

Abstracts

SPECULATIVE REPUBLICANISM

'Republicanism and the English Revolution: George Wither and Sir John Maynard'

John Gurney, Newcastle University

In examining the careers and writings of the poet George Wither and the Presbyterian politician Sir John Maynard, this paper will explore some aspects of the at times problematic relationship between republicanism and England's mid-seventeenth-century Revolution. Wither and Maynard were close collaborators during the Civil War in advancing the cause of the 'well affected', but after 1645 their paths diverged. Maynard, steeped in Machiavelli but mindful of the failings of ancient and modern republics, fought hard for a monarchical political settlement and was active in Presbyterian political campaigns against the New Model Army and its political allies. From 1649, Maynard worked closely with the Leveller John Lilburne in orchestrating the campaigns of fenland inhabitants against government-backed drainage schemes, drawing partly on common-law and rights-based arguments but at times also making use of the new Republic's own propaganda and rhetoric to support his case. Wither, 'the Poor Man's Milton', tends to be portrayed as a republican poet, but it could be argued that his active support for the political experiments of the late 1640s and 1650s owed at least as much to his providentialist world view (and indeed his own material needs) as to any deeper commitment to republican ideas. He was, nevertheless, prepared to flirt with speculative republican constitution building – anticipating aspects of Harrington's model along the way – and, like Milton, he campaigned to the last to prevent the restoration of monarchy. With the return of Charles II, Wither resorted once more to largely providentialist arguments to explain the failure of kingless government. Although it was Wither rather than Maynard who championed the English Republic, and it is Wither who is remembered as the republican, he was not necessarily the more attuned to the broader language of republicanism. Furthermore, while Wither's views can be seen as being very much characteristic of the age, Maynard may be said to have been driven by concerns more usually associated with the later-seventeenth century, not least in his opposition to standing armies and his apparent conviction that political corruption, rather than absolutism, posed the greater threat to liberty. A comparison between Wither and Maynard may help us to think further about the meanings and significance of republicanism in the English Revolution.

Poetry as thought and action: Mazzini's reflections on Byron

Lilla Maria Crisafulli, University of Bologna

In this paper I will discuss Giuseppe Mazzini's reception of Byron. The elective affinities and similarities of thought that unite these two renowned intellectuals are potentially limitless. They both had faith in the relentless progress of mankind, and were both convinced that a future sense of brotherhood between different nations and peoples was not a mere chimera but an achievable project, for whose realization men and women of good will had to take an active role.

Mazzini uses Byron, on the one hand, as a means to demonstrate that Italians could discuss European poetry without putting at risk their national identity, or, as the

classicists maintained, that fragile and fragmented profile of a nation that contemporary Italy offered to the minds and hearts of thousands of young people. On the other hand, however, Mazzini questions Byron's authority by subverting and converting his value, in a very personal way: he gradually substitutes Byron's with a different authority and credits him with a new values. In a first stage, Mazzini deposes Byron by positing him as a figure of transition, a bright meteor in a past time. Mazzini refers to a time that he defines as individual or subjective, and therefore dangerous for the future that was already delineating itself and that promised many innovations: a new social conscience, a different communitary feeling, and a revolution in thought and action. Mazzini could not accept Byron as the emblem of élitism and isolation: Byron's solipsism needed to be purified, and his renowned cynicism tempered; eventually Byron's myth needed to be connected to the destiny of peoples and nations.

MONARCHICAL REPUBLICANISM

Monarchical Republicanism in Late Eighteenth Century Russia:

The Case of Prince Mikhail Shcherbatov

Vladimir Ryzhkov, Central European University, Budapest

Prince Mikhail Shcherbatov (1733–1790), a scion of the Russian aristocratic family, is mostly known as an opponent of the “enlightened absolutism” of Catherine the Great. He can hardly be regarded as an adherent of republicanism in a direct sense of the word, because in accordance with Montesquieu's theory, which was widely accepted in his time, Russia, as quite a big country, had only the choice between a monarchy and a despotic government.

