Gilbert Burnet: A Case-Study in the Genesis and Development of Revolutionary Consciousness and Activism in Late Stuart England

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GILBERT BURNET: A CASE-STUDY IN THE GENESIS
AND DEVELOPMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY CONSCIOUSNESS
AND ACTIVISM IN LATE STUART ENGLAND

by

Paul Peter Pocus, Jr.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate
School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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FOREWORD

This is not a traditional or standard foreword. The author wants to take this opportunity to gratefully and publicly acknowledge not only the financial, but more importantly, the emotional support of his parents, Paul Pocus, Sr., and Dorothy (Masden) Pocus. Most assuredly, without their support the author would never have been awarded his Ph.D. In this regard, if the author's father had not been compelled to embark upon the Sisyphean task of earning a living, he undoubtedly would have researched as well as written a far better dissertation than his son has. Whatever defects this work contains should rightly be laid at the author's doorstep, however this dissertation's merits are dedicated to Paul Pocus, Sr. To paraphrase a popular television commercial: Dad, this dissertation is for you. Hopefully, this foreward will serve as the public testimonial of a son's love for his father.

Paul Peter Pocus, Jr.

Chicago, Illinois
26 March 1988
VITA

The author, Paul Peter Pocus, Jr., is the son of Paul Peter Pocus, Sr., and Dorothy (Masden) Pocus. He was born 5 January 1947, in Aurora, Illinois.

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In July 1979, Mr. Pocus became an adviser at Chicago City-Wide College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago.
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INTRODUCTION

1. "The Learned Ax"\(^1\): The Historiography Of Gilbert Burnet

Although Gilbert Burnet was "lacking in tact and taste,"\(^2\) he nonetheless "was a good historian and a warm-hearted man."\(^3\) The historiography of Gilbert Burnet, immense as it is, is full of such superficial statements. Almost any monograph on late Stuart England will mention Burnet several times. This is especially true of those works which are concerned with the Glorious Revolution and its aftermath. For example, David Ogg in his *England in the Reigns of James II and William III* referred to Burnet as a "large-hearted, flat-footed Scot"\(^4\) who had been "the most prominent refugee at The Hague."\(^5\) Most of these references either catalogue Burnet's virtues and vices,


\(^3\) Ibid.


\(^5\) Ibid., p. 196.
or they retail salacious anecdotes about him. For example, many stories have been told about how he not only had lusted after women and tobacco, but also how he had sold his vote in the House of Lords to the highest bidder. Needless to say, for the serious student, these anecdotes are of little

value, except that on some infrequent occasions, they are accompanied by a photographic reproduction of one of the good bishop's few portraits. 7

Considering that Burnet's critics never tired of expatiating upon his "special" physical endowments that enabled him to proselytize so successfully among women, these facsimiles act as a check upon the vituperations of Burnet's foes, since they allow the student to judge for himself. Even John Dryden, who was James II's poet laureate, never missed an opportunity to impugn the genuineness of any of Burnet's conversions. In this matter, Dryden, like so many other High Anglicans, Tories, Jacobites, and Nonjurors, deliberately chose to underscore the carnal nature of Burnet's conversions. Dryden in The Hind and the Panther described Burnet in the following manner:

A portly Prince, and goodly to the sight
He seemed a son of Anak for his height,
Like those whom stature did to crowns prefer.
Blackbrowed and bluff, like Homer's Jupiter,


Broad-backed and brawny, built for love's delight,
A prophet formed to make a female proselyte. 8

These photographic reproductions introduce us to some of the
canons of male beauty in late Stuart England.

Since Burnet was one of those individuals who aroused
very strong emotions in people, friends as well as foes, the
extant literature can be divided into two main groups. The
one camp is made up of Burnet's detractors; those regarded
him as a timeserving hypocrite, devoid of any virtues, a
veritable spawn of the devil. This camp is by far the larg­
est, since Burnet always has suffered from a bad press. In
this group, one even finds Martin Joseph Routh, the first
nineteenth century editor of Burnet's History of My Own Time
(1823). Routh's judgment of Burnet's character was the most
charitable opinion that any of his detractors ever enter­
tained. When Routh's nephew asked him "why . . . [he was]
always working at Burnet, whom . . . [he was] always attack­
ing," Routh replied, "a good question sir, ...because I know
the man to be a liar; and am determined to prove him so." 9
Burnet's apologists, although few in number, are found in
the second camp. These individuals perceived him as a para­
gon of virtue, a sincere Christian, a conscientious clergy­
man, and a dutiful subject. Anyone who has not immersed

8 The Hind and the Panther, pt. 3, lines 2435-2440.
himself in the extant literature might well regard these two approaches as far too simplistic. A review of this literature will clarify the latter criticism.

Given the powerful emotions that Burnet's personality and behavior engendered in people, his contemporaries either loved him, or loathed him. His detractors found many ready recruits from among the ranks of disaffected High Tories, Jacobites, and Nonjurors. Their principal representatives included George Hickes, Charles Leslie, and Jonathan Swift. They are extremely important, since the polemical techniques which they devised permanently damaged Burnet's reputation. Hickes and Leslie were especially adept at juxtaposing seemingly contradictory passages from Burnet's earlier, pre-1687, and later, post-1687 writings. 10 Thomas Hearne and

10 See George Hickes' Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson; Occasioned by the Late Funeral Sermon of the Former upon the Later (London: n.p. 1695), as well as Charles Leslie's Tempora Mutantur or the great change from 73 to 93. In the travels of a Professor of Theology at Glasgow from the Primitive and Episcopal Loyalty, through Italy, Geneva, &c., to the deposing doctrines under Papistico-Phanatico - Prelatio Colours at Salisbury; together with his great improvement during his short stay at Cracovia. [Dedicated to the Clergy of the Diocese of Sarum ([London]: n.p., 1694]), and Leslie's Cassandra: (But I hope not) telling what will come of it. Num. I-II. In answer to the occasional letter. Num. I. Wherein the new-associations, &c. are considered, 2 vols; in 1. (London: n.p., 1704), as well as Leslie's [Miso- Dolos'] The good old cause, or Lying in the truth, being a second defence of the Lord Bishop of Sarum, from a second speech. And also, the dissection of a sermon it is said His Lordship preached in the cathedral church of Salisbury, last 29th of May (London: n.p., 1710). See also Leslie's The Bishop of Salisbury's proper defence, from a speech cry'd about the streets in his name, and said to have
Swift, as well as Leslie and Hickes, were also responsible for the original litany of Burnet's vices. The juxtaposing of apparently contradictory passages along with the litany of his vices have become the stock in trade of every anti-Burnet writer since their time.  

In the other camp, one finds, of course, Gilbert Burnet himself, Thomas Burnet, his youngest son, and Jean Le Clerc, the elder Burnet's Dutch publisher. Since Burnet always had been much in love with himself, his autobiography, the *Rough Draught of My Own Life*, must be used with some caution. Even though Burnet tried to justify himself in the *Rough Draught*, his autobiography nevertheless remains an extremely valuable historical document. It underscored the indelible impression that his father's, Robert Burnet's, __________  

been spoken by him in the House of Lords, upon the bill against occasional conformity (London: n.p., 1704).  

educational program had left upon his son's modes of thinking. This educational regimen introduced him not only to the masters of Greek and Latin literature, but also to the writings of Hugo Grotius and William Barclay. The Rough Draught revealed that he had inherited most of his father's political beliefs and values. Notwithstanding his protestations to the contrary, Bishop Burnet inculcated these beliefs and values into his three surviving sons, William, Gilbert, and Thomas. Among these were the principles of Richard Hooker's Of The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity which later provided Burnet with a rationale for his participation in various schemes for the comprehension of the former "hot gospelers," as well as for the toleration of other Trinitarian Protestants. Finally, in his autobiography, he constructed his role model of the ideal clergyman. This is found in his character sketches of Robert Leighton, James Nairn, and Lawrence Charteris.


15 Ibid., pp. 460-64; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 9-16. In addition, the first part (Great Britain, 1603-1685) of his History of My Own Time revealed how the behavior and the religious beliefs of the Cambridge Platonists--Benjamin Whichcote, John Smith, Ralph Cudworth, and Henry More--reinforced the religious beliefs and values that he inherited from his father (Gilbert Burnet, Burnet's History of My Own Time - A New Edition Based on that of M. J. Routh, D.D.)
Although Thomas Burnet inherited his father's personality defects, rather than his passion for hard work, his Life of the Author (1733-34) nonetheless is not without some merit. Thomas' sketch of his father's life expanded upon some of the preceding points in the Rough Draught. Of far greater importance, however, were the documents which he appended to his work, especially his father's famous letter to Charles II (29 January 1679/80), and select correspondence with representatives of the House of Hanover. This was the first time that any of these documents had been printed.

Thomas Burnet, the youngest of the bishop's surviving sons, was emmeshed in Whig politics. As a consequence, Thomas' judgment, like his father's, oftentimes was impaired by the political and the religious imbroglios of the day.

In this matter, the bishop and his youngest son believed that in order to arrive at historical knowledge one must


allow historical events to be reflected through the prisms of their personal biases. As a result, both Thomas and his father simply projected their political and religious predilections onto past historical events. When Thomas Burnet became identified with the "Mohock" faction within the vertiginous Whig blocs, his truthfulness was once more called into question by his enemies—High Anglicans, High Tories, Jacobites, and Nonjurors. These same politico-religious groups had been his father's enemies. Later on when Thomas broke his promise that he would deposit his manuscript copy of the *History of My Own Time* in the British Museum, his adversaries believed that Thomas, just like his father before him, was devoid of personal integrity. Henceforth Thomas Burnet's foes regarded him as "a Young little impudent Brat . . . [who] is . . . one of the principal . . . Mohocks . . . [whose] Principles & Doctrines lead . . . them to all Manner of Barbarity & Inhumanity." These detractors concluded that he "bore the same character for modesty, probity and veracity with his father." Bishop Gilbert Burnet was also traduced as "a canting Enthusiast" who "was a most notorious fabulator, others say lyer," whose


20 The quotation is taken from Doble and Rannie's Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne, 3(1889):327–28.

21 Ibid., 11(1921):336. 22 Ibid., p. 415. 23 Ibid.
"romance or Libel, called by him The History of his own Times . . . is the common table Book for . . . such as are friends to the Revolution Scheme." In Montrose and the Covenanters, one finds this comment about Gilbert Burnet's historical method:

... the Bishop, "after a debate in the House of Lords, usually went home, and altered every body's character as they had pleased or displeased him that day,"--and that he kept weaving in secret, till he died, this chronicle of his times, not to enlighten posterity, or the cause of truth, but as a means of indulging in safety his own interested or malicious feelings towards the individuals that pleased or offended him.

When Samuel Johnson considered the bishop's judgment, he remarked:

I do not believe that Burnet intentionally lied; but he was so much prejudiced that he took no pains to find out the truth. He was like a man who resolves to regulate his time by a certain watch; but will not enquire whether the watch is right or wrong.

In regard to the works of Gilbert and Thomas Burnet, this caveat must be added: both men conceived of truth as being a very malleable substance.

Despite the fact that Jean Le Clerc's The Life of Dr.

24 Ibid., p. 317.


Burnet (1715), is really only a pamphlet, rather than a biography, it is noteworthy in two respects. 27 It was the first life of Burnet written by someone from outside of the Burnet family. 28 Also, Le Clerc's work included a select bibliography of Burnet's works, the first such bibliography to appear in print.

Before considering the six works which dominated the literature on Burnet in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, some consideration must be given to Canon Richard W. Dixon's *History of the Church of England*. 29 This study deserves more than one explanatory footnote since Dixon was the first nineteenth century Anglican clergyman who recognized that Burnet's *History of the Reformation of the Church of England* was not without some merit. He did, however, admit that Burnet's *History of the Reformation* contained many errors. Even though Burnet "was very laborious,

27 The exact title is *The Life of Dr. Burnet, late lord bishop of Sarum; with his character and an account of his writings* (London: J. Brown, 1715). When I have cited words from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, I have retained the spelling and the capitalization of words as they appeared in the original work. Likewise I have only included those facts of publication which were given on the title page of the work itself. I have only deviated from this procedure when through the use of internal or external evidence I have ascertained a fact or facts of publication.

28 Jean Le Clerc was a Dutch Arminian who published many of Burnet's works.

and . . . studied to be exact, "30 Dixon nonetheless realized that he was a man of "strong prejudices . . . [who often-
times made] unwarrantable inference[s] from authorities fairly given." 31 However, Dixon like Macaulay believed Burnet to have been an honest man and a competent histor-
ian. 32 Despite the fact that "no book . . . [had] been more severely criticised," 33 Dixon retained his favorable opinion of Burnet's historical method:

He is never found passing entirely over events that do not favour him. His actual blunders are not so gross as those of some modern writers. His remarks on legal and judicial matters are especially valuable. His faults are, want of arrangement, want of elevation of style, want of points of view. But this is better than the modern delusion of grouping: better than running up a theory on every page: better than false analogies: better than perpetual graphic: better than exalting one fact into a dominant theory, and running that theory through a whole age. 34

The literature on Burnet in the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth century was dominated by six works. They are Thomas Babington Macaulay's The History of England from the Accession of James II (1856-61), Leopold von Ranke's A History of England Principally in the Seventeenth Century (1875), William Lecky's A History of England in the Eighteenth Century (1888-90), Martin Joseph Routh's edition of Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time (1823), T. E. S. Clarke and Helen Charlotte Foxcroft's A Life of

30 The quotation is taken from Dixon, 2(1895):359, footnote. In this work, the footnotes are not numbered.

31 Ibid. 32 Ibid. 33 Ibid. 34 Ibid.
Gilbert Burnet (1907), and her Supplement to Burnet's History of My Own Time (1902). In the works of Macaulay, Ranke, and Lecky, one finds the most enduring defense of Burnet's character and his actions. This was especially true of Lecky and Macaulay's character sketches. If one excludes Burnet's immediate family and his Dutch Arminian publisher, this was the first time that any writers had depicted him as something other than the spawn of the devil. Even though these historians were aware of the flaws in his character, pomposity, amour-propre, and vanity, they maintained that his many virtues more than compensated for the defects in his personality. For the first time, he was not castigated as a timeserving hypocrite. Macaulay, unlike Swift, even stated that Burnet's style was not barbarous.

Moreover, both Ranke and Macaulay argued that Burnet's views on the nature of political authority were not the product of political expediency. According to Ranke, the execution of Lord William Russell in 1683 convinced Burnet that on certain occasions--they had been discussed by Grotius in his On the Law of War and Peace--subjects could resist their


rulers. Also, these same two historians stressed the "special relationship" that Burnet enjoyed with William and Mary. They attached particular importance to Burnet's role as peacemaker between the prince and princess of Orange, on the eve of William's departure for England, since they believed that the Revolution Settlement would be jeopardized if the princely couple became estranged.

Routh's edition of Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time (1823) is noteworthy for its publication of primary source materials, including Thomas Burnet's The Life of the Author, as well as his father's two memorials concerning the first fruits and tenths. In these two memorials, which had been addressed to William III, Burnet developed detailed proposals for providing the Anglican clergy with an adequate income. His proposals were to be realized later in Queen Anne's Bounty. Routh's work has also an excellent bibliography. This bibliography was the foundation upon which Foxcroft built. Foxcroft herself who has compiled the most comprehensive bibliography of Burnet's works acknowledged her dependence upon Routh's labors.

37 Ranke, 6:51-59. In this matter, Macaulay maintained that Burnet had only espoused this "servile doctrine" of passive obedience in his youth (Macaulay, 2(1856):130-32).


39 Routh, Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:315-17.

40 T. E. S. Clarke and Helen Charlotte Foxcroft, A Life of Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, with an
Clarke and Foxcroft's *Life of Gilbert Burnet* (1907) is the first, and to date, the only full length biography of Burnet in any language. As we have previously mentioned, Le Clerc's biography was in reality only a pamphlet. The Clarke and Foxcroft work is one of vast erudition. It is in a class all by itself. First, the authors introduce the reader to the volatile political and religious worlds in Scotland and England, where fissiparous political and religious factions constantly threatened the status quo. Secondly, Foxcroft presents the student with one of his most difficult problems inherent in Burnet scholarship, the fact that he was acquainted with not only every major political and religious decision-maker in Great Britain, but also in West Europe. In fact, Burnet had met, and even conversed briefly with Peter the Great. Moreover, he had been acquainted with, or had corresponded with, many of the *literati* of Great Britain and West Europe, Swift and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz among them. Like Macaulay and Ranke, Foxcroft rejected the argument that political expediency had

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41 In the *Life of Gilbert Burnet*, T. E. S. Clark was the author of "Part I: Scotland, 1643-1674," while H. C. Foxcroft was responsible for "Part II: England, 1674-1715." While this biography was being written, Clarke was the minister at Saltoun, Gilbert Burnet's old parish and first cure of souls (Helen Charlotte Foxcroft, Preface to *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, by Clarke and Foxcroft, p.v.).

42 Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 348-49.
been the touchstone for all of Burnet's political and religious activities. In her view, Burnet had repudiated the doctrine of passive obedience as the direct result of Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Hence it was this action of Louis XIV, rather than political expediency, that had compelled Burnet to reexamine his views on the nature of political authority. In contrast to Macaulay, Ranke, and Foxcroft, I contend that the change in Burnet's views on the nature of political authority was a much more gradual process. It most definitely had not been his response to one particular event, either Russell's execution in 1683, or the revocation of the edict in 1685, nor can it be regarded as a youthful indiscretion (Macaulay). Rather, Burnet embarked on an agonizing reappraisal of his political beliefs and values shortly after the death of Charles II. While he was in "voluntary" exile in the United Provinces, he continued to reexamine his political ideas. However, the change in his political views only became apparent in January or February 1687 with publication of his travel letters. Nonetheless, if an individual aspires to do any serious work on Burnet, he has to begin with this study.

Even if Foxcroft had never collaborated with Clarke, every serious student of Burnet still would be deeply indebted to her because of her editorial labors. In 1902, there appeared A Supplement to Burnet's History of My Own

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Ibid., pp. 213-14, 458-64.
Time. This work is an indispensable source for any political biographer or political theorist. In the first place, she has provided us with her edition of Burnet's *Rough Draught of My Own Life*. Moreover, she has also provided us with the first and, to date, the only edition of Burnet's *A Meditation on My Voyage for England*. Although this tract first appeared in 1688, it was not published again until 1902. Foxcroft's publication of *A Meditation on My Voyage for England* is a godsend for scholars. In this pamphlet, Burnet provided the protagonists of 1688 with a convenient set of rationalizations. His apology later would become the Whig interpretation of the Glorious Revolution. After enduring thousands of pages of Burnet's turgid prose, it is such a pleasant surprise to find that on at least one occasion his style was clear and concise.

In her *Supplement*, Foxcroft has published again for the first time some of Burnet's correspondence with Admiral Arthur Herbert, the commander of William of Orange's expeditionary force. Even the most cursory examination of these letters will dispel any illusions about his tactfulness. For example, he referred to Herbert as "a strange bad man

44 The complete title is *A Meditation on my voyage for England which I have writ intending it for my last words in case this expedition should prove either unsuccessfull in generall or fatall to myself in my own particular* (n.p., [1688]).

and nothing can mend you." In her Introduction, she has an excellent discussion of the genesis of Burnet's History of My Own Time. The process by which Burnet transformed his "secret" diary into a history, the collation of divergent autograph copies of this history, together with other topics such as the textual emendations that Burnet himself made, the editorial castrations by his sons, and the impact of other historians' works upon Burnet's, most especially Lord Clarendon's The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars were treated there.47

Foxcroft's editorial labors were not confined to her Supplement to Burnet's History of My Own Time. In 1904 her edition of The Burnet-Leighton Papers was published in the Miscellany of the Scottish History Society. These papers were part of the collection of Bishop Gilbert Burnet's Papers that Oxford University had acquired in 1835.48 If Foxcroft had neither collaborated with Clarke, nor had edited her Supplement, every serious student of Burnet would still be deeply indebted to her. In Burnet scholarship Foxcroft has once again done yeoman's service, for she not only has compiled the most comprehensive bibliography of his works, which itself is a prodigious undertaking, but

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46 Ibid., p. 530.
47 Ibid., pp. v-xxx.
she has also "unearthed" many primary sources. If one doubts her nonpareil contributions to Burnet scholarship, one should then think what the extent of our knowledge would be, if Foxcroft had never written a word, edited a document, or compiled a bibliography. Unlike the works of so many scholars, the passage of time has not diminished her stature.

Her edition of *The Burnet-Leighton Papers* was a godsend to historians, political theorists, and theologians. Among these papers she unearthed Mr Robert Burnet his scruples why he can not "Salua Conscientia subscryue the League and Covenant." In this document the elder Burnet summarized his reasons for refusing to sign the Solemn League and Covenant, notwithstanding the enormous pressure that was brought to bear upon him to subscribe to this Covenant. Robert Burnet drew his arguments from the Scriptures, contemporary Protestant theologians, and his study of legal history. This document also reflected his Erastian views on church discipline. Later on these same Erastian views would be found in his son's writings.

Granted that Mr Robert Burnet his scruples why he can not

49 The exact title is "Mr Robert Burnet his scruples why he can not Salua Conscientia subscryue the League and Covenant: And he humblie craves ne sit ei fraudi That he has set them downe frielle and plainlie being so commanded. And that no man take exceptione at anie thinge that is written no thing w't intentione to offend anie iustlie takes exceptione at anie thinge, he professes nolle scriptu. Given in to ye Presbyterie of Edg at yr command, but suppressed be Mr Rb Duglas," in Foxcroft's *The Burnet-Leighton Papers*, in the Miscellany of the Scottish History Society, 4th ser., 2(1904): 335-40. The italics are in the original.
"Salua Conscientia" subscriyue the League and Covenant is a pièce justificative, it does nonetheless provide us with a valuable insight into the elder Burnet's thinking. Considering that we know so very little about Robert Burnet, this document, notwithstanding the fact that it was his justificati­ cation for refusing to sign the Covenant, is a welcome addition to our store of knowledge. Given the imprint that the elder Burnet left upon his son's way of thinking, the serious student is once again in Foxcroft's debt. Although Robert Burnet's pièce justificative was written sometime between August 1647 and January 1649, Foxcroft has provided us with the first and, to date, the only edition of this work.50

Among these papers Foxcroft also unearthed Burnet's A Memorial of diverse grievances and abuses in this Church, which he had written in 1666 while he held the cure at Saltoun. This was an especially important find, considering that in this Memorial Burnet with the notable exception of his friend Robert Leighton indicted the entire Restoration Episcopate in Scotland for their alleged sins of omission and commission—nonresidence, pluralism, simony, infrequent diocesan visitations, poor preaching, and diverting church revenues for their own private use. In this matter, Burnet concluded that these newly consecrated Scottish bishops were

of the same low caliber as those Laudian bishops whom his father had rebuked. Given that he not only insured that each Scottish bishop was provided with a copy of his Memorial, but he had also allowed, through his own negligence, his privat monitorie to fall into the hands of the Nonconformists, Burnet earned the implacable hatred of most of his Episcopalian brethren. Burnet's authorship of this Memorial permanently damaged his reputation, for he was never able to convince his fellow Episcopalians that his actions were devoid of malice. Consequently he was unable to dismiss his authorship of this Memorial as a youthful indiscretion. In this regard Burnet as was his wont was oftentimes his own worst enemy. Notwithstanding the fact that Burnet had written his Memorial in 1666, Foxcroft has provided us with the first and, to date, the only edition of this work.

While Foxcroft was sifting through the bishop's papers, she discovered some of Robert Leighton's correspondence with his old friend Gilbert Burnet. Notwithstanding her painstaking use of internal as well as external evidence, she regretted that in only one case was she able to precisely date Leighton's letter (9 October 1671). Of the remaining ten letters Foxcroft at first remarked that "it seem[ed] ... quite impossible to date or arrange ..."

[Leighton's] letters. Later on she concluded that these letters must have been written sometime after "Burnet received his honorary degree of D.D. from Oxford, [in] September 1680." In this matter one should keep in mind that Leighton died on 28 June 1684.

In spite of the chronological problems associated with Leighton's letters, every serious student of Burnet is once again deeply indebted to Foxcroft. These eleven letters revealed the high esteem in which each man held the other. This is quite remarkable, considering the strikingly different temperaments of the two men. In this regard Leighton's personality was far closer to Robert Burnet's personality than to the younger Burnet's. Moreover this correspondence underscored how Leighton's thinking had been influenced by his study of the works of the Cambridge Platonists and the mystical theologians. These letters


53 Ibid.

also provide us with clear-cut examples of Leighton's Erastian views. On one occasion he remarked that he was "neither pleased with presbyterie nor Episcopacy, with ye exorbitancies of neither [he] ... confesse[d], but ...
[he] ... was pleased with both, for [he had] ... bin constantly enough of that opinion that they doe much better together then either of them does apart...". In this same letter he lamented the sorry condition of the Scottish establishment. Nevertheless he refused to pursue an independent course of action, having concluded that "till [he] ... receiv[ed] ... from some y t have power to give it [formulate new ecclesiastical policies] [he] ... must forebear to attempt anything...". Considering that he owed "absolute submission to those ... above [him,]" Leighton believed that he could not act until he received new instructions from "ye Lords of Councill." Keeping firmly in mind that Burnet not only inherited his father's Erastian views, but that his own theological beliefs in part had been shaped by the teachings of the Cambridge Platonists, it is not surprising that he regarded Leighton as a kindred spirit. These eleven letters also provide us with an insight into Leighton's character. They showed him to be a gentle, sensitive, and thoughtful man whose temperament

56 Ibid.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
was more suited to the cloister than to the episcopal see. In other circumstances, Leighton would have been an ideal Trappist monk. Notwithstanding the fact that Oxford University acquired *The Burnet-Leighton Papers* in 1835, Foxcroft has once again provided us with the first and, to date, the only edition of Leighton's select correspondence with Burnet during the years 1671 and 1680-1684.

