horse could be performing dressage. The cloud under the King’s elbow seems to push him forward. There would appear to have been some repainting of the sky behind the royal head. Horses trotting directly towards the viewer had appeared in Rubens portraits of the Spanish Privado (favourite), the Duke of Lerma, 1603, Prado, and Marie de Medicis, 1622-5, Louvre, in the famous cycle of her (rather discreditable) life as tidied up by the artist and other advisers.

The equestrian portrait of Charles shows how far painting executed in England had progressed since Robert Peake’s “Henry, Prince of Wales and Sir John Harington in the Hunting Field”, 1603, Metropolitan Museum, cat. 1, near the start of the exhibition. Neither young man is actually mounted but there is a horse, here in profile. Primitive as the work is in some respects it has the most wonderful pale Mannerist colouring. The groom is partially concealed by the horse but the legs are very visible as in Caravaggio’s “Conversion of St. Paul”. Is it just possible that that a description or a semi understood sketch of the great Roman work could have found its way to England? The dead deer, twisted head suggesting prostration before Sir John, takes the place of the blinded and unhorsed saint.

Possibly in the last decade or so at least some of the time van Dyck became more sober, even classical. Within such a short period of intense activity as his main English period covered by the exhibition and with dates not always certain there is considerable chronological overlapping. In rooms 4 and 5 of the last decade or so some of the paintings are so obviously classical that they could be taken for paintings by Laurent de La Hyre (1606-56) or Eustache Le Sueur, (1616-55). A painter with all van Dyck’s international contacts must always have been aware of French developments added to which the queen was French. In fact the Le Sueur, self-portrait, looking over his shoulder in the rear of “A Gathering of Friends”, ca. 1640, Louvre, is so like van Dyck in the sunflower work that influence may have been mutual. A particularly good

example of van Dyck's "French" manner is "Dorothy, Lady Spencer, later Countess of Sunderland", ca. 1637-9, Lord Egremont, Petworth House, cat. 53, who makes a restrained gesture to a plant, while resting her hand on the top of the urn from which the plant grows. This is relateabl to the National Gallery's later "Allegory of Grammar", 1650, by Le Hyre in which two flower pots on an upturned architectural block are watered are watered by the personification. There is an urn on the wall behind her. An urn and the reticent gesture also appear in "Anne Kirke" ca. 1637-8, the Huntington Library, Art Collections, San Marino, California, cat. 48, and even the Warwick fits into the category in restraint if not in attributes. Van Dyck may actually have been ahead of the direction of travel of classicizing French taste. Also rather French in subdued tonality and colouring is "Lord George Seigner d'Aubigny", ca. 1638-40, the National Gallery, cat. 46. Lord George had grown up in France and van Dyck might have been trying to please him by working in a French manner. Lord George wears an approximation of ancient attire. "Frances, Lady Brockhurst, later Countess of Dorset", ca. 1637, Knole, cat. 39, could fit into what might loosely be called the late classicizing group. The sitters dress is almost classical. This painting is as late as ca. 1637.

It should be pointed out, however, that the archetypal double swagger portrait of the two Stuart brothers as young men is as late as 1638. It is possible style was altered to please the patron. In "Lady Villiers as St. Agnes" the lamb might seem to be pure kitsch, but does bring to mind Zurbarán's "Sheep with Feet Tied Together", two versions, private collection, 1631; Madrid and Fine Arts Gallery San Diego. Ribalta's "The Vision of St Francis", also comes to mind, ca. 1620, Prado, reproduced in Stoichita, "Visionary Experience in the Golden Age of Spanish Art", ill. 68. As a subject of the Spanish Monarchy van Dyck must have been aware of such works.

Van Dyck perhaps made a brilliant career move dying when he did. As Caroline court life collapsed, though he did visit Paris in November 1641, shortly before his demise, in the hope of being commissioned for a major decorative undertaking at the Louvre. He did not live to face such indignities as Inigo Jones, the court architect, carried out of the Basing House siege wrapped in a blanket. The small "Charles and the Knights of the Garter in Procession", 1639-40, the Ashmolean, cat. 77, oil on panel in a brown monochrome with white highlighting has some of the qualities of a Rubens oil sketch, and dates from the period of van Dyck's declining health and activity. It was an idea for a series of tapestries for the Banqueting House to go under the Rubens ceiling. It shows the St. George's Day procession of the knights. Though more decorous and formal it may reflect the militia group portraits of the Dutch Republic of which Hals's are the best. None of the Netherlandish examples had the Veronese setting van Dyck put in his proposal. The militia group paintings were all hung in the halls of (largely honorific) military units. Perhaps the Banqueting House could be regarded as a monarchical and more architecturally elaborate version of such a hall usually filled with courtiers who regarded the profession of arms as their rightful prerogative. Sadly this profession was not to be a merely honorific function as it remained in the for the most part tranquil and well governed Dutch Republic. These courtiers under the eye of the fastidious Charles would have behaved with far more decorum than the Dutch burghers on their carouses, which could last for three days.

