

Chapter 11 An “Amsterdarnified” public sphere: English newsbooks,
pamphleteering, and polemic in European context

Jason Peacey

In 1641, a proto-royalist tract called *Religions Enemies* complained that England had become “Amsterdarnified.” Its point was to warn against England becoming a society bedevilled by “several opinions,” where religion was “the common discourse and table talk in every tavern and alehouse,” and “where a man shall hardly find five together in one mind, and yet every one presumes he is in the right.”¹ This chapter argues that this neglected comment highlights a poorly understood dimension of the “print revolution” in seventeenth-century England. European influences and European print culture lay at the heart of the transformation of print and polemic in the decades before and after the civil wars, and cheap print—pamphlets, ballads, broadsides, and newsbooks—threatened to revolutionize English public culture. This chapter examines the process by which the political authorities in England found ways of adapting and developing practices with which to address such external threats.²

The focus on “cheap print” and communicative practices, of course, has been one of the most striking advances within recent historiography on seventeenth-century England, driven more or less consciously by the desire to confront so-called “revisionist” accounts of the origins and significance of the civil wars. It has generated a sophisticated understanding of news and pamphleteering, in terms of the nature and uses of print and its role in the political and religious upheavals of the Stuart age. Ideas about the existence of a “print revolution,” and about the

emergence of a “post-reformation” or indeed a Habermasian “public sphere,” are now fairly well-established, if not perhaps universally accepted.³ It has become increasingly clear, however, that the challenge for scholars of early modern political culture is not just to integrate public politics and print culture into our understanding, but also to do so in ways which avoid parochialism. This awareness has underpinned interest in the European “republic of letters” and provided at least part of the impetus for the turn to “new British history,” which opened up opportunities for thinking about how different states or regions interacted – even within a multiple monarchy. At least to some degree, historians have thus begun to focus on the ways in which texts moved between England and Scotland, including the Covenanter texts which flooded into England in the late 1630s.⁴ More recently, historians have emphasized the need to place British history within its *European* context, and it is in this latter spirit that this chapter has been written: the aim is to suggest that many contemporaries – both within and beyond the political elite – recognized the value of engaging with European print culture and were interested in European affairs. The kinds of networks and entanglements that connected England to the Continent made it difficult to avoid the possibility that English political culture would become profoundly influenced by European print practices.⁵

However, more than merely teasing out the international and transnational dimensions of England’s print revolution in the decades before the Restoration, the goal of this chapter is to suggest that contemporary reflection on the possibility that England might be influenced by European practices, and might come to emulate in particular the vibrant Dutch public sphere, provoked not just anxiety but also adaptation. Even the most conservative of English officials came to understand that change needed to be accommodated rather than merely resisted.

I

Historians have long recognized that texts printed abroad had an impact on English print culture and the domestic public sphere. This sometimes involved Catholic presses – like those at St Omer and Douai – producing radical texts for English audiences. Peter Lake has recently emphasized the importance of Catholic polemic for understanding the political culture of Elizabethan England, and attention has also been paid to the significance of inflammatory works such as *Corona Regia* (1615) and George Eglisam's *The Forerunner of Revenge* (1626).⁶ Perhaps more obviously, scholars have discussed how, during the 1620s and 1630s, English Puritans and political radicals evaded domestic censorship by printing texts in the Low Countries, including works that had been smuggled out of English prisons, even if – as David Como has demonstrated – texts that appeared to have been produced in the United Provinces were sometimes the work of underground presses in London.⁷ What makes such Catholic and Puritan printing interesting is not just the fact that dissidents of all descriptions recognized the possibilities offered by continental presses, but also the significant difficulties that the English authorities faced in controlling such activity. Archival evidence abounds for both official anxiety regarding such tracts and the time and effort that was devoted to tracing and punishing those responsible.⁸

Historians of news culture are also aware that English political culture was further influenced by European practices through generic emulation. Thus, while news pamphlets – topical but occasional – had been a feature of the domestic political scene since the mid-sixteenth century, the embryonic newspaper, newsbook, or coranto – regular, numbered serials – only developed following the

outbreak of the Thirty Years War and in direct response to the emergence of new kinds of text in places such as Amsterdam and Paris. The first newsbook to appear in England – in December 1620 – was thus a Dutch import, although similar works soon began to be produced in London, in part as a result of the entrepreneurial instincts of Nathaniel Butter and Nicholas Bourne, who came to dominate the English news trade.⁹ These developments in print culture which threatened to transform the English public sphere provoked official concern in Whitehall, and James I asked the Dutch authorities to prohibit the export of such material. He issued a famous proclamation against “lavish and licentious” discourse on matters of state, and took action against English Stationers who became involved in the new trade in European news. His victims included the successful news monger Thomas Archer who, as one of his customers noted in 1621, was “layd by the heeles” for making corantos.¹⁰

