

Editors' Introduction

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This issue begins with two articles on religion and politics in early modern England. In "Public Worship and Political Participation in Elizabethan England," Natalie Mears offers a study of the special "Forms" of prayer formulated and promulgated by the Elizabethan state as a particular kind of religious worship that encouraged popular participation in, and support for, the political agendas promoted by the regime. She argues that these Forms of Prayer should be understood as part of the popular politics of early modern England. The special prayers not only provided people with news about the regime's own political agenda, they also provoked commentary and occasionally debates about it. The Elizabethan regime systematically printed and widely distributed special prayers throughout the kingdom to an unprecedented extent. These prayers were also understood to have political efficacy, for forms of worship such as prayer and fasting were commonly thought to work to invoke the protection of divine providence at special moments. The Forms of Prayer may therefore be understood as yet another site of negotiation in the long-term process of early modern state making that has concerned previous contributions to this journal recently.¹

Scott Sowerby's "Opposition to Anti-Popery in Restoration England" examines the relationship between politics and religion in England one hundred years later. Sowerby offers a careful study of the rhetoric of "anti-anti-popery" in the 1670s and 1680s. He notes that the well-known anxieties over "popery and arbitrary government" that were a powerful rallying cry in later Stuart politics were matched by an equally vehement discourse of discontent with those who sought to stir up "fears and jealousies" among the subjects of the restored monarchy (34). Writers who opposed anti-popery criticized the divisive and destabilizing effects that they thought this prejudice created. Like the rhetoric of anti-popery, this anti-anti-popery could be utilized by both Whigs and Tories, and Sowerby notes that some controversialists could deploy aspects of each rhetoric on different occasions: "Anti-anti-popery was as much the companion of anti-popery as it was its opposite," he observes (31). In order to understand the political divisiveness of later Stuart Britain, the opposition to anti-popery must be taken into account along with the better known anti-popish prejudices of the age.

¹ Compare Christopher Maginn, "The Gaelic Peers, the Tudor Sovereigns, and the English Multiple Monarchy," *Journal of British Studies* 50, no. 3 (July 2011): 566–86; and David Dean, "Elizabeth's Lottery: Political Culture and State Formation in Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 50, no. 3 (July 2011): 587–611.

Hannah Grieg's article "All Together and All Distinct': Public Sociability and Social Exclusivity in London's Pleasure Gardens, ca. 1740–1800" examines the practices of aristocratic sociability in the new pleasure gardens of Vauxhall and Ranelagh in eighteenth-century London. She notes that the social interactions experienced in these places were less indiscriminate than most previous historians have recognized. Although the pleasure gardens were commercial spaces open to all paying customers, the people who frequented them could remain distinct and stratified from one another even when gathered together in the same space. She thus draws attention to "the relationship between the experience of exclusivity and the appearance of inclusivity, and of the ways in which social exclusivity was performed and practiced within ostensibly 'open' (inclusive) public arenas" (51). The pleasure gardens therefore should be understood as places where social hierarchy was maintained rather than effaced.

The widespread use in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of comparisons between the Roman and British empires is well known. Less well known, Krishan Kumar claims, is the role of Greece as an alternate model for the British Empire in the minds of both statesmen and political theorists. Kumar's "Greece and Rome in the British Empire: Contrasting Role Models" seeks to redress the balance by exploring the role played by understandings of the classical empires of ancient Greece and Rome in the imagination of the British *imperium*, with particular attention to images of Greece deployed in the nineteenth century. Kumar's article continues in a rich tradition of work on the intellectual history of empire that draws both on textual analysis and on the ideas deployed during political debate. Here Kumar is interested in ideas but also in how powerful individuals used these ideas at key moments. If Greece came to replace Rome as the ideal model for the British Empire in the imagination of at least some influential late Victorians, perhaps this was because Greece seemed to present an imperial example that was less reliant on brute force than was Rome and in some ways provided a more optimistic conception of empire. Kumar also shows, however, fluctuations in the choice of Rome or Greece as imperial model; the rise of a new empire in Africa and Asia by the end of the century was accompanied by a renewed interest in Britain as Rome.

In "Class Trips and the Meaning of British Citizenship: Travel, Educational Reform, and the Regent Street Polytechnic at Home and Abroad, 1871–1903," Michele M. Strong provides an innovative analysis of the foundation and early activity of the Regent Street Polytechnic, aimed in the first instance at providing education and companionship for young men and (eventually) women of the upper working and lower middle classes. The travel program of the "Poly" on which she focuses was a particularly important component of the institution's drive to educate the working class for citizenship in an era of democratization and its concomitant anxieties. Strong analyzes how this travel was both imagined and experienced, including the reinterpretation it allowed of the "Poly boy" as imperial citizen. Reformers saw the Polytechnic and its travel programs as a potential antidote to the alienation of modern mass culture. At the same time, the Regent Street Polytechnic was also a site of contestation, marked in particular by tension over gender and class relationships. Strong suggests that her work points not only to real tensions within the Poly but also more broadly to internal contradictions within late nineteenth-century liberalism itself.

Jennie Taylor's article "Pennies from Heaven and Earth in Mass Observation's Blackpool" provides more than a simple analysis of the early days of Mass Observation. Taylor looks at Mass Observation's work on superstition and magic (as observers termed them) in the working-class seaside town of Blackpool in the late 1930s. She brings to life a world of fortune-tellers and palm readers by the sea, whose clients more than half believed their predictions. Taylor's greatest innovation, however, is to use this material as a springboard for rereading the Mass Observation team's ideas about what we might now call enchantment and disenchantment in the face of an imagined modernity. She looks, for example, at the influence of surrealism on some of the early observers and notices their own engagement with ideas about magic and the modern. She also considers their anxieties about the impact of commercially driven mass culture. The concern of the observers of Mass Observation with what they saw as tension between the "modern" and the "traditional" is a window on wider preoccupations of the 1930s, while the enthusiasm of the observers for some of the very forms of magic and superstition they critiqued suggests a not entirely "disenchanted" worldview (137).

Finally, Kennetta Hammond Perry's "'Little Rock' in Britain: Jim Crow's Transatlantic Topographies" provides a good example of a different approach to imperial and transnational history than that deployed by Kumar that nonetheless shares some points in common. Perry is similarly interested in the transnational circulation of ideas and news, but her main focus is on the use of such ideas in popular forums and on their general circulation as tropes. She shows that the American controversies over the desegregation of the public schools in Little Rock, Arkansas, during the later 1950s resonated in Britain and that it was common to draw comparisons to Little Rock. Street disturbances in London were read through the lens of the American south, for example. Perry thus calls for a more networked and interdisciplinary history that pays attention to the linkages made by contemporaries between far-flung sites. She hopes to bring African American history into dialogue with British history, for example, and to draw on the work of cultural theorists interested in diasporas, cultural pluralism, and transnational networks to write a different kind of "national" history.

Our next issue will include articles on language usage in the medieval English state bureaucracy, print culture in mid-seventeenth-century England, and the politics of Restoration drama. It will also feature a reconsideration of the significance of the assassination of Prime Minister Spencer Perceval in 1812 and a new study of the 1857 revolt in British India. It will conclude with two articles on the twentieth century: one on middle-class women farmers in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century England, and another on capital punishment and the politics of emotion in the 1950s.