The notion of monarchic republicanism provided, however, another possibility for Russia – a mixed monarchy, in which the power of a monarch would be limited by aristocratic “intermediate bodies”. The problem was, however, that Montesquieu's “honor”, a motor force for a monarchy, had to be reinterpreted in order to present it as a kind of “virtue”, thus providing a possibility for a republican political body “within” a monarchical state.

Such reinterpretation was connected with the use of the specific political language for the description of Russian social and political realities. Noblemen were presented as “sons of the fatherland”, inspired by a patriotic devotion, and a monarch was understood as a magistrate responsible towards the political community. This was, however, the description of an ideal state of Russia, in respect to which its current despotic condition was regarded as a result of “corruption”. The latter was described as a result of the destruction of social ties, caused by the spread of “selfishness”. For Shcherbatov, the spread of an unlimited selfishness undermined the ability of resistance of the noble community towards arbitrary rule of a monarch and her favorites.

My paper will explore this trend in the Russian political thought of the Age of Enlightenment in the context of its contemporary European sources.

Were the Commonwealthmen Republicans?

Rachel Hammersley, Newcastle University

The eighteenth-century commonwealthmen, as presented in Caroline Robbins's groundbreaking study *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman* pose a potential problem for those working on republicanism. On the one hand these figures presented themselves as the heirs of the English republicans of the mid-seventeenth-century and were viewed by Robbins herself, and by many subsequent scholars, as continuing that English republican tradition. Yet most of the commonwealth writers did not adhere to what have come to be seen by some as the central tenets of republicanism. In the first place, they were not anti-monarchical, but rather placed their faith in mixed and balanced constitutional monarchy of the kind that was believed to exist in England after 1689. Secondly, they were sceptical about the extent to which human beings are capable of acting according to reason and virtue – and instead placed great emphasis on designing the political system in such a way as to control and direct human passions and self-interest. Given these problems, the proposed paper would examine the political and moral views of the commonwealthmen in some detail, and use them as a basis from which to explore and challenge the ways in which the republican tradition has conventionally been defined.

CLASSICAL REPUBLICANISM AND DEMOCRACY

Levellers into republicans?

Rachel Foxley, University of Reading

This paper will pose questions about the relationship of anti-monarchical and egalitarian agendas to republican thought and language by examining the continuities and disjunctions between the thought of the Levellers in post-civil-war England and their republican successors after the regicide. A recognisably distinct classical republican language, which had barely impinged on Leveller circles at all in the 1640s (except in the *Vox Plebis* pamphlets) certainly began to circulate widely in the 1650s, and was adopted to differing degrees by Levellers who continued to produce political writing in this decade. Given the continuity of some personnel from Leveller circles into Harrington's Rota, and the entirely new interest shown by an old Leveller such as Lilburne in the writings of Machiavelli in the 1650s, it would be natural to see 1650s classical republicanism as a mutation or continuation of 1640s Leveller politics in another guise. Such an argument, however, requires us to ask why such a mutation occurred, and which elements of Leveller thought and motivation were carried into 1650s republicanism. Is the classical republicanism of the 1650s an unleashing of language that was repressed before the king's death, and whose energies were now allowed to flow into their natural classical republican articulation? Or is it a disempowered language, one which was safe to articulate after the Leveller agenda had been evaded and extinguished? It might be argued that 1650s classical republicanism avoided challenging – and sometimes even co-opted - de facto argument, turning its back on the Leveller concern for legitimacy; and that it replaced the Leveller hope that the people could be brought to agree the foundations of their own freedom with a despairing reliance on the virtue of the few. Yet elements of Leveller thought were infused into the writings of the 1650s republicans, in a mixture which represented a sometimes uneasy reconciliation of republican thought with democratic ideas.

Harrington and democracy

Alejandro Doering de Rio, University of Cambridge

This proposed paper has two distinct aims. The first is to identify a serious puzzle about the republican theory of government to which the ideological contests of the English revolution gave rise. And the second is to suggest that it was in his attempt to deduce a solution to that specific puzzle that James Harrington made one of his most original contributions to the political theory of his age.