Sir Charles Harding Firth's Introduction to Clarke and Foxcroft's *A Life of Gilbert Burnet* deserves special consideration. Like Dixon, Firth argued that the publication of Burnet's *History of the Reformation of the Church of England* "mark . . . [ed] the beginning of a new epoch in historical science . . . [, since] Burnet's *History* raised the controversy it handled to a higher place of thought." Unlike the previous historians of the English Reformation, he did "not conceal the faults of the Reformers themselves . . . [, but rather] state[d] fairly the views of the


60 Sir Charles Harding Firth, Introduction to *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, by Clarke and Foxcroft, p. xxii. The italics are in the original.
different leaders and the conflicting parties." In addition, he believed that Burnet was the first English historian to have had any conception of general causation. Although Burnet's idea of general causation was couched in theological terms, since the bishop never doubted that the course of human events had been providentially ordered by Almighty God, he nonetheless maintained that Burnet's theory of general causation made him a better historian than Lord Clarendon. Firth concluded that Burnet "succeed . . . [ed] in making the Revolution of 1688 intelligible[,] while Clarendon . . . [left] that of 1649 unexplained." In this matter, Firth shared Dixon's views on Burnet's historical method. Later on we shall presently see that H. W. C. Davis and John Kenyon shared Firth's view concerning Burnet's contributions to English historiography. Moreover, Firth's Introduction provides the student with an excellent set of bibliographic footnotes.

In his Introduction, Firth maintained that Burnet remained unaware of the works of many contemporary writers, among them were Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Consequently, Firth gives credence to my belief that Burnet had never read Locke's Two Treatises of Government, notwithstanding the fact that Burnet's arguments in his An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority

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61 Ibid., p. xx.  
62 Ibid., p. XLL  
63 Ibid.  
64 Ibid., p. xxxi.
were nearly identical to those found in Locke's work. In the *History of My Own Time*, I have not found any reference to Locke or to his works. My position has been corroborated by Firth. 65

Before we turn our attention to the twentieth century's contributions to Burnet scholarship, we should mention Helen Charlotte Foxcroft's "An Early Recension of Burnet's Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton" in *The English Historical Review* (1909). 66 In her article, Foxcroft, for the very first time, published some fragments from Burnet's first draft of his *Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton*. Dorothy Lane Poole's "Some Unpublished Letters of George Savile, Lord Halifax, to Gilbert Burnet," which also was published in *The English Historical Review* (1911) provides us with some of Halifax's select correspondence during the Exclusion controversy and its aftermath. 67

H. W. C. Davis' "Gilbert Burnet, 1643-1715," which forms chapter 7 of William Edward Collins' *Typical English Churchmen from Parker to Maurice* (1902), merits more than a footnote. In this work, Davis argued that Burnet was "the exponent of a new historical method, . . . [since] he . . .

65 Ibid.
[was] less concerned with persons than with the genesis of new ideas in the turmoil of events." He concluded that "no Roman controversialist, before the nineteenth century, was able to assimilate the new idea [Burnet's historical method] and turn it against the Protestant position." Considering that Collins' work was published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.), it was to be expected that Davis' contribution revealed his High Church bias. Davis remarked that Burnet was "a many-sided man, living in a one-sided generation, . . . [who had the misfortune of being only] partially appreciated by any single witness." Since Davis accepted at face value Burnet's statement that " . . . [his] thoughts have run most, and dwelt longest on the concerns of the Church [of England] and religion," he emphasized that Burnet was motivated by religious, rather than political, ideals. In this regard, Davis wrote:

Burnet was a Churchman first, and a politician afterwards. . . . For constitutional principles he cared little; if the King would endorse the Church policy on which Burnet's heart was set, then he was with the King; if the King declared against the Church, then Burnet

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69 Ibid., p. 175.

70 Ibid., p. 150.

71 The quotation is taken from Gilbert Burnet's "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:634.
would make a shift to work with Parliament and the Prince of Orange. He followed ideals which were religious rather than political. 72

Unfortunately, given the political and religious situation in Great Britain, Burnet had "to work with men to whom religion was a secondary consideration." 73 Davis concluded that, " . . . Burnet understood his allies: if they failed to understand him and the nature of the tie which bound him to them, the fault lay, not in his duplicity, but in the cynicism which blinded them to all motives of a higher nature than their own." 74

Even though the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries were a golden age for Burnet scholarship, far too many of these works we cited either resurrect the controversies of the preceding century or simply increase our stock of salacious anecdotes. 75

Thus far, the twentieth century's contribution to Burnet scholarship has indeed been sparse. At the moment,  

72 Davis, p. 150. 73 Ibid., p. 151. 74 Ibid.

most of the work has been done by doctoral students in English literature. Two of these dissertations merit special consideration. Robert F. Madden's "Bishop Gilbert Burnet as a man of letters" (1963) is an extremely well researched work that concentrates on Burnet's many contributions to English literature. In his work, Madden repudiated Swift's argument that Burnet was a mere Scottish scribbler, whose works were devoid of style, and on many occasions quite unintelligible. Leon Vinson Driskell's "An Evaluation of the Writings of Gilbert Burnet on the Basis of Stylistic Evidence" (1964) is an attempt to establish a positive correlation between the literary devices that Burnet employed and his mental constitution. Nonetheless, one has to use Driskell's work with some caution, for he referred to William of Orange as a Lutheran prince. In contrast to Madden's and Driskell's dissertations, George Bush Rodman's "Bishop Burnet and the Thought of His Own Time" (1940), Emily H. Patterson's "Antithetic Anglicans: Swift and


78 Ibid., p. 33.

79 George Bush Rodman, "Bishop Burnet and the Thought of His Own Time" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1940).
Bishop Burnet (1643-1715): A Critical Account of His Conception of the Christian Ministry" (1966) are three very poorly researched dissertations. Neither Anderson nor Patterson nor Rodman could have spent much time with primary source materials. Norman Dodds' master's thesis, "The Bishops in Politics, 1702-1714" (1968), too, was neither well researched, nor well organized, nor well written.

At the present time, there are only two scholars of note who are working in this field. They are John Jay Hughes and John P. Kenyon. Hughes is an American scholar who discovered a previously unknown manuscript of Burnet's, while doing research at the National Library of Scotland. The document is dated "At the Hague the 30th of July 1687." In this document, Burnet formulated the classic Whig interpretation of the Glorious Revolution. Although it was written before Burnet's *A Meditation on My Voyage for England* (1688), the content and tone of the two works are virtually identical. In each case, Burnet provided the protagonists


of 1688 with a convenient set of rationalizations. As always, Burnet was adept at telling the members of the political nation what they wanted to hear. This recently discovered document reinforces this dissertation's argument that Burnet's changing views on the nature of political authority did not become apparent until the publication of his travel letters in January or February 1687. Hughes included this document in his article "The Missing 'Last Words' of Gilbert Burnet in July 1687," published in The Historical Journal (March 1977). 83

In The History Man, Kenyon argued that Burnet's History of the Reformation was "the first work of historical synthesis" to appear in England. 84 Unlike past historians, as well as some of the philosophic historians of the eighteenth century, Burnet in Kenyon's view was able to distinguish "between original and derivative authorities." 85 Like Dixon, Firth, and Davis, Kenyon believed that Burnet was one of the first English historians to understand the importance of causation, and the need to explain great religious movements not solely by reference to religion itself or to the


84 The quotation is taken from Kenyon's The History Men, p. 8.

85 The quotation is taken from Arnaldo Momigliano's "Ancient History and the Antiquarian," Journal Of The Warburg And Courtauld Institutes 13 (July To December 1950): 286. See also Kenyon's The History Men, pp. 7-8, 34-38.
actions of individuals." Consequently, Kenyon shared Dixon's, Firth's, and Davis' opinion that Burnet's "pioneering work as a historian is still largely unrecognized." In this matter, Kenyon subscribed to Davis' argument that Burnet was "the exponent of a new historical method." Kenyon emphasized that until 1885 Burnet's History of the Reformation was included in the reading lists for the Oxford School of Law and History, as well as for the Oxford School of Modern History. Concerning Burnet's "conversion" to resistance principles, Kenyon believed that Burnet repudiated the doctrine of passive obedience "in 1683... [when he] espoused... the cause of his patron, Lord Russell." This was also Ranke's contention.

Before concluding this historiographical essay, some consideration should be given to H. Trevor Colbourn's The Lamp of Experience. In this work, Colbourn argued that the Whig historians of the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries provided the British colonists in North

86 Kenyon, The History Men, p. 37.
87 Ibid., p. 33.
88 The quotation is taken from Davis, p. 174.
89 Kenyon, The History Men, p. 38.
90 Ibid., p. 34. 91 Ranke, 6:51-59.
America with their justification for the American Revolution. The ideology of the American Revolution, in Colbourn's view, had been hammered out on the anvil of English Whiggism. Many of the protagonists in the American Revolution were well acquainted with Burnet's *History of My Own Time*. They included John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin. Unlike most of Burnet's contemporaries, Whigs as well as Hanoverian Tories, Adams referred to Bishop Burnet as one of "the honest Historians." 

2. The Scope Of This Dissertation

The task of this dissertation is to elucidate the developments in Gilbert Burnet's political life during the formative years, 1643-1687. In the late seventeenth century, even though politics and religion were no longer inextricably bound together as they once had been in the preceding century, it was not possible--nor would it have been desirable--to divorce religious consciousness and ecclesiastical institutions from political consciousness as well as from political institutions. This is especially true in Burnet's case, since he always affirmed that his multifarious political activities had been conditioned by his perception of Protestant Christianity. Burnet once

93 Ibid., pp. 10-11, 15-16, 44-48, 50, 60, 62, & 66.
94 Ibid., pp. 86, 92, 104-105, 128, & 182-83.
95 Quoted in Colbourn's *The Lamp of Experience*, p. 104.
remarked that "... [his] thoughts have run most, and dwelt longest on the concerns of the church and religion."\textsuperscript{96} Nonetheless, this dissertation is primarily a political biography of Burnet during his formative years, 1643-1687. Consequently, religious controversies and other theological conundrums are discussed when they help to illuminate some aspect or aspects of his political activity. This dissertation, in short, presents a revisionist interpretation of Gilbert Burnet's political career, emphasizing his early and middle years, 1643-1687.

Notwithstanding the fact that his life could be approached from many perspectives--for example, chronological, topical, intellectual, and stylistic--I have in general employed the chronological approach. This method has four salient virtues. First, a chronological framework will save the reader from becoming lost in a labyrinth of seemingly ephemeral relationships. For in Burnet's life, the dramatic personae are crowded. Also, by utilizing a chronological approach, the scope of this dissertation has been defined more precisely: the time-frame 1643-1687 is coterminous with Burnet's Scottish period (1643-1675), his first English experience (1675-1685), as well as his period of "voluntary" or self-imposed exile (1685-1687). His second English experience (1688-1715), on the other hand, is

\textsuperscript{96} The quotation is taken from Burnet's "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:634.
beyond the compass of this dissertation. Occasionally, this narrative approach has been abandoned in order to underscore the effect that certain of his beliefs and values as well as his life experiences had upon both his private life and public career. For example, when discussing respectively his *Thoughts on Education* and his belief in the value of a limited religious toleration, there is a digression from the chronological approach, since Burnet's *Thoughts on Education* has been perceived as one of his lifelong attempts to effect educational reforms in Great Britain, while his espousal of a limited religious toleration would be embodied in the Toleration Act of 1689. Finally, an essentially narrative approach will prove to be extremely useful when trying to pinpoint Burnet's changing perception of the nature of political authority and political obligation--his rationalization of resisting his sovereign with armed force, if necessary. This is especially true during the critical period 6 February 1685 - 25 May 1687, the period from the death of Charles II until Burnet's second marriage.

This dissertation does not aspire to be an intellectual biography, although the influence of the Cambridge Platonists and the Arminians will be explored and his political and educational ideas will be discussed. It is a political biography of Burnet during the formative years, 1643-1687. Nor is this work an essay at psychohistory. Even though I have underscored the impact of early
experiences and early childhood education upon Burnet's modes of thinking, the author does not follow either Freudian or the Eriksonian interpretations. After all, René Descartes and John Locke as well as Plato and Aristotle held that an individual's earliest experiences had a profound effect upon his development. 97

Nor is this dissertation particularly concerned with Burnet as either an ecclesiastical or political historian. Notwithstanding the fact that subheading three of chapter two is entitled, "The History of the Reformation," I have treated Burnet's work as an historian of the English Reformation only insofar as it helps to elucidate his political activities. To take an example, the first volume of Burnet's History of the Reformation, published in 1679, appeared on booksellers' shelves during the hysteria that had been generated by the Popish plot. Likewise, when the third volume of this history was published in 1714, it revealed that Burnet once again had been taken close prisoner by his emotions, since he believed that the realm was infested by "papists" who would soon rekindle the fires at Smithfield. 98 Hence, Burnet's place in English church


history, as well as his place in seventeenth-century ecclesiastical history in general, is clearly beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Now that I have not only reviewed the extant literature on Gilbert Burnet, but have also defined with greater precision this dissertation's focus, I shall now briefly examine the three formative influences that markedly affected his political thinking, and consequently shaped his political opinions, his relationship with his father, the teachings as well as the conduct of the Cambridge Platonists, and Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*. This dissertation will illustrate how these three influences acted as a leaven upon Burnet's politics.

3. Intellectual Influences On Gilbert Burnet's Outlook and Career

Gilbert Burnet never realized how profoundly his father's tuition had affected his modes of thinking. In politics, religion, and education, Robert Burnet had made an indelible impression on his son's mind. This is something that other students of Burnet have completely overlooked.

In politics, both father and son rejected not only the theory of the divine right of kings, but also eschewed the later Stuarts' machinations to resuscitate the cult of

29th-1714. Before The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, The Aldermen and Governours of the several Hospitals of the City (Dublin: James Carson, 1714); Driskell, pp. 248-68; Foxcroft, pp. 461-66.
thaumaturgic kingship. Despite the fact that they had repudiated the ideology of prerogative monarchy, neither the elder nor the younger Burnet had ever subscribed to the Scottish covenants, since they believed "that the King's authority was invaded against law." In this matter, both Robert Burnet and his more famous son simply had espoused a part of the conventional political wisdom of the Tudors: they maintained that the essence of the English constitution was the harmonious balance of power that existed among the three authorities within the constitution—crown, parliament, and common law. If any one of these three triumvirs sought either to emasculate or to destroy the authority of the others, then, and only then, did Gilbert and his father acknowledge that:

This is such a breaking of the whole constitution . . . so that it is really a dissolution of the government; . . . then it is plain . . . that there is not any one part of it left sound and entire . . . then . . . no man will doubt that the whole foundations of this government, and all the most sacred parts of it, are overturned.

Having oppugned the theory of the divine hereditary right of

99 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 453.

100 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority; and of the Grounds upon which it may be lawful or necessary for Subjects to defend their Religion, Lives, and Liberties (London: n.p., 1688), in the Harleian Miscellany, or a Collection of Scarce, Curious, and Entertaining Pamphlets and Tracts, as well in Manuscripts as in Print, found in the Late Earl of Oxford's Library, Interspersed with Historical, Political, and Critical Notes, 10 vols. (London: n.p. 1808-13), 1(1808):446-48.
the monarch to rule, Robert as well as Gilbert Burnet had asserted that the monarchy was limited by law. Consequently, they were unsympathetic to the newfangled notions that the monarch was above the law, or that his will alone was the law, since they still subscribed to the medieval theory of limited monarchy.  

Burnet, in "The Conclusion" of his History of His Own Time, bluntly stated that:

There is not anyone thing more certain and more evident, than that princes are made for the people, and not the people for them; and perhaps there is no nation under heaven, that is more entirely possessed with this notion of princes, than the English nation is in this age, so

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101 See the following works of Gilbert Burnet:
Reasons Against the Repealing the Acts of Parliament Concerning the Test. Humbly offered to the Consideration of the Members of Both Houses, at their next Meeting, on the Twenty eight of April, 1687 ([Holland]: n.p. [1687]); An Enquiry Into The Present State of Affairs: And in particular, Whether we owe Allegiance to the King in these Circumstances And whether we are bound to Treat with Him, and call Him back again, or not? (London: John Starkey & Ric. Chiswell, 1689); At the Hague the 30th of July 1687; A Pastoral Letter Writ By The Right Reverend Father in God Gilbert, Lord Bishop of Sarum, To The Clergy of his Diocess, Concerning The Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy To K. William and Q. Mary (London: J. Starkey & Ric. Chiswell, 1689); Reflections Upon A Pamphlet, Entitled, [Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson, Occasioned by the Late Funeral-Sermon of the Former upon the Later.] (London: Ri. Chiswell, 1696); A Sermon Preach'd in the Cathedral-Church Of Salisbury, On The 29th Day of May, in the Year 1710 (London: J. M. for J. Churchill, 1710); An Exposition of The Church Catechism, For The Use of the Diocese of Sarum (London: n.p. for John Churchill, 1710); The Declaration of His Highness William Henry, By the Grace of God, Prince of Orange, &c. Of the Reasons inducing Him, To appear in Arms, in the Kingdom of England, for Preserving of the Protestant Religion, and for Restoring the Laws and Liberties of England, Scotland, and Ireland (n.p. [1688]); An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority; and of the Grounds upon which it may be lawful or necessary for Subjects to defend their Religion, Lives, and Liberties (London: n.p. 1688).
that they will soon be uneasy to a prince, who does not govern himself by this maxim, and in time grow very unkind to him. 102

Burnet concluded that:

The only way [for princes] to keep their prerogative from being uneasy to their subjects, and from being disputed, is to manage it wholly for their good and advantage; then all will be for it, when they find it is for them: this will prevail more effectually than all the arguments of lawyers, with all the precedents of former times. 103

Hence, when Gilbert and his father discussed the nature of political obligation, their presuppositions were essentially those of the common law lawyers who in the first part of the seventeenth century had steadfastly opposed James I's and Charles I's half-hearted attempts to erect a "makeshift" absolutism in Great Britain. 104 In fact, Gilbert Burnet on several occasions had argued that when religion had become a part of the subject's property, then the ruler could not deprive him of his property without contravening the Ancient English Constitution. 105

Both Robert and Gilbert Burnet's political beliefs and values were part of the legacy of the common law lawyers.

102 Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:665.
103 Ibid., 6:641.
Consequently, Gilbert as well as his father had advocated the restoration of the balance of power in the English constitution among the crown, the parliament, and common law which they thought had existed under the regimes of the Tudors. For both men believed that the English as well as the Scottish constitution had been the product of a unique historical development; they most certainly had not been the result of obstruse political ratiocination.\(^{106}\) This is something that other students of Burnet have completely overlooked.

While under his father's educational regime, young Gilbert imbibed the political principles of William Barclay, and most especially of Hugo Grotius. From his father's tuition, young Gilbert was taught Barclay's political axioms that political resistance was justifiable if the prince attempted either to alienate his kingdom, or to make it

\(^{106}\) For additional information, see the following works of Gilbert Burnet: A Vindication Of The Authority, Constitution, And Laws Of The Church And State Of Scotland, In Four Conferences. Wherein the Answer to the Dialogues betwixt the Conformist and the Non-Conformist is examined (Glasgow: Robert Sanders, 1673); "Subjection for Conscience-sake Asserted: In a Sermon Preached at Covent-Garden-Church, December the Sixth, 1674," in The Royal Martyr and the Dutiful Subject, in Two Sermons (London: S. Keble & J. Morphew, 1710); "The Royal Martyr Lamented, in a Sermon Preached At The Savoy, On King Charles the Martyr's Day, 1674/5," in The Royal Martyr; A Sermon Preached at the Funeral Of Mr. James Houblon, Who was buried at St. Mary Wolnoth Church in Lombard-street, June 28. 1682 (London: Richard Chiswell, 1682); A Sermon Preached before the Aldermen Of The City of London, At St. Lawrence-Church, Jan. 30. 1680/1. Being the day of the Martyrdom of K. Charles I. (London: Richard Chiswel, 1681).
dependent on other kingdoms. Undoubtedly, the elder Burnet was acquainted with Barclay's *De Regno et Regali potestate* [The Kingdom and the Regal Power].\(^{107}\) This book, a compendium of French political thought in the sixteenth century, was a summary of, as well as a critical commentary on, the writings not only of the apologists for divine right monarchy, but also of the constitutional theories of George Buchanan, Brutus, Jean Boucher, and Francois Hotman. Hence, Gilbert Burnet, while under his father's aegis, had been introduced indirectly—via Barclay's work—to what some politically conscious Frenchmen thought about such questions as the nature of political authority, the nature of political obligation, as well as the nature of sovereignty. Consequently, Gilbert's modes of thought were affected by the sixteenth century French civil wars and their aftermath.

Notwithstanding the fact that Burnet remarked that his father "allwaies espoused Barclay's and Grotius' notions in that matter\(^{108}\) [of political resistance], this is something that most of the other students of Bishop Burnet have completely overlooked. As a matter of fact, only Thomas Burnet in his *The Life of the Author*, Ranke in his *A History of England, Principally in the Seventeenth Century*, and Clarke in Foxcroft's *A Life of Gilbert Burnet* have

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\(^{107}\) Barclay's work was first published in Paris in 1600.

\(^{108}\) The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's *Supplement*, p. 453.
acknowledged that the political writings of Grotius and Barclay had any influence on Burnet's intellectual development or his political and religious activities. Yet neither Burnet, nor Ranke, nor Clarke ever mentioned that Robert Burnet's tuition of his son had served as a conduit for the political axioms of Barclay or Grotius.

Not only his political views but Gilbert Burnet's religious consciousness and his subsequent religiosity had been profoundly affected by his father's perception of Protestant Christianity. Both men were robust Erastians who believed that episcopacy, even though it most certainly was not of divine origin, was the most desirable form of church discipline. Nonetheless, the elder Burnet as well as his son believed there were defects and abuses that had plagued the institution of episcopacy in the established churches of Scotland and England. Consequently, both men labored for the reform of the episcopal order in the two churches. In this regard, Gilbert and his father advocated the reformation of such episcopal abuses as nonresidence, pluralism, simony, laxity, the greediness for ecclesiastical preferment, and the raising of a large family in grand style on church revenues, so that the institution of episcopacy might once again be restored to the pristine innocence that they

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109 Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:673; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 10, 12; Ranke, 6:55-56.
claimed it possessed during the heroic age of primitive Christianity. 110

While his great watchword was moderation, Robert Burnet "was dissatisfied with the conduct of the Bishops . . . and delivered him selfe so plainly that he lost the favour of the governing Bishops: and at the breaking out of the troubles in the year 1637 he was looked on as a Puritan." 111 Yet this is the same man who "when he saw that instead of reforming abuses, the Order it selfe was struck at, he did adhere to it with great zeal, and in the warrs that followed . . . he never took the Covenant . . . ." 112 Although Gilbert shared his father's views on the institution of episcopacy, it is not surprising that he was anathematized as "a Canting Enthusiast" in lawn sleeves, "others say lyer" of, "unstable, hellish Minds, [sic] and govern'd by self Interest, such as will cut . . . [his] Fathers throat to possess his Estate, & take up arms against ye L[or]ds.


111 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 453.

112 Ibid.
anointed to be exalted to temporal Dignity, & to have a share in his undoubted Rights.” ¹¹³ After all, if the elder Burnet, being a man of "excessive modesty . . . [and] eminent for integrity and probity,"¹¹⁴ was regarded as a Puritan sympathizer, it is little wonder that his son, who many believed was devoid of his father's virtues and scruples, was perceived as an apostate who was quite capable of taking a leaf from Judas Iscariot's book. For example, despite the fact that Gilbert's privat monitorie of 1666, which roused the ire of all the Scottish bishops with the exception of Robert Leighton, only reiterated Robert Burnet’s critique of the contemporary Scottish episcopate, the elder Burnet was never so foolhardy as to commit his thoughts to paper, and to allow them to be printed, and then to be circulated abroad, especially among the Nonconformists.

Notwithstanding that both men had rejected the theory of the jure divino of episcopacy, just as they previously had repudiated the theory of jure divino of kings, they contended that the institution of episcopacy could be justified on the basis of the experience of the early Christian church as well as on the grounds of natural reason. This had been Richard Hooker’s argument in his Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity. Yet in order to preserve the peace and the

¹¹³The quotation is taken from Doble and Rannie's Collections of Thomas Hearne, 11(1921):415, 2(1886):383.

¹¹⁴The quotation is taken from Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 452.
unity of the Scottish and English churches, neither father nor son would insist on episcopal government in any church, if it entailed precipitating a schism. From their perspective, the preservation of unity among Protestant Christians was of far greater importance than preserving the office of bishop. When Gilbert in his *Rough Draught of My Own Life* penned these lines about his father's Erastianism, he could just as easily have been writing about himself:

> He saw the designe laid to set up Episcopacy again in Scotland but from the channel in which things did then run he did very much apprehend that great disorders would follow upon it. Tho he preferred Episcopacy to all other forms of government and thought it was begun in the Apostles' times, yet he did not think it necessary but that he could live under another form, for indeed his principle with relation to Church Government was Erastian. 115

In their discussions of the origin of, as well as the nature of, the episcopal order, both Robert and Gilbert Burnet revealed their dependence on the theological writings of Grotius.

The father and son had both been deeply and permanently influenced by the Arminian movement in the Dutch Reformed Church as well. This placed them in sympathy with the Stuart religious tradition and in opposition to Puritan extremists. Even though Gilbert denied most emphatically that he was an Arminian, nevertheless, while under his father's instruction, he had imbibed Grotius' Arminianism along with his political axioms. For the elder Burnet

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115 Ibid., p. 458.
undoubtedly had not only read some of Grotius' works, but during one of his three "voluntary" exiles on the Continent, he had also had the opportunity of conferring with him in France. In his Rough Draught of My Own Life, Gilbert smugly remarked that his father "knew Grotius well beyond sea, and went in to all his notions." Consequently, both father and son were proponents of what would be considered today a limited religious liberalism. For the Arminians had repudiated many of the fundamental tenets of classical or orthodox Calvinism, since they rejected both the doctrine of predestination on the grounds that it made God the author of sin, and the orthodox interpretation of the decree of election, for they believed that the saints did not constitute a religious elite. They also rejected the doctrine of irresistible grace, for man's free will had to cooperate with God in working out his salvation, and with it the doctrine of limited atonement, since the Arminians believed that Jesus Christ had died for all men. Hence, the Arminians stressed not only the interiority of the religious experience, but also the use of reason, which they regarded as "a revelation from God within which man's free will moved," to

116 Ibid.

interpret the Scripture. The Arminian element in Robert Burnet's own religious thought is exemplified best in his strictures concerning the intolerance of the Covenanters in a letter--written about 1639--to his brother-in-law, Archibald Johnson of Warriston:

Who will rather have all the three kingdoms destroyed, and everyone weltering in another's blood, before you get not your will. God forgive your bloody and cruel preachers who have not known, nor will not know, the way of peace.