Timothy Alves

Turner and Italy
National Gallery of Scotland
27 March-7 June 2009



J. M. W. Turner made seven visits to Italy throughout his life. His relationship with the landscape and architecture of Italy was recently celebrated in an exhibition at the National Gallery of Scotland.

This exhibition not only explored the artist's relationship with Italy, it also provided insights into how Turner worked. Several of Turner's notebooks were on display. In one of them, the lack of text is notable. Turner filled a notebook with drawings of views he wanted to see taken from other books before he set out on one of his journeys. There is no written text at all in this notebook; Turner was clearly thinking in pictures when he was planning his journey.

An unfinished watercolour of *Naples: Vesuvius, 1819* also revealed some of Turner's way of working. In this, the background is complete in full detail while the foreground is barely sketched in. Other works, such as *Turner's Bedroom in the Palazzo*

Giustiniani of 1840 also have a sketch-like quality. Turner's characteristic flair for light and colour shows in the pictures he did in each of his Italian visits.

The real stars of the show were the amazing paintings Turner did of Venice. Although he is justly famous for his depictions of the city, Turner only spent a total of four weeks there. He must have been painting and drawing every available second he was there.

In addition to the paintings, the exhibition included books from Turner's private library. This collection is mostly intact and in private hands. Turner collected books dating from the seventeenth century on and his library included works of literature, history, and guide books. His collection shows a marked interest in all things Italian. Turner also contributed illustrations to various publications, including views of Italy, to books throughout his career.

Turner's love of Italy went beyond his interpretations of Italian scenes. He brought an Italianate sensibility to some of his depictions of British views such as those of Edinburgh, London, Surrey, and Kent. In these the British landscape is infused with the light of the Italian sun and somehow in Turner's hands this works.

A small selection of some of the works which made up the exhibition is available online (as of 19 June 2009) at

<http://www.nationalgalleries.org/whatson/calendar/5:367/6324/6486>

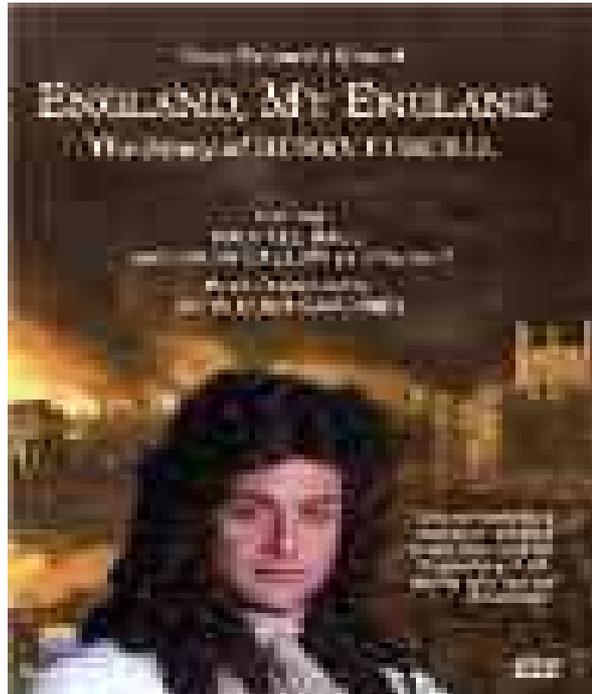
Although this show featured loans from Washington, Melbourne, Paris, and Texas, many of the featured works from this exhibition are normally housed in Tate Britain so do not despair if you missed this. With a little bit of planning, you may be able to do your own version of *Turner and Italy* in your own time.

Karen Baston

FILM/DVD

DVD Review:

England, My England, (Channel Four, 1995, 155 minutes). Extras: Subtitles.



England, My England, is a dramatized biopic charting the life of Henry Purcell (1659-1695). Originally commissioned by Channel Four to commemorate the tercentenary Purcell's death in 1995, *England, My England* is really two plays in one. One play is set in the 1660s and features Simon Callow as an actor playing Charles II, the other play is a historical reconstruction of the life of Henry Purcell through the Restoration of Charles II, continuing through the reign of James II and finishing in the early years of William III.

This flip-flopping between centuries has a point, given the premise that the purpose of history is to explain the past by comparing it to the present. Similarities are drawn between the seventeenth century and the film's 'present': for fear of France in the 1660s, read scepticism of the Common Market (EU) now. For the threat of Catholicism via the Popish plot, read terrorism. The scenes concerning the Common Market were written with the benefit of hindsight and are still relevant, in that they explore ongoing issues today. Similarly, the film's commentary on terrorism, seen via the problems in Northern Ireland in the late sixties, is still valid, although the threat from the Provisional IRA has arguably been replaced by that of a minority of Muslim extremists.