Briefly stated, the puzzle is that English republicanism (to paraphrase Hobbes's own words in his study of Thucydides of 1629) "was in *name* a *State Democraticall*, but in *fact* a government of the Principall Men".¹ In *Behemoth*, his history of the English civil wars, which he completed after the restoration of monarchy in 1660, Hobbes recurs to this same accusation. Here Hobbes's presentation of the case is especially stark in its simplicity: as he unmasks the English republican theorists with his famous sardonic characterisation of them as: "*Democraticall Gentlemen*".² The effect of Hobbes's hyperbole is undoubtedly to fix the reader's attention on the untenability of the republican position that can be summed up by a contradiction in terms.

Hence Hobbes was not far from the mark in *Leviathan* when he tells us that "I will not doubt to compare the biting of a Mad Dogge" with the arguments being put forward by "those Democraticall writers". For "the disease the Physicians call *Hydrophobia*, or *fear of Water*", Hobbes goes on to explain, is the "continuall [sic.] torment of thirst, by those who abhorreth nothing more than water".³ Similarly the "Democraticall Gentlemen" want self-government while there is nothing they fear more than the substantive political equality that self-government effectively is.

It is against this background that we need to read what an apoplectic Harrington tried to accomplish when he rhetorically enquired in *Oceana*: "Is there one of them [sc. "of our republicans" as Harrington himself (doubtless with no small measure of disdain) likes to call them] that yet knows what a commonwealth is?"⁴ The clue to Harrington's meaning lies, I suggest, in examining the implications of this question from the point of view of his fellow "democraticall gentlemen", that is, from the point of view of "our republicans". It appears, then, that what Harrington is doing is putting a challenge to his fellow republicans, and in particular raising a doubt about the coherence of their thought. They want to have democracy without its democratic element: that is, self-government without the element of self-government. In short what they want is the oxymoronic concept that has since come to be known as 'representative democracy'.

This self-conscious turn from English republicanism and nominal liberty to classical democracy and effective political equality was, I suggest, Harrington's true innovation.

COMMUNITIES AND CITIZENS

Recovering Republican Eloquence: John Cheke v. Stephen Gardiner on the Pronunciation of Greek

John F. McDiarmid, New College of Florida, Emeritus

¹ Thucydides, *Eight Bookes of the Peloponnesian Warre*, trans. Thomas Hobbes (London, 1629), pp.117.

² Hobbes employs this apparent paradox in *Behemoth*, ed. Ferdinand Toennies (Chicago: University Press, 1990), pp. 26, 39. See Quentin Skinner, 'Classical Liberty and the Coming of the English Civil War', in Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *Republicanism: a Shared European Heritage*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), II, pp. 9-28, esp. pp. 15-28.

³ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 226.

⁴ James Harrington, *Oceana*, ed. J. G. A. Pocock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 184, 145-6.

Political and linguistic thought are connected in the work of the mid-Tudor Cambridge Humanists such as John Cheke, Thomas Smith and Thomas Wilson, who feature prominently in recent studies of English republicanism. Politics and language appear in their work essentially as two aspects of the social practice of a community; similar issues arise in connection with both.

The Greek pronunciation controversy in 1542 was a critical moment in the Cambridge group's rise to prominence. Important analysis of the controversy has been offered by recent scholars including Alec Ryrie*, Jennifer Richards** and Cathy Shrank***. These scholars have worked mainly from one segment of the controversy, the texts exchanged between Stephen Gardiner and Thomas Smith. My paper would focus instead on the lengthier exchanges between Gardiner and John Cheke.

While Gardiner certainly targeted Cheke because Cheke was a known advocate of religious reform, unlike Ryrie I do not think Cheke's arguments in the controversy are to be related to his Protestant beliefs, but instead to his inheritance from classical and Christian humanism. Ryrie and Shrank speak of Cheke and Smith as attacking the authority of linguistic custom; Richards rightly nuances this point. I would emphasize that Cheke and Smith as Humanist grammarians basically recognized community custom as setting the standard for correct language, but also held that customs could change and improve and reformers might guide languages towards more useful and eloquent forms (or help recover such forms if they had been lost, as in the case of Greek).