In the younger Burnet's religious thought, Grotius' Arminianism was reflected by his espousal of a limited religious toleration for most Protestant dissidents. As we shall see, Burnet's views were embodied in the Toleration Act of 1689. Nonetheless, like other prominent figures Gilbert believed that religious freedom must be restricted in order to preserve the existing civil and ecclesiastical constitutions. Otherwise Roman Catholics, non-Trinitarian Christians (Unitarians), atheists, and agnostics would subvert the status quo. In this respect he differed from Grotius who would have denied religious freedom only to atheists, and to those who denied the immortality of the soul. Other students of Gilbert Burnet have failed to perceive this impact of Grotius' Arminianism upon his religious thought.

The imprint that Robert Burnet had left on young

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118 Ibid., p. 178.
119 The quotation is taken from Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History Of My Own Time, 1(1897):58, footnote 1.
Gilbert's mind was not limited to political and religious matters. Gilbert's own pedagogical theories and activities underscored his dependence on the education he had received from his father. Yet differences in approach emerged. In his Thoughts on Education, written some time in late 1668, Gilbert, unlike his father, however, endeavored to change the role of the tutor from that of an educational drill sergeant to one of a fellow scholar who could cope successfully with "the manny wild frolicks" of youths.\textsuperscript{120} He disavowed his father's practice of humbling his charges "with much severe correction": since "he [Robert Burnet] carried that too farre for the fear of that brought . . . [the youths] under too great an uneasyness and sometimes given to a hatred of my Father."\textsuperscript{121} In his Thoughts on Education, he bluntly stated that "nature made children, children and not men." Hence, unlike his father, Burnet, even though he himself rose early, felt that students need not "rise constantly about four."\textsuperscript{122}

Both men, however, shared the same educational goals. Gilbert as well as his father assumed that education was, and should remain, primarily the preserve of the upper

\textsuperscript{120}The quotation is taken from Gilbert Burnet's Thoughts on Education (n.p., 1761; reprint ed. Aberdeen: printed for the University [Aberdeen], 1914), pp. 9-79.

\textsuperscript{121}The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 454.

\textsuperscript{122}Ibid.
classes. This had been a part of the conventional wisdom of many not only in Stuart England, but also in West Europe. After all, if the "rude mechanical classes" were to become politically conscious, this would pose immense, if not insuperable, difficulties for the established hierarchies in church and state. Since Burnet had participated in the Archbishop of Glasgow, Robert Leighton's, various attempts to accommodate the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians in Scotland—he had been one of 'the Bishop's Evangelists'—he had first-hand knowledge of how obdurate, if not truculent, the "rude mechanical classes" could be when they possessed a little Biblical knowledge. Neither the elder Burnet nor his son regarded education as a vehicle either to ameliorate social antagonisms or to facilitate upward social mobility. Robert as well as his son maintained that education had a strictly utilitarian purpose: to prepare gentlemen to participate in governmental affairs, and to provide the established churches in Great Britain with a learned clergy.¹²³

Gilbert Burnet therefore contended that education had a threefold aim: to protect public liberty, to preserve the existing ecclesiastical polities, and to nurture national consciousness in Great Britain. In this matter, the elder Burnet and his son felt that a thorough mastery of the Greek and Latin writers would remedy the deficiencies in the

¹²³Burnet, Thoughts on Education, pp. 9-10, 47, 66-67.
education of the propertied oligarchs. Accordingly the younger Burnet was concerned especially with the education of the English gentry, for he "dwelt the longer on this article, because on the forming the gentry well, the good government of the nation, both in and out of parliament, does so much depend." Nonetheless, he ruefully remarked that the gentry "are for the most part the worst instructed, and the least knowing of any of their rank . . . [he] ever went amongst." In this instance, he felt that the education of the English gentry would be much improved if they followed the example of their Scottish cousins.

Gilbert claimed that owing to the deficiencies in the education of the propertied oligarchs in 1660 "slavery and absolute power might then have been settled into a law, with a revenue able to maintain it," since "after the restoration, all were running fast into slavery." Public liberty had been preserved only because of Charles II's slothful and irresolute behavior. The liberties of the English nation would only be secure when the propertied oligarchs had been inculcated with, or rather had internalized, the correct political and religious principles.

124 Gilbert Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:648-55.

125 Ibid., 6:653.

126 Ibid., 6:648-49.

127 Ibid., 6:649.

128 Ibid.
The ratio studiorum (curriculum) that Burnet recommended to the upper classes was the same one that his father had imposed on him. This is extremely important, since Gilbert Burnet's education, both at home and at Marischal College of Aberdeen University, emphasized the mastery of the classics of Greek and Latin literature. Consequently the works of contemporary thinkers were neglected. For example, little time was given to perusing the writings of La Mothe le Vayer, Galileo Galilei, Francis Bacon, Pierre Gassendi, René Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, Baruch Spinoza, and Nicholas Malebranche. It was only after he had completed his university course that Burnet came into contact with the ideas of these contemporary thinkers. Gilbert was not a precursor of the Enlightenment in England, rather he was England's last Renaissance thinker. His recapitulation of the virtues of his paradigmatic propertied oligarch was merely a litany of his own father's virtues. He projected these onto the propertied oligarchs and their issue.

In politics, religion, and education, Gilbert Burnet never emancipated himself from his father. Probably, he never realized the impact that his father had made on his mental processes. Yet it proved to be quite indelible.

This dissertation stresses the continuity of political, religious, and pedagogic beliefs and values between the

elder and younger Burnet. Given the "special relationship" that existed between father and son, and the fact that Gilbert's knowledge of the works of Barclay, Grotius, and the masters of Greek and Latin literature had been refracted through the prism of his father's educational régime, it is not at all surprising that the primary difference between the two was their personalities, not their political and religious principles. Robert Burnet was excessively modest, while his son was vainglorious; the elder Burnet's "judgment was good," while the younger son was noted for "his propensity to blunder"; his father "was eminent for integrity and probity," while young Gilbert was traduced as a lying knave and reprobate; the senior Burnet was quite circumspect in his behavior, while his son was "too busy"; and finally Robert Burnet was a taciturn person, while Gilbert was a very gossipy individual. This is something that not only Burnet's detractors, but also his apologists, contemporary as well as latter-day, have failed to perceive. It was Gilbert Burnet's personality and his subsequent behavior, not his political and religious principles, that angered so many members of the political nation that they reviled

130 The quotation is taken from Macaulay, 2(1856): 129-30.

131 The quotations are taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 452.

132 The quotation is taken from Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900): 58.
him as an "Irish adventurer." This was one of the very few things on which the many political and religious factions in England and Scotland could agree. Jacobites, Tories, Whigs, Nonjurors, Anglicans, and Presbyterians—they all believed that Burnet was not a trustworthy person since he disdained to "come entirely into . . . [their] interests." As we shall see, on most occasions, Burnet's own personality traits along with his maladroit, if not mala-pert, behavior alienated the powers that be.

Next to his father's tutoring and the sacrosanct authority of Holy Writ, the teachings and example of the Cambridge Platonists left a deep imprint on Gilbert Burnet's psyche. In fact, in his History of My Own Time he remarked that even after the restoration of the episcopal order in the Anglican Church "that, if a new set of men had not appeared of another stamp, the church had quite lost her esteem over the nation." "These," he added, "were generally of Cambridge, formed under some divines, the chief of whom were Drs. Whitchot, Cudworth, Wilkins, More and Worthington." Burnet felt a special affinity for them,

133 The quotation is taken from Macaulay, 2(1856): 129-30.

134 The quotation is taken from Burnet's Rough Draught of My Own Life, in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 488.


not only because of their teachings, but more importantly because of their personalities. He admired the Cambridge Platonists as human beings. As we shall presently see, this was one of his most salient personality traits: since he would not only have to respect an individual's principles, but also esteem his person, before he would become more deeply involved with him.

If one were to depict his relationships as a series of concentric circles, then the innermost circle would represent Robert Burnet, while the second circle would represent Sir Robert Moray, his "second father," Robert Leighton, bishop of Dumblane and later archbishop of Glasgow, James Nairn, minister of the Abbey Church at Edinburgh, Lawrence Charteris, an Edinburgh clergyman, John Tillotson, dean of St. Paul's and later archbishop of Canterbury, and Mary II. Leighton, Nairn, Charteris, and Tillotson had all been greatly influenced by the Cambridge Platonists. The third and last concentric circle would represent his political associates of the moment, for example, from 1643 to 1674, many of Burnet's confrères were aligned with the Court faction, while after his final departure from Scotland, many Scotland, many of his political allies were the leaders of the Country faction.

In a very large measure, Burnet was favorably disposed toward the teachings of the Cambridge Platonists

138 Ibid., 1(1897):533.
because they reinforced the beliefs and values that his father's educational regimen already had inculcated in him. Like the elder as well as the younger Burnet, moderation had been one of the traits of the Cambridge Platonists. These Cambridge dons like the Burnets attempted to find and to follow the via media in ecclesiastical matters. They wanted to avoid, not only the Scylla of Laudianism—since many "hot gospelers" were convinced that the Laudian regime was really a Trojan Horse for the reimposition of the "papal yoke" on the realm—but also the Charybdis of Puritanism— for many High Anglicans were equally convinced that precisianism, given its centrifugal dynamic, soon would degenerate into unbridled sectarianism. Like the Christian humanists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these Cambridge divines called for "liberty in non-essentials." They believed that the doctrines of Christianity were few and simple. Although they were convinced of the absolute truth of Christianity, the Cambridge men had been chagrined by the inquisitorial temperament of the Catholic and Calvinist "saints." They, like Robert and Gilbert Burnet, believed that an inordinate amount of time and energy had been wasted in seemingly endless wrangles over abstruse theological points. 139

Needless to say, the dons as well as Robert and Gilbert Burnet loathed the mechanistic materialism of Hobbesianism.

139 Ibid., 1(1897):330-41.
Consequently, they both participated in the already popular sport of the "hunting of Leviathan." 140

Neither Gilbert Burnet's apologists nor his detractors, contemporaneous as well as latter-day, ever fathomed to what extent his thinking and his consequent behavior had been influenced by his scrutiny of Richard Hooker's Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity. This is all the more remarkable considering Burnet's statement in his Rough Draught of My Own Life:

I began my study with relation to our home matters [the proper ordering of the Scottish kirk] with Hooker's Ecclesiasticall Policy [sic], which did so fixe me that I never departed from the principles laid down by him, nor was I a little delighted with the modesty and charity that I observed in him which edified me as much as his book instructed me. 141

Despite his candid remarks in his autobiography, the literature on Burnet is devoid of any extended discussion, let alone analysis, of the impact of Hooker's principles upon Burnet's temperament. In this regard, two examples will suffice. Thomas Burnet, in his The Life of the Author, simply paraphrased his father's words, stating that, "no book pleased him more than Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity from the principles of which he never departed." 142

Likewise Clarke, in his section on Burnet (1643-1674) in

140 Ibid., 1(1897):333.

141 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 460.

142 Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:675.
Foxcroft's *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, again merely quoted from Burnet's *Rough Draught of My Own Life*. Other students of Burnet have followed the example of Clarke and Thomas Burnet. This is as true for twentieth-century scholarship as for that of the eighteenth century. However, one must add this caveat. In his "The Anglican Reaction to the Revolution, 1688-1702," Gerald Milton Straka—even though his work is concerned primarily with the Anglican establishment's justification of the Glorious Revolution and its subsequent rationalization of the Revolution Settlement—stressed that many Anglican divines, whatever their individual "theological political theories" might have been, had been imbued with Hooker's political and religious principles. Since his work was one of prosopography, given that its focus was the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Church of England, Straka was not particularly concerned with Burnet, he merely cited him as one example among many others.

Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* reinforced Burnet's negative view of the Presbyterians. As we shall presently see, his adverse initial impression of the "hot gospelers" had been the product of his first-hand experiences with his mother's Presbyterian relatives. Even

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143 Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 27.

though his personal encounters with the "hot gospelers" had deepened his disillusionment with them, especially his participation in Robert Leighton's various stillborn attempts to accommodate presbytery with episcopacy in one national kirk, Burnet came to regard Hooker's work as an enchiridion that provided him with irrefutable arguments for emasculating the Presbyterians' intellectual pretensions. In fact, he made Hooker's arguments his own. Consequently, whenever he grappled with the vexatious political and ecclesiastical problems of his day, such as schism, nonconformity, occasional conformity, and the nonjuring clergy, Burnet's position was the product of Hooker's vision of the Anglican establishment, and his own experiences with the "hot gospelers." Thus, when he demarcated the boundaries of acceptable religious dissent, he never lost sight of Hooker's ideal of the Anglican Church.

Neither Burnet nor Hooker ever doubted that the vertices of ecclesiastical society as well as civil society were congruent, since the crown was at the apex of each hierarchy. Consequently they believed that the church ought to be comprehensive and national, for every one of the king's subjects should be a communicant of one of the established churches. Conversely every member of either the Scottish kirk or the Anglican establishment would be one of His Majesty's subjects. This had been part of the conventional wisdom of most politically and religiously conscious
Elizabethans. Needless to say, Burnet's irenic schemes, as we shall presently see, were confined to Protestant Christianity. He never wavered from his belief that Roman Catholicism per se was as lethal to the body politic as syphilis was to the subject.

Given that Burnet never had lost sight of Hooker's ideal of the Anglican Church, he spent most of his adult life trying to make the real Anglican establishment conform to Hooker's ideal. Notwithstanding his historical labors, he remained invincibly ignorant of the fact that the Elizabethan world was a world that had been lost. Even as late as 1688-1694, the period of his greatest ecclesiastical influence, Burnet still was attempting to resuscitate the Elizabethan ecclesiastical polity. In this matter, he was as ingenuous as those Reformers of the preceding century, who believed that the national churches which the Reformation movements had helped to create could somehow recapture not only the dogmas and discipline, but also the spirit of the primitive Christian church.

For Burnet there were seemingly three coordinate religious and political authorities. First, there were the religious and political beliefs of Robert Burnet. Secondly, there were the Scriptures and the writings of the Church

Fathers. Thirdly, there was Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*.

Keeping firmly in mind those intellectual influences which molded Gilbert Burnet's outlook and career, we shall now embark upon Burnet's Scottish career from 1643 to 1674, during which time, notwithstanding his later tergiversations, he showed himself a robust exponent of passive obedience. By the dénouement of his Scottish career, Burnet, in part due to his own duplicity, had succeeded in antagonizing his patron Lord Lauderdale and in angering the other members of the Court faction, with the notable exception of James, who was then duke of York.
CHAPTER I

THE SCOTTISH CAREER, 1643-1674

1. His Early Background And His First Travels

Gilbert Burnet was born in Edinburgh on the eighteenth of September 1643, the year before the Battle of Marston Moor. His father was a scion of the house of Crathes, an old and socially prominent family in Aberdeenshire. The elder Burnet, while still a law student, had spent seven years in France. Consequently, although Robert Burnet like his son Gilbert later took great pride in his Scottish background, the elder Burnet like his more famous son, did not have a parochial mentality, since Robert's foreign legal studies as well as three "voluntary" exiles had broadened his world view. Foreign travel and "voluntary" exile would also alter the way in which the younger Burnet

perceived his world. Robert Burnet became a solid and respected member of the bar in Edinburgh. Although he was the descendant of an ancient, landed family in Aberdeenshire and had received a splendid legal education, he would never attain, however, to the uppermost stratum of his profession. His moderation in ecclesiastical and political matters, as well as his setting aside so much of his practice to charity cases, had estranged him from the most influential members of the Scottish legal establishment.

Robert Burnet was also the only member of the political "nation" in Edinburgh who had steadfastly refused to subscribe to the National League and Covenant, which had been drafted in February 1638 by Alexander Henderson, minister of Leuchars, and the lawyer Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston. Lord Warriston, who later became the

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147 As we shall presently see, foreign travel along with his exilic experiences would act as a leaven upon the younger Burnet's political and religious development. Their effects upon his outlook were most dramatically revealed when his travel letters were published in January or February 1687. At the same time, foreign travel would act as a solvent upon his orthodox or classical Calvinism.


149 Henderson and Warriston had drawn up the National Covenant at the express order of 'The Tables': four select committees made up of nobles, gentlemen, burghers, and ministers who had been elected by their fellow Presbyterians to spearhead their drive against Charles I's ecclesiastical policies. Consequently, the National League and Covenant was both a defensive as well as an offensive alliance for
spokesman for the most vociferous and intransigent of the Covenanters, was Robert Burnet's brother-in-law. The elder Burnet had married Warriston's sister. Thus, Johnston later became Gilbert's maternal uncle. In spite of his consistent opposition to the National League and Covenant, Robert Burnet, through the good offices of his brother-in-law, was allowed to go into "voluntary" exile on the Continent.150

After the defeat of the Scots in the Second Civil War, he was allowed to return to Scotland. Even though the elder Burnet had refused repeatedly Oliver Cromwell's blandishments—for the Lord Protector had tried to woo him with various positions in the Scottish administration—he was allowed to retire to his estate in Aberdeenshire. While on his estate at Crimond, he spent his time like his more famous son either in "dignified leisure," or in catechizing his servants and tenants. The two Burnets emphasized the practical rather than the speculative aspect of Christianity—the practice of virtue and care of souls. Both father

the preservation of Presbyterianism in Scotland. On the one hand, the Covenanters were determined to preserve the achievements of the Scottish Reformation, fully believing that John Knox and his disciples had restored the pristine purity of the Scottish Kirk. On the other hand, the Presbyterians in Scotland, although they were staunch monarchists, already had repudiated the royal supremacy over the Kirk. They rejected any species of Erastianism or Caesaro-papism.

and son shared a preference for a policy of comprehension or toleration.

In 1660 the elder Burnet as a reward for his loyalty to episcopacy and to monarchy was made a Lord of the Session, with the title of Lord Crimond. Unfortunately, he was not to enjoy his new dignity for long: he died on 29 August 1661, when Gilbert was seventeen.\footnote{Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 457-59; Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):143.}

Gilbert's mother, Rachel Johnston, like her brother, Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, was a zealous Presbyterian. Needless to say, unlike her husband and son, Rachel was opposed to Charles I's Scottish policy. Since she and her kinsfolk all had been "hot gospelers,"\footnote{"Hot gospelers" was a term of opprobrium that many High Anglicans--such as John Whitgift, Richard Bancroft, and William Laud--had employed in order to deride and to discredit the Presbyterians in England and Scotland.} it afforded the younger Burnet the splendid opportunity of becoming acquainted with the leaders of the various Covenanting sects. Even though he was cognizant of the fact that most of the Covenanters were zealous, prayerful, sober, and devoted to Scriptural studies, he believed that far too many of the Presbyterians were destitute of piety, virtue, and learning.\footnote{Burnet, "Rough Draught Of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 459-60; Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):53-58; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of}
that Presbyterianism was inherently an unstable order. According to young Gilbert, this was especially true of his maternal uncle, Lord Warriston, leader of the Remonstrant faction of the Covenanters. Notwithstanding

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His Own Time, 6:673; Cockburn, pp. 26-27; Elliot, p. 62; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 31-39.


In his A Vindication Of The Authority, Constitution, And Laws Of The Church And State Of Scotland. In Four Conferences. Wherein the Answer to the Dialogues betwixt the Conformist and the Non-Conformist is examined (Glasgow: Robert Sanders, 1673)—which is a composite of four dialogues between "Eudaimon, a Moderate man, Philarchaeus, an Episcopal man, Isotimus, a Presbyterian, Basilius, an Asserter of the Kings [sic] Authority, Criticus, one well studied in Scripture [and] Polyhistor, an Historian"—Gilbert Burnet not only castigated the Presbyterians for their unchristian behavior, but he also anathematized them for their pharisaical superciliousness ("The First Conference," there is not any pagination in the original).

One of the most important consequences of Oliver Cromwell's victory over the Scots at Dunbar on September 3, 1650 was the creation of further schisms among the Covenanters. The Remonstrants or Protesters were the most extreme or radical of all the many factions of Covenanters. They believed that Almighty God had used Cromwell's New Model Army as His Own Instrument: for the Lord of Hosts was again chastising His People, since they had allowed "ungodliness in high places" to go unpunished. Consequently, the Remonstrants refused to swear allegiance to young Charles (the future Charles II), or to help his supporters: until Charles had sincerely, as well as publicly, repented of his vile hypocrisy, when he had subscribed not only to the National League and Covenant, but also to the Solemn League and Covenant. According to Alexander Jaffray, one of the...
the fact that Burnet's negative view of the Covenanters would be reinforced by his participation in Robert Leighton's various attempts to accommodate presbytery and episcopacy within one national church, Gilbert would also have repudiated the position that James I articulated in 1604 at the Hampton Court Conference. During this conference, which was a debate between some representative Puritan ministers and select Anglican bishops, James I remarked, "No bishop, no king."\footnote{157} Considering that Gilbert shared his father's Erastian views on church government,

Scottish commissioners, who was then negotiating with Charles I's son, the more rigid Covenanters (Remonstrants) were determined to force the future king to swallow the bitter pill of Presbyterianism. In Jaffray's own words, the Scottish commissioners compelled the young Charles to "sign and swear a covenant, which we knew, from clear and demonstrable reasons, that he hated in his heart. . . . He sinfully complied with what we most sinfully pressed upon him" (George Clark, gen. ed., The Oxford History of England, 15 vols. (Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, 1934-), vol. 9: The Early Stuarts: 1603-1660, by Godfrey Davies, 2d ed., p. 88.

\footnote{157 The Hampton Court Conference not only was summoned by, but it also was under the chairmanship of James I. During the disputation that ensued, the king himself participated in the debate. This conference had one positive result: a new translation of the Bible, now known as the King James or Authorized Version, was undertaken. (Davies, The Early Stuarts, 2d ed., pp. 69-70; J. P. Cooper, "The Fall of the Stuart Monarchy," [Chapter 18] in G. N. Clark, J. R. M. Butler, J. P. T. Bury, and E. A. Benians' edition of The New Cambridge Modern History, vol. 4: The Decline of Spain and the Thirty Years War, pp. 536-37; John) P. Kenyon, Stuart England, The Pelican History of England [Hammondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 178], pp. 49-50. Roger Lockyer, Tudor and Stuart Britain, 1471-1714 [London: Longman Group, 1974], pp. 228-29).}
this future bishop of Salisbury would have stopped short of James' aphorism. 158

Young Gilbert's homelife was to be touched by the divisions of his age. Even though Robert and Rachel Burnet held not only different but mutually exclusive political and religious opinions, they seemed to have loved one another very much and to have been happily married: as the fact of Gilbert's father selecting his wife as executrix of his estate and his commending his sons to her guidance testifies. T. E. S. Clarke 159 maintained that the phraseology of Robert Burnet's will "written in 1651 after the troublous period of the covenants, [is] strong testimony of an enduring affection between husband and wife which many trials and much difference of opinion had failed to overthrow." 160 The taproot of Gilbert's repeated attempts to realize the old


159 T. E. S. Clarke was one of the coauthors of the Life of Gilbert Burnet. In this work, Clarke himself was responsible for "Part I: Scotland, 1643-1674." Consequently Clarke was the author of chapters 1 ("Family, Home-Life and Training"), 2 ("Youth, Friends, and Early Travels"), 3 ("Life and Work in Saltoun"), and 4 ("Professor in Glasgow"). In regard to his professional training, Clarke was a theologian, rather than a historian. He had earned a bachelor's degree in divinity. While he was working on this project, Clarke was the minister at Saltoun.

160 Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 8.
Elizabethan ideal of a comprehensive national church had been the result of the deep and enduring affection that his parents had for one another throughout their lives. Although the son loved both his parents very much, it was apparent that in his views he identified much more with his father than with his mother and her family. Yet in spite of this fact, out of a sense of filial obedience he would attend Lord Warriston on the scaffold in 1663. 161

Robert Burnet, as we already know, had made an indelible impression on the mind of young Gilbert. Until he was eighteen years old, Gilbert's intellectual and mental development had been molded by the elder Burnet. 162 Yet, while identifying with his father, he also harbored ambivalent feelings toward him. At various times, Gilbert both loved and hated him. 163 These same feelings that young Burnet manifested toward his father, an early authority figure, he would later carry over toward other authority figures. They would be reflected in his relations with the Duke of


Like John Stuart Mill much later, Gilbert was an infant prodigy who had been educated at home by his father. As a teacher, the elder Burnet was a hard taskmaster and a severe disciplinarian: for young Gilbert not only had to begin his studies at four o'clock in the morning, but also his father "humbled ... [him] with severe correction." Under his father's tuition, he developed an early proficiency in Latin. According to his own testimony, his father had taught him Latin "with so much success that before I was ten years old I was master of that tongue and of the classic authors." He matriculated at Marischal College of Aberdeen University when he was nine years old, and "went through the common methods of the Aristotelian philosophy with no small applause." In June 1657, he


165 Cockburn, p. 28; George Clark, p 115; Henderson, p. 120; Mathieson, 2:244.

166 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 454.

167 Ibid. 168 Ibid.
became Master of Arts when not yet fourteen years old. While he was at Marischal College, his father continued to monitor his studies closely. Under the paternal tutelage, young Gilbert was also instructed in Scottish history and politics. The elder Burnet not only was a keen observer of contemporary Scottish affairs, but had also maintained ties with the leaders of both the royalist and the covenanting factions. However, his son, who was only eight years old when Oliver Cromwell's soldiers marched into Aberdeen, was neither deeply nor personally affected by the political turmoil of the English Civil Wars and the Commonwealth era.