Henry Purcell was born in 1659, the last year of the Cromwellian Protectorate. In many ways, Purcell's music was the defining sound of the Restoration. Despite his untimely death at the age of thirty-four, Purcell wrote and performed courtly music for three monarchs: Charles II, James II and William III. Despite its length, this is a lively concerto of history, with many moments of humour. When Queen Mary commands 'Master Purcell' to compose, William of Orange bursts into laughter. Everybody else promptly joins in: when the king laughs, everybody laughs.

England, my England benefits from bold casting: Simon Callow as Charles II is well supported by Michael Ball as Henry Purcell. Robert Stephens, in his final film role, narrates magnificently and also plays John Dryden. Samuel Pepys is played commandingly by John Shrapnel, while Edward Hyde, Earl Clarendon is brilliantly portrayed by John Fortune. This DVD edition contains no extras apart from scene selection. On the other hand, there is the wonderful music, the costumes and many beautiful internal and external location scenes.

Robin Rowles

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS

Events 2009-2010

All events start at 6.30p.m. unless otherwise stated, and are followed by refreshments and questions

- 24th June 2009: Prof. Peter Burke (Emmanuel College, University of Cambridge), 'The Rhetoric of Autobiography in 17th-century Europe', followed by end of year party.
- 17th July 2009: Highbrows and Lowlifes: An Early Modern Bloomsbury Pub Walk, starting at the British Museum. The tour will be led by Karen Chester, a qualified City guide.

***** **ATTENTION** *****

Please note that all tickets have been allocated for this event. For further information contact the secretary, Laura Jacobs. Members without tickets cannot just turn up and expect go on the walk.

- 25th July 2009: Student Conference, 'Revolution and Evolution', Birkbeck College, Room 352, Malet Street

***** **ATTENTION** *****

Please note that this is an all day event. We will begin with the Society AGM and then proceed with the conference. Refreshments will be provided at designated intervals throughout the day. For further information contact the secretary, Laura Jacobs (times and additional details will be sent out to members closer to the date).

- 22nd October 2009: Dr Roger Mettam 'Absolute Monarchy and Provincial Identity in Louis XIV's France'.
- 12th November 2009: Karen Hearn (Curator of 16th and 17th century British Art, Tate Britain), Tudor and Jacobean pregnancy portraits

For further information on membership and activities contact the secretary, Laura Jacobs: l.jacobs@english.bbk.ac.uk

Membership is £5 for the year. Non-members may attend events at a cost of £3 each.

Film Night

As a Society we are constantly looking at ways of extending our scope and entertaining our membership, one such innovation is a monthly film night, held on a Friday and shown in one of the lecture theatres at Birkbeck.

Film Night has been running for a few months now and has proved a popular event for our members. Why not come along, see a great film and meet other members. We show a variety of British and foreign films, all dealing with subjects associated with the Early Modern era. Film Night is free to members and we also provide wine and snacks.

For June we will be screening 'Cyrano de Bergerac'. This will be shown in Room B36 at Birkbeck College in Mallet Street, London on Friday, 19th June 2009.

For further information on Film Night contact the secretary, Laura Jacobs:
l.jacobs@english.bbk.ac.uk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

This section concerns those events staged by other societies which we feel might be of interest to our membership.

FRIDAY 19 JUNE at 2pm:

Lost Churches of the City - rediscovering lost London
Meet: Mansion House Station, Bow Lane Exit 4, in the garden courtyard in front of St Mary Aldermary Church, Bow Lane, London

Before the Great Fire of 1666, there were well over 100 churches in the City of London. In more recent centuries fire, war and municipal vandalism have contributed to the disappearance of many more of them. But they haven't vanished entirely; you can still see them if you know how to look.

SATURDAY 11 JULY at 11am

Samuel Pepys' City - a stroll through Restoration London
Meet: Tower Hill Station, next to the statue of the Emperor Trajan

Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) was a respected civil servant and a Member of Parliament. But most of us don't remember him for that! We remember him for the secret diary in which he recorded his candid and uncensored opinions of the people he met and the events he witnessed. His first-hand accounts of the Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of 1666 still bring 17th-century London vividly to life

Both the above walks are organised by Karen Chester. They last about two and a half hours, with a break at 'ye olde pub' along the way. Just turn up at the appointed meeting place and pay the guide. £7 per person, DISCOUNT £6 for Early Modern Society members and their guests, email info@bigsmokewalks.com

4th and 5th July

These walks are part of the City of London Festival and are called a 'London a Hanseatic City'. They will be led by one of our members, John Gibson. For more details, or to book, see www.colf.org and find the events for 4th or 5th July on the calendar. The cost is £10.