However, while these men were satirized mercilessly by onlookers such as Ben Jonson (in *The Staple of News*, 1631), the popularity of the new medium – signalling an interest in European affairs and the way in which news made state borders permeable – almost certainly explains why the government was forced to adapt. The 1620s and 1630s witnessed attempts to monitor and license, rather than merely suppress, the activities of English journalists. As early as 1621, Butter was granted leave to publish Dutch news in translation. Although there were moments when heightened international tension, and indeed pressure from other European regimes, led to a tightening of regulations, by the late 1630s the government had relented somewhat and oversaw the establishment of a controlled newsbook trade, in which official licensers were expected to keep publishers on a fairly short leash.¹¹ Perhaps unwittingly, the government thus helped to acculturate English readers to the idea of regular news; when the drift towards civil war fuelled the appetite for

domestic reportage, it proved very difficult indeed to prevent the emergence of English “diurnalls” and “mercuries,” which proliferated in number and grew in political significance.¹² Here, too, the result was adaptation rather than suppression, and the 1640s and 1650s witnessed convoluted experimentation with licensing and censorship, in ways which proved only moderately successful.¹³

What has received much less attention, however, is the fact that the political deployment of European genres and texts had a much older pedigree, and took a variety of forms. The dynamic here is somewhat complicated, as English political grandees sometimes translated and published – even if only in a surreptitious fashion – French pamphlets in order to contribute to debates regarding domestic affairs.¹⁴ In the case of newsbooks, the form of adaptation eventually centered on official propaganda: many civil war mercuries were more or less directly controlled by parliamentarian and royalist authorities, and the most important Interregnum newsbooks – such as *Mercurius Politicus* (1650-1660) – were formally official. Modelled on Theophraste Renaudot’s official and very popular French *Gazette*, the latter illustrates again how continental texts influenced English developments.¹⁵ But scholars have only begun to investigate the complex ways in which contemporaries recognized the utility of European practices, in which English and European public spheres became entangled, and in which English officials responded to the challenges and opportunities that were involved.

II

A crucial, as yet unrecognized part of the dynamic interplay between European print culture and the English public sphere – and between specific European and English texts – is the collaborative nature of textual production. This involved close

cooperation between a range of English exiles, European controversialists, and continental presses, whether for entrepreneurial, political, or confessional purposes. Examples can be highlighted which reveal a range of ways in which texts transcended borders, thereby affecting the English public sphere and generating concern about the influence of European practices.

For example, commentaries on Dutch politics were deployed in the English public domain as part of wider polemical battles, not least through the writings of Richard Verstegan, an English-born Catholic of Dutch extraction who eventually settled in Antwerp. Verstegan is well known for his involvement in European journalism and for polemical pamphlets which troubled the Elizabethan regime, but less familiar are his translated English language pamphlets from the 1620s, which were printed at St Omer in France and offered English audiences commentary upon Dutch politics.¹⁶ These pamphlets include *Newes from the Low Countreyes* (1622), an account of the “Calvinisticall Calumnyes” which were said to underpin a recent Dutch order against the Jesuits, as well as *Observations concerning the present affaires of Holland and the United Provinces* (1621). The latter was said to have been “made by an English gentleman there lately resident,” to have been written up in Paris, and to have been sent to a friend in England before being printed at St Omer.¹⁷ Here, in other words, the promotion of a Catholic agenda involved European authors discussing continental affairs for English readers. Verstegan consciously invoked the idea that texts could move more or less freely across borders, and that authors and printers could operate as transnational actors.