After he had been awarded his master's degree, young Burnet was allowed to choose his own profession. Given that his father and his mother's relatives still had influential friends in the Scottish legal establishment, the young man decided to enter the legal profession, even though his father had hoped that he would become a churchman. After studying civil and feudal law for a year, however, he abandoned his legal studies and decided after all to enter the ministry. This decision to prepare for a clerical career delighted his father. Since the elder Burnet himself had become disenchanted with the law, he had several times seriously considered becoming a clergyman. Needless to say, Gilbert's mother and her relatives were not so pleased with

his decision, for they realized that the bar had greater prizes to offer than the church. Moreover they also resented his desire to become an Episcopal clergyman. 170

Although Gilbert had read law for only a year, the influence of his legal studies was to remain and be reflected in many of his later political pamphlets and historical works. This was most evident by his concern with the historical development of institutions and ideas, for example, in his treatment of the nature of sovereignty, the liberty of the subject, the nature of private property, the legislative and executive powers, and the English constitution. 171

Having discontinued his legal studies, Gilbert spent the next three years studying theology and traveling throughout West Europe. In the course of his theological study, he became acquainted with three Scottish clergymen who were to influence his theological thought as well as his

170 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 454-56, 460; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:673-75; Foxcroft, Supplement, p. 30; Le Clerc, pp. 7-10.

pulpit style greatly. James Nairn first introduced the young man to the works of the Cambridge Platonists. In Burnet's later writings, there was a strongly Platonic element, in particular, the tendency to elevate the mind to an ethereal realm, and to disregard the demands of the corrupt body, together with a propensity to look upon the cosmos as a solidly theocratic order, composed of a series of integrated hierarchies. This very marked Platonic strain in his thought underscored the fact that Burnet's ideas, beliefs, and values were a legacy of the English Renaissance. In fact, he was a true scion of the Elizabethan age: for the chain of being was as fundamental to his thought as it


173 For additional information, see Burnet's two great oraisons funebres: A Sermon Preached at the Funeral Of The Honourable Robert Boyle At St. Martins in Fields, January 7,1691/2 (London: Ric. Chiswell, and John Taylor 1692) and A Sermon Preached at the Funeral Of The Most Reverend Father in God John By The Divine Providence, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate and Metropolitan of all England. Who Died at Lambeth the 22d, Day of November, in the 55th. Year of his Age: And was Buried at St. Lawrence Jewry in London on the 30th. of that Month Anno Dom. 1694 (London: Ric Chiswell, 1694). Also, see Burnet's A Discourse of the Pastoral Care (London, 1692), as well as his The New Preface And Additional Chapter, To The Third Edition Of The Pastoral Care. Publish'd Singly, for the Use of Those who have the Former Editions (London: A. Baldwin for D. Midwinter, and B. Crowse, 1713). In addition, one should see Burnet's An Essay On The Memory Of The Late Queen (London: Ric Chiswell, 1695).
had been to any of Queen Elizabeth's subjects. 174 It would
be extremely difficult to overemphasize the effect that the
writings of Plato, his disciples, and later scholiasts had
upon Burnet's intellectual development. In addition, Nairn
along with Robert Leighton and Lawrence Charteris also
affected the future bishop of Salisbury's homiletical style.
They stressed extempore eloquence in pulpit preaching, and
they believed that sermons should be plain, short, and
practical. 175 If Burnet's sermons were not always short—he
had the reputation of preaching out the hour-glass—they
were at least plain and simple. 176 In this matter, Burnet
like the other Latitudinarian divines had stripped the
Elizabethan and Jacobean ornamentation from his sermons. 177

The second clergyman to influence him was Robert
Leighton, a moderate divine. He espoused a restricted

Elizabethan World Picture (New York: Alfred A. Knopf and
passim.

175 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time,
1(1897): 238-41, 384-86; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own
Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 460-62; Thomas Burnet,
"The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's His-
tory of His Own Time, 6: 675-76; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 2,
11, 86-87; Driskell, pp. 45-64, 97-130 passim; W. Fraser
Mitchell, English Pulpit Oratory From Andrewes To Tillotson:
A Study Of Its Literary Aspects (New York: Russell &
Russell, 1962), pp. 20, 24, 90, 115, 121-29, 254-59, 277,
284, 341-43.


177 Driskell, pp. 44-92 passim; Mitchell pp. 341-43,
392-93.
episcopacy for Scotland, believing that the episcopal order would have to be changed so that it could accommodate itself to the peculiarities of the Scottish people. Burnet and Leighton were kindred spirits. Over a period of twenty-three years, the friendship of the two men broadened and deepened. The future bishop of Sarum supported and participated in Bishop Leighton's several attempts to reconcile the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians so that they might become fellow communicants in one national church. Unfortunately, Leighton's various schemes—accommodation and indulgence—failed not only because the Presbyterians were inflexible and obdurate, but also because the Bishop of Dunblane, a very saintly man, was more suited to be either a scholar or a monk than an ecclesiastical politician. Yet their friendship would leave its mark on Burnet's theological development and pulpit style in four ways. Along with Nairn and Charteris, Leighton maintained that the end

of religion "... [was to be] a divine life in the soul that carried a man farre above forms or opinions." In Burnet's theological writings great stress was placed on the inner nature of the religious experience while external observances were of little account. Secondly, Leighton reinforced Burnet's view of political Erastianism, moderate episcopacy, limited toleration, and reforming zeal.

In the third place, along with Charteris and Nairn, the Archbishop of Glasgow had been affected by the "prose revolution" of the seventeenth century that had been precipitated by the cataclysm of the English Civil Wars, and had been furthered by the scientific movements of the day. This literary revolution had completed the "breakdown of the elaborate system of verbal artifice which had endured under the name 'rhetoric' from classical times into the Renaissance." Like the others, Leighton maintained that sermons should be plain, simple, and practical rather than pedantic, speculative, and detailed.

Finally, Leighton encouraged young Gilbert to study

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179 The quotation is taken from Burnet's, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 462.


181 The quotation is taken from Driskell, p. 44.

the Church Fathers as well as the constitution of the primitive church. When one peruses Burnet's sermons as well as his other religious tracts, one finds innumerable citations from the Church Fathers as well as hundreds of allusions to the halcyon days of primitive Christianity.

In spite of Burnet's memorial to the Scottish bishops in 1666 in which he struck at the neglect of their pastoral duties, their meddling in secular affairs, and their efforts to enrich their children from the patrimony of the church, the friendship between Bishop Leighton and the young Burnet remained unimpaired. If one excluded his immediate family, Leighton along with Sir Robert Moray, John Tillotson, and Mary II were the four people with whom Burnet was most

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184 See Burnet's A Relation Of The Death Of the Primitive Persecutors. Written originally in Latin by L[ucius] C[aecilius] F[irmianus] Lactantius. Englished by Gilbert Burnet, D.D. To which he hath made a large Preface concerning Persecution (Amsterdam: J. S., 1687), as well as his Animadversions on Mr. Hill's Book Entituled, A vindication of the Primitive Fathers, against the Imputations of Gilbert, Lord Bishop of Sarum. In a Letter to a Person of Quality (London: Ri. Chiswell, 1695). If one ever doubted the influence that Burnet's perception of primitive Christianity, and its first apologists had upon his modes of thought, one need only examine the Animadversions on Mr. Hill's Book. In this work, there was scarcely one page wherein he had not cited an early Christian apologist, or had not discussed a particularly abstruse theological or philosophical problem.
deeply involved emotionally. When each of these persons died, he gave a "cry from the heart." 185

Lawrence Charteris was a minister in Edinburgh who, like Leighton, stressed the inner nature of the experience of faith. He was also a student of mystical theology. Burnet as a young man at Saltoun had already studied the works of the mystics. At the time that he was becoming friends with Nairn, Leighton, and Charteris, he also developed an interest in contemporary science and thought: he began to study the writings of René Descartes, Pierre Gassendi, and George Keith. 186

Apart from his university course and his own theological studies, the young Burnet counted travel a part of his preparation for his chosen profession. During the years 1662-64, he made a series of pilgrimages to the most important centers of Protestant thought. Although he originally had come to England to take care of some family business, which included attending Lord Warriston on the scaffold, Burnet took this opportunity to visit London, Cambridge, and Oxford. While in London, he became acquainted with the most eminent of the Latitudinarian divines, men such as Edward Stillingfleet, John Tillotson, William Lloyd, Thomas

185 The quotation is taken from Clarke and Foxcroft p. 331.

186 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):384-86; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 460-62; Henderson, pp. 120, 136-37; Le Clerc, p. 10.
Tension, and Simon Patrick. He found himself not only in accord with their theological and philosophical principles, but he also admired them as human beings.\(^{187}\) After Burnet's Scottish career had come to an end in 1675 (subsequent to his altercation with the Duke of Lauderdale), he would associate himself with the Latitudinarian or Low Church party in the Anglican Church.\(^{188}\) When William III and Mary II ascended the throne, Burnet used his influence with the joint sovereigns to have them appoint Latitudinarian ministers to the bench of bishops.\(^{189}\) The Latitudinarian divines


\(^{188}\) Abbey 1:112-13; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 471 & 480; Davis, pp. 150-53, 159, 188-90; Lecky, 1(1888):80-83; Swift, A preface to the B p of S r m's introduction to the third volume of the History of the reformation, p 56; Ward and Waller's The Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. 8: The Age of Dryden, pp. 298-300.

reinforced not only Burnet's belief in moderation and in limited toleration, but also his desire for a non-violent comprehension of Dissenters within the Church of England.

While in London, he became acquainted with many of the English Nonconformists. Even though he respected the religious scruples of the English Dissenters, just as he would later respect the religious and political scruples of the Non-juring clergymen, Burnet would never be attracted to the intellectual positions of either the Dissenters or the Nonjurors. He never questioned his attachment to the Church from which the Nonconformists and the Nonjurors had cut themselves adrift. 190

Burnet's attitude toward the Nonconformists and the Nonjurors was an amalgam of intellectual and emotional elements. Notwithstanding the Romish abuses that still plagued the Anglican establishment, Burnet was convinced that the

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Church of England was a truly Reformed Protestant Church that deserved the support of every one of His Majesty's subjects. Unlike the Puritans of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and the English Dissenters of his own day, Burnet believed that the Church of England, notwithstanding all its shortcomings, was the only Protestant bulwark in England capable of sustaining the repeated onslaughts of a reinvigorated Tridentine Catholicism. He likewise rejected the Nonconformists' argument that the Church of England was not a truly Reformed Protestant Church, since "popish dregs" had vitiated the Anglicana Ecclesia's liturgy as well as its constitution. Moreover, given that Burnet had inherited his moderate Episcopalianism from his father, he was favorably disposed toward Anglicanism's raison d'être: the pursuit of the via media. Considering that he had been as deeply affected by the teachings and the person of the Cambridge Platonists as he would later be by the person and the teachings of the Latitudinarians, it is not surprising that he sympathized with the plight of the Nonjurors and the Protestant Dissenters.191

191 In his "Last Will and Testament," Burnet remarked that:

I live and die a sincere Christian, believing the Truth of that Gospel which for many Years I have preached to others. I am a true Protestant according to the Church of England; full of Affection and Brotherly Love to all who have received the Reformed Religion, tho' in some Points Different from our Constitution.

I die, as I all along lived and professed my self to be, full of Charity and Tenderness for those among Us who yet Dissent from us, and heartily pray that God would
Although he deprecated much of the religious bigotry of his
day, Burnet believed that the Anglican establishment's spec-
ial place in the civil and the ecclesiastical constitutions
should be preserved. Nonjurors and Nonconformists should

heal our Breaches, and make us like-minded in all Things,
that so we might unite our Zeal, and join our Endeavours
against Atheism, and Infidelity, that have prevailed
much; and against Popery, the greatest Enemy to our
Church, more to be dreaded than all other Parties whatso-
ever (Gilbert Burnet, "The Last Will and Testament of the
said Gilbert, Bishop of Salisbury, in the Presence of John
Macknay, Alexander Le Fort, John Barnes" [17 April 1714], in
"Appendix Number I," in Macky's Memoirs of the secret ser-
\vices of John Macky, pp. ii-iii=--the italics are in the
original). See also Burnet's "The Conclusion," in Routh's
Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:633-37, 666-69;
as well as Burnet's "A Meditation on My Voyage for England," in
Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 522-28; and Burnet's "At the
Hague the 30th of July 1687," in Hughes' article, pp.
223-27.

192 For additional information, see Gilbert Burnet's
"An Enquiry into the Reasons for abrogating the Test imposed
on all Members of Parliament Offered by Sa. Oxon. ([London:
Richard Baldwin, 1689]), in Walter Scott's A Collection of
Scarce And Valuable Tracts, On The Most Interesting And En-
tertaining Subjects: But Chiefly Such As Relate To The His-
tory And Constitution Of These Kingdoms. Selected From An
Infinite Number In Print And Manuscript, In The Royal, Cot-
ton, Sion, And Other Public, As Well As Private Libraries;
Particularly That Of The Late Lord Sommers. 2d ed., rev.
13 vols. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies; J. Murray; R. H.
Evans; J. White; And J. Harding, 1809-15; reprint ed., New
York: AMS Press, 1965), 9(1813):151-60; Gilbert Burnet's
"Samuel Lord Bishop of Oxon, his celebrated Reasons for
abrogating the Test and Notion of Idolatry, answered by
Samuel Archdeacon of Canterbury" [1688]), in Somers Tracts,
9(1813):160-67; Gilbert Burnet's "A Second Part of the
Enquiry into the Reasons offered by Sa. Oxon for Abrogating
the Test: Or an Answer to his Plea for Transubstantiation;
and for Acquiring the Church of Rome of Idolatry" ([1688]),
in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 215-28; Gilbert
Burnet's "Reasons Against the Repealing the Acts of Parlia-
ment Concerning the Test. Humbly offered to the Considera-
tion of the Members of Both Houses at their next Meeting, on
the Twenty eight of April, 1687" ([Holland], [1687]), pp.
1-7; Gilbert Burnet's "A Letter, containing some Remarks on
not be persecuted, since the consciences of Trinitarian protestants should not be coerced. Nonetheless these protestant dissidents, in Burnet's view, should not be allowed to occupy the key posts in the civil and the ecclesiastical hierarchies. In this matter, Burnet's arguments were similar to those of William Warburton in his book *The alliance between church and state*. Needless to say, Burnet loathed the practice of occasional conformity.

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193 See footnote 190.


195 Occasional conformity was the practice whereby a Protestant Dissenter would receive the Eucharist in the
Notwithstanding the fact that family business had brought Burnet to England, his sojourn there afforded him the opportunity of becoming acquainted with some of the preeminent experimental scientists of his day. For example, he met the Honorable Robert Boyle, a great chemist, and Sir Robert Moray, the first president of the Royal Society. Having studied mathematics and natural philosophy in Scotland, England, and on the Continent, and having become acquainted with the most eminent scientists in Scotland and England, as well as with those in Holland and in the Germanies, he always had viewed experimental science and mathematics as a necessary prelude to theological study. Yet even though he was to become a member of the Royal Society, in the fields of natural philosophy and mathematics, he was never any more than a dilettante. When the brash young Scotsman was in ill favor at Court and in political difficulties, he spent his time building his own laboratory, and conducting his own chemical experiments. He plunged into this activity particularly after the trial and execution of the Rye House conspirators: when he feared not only that Anglican Church at very infrequent intervals, perhaps once a year, so that he could circumvent the penalties imposed by the Test Acts of 1673 and 1678.

his house would be searched and his papers seized, but also that he would be arrested. He hoped that by eagerly return­ing to his mathematical and scientific studies, he could maintain a low profile. In short, experimental science and mathematics became never more than his favorite diver­sions.

After Burnet attended his maternal uncle on the scaf­fold, he spent several weeks at the universities. In Cam­bridge, his belief in moderation and limited toleration was reinforced by his dialogue with some of the leaders of the Cambridge Platonists. At Oxford, the young Burnet met Edward Pocock, the celebrated orientalist, and John Wallis, the distinguished mathematician. Nevertheless, after he had visited both universities, he became disillusioned with them. He realized that most of the dons not only were not


198 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):331-40; Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:634-37, 666-69; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 463-64; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:676; Fox­croft, Supplement, pp. 45-47; Davis, pp. 158-59; Mathieson, 2:244; Le Clerc, pp. 10-11.
moderates or Latitudinarians, but they were actually bigots who opposed even a limited toleration. 199

In 1664 he began his grand tour of the Continent. It took him to Holland, where his belief in moderation and a limited toleration was even further strengthened. In Holland he not only studied but also met some of the leaders of the various sects that had congregated there, Lutherans, Calvinists, Arminians, Anabaptists, Brownists, Roman Catholics, and Unitarians. While he had come to the United Provinces already with a predilection for a limited toleration, he left there convinced not merely that a limited toleration was a practical possibility—although to have realized what a majority of Scotsmen still denied was itself a prodigious achievement—but also that limited toleration could be of inestimable advantage to the religious life of a nation. During a stay in Amsterdam, he noted that every religious sect had produced both dutiful citizens and sincere Christians. At the same time, he realized that the teachings of the different religious sects had far less influence on men's behavior than he had once supposed. 200 He had the lifelong dream of bringing about a reunion of European


200 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 467; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:677; Davis, pp. 159-60; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 89-94; Le Clerc, pp. 11-12.
Protestants. From his Dutch experience, the future bishop of Salisbury decided that compromise, rather than coercion, would help him bring about his irenic dream.

Although he had found dutiful citizens and sincere Christians among all the sects in Holland, he had been most impressed by the Arminians. In fact, dating from this Dutch experience, his own theological thought inclined him more and more towards Arminianism, even though later on in Scotland, he would deny that he was an Arminian. After he had completed his tour of the Low Countries, he went on to visit some members of the Huguenot community in Paris, before he returned to Scotland at the end of 1664.

2. The Ministry At Saltoun, 1664-1669

Not yet eighteen years old, young Gilbert had become an expectant preacher or probationer in the Kirk. By then he had passed his "trialls," which were a three-months-long

201 Foxcroft, Supplement, p. 92.

202 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):371; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 467; Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:239-45; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:677; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 92-93; Le Clerc, pp. 11-12.

series of oral examinations before a group of local clergy­men, who not only tested the future curate's knowledge of speculative and practical divinity, but also scrutinized his pulpit style. During these theological discussions, the moral character of the prospective preacher was carefully evaluated. After he had returned from his grand tour of the Continent, he stood his "trialls" again before the presbytery of Haddington on 15 December 1664. In Scotland a minister had to stand for these "trialls" every time he was presented to a benefice. Then Sir Robert Fletcher, who was an old and a very dear friend of his father, presented Gilbert to the living at Saltoun, a village about fifteen miles south of Edinburgh. Throughout his long life, young Burnet, thanks to his social position, as well as to his obvious abilities, had the good fortune to find highly­placed friends. In this instance, not only did Sir Robert Fletcher and his young protege have a common interest in mathematics, but Sir Robert, since he owed much to Robert Burnet, felt a deep sense of obligation toward the young man. 204

Before Burnet was ordained an episcopal priest, he already had been preaching for four months at Saltoun. This

was a deliberate act on his part. For by waiting until February 1665 to be ordained, Gilbert could maintain that his flock had chosen him as their pastor after the Presbyterian fashion. By allowing some time to elapse between his "trialls" before the presbytery of Haddington and his ordination, he was able to accommodate both Presbyterianism and Episcopalianism at the parish level in Saltoun. At the same time, unknown to the members of his congregation, he used the Anglican liturgy when he conducted divine worship. He was probably one of few Scottish Episcopalians who had dared to use the Anglican liturgy at Edinburgh in 1665. For many Scotsmen the Anglican constitution and liturgy were still anathema. In the young parson's own words, "I was the only man that I heard of in Scotland that used the forms of the Common prayer, not reading but repeating them." If he had read these prayers aloud from the English Service Book, he most assuredly would have roused the venom in many of his parishioners' spleens. In the Scottish Kirk, Episcopalians as well as Presbyterians were staunch advocates of

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205 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):57; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 468; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:678; Reid, p. 146.


207 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 471.
informal, extemporary prayer. Just as John Wesley and his
Methodists in the eighteenth century repudiated the luxuri-
ant liturgy of Anglicanism, Laud's "the beauty of holi-
ness," so too Burnet's auditors who were the spiritual
descendants of John Calvin, John Knox, and the Melvilles,
Andrew and James, insisted that their ministers preach as
well as pray extemporaneously. In all probability, if
Burnet had read either his sermons or his prayers, he would
have been rabbled by his own flock. By deliberately
deceiving the members of his congregation, this young curate
had been able to accommodate or to hold a delicate balance
at the parish level between the Presbyterian and the
Episcopalian polities. However, he was never again able to
achieve a non-violent comprehension of the Episcopaliens and
Presbyterians within one national church. In Scotland he
failed to modify the Kirk's system of synods and assemblies
so that it could accommodate a reformed episcopacy, while in
England the future bishop of Salisbury was not able to
broaden the base of the episcopal order so as to bring the
Nonconformists into the established church.

208 The quotation is taken from H. R. Trevor-Roper's
Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645, 2d ed. (London: Macmillan,
1965); New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965) pp. 140, 151,
182.

209 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in
Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 470; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp.
56-57; Grub, 3:217-18, 223-24; Mitchell, pp. 20 & 24; Reid,
pp. 148-49.

210 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time,
Even though he had judiciously postponed his ordination until after his congregation had elected him as their pastor, he was neither a timeserving Vicar of Bray, nor an unscrupulous place-seeker. He believed that the ministry was a divine vocation, and that the minister's pastoral duties were his highest function. During his five-year ministry at Saltoun, he proved himself a dedicated, conscientious, and hardworking parish priest. He not only preached three extempore sermons a week, which according to Scottish custom were to last an hour, but he also catechized both the old and the young three times each week, except during the season of sowing and at harvest time. In addition, 1897): 442-43, 496-536; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 498; Clark, pp. 115-16, 120; Davis, pp. 157-58, 164; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 15-16, 68-72; Grub, 3:238-39; Mathieson, 2:245-47; Spence, pp. 466, 468-69.

he visited his sick parishioners every day, and every household at least twice a year so that he could personally reprove, exhort, or comfort every one of his flock. Also, he distributed the Sacrament four times a year, and examined every member of his congregation who desired to receive the Sacrament. Clearly religion did not sit lightly on his shoulders. He was motivated primarily by religious ideals; political ideals were of secondary or lesser importance to him. Two examples will illustrate this point. When the young curate was conducting the divine service on Sunday, he frequently had the entire village searched to make sure that every individual who was physically able had come to

212 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 469-72; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:678; Cockburn, pp. 32-33; Conder, p. 308; Davis p. 160; Le Clerc, p. 13; Reid, pp. 147-48.

church. On the other hand, he gradually became disen-chanted with the bench of Scottish bishops, with the exception of his friend Robert Leighton. Despite the fact that he had maintained that episcopacy as a system of church government could be justified on the basis of the experience of primitive Christianity as well as on the grounds of natural reason—this had also been Richard Hooker's contention—Burnet believed that the Scottish bishops neglected

214 Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 58-60; Turberville, p. 297.


their pastoral functions. Their acquiescence in administrative abuses rendered episcopal government unacceptable to most of his countrymen.

While still a parish priest at Saltoun, he became so incensed by the behavior of the Scottish bishops that in 1666 he drew up a memorial which listed the abuses that the bishops had condoned.

Notwithstanding the fact that most members of the Restoration episcopate in Scotland were a sorry lot of mediocrities who oftentimes were guilty of apostasy, Burnet's Memorial of diverse grievances and abuses in this Church revealed the dark side of his character, his Pharisaical superciliousness. Given that many of the newly consecrated bishops had once been "hot gospelers," who had only recently repudiated their Presbyterian beliefs as well as their subscriptions to the Scottish Covenants so that they might receive their miters and crosiers from the Anglican establishment, Burnet's Memorial of diverse grievances revealed nonetheless how condescending, insulting, and sarcastic he could be. Burnet's Memorial of diverse grievances is a clear-cut example of how egocentric he had become. Long before he ever began writing the Rough Draught of My Own Life, he already was much in love with himself. On this occasion, he acted as though he had communed with Almighty God. Consequently, he never doubted that he had been chosen to administer "fraternal" correction to the entire Scottish
episcopate, the one notable exception was Robert Leighton. Burnet wrote that:

There is a time to speak and then to be silent is no less crime than to talk unseasonably, and tho obedience and subjection be the duty of Inferiors, yet to give modest and humble representation of abuses, when they are notorious and scandalous is no violation of the just respect due to authority. 217

Even though he did not attack the institution of Episcopacy per se, his scathing remarks regarding not only the character, but also the lifestyle of the individual members of the episcopate, undermined the moral authority of the Scottish bishops. By his repeated and poignant attacks upon the shortcomings of the members of the episcopate, Burnet held not only the Scottish bishops, but also the institution of Episcopacy, up to derision. 218 Granted that the Scottish episcopate was made up of neither the best, nor the brightest, clergymen in the kingdom, Burnet's telling assaults upon the moral integrity of the Scottish bishops rendered the Episcopal church-order contemptible in the eyes of many of his countrymen. By heaping obloquy upon the person of the bishops, and as a consequence upon the institution of Episcopacy, Burnet, notwithstanding the fact that he would have vehemently denied it, played into the hands of


218 Ibid., pp. 340-58.
most intransigent Presbyterians, inasmuch as he had rebuked the Scottish bishops for being a brood of renegade Presbyterian vipers who "preach scarce ever,"\(^{219}\) who "have their dwellings without the bounds of their diocese,"\(^{220}\) who are "accuse[d] of a great neglect of your charges,"\(^{221}\) who "have engaged [your]selves wholly in the affairs of State and secular business,\(^{222}\) and who are more concerned with "the State and grandeur which you do keep up,"\(^{223}\) than with keeping "the door to the holy orders . . . [well] kept [in order to keep out the] many wolves, robbers and thieves . . . who [have] betake[n] themselves to the ministry for filthy lucre."\(^{224}\) Notwithstanding his disingenuous protestation that he was not attempting to "justifie the Presbyterians in their humours . . . [since he knew] too many of . . . [them were] schismatical and factious,"\(^{225}\) he nonetheless proceeded to excoriate the bishops for persecuting the Presbyterians simply "because God hath darkened their understandings."\(^{226}\) He then proceeded to lecture the bishops in this manner:

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\[\ldots\] they [the Presbyterians] deserve compassion from all, especially from most of your selves who were once in the same error (for having taken the Covenant

\(^{219}\) Ibid., p. 343.  
\(^{220}\) Ibid.  
\(^{221}\) Ibid.  
\(^{222}\) Ibid.  
\(^{223}\) Ibid., p. 348.  
\(^{224}\) Ibid., p. 352  
\(^{225}\) Ibid., p. 347.  
\(^{226}\) Ibid., p. 345.
and persisting so long in a violent profession of presbytery, you have either strangely prevaricated or were really of that opinion: I speak not this to your reproach, . . . You ought to have more pitie on these who were your fellows in the errour. 227

From the foregoing passage it is evident that Burnet as was his wont forgot to mention that while he was at Saltoun he had behaved as guilefully as some of the Scottish bishops, inasmuch as he had allowed his flock to believe that they had "called" him to be their pastor after the Presbyterian fashion, in spite of the fact that shortly after he had stood his "trialls" before the Presbytery of Haddington he was ordained an Episcopal priest. In this matter Burnet saw the mote in the eyes of the Scottish bishops, while he failed to see the beam in his own eye. Apparently Burnet had been entertaining one of his celebrated mental reservations.