The theme of the Festival this year is 'The latitude of 60 degrees' and John, who is a City Guide, was asked to do the walk because he is researching a book on Elizabethan London. He assures us that, despite its title, the walk will be entertaining as well as informative.

**Henry VIII: Dressed to Kill
The Tower of London**

Until January 2010

Telephone: 0844 4827777

The Tudor monarch is battle-ready in this exhibition that features various examples of his armour and weapons. The objects are beautifully made and are designed both to impress and to serve a functional purpose.

**Henry VIII: Man and Monarch
The British Library, London**

Until September 2009

Telephone: 01937 546060

Drawing upon the British Library's vast collection of documents this exhibition aims to demonstrate the huge political, religious, cultural and intellectual changes of the mid-Tudor age. The exhibition has David Starkey as guest curator.

**Henry's Women
Hampton Court Palace, Surrey**

Until August 2009

Telephone: 0870 753777

This exhibition allows visitors to view portraits of all six wives displayed in what was Henry's Council Chamber. In addition to the depictions of Henry's wives will be portraits of the King and his daughters.

**Hidden Treasurers from the Mary Rose
Whitgift Conference centre, Croydon**

Until August 2009

Telephone: 020 86339939

Some two hundred objects from Henry VIII's flagship are on display here. These include jewellery, clothing, utensils, weapons and medical equipment.

BOOK REVIEW

NON-FICTION BOOKS

I hope that many of you will send in your reviews of newly published books and the occasional old book. The only criteria being that it deals with a subject within the Early Modern period, roughly from the Renaissance (the middle of the fifteenth century) through to the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and that the book is still in print.

John Croxon

Deborah E. Harkness, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007)

Deborah E. Harkness wisely sidesteps historiographical debates about the Scientific Revolution and scientific terminology at the start of *The Jewel House* and gets straight to the point with her exploration of the state of science in London in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. Although the term did not exist, people were certainly doing ‘science’ and scientific activities at this time and they were doing it long before Francis Bacon told them how to.

Elizabethan London was a hive of scientific activity. From industrial processes such as brewing and making mathematical instruments to medical practice and gardening to alchemical experimentation and communication with fellow scholars abroad, Londoners were active practitioners of science. Harkness takes her title from Hugh Plat’s *The Jewell House of Art and Nature* (London, 1594) and offers the activities of Plat and others like him as an alternative to the science proposed by Bacon’s vision of Salomon’s House. Where Bacon’s science is institutionalised and the preserve of the gentry, Plat’s is active and for everyone – from the muskmelon seller on the street to the prisoners in the King’s Bench - to practice in their own ways. Harkness convincingly theorises that Bacon’s *Advancement of Learning* of 1605 is actually a reaction against the world of messy science that he saw all around him. It was only when, after the chaos of Civil War, Bacon’s social equals came to form the Royal Society that science was removed from daily life and made the concern of the social elite.

The Jewel House is also a pleasure to read. Harkness’s use of real lives and her engaging use of primary sources such as the notebooks of Clement Draper keep the stories fresh. Her description of Plat’s chats with members of all classes of society is especially good and serves as a reminder to go beyond printed texts when we can. The differences between what Plat recorded in his manuscript notebooks and what eventually made it to the printed versions of his notes are revealing. Harkness makes

it clear that science and scientific practice were activities for all members of society – even women – and that London was a place not of theory but of daily practice. Non-specialists will also find much to enjoy in this attractively presented book with the chapters on the Lime Street naturalists and on the contrast between Plat and Bacon as especially good. Along the way we also meet such Elizabethan luminaries as John Dee, William Cecil, John Gerard, and Walter Raleigh and we can see how their achievements fit into a bigger picture.

Overall this is a strong performance but there is one niggling thing about this book. Although correctly spelled in the acknowledgments, Magdalen College, Oxford is repeatedly given an unneeded ‘e’ – Cambridge style - in the notes and in the bibliography. I’m sorry to be pedantic but it is the sort of thing that can drive a bibliographer and ex-librarian spare.

Karen Baston

FICTION BOOKS

The criteria for fiction books is the same as that for non-fiction book reviews; that it deals with a subject within the Early Modern period, roughly from the Renaissance (the middle of the fifteenth century) through to the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and that the book is still in print.

John Croxon

Salman Rushdie, *The Enchantress of Florence* (New York: Random House, 2009)

I was lucky to be in London in 1982, when Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children* came out and became an overnight success. Even luckier to see a TV show in which Rushdie read passages from his masterpiece and introduced his theme. Rushdie is a great speaker as well as a writer. It is a show I can never forget because of my first exposure to Rushdie and his magical world, with its convincing blend of reality, fantasy and history that makes him the postcolonial writer par excellence.