The eloquent Greek Cheke sought to recover had been achieved first in the age of Demosthenes, at the culmination of the Athenian republic. Greek linguistic and political development had been simply different aspects of the rise of the Greek community to this perfect age. It was always a part of the Cambridge Humanists' thought that such a rise was possible for the English community as well; this was the object of the linguistic, political and religious initiatives they undertook throughout the rest of their careers.

* *The Gospel and Henry VIII*, 2003, pp. 183–93.

***Rhetoric and Courtliness in Early Modern Literature*, 2003, pp. 78–86.

****Writing the Nation in Reformation England, 1530–1580*, 2004, pp. 146–150.

Julius Caesar and Republicanism **Warren Chernaik, King's College London**

The ideology of republicanism plays a prominent role in *Julius Caesar*, but in a very different way from plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries that appear to endorse tyrannicide. A hostile view of Caesar, seeing him as actual or potential tyrant, threatening the extinction of Roman liberty, finds its origins in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, in which Caesar, in his rise to power, is seen as a wholly destructive force. Machiavelli argued that Caesar was worse than Catiline, since 'he who has done wrong is more blameworthy than he who has but desired to do wrong'. In George Chapman's *Caesar and Pompey* (c. 1601), drawing on Plutarch and Lucan, the defeated Pompey is presented more sympathetically than the victorious, boastful Caesar, excoriated by the virtuous republican Cato as not only tyrannous but corrupt. Thomas Kyd's *Cornelia* (1594), a translation of a French Senecan tragedy by Robert Garnier, is unequivocal in its representation of Caesar as tyrant, whose victory over Pompey is a disaster for Rome, and in its endorsement of tyrannicide. A series of choral odes and speeches by Cicero predict that, like any tyrant, Caesar will be overthrown, and praise the public-spirited citizen who seeks 't'enlarge his countries liberty' by resisting 'bloody Tyrants rage'.

In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, the word 'Roman' is a highly charged term, implying possession of moral qualities or a claim that others lack such qualities. Cassius, in his attempt to persuade Brutus to join the conspiracy, suggests that to be true Roman is to be a republican, and Brutus's use of the magic words 'Rome' and 'Roman' can be seen as attempts to convince himself and others. Throughout the play, Roman values, including the principles of republicanism, are held up to scrutiny. When Caesar says 'I am constant as the northern star', or when Brutus says 'not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more', their proclamation of their own virtues entails considerable self-delusion, and the irony, apparent in both cases, is characteristic of Shakespeare's play. At no point does the play give clear evidence as to whether Caesar is an actual or potential tyrant. But Brutus's hope that in killing Caesar they can be "sacrificers, but not butchers" and Cassius's confident prediction that in time to come they will be praised as "the men who gave their country liberty" are subjected to an overarching authorial irony. Events have consequences, but not those intended by men and women acting out a script in which they have been assigned parts.