Given the condescending and self-righteous tone of his Memorial of diverse grievances, it is not surprising that Burnet with exception of his friend Leighton earned the hatred of the entire Scottish episcopate. Considering moreover that he had allowed his privat monitorie to somehow fall into the hands of the Nonconformists, and as a consequence to be circulated abroad, it is not surprising that James Sharp, then archbishop of St. Andrews, wanted to excommunicate him. Fortunately for Burnet, he was not excommunicated. While on his knees Burnet merely had to beg

227 Ibid., p. 347. The italics are mine.
forgiveness from the archbishop. 228 This is quite remarkable, considering his insufferably arrogant attitude toward the bench of bishops. In this regard Burnet wrote that:

... consider not the person but the advice, which I can say is not contemptible. ... Remember yt out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise. ... I do therefore entreat yow ... in still and sober sadness [to] ponder what I have written. ...

[since] yow will answer to the great God at the last day. 229

Unfortunately Burnet believed that far too many of "the bishops [were content to] sit down upon the dregs of the Presbyterians, and rise no higher wt their reforme." 230

The Memorial of diverse grievances underscored the effect that Leighton, Nairn, and Charteris had upon Burnet's homiletical style. In his privat monitorie he criticized not only the bishops, but also the lower clergy, for delivering homilies which oftentimes were nothing more than "long formal discourses" 231 that were "unintelligible to the vulgar." 232 Instead of these inordinately "long preachments" 233 which were "wrought out wt an operose method and stuffed wt pedantry," 234 he recommended that sermons "be

228 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):387-89; Cockburn, pp. 34-43.
230 Ibid., p. 351. 231 Ibid., p. 353.
232 Ibid. 233 Ibid. 234 Ibid.
serious, nervous and short." 235 Unfortunately in this matter of homiletics, he lamented that too "many of the Presbyterians did farre outdo" the Episcopalians. 236

His privat monitorie moreover gave several hostages to Fortune. At this time, he was very favorably disposed toward Charles II. He remarked that Scotsmen "live[d] under a prince of extraordinary worth and virtue, full of paternal care and affection for ... [their] nation." 237 This is quite remarkable, considering that later on in the History of My Own Time, Burnet stated that Charles' "person and temper, his vices as well as his fortunes, did resemble the character ... of Tiberius." 238 Later on in his Memorial of diverse grievances, he lauded Charles for not enforcing the recusancy laws against the Roman Catholics. Considering that the recusancy laws were "sanguinary laws," 239 Burnet believed that Charles revealed his "own good inclination to moderation, which is indeed very suitable to his equal clemency and gentlenes, which makes him admired all the world over." 240 Nevertheless during the last years of Charles

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235 Ibid. 236 Ibid. 237 Ibid., p. 341.

238 The quotation is taken from Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):470.


240 Ibid.
II's reign, he was alarmed by "the Creeping Romanism" at the English Court. He now felt that the king was too indulgent of the Roman Catholics. In the History of My Own Time he wrote that "there was a great expectation in the court of France that . . . the king [Charles II] would declare himself a papist." Notwithstanding his good intentions, Burnet in his privat monitorie made promises which he would never be able to keep. For example, he remarked that he would not "judge of the actings of Statesmen, [since] they have their own political reasons which privat persons ought not to inquire into." Nonetheless he spent most of his adult life analyzing and censuring the behavior of political and religious figures. In spite of the fact that he himself was only a "privat person," he was constantly "inquir[ing] . . . into the actings of Statesmen" and ecclesiastics.

Burnet's integrity was permanently compromised by his authorship of the Memorial of diverse grievances, and his subsequent negligence in allowing it to circulate abroad among the Nonconformists. Unfortunately for Burnet, he was

\[241\] The quotation is taken from Kenyon's The History Men, p. 36.

\[242\] The quotation is taken from Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):451.

never able to convince his fellow Episcopalians that he had only administered "fraternal" correction to the bench of bishops. Consequently his reputation was irreparably damaged by privat monitorie, since he was never able to dismiss it as a youthful indiscretion. Despite his repeated efforts to construct a plausible explanation for his conduct, Burnet had already forfeited the trust of his Episcopalian brethren. They refused to allow him to disassociate himself from his Memorial of diverse grievances. For the remainder of his Scottish career, and for that matter during the early years of his first English period, Burnet's detractors used his privat monitorie to impugn his motives. This was neither the first, nor the last time when Burnet would fashion the very cudgels that his opponents would later use to beat him with.

While Gilbert Burnet was at Saltoun, he not only earned the respect of the Nonconformists in his parish, but he also suggested that moderate Presbyterians might be presented to some of the vacant benefices in the duchy of Hamilton. In his view, many of the Episcopal clergy not only were poorly educated, but they also led scandalous lives. Consequently, the people, the young clergyman believed, "were running either into grosse ignorance or into

244 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897): 496-509; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 476-77; Reid, pp. 149-55.
wild fanaticism." Field conventicles were also being held in the area. If moderate Presbyterians were presented to some of the vacant livings, he maintained that not only would these ministers arrest these excesses, but they would have the respect of their flocks, and might "keep the people in some order."

In his view, Protestant Christianity for pragmatic reasons alone deserved the support and the protection of the magistrates. Many of his episcopal colleagues as well as

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245 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 476.

246 Ibid.

most of the Scottish bishops believed that not only was he too tolerant of the Nonconformists, but also that his various schemes to conciliate the moderate Presbyterians were really only Trojan horses. Even though Burnet asserted that he only wanted to restore to Episcopacy the pristine purity that he believed that it possessed during the "heroic age of primitive Christianity," most of the bishops in England and Scotland nonetheless did not believe him. They felt that Burnet in order to bring the moderate Presbyterians back into the Church of England as well as into the Scottish Kirk would so emasculate their order that they would once more be reduced to tulchan bishops. 248 Even after he was consecrated

Italy, Germany, etc. In the Years 1685, and 1686. Being Further Remarks on Switzerland, and Italy, etc. Written by a Nobleman of Italy, and Communicated to the Author. Which He Has Since Thought fit to Publish in Vindication of some Passages in the Letters (Rotterdam: Abraham Acher, 1687), pp. 1-24; Gilbert Burnet, Three Letters Concerning the Present State of Italy, Written in the Year 1687. I. Relating to the Affair of Molinos, and the Quietists. II. Relating to the Inquisition, and the State of Religion. III. Relating to the Policy and Interests of Some of the States of Italy. Being a Supplement to Dr. Burnet's Letters, in Dr. G. Burnet's Tracts, 1:4-11, 117-18, 129-35, 149, 154-55, 161.

248 Tulchan is a Gaelic word that refers to a stuffed calf-skin that is employed to cajole the mother cow into yielding her milk. In the context of Scottish history, the term tulchan bishops or tulchan episcopate refers to the period (1572-84) when the office of bishop was denuded of most of its political and ecclesiastical functions. In the religious sphere, the tulchan bishops were reduced to the status of permanent moderators of Presbyterian synods. In the political sphere, the tulchan bishops were forced to surrender most of the revenues from their sees to the Crown. Consequently this drastic Erastian solution to the problem of church government in the Scottish Kirk so emasculated the institution of episcopacy that a tulchan bishop was a bishop in name only (John T. McNeill, The History and Character of
bishop of Salisbury, most of his episcopal brethren looked
askance at him. They continued to regard him as a Presby-
terian in "Lawn Sleeves,"\(^{249}\) who was far too deeply involved
emotionally and intellectually with the Nonconformists. In
this matter, his fellow bishops were not reassured by the
example he set while at Saltoun, where he had adopted a
conciliatory posture toward the Nonconformists in his par-
ish.\(^{250}\) Moreover his episcopal brethren felt that Burnet's
family background was tainted. After all, his mother and
her relatives were "hot gospelers," while his father not
only was a convinced Erastian when it came to church gov-
ernment, but was also "looked on as a Puritan"\(^{251}\) by the
Scottish bishops of his day. In the 1838 edition of Bishop
Burnet's History Of His Own Time, the anonymous author of
the Introduction remarked that:

> Dr. Burnet was a bishop, and he stood unflinchingly
by the episcopal church: so far he was approved by the
high church or Tory party; . . . at the same time he depre-
cated the persecution of men whose only offence was
that they preferred a presbyterian form of church govern-
ment. . . . They, [High Anglicans and Tories] therefore,
ever trusted, much less did they advance him. He [Gil-
bert Burnet] supported their measures when he approved

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\(^{249}\) The quotation is taken from Doble and Rannie's Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne, 5(1901):44.

\(^{250}\) Ibid., 11(1921):415; "Introduction" to 1838 edition of Bishop Burnet's History Of His Own Time, 1(1838):ix-xi.

\(^{251}\) The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 453.
of them, and was drily thanked: he reproved them, [High Anglicans and Tories] and in return was hated. Consequently Burnet was "never entirely trusted" by his ecclesiastical brethren, for they viewed him "as a heterodox bishop—-an Episcopalian by interest, and a Presbyterian at heart." Most of his contemporaries, clergymen as well as laymen, regarded Burnet as a trimmer. 

After the rebuke he had received from the bishops, Burnet decided to atone for his alleged sin of recalcitrance by retreating into the desert, even though he still felt that he had only administered fraternal correction to the bishops. Accordingly, for the next two years, he remained in seclusion at Saltoun. He wanted to prove to his episcopal critics that Christian charity, rather than self-conceit or effrontery, had motivated him to write and to circulate his privat monitorie. While he confined himself to Saltoun, he not only began to study mystical theology, at the recommendation of Charteris, but also attempted to practice a severe asceticism. Neither his constitution nor his personality were suited to the practice of asceticism. Two years of ascetic practices had a debilitating effect on his physical as well as his mental health. He had neglected

252 "Introduction" to 1838 edition of Bishop Burnet's History Of His Own Time, 1(1838):1.
253 Ibid.
254 Ibid., p. xi.
personal hygiene, his diet was nutritionally deficient, "the whole masse of . . . [his] blood was corrupted," and he experienced two prolonged fevers. Simultaneously, he discerned that his ascetic practices had deleterious effects on his personality; he became more egocentric, over-scrupulous, self-conceited, and was more concerned with ritualistic observances, than with the inner nature of the faith experience. After he recovered from his second fever, which had continued for thirty days, he decided to return "to more compliance with my body." He was never to attempt asceticism again. Later, when the future bishop of Salisbury became persona non grata at court, and he had to keep a low profile, he would retreat to the desert of algebraic equations and experimental science, rather than find refuge in mystical theology and asceticism.

During the time that he was following an ascetic regimen at Saltoun, he was studying mystical theology, especially the works of St. Theresa of Avila and the lives of the saints of the Roman Catholic Church. He came to the

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256 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 472.

257 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):388-89; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 472-75; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:679; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 67-70; Cockburn, pp. 32-33, 43; Davis, pp. 161-62; Le Clerc, pp. 15-16; Reid, pp. 151-55.

258 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 472.
conclusion that the mystics were "recluse, melancholy people" who were "full of rank Enthusiasme."259 If they had not been restrained by the *magisterium* of the Roman Catholic Church, the behavior of the mystics, he claimed, would have been indistinguishable from the behavior of the sectaries.260 From this study, his prejudice against the Catholic practice of venerating the saints had been reinforced. It had all along been a latent element in his thought.261 This animus against the Catholic practice of venerating the saints had been especially evident in his *Some Letters*.262

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259 Ibid., p. 473.  
260 Ibid.  

262 An excellent example is Burnet's relation of the Jetzer affair—the gullible lay brother Jetzer and the concomitant machinations of his Dominican brothers ("Some Letters," in *Dr. G. Burnet's Tracts*, 1:40-42).
During his period as parish priest, he had been introduced to Anne Douglas, Duchess of Hamilton, by his friend Sir Robert Moray. In the course of one of his many visits to Hamilton, which was only a short distance from his parish, he met the rector of the University of Glasgow. In November 1669 Gilbert was elected Professor of Divinity at Glasgow University. Undoubtedly he had made a good impression on the rector. He most assuredly was not the kind of man who would either put his own light under a bushel, or allow other people to put it there. Throughout his long and active political and ecclesiastical career, he never doubted his own ability and was never at a loss for words. His egocentricity would only be tempered by two events in later life. The first event was the fall out from the Rye House Plot of 1683, especially the trial and execution of William Lord Russell, as well as the suicide of Arthur Capel, earl of Essex, in the Tower. The other time, Burnet's amour...
and self-love would be deeply and terribly shaken by his conflict in 1687-88 with James II. After the death of Charles II and the subsequent accession of James II, Burnet decided once again to go into "voluntary" exile on the Continent. On the eve of his second marriage, he became embroiled in a series of disputes with James II. During this protracted struggle, James not only had Burnet removed from his protection, thereby making his former friend an outlaw, but the king also put a price on Burnet's head.265

the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:691-92.

Even though Burnet may have made a good impression on the rector, he owed his new position at least in part to the efforts of some of his highly-placed friends. He was particularly indebted to the Duchess of Hamilton, Robert Leighton, Sir Robert Moray, John Maitland, lord of Lauderdale, and John Hay, earl of Tweeddale. Since Lady Anne was one of Burnet's patrons, one cannot believe that chance had brought the rector and the parish priest together. In all probability, the duchess herself had engineered the meeting. Given that Lady Anne was interested in advancing her protégé's career, it was to be expected that she would use her friendship with the rector to further Burnet's interests. Nor was this the first such occasion. It was the Duchess of Hamilton who had introduced Gilbert to her closest and dearest friend, Lady Margaret Kennedy, whom he later married.266

In addition to Lady Anne's solicitude, his good friend, Leighton, probably still had highly-placed friends in the university community in Scotland. For nine years, 1653-1661, he had been the principal at the University of Edinburgh. Shortly after he had been elected to the principalship at Edinburgh, he was to acquire the post of


266 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):516-17; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 475-76; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:679-80; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 72-73; Foxcroft, Supplement, p. 4.
professor of Divinity. Although he had resigned his positions at Edinburgh University in 1661 when he had been translated to the see of Dunblane, he undoubtedly still retained important connections with the scholarly community. As Burnet's mentor, he quite naturally concerned himself with advancing his protégé's career. In all probability, the future archbishop of Glasgow may well have been acquainted with the rector.

Sir Robert Moray, one of the founding fathers of the Royal Society, was another of the young curate's patrons. At this time, Moray was one of the triumvirs who ruled Scotland. Considering that Sir Robert regarded Burnet as one of his clients, it is not at all surprising that he used his good offices with Lord Lauderdale as well as with the king to advance Burnet's career. Originally Moray had taken Gilbert under his wing in order to repay the many kindnesses that Burnet's father had shown him. He wanted to have his friend's son translated from Saltoun to Glasgow so that he could expunge the debt that he believed he owed to the elder Burnet. Later on, the two men became such close friends


268 The other two members of the triumvirate were John Maitland, soon to be created duke of Lauderdale, and Charles II.

269 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):104-106; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 465 & 476; DNB, s.v. "Moray, Sir
that Gilbert regarded him as "another father." In Burnet's own words, "I have ever reckoned that next to my father I owed more to him than any other man." Moray's influence upon Gilbert must indeed have been prodigious.

Before young Gilbert had his apparently fortuitous meeting with the rector at Hamilton Palace, John Hay, marquis of Tweeddale, had been working busily behind the scenes to promote his interests. After all, it had been at Yester House in Haddingtonshire, the residence of Lord Tweeddale, where Burnet had been introduced to Charteris, Nairn, and Sir Robert Fletcher.

In addition to the strenuous and repeated efforts of his well-intentioned as well as highly-placed friends, this young parish priest owed his new position at least in part to his own contributions to pedagogy, theoretical as well as practical. Before he had attained his twenty-fifth year (sometime in late 1668), Burnet already had completed his treatise entitled, Thoughts on Education, which had been written at the behest of, and for the use of, an anonymous

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270 The quotation is taken from Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):25.

271 Ibid., 1(1897):106.

This work revealed that Burnet shared the educational goals of the humanists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, especially the Christian humanists. This young clergyman's ideal of education, just like that of the humanists, was the cultivation and disciplining of the intellect, in order to gratify the individual, and to prepare him for a suitable role in secular society. The focal point of all education was to hammer out an individual's personality as well as his character on the anvil of classical pagan and medieval Christian traditions. In common with the Italian and Northern Christian humanists, Vittorino da Feltre and Guarino da Verona, as well as Sir Thomas More and Desiderius Erasmus, Burnet perceived that the primary function of the teacher was to facilitate optimal human development. Consequently, he was concerned with the genesis and development of the entire human personality—physical, mental, emotional, moral, and spiritual.

He already had grappled with many of the practical problems that bedeviled pedagogues. Sir Robert Fletcher had earlier insisted that he should superintend the education of

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273 Alexander Bruce, earl of Kincardine, was probably the man for whom Gilbert composed his treatise ("The Editor's Preface," [of 1761] in Burnet's Thoughts on Education, P. 6; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 72-73).

his two sons, including his heir, Sir Andrew, whom later generations of Scotsmen would acclaim as the Patriot. When young Sir Andrew eventually became a republican zealot, Burnet's detractors imputed his espousal of republicanism to the five years spent under the "good bishop's" tutelage. 275

Needless to say, Burnet's critics exploited his former pupil's political orientation in order to cast aspersions on Burnet's personal as well as on his political integrity: for not only was the Patriot a rabid republican, but he also was intensely conscious of, as well as fiercely proud of, his Scottish nationality. 276

Consequently Burnet's disparagers scarified him as a tutor who inculcated the serpent's wisdom into his charges--or at the very least, had them internalize the value system of The Prince. This was especially true after he had been translated to Glasgow. Henceforth his enemies would excoriate him for being a consummate dissembler who corrupted the morals of his pupil by transforming him into an Italianato, whose personality was a mosaic of Italian vices. Later in his career, when one of the Duke of Gloucester's playmates asked the boy- duke why he was so polite to his preceptor (Burnet) whom he loathed, the precocious Prince of Wales was reported to have jejunely replied: "Do you think I have

275 Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 73; DNB s.v. "Fletcher, Andrew, by Francis Espinasse; Foxcroft, Supplement, p. 89.
276 Ibid.
been so long a pupil of Dr. Burnet's without learning to be a hypocrite?" 277 Burnet's enemies believed that the children who had been unfortunate enough to have been placed under his private tuition had been turned into a brood of vipers, intent upon emasculating not only the Anglican establishment, but also the Ancient English Constitution. 278

Throughout his long and active political and ecclesiastical career, this Scottish gadfly endeavored to effect educational reform. During his ministry at Saltoun, he not only wrote an enchiridion for a Christian gentleman and tutored his patron's two sons, but was also instrumental in securing funds so that a parish school could be built. 279 After he had been consecrated bishop of Salisbury in 1689, Burnet established a theological college that he hoped would become "a nursery at Salisbury of students in Divinity." 280 Notwithstanding that his theological nursery would endure neither the antipathy of the Oxford dons, nor the timidity and supineness of its benefactor, its foundation attested to

277 The quotation is taken from Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 356.


279 Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 60.

280 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 500-501.
his lifelong concern with practical educational matters. \footnote{281} Foxcroft asserted that Burnet's educational endeavors were analogous to those of Samuel Wilburforce at Cuddesdon in the nineteenth century. \footnote{282}

Shortly after the death of Burnet's second wife in 1698, William III, in the face of repeated protests from Princess Anne and all but two members of her household, \footnote{283} was determined that he become the Duke of Gloucester's tutor. Even though it would have been more politic if the stadholder-king had selected a clergyman who was more acceptable to the future queen, William refused this opportunity

\footnote{281} Burnet demonstrated his lifelong commitment to practical educational concerns by his unceasing attempts to augment the endowments of poor benefices so that better-educated men would be attracted to the clerical profession. Even Queen Anne, who loathed Burnet's Whig principles as well as his person, frankly admitted that he had been the prime mover behind the various attempts to provide the Anglican clergy with an adequate system of income maintenance (Savidge, pp. 4-26). Moreover, his preoccupation with concrete educational matters was demonstrated once more by the bequests that he made in his last will and testament: for Aberdeen University and the parish of Saltoun received considerable legacies, as well as the master of the charity school in Salisbury. (Burnet, "The Last Will and Testament of . . . Gilbert, Bishop of Salisbury," in "Appendix Number I," in Macky's Memoirs of the secret services of John Macky, pp. i-xxiii; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 60 & 79.

\footnote{282} Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 287, 289-90, 293, 298-99, & 323.

\footnote{283} John and Sarah Churchill, who later became the duke and duchess of Marlborough, were the only members of Princess Anne's household who approved of Burnet's appointment (Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 494; Foxcroft, "Introduction," in Foxcroft's \underline{Supplement}, p. xix; Macaulay, 5(1861):203-204; Turberville, p. 301).
to placate Anne. He believed that Burnet, notwithstanding his Whig principles as well as his defects of character, was the divine who was most eminently qualified to become the Prince of Wales' tutor. While he held the royal preceptorship between 1698 and 1700, he sought to implement his philosophy of education that he had elucidated thirty years earlier in his Thoughts on Education. He saw his tutorial position providing him with a splendid opportunity for testing his educational theories, and he perceived his post as a laboratory in which he could test his a priori assumptions. During those years he not only tested his own educational theories but also implemented and analyzed those of his father.

In addition to tutoring Sir Robert's two sons and the Prince of Wales, Burnet's lifelong commitment to practical educational matters was reflected in the close scrutiny of his own three sons' education. Just as his father had educated him at home, until he was enrolled at Marischal College at Aberdeen University, so too he had decided to educate his sons at home, until they were sent either to


Trinity College, Cambridge, or to Merton College, Oxford.
Unlike Robert Burnet, who had the leisure to personally instruct his son, the Bishop of Sarum was not his children's only tutor, and confined himself mostly to theological and ethical matters. Nevertheless, Burnet carefully selected, and closely monitored the activities of his son's three tutors. He remarked that "the pains my Father had taken upon me laid a more than ordinary obligation on me to look carefully to my children." Burnet's solicitude for his children's education was best exemplified by his voluminous correspondence with Dr. John Colbatch, who had been his eldest son's tutor at Cambridge. Even though his educational regimen was less Spartan than his father's had been, he nonetheless was a very exacting taskmaster. Although the bishop had rejected his father's antiquated and heavyhanded educational régime, Burnet, nevertheless, demanded periodic comprehensive reports from his sons' tutors.

286 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 510-12; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:722; Le Clerc, p. 36; Thomson, Memoirs of Viscountess Sundon, 1:168-76; DNB, s.v. "Burnet, Gilbert," by Osmund Airy.

287 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 510.

288 For additional information, see Madden's "Bishop Gilbert Burnet as a man of letters" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1963). Madden had access to the Colbatch Correspondence in the British Museum.

289 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 511-12.
He was concerned not only with his sons' academic progress, but also with their social morality, and their consequent social behavior. Clearly, he believed that their tutors performed a dual function: they were to be censors as well as teachers. This preoccupation, albeit sometimes morbid, with the moral order (individual and social ethics) was a characteristic trait of Scottish Presbyterianism: the Calvinist saints sought to employ "the holy discipline" to raise up a New Jerusalem in their desolate and impoverished country.

The future Whig bishop and historian only removed the stool of repentance from the kirk-session to the episcopal palace and the precincts of Oxford and Cambridge. He never realized that his own educational regimen had a markedly Spartan ethos: since "remembering the ill effect his father's severity had on . . . [him], . . . [his] bias lay the other way to a remisse gentleness of which . . .

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290 Ibid., pp. 510-12; Colbatch Correspondence, [excerpts from] in Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 427-28. Also see Madden's dissertation.

291 For additional information, see George Grub's multivolume work, An Ecclesiastical History of Scotland, from the Introduction of Christianity to the Present Time, as well as James Kirkton's The Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland, from the Restoration to the Year 1678.

Burnet was quite unconscious that he had inherited not only some of his father's genes, but also much of his intellectual baggage. For example, despite his repeated protestations that he kept his sons "in all three years beyond sea . . . at a great charge that so they might go into the best companies and learn all that was to be learned abroad"—the lord bishop was rather tight-fisted when it came to pecuniary matters—just as his father had been with him. When his sons lost their gloves, for instance, he instructed their tutors that his sons should pay for the lost articles themselves. In pedagogics, as in so many other things, his mode of thinking as well as behavioral patterns had been conditioned by his relationship with his father.

4. The Literary Pursuits And Political Activities or Burnet During His Tenure As Professor Of Divinity At The University Of Glasgow, 1669-1674: His Relationships With The Hamilton Clan And The Duke Of Lauderdale

After he had moved from Saltoun to Glasgow in 1669, Burnet demonstrated that he was in his element as a pedagogue. A very conscientious, dynamic, resourceful, and respected teacher, he was an indefatigable worker, lecturing

293 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 510.
294 Ibid., p. 512.
five days a week on five different subjects. This led Foxcroft in her edition of Burnet's *Rough Draught of My Own Life* to liken his pedagogical activities to those of Matthew Arnold. In order to prepare his daily lectures, he was at his desk by four o'clock in the morning. This was but another instance of the indelible impression his father had made on him. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he also counseled students, and attempted to conciliate disaffected clergy. While he held the chair in Glasgow, he collaborated again with Leighton, now archbishop of Glasgow, in various schemes to accommodate the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians. But his motives were suspect, and he was damned by both religious factions.

During his five-year tenure as Professor of Theology at Glasgow, Burnet began his preliminary research for his first major work, *The Memoirs of the Lives and Actions of*

296 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 477-78; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:679-80; Kirkton, pp. 193, 293-94; Le Clerc, pp. 17-18; Reid, pp. 155-64.


298 Ibid., p. 478; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:680; Le Clerc, p. 18; Reid, p. 157.

299 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):496-536, 600-607 passim; "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 477; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:679; Le Clerc, pp. 15-17; Mathieson, 2:243-51; Reid, pp. 161-64.
James and William, Dukes of Hamilton. The Memoirs have been accorded the honor of being England's "first political biography." This was the first English book to use documentation systematically, in order to enhance the authenticity of the work. In many instances, Burnet not only had cited his sources, but he had transcribed those sources verbatim. Sir Robert Moray had suggested to him that he incorporate primary source materials in the memoirs. This is a clear-cut example of how the seventeenth century scientific revolution influenced the development of historiography. By giving his readers the opportunity of examining some of the primary sources themselves, he tried to

300 The quotation is taken from Charles Harding Firth's Introduction to A Life of Gilbert Burnet by Clarke and Foxcroft, p. xiii.