In *Midnight’s Children* Rushdie declares: “I am the sum total of everything that went before me, of all I have been seen done, of everything done-to-me. I am everyone everything whose being-in-the-world affected was affected by mine to understand me, you’ll have to swallow a world.” That is quite true of this novel where the scene keeps shifting from Kashmir to Mumbai to Rawalpindi to Dhaka. A hundred characters crowd the pages. The design of his latest book, *The Enchantress of Florence*, is somewhat simpler, even though it has a broad canvas virtually encompassing the twin hemispheres, the east and west. There is the storyteller and listener, Mogor dell’Amore and Akbar the Great, like Saleem and Padma in *Midnight’s Children*, who knit the novel together.

In many ways this is a more satisfying novel because its elegance of form combines with a backdrop that is lush and flamboyant. Also, magic seems to be a natural element in the story that is about an enchantress, Angelica alias Qara Koz. However, it is the hidden princess at the core of the plot, the mysterious figure that is shrouded in veils that keeps teasing the reader who gets drawn into the story as each veil of mystery is lifted. The reader really identifies with Emperor Akbar, who can barely contain his impatience in trying to trace the origin of this hidden ancestress of his, the great aunt whose name is erased from history. She is finally reinstated in this epic of colonization that begins with the journey of a yellow-haired stranger, from the west to the east.

Mogor dell'Amore or Niccolo Vespucci is renamed many times in the story, like his ancestress Angelica who goes through many stages of metamorphosis: Khanzada Begum, Qara Koz, the Mirror etc. It is as if through these transformations, as veil after veil is lifted, she enters a new phase of life and faces new adventures. Accordingly, the scene keeps shifting from Florence to Fatehpur Sikri to Agra and back again, with Mogor as the main narrator throughout the story.

It is as if the plot line is held together by the thread of storytelling only. That seems to be the quest that Mogor embarks on, at the very beginning. As the plot thickens, we learn that the protagonist's life, like the archetypal storyteller Scheherazade's, may depend on this art only. In fact, it begins with one mystery that is partly uncovered that makes us curious and read on and on. Rushdie's is the art of mystifying the reader, an art that is manifest in all his works.

The book is meticulously researched, with an impressive bibliography. There are many historical facts that are carefully outlined, along with familiar historical figures like Queen Elizabeth, Niccolo Machiavelli, Amerigo Vespucci and Christopher Columbus. At first we think we are reading the history of the colonization of India, with the date pushed back just a little, with Akbar and Elizabeth instead of Jehangir and James I; but soon, as the novel starts in full swing, we are lost in a maze, a labyrinth of stories within stories, adventure within adventure, with magic encasing all of it.

It is the theme of magic that lends a special charm to the tale. However, there is an undercurrent of realism that often provides a prosaic explanation for some sensational events. The ambassador of Britain for instance, is threatened with death if he learns the Florentine traveller's deadly secret; shortly afterwards, when he falls down dead, we learn that it is laudanum instead of a curse that is the cause. It is a crucial moment in the beginning that sets Mogor on his path.

As the story progresses, we find these pivotal incidents are either lifesaving or death dealing, and they turn the corner of the plot. The two whores, Skeleton and Mattress, save Mogor's life by massaging unguents and perfumes into his hand. When he is about to be trampled to death by the mad elephant, it is the familiar smell rather than a magic potion that saves his life. The incident is replicated later when Argalia is saved by Qara Koz, the "enchantress" who mixes herbs that cause stomach pain in his competitor that helps Argalia to win the race. Thus Qara Koz or Angelica, compared to Circe of the legends, or the Queen Demoness of fairy tales, is merely an intriguer, rather like the medicine woman of yore.

While Qara the enchantress keeps vanishing and reappearing like Ariosto's Angelica, there is another figure that seems to remain constant in the story. It is merely a figment of Akbar's imagination, Jodha Bai, the imaginary Rajput princess he consorts with, except that she has no existence outside his dreams. Accordingly, she is the perfect contrast to her counterpart, "the hidden princess" Angelica/Qara Koz, because she has every virtue, every grace. Akbar endows her with superhuman powers and she never ages, never dies and never does anything wrong. She remains constant throughout the narrative as opposed to the proverbial Angelica who changes allegiance, is fickle and inconstant and who loves, betrays and kills with a vengeance all those she comes in contact with, thereby becoming a lethal woman in every sense of the word. At the end, somewhat unexpectedly, there is a tussle between these two superwomen and one edges the other out. There is no doubt about who wins. Pale, shadowy and constant Jodha is defeated by the serpentine enchantress of Florence, who thus puts the finishing touch to *her* story that blends fantasy with realism. It proves Rushdie to be a master storyteller, spellbinding in his art as always.