REPUBLICANISM AND THE WORKING CLASS

Working-class women and republicanism in the French revolution of 1848

Judith DeGroat, St. Lawrence University

In the spring of 1848, Julia Jacquier, a Parisian linen seamstress, proclaimed to the 'citizens' of the provisional government her dedication to 'the most beautiful, the most pure of republics.'⁵ Jacquier's declaration accompanied her request for employment from the Second Republic that, on 25 February, had proclaimed the 'right to work' for all French citizens. In the months that followed, working-class women as well as men attempted to hold the government to its promise through street demonstrations, individual and collective demands for work and participation in the national workshops that had been established in an attempt to address the problem of unemployment in the capital; in the process, these activists articulated what scholars have labeled as a democratic socialist vision of republicanism. In June of 1848, women participated in the insurrection that sought to defend the vision of a social republic. Two years later, working women in the Midi fought to defend the Second Republic against Louis Napoleon's coup d'état; many were arrested and transported to Algeria for their efforts. While the republicanism of working-class men and bourgeois women such as George Sand has been examined, studies of working-class women in the first half of the nineteenth century have to this point focused on the romantic socialist influences that shaped their activities, in particular the Saint Simonian movement. In this paper, I propose to examine the articulation of republican ideals of working women during the Second Republic. Drawing primarily on police interrogations as well as letters, a vision of republicanism emerges that includes the ability for women to sustain their families through waged as well as household labor. This concept of republican virtue based itself not in suffrage but in women's capacity to act as both producers and consumers under justice and equitable conditions.

Thomas Spence and the egalitarian political economy of Shelley's *Notes to*

Queen Mab

Leanne Stokoe, Newcastle University

⁵ Archives de la Seine, V.D/6 619, n. 7

It is often assumed that Percy Bysshe Shelley was hostile towards political economy. His critique of Malthusian theories and Benthamite utilitarianism has been taken as evidence for this. However, through pointing to his interests in eighteenth-century materialist philosophy, I argue in this paper that his concept of political economy was more complex, and that he viewed it as a beneficial science. Moreover, while Shelley is conventionally viewed as a social idealist, I intend to present him as an economic theorist, and to highlight his agrarian interests. The campaign against private property was embodied in Thomas Spence's writings, speeches and 'Land Plan'. Spence has been dismissed as an eccentric radical, but his emphasis on agricultural and industrial progress, combined egalitarian philosophy with the practicality of scientific thinking in the 1790s. Although Shelley condemned Spencean participation in the Spa Fields riots and Cato Street Conspiracy, I will suggest that he admired Spence's assessment of the economy. Spence's agrarian ideas highlighted working-class suffering that was often overlooked by intellectuals. I will demonstrate Spence's hitherto understated influence upon Shelley's ideas about political economy, by revealing parallels between the language of Spence's pamphlets and the Notes to *Queen Mab* (1813), which were written during Shelley's involvement in the Tremadoc Embankment project. Shelley's admiration for working-class agricultural innovations reflects Spence's belief that political economy should encompass the idea of 'the People's Farm'. I will argue that Shelley's apparently idiosyncratic enthusiasm for civic projects based upon scientific discoveries, in fact illustrates his redefinition of political economy, transforming it from an abstract theory, into a practical form of enlightenment that is exemplified in Spence's works. Finally, I will suggest that through his eclectic reading of unconventional thinkers such as Spence, as well as celebrated philosophers like William Godwin, Shelley formulated a 'commerce of good words and works'.

REPUBLICANISM AND VIRTUE

Republican honour in seventeenth-century Ireland

Ian W. S. Campbell, Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris

Republican honour could be indispensable in a divided kingdom. The Catholic intellectuals of seventeenth-century Ireland favoured republican language and concepts because their king was a Protestant. Kings and kingship dominated political discourse throughout Europe because the dominant culture was religious: everything of importance – from the family to warfare – was treated using religious language and religious concepts. Kings blended the sacred and the secular in their persons and connected their people's worldly arrangements with God. Seventeenth-century Irish Catholics were thus presented with a monstrous problem: their Stuart kings were heretics whose heresy poisoned the ancient Catholic kingdom. Writing and speaking about the relations between the citizens of the Irish *respublica* allowed them to escape both impiety and treason.

John Lynch, archdeacon of Tuam, was the most important Irish Catholic intellectual of the later seventeenth century. The doctrine of Irish citizenship prominent throughout Lynch's weighty Latin works on the Irish kingdom, commonwealth and church was derived from Cicero's *De officiis*. This grammar-school staple provided a sophisticated scheme for regulating honour relationships in pre-modern societies, and Lynch applied its terms and categories in his analysis of the Catholic Confederation which governed Ireland in the 1640s. Lynch's Ciceronian humanism provided him with a scheme in which honour could trump heresy, thus providing his fellow Catholics with ways of accommodating important Protestants like James Butler, duke of Ormond, in the Irish

respublica. Honour-based Ciceronian humanism was used in similar ways in Henry IV's France.