302 Gilbert Burnet, "Preface," in Gilbert Burnet's The Memoires of the Lives and Actions of James and William Dukes of Hamilton and Castle-herald, &c. In Which an account is given of the rise and progress of the Civil Wars of Scotland with other great Transactions both in England and Germany, from the year 1625, to the year 1652. Together with many letters, instructions, and other papers, written by King Charles the I. Never before published. All drawn out, or copied from the Originals (London: J. Grover for R. Royston, 1677)--there is no pagination in Burnet's Preface; Dewar, p. 387; Firth's Introduction, pp. xii-xiii.
counteract the public's stereotype of the historian as someone who used his imagination as he went along. As he sifted through the mounds of primary sources at Hamilton, his belief in the mystique of the thaumaturgic kingship of the Stuarts was dispelled. In this matter, Burnet's research had "brought the character of King Charles the first very low with . . . [him,] but the Earl of Clarendon's History sunk it quite."

At the time he was spending his summer vacations at Hamilton, which was only eight miles from Glasgow, he not only carried on research for *The Memoirs*, but he also courted Lady Margaret Kennedy, the eldest daughter of the Earl of Cassilis and a cousin-german of the Duke of Lauderdale. The lady was eighteen years his senior. They were secretly married sometime between 1670 and 1673. For Lady Margaret, this was a mariage de dérogation as well as a clandestine marriage. In Burnet's case, it was the first of three marriages to women of fortune—a fact which the Tories and Jacobites did not allow to go unpublicized.

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304 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's *Supplement*, p. 479.

305 Ibid., 480-81; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, 6:681; DNB s.v. "Burnet, Gilbert," by Osmund Airy; Le Clerc, pp. 18-19.
Interestingly too, his first two wives, Lady Margaret Kennedy and Mary Scott, were devout Presbyterians who believed in absolute predestination, just as his mother had done.\textsuperscript{306}

Needless to say, the other members of the Hamilton family were not pleased with him. They felt that he had taken advantage of their hospitality. Many of them, even though they were highly gratified with the \textit{Memoirs}, thought that Gilbert was an unscrupulous fortune hunter.\textsuperscript{307} Yet, before his marriage, he had signed a document by which he had renounced all claim to Lady Margaret's fortune. This act would assuage the anger of some of his wife's relatives; for they wanted a large share of Lady Margaret's fortune to advance the social position of their own children.\textsuperscript{308} Like his privatu monitorie of 1666, Burnet would pay dearly for his clandestine marriage to Lady Margaret. This first marriage is an excellent example of how brash, foolhardy, and precipitous he could be. He frequently acted first, and much later, if at all, thought about the consequences of his actions. He was the kind of man who "wore his

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\textsuperscript{306}Burnet, in Airy's \textit{Burnet's History of My Own Time}, 1(1897):196-97; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 480-81, 492; Cockburn, pp. 46-47; Driskell, p. 26; Macaulay, 2(1856) 129-30.
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\textsuperscript{307}Cockburn, p. 48; Driskell, pp. 26-27.
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\textsuperscript{308}Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 481; Cockburn, p. 46; Reid, p. 166; Spence, p. 466; Barnett, p. 901.
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Burnet's Scottish career (1643-1675) had been overshadowed by his relationships with Leighton and John Maitland, duke of Lauderdale. He had first met Lauderdale in 1663, at the time he was working with Leighton to accommodate the Presbyterians and Episcopalians. When he had nearly finished The Memoirs, Lauderdale requested that Gilbert wait upon him at Whitehall in 1671. Lauderdale, who had been appointed Lord High Commissioner for Scotland in 1669, had a vested interest in this work. The Memoirs were not simply the political biographies of two dukes of Hamilton. This work discussed and analyzed the relations of Charles I and his son with Scotland. Since Lauderdale himself had been a Covenanter, he wanted to make sure that this relatively obscure parish priest had not been too critical of his behavior. When Burnet arrived in London, Lauderdale had him read selected parts of The Memoirs, which Burnet then allowed the Lord High Commissioner to amend in the manuscript.310

For the next two years from 1671 to 1673, he was

309 The quotation is taken from Clark's "Gilbert Burnet, 1643-1715," p. 113.

310 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):184-85, 427, 531-36; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 479-81; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:681; Davis, p. 163; Dewar, pp. 385, 387-88; Firth's Introduction, p. xiv; Le Clerc, p. 18; Mathieson, 2:248.
Lauderdale's protégé. The latter introduced him to Charles II, and to James, duke of York. Through Lauderdale's influence, Gilbert was also made a royal chaplain. He was present at the levée. As long as he retained Lauderdale's support, he was an important figure at Charles II's court. 311 Lauderdale, at this time, regarded Burnet as a valuable ally. He believed that anyone who had offended James Sharp, the archbishop of St. Andrews and the primate of the Scottish Church, was his friend. 312 For as we know, ever since Burnet had circulated his memorial of 1666, Sharp had regarded him as his implacable enemy. This alone was enough to recommend him to Maitland. Evidently, the man who had been lauded by some and anathematized by others as "the King of Scotland" 313 had subscribed to Niccolò Machiavelli's obiter dictum that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. 314

For the sake of political expediency, the Lord High Commissioner had decided to implement a policy of religious conciliation in Scotland. He felt that Leighton and Burnet

311 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):26-28; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 479-81; Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 100; Cockburn, p. 53.

312 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):370, 387-88; Elliot, pp. 2-10.

313 The quotation is taken from Gooch, p. 73.

might be able to work out an accommodation between the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians. Lauderdale was quite prepared to reform, to modify, or to abolish episcopacy. He believed that if his countrymen could have their own way in religious matters the crown would be able to govern Scotland as absolutely as it pleased. Besides, by accommodating the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, "the King of Scotland" could indirectly strike at Sharp, and the rest of the bench of bishops. If religion had sat lightly on Elizabeth's shoulders, then religion had sat even more lightly—if that were possible—on Lauderdale's and Charles II's shoulders. For both men, religion was an extremely useful political tool.


Burnet and Leighton had once more tried to conciliate the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians by holding a series of theological conferences. Their efforts proved to be futile. By this time the divisions between these two religious groups had deepened, and ossified. In 1673 both Leighton and Burnet would be able to report to the Privy Council that episcopacy in any form could not be restored in the disaffected districts of the west and south.\footnote{For additional information, see footnote 299.} For his efforts, Burnet was offered one of four vacant Scottish bishoprics, including the see of Edinburgh. Since he did not want to become further embroiled in Scottish ecclesiastical politics, he thanked Lauderdale for his generosity, but declined to become a bishop.\footnote{Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):536; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 480; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:681.} At the time, Gilbert was only twenty-eight years old. He was a rising man at Court. Yet, the friendship between Lauderdale and Burnet had shown signs of strain during the years 1671-1673. Despite Lauderdale's protestations, Gilbert steadfastly refused to give up his friendship with Moray,
even though the Lord High Commissioner considered him his enemy. 319 The effort on Burnet's part at reconciling the duke of Hamilton with Lauderdale proved a failure, for in the Scottish Parliament only Hamilton and his creatures were powerful enough to oppose Lauderdale's faction. Burnet, later on, was to be damned by both factions for his attempt to be an honest broker. 320

Unfortunately, Burnet was not only Lauderdale's protege, but he was also to become his dupe. There was something about Lauderdale's personality which enabled him to manipulate good and decent men with cynical disdain. Even the saintly Leighton had been manipulated several times by Maitland to serve his own base ends. 321 Lauderdale had the talent of eliciting devotion and service from his friends. On three occasions Burnet had behaved like a sycophant. In the first instance, he wrote a pièce d'occasion entitled Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience. 322

319 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):533.

320 Ibid., p. 534; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 480-83; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:681-84; Davis, p. 163; Dewar, pp. 385-86; Le Clerc, pp. 18-19.

321 Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 89.

322 The exact title is Dr. Gilbert Burnet's Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience. Question the First, viz. Is a Woman's Barrenness a Just Ground for a Divorce or for Polygamy? Question the Second. Is Polygamy in any Case lawful under the Gospel. This work can be found in "Appendix
Lauderdale had informed him that James, duke of York, had become a Roman Catholic. Consequently the Protestant Succession was endangered. According to Maitland, only a second and a more fruitful marriage for Charles II could keep the realm Protestant. "The King of Scotland" had shrewdly played upon Gilbert's fears. As he would later, Burnet feared a Catholic Restoration in England. Amidst this threat of a popish succession, Lauderdale asked him to prepare a position paper for the king's private reading. In 1671 he transmitted his paper to Lauderdale. At this time, it would have been difficult for Charles II to have divorced Catherine of Braganza: the king would have had to demonstrate a pre-existing impediment. In his position paper, Gilbert maintained that polygamy had been recognized as a common social custom in the Old Testament, and that it had nowhere been expressly forbidden in the New Testament. Furthermore, he believed "that if our Lord had II" in Macky's Memoirs of the secret services of John Macky, pp. xxvii-xxxiii.


324 Ibid.


326 The italics are in the original.
been to antiquate Polygamy, it being so deeply rooted in the
Men of that Age, confirmed by such famous and unquestioned
Precedents, and riveted by so long a Practice, he must have
done it plainly and authoritatively; and not in such an
involved Manner that it must be sought out of his Words by
the search of Logick; neither are these dark Words made more
clear by any of the Apostles\textsuperscript{327} in their Writings.\textsuperscript{328}
Later he was to have second thoughts about the wisdom of
having prepared his paper. Maitland never returned Burnet's
paper, and at a later occasion when the friendship between
Gilbert and Lauderdale had ended, the Lord High Commissioner
used it to embarrass his former client. Although he had
condemned the Jesuits for their practice of casuistry,
Burnet himself in the \textit{Resolution of two important Cases of
Conscience}, as well as in some of his other works, had dem­
onstrated that he was no stranger to casuistic practices.\textsuperscript{329}

\textsuperscript{327} Once again, the italics are in the original.

\textsuperscript{328} The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Resolution
of two important Cases of Conscience," in "Appendix II," in
Macky's \textit{Memoirs of the secret services of John Macky}, p.
xxxii.

\textsuperscript{329} Any doubts that one has regarding Burnet's prac­
tice of casuistry will be dispelled by the most cursory
examination of the following works: \textit{Reflections On The Rela­
tion Of The English Reformation, Lately Printed at Oxford.}
Part I (Amsterdam: J. S., 1688); \textit{An Edict in the Roman Law:
In the 25 Book of the Digests, Title 4. Sect. 10. As con­
cerning the visiting of A Big-Bellied Woman: And the looking
after What may be born by Her (n.p., 1688); Reflections Upon
a Pamphlet, Entituled, [Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and
Dr. Tillotson, Occasioned by the Late Funeral-Sermon of the
Former upon the Later.] (London: Rl. Chiswell, 1696).
Once more Lauderdale attempted to reward Gilbert for his service to the crown by not only offering him a Scottish bishopric, but also promising him the first Scottish archbishopric that should become vacant. He was only twenty-nine years old. Yet he had twice been offered a bishopric, and now he had been tantalized with a Scottish archbishopric.

Burnet's authorship of the Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience permanently stained his reputation. This work proved to be a continual source of embarrassment for Burnet's apologists. Neither Thomas Burnet, nor Le Clerc, nor Ranke, nor Macaulay ever mentioned this pièce d'occasion. In his part of the Life of Gilbert Burnet, T. E. S. Clarke devoted little more than a page to this work. He was more concerned with providing Gilbert with a credible rationale for his conduct. He concluded that Burnet had been duped by Lauderdale. Given "that Lauderdale was a very strong character, whose influence did harm to everyone who associated with him," Clarke argued that he "no doubt . . . deliberately misled Burnet." Even Burnet tried to dissociate himself from this tract, as


331 The quotation is taken from Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 104.

332 Ibid., p. 103, footnote 1.
evidenced by the fact that he never once mentioned this work either in his History of My Own Time, or in his History of the Reformation, or in his Rough Draught of My Own Life.

When discussing the problems associated with Henry VIII's first divorce, he jejunely remarked that among the Protestant Reformers "the lawfulness of polygamy was much controverted at this time." Considering that Burnet's justification for polygamy was based upon Old Testament practice, it is quite remarkable that so many of the Reformers had ambivalent feelings about polygamy. Surely these early Protestants were as conversant with the Scriptures as Burnet was. However, these early Protestants unlike Gilbert were not trying to ingratiate themselves with the civil authorities.

Notwithstanding his Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience, Burnet later on in his History of My own Time, which he began after the execution of Lord William Russell in 1683, did a volte-face on the questions of divorce and polygamy. In his History of My Own Time, he remarked that he tried to dissuade Lauderdale and Sir Robert


335 See footnotes 325 and 328.
Moray from considering either polygamy or divorce as possible solutions to Charles' matrimonial problems and the concomitant problem of the Protestant Succession. According to Burnet, he informed his two friends that:

Other . . . [people] talked of polygamy: and officious persons were ready to thrust themselves into any thing that could contribute to their advancement. . . . I said I knew speculative people could say a great deal in the way of argument for polygamy and divorce: yet these things were so decried, that they were rejected by all Christian societies: so that all such propositions would throw us into great convulsions, and entail wars upon us if any issue came from a marriage so grounded.

In the various editions of the History of My Own Time that I have examined, I have never found any references to the Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience. This was a work that Burnet wished he had never written. Unfortunately for Gilbert, Lauderdale not only refused to return his position paper, but he also allowed some of Burnet's enemies to examine and to transcribe this document, so that it could be circulated abroad. In this instance, the Lord High Commissioner's conduct paralleled that of Burnet himself, when he had allowed his privat monitorie to fall into the hands

336 The quotation is taken from Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):470-71. The italics are mine.


of the Nonconformists. Needless to say, Burnet believed that Lauderdale's conduct was despicable. Oftentimes when Burnet did not get his way, he puffed himself up with righteous indignation.

In the Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience, Burnet's arguments for polygamy and divorce were not new, for his justification for polygamy was based upon Old Testament practice, while he contended that divorce was justifiable if a man's wife was infertile. His arguments, for the most part, were simply a restatement of Martin Luther's earlier views regarding the bigamous marriage of Philip of Hesse. Once again it was not the content of the Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience that created problems for Burnet, rather it was his own behavior. Unlike Luther who candidly admitted that "Great is the scandal caused by our Hesse," Burnet chose to wring his hands, while at the same time exclaiming that he had been


341 The quotation is taken from Luther's Works, vol. 54: Table Talk, p. 382.
bamboozled by a cabal of obsequious courtiers, libertines, and bawds. Moreover, even though "this scandal grieve . . . [d] him very much," Luther remarked: "Just be calm!" . . . "It will blow over." . . . "Perhaps either she or he will die." On the other hand, all Burnet did was to whine about his innocence.

Notwithstanding that Burnet's defense of divorce and polygamy was founded upon pedestrian arguments, his detractors were quick to point out that the future bishop of Salisbury had a remarkable knowledge of such things as "Venery," "natural Barrenness," "Casual" Barrenness, as well as the physiology of a woman's "Matrix." Consequently the Jacobites, High Tories, Nonjurors, and High Anglicans all used his authorship of this work to further their attacks upon Burnet's character as well as his principles. When he prepared the Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience, Burnet unwittingly played into the hands of the propagandists for the Tories, Jacobites, and Nonjurors. Now

\[^{342}\text{Ibid., p. 388.}\] \[^{343}\text{Ibid., p. 382.}\]

\[^{344}\text{She refers to Philip of Hesse's new wife, the former Margaret von der Sale, while of course he refers to Philip of Hesse (Luther's Works, vol. 54: Table Talk (1967), pp. 380, footnote 60, 382, footnote 74, & 388, footnote 103).}\]

\[^{345}\text{Ibid., p. 380.}\]

\[^{346}\text{The quotations are taken from Burnet's "Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience," in "Appendix II," in Macky's Memoirs of the secret services of John Macky, pp. xxvii-xxviii. All of the italics are in the original.}\]
they could more effectively vilify him as an unprincipled "Irish adventurer" . . . whose high animal spirits"\(^{347}\) and apparently insatiable sexual appetite led him to express his Christian love for all mankind by impregnating women."\(^{348}\)

Burnet's critics, and these included some of his fellow Whigs as well as some of his diocesan clergy, regarded him not so much as a shepherd, but rather as a roué who might well have "defiled six hundred harlots, . . . and violated countless matrons and virgins."\(^{349}\)

Burnet's second faux pas at the time had been the publication of his *A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland*. This was another pièce d'occasion which opened with a laudatory preface to the Duke of Lauderdale. The "Epistle Dedicatory" is an excellent illustration of how much there was in him both of the flatterer and of the lackey, perhaps one should say toadyish sycophant. It is an example of just how cringing and subservient he could be.\(^{350}\)

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\(^{347}\) The quotation is taken from Macaulay, 2(1856): 129-30.


\(^{350}\) Notwithstanding the fact that patrons in early modern Europe expected to be lauded as the Maecenas of their age, Burnet's "Epistle Dedicatory," even by seventeenth-
When this "Epistle Dedicatory" had been written, Lauderdale and he had been close personal friends as well as political allies. Later, when he and Maitland had grown to hate one another, both personally and politically, a story was told—perhaps it was apocryphal—that Burnet visited all the London booksellers so that he could buy back all the copies of 

A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland that contained the "Epistle Dedicatory" to Lauderdale. 351

\[\text{A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland was Burnet's apology for the Restoration regime in Scotland.} \]

In this work, he espoused political Erastianism, passive century standards, revealed that he occasionally behaved in a self-seeking and pharisaical manner. In the "Epistle Dedicatory," he addressed Lauderdale in this manner:

"May it please your Grace,

"The noble character which you do now so worthily bear, together with the more lasting and inward characters of your princely mind, did set me beyond doubting to whom this address was to be made. For to whom is a Vindication of the Authority and Laws of this Kingdom so due as to your Grace, to whom His Majesty hath, by a Royal Delegation, committed the administration of affairs amongst us, and under whose wise and happy conduct we have enjoyed so long a tract of uninterrupted tranquillity. But it is not only your illustrious quality that entitles you to this dedication. No. Great Prince, greater in your mind than by your fortune; there is something more inward to you than the gifts of fortune; which, as it proves her not blind in this instance, so commands all the respect can be payed your Grace by such who are honoured with so much knowledge of you as hath fallen to the happy share of your poorest servant" (Gilbert Burnet, "The Epistle Dedicatory," in his A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland [there is not any pagination in this part of the work]).

351 Doble and Rannie, Collections of Thomas Hearne, 11(1921):389.
obedience, and episcopacy. Even though his father had inculcated in his young son Grotius' notions about the rights of the subject to resist his sovereign, Gilbert had so emasculated Grotius' arguments in this work that he asserted that in Scotland His Majesty's Christian subjects could only resist their king if he commanded them to abandon a religious creed which they conscientiously professed. According to Burnet, the king of Scotland was "a Sovereign unaccountable Prince" to whom his subjects owed "absolute obedience." Since the king of Scotland was God's vice regent here on earth, he was not bound by any original contract or compact with his subjects. Neither his Coronation Oath, nor the people's Oath of Allegiance could impose any limitations upon the king's actions. At the time, Gilbert would have subscribed to James I's maxim that if subjects disagreed with royal policies, they could only pray to God to have Him change the kings' mind. In this work Burnet, following his father, had reiterated "that the late

352 Burnet, A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland, pp. 6-156 passim.
353 Ibid., pp. 153-54.
354 Gilbert Burnet, "To the Reader," in Burnet's A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland--there is not any pagination in the original.
356 Ibid.
wars were an invasion of the King's Authority, and of the established laws, and were not for defence of any part of the established Religion and Liberties."\textsuperscript{357}

In retrospect, \textit{A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland} proved to be as big an embarrassment to Burnet as his authorship of the \textit{Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience} had been. This work was another godsend for the Tories and Jacobites. In this work, they found much ammunition which they later could use against him. A favorite tactic of theirs was to juxtapose quotations which had been taken out of context, of a diametrically opposite tendency, from his earlier and later writings. Unfortunately for Burnet, his critics were once again able to redouble their attacks on his political thought as well as on his person. They had strengthened their case by copious and compromising citations from his earlier works, such as \textit{A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland}, and the \textit{Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience}. Needless to say, this method of attack, although it was admirably simple, had been exquisitely calculated to annoy. Furthermore, even though \textit{A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland} was concerned only with the Scottish constitution in church and state, his arguments for political Erastianism, \textsuperscript{357}Burnet, \textit{A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland}, p. 236.
passive obedience, and episcopacy could have been used to transform almost any kingdom with the exception of Bohemia.

Unlike many other nations in West and East Europe, Bohemia had a historic constitution that was "strongly particularistic." In Bohemia, political power was exercised by the crown and the estates (lords, knights, and towns), who also participated in choosing the monarch. The king of Bohemia, whether he was a hereditary or an elective monarch, "swore to respect the constitution." Although the king executed the laws, "the Diet enjoyed unlimited legislative power." Consequently the estates regarded the diet as a bastion for the protection of their privileges. In addition, the crown of St. Wenceslas enjoyed a unique position in the Holy Roman Empire: since Bohemia was the only kingdom within the empire, and its king was the empire's first lay elector (The quotations are taken from V-L Tapie's "The Habsburg Lands 1618-57," [Chapter 17] in The New Cambridge Modern History, vol. 4: The Decline of Spain and the Thirty Years War, pp. 505-506).

Notwithstanding this kingdom's "strongly particularistic" historic constitution, Bohemia after 1620 fell victim to Habsburg absolutism. Long before the celebrated Fenstersturz (Defenestration) of Prague on 23 May 1618, capable Habsburg officials, this was especially true of Diepolt von Lobkowitz, the Grand Chancellor of Bohemia, had set about the task of reorganizing and centralizing the royal administration. By emasculating the feudal institutions in the countryside, these royal servants were determined that the king's power should extend to the most remote areas of the realm. Their ultimate goal was to transform the Bohemian king into an absolute monarch.

Considering that "for baroque man religion and politics were cut from the same cloth," it is not surprising that the movement towards political absolutism was accompanied by a movement toward religious absolutism (The quotation is taken from Friedrich's The Age of the Baroque, p. 161). Even though Bohemian Protestants enjoyed a large measure of religious toleration, they were apprehensive of the future. They now believed that the Roman Catholics were determined to eviscerate Rudolph II's Letter of Majesty (1609), which they regarded as the cornerstone for religious liberty in Bohemia. Although the Letter of Majesty only legally recognized "one Czech Protestant Church" for the entire kingdom, Rudolph II's royal act did grant not only "religious freedom . . . to all . . . followers [of the Czech Confession, but it also guaranteed them] . . . equal rights with the Catholic minority whose possession of privileges and exclusive right to freedom had until recently
been maintained by the sovereign power" (The quotations are taken from G. [eorges] Pages' The Thirty Years War, 1618-1648, with a Foreword by Theodore K. Rabb [New York: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1981], pp. 44-45). In fact Pages argued that Rudolph II's Letter of Majesty provided the Bohemian Protestants with a much larger measure of religious freedom than that enjoyed either by the German Protestants as a result of the Peace of Augsburg of 1555, or by the French Huguenots as a result of the Edict of Nantes of 1598 (Ibid.).

Shortly before the death of Matthias, who was king of Bohemia and Hungary, as well as Holy Roman Emperor of the German Nation, Ferdinand of Styria, with his uncle Matthias' support, was recognized by the Bohemian estates as king of Bohemia. Having secured his cousin Ferdinand's succession to the crown of St. Wenceslas, Matthias summoned the Hungarian diet in order to secure Ferdinand's succession to the crown of St. Stephen. By these political maneuvers Matthias insured that Ferdinand not only would become the next king of Bohemia and Hungary, but that he would also be elected Holy Roman Emperor. Upon the death of Emperor Matthias, Ferdinand succeeded to the crowns of St. Wenceslas and St. Stephen. Shortly thereafter he was unanimously elected Holy Roman Emperor on 28 August 1619. Unfortunately for Ferdinand, on 19 August 1619 "the confederated estates of Bohemia, Silesia, Moravia and Lusatia had deposed Ferdinand and declared him no longer their king" (The quotation is taken from Friedrich's The Age of the Baroque, p. 164).

After the death of Emperor Rudolph II in 1612, political and religious tensions in Bohemia were exacerbated by the Protestants' belief that the Catholic hierarchy had deliberately embarked upon a policy of trying to strip them of the legal safeguards that they enjoyed under the Letter of Majesty. During the years 1612-1618, the crescendo of political and religious tensions continued. By having the Bohemian estates nominate Ferdinand of Styria as king of Bohemia, Emperor Matthias unwittingly escalated the religious and political tensions in the kingdom. Many Bohemian Protestants looked askance at Ferdinand's nomination, since they regarded him as the archetypal prince of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. In order to allay the Protestants' fears, Ferdinand promised that he would not abrogate the Letter of Majesty. Nonetheless most of the Bohemian Protestants doubted their future king's sincerity. They felt that Ferdinand did not intend to keep his promise: when he made his promise many Bohemian Protestants believed that Ferdinand was employing a mental reservation. The religious fears of the Bohemian Protestants were not unwarranted, considering that Ferdinand was absolutely certain "that God would not abandon him" (The quotation is taken from Pagès'
The Thirty Years War, p. 48). Furthermore the Bohemian Protestants' apprehensions were reinforced by Ferdinand's rule in Styria, where he not only systematically reduced the power of the estates, but he also "reckless[ly] . . . under[took] . . . to convert back to Catholicism a country in which there was no longer more than a handful of Catho-

lics. (Ibid p. 47). In regard to Ferdinand's proclivity to absolutism, political as well as religious, Cecilia Veronica Wedgwood wrote that, "Absolute power was Ferdinand's ambition: absolute power in his own dominions and throughout the Empire; he saw the future of the Hapsburg dynasty from this angle" (The quotation is taken from Cecilia Veronica Wedgwood's The Thirty Years War [London: Jonathan Cape, 1938], p. 144).

While Ferdinand was at Pressburg waiting for the Hungarian diet to proclaim him king of Hungary, the political and religious tensions in Bohemia had reached a boiling point. On the 23 May 1618 a delegation of Protestants, under the leadership of some Bohemian nobles, arrived at Hradchin castle to present a list of their grievances to the Habsburg officials. During their talks with these officials, the discussion became so heated that a mêlée ensued in which two imperial councilors and an unfortunate secretary were thrown out of a window. This overt act of defiance marked the beginning of the Bohemian War. Before long the Bohemian conflict had embroiled the Germanies in a civil war. Later on this civil war in the Germanies became a European-wide War.