Bansari Mitra

John Buchan, *John Burnet of Barnes* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2008)

John Buchan is best known these days for *The 39 Steps* and his other novels featuring Richard Hannay but he was a prolific writer from an early age. *John Burnet of Barnes* (1898) was his first full length novel and in it Buchan takes us to the 1680s with a tale of youth, love, and revenge.

Young John Burnet enjoys a peaceful life in the Scottish Borders. He spends lazy days fishing and evading his tutor while falling in love with the girl next door. His life is a comfortable one. He knows he will inherit the lands of his father's estate at Barnes and he is surrounded by faithful servants and glorious countryside. He eventually heads to Glasgow to get a university education. Burnet is torn between choosing a scholarly life or an active one and I can't help but wonder if this is a debate Buchan had within himself when he was studying at Oxford and writing this novel. There may be more than a hint of autobiography here. Burnet decides to complete his education with a trip to Leiden as was a common practice among Scottish scholars at the time.

Luckily for the reader a new character arrives who forces Burnet into action. His cousin Gilbert Burnet arrives at Barnes while John is packing his bags for the Continent and spectacularly earns John's hatred by flirting with his girlfriend – who is quickly proposed to and upgraded to fiancée – and causing his father to have a stroke and die. Soldier Gilbert has all the glamour John lacks. He is confident and cocky and despite the dislike John has he can't help but be jealous of his dashing cousin. In many ways the cousins are two parts of a whole.

Barnes may be in a state but John carries out his plan of Continental study. At Leiden he partakes in philosophical debates and meets his fellow Scots abroad, including inevitably Cousin Gilbert who is now a travelling soldier. The cousins have another row before heading home to Scotland. Gilbert, meanwhile, has assembled a regiment and some followers.

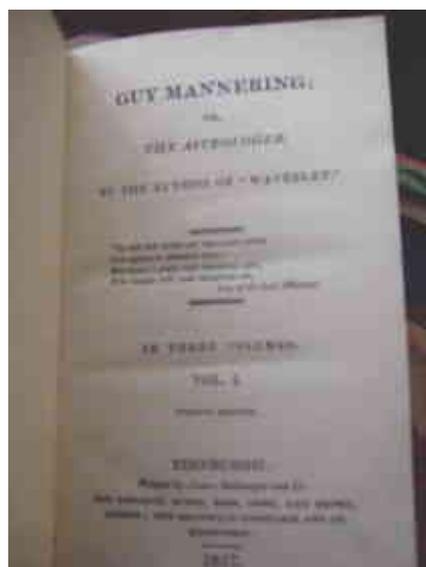
John's dreams of returning to his peaceful life at Barns are destroyed when he finds upon his return to Scotland that Gilbert has framed him. Gilbert has accused him of conspiring with Covenanters to overthrow the king and John is an outlaw rather than a respected laird. He returns to the countryside of his youth to evade capture in the way he once dodged his lessons. Along the way he meets a secret Covenanter coven, is saved by gypsies, and depends on the loyalty of his servant Nicol Plenderleith and the love of his faithful Marjory.

John and Gilbert have a final clash and there are no prizes for guessing the outcome. With the narrative ending in 1688, Burnet is able to clear his name with the new government and to settle down. He has proved his capabilities for the active life and can return to his fishing and his books.

On the whole this is an enjoyable novel. If you like descriptions of landscape there is plenty of that here. However, I couldn't help but think that the story of 'bad cousin Gilbert' would have been more exciting than that of 'good cousin John'. I did enjoy the descriptions of educational practice in late seventeenth century Glasgow and Leiden especially as these are what drew me to the book in the first place. Burnet seems unwilling or unable to explore the implications of Descartes's thinking to get access to the writings of Spinoza. But he knows of these thinkers as late-seventeenth century Scottish scholars would have done in reality and that is good enough for me. Buchan's evocation of Scottish history and characters like Nicol Plenderleith clearly owe much to Sir Walter Scott and that is a good thing.

Karen Baston

Sir Walter Scott, *Guy Mannering, or, The Astrologer*, Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999)



*Title page of the first volume of my
4th edition copy in 3 volumes (1817)*

Guy Mannering is Walter Scott's second novel and was written in 1815. It looks back to the 1760s-80s and tells not so much the story of the eponymous character as that of those around him.

We meet the English Mannering on a post-university tour of Scotland. He lodges for a night with the Laird of Ellangowan whose wife is having a child at that very time. Mannering befriends the laird and his associates, the inept 'Dominie' Sampson and the gypsy midwife Meg Merrilies. Mannering decides to cast a horoscope for the laird's newly arrived son and heir and finds that momentous events will befall the child at three times – at the ages of 5, 10, and 21- in his life. Mannering makes the family promise not to open the horoscope until young Henry Bertram is past the age of five. Despite his divination activities, Mannering has no idea how much a part the Bertram family will play in his own future. He departs home to England to marry and we are not reacquainted with him until much later in the story.