Honour played a central role in Ciceronian humanism all over Europe, and could be used for purposes of confessional accommodation. Historians of political thought have neglected this phenomenon. Recognising the place of honour in republican and civic humanist discourse will mean that historians of political thought and those who write anthropologically-inflected social history will no longer speak past each other.

Liberty, Law and Licentiousness in Augustan England: Republicanism, Reformation and Restraint at the Quarter Sessions and Assizes
Francis Dodsworth, The Open University

This paper traces the fortunes of republican discourse as it was translated into the mainstream of early eighteenth-century life, specifically into the courts of assize and the quarter sessions. Republican language and arguments, of both neo-Harringtonian and neo-Roman kinds, were deployed in public addresses delivered in court not only as a means of legitimising the constitutional settlements of 1688 and 1714, but also to promote the government of manners and morals. Rather than being deployed as a language of critique against the government and its ministers republicanism operated as a means of encouragement to the assembled officers of government to carry out their duty in relation to vice and licentiousness. The authors of these discourses drew upon republican arguments and quoted republican authors to argue that English liberty itself depended upon the government of morality, because freedom was a median condition, balanced between tyranny and anarchy; unfreedom could be brought about either by becoming slaves to the arbitrary will of a ruler, or by slavery to the passions and vices, leading to licentiousness and anarchy. These statements, delivered in the assize sermon and the 'charges' delivered to grand juries, were consonant with the aims for the movements for the reformation of manners and seem to have been directed towards promoting their agenda. Equally, they were delivered on the occasion of the law in practice and these orations were heard both by the juries themselves, and the assembled justices of the peace, constables and so on who were charged with carrying these moralising principles into practice. They were also more widely disseminated by frequent publication.

EUROPEAN EXCHANGES

Human bodies and civil bodies: medicine and politics in the *Parallelo politico delle Repubbliche antiche e moderne* of Pompeo Caimo (1627)
Laura Casella, University of Udine

This paper aims to explore some aspects of the relationship between scientific and political thought in seventeenth-century Italian culture. In particular it focuses on an essay, published in Padua in 1627, entitled *Parallelo politico delle Repubbliche antiche e moderne in cui coll'essame de veri fondamenti de' Governi civili, si antepongono li moderni a gli antichi e la forma della Repubblica veneta a qualunque altra forma delle Repubbliche antiche*. The work has achieved great success and in a few months' time two editions will be published.

The author is Pompeo Caimo, a physician belonging to a noble family of Friul, who worked for many years at the Court of Rome at the service of Cardinal Montalto and taught theoretical and practical medicine in the Roman Collegio. In 1624 he brought the principal teaching of theoretical medicine and anatomy to the University of Padua. He was well-known in the scientific field for his publications – in particular for *De calido innato libri tres* – and for his strong defence of the traditional positions and the theories of Galeno in opposition to Cesare Cremonini and the “new medicine”.

Why, given his scientific work, a book on a classical political theme like “Republics”? And, above all, through what categories, and with what kind of language, does Caimo develop his analysis? As one who graduated in Padua in philosophy with Francesco Piccolomini, and in medicine with Mercuriale, Caimo thought that philosophy and medicine were closely connected and considered a “moral” essay – like this one on civil governments – appropriate to a man of science who was for him, first of all, a philosopher. He made a comparison between ancient and modern republics by comparing human and political bodies. The treatise, organized in the form of a dialogue, is an apologetical essay about Venice and the perfection of its constitutional form and its institutional balance. The interest of the essay rests in the blending of scientific and political vocabulary: both medical theories and political ideas in fact belong to the same philosophical field.