The Bohemian rebellion was a godsend for Ferdinand II. Since the Bohemian rebellion could be easily isolated, militarily as well as diplomatically, Ferdinand's forces were able to decisively defeat the rebels at the battle of the White Mountain (8 November 1620). Shortly after this defeat the Bohemian resistance collapsed. After the battle of the White Mountain, Ferdinand was able to impose autocratic royal government upon Bohemia. The defeat of the rebels insured the triumph of political and religious absolutism in Bohemia. In this regard J. V. Polisensky argued that the Bohemian War was a struggle between two markedly different political and religious ideologies: "The notion of a powerful state and ruler, culminating in a Machiavelli-an theory of absolutism buttressed by religious exclusiveness and the intolerance of the revived Catholic Church, stood opposed to the policy of Bohemia which was founded on the recognition of free religious and political expression and applied in practice the principle of negotiation" (The quotation is taken from J. V. Polisensky's The Thirty Years War, trans. Robert Evans [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971], p. 99). See also David Ogg's Europe in the Seventeenth Century, 7th ed. (London:
into an absolute monarchy. Notwithstanding that neither the younger nor the elder Burnet had ever been a proponent of divine right monarchy, Gilbert's arguments nonetheless had left subjects with only a very small loophole through which they might lawfully resist their sovereign. It would have been as difficult for subjects to have lawfully resisted their king as it would have been for them to have fulfilled all of John Calvin's requirements before they offered armed resistance to their monarch.

When the young don wrote these tracts and had allowed them to be published, he had behaved foolhardily and imprudently, but by no means dishonorably. This was not the case when Lauderdale revealed to him his new policy of "Thorough." Then, Burnet was to behave in a deceitful and a dishonorable way. In the middle of 1673, Maitland


359 Burnet, A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland, pp. 73, 81-82.

360 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):533, 2(1900):60-61; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 484.
had confided to him that if disorders occurred in Scotland, he would bring over an army of Irish papists to crush the rebels. He also confessed to Burnet his plan of raising an army in Scotland that Charles II might use to subdue his English opposition. Although Burnet disputed the viability of the plan, he never divulged Lauderdale's treasonable schemes until their friendship had been transformed into implacable hatred. In this instance, not only had he behaved with indiscretion, but also had not been true to himself. He waited eighteen months before he told some of the leaders of the Country faction about Lauderdale's new policy of "Thorough." By allowing eighteen months to elapse before he denounced his former patron, Burnet himself had violated one of his most sacred principles. He had inherited from his father Grotius' belief that "when the root of our Constitution was struck at" subjects could

362 Ibid., 2(1900):26.  
363 The quotation is taken from Airy's edition of Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):355-56, as well as from Foxcroft's edition of Burnet's Rough Draught of My Own Life, pp. 488-90. In addition, see Gilbert Burnet's Reflections Upon A Pamphlet, Entituled, [Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson, Occasioned by the Late Funeral-Sermon of the Former upon the Later.], pp. 31-36; Thomas Burnet's "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:672; Lecky's A History of England in the Eighteenth Century, 1(1888):80-83; Ranke's A History of England, 6: 47, 55-56. Furthermore, see Hugo Grotius' De Jure Belli ac Pacis Libri Tres, trans. Francis W. Kelsey, Arthur E. R. Book, Henry A. Sanders, Jesse S. Reeves, and Herbert F. Wright, with an Introdution by James
justifiably resist their sovereign. Nevertheless, he did not reveal Maitland's treacherous schemes until his former patron had undermined his position at Court. When his name was struck off the list of royal chaplains, when he was forbidden the levée, and when Charles II suggested that he return to Scotland for he had been "too busy," while the Duke of York informed him that he probably would be incarcerated if he returned to Scotland, then and only then did he inform some of the leaders of the Country faction of Lauderdale's plans.


364 [Gilbert Burnet,] "The Additional Declaration" [of William of Orange] (n.p., [1688]), p. 8 [separate pagination] in A Collection of Eighteen Papers; Gilbert Burnet, Four Discourses Delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Sarum Concerning I. The Truth of the Christian Religion. II. The Divinity and Death of Christ. III. The Infallibility and Authority of the Church. IV. The Obligation to Continue in the Communion of the Church (London: R. Chiswell, 1694), p. xxix; [Gilbert Burnet,] "A Memorial drawn by King William's special Direction, intended to be given in at the Treaty of Ryswick, justifying the Revolution, and the Cause of his Government. In Answer to two Memorials that were offered there in King James' Name" ([London:] [Chiswell,] [1697]), in Somers Tracts, 11:110. Furthermore, see the citations in footnotes 44, 100, 101, & 265.

365 The quotation is taken from Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):58.

366 Ibid., Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 483; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:683.
So long as Lauderdale enjoyed the king's confidence, any parliamentary attack upon him would be futile. In terms of practical politics, it made precious little difference whether Burnet violated his former patron's confidence in the middle of 1673, or in late 1674, since the secretary of state for Scotland continued to enjoy Charles' support throughout Burnet's Scottish career. Notwithstanding the fact that the members of the Country faction undoubtedly used Burnet's revelations to embarrass the king and the other members of the Court faction, Lauderdale nonetheless was certainly able to weather this political storm. Ironically enough Burnet in this matter was the real loser, for many members of the English political nation looked askance at his behavior. They believed that he was motivated more by pique, than by any feigned regard for the Ancient English Constitution. On this occasion, as on so many others, Burnet proved to be his own worst enemy. Considering that he allowed eighteen months to elapse before he betrayed Lauderdale's confidence, many of the oligarchs came to regard him as a spiteful ingrate. If he had acted with greater dispatch, he might have been able to revivify his connection with the Hamilton clan, thereby affording him some protection from Maitland's wrath.

Consequently, Burnet quite unconsciously helped to fashion many of the cudgels that his detractors would later use to beat him with. By the dénouement of his Scottish
career, Burnet in a large measure had permanently damaged his own reputation. When he crossed the Tweed for the last time, he left the remains of his personal integrity behind in Scotland. For the rest of his life, he tried unsuccess­fully to exorcise the specters that he himself had created, his authorship of a Memorial of diverse grievances, A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland and the Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience, as well as his betrayal of his erstwhile patron's confidence.
CHAPTER II

THE EARLY AND MIDDLE YEARS (1675-1682) OF
BURNET'S FIRST ENGLISH PERIOD

1. The Breakup Of Burnet's "Special Relationship" With Lauderdale And The End Of His Scottish Career

By the beginning of 1675, Burnet's Scottish career was over; he had already resigned his professorship at Glasgow. At the age of thirty-one he found himself cast adrift in London. Within less than four years he had managed to alienate the great men who had so recently been his protectors and friends. By antagonizing the Hamilton clan, he had deprived himself of an important power base in Scottish politics, since the Hamiltons were the only faction capable of obstructing Lauderdale's policies. Burnet, now increasingly isolated and vulnerable, was more than ever dependent upon the good will and the support of Maitland. Unfortunately, before his marriage, he already had lost Lauderdale's support. In part, Lauderdale and his wife had undermined Burnet at court because they were extremely jealous of the favor that Charles II and his brother James had shown to him. In part, they suspected his motives, believing that he
might really be acting as an agent for the Hamilton interest at court. 367

When one considers not only Lauderdale's volatile and imperious temper, but also Burnet's conduct, the Lord High Commissioner was fortunate that he did not share the Earl of Strafford's fate. 368 The Duke had built on the foundations of absolutism that Oliver Cromwell and the Earl of Middleton had laid in Scotland. Even before he became Lord High Commissioner, and while still a member of the Scottish Council at Whitehall, Lauderdale was busily working to erect a strong system of control in Scotland. By the time of the dissolution of the Restoration Parliament in Scotland in October 1663, Maitland already had carried out a constitutional revolution in the northern kingdom. Government now had returned to the old channel. Lauderdale had turned back the hands on the political and religious clocks in Scotland to the year 1633. 369 His native land had now returned to

367 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):195-96, 533-34, 2(1900):27-35, 37-42; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 480-84; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:681-84; Clark, p. 116; Cockburn, p. 55; Davis, pp. 166-68; Dewar, pp. 385-86; Mathieson, 2:250-52.

368 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):184-85; Turberville, p. 298.

the good old form of government by His Majesty's privy
council.370 There had been a shift in the balance of power
within the Scottish Constitution, with the parliament now
subservient to the crown.371 "Nothing," boasted Lauderdale,
"can come to the Parliament but through the Articles,372
and nothing can pass in [the] Articles but what is war­
ranted by His majesty; so that the king is absolute master

Poole, gen. eds., The Political History of England, 12 vols.
(London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1918), vol. 8: From the Res­
toration to the Death of William III, 1660-1702, by Richard
Lodge, pp. 28-29, 40-43; Mathieson, 2:250-53. For addi­
tional information, see Grub's An Ecclesiastical History of
Scotland, from the Introduction of Christianity to the Pres­
et Time, as well as Kirkton's The Secret and True History
of the Church of Scotland, from the Restoration to the Year
1678; Gordon Donaldson's Scotland: James V to James VII
(Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1965), pp. 276-91, 358-84;
Maurice Lee, Jr.'s The Cabal (Urbana, Ill: University of
Illinois Press, 1965), pp. 28-69; R. W. Harris' Clarendon
and the English Revolution (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford
University Press, 1983), pp. 317-22; Clayton Roberts' The
Growth of Responsible Government in Stuart England (Cam­
bridge: At The University Press, 1966), pp. 183-90, 437; and
John Patrick's "The origins of the opposition to Lauderdale
in the Scottish parliament of 1673," The Scottish Historical

370 Lodge, p. 41.

371 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time,
1(1897): 184-85, 207-12; Dewar, p. 385; Gooch, pp. 73-74;
Mathieson, 2:251.

372 In the Scottish constitution, the Lords of the
Articles were a steering or policy committee which was
composed of representatives coopted from the three estates
of the realm—clergy, barons, and boroughs—along with a
varying number of royal appointees. This committee deter­
mined the Scottish parliament's agenda: since only the Lords
of the Articles could initiate legislation (Burnet, in
Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):207-12;
Lockyer, p. 414; Lodge, pp. 40-43).
Lauderdale, Burnet thought, identified his own self-interest with that of the commonweal. Therefore this "King of Scotland," whom Burnet believed to be devoid of scruples, would have repudiated any covenant—whether it be the National Covenant of 1638 or the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643—in order to cling to political power. On one occasion, according to Burnet, Lauderdale cheerfully declared that he would "swallow a cartload of such oaths" sooner than lose his place. In Burnet's eyes Maitland's character incarnated all the qualities of stratagem and ruthlessness. His flexibility was "that of highly tempered steel." He enjoyed "great personal success at the cost of incalculable wrong." 375

When Burnet denounced Maitland before a committee and afterwards at the bar of the House of Commons, the clergyman demonstrated that he could be as calculating and as vindictive as the Lord High Commissioner himself. In this instance, he was motivated more by pique and anger than by

373 The quotation is taken from Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):211, footnote 1. Also, the italics are in the original.

374 Ibid., 1(1897):257-58, footnote 1.

loyalty to the principles which he had inherited from his father. Even if we accept that Lauderdale was devoid of personal integrity and moral scruples, his own conduct certainly was not beyond reproach. If Lauderdale's new policy of "Thorough" involved treasonable activities, one wonders why Burnet waited until 1675 to denounce his schemes. Certainly if his policies involved treasonable activities in 1675, they most certainly would have involved treasonable actions in mid-1673. Later, Burnet was to feel guilty about the way he had denounced his former patron.

In the History of My Own Time, one finds this splendid rationalization for his behavior: "I had been for above a year in a perpetual agitation, and was not calm enough nor cool enough to reflect on my conduct as I ought to have done. I had lost much of a spirit of devotion, and so it was no wonder if I committed grave errors."

In addition to having lost the patronage of the Hamilton clan as well as the support of Lauderdale's faction, Burnet had incurred the displeasure of Charles II. For even the indolent monarch had become bored and irritated

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376 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):60, 73-75; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 484; Clark, pp. 116-17; Cockburn, pp. 54-55; Davis, 167-68.

377 Burnet in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):60.

378 Ibid., 2(1900):75.
with Burnet's lectures on the art of government, on his mistresses, and on the proofs for the Protestant religion. 379

Charles II was particularly annoyed when he learned that Burnet had boasted to the Duchess of Lauderdale of his "freedom that . . . [he] had used with . . . [the king] upon his course of life." 380

But Burnet still retained the friendship of the Duke of York, although by the time James ascended the throne he and Burnet would become implacable foes. 381 Already by the beginning of 1675, Burnet's connection with the Court faction had been severed, and he would drift or blunder into the camp of the Country faction. He never returned to Scotland. 382 Even though he had been active at the English

379 Ibid., 2(1900):27-39; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:682-83; Cockburn, pp. 53-54.

380 The quotation is taken from Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):40.


382 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):58-61, 73-76; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 484; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:683-86; Clark and Foxcroft, pp. 131-41; Davis, pp. 150-51, 154-55, 168-69; Clayton Roberts, Schemes & Undertakings: A Study of English Politics in the Seventeenth Century (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University
court as early as 1673, personal and family business had initially brought him to London. He had come not only to attend the trial and subsequent execution of his maternal uncle, Lord Warriston, but to oversee the licensing and later publication of his Hamilton memoirs. After incurring the antipathy of both Charles II and Lauderdale, he believed that he could never again return home to Scotland, unless he was prepared to experience the displeasure of "a Sovereign unaccountable Prince" to whom he owed "absolute obedience."

While Burnet appeared to be in political limbo in

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383 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):358, 364-65, 533, 2(1900):24-27; 58-60; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 479, 481-82; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:680-82; Clark, p. 115; Cockburn, p. 53; Dewar, p. 385; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 41 & 43.

384 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):37-42, 58-60; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 483-84; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:683-84; Clark, p. 116; Gooch, pp. 78-80.

385 The quotation is taken from Burnet's A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland, pp. 153-54.

386 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "To the Reader," in his A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland—there is not any pagination in the original.
1675—since his ties with the Court faction had been severed, and he was not yet taken seriously by the leaders of the Country faction—nonetheless, his political activities as well as his public pronouncements began to exhibit a markedly critical attitude towards not only the machinations, but also the leadership of the Court faction. This critical attitude vis-à-vis the schemes of Charles II and his supporters is the most salient feature of Burnet's first English period. Later on, we shall see that his critical attitude led him first to question, and later to attack, the cult of thaumaturgic kingship which the Stuart monarchs and their apologists had striven to sustain.

2. The Joint Tenure At The Rolls Chapel And At St. Clement Danes: The Beginning Of Burnet's First English Period

After he had resigned his position at Glasgow University, and had removed himself to London, Burnet was without employment for a full year before Sir Harbottle Grimstone, the Master of the Rolls, selected him to be the preacher at the Rolls Chapel. His appointment to be the preacher at the Rolls Chapel showed that he still had important connections. Lord Denzil Holles, a former ambassador to France, had provided him with a proper introduction to Grimstone. 387 Since

Sir Harbottle had been a very zealous Puritan of celebrated anti-Stuart sentiment, any appointment which Harbottle made could hardly help but alarm the king. The Court dispatched first a bishop, and then a secretary of state to express His Majesty's displeasure at the Master of the Rolls' appointing Burnet. Grimstone informed the two court emissaries that he was greatly distressed that His Majesty had taken umbrage at his action. How little power Charles had is indicated in Harbottle's self-righteous and insulting remark that Burnet's spiritual ministrations were indispensable to him, for he was quite advanced in years, and needed Burnet's pastoral care to prepare him for death.

During the ten years' of his chaplaincy at the Rolls (1675-1684), Burnet created for himself a reputation as a pulpit preacher in London, much like he had previously done


388 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900): 75-78; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 484; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:684.

389 Ibid.
in Glasgow. He attracted large audiences to the Rolls Chapel, and he soon became the most popular as well as the greatest extempore speaker in London. When he was preaching at the Rolls Chapel, "he was often interrupted by the deep hum of his audience; and when, after preaching out the hour glass, which in those days was part of the furniture of the pulpit, he held it up in his hand, the congregation clamorously encouraged him to go on till the sand had run off once more." Although his child-like love of display as well as his passion for expounding and giving advice helped to make him the most popular preacher of his day, the members of the congregation at the Rolls Chapel already came with their minds made up. Burnet was sure of their sympathy before he said a word. Shortly after his appointment at


391 The quotation is taken from Macaulay, 2(1856): 129-30.

392 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):75-78; 441-43; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 485; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 141-42; Davis, p. 173; Driskell, p. 28; "Gilbert Burnet - Preacher and Politician - Burnet and Charles II - 'His History,'" Blackwood's Magazine, p. 143.
the Rolls Chapel, he obtained the lectureship at St. Clement Danes. He regarded both appointments as an act of Divine providence, for they enabled him to preach, and as a consequence, to support himself and his wife.393

During his joint tenure at the two places of worship, he became embroiled in politics again. Quite by accident, according to Burnet, he moved next door to Sir Thomas Littleton, who "was at the head of the Opposition that was made to the Court."394 One would have to be an inordinately credulous person to believe that when Burnet was looking for a house to rent that he just happened to find one next door to Sir Thomas' residence. Littleton already was one of the leaders of the Country faction.395 As neighbors in Lincoln's Inn Fields, Burnet and Littleton were continuously discussing political matters. For the next six years, hardly two days would ever go by when the two men were not hotly debating the political issues of the day. Sir Thomas


394 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 485.

often rehearsed his political speeches before Burnet so that he could critique them. Through these discussions, Burnet kept himself informed of the latest political developments. He may have influenced Sir Thomas' oratorical style, but it is difficult to determine what effect he had on the content of Littleton's speeches.

By his philippics against Roman Catholicism Burnet offended Charles II and the rest of the Court faction. Ever since parliament had passed the first Test Act in 1673,

396 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2[1900]:92, 178; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 485; Le Clerc, pp. 20-21; Spence, p. 467.

397 This was especially true of the sermon that he preached on 5 November 1684, which just happened to have been the anniversary celebration of James I's happy deliverance from the Gunpowder Plot. In this sermon, Burnet selected these words for his text: Save me from the lion's mouth; thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns (Gilbert Burnet, A Sermon Preached at the Chappel of The Rolls, on the Fifth of November, 1684. Being Gunpowder-Treason-Day (London: R. Baldwin, 1684), p. 1. [The italics are in the original.] In this sermon he "shewed how well popery might be compared to the lion's mouth, then open to devour us: and . . . [he] compared our former deliverances . . . as being on the horn of a rhinoceros" (Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2[1900]:441-42; Burnet, A Sermon . . . on the Fifth of November, 1684, p. 9). Since this sermon resulted in his immediate dismissal from his position not only at the Rolls Chapel, but also from his lectureship at St. Clement Danes—for the lion and the unicorn both appeared on Charles II's escutcheon—it was not at all surprising that Burnet attempted to place the blame on someone else for his dismissal from his two positions. In the History of My Own Time, Burnet disingenuously remarked that he had "begged the Master of the Rolls to excuse . . . [him] then from preaching; for . . . [Gunpowder Treason day] led one so to preach against popery that it was indecent not to do it" (Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History
Burnet sensed that Roman Catholicism was regarded with more and more sympathy at Court.\(^{398}\) For the last ten years of Charles' reign, one political and religious issue tended to eclipse all others: what was the raison d'être for the Anglican establishment?\(^{399}\) Burnet believed that the Anglican

of My Own Time, 2[1900]:441). Furthermore, he added that he "made no reflection in . . . [his] thoughts on the lion and unicorn as being the two supporters of the king's scutcheon, for . . . [he] ever hated all points of that sort, as a profanation of [the] Scriptures" (Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2[1900]:441). Burnet concluded that "old sir Harbottle Grimstone" had compelled him to preach an anti-papery sermon (Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2[1900]:441). In this instance, he protested far too much: since Burnet was quite adept at clothing his political sermons in a religious guise.\(^{398}\)

\(^{398}\) Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):167, 317-18, 552-58, 2(1900):179-80, 459-60; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 485-90; Burnet, A Sermon . . . on the Fifth of November, 1684, pp. 2-5, 7-9; Burnet, A Letter Written Upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 1-2, 45; Burnet, The Unreasonableness and Impiety of Popery: In a Second Letter Written upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 4, 6, 11, 19; Burnet, A Sermon Preached on . . . Decemb. 22. 1680 . . . before the . . . House of Commons, pp. 8-12, 25-26, 29; Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:637, 639-40; Gilbert Burnet, "A Letter, Containing some Remarks on the Two Papers, writ by His late Majesty King Charles II Concerning Religion," (n.p., 1686), in State Tracts: Being a Farther Collection of Several Choice Treatises Relating to the Government. From the Year 1660, to 1689. Now Published in a Body to shew the Necessity and clear the Legality of the Late Revolution, and Our present Happy Settlement, under the Auspicious Reign of Their Majesties, King William and Queen Mary, 2 vols. in 1 (London: Richard Baldwin, 1692), pp. 274-80; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:685.

establishment, although certainly not perfect, was the best bulwark against social disorder and chaos. His concept of the Church of England as a mighty fortress that had withstood, and was still withstanding, the repeated onslaughts of the "papists" and Protestant Dissenters had been part of the conventional wisdom of the majority of Tudor and Jacobean theologians. Burnet's modes of thought had been

Reformation, 1:3-19; Burnet, "The Preface," in Pocock's edition of The History of the Reformation, 2:5-31; Burnet, "To The King," [George I] in Pocock's edition of Burnet's History of the Reformation, 3:1; Burnet, "The Preface," in Pocock's edition of The History of the Reformation, 3:14-17; Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900): 29-32; Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:633-37. In addition, see the following works: Gilbert Burnet's, A rational method for proving the truth of the Christian religion, as it is professed in the Church of England. In answer to a rational compendious way to convince without dispute all persons whatsoever dissenting from the true religion, by J[ohn] K[eynes] (London: R. Royston, 1675); Gilbert Burnet's The Infallibility of the Church of Rome examined and confuted in a letter to a Roman priest ([London:] M. Clark for H. Brome and B. Tooke, 1680); Gilbert Burnet's A vindication of the ordinations of the Church of England. In which it is demonstrated that all the essentials of ordination, according to the practice of the primitive and Greek churches, are still retained in our church. In answer to a paper entitled Arguments to prove the invalidity of the orders of the Church of England] written by one of the Church of Rome to prove the nullity of our orders; and given to a person of quality (London: E.H. and T.H. for R. Chiswel, 1677); Gilbert Burnet's An exhortation to peace and union. A sermon preached at St. Lawrence-Jury, at the election of the lord-mayor of London, on the 29th of September, 1681 (London: R. Chisewell, 1681); Gilbert Burnet's A Discourse Wherein is held forth The Opposition of the Doctrine, Worship, and Practices Of The Roman Church, To the Nature, Designs, and Characters of the Christian Faith, 2d ed. (London: J[oseph] Watts, 1688).

Burnet, "A Letter Containing Some Reflections On
permanently affected by the world view of the Elizabethans. Not only his perception of, but also his proposed solutions to, the political and religious conflicts of his own day had all been conditioned by his belief that in the halcyon days of the Virgin Queen the realm had not been plagued by continual dissensions among political and religious factions, for "it [had] pleased God to send England a calm


Gilbert Burnet, An Exhortation to Peace and Union, in a Sermon Preached at St. Lawrence-Jury, on Tuesday the 20th of Novemb. 1689 (London: R. Chiswell, 1689); Gilbert Burnet, A Sermon Preached before the King and Queen, At White-Hall, On the 19th Day of October, 1690. Being The Day of Thanksgiving, For His Majesties Preservation and Success in Ireland, 2d ed. (London: Ric. Chiswell, 1690), pp. 1-36; Gilbert Burnet, A Sermon Preached before the Queen At White-Hall, On the 29th. of May, 1694. Being The Anniversary of King Charles II. his Birth and Restauration (London: Ri.
and quiet season, a clear and lovely sunshine, a quitsest [sic] from former broils of a turbulent estate, and a world of blessings by good Queen Elizabeth." Throughout his entire career, he attempted to resuscitate not only the Elizabethan constitution in church and state, but also the Elizabethans' beliefs about the structure of their world. Burnet's chimerical pursuit of what he held was the golden age of Elizabeth was a polemical device which thinkers had used much earlier in the century. It was a convenient ploy, of course, in view of the imprecise and compromising nature of the Elizabethan "settlement."

Religion and morality, he argued, were inextricably linked. The essence of Roman Catholicism was intolerance, whereas the essence of Reformed Protestant Christianity was tolerance. Cruelty, rage, and persecution were the


403 Burnet, A Sermon Preached on ... Decemb. 22. 1680 ... before the ... House of Commons, pp. 1-42; Burnet, A Letter, Written upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 1-45; Burnet, The Unreasonableness and Impiety of Popery: In a Second Letter Written upon the Discovery of
primary attributes of Roman Catholicism but peace, love, and charity were the marks of Reformed Protestant Christian-

404 He believed that the Church of Rome's view of heresies as well as its powers of excommunication and deposition would always constitute a clear and present danger for rulers. If the bishop of Rome could excommunicate and could depose princes at his pleasure, then the princes were not the masters in their own houses, inasmuch as they were then dependent upon some external authority. 405 Although he


404 Burnet, A Letter Written upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 1-45; Burnet, The Unreasonableness and Impiety of Popery: In a Second Letter Written upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 1-19; Burnet, A Sermon Preached on . . . Decemb. 22. 1680 . . . before the . . . House of Commons, pp. 1-42; Burnet, A Sermon . . . on the Fifth of November, 1684, pp. 1-10; Burnet, A Sermon Preached Before the House of Commons, On the 31st of January, 1688, pp. 1-35; Gilbert Burnet, A Sermon Preached In the Chappel of St. James, Before His Highness the Prince of Orange, the 23d of December 1688, 2d ed. (London: Richard Chiswell, 1689), pp. 1-33.

405 Burnet, A Letter upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 1-2, 45; Burnet, The Unreasonableness and Impiety of Popery: In a Second Letter Written upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 4, 6, 12, 19; Burnet, A Sermon Preached on . . . Decemb. 22. 1680 . . . before the . . . House of Commons, pp. 25-26, 29; Burnet, A Sermon . . . on the Fifth of November, 1684, pp. 4-5, 9; Burnet, "To The King,"
conceded that some individual Roman Catholics were good and decent men, he felt that the evils of Catholicism were due to its doctrines and its rules, and not to excesses of individual men. The Church of Rome was a “Machin . . . [that had] been set on by so many strong Springs, that nothing should withstand it.” Since the Church of Rome was such a monolithic structure, it was impossible to compromise with it.