We stay in southwest Scotland with the Bertrams. The Laird comes under the influence of his estate manager, a corrupt and social climbing lawyer called Gilbert Glossin, and is compelled to take action against the local smugglers. He also begins to evict the local gypsy population. Henry's education, meanwhile, is in the hands of Dominie Sampson who proves to be a surprisingly good tutor. Sampson, however, is less good at babysitting than at teaching and manages to lose the Bertram heir. Henry witnesses the murder of a customs officer. After Meg Merrilies begs the smugglers to spare his life Henry is kidnapped and taken to Holland on his fifth birthday with his unopened horoscope charm around his neck. The years pass with the Bertram family, which now also includes a daughter called Lucy, losing status and coming increasingly under the power of Glossin.

Mannering, meanwhile, has gone to India and has become a colonel. He and his wife have a lovely daughter called Julia but their lives are torn apart when a young soldier in Mannering's regiment, called Captain Vanbeest Brown (could that maybe be a Dutch name?), seems to be pursuing Mannering's wife. Mannering and Brown fight a duel before Mannering retires to Britain leaving Brown, who is aged about 21, wounded and presumed dying.

Battered and bruised by his colonial experience, Mannering returns to the scene of his youthful adventure in Scotland. He finds the Laird of Ellangowan on his deathbed. Lucy Bertram is about to be orphaned and Glossin is primed to purchase the estate he's managed for so many years.

Brown, meanwhile, has recovered and is in Britain to find his true love Julia Mannering. Julia is staying with her father's friend in England while Mannering is finding a place for them to settle in Scotland. She begins to receive a mysterious visitor under her window and it doesn't take Mannering long to work out who this is. He decides to acquire the Bertram estate and arranges for his daughter to join him in Scotland.

Brown follows Julia north and along the way meets and befriends the yeoman farmer Dandie Dinmont. (This is the only case I know of where a type of dog was named for a fictional character.) Dinmont is a good and loyal friend and through him we come to realise that Brown has been misrepresented by Mannering. Meg Merrilies is also a

fellow traveller. She has no doubt as to Brown's true identity and begins to work to restore him to his proper place with the unlikely help of Dominie Sampson who has become increasingly terrified of her as the years have passed.

Manning travels to Edinburgh to take legal advice on purchasing the Bertram estate and on protecting Lucy Bertram's interests. He meets the lawyer Paulus Playdell who introduces him to leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment including Hume (although he would have died a few years before Manning's visit), Ferguson, Lord Kaimes, Hutton, Clerk, Smith, and Robertson. Playdell re-opens the murder investigation of the customs officer and, together with Manning, begins to work out what really happened that fateful night. Meg Merrilies, meanwhile, confirms that Henry Bertram was not killed but kidnapped. All the clues are there for us to see and for the characters to put together.

Eventually, of course, it all works out. Brown returns to his proper place as Bertram. Young love wins the day for both Julia and Lucy and Dominie has his dream job as the keeper of a library once owned by a bishop*. The plot may be predictable but the characters make this worth reading. From the eccentric Sampson to the unflappable Dinmont to the suave Playdell to the sinister Glossin to the stately Merrilies, these are characters who stay with you even when the last page is finished. It comes as no surprise that a musical version of the story appeared a year after the novel was published. It would make a fantastic film.

The Edinburgh Edition features comprehensive historical notes. It attempts to recreate the novel as Scott intended and includes Scott's own later observations about his sources. Having this information available is very useful and well worth reading to get the most out of the text.

This has turned out to be more a plot synopsis than a review. It is difficult for me to explain why I enjoyed this book so much. It might be because it fits with my academic interests at the moment or it might simply be that it's a true classic.

**I have adopted Dominie Sampson as project mascot for my PhD on the library of Charles Areskine.*

Karen Baston

Problem Page

Aunt Agonistes, Birkbeck's own early modern agony aunt.

Dear Aunty Ag.

My problem is that I am extremely ugly and this is getting me down.

Can you help?

Hector Savinien de Cyrano de Bergerac

Dear Cyrano,

You need to be convinced that it is better to be fowl than fair.

Firstly beauty is dangerous, if fair *Helen* the Greek, and the gentle *Trojan* Shepherd, had been hard favoured or counterfeit in personage, then the Greeks would never have taken so much pain in pursuing them. Nor would poor *Troy* have endured such cruel ruin and destruction, in long description whereof, so many skilful wits were wearied and tired.