A similar dynamic can be observed on other occasions, as with a pamphlet sometimes attributed to another truly international figure of the period. This was Isaac Casaubon, a French Huguenot who was born in Geneva before becoming a

leading light within the early modern republic of letters and a recipient of James I's patronage. In 1624, a text purporting to be one of Casaubon's French works was published in London as *The Originall of Idolatries*, in a translation by the Geneva-born Englishman, Abraham Darcie, "for the benefit of this monarchy."¹⁸ Unlike earlier works in this vein to which scholarly attention has been drawn, *Idolatries* was emphatically not sanctioned or instigated by the government, and Casaubon's prompt *Vindication* against the imposters who used his name was issued "by his majesties command" and by the king's printers.¹⁹ This swift reply did not prevent *Idolatries* from being used to intervene in English debates, however. A 1630 English edition – *The Originall of Popish Ideolatrie* – is interesting for having been produced on a Dutch press by a neglected English separatist, Stephen Offwood, a prominent and controversial figure within the exile churches. Offwood played a leading role not just in printing works by English Puritans, but also in translating, editing, and publishing a variety of other European texts.²⁰ On this occasion, he acknowledged that the attribution to Casaubon was unfounded, and tried to suggest that the tract had now been "reprinted with allowance," but he also added a telling comment which justified the use of a European text to meddle in English affairs. He suggested that "[w]ise politicians . . . do hold for an infallible maxim, that to reform corruptions and abuses in states, better course cannot be taken, than often to reduce things to their primitive original."²¹

Offwood's career also demonstrates that such transnational interventions in English controversies were sometimes extremely pointed. This was especially true in terms of Anglo-Dutch ventures ~~which mobilized for war~~ during increasingly lively pamphlet debates about the merits of English engagement in the Thirty Years War.²² For example, an anti-Spanish pamphlet called *A Relation of Some Speciall Points*

concerning the State of Holland (1621) sought to convince readers that war would be “much better than peace” for both the security of the United Provinces and the welfare of her neighbours. This text is particularly interesting because it was a Dutch work – *Den Compaignon vanden verre-sienden Waerschouwer* – translated for English readers, which provided a Dutch perspective on English debates. Also, an Englishman was at least partly responsible. Thus, while the pamphlet was said to have been printed at the Hague, by Aert Meuris, a bookseller “in the Paepstreat at the Signe of the Bible,” it was in fact produced in London by Edward Allde, who merely copied the imprint from the Dutch edition.²³ Allde was arrested alongside the newsmonger Thomas Archer in the same year that this tract appeared, for having produced a tract – *A briefe description of the reasons that make the declaration of the ban made against the King of Bohemia* – which likewise reprinted a Dutch tract under a fake Aert Meuris imprint. This tract was considered to be impertinent for aggressively siding with the Elector Palatine against the Holy Roman Emperor.²⁴

On this occasion, of course, the nature of Allde’s collaboration – if collaborate he did – is unclear, but other tracts on the same theme are more revealing. These include *An Oration or Speech . . . unto the most mightie and illustrious princes of Christendom* (1624), which contained an account of “the right and lawfulness of the Netherlandish war, against Philip King of Spain.” This work was said to have been “composed by a Netherlandish gentleman,” translated “out of divers languages into Dutch,” and then “Englished” by one Thomas Wood. It was also said to have been taken from an older pamphlet that had appeared from the Amsterdam press of Michael Collyne in 1608. Here, in other words, there was fairly concrete evidence of collaboration between Englishmen and Dutchmen. It involved in the translation and republication of a Dutch work – *De Jure Belli Belgici* by Jacob Verheiden, sometime

rector of the Latin school in Nijmegen and delegate at the Synod of Dort – using an Amsterdam press which was run by the successor of Giles Thorp. Moreover, the tract was almost certainly produced by Stephen Offwood, appearing as it did alongside his own anti-Spanish pamphlet called the *Adjoynder*. This latter work had itself been “gathered out of several Dutch writers” by “an unfeigned hater of oppression and tyrannie.”²⁵ Moreover, *Adjoynder* also appeared separately in London in the same year with the title *A Relation of Sundry Particular Wicked Plots* (1624), and it formed part of a concerted print campaign, which also included *A Second Part of Spanish Practices* (1624). *Practices* addressed James I with “excellent reasons . . . to dissolve the two treaties both of the match and the Palatinate, and enter into warre with the Spaniards,” and it appeared with another version of the “*Oration*” and the “*Adjoynder*,” from the London press of Nicholas Okes.²⁶

In other words, while the precise nature of cross-border collaborations in such cases tends to be unclear because of false imprints, European texts were being introduced into the English domestic sphere. They were being produced, moreover, by English exiles and London Stationers, and perhaps also by Dutch colleagues, in order to contribute to political debates. These collaborative productions represented a troubling appropriation of tactics that had earlier been deployed by English courtiers for political effect.