Revising Republicanism: Metamorphoses of Liberty in Revolutionary-era Swiss Travel Narratives

Patrick Vincent, University of Neuchâtel

Although Switzerland is central to what Quentin Skinner has called a “shared European heritage of republicanism,” a recent review laments the fact that, due to its complexity, “The Swiss idea of Freedom...has yet to be written.” Many travelers in the eighteenth century attempted to do just that, however, combining picturesque landscape description with detailed historical and political investigations of its various forms of republican government. They used Switzerland as a case study in ongoing debates concerning virtue versus commerce, citizenship, agrarian laws, militia versus a standing army, the incompatibility between liberty and Catholicism, the possibility of large-state republics, etc. The most influential of these travel writers was William Coxe, a staunch Whig who tracked “the general spirit of liberty” during the course of four trips and five separate editions spanning the turbulent revolutionary years from 1776 to 1802. As Benjamin Colbert has pointed out, Coxe’s travel accounts were conceived as “unfinished projects” in which material was constantly revised and collated as a result of later visits, new informants and improved information. But the real catalysts for revision were the democratic revolutions transforming the very meaning of ‘liberty’ in France, Switzerland and Britain. While the earliest 1779 edition, which can praise Rousseau and criticize the Swiss republics, still belongs to what J.G.A. Pocock has distinguished as the “first eighteenth century,” later editions fall into the more disruptive “second eighteenth century” in which Swiss republicanism increasingly comes to be associated with Tory politics and is emptied of its constitutional content. Thus, despite the constitutional improvements introduced by the French after 1798, Coxe deliberately chooses not to update the 1801 edition, leaving it as a “memorial of Switzerland in a state of independence, freedom and prosperity, and a contrast to its present state of subjugation and misery.” Focusing in particular on Berne and its treatment of the subject state of Vaud, this paper proposes to trace some of these revisions in Coxe’s editions but also to examine two more radical accounts that consciously set out to revise Coxe, Helen Maria Williams’s *Tour in Switzerland* (1798) and United Irishman William Macnevin’s *A Ramble in*

Switzerland (1803). As I will argue, the “Swiss idea of Freedom” was by the turn of the nineteenth century a highly unstable, ideological and contested notion which helped not only Coxe but also figures such as Wordsworth and Coleridge turn away from the democratic aspirations of their youth by pointing back romantically to a residual form of Whiggish republicanism grounded less in politics than in history and in culture.

Theorizing a republican poetics: P. B. Shelley and Alfieri

Michael Rossington, Newcastle University

In *A Defence of Poetry*, written in Tuscany in early 1821, Shelley considered the role of poetry in effecting freedom at a time when monarchies in Europe were in crisis. This paper speculates that his Italian situation speaks to *Della tirannide*, *Del principe e delle lettere* and *Vita*, amongst the most esteemed of Alfieri’s works. An outline is offered first of Shelley’s recorded engagement with Alfieri’s writings, including their distinct conceptions of tragedy, then of the treatment of Alfieri in reviews between 1800 and 1825.

Consideration is also given to representations of Alfieri by Foscolo, Byron and Staël. The latter are not unsympathetic towards Alfieri’s view that the artist’s principal function is as a patriot since it is a fitting response to the impossible political situation of Italy. Like Alfieri’s prose, Shelley’s *Defence* and *A Philosophical View of Reform* align poetry against monarchy and set the writer apart from the state. His interests therefore correspond with the cosmopolitan, transnational reach of Alfieri’s writings not only the uses made of them for nationalist ends by others. Finally, it is noticed that Shelley discovered in Italy what Alfieri found in England, a critical vantage-point that enabled the expression of cosmopolitan republican values.

REASSESSING THE ENGLISH REPUBLIC

The Brothers De la Court and Anglo-Dutch Commercial Republicanism, c. 1650-1700

Arthur Weststeijn, European University Institute, Florence

The political thought of the Leiden brothers Johan and Pieter de la Court (1622-1660/1618-1685) has often been characterized as the most important republican theory formulated in the Dutch Republic. Over the past few decades, historians in and outside of the Netherlands have pointed to the relevance of the De la Courts’ thought for the development of early-modern European republicanism, especially in comparison with English republicans such as James Harrington. However, thus far no systematic attempt has been made to explore in detail how the republicanism of the De la Courts originated in seventeenth-century Dutch political debate and practice. Furthermore, it remains unclear to which extent the issues central to their thought were adopted or adapted outside of the Republic, in particular in England.