And if we shall compare and unite together, the beauty of the mind with that of the body: shall we not find a greater number of deformed people, to be more wise and ingenious than the fair and well formed? Let *Socrates* be our witness, whom the historians and ancient figures represent, to be so ill-favoured. He was acknowledged to be the wisest man of his time. Of great deformity were the Philosophers, *Zeno* and *Aristotle*, *Empedocles* foully composed, nevertheless, they all were of marvellous and sweet disposed spirit.

Consider pretty boys and girls, and ye shall commonly find them to be sickly, weaker and less able to travail: more soft, delicate and effeminate, than the other kind of people. Consider, how good looks have headlong thrown down young people, into secret griefs and perilous dangers, and allured them to such hateful sins: as right happy might he count himself that could escape them with his honour unstained.

Contrariwise, note the good and profit ensuing by deformity. For example a very foul deformed woman serves as a good receipt and sovereign remedy against fleshly temptations.

I could go on but you can see that it is really is much better to be ugly than pretty. So cheer up Cyrano and get out more.

Agonistes

Oliver Cromwell Speech - Dissolution of the Long Parliament

Taking historical events and long-dead individuals and using them to make a current political point is done far too often these days and often the attempt appears contrived and fatuous. However, the speech made by Cromwell to the Long Parliament does appear particularly apt at this time.

Dissolution of the Long Parliament by Oliver Cromwell given to the House of Commons on the 20th April 1653.

It is high time for me to put an end to your sitting in this place, which you have dishonored by your contempt of all virtue, and defiled by your practice of every vice; ye are a factious crew, and enemies to all good government; ye are a pack of mercenary wretches, and would like Esau sell your country for a mess of pottage, and like Judas betray your God for a few pieces of money.

Is there a single virtue now remaining amongst you? Is there one vice you do not possess? Ye have no more religion than my horse; gold is your God; which of you have not barter'd your conscience for bribes? Is there a man amongst you that has the least care for the good of the Commonwealth?

Ye sordid prostitutes have you not defil'd this sacred place, and turn'd the Lord's temple into a den of thieves, by your immoral principles and wicked practices? Ye are grown intolerably odious to the whole nation; you were deputed here by the people to get grievances redress'd, are yourselves gone! So! Take away that shining bauble there, and lock up the doors.

In the name of God, go!

THE SUMMER QUIZ

1. Built in 1587, what was the original name of the first *Ark Royal*?
2. Which dramatist wrote *'Tis Pity She's a Whore'*?
3. Which American statesman, philosopher, scientist and inventor died on the 17th April 1790?
4. Which great British naval commander had attended the Norwich Royal Grammar School as a boy?
5. Which great British artist was born in London on St George's Day 1775?
6. Which former Prime Minister died on the 23rd January 1806?
7. What did Thomas Thorpe publish on the 20th May 1609?
8. Which Austrian composer died in Vienna on the 31st May 1809?
9. Which discoverer of the smallpox vaccination was born in Berkeley, Gloucestershire on the 17th May 1749?
10. Who painted *'Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle'* in 1637?
11. Who composed the oratorio *'Samson'* first performed in February 1743 at Covent Garden?
12. What did the London lawyer, James Puckle, patent on the 15th May 1718?
13. Which Prince of Wales died at Middleham Castle in April 1484?
14. Who conducted Parliament's negotiations with Charles II at Oxford in 1642/3, at Uxbridge in 1645, and at Newport in 1648?
15. Multiple marriages forced the passing of which piece of legislation in 1753?
16. Who was made to do penance at Paul's Cross in St Paul's Churchyard for the indecency of appearing on stage in 1612?
17. Which English composer died of pneumonia on the 21st November 1695?
18. Which dramatist wrote *'Tamburlaine the Great'* first performed in 1587?
19. Which artist painted *'Hans Luther'* (Martin's father) in 1527?
20. Which artist painted *'Diana and Callisto'* during 1556-9?

Answers on the following page

ANSWERS TO THE SUMMER QUIZ

1. *The Ark Raleigh*
2. John Ford
3. Benjamin Franklin
4. Horatio Nelson
5. Joseph Mallord William Turner
6. William Pitt (the Younger)
7. William Shakespeare's *sonnets*
8. Joseph Hayden
9. Edward Jenner
10. Sir Anthony Van Dyck
11. George Frederic Handel
12. The machinegun
13. Edward of Middleham, only legitimate son of King Richard III
14. Algernon Percy, 10th earl of Northumberland
15. The Marriage Act
16. Moll Cutpurse
17. Henry Purcell
18. Christopher Marlowe
19. Lucas Cranach
20. Titian

THE BIRKBECK EARLY MODERN SOCIETY

FOUNDED 2006

This society was founded in the belief that more study, discussion and interest in the Early Modern period is required. The society aims to promote, encourage and stimulate new research and discussion into a wide range of themes, including art and images, consumption, gender roles, literature, magic, politics, religion, science, music, sexuality and, travel and exploration.

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