407 The quotation is taken from Burnet’s A Sermon . . . on the Fifth of November, 1684, p. 4.

408 Burnet, A Letter upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 1-2, 45; Burnet, The Unreasonableness and Impiety of Popery: In a Second Letter Written upon the Discovery of the Late Plot, pp. 4, 6, 12, 19; Burnet, A Sermon Preached on . . . Decemb. 22. 1680. . . before the . . . House of Commons, pp. 8-12, 25-26, 29; Burnet, "Reasons Against . . . Repealing . . . the Test," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 1-6.
he could both condemn Rome for intolerance and suggest at
the same time that "tolerant" Protestant states should not
tolerate the monster. "Here is an Enemy that if it prevails
it must either swallow up our Souls, or will be sure if that
project fails, to succeed in that which it has in reserve,
it will devour our Bodies." The nations of West Europe,
in his view, had become divided into Protestant and Catholic
power blocs. The Protestant bloc had to contain the
Catholic bloc, especially the France of Louis XIV, so that
the Protestant powers could consolidate and could continue
the work of the Protestant Reformation.

3. The History Of The Reformation

Burnet, in addition to his polemical tracts against
Roman Catholicism and his apologies for Anglicanism, had
begun to do research for a new book which would be of greater
interest to many of his contemporaries than most books
of the decade. His success as a polemicist, as a preacher,
and as an apologist made him a logical candidate to write a

409 The quotation is taken from Burnet's A Sermon
•• on the Fifth of November, 1684, p. 4.

410 Burnet, A Sermon Preach'd before the King ••. On
the Second of December 1697, pp. 1-30; Burnet, "The Pre-
tface," in Pocock's edition of Burnet's History of the Refor-
mation, 3:14-17; Gilbert Burnet, "An Introduction to the
Third Volume of the History of the Reformation of the Church
of England" (London: John Churchill, 1714), in Pocock's
history of the English Reformation. Given his Protestant predilections, it was to be expected that Burnet's interpretation of the English Reformation would attempt to rebut the Catholic attacks upon the Anglican establishment. This was particularly important after the posthumous publication in 1585 of Nicholas Sanders' *De Origine ac Progressu Schismatis Anglicani*. Sanders had attacked the Church of England's ecclesiology, sacraments, orders, and dogmas. His history of the English schism was later reprinted on the Continent, and translated into the leading languages of Europe. By the late seventeenth century, Sanders' work had become the touchstone for Catholic scholarship on the English Reformation. Sanders' account of the English schism became for Roman Catholics what Burnet's *History of the Reformation* would later become for English Protestants.

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411 Nicholas Sanders (1503?-1581) was a Catholic controversialist and historian, who went into exile shortly after Elizabeth had ascended the throne.


413 Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, 6:685; Clark, pp. 117-18; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 150-53; Davis,
Burnet claimed that he undertook to frame a reasoned reply to Sanders' work at the request "of all my friends." His friends, among them John Evelyn and Sir William Jones, the attorney general, constituted no majority, since Burnet and his assistants eventually found that many libraries were closed to them. He was hindered in his research at the Cottonian Library, whose collections then contained the most comprehensive corpus of primary sources for the study of every period of English history--Anglo-Saxon, Norman and Tudor--by his former patron's machinations. Exploiting Sir Robert Cotton's fears that Burnet not only was no friend of Episcopacy, but a secret Presbyterian, Lauderdale was able to restrict his access to the great library at Cotton House in London. Burnet and his Scottish amanuensis, Adam Angus,


414 The quotation is taken from Airy's edition of Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):106-107.

could only gain admittance to the Cottonian Library when Sir Robert was not residing there. Cotton's fears narrowly circumscribed Burnet's historical labors. Needless to say, this milieu which the ill-humored Lauderdale had consciously and shrewdly fabricated was calculated to prevent him from working at an optimum level. It was only after the publication of the first volume of the History of the Reformation in 1679 that Burnet was granted free access to the Cottonian Library. Shortly thereafter he overcame the suspicions of several families who held valuable documents. Among those corporations and individuals who lent Burnet valuable documents were Corpus Christi College at Cambridge University, William Fulman, rector of Hampton-Meysey in Gloucestershire, John Strype, a noted Anglican Church historian, Sir James Dalrymple, statesman and memoir writer, John Evelyn, Burnet's friend, and James Douglas, duke of


In addition, many of Burnet's friends and colleagues corresponded with him frequently during this period. For instance, William Fulman wrote to Gilbert Burnet on 9 October 1679, discussing a variety of topics, including The History of the Reformation. In this letter, they exchanged views on the work's progress and Burnet's health. Fulman's letter was a typical example of the correspondence between the two, which continued throughout 1680 and into early 1681. The letters are detailed in Nicholas Pocock's edition of The History of the Reformation, 7:25-26. Here are some excerpts from their correspondence:

- William Fulman to Gilbert Burnet, 9 October 1679, discussing the progress of The History of the Reformation and Burnet's health.
- Gilbert Burnet to William Fulman, [sometime before 23 February 1680], discussing the need for Fulman's assistance in the work's progress.
- William Fulman to Gilbert Burnet, 23 February 1679-80, discussing a variety of topics, including the need for Fulman's help.
- Gilbert Burnet to William Fulman, 19 March 1679-80, discussing the need for Fulman's assistance in the work's progress.
- William Fulman to Gilbert Burnet, 23 February 1679-80, discussing a variety of topics, including the need for Fulman's help.
- Gilbert Burnet to William Fulman, 29 July 1680, discussing the need for Fulman's assistance in the work's progress.
- William Fulman to Gilbert Burnet, 16 August 1680, discussing a variety of topics, including the need for Fulman's help.
- Gilbert Burnet to William Fulman, 7 September 1680, discussing a variety of topics, including the need for Fulman's help.
- William Fulman to Gilbert Burnet, October 1680, discussing a variety of topics, including the need for Fulman's help.
- Gilbert Burnet to William Fulman, 19 October 1680, discussing a variety of topics, including the need for Fulman's help.
- William Fulman to Gilbert Burnet, 6 May 1681, discussing a variety of topics, including the need for Fulman's help.

These letters provide a valuable insight into the collaborative process of The History of the Reformation and the relationship between Burnet and Fulman during this period.
political associates were now willing to subsidize his further research. They included Anthony Keck, Esq., a celebrated lawyer, Lord Chancellor Heneage Finch, William Lord Russell, George Savile, marquis of Halifax, Sir Harbottle Grimstone, and the Honorable Robert Boyle.

The publication of the first volume occurred at a propitious time, for the country was in the throes of the hysteria that had been generated by the Popish Plot and its aftermath. Since Burnet's point of view was frankly Protestant, the book received an enthusiastic welcome by the reading public. He was hailed as a champion of Protestantism at a time when the fear of popery was at its height. He not only received a vote of thanks from both Houses of Parliament, but they also requested that he complete the History.

After the publication of the first volume, he enjoyed


almost national support in his research for the second vol-
173 ume of the History which appeared in 1681. The second
volume of the History, like the first, was again successful.
In part, like the first, it was a reasoned reply to another
attack on Anglicanism, this time by Jacques Bénigne Bossuet,
bishop of Meaux. Burnet wrote the historical portion of
the second volume in only six weeks. The third and final
volume of the History was not published until 1714, while an
abridgment of the entire work appeared in 1719.

The History of the Reformation was a landmark in the
development of English historiography. Like The Memoirs of
the Dukes of Hamilton, the History was an attempt to write a
judicious account of a set of historical experiences that
was based on primary source materials. Although his

420 Burnet, "The Preface," in Pocock's edition of The
History of the Reformation, 2:1-5; Burnet, "The Preface," in
Pocock's edition of The History of the Reformation, 3:3-14;
Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):
261, 392; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in
Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:685;
Clark, pp. 117-18; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 150-53; Davis,
p. 176; Firth's Introduction, pp. xxii-xxiii; Foxcroft,
Supplement, p. 105; Fitzsimons, Pundt, and Nowell, p. 131;
Pocock, "Editor's Preface," to The History of the Reforma-
tion, 7:5-12.

421 Fitzsimons, Pundt, and Nowell, p. 132; Pocock,
"Editor's Preface," to The History of the Reformation,
7:181-87.

422 See footnotes 420 and 421.

423 Burnet, "The Preface," in Pocock's edition of The
History of the Reformation, 2:1-2; Gilbert Burnet to John
Churchill, 26 September 1713, in Burnet, "The Preface," in
point of view was unabashedly Protestant, he was above the vulgar artifices of concealment and misrepresentation. According to Burnet, the Protestant Reformation, as would be the case with the Glorious Revolution of 1688, was the work of Divine Providence which had been accomplished by human and imperfect agents. There were errors to be rooted out and truths to be recovered from oblivion. However, he maintained that the errors were only perceived in "the fulness of time." The truth was often slow in dawning on the minds of men.


of Protestants, a convenient device which allowed the author to explain away inconvenient facts and to offer his own interpretations. He felt that the progress of the English Reformation had been arrested by differences of opinion among the Reformers, since there would always be differences when finite minds were engaged in the exploration of the infinite.

The achievements of the English Reformation, as


he would say when discussing the consequences of the Rev-
olution of 1688, could be neither proved by exonerating, nor
refuted by casting aspersions on the character of men like
Henry VIII and Thomas Cranmer who smoothed the way for
it. 427 Oftentimes, the highest ends of Divine Providence
were brought about through natural causes, often by the
hands of very unworthy agents. 428 Good often came from
evil, and many selfish wills were put together to fulfill a
purpose of which they were at best but half-conscious. 429

Burnet was a pioneer of a new historical method. 430

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427 Anthony à Wood, "A letter written to me [Gilbert
Burnet] by Anthony Wood, in justification of his History of
the University of Oxford, with reflections on it; referred
to alphabetically," [5 July 1679] in Pocock's edition of The
History of the Reformation, 1:574; Burnet, "A letter to M.
Auzout, which was translated into French, upon his procuring
for me a Censure in writing, made in Paris, upon the first
volume of my History of the Reformation," [10 August 1685]
in Pocock's edition of The History of the Reformation,
1:575-84; Burnet, "To the King," [Charles II] in Pocock's
edition of The History of the Reformation, 1:2; Burnet, "The
Preface," in Pocock's edition of The History of the Reformation,
of The History of the Reformation, 2:8-12, 16; Burnet,
"Reflections On The Relation of the English Reformation,
Lately Printed at Oxford. Part I" in A Collection of Eight-
een Papers, pp. 1-26; Burnet, "Reflections On the Oxford
Theses, Relating to the English Reformation. Part II" in A
Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 27-64; Burnet, in Po-

428 Ibid.

429 Ibid.

430 Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in
Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:685;
Clark, p. 118; Davis, p. 174; Firth's Introduction, p. xxii.
He was less interested in persons than in the genesis and the development of new ideas in the welter of events. His justification of Reformed Protestant Christianity rested upon a contrast between the system of medieval Christianity into which the first Reformers had been born, and that which had been established as the consequence of their revolt. He neither praised nor blamed the English Reformers, since that was outside the main scope of his work. Burnet's idea of historical development blunted the standard weapons of polemic. Even Bossuet, the great Catholic apologist, in his Histoire des variations des Églises protestantes was not able to discredit Burnet's new idea of historical development. It was not until the nineteenth century that Catholic apologists were able to assimilate this new concept, and to turn it against the Protestant position.

431 See footnotes 427 and 430.

432 Clark, p. 118; Davis, pp. 174-75; Firth's Introduction, pp. xxii.

John Lingard (1771-1851), a contemporary of Thomas Babington Macaulay and Thomas Carlyle, was the first Roman Catholic apologist and historian who had mastered Burnet's "new historical method," and subsequently used it to undermine the Anglican establishment's rationale for the English Reformation (The quotation is taken from Davis, p. 174). In William Galignani's Preface to his unauthorized French edition of Lingard's History of England, he wrote that: The publication of Dr. John Lingard's History . . . is one of the most remarkable events of our time; and the revolution it has produced in men's minds, not only in the [author's country] . . ., but in France and in all Europe, is such that the results promise to be lasting (John Lingard, Abrégé de l'histoire d'Angleterre de John Lingard, trans. [William Galignani], with a Preface by
In details, however, the execution of his History


Unlike Burnet whose markedly Protestant prepossessions prevented him from appreciating the contributions of medieval scholars, Lingard, having been influenced by the new critical historiography developed by the Bollandists and the Maurists, was deeply appreciative of medieval scholarship (See footnotes 436 and 437). On most occasions Lingard, although he was a Roman Catholic priest, did not allow his emotions to take his intellect prisoner. In fact some of Lingard's severest critics were his coreligionists. They accused him of being too "soft" on the Protestants. In a letter to his friend John Kirk, he remarked that "through the work, [the History of England] I made it a rule to tell the truth whether it make for or against us" ([John Lingard] to Dr. [James] Kirk, 18 December [1819], quoted in Martin Haile and Edwin Bonney's Life and Letters of John Lingard, 1771-1851 [London: Herbert & Daniel, (1911)], p. 166). When the third edition of The History and Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church was published in 1858, Lingard in his Preface had reiterated that "with the truth or falsehood of doctrine the following pages have no concern; their object is to discover and establish facts" (The quotation is taken from John Lingard's "Preface," in his The History And Antiquities Of The Anglo-Saxon Church; Containing An Account Of Its Origin, Government, Doctrines, Worship, Revenues, And Clerical And Monastic Institutions, [3rd ed.,] 2 vols. [London: Catholic Publishing & Bookselling Co., 1858], 1:vii). In his Preface to his second edition of The History of England, Lingard stated that his task simply had been "to elucidate what was obscure, and to rectify what had been misrepresented" (The quotation is taken from John Lingard's "Preface" to his A History of England from the First Invasion by the Romans to the Accession of William and Mary in 1688, 5th ed., [10 vols.] [Boston, 1854], 1:xxiii-xxiv, quoted in Shea's The English Ranke, p. 26).

Lingard's portrayal of Joan of Arc and St. Thomas a Becket are two clear-cut examples of his trying "to tell the truth whether it make for or against us." In Joan of Arc's case he remarked that:

It [was] . . . plain that the enthusiast mistook for realities the workings of her own imagination . . . An impartial observer would have pitied and respected the mental delusion with which she was afflicted (The quotation is taken from John Lingard's The History Of England From The First Invasion By The Romans To The Accession Of
left much to be desired. His research had not been thorough. He frequently misread and misunderstood his authorities. His transcripts were often inaccurate, and his dates more often wrong than right. In fact, his inaccuracy became notorious. Nicholas Pocock, a High Church clergyman of the nineteenth century, produced an edition of the History in which he checked every one of Burnet's statements. Pocock concluded that "it is scarcely an exaggeration of the state of the case to say that the author's dates are nearly

William And Mary In 1688, 5th ed., rev. and enl. 10 vols. [London: Charles Dolman, [1849], 4:28 & 42). Of St. Thomas a Becket Lingard wrote that he "was a personage ... who, since by his death, has been alternately portrayed as a saint and hero, or as a hypocrite and traitor, according to the religious bias of the historian" (Ibid., 2:108).

Keeping in mind that Lingard was a Roman Catholic priest, his treatment of Elizabeth was rather restrained. Although his portrayal of her was not encomiastic, his strictures were quite subdued. Of Elizabeth he wrote that:

To her first parliament she had expressed a wish that on her tomb might be inscribed the title of "the virgin queen." But the woman who despised[d] ... the safeguards, must be content to forfeit the reputation of chastity (Ibid., 6:659).

Unlike the Whig historians in general and Burnet in particular, Lingard did not regard the English Reformation as an advance towards religious and political freedom. From Lingard's perspective the English Reformation constituted a break in English tradition and continuity. By their misguided zeal and precipitative actions, the Reformers with the encouragement and consent of the King, Lords, and Commons abandoned the true Ecclesia Anglicana (Shea, The English Ranke, p. 36). See also Clark, p. 118; Davis, pp. 174-75; Firth's Introduction, pp. xxi-xxii.

as often wrong as right." In regard to many of the documents appended to the History, Pocock remarked that "after making allowance for all the alterations in the spelling both of common words and proper names, there remained about ten thousand downright mistakes." Notwithstanding that he had spent a considerable amount of time in France, Burnet nonetheless remained ignorant of the new critical historiography that was being developed by the Bollandists and the Maurists. Since "England lagged behind the Continent in ... [the study of


435 Ibid., p. 67.

436 The Bollandists were a group of Jesuit scholars who undertook to edit the old manuscript lives of the saints. Later on, Father John Bollandus (1596-1665), for whom the group was named, and his associate, Father Godfrey Henschenius, redefined their task. They decided to present an entirely new series of the lives of the saints. During the course of their labors, the Bollandists made many contributions to the auxiliary disciplines of diplomatics and paleography (Fitzsimons, Pundt, & Nowell, p. 129).

437 The Maurists were a group of scholarly Benedictine monks who were members of the congregation of St. Maur. These monks dedicated themselves "to revealing the riches of medieval monasticism and the sanctity of the Benedictine Order." Among these scholarly monks, Jean Mabillon (1632-1707) was preeminent. Mabillon not only was "noted for his critical powers ... [and] for his industry," but in his Six Books on Diplomatics (1681), he formulated principles for study of ancient documents and charters. In the seventeenth century, the Bollandists and the Maurists expanded the horizons for medieval studies (Fitzsimons, Pundt, & Nowell, pp. 129-30; Smith, The Enlightenment, pp. 211-16).
the Middle Ages], "Burnet built upon the foundations that had been laid by an earlier generation of British antiquarians. Moreover, Burnet's temperament was not suited to "the patient drudgery of accumulation and criticism of material," since he was more attracted to "the gaudy charms of imaginative theory." After the first volume of his History of the Reformation had been published, William Fulman, one of Burnet's correspondents, provided the author with a list of his errors. Burnet smugly remarked that he "was not a little pleased to find that they [his errors] were neither many, nor of importance to the main parts of the History; . . . [for they] were chiefly about dates, or small variations in the order of time." Even if he had been aware of the painstaking labors of the Bollandists and the Maurists, Burnet would have minimized their contributions to diplomatics and to paleography. Considering his

438 The quotation is taken from Kenyon's The History Men, p. 8.


440 The quotation is taken from Smith's The Enlightenment, p. 211.

441 Ibid.

442 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "The Preface" in the second volume of Pocock's edition of The History of the Reformation, p. 3. The italics are mine.
protestant predilections, Burnet would not have appreciated
the pioneering work of Jean Mabillon in "the study of seals,
forms, language, handwriting, paper and ink." Furthermore Burnet would have deprecated the work of the Bollandists, since he still regarded the Jesuits as "the Pests of humane society and the reproach of the Christian Religion," while the members of the Benedictine congregation of St. Maur were the spiritual progeny of "lewd and dissolute" Benedictine monks who "possess[ed] the world with a belief" in purgatory. Like most other Protestant apologists, Burnet viewed the Middle Ages as "the scorn of all men, [and] the laughing-stock of wit."

Since he believed himself to be the nonpareil defender of the English Reformation, Burnet considered the work of the medieval chroniclers to be of little value. In his History of the Reformation, he wrote that:

It is true, most of these [medieval chronicles] were written by men of weak judgments, who were more punctual in delivering fables and trifles than in opening

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443 The quotation is taken from Fitzsimons, Pundt, & Nowell's The Development of Historiography, p. 130.


446 Ibid., p. 266.

observable transactions: yet some of them were men of better understandings, and, it is like, were directed by their abbots, who, being lords of parliament, understood affairs well; only an invincible humor of lying, when it might raise the credit of their religion, or order, or house, runs through all their manuscripts. 448

Moreover, unlike the Bollandists and the Maurists whose "ideal was to make dependable works of reference," 449 Burnet's History of the Reformation "was a meditation on the providence of God," 450 whereby God made use of unworthy secondary agents to help Him further His Divine Plan for preserving the achievements of the English Reformation.


While Burnet was researching and writing his three-volume History of the Reformation, he was also caught up with the Popish Plot and with the hysteria that Titus Oates' denunciations had helped to stir up. At the time, he still lived next door to Sir Thomas Littleton. In spite of his association with the Country faction, he refused to believe Oates' stories about a Popish Plot. Although many other members of the Opposition pretended to believe Oates, Burnet

448 The quotation is taken from Pocock's edition of The History of the Reformation, 1:431.

449 The quotation is taken from Smith's The Enlighten-

450 The quotation is taken from Fitzsimons, Pundt, & Nowell's The Development of Historiography, p. 131.
felt that Oates’ stories were tall tales, simply a tissue of lies.\textsuperscript{451} In the face of the wrath of some of the leaders of the Country faction—especially of Anthony Ashley Cooper, the first Earl of Shaftesbury and Sir William Jones, the attorney general—Burnet not only refused to feign a belief in Oates’ stories, but even tried to help one of the Catholic victims of the Popish Plot.\textsuperscript{452} Some of the leaders of the Country faction felt that not only was he too indulgent toward Catholicism, but that he was hampering their efforts to gain political advantage out of the Popish Plot and its aftermath. Men like Jones and Shaftesbury wanted to seize this golden opportunity. They believed that they could use the Popish Plot to bludgeon Charles II, James, duke of York, and the rest of the Court faction.\textsuperscript{453}


\textsuperscript{452}William Staley, a Catholic banker, was one of the first casualties of the Popish Plot. He was condemned to death for his supposedly treasonable words. Burnet had unsuccessfully pleaded Staley’s case before Jones and Shaftesbury (Burnet, in Airy’s Burnet’s History of My Own Time, 2(1900):171-72; Clark, The Later Stuarts, p. 94). Once again, this illustrates that Burnet’s judgment had not been impaired by his hatred and fear of popery. He still continued to believe that some Catholics were good and decent men. Nonetheless, as a political and religious system, he always regarded Roman Catholicism as a cancer on the body politic.

\textsuperscript{453}Burnet, in Airy’s Burnet’s History of My Own Time, 2(1900):171-72; Lodge, pp. 154-81; Ogg, 2:559-619 passim; Kenyon, The Popish Plot, pp. 1-31, 77-176 passim; Haley,
Shaftesbury and some others probably realized that Burnet— notwithstanding his altercations with some of the leaders of the Court faction and their consequent halfhearted harassment of him—was much more of a royalist than they, for he was still a proponent of passive obedience. He was unalterably opposed to the Country faction's theory of the people's right to use physical force against their king. 454


454 Long after the Popish Plot had been removed from center stage of English political life, Burnet still feigned belief in the doctrine of passive submission. In a letter to his old compatriot, Dr. James Fall, who was then rector of Glasgow University, Burnet still espoused his unconditional belief in the doctrine of passive obedience:

But we are followers of him that was made perfect through sufferings, and therefore we ought not to be afraid; for who is he that can harm us if we are the followers of that which is good? . . . Here [at The Hague] I fancy I may stay for some time. I have nothing to do neither with the Scots at Rotterdam nor with the
Nonetheless, he probably was not fully aware of the differences that separated him from many of the leaders of the Opposition.

After the publication of the first volume of his *History of the Reformation* in 1679, Burnet had been lauded as the paladin for English Protestantism. Nevertheless, his outspoken defense of one of Oates' first victims attracted the attention of Charles II. Ironically enough, while many of the reading public regarded him as the champion of the Protestant cause, Charles II thought that he had misjudged Burnet. The king now felt that he was a moderate man, who could be brought to support the designs of the Court faction. Consequently, Charles dangled the bishopric of

English that are believed to be in Amsterdam, for as I have seen none of them, so I am resolved that my soul shall never enter into their secrets; and I do assure you I am so entirely possessed with the doctrine of the Cross that I am further than ever from all things that lead to the drawing the sword against those in whose hands God hath put it. So that you may depend upon it that I will never be directly nor indirectly so much as in the knowledge of things of that nature.

Foxcroft concluded that Burnet wrote this letter no later than 26 September 1686 (Gilbert Burnet to [Dr. James Fall,] 26 September [1686] quoted in Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 219-21--the italics are mine).

455 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900): 170-73, 260-61, 392; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 486; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:685-86; Clark, p. 117; Davis, p. 176; Foxcroft, Supplement, p. 105; Turberville, pp. 298-299.
Chichester before his eyes. According to Burnet, the king offered him "the Bishopric of Chichester if ... [he] would come entirely into his interests."\(^{456}\) In order to effect his Majesty's design, William Chiffinch\(^{457}\) arranged a series of meetings between Burnet and Charles II. These conferences took place at Chiffinch's palace lodgings. At one of these meetings, Charles II told Burnet that he believed that the Popish Plot was a contrived affair.\(^{458}\)

In the event, the attempt to woo Burnet with the bishopric proved a failure. He informed the king that he did not know the meaning of the words to "come entirely into his interests." However, he "knew what the Oaths were which ... [he] was to take, [and] these ... [he would] observe faithfully but for other promises ... [he] would make none."\(^{459}\) Burnet suspected the king's motives. He believed

\(^{456}\)Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 488; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:685-86; Le Clerc, p. 22.

\(^{457}\)William Chiffinch (1602?-1688) was a page of the royal bedchamber and keeper of the king's private closet. He was reputed to have "carried the abuse of backstairs influence to scientific perfection." Moreover, he was the king's procurer: for Chiffinch "managed" the royal mistresses.

\(^{458}\)Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):179.

\(^{459}\)Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 488; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:685-86; Le Clerc, p. 22.
that Charles wanted to buy his support so that he could de-
prive him of his freedom of action. In Burnet's words, the
king wanted "to have me in his power." While he was
negotiating with the king at Chiffinch's, Burnet with his
usual effrontery and indiscretion also attempted to reform
Charles II's private life by letter. Although Burnet stated
in his letter of 29 January 1680 that he was "no enthusiast
in opinion or temper," he felt compelled to inform His
Majesty why his plans had not extricated him from his diffi-
culties. In his view, there was only one solution to the
king's problems:

There is one thing, and indeed the only thing, which can easily extricate you out of all your troubles; it is not the change of a minister or of a council, a new alliance or a session of parliament; but it is a change in your own heart and in your course of life. And now, Sir, permit me to tell you that all the distrust your people have of you, all the necessities you now are un-
der, all the indignation of Heaven that is upon you, and appears in the defeating of all your counsels, flow from this, that you have not feared nor served God, but have
given yourself up to many sinful pleasures.

The rest of the letter was in the same vein. Charles II
read the letter over twice, and then he threw it angrily
into the fire. After receiving this letter, the king could

\[\text{Ibid.}\]

\[\text{Gilbert Burnet to Charles II, 29 January 1680, in Thomas Burnet's "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:688.}\]

\[\text{Ibid., p. 687.}\]
never hear his name mentioned without expressing the anger
and disgust he felt for the man. 463

On the other hand, Burnet annoyed some of the leaders
of the Opposition as well as James, duke of York, by his
intercession on behalf of William Howard, the viscount
Stafford. Although Howard was one of five popish lords who
had been incarcerated in the Tower of London, he asked
Burnet to use his good offices to help secure his release.
Notwithstanding this lord's adamant refusal to embrace Ang­