III

Even more troubling was the possibility that texts which meddled in the English public sphere were being ~~produced~~ created at the behest of European regimes in the hope of influencing English public opinion. This issue is not fully understood by

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historians of seventeenth-century print culture, despite recognition that monarchs and ministers were occasionally willing to place diplomatic pressure on the English government when they were offended by productions such as Thomas Middleton's *Game at Chess* (1625). It can also be highlighted by evidence regarding both English anxiety and Dutch practices.²⁷

English concern about the possibility that the Dutch government would interfere with the English public sphere is clear from an episode involving John Selden's famous *Mare Clausum*. In April 1636, Secretary of State Sir John Coke explained to the English ambassador in The Hague, Sir William Boswell, that "this last week a new impression of Mr Selden's *Mare Clausum* in octavo was brought unto me," which was "said to be printed in London," but which had in fact been produced in Amsterdam. He was worried not just that it was an illicit edition, but also that other material had been "impertinently thrust in," including an "apologia" by the Dutch scholar Marcus van Boxhorn. Coke referred to 200 copies "which we shall take order with, so as they shall neither hinder the sale of Mr Selden's books, nor . . . prejudice . . . the cause he doth maintain." He asked Boswell, meanwhile, to take action regarding "the rest of the impression which remaineth on that side of the sea." Boswell's task was to "discover in whose hands they are, and who is the printer, and then represent to the States [General] the inconvenience that may follow, if they punish not this liberty, to print books without warrant, and to falsify the place of printing, whereby much offence may grow both in matter of church and state."²⁸ What quickly became clear, however, was Boswell's concern that Selden's book—"much spoken of . . . in their assembly"—had provoked the Dutch to commission a formal response. He explained that although Selden's book had not been suppressed, prominent figures "did . . . privately require one [Peter] Cunaeus, professor of the

civil laws in Leiden, to give his judgments of the same.” Since then, the Dutch government had apparently decided to find “special wits among their advocates” who might be “set on work” to formulate an official reply.²⁹

English concerns soon became focused on the Dutch jurist Theodorus Graswinckel. On 10 May, Boswell reported that the Dutch were not yet “resolved” upon the “fit champion” to make “animadversions” on Selden’s book, but by September the task had clearly fallen to “Advocat Graswinkel,” who had been “required to observe and answer such passages in Mr Selden’s *Mare Clausum* as more nearly concerned these countries.” Boswell resolved to “get a copy” of whatever text emerged, and by February 1637 he reported that, with “encouragement from his superiors, and pieces contributed from several hands,” Graswinckel had already “framed a large response.” Although the text was **being** strictly guarded, he found money enough to “get the first three books, amounting to above 50 sheets of paper in a close hand.”³⁰ By April 1637, moreover, Boswell was worried that other responses might appear: he notified Sir Francis Windebanke about “a bolt . . . shot against” Selden’s book by Johannes Pontanus, a professor of History at Harderwick in Gelderland. English officials may have taken some comfort from the fact that this had appeared without the knowledge or consent of the Dutch authorities. Nevertheless, it was probably disconcerting to learn that **Pontanus’s response** had been produced at the behest of another European power, Denmark, for whose king Pontanus served as “historiographer and pensioner.” Not until May 1637 did Boswell begin to feel reassured that the Dutch authorities, having been presented with Graswinckel’s increasingly voluminous text, and having referred it to a special committee, were unlikely to “allow it to the press.” Instead, they decided to

take action against Pontanus, who had “troubled their patience” with his “overhearty and blind” work.³¹

On this occasion official fears about the willingness of the Dutch authorities to produce texts that might be inserted into the English public sphere proved to be unfounded. Nevertheless, the possibility of future interference was thought to be both real and troubling. It is worth noting that Graswinckel’s text eventually saw the light of day in 1652, in the context of the first Anglo-Dutch war, and perhaps in response to the reappearance of a new and official version of Selden’s work. Regardless of whether this version of Graswinckel’s book was officially inspired, what seems certain is that the Dutch authorities were more than willing to intervene in the English public sphere, with or without English accomplices.

In precisely this conjuncture, there appeared *A Declaration or Manifest of the High and Mighty Lords the States Generall of the United Netherland Provinces*, which was printed in English on an official Dutch press in September 1652. It offered a translation of a formal Dutch account of recent negotiations between the two states, both in London and at The Hague. The tract decried “the unjust and violent proceedings” of the English government, which had “forced the said States Generall by way of retortion to defend their state and subjects against their oppressions.” It explained that lawful magistrates were obliged to ensure that “neighbouring states and countries” retained a “well-grounded and assured confidence of each other’s fidelity,” while also being entitled to use force if necessary. The pamphlet’s aim, in other words, was not just to use bellicose rhetoric which justified war. It was also to influence English public opinion with warm words about the need for the Dutch to befriend an “English nation” that had lately been “disturbed within her own bowels and rent in factions.” The pamphlet also dwelt on England’s lack of gratitude

regarding Dutch attempts to offer financial support to those affected by the civil wars and to mediate a settlement with the king. The pamphlet especially decried “a certain discourteous and unneighbourly act”—England’s Navigation Act (1651)—“whereby the usual liberty of trade was manifestly restrained.” It also bemoaned the “extreme provocations” and “pernicious designs” of an English government that was “drunken with successes” at home and that displayed “insatiable appetites abroad.”³²

IV

Such willingness on the part of European regimes to use print to insert themselves in English domestic affairs makes it possible to extend our analysis in one more direction: how did English fears and Continental practices combine to modify yet further the attitudes of successive regimes in London? This change involved new modes of behaviour which complicated the relationship between English and European public spheres, not least as a result of English attempts to address foreign audiences. Works by James I were often produced for export, and certain puritanical texts were not only printed on Dutch presses in order to be smuggled into England, but also printed in Dutch (and other languages) for a Continental readership.³³ As recent work by Tom Cogswell and Alastair Bellany has shown, English politicians went to great lengths to influence what French audiences could read about Charles I’s alleged role in the “murder” of James I.³⁴ This too may have been an area, in other words, where England’s official reticence eventually gave way to much more confident interventions in European public spheres during the civil wars and Interregnum.

A key example of English political thinking on such topics in the 1620s is revealed in diplomatic correspondence about the famous Amboyna massacre of

English merchants in East Asia. In August 1624, the English ambassador at The Hague, Sir Dudley Carleton, received a letter from the East India Company in London, expressing concern that officials of the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*) had “printed the book of their people’s proceedings in Amboyna.” The letter noted that copies produced in the Low Countries had been “sent over into England,” and it explained that “for our parts we have forbore to publish anything in print.”³⁵ The company’s response to such texts – including an English-language Dutch tract called the *True Declaration of the News* – has been explored in some detail by Anthony Milton; he has emphasized the eventual decision to produce an extended narrative in response, and to secure royal approval for its publication as *A True Relation*, complete with the text of the Dutch pamphlet.³⁶ However, while this was clearly a manifestation of the East India Company’s willingness to address a range of different audiences, less attention has been paid to the attitude of the English government, particularly in relation to the question of how best to answer the Dutch republic.

Carleton’s immediate response-reaction was to complain to the States General about “a certain pamphlet in Dutch,” which had been “newly printed” in Amsterdam. It contained, he wrote, a “missive concerning the business of Amboyna.” Thereafter, he also presented the Dutch authorities – who were known to be collating evidence about the incident – with a manuscript containing “a translate in Dutch . . . of our men’s relation of all that passed in that barbarous torture and bloody execution,” alongside a list of the grievances they had presented to James I. Such actions made clear his belief that the offending Dutch pamphlet had emerged from “no other forge” than the Dutch East India Company. He insisted that it was to them that the English narrative should be sent, “to know what they can say unto it.” He

also called for action to be taken against those responsible and demanded that the Dutch tract should be designated as a libel by the States General, on the grounds that it infringed Dutch laws which required pamphlets to bear the name of both printer and author. Carleton soon felt satisfied that the authorities “showed much dislike” of the pamphlet. As the tract grew “very common,” he noted with satisfaction that the Dutch government had produced a “placart” against it, which was “fixed upon the pillars of the bourse and in several places in the town,” and which did “not a little vex” the governors of the Dutch East India Company.³⁷

However, while Carleton was happy to enlist the help of English merchants to identify the author and printer, he was much more reticent about how to respond to those who desired to see the “publishing in print [of] our men’s informations.” On the one hand, he recognized that, “since these on this side are so much divulged it is fit what our men say should be likewise known,” and yet “on the other side I would not have anything in favour of our men’s cause decried by placart.” He worried about the ~~idea of a print~~ing of an anonymous response ~~if it took the form of an anonymous tract~~, which would be “esteemed a libel and subject to placart;” at the same time he ~~he appeared to be willing to concede~~d that it might be worth doing if English merchants would “authorise it.” In other words, Carleton was apprehensive of causing anger on the part of the Dutch authorities by using print in a provocative fashion, and as a result he seems to have resolved to do no more than submit a succession of “memorials” to the States General. ~~H~~This caution would leave~~left~~ the matter of printing to the “discretion” of English merchants, although he did advise that any printed response ought to be produced in both Dutch and French translation.³⁸ Ultimately, the East India Company in London decided to provide Carleton with “some short answer to their relation printed and published” (August

1624), and they seem to have been responsible for producing a Dutch edition of the narrative. This appeared – complete with their response to the Dutch pamphlet – before the end of the year, but there is little evidence to indicate that this was done with Carleton's assistance.³⁹

~~What seems a~~pparently, ~~is that~~ such official reticence about meddling in European public spheres became much less powerful as time passed. During the 1640s and 1650s, both parliamentarians and royalists sought to ensure that official texts were translated into a range of European languages and dispersed abroad, alongside copies of English newspapers, normally through the offices of diplomats and agents such as Sir Richard Browne, Theodore Haak, and Walter Strickland. Once again, this can be demonstrated fairly neatly by an episode relating to Anglo-Dutch relations. In 1645, the Dutch ambassadors in London undertook the translation of the speech they had delivered upon taking their leave of Parliament (10 April); it was “printed by their excellencies order.”⁴⁰ The speech revealed the ambassadors' frustration at their failure to broker a peace deal with the king. However, by appearing to lay the blame at Parliament's door the ambassadors offended officials at Westminster, and it was perhaps predictable that a “moderate answer” to their speech would quickly be produced, albeit in semi-official form, from the hand of a “private gentleman.” This turned out, in fact, to be the reliable propagandist Henry Parker (16 April).⁴¹ Intriguingly, his text was also reprinted in a Dutch edition, and there also appeared another short pamphlet, *Poincten van Consideratien*, which contains an English response to an account of the affair that the Dutch ambassadors had made on their return to the Low Countries in May 1645. This latter work, which likewise sprang from the pen of Parker, accused the ambassadors of having “abused their trust to our prejudice” by making themselves

“interested parties” rather than “public agents.” Clearly, this claim effectively represented both an official parliamentary declaration and the expression of an avowed desire for “publishing” something in the Dutch republic.⁴² It is possible, therefore, not just to trace the progress of this text through the Commons but also to observe how officials secured its translation into both French and Dutch, and how the English ambassador at The Hague (Walter Strickland) arranged for its printing. Also noteworthy is that on this occasion Parliament opted not just to address the Dutch public but to do so in ways that did not appear to involve an official communiqué. This was an indication that while ~~Parliament it was thought it~~ necessary to intervene in Dutch public life, ~~it the legislature was also thought to be useful~~ wished to do so in fairly subtle ways. ~~S, and~~ such thinking would ultimately lead to the translation and publication of a much wider range of texts on the Continent, in ways that have yet to be fully explored.⁴³

V

It is now possible to return to where this chapter began, in terms of nervousness that became evident, in the months and years before the outbreak of civil war, regarding the influence of European political culture on the English public sphere. This impact can also be observed during the 1637 trial of John Lilburne, when concerns were raised about his impression of political culture in Amsterdam and about his having seen “great store of books . . . in every bookseller’s shop.” Prosecutors expressed a determination to comprehend collaboration between English Puritans and Dutch citizens.⁴⁴ Lilburne’s case ~~is interesting because it~~ appears to reveal a wider concern that continental practices – particularly those of the Dutch – might shape English politics. This involved the notion that the Dutch were positively admired for their

ability to foster a vibrant – and republican – public culture, wherein the “voice of the people” and the “common good” were highly prized, and wherein “almost every common man is a statesman.” As Thomas Hobbes later reflected, a neglected cause of the English civil wars involved the desire on the part of some Englishmen to emulate the Dutch. Indeed, this was something that was perfectly evident in the writings of men such as Thomas Scott in the 1620s, and of Hugh Peters in the 1640s, as well as in the writings of Richard Overton and of Lilburne himself. Lilburne admitted to thinking that the Dutch republic would be an advantageous place in which to settle and secure “a pretty large portion of earthly things.”⁴⁵

Ultimately, however, the significance of the moment when Lilburne was interrogated, and when Taylor produced *Religions Enemies*, was not just that statesmen and Stationers were anxious about the development of a new public sphere marked by European print practices. It was also that political authorities recognized the need to adapt to such pressures, rather than merely to resist change. Official fears about the effects of cheap print, in other words, were brought into sharper focus through encounters with European print culture, and the result was that English public life became more open in some ways and more rigidly controlled in others. It was increasingly difficult to ignore the nature and workings of European print culture, and these interactions proved instructive and influential. It is also vital to recognize that developments in England and the Continent’s engagement reflected various factors, including the importance of transnational religious and political communities (including English exiles), the effects of commerce and entrepreneurial Stationers, and the political, religious, and economic entanglements between different European powers. Governing elites were willing to exploit European affairs – and texts – for political purposes and were willing to intervene in each other’s

affairs by addressing neighbouring public spheres. Only when historians gain a better understanding of these dynamics will they properly understand how, why, and how far the English public sphere became “Amsterdamnified.”

Further reading

Jayne E. E. Boys, *London's News Press and the Thirty Years War* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011).

Stephen Foster, *Notes from the Caroline Underground* (Hamden, CN: Archon, 1978).

Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

Keith L. Sprunger, *Trumpets from the Tower* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

¹ [John Taylor], *Religions Enemies* (London, 1641), 6.

² For contemporary concerns about the print revolution, see Jason Peacey, *Print and Public Politics in the English Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013), 2-6.

³ Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003); Joad Raymond, ed., *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture: Volume One: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011); and Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, “Rethinking the public sphere in early modern Britain,” *Journal of British Studies*, 45.2 (2006): 270-

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⁴ For a discussion of England and Scotland (as well as Ireland), see James Loxley's chapter in this volume.

⁵ Raymond, *Pamphlets*, 161-201; and Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000).

⁶ Peter Lake, *Bad Queen Bess. Libels, Secret Histories and the Politics of Publicity in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2016); *Corona Regia*, ed. Winfried Schleiner (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2010); Thomas Cogswell and Alastair Bellany, *The Murder of King James I* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2015).

⁷ David Como, "Secret Printing, the Crisis of 1640, and the Origins of Civil War Radicalism," *Past and Present*, 196 (2007): 37-82.

⁸ Keith Sprunger, *Trumpets from the Tower* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); Stephen Foster, *Notes from the Caroline Underground* (Hamden, CT, Archon, 1978).

⁹ Raymond, *Pamphlets*, 98-160; Chris R. Kyle and Jason Peacey, *Breaking News: Renaissance Journalism and the Birth of the Newspaper* (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 2009), 11-25; Leona Rostenberg, "Nathaniel Butter and Nicholas Bourne, first 'masters of the staple'," *The Library*, 5th ser., 12 (1957): 23-33.

¹⁰ British Library, Harleian MS 389, fo. 122.

¹¹ Jayne Boys, *London's News Press and the Thirty Years War* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011); Anthony Thompson, "Licensing the Press: the Career of G.R. Weckherlin during the Personal Rule of Charles I," *Historical Journal*, 41.3 (1998): 653-78.

¹² "Diurnalls" was used to signify any news-sheet that was published daily or at some other interval; "mercuries" refers to a hawker of newsbooks or pamphlets and was also used in the titles of such tracts (see *OED* s.v. "diurnal" and "mercury").

¹³ Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 132-62.

¹⁴ Lake, *Bad Queen Bess*, 231-56; Lisa Parmelee, *Good Newes from Fraunce. French Anti-League Propaganda in Late Elizabethan England* (Rochester: Rochester UP, 1996).

¹⁵ Howard Solomon, *Public Welfare, Science and Propaganda in Seventeenth-Century France* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1972).

¹⁶ Albert Loomie, "The Authorship of 'An Advertisement Written to a Secretarie of M. L. Treasurer of England,'" *Renaissance News*, 15.3 (1962): 201-7; Paul Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World: Richard Verstegan and the international culture of the Catholic Reformation* (Leuven: Leuven UP, 2004), 123-52; A. F. Allison, "A Group of Political Tracts, 1621-23, by Richard Verstegan," *Recusant History*, 18 (1982): 128-42.

¹⁷ Richard Verstegan, *Newes from the Low Countreyes* (St Omer, 1622); and *Observations concerning the Present Affaires of Holland* (St Omer, 1621).

¹⁸ *The Originall of Idolatries* (London, 1624).

¹⁹ *The Vindication or Defence of Isaac Casaubon* (London, 1624), A2.

²⁰ Michael Moody, "Trials and Travels of a Nonconformist Layman: the Spiritual Odyssey of Stephen Offwood (1564-c.1635)," *Church History*, 51 (1982): 157-71; Sprunger, *Trumpets*, 111.

²¹ Stephen Offwood, *The Originall of Popish Idolatrie* ([Amsterdam], 1630).

²² Thomas Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution. English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621-1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), 281-307.

²³ *A Relation of Some Speciall Points* (Hague [London], 1621), sigs. A2, A2v, pp. 3, 7, 9, 11.

²⁴ *Records of the Court of the Stationers Company, 1602-1640*, ed. William Jackson (London: Bibliographical Society, 1957), 138, 159.

²⁵ Jacob Verheiden, *An Oration or Speech* ([Amsterdam], 1624).

²⁶ Stephen Offwood, *A Relation of Sundry Particular Wicked Plots* (London, 1624); *A Second Part of Spanish Practises* (London, 1624), sigs. A3-4, A4v-D4v, E.

²⁷ Edward Wilson and Olga Turner, "The Spanish Protest against 'A Game at Chess'," *Modern Language Review*, 44.4 (1949): 476-82.

²⁸ The National Archives (TNA), Kew, SP 84/151, fos. 166-v.

²⁹ TNA, SP 84/151, fos. 182v-183.

³⁰ TNA, SP 84/151, fos. 198, 312v-313; SP 84/152, fos. 68v-9, 85, 123v.

³¹ TNA, SP 84/152, fos. 141, 163v, 195v; SP 84/153, fo. 109v.

³² *A Declaration or Manifest* (Amsterdam, 1652), A2, pp. 2-4, 9, 12-14. See Steven Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

³³ Astrid Stilma, *A King Translated* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012); Sprunger, *Trumpets*, 112, 144-55, 215-7.

³⁴ Cogswell and Bellany, *Murder*, 424-30; Jason Peacey, "'My Friend the Gazetier': Diplomacy and News in Seventeenth-Century Europe," in *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 420-42.

³⁵ TNA, SP 84/119, fo. 49.

³⁶ Anthony Milton, "Marketing a Massacre: Amboyna, the East India Company and the Public Sphere in Early Stuart England," in *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, ed. Peter Lake and Steven Pincus (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2007), 168-90; TNA, SP 84/119, fo. 47; *A True Relation* (London, 1624). It is unclear in what circumstances another edition of this narrative emerged

from the Catholic press at St Omer: *A True Relation* ([St Omer], 1624).

³⁷ TNA, SP 84/119, fos. 56-7, 60, 99, 164.

³⁸ TNA, SP 84/119, fos. 85, 99, 113, 124, 128-v, 164.

³⁹ TNA, SP 84/119, fos. 105, 148; *Ee waer verhael vande onlancksche ongerechte* ([London?], 1624).

⁴⁰ *The Speech of their Excellencies* (London, 1645).

⁴¹ [Henry Parker], *The Speech of their Excellencies* (London, 1645).

⁴² *De Propositien van hare Excellentien* (London, 1645); *Poincten van Consideratien* (Rotterdam, 1645). For the translation of this pamphlet, and its attribution to Parker, see: BL, E.286/16 ('Points of Consideration').

⁴³ Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers*, 59-60, 322.

⁴⁴ John Lilburne, *The Christian Mans Triall* (London, 1641), 2-3.

⁴⁵ TNA, SP 84/79, fos. 6, 71v; SP 84/75, fo. 225v; Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 225; Hugh Peter, *Good Work for a Good Magistrate* (London, 1651), A6, pp. 108-9; Thomas Scott, *The Belgicke Pismire* (London, 1622), 49, 50, 53-4, 72, 73-4, 75-80; Richard Overton, *A Remonstrance of Many Thousand Citizens* (London, 1646), 3, 16; and Lilburne, *Christian Mans Triall*, 22.