This paper aims to start closing this historiographical lacuna. It will first argue that the peculiarities of the constitutional order and the political debate in the Dutch Republic informed three decisive aspects of the De la Courts’ republicanism, developed in clear opposition to the counterexample of the English commonwealth: a) the radical argument that any monarchical figure necessarily entails the establishment of tyranny, b) the idea that a true republic should be utterly self-reliant and refrain from territorial expansion, and c) the emphasis on commerce as the pivot of republican prosperity. The paper then continues to analyse the diffusion and reception of these three issues outside of the Dutch Republic, especially in England. It will show that the republicanism of the De la Courts unavoidably lost its sharp anti-monarchical and anti-expansionist edge when adopted in political constellations and traditions elsewhere. Nonetheless, the emphasis on

commerce was soon taken up abroad, and at the start of the eighteenth century it had become a dominant feature of republican thought at both sides of the North Sea.

Established Law Versus the Sword: The Illegality of English Republicanism in Scotland 1649-1660

Kirsteen M MacKenzie, Independent Scholar

Recent historiography dealing with the English Republic and the conquest of Ireland has focused on debates about military codes of conduct. This paper seeks to highlight the clash between English republicanism and established Scottish law during the Cromwellian conquest of Scotland. In particular, it will discuss the objections that the Scottish Covenanters had about English republicanism. It will focus on the Covenanters' rejection of English republican 'innovation' in favour of established political codes of conduct, the natural law of nations and traditional Scottish law. The Scottish kirk spearheaded this 'legal' campaign during the conquest in order to highlight to Cromwell, his soldiers and the Scottish population at large, the 'illegality' of the English pre-emptive strike in 1650 and the subsequent military occupation of Scotland.

The kirk's exclamations against the Cromwellian breaches of Scottish law provide an interesting backdrop from which to view English republicanism, albeit from the perspective of one of the regime's most determined enemies. In doing so this paper will challenge the English republican perception that the English Commonwealth was founded 'in the first year of freedom', granting liberty of conscience and in doing so 'gifting' English rights and freedoms to other less fortunate nations. From a Scottish perspective English republicanism looks dark and sinister. English republicans were seen as aggressive, arrogant, and ignorant, riding roughshod over the natural order and Scottish sovereignty. Often the 'natural' actions of the Scottish Covenanters were contrasted with the 'unnatural' actions of English republicans. Lastly, this paper will argue that although the Cromwellians managed to dominate Scotland militarily, the debate over the legality of the Scottish conquest cast a major shadow and had an impact on the English regime's relationship with its northern neighbour throughout the decade.

The republican discourse on religious liberty during the Exclusion Crisis

Gaby Mahlberg, Potsdam University

This paper engages with the republican discourse on religious liberty and toleration during the Exclusion Crisis. It will be shown how the debates about the contested succession of the Duke of York to the English throne during the 1670s and 1680s brought back Civil War and Interregnum ideals of religious liberty to the political argument of the more radical members of the opposition, and how republican ideas could sometimes lead to rather strange and surprising political alliances that were considered favourable to the "good old cause".

While the Popish Plot of the later seventeenth century is commonly seen as a fabrication by the political opposition employed to root out Catholicism and secure a Protestant succession in England, this paper shows that there were also some radical republican voices within the opposition which exposed the scapegoating of Catholics as a political ploy, backed the succession of the Duke of York, and even argued for a toleration of Catholics. Using the example of the republican Henry Neville, his political writings and his correspondence with the Catholic Grand Duke of Tuscany Cosimo III, this paper

calls for a reassessment of the relationship between republicanism and Catholicism as well as of the political and religious divisions of the so-called Exclusion Crisis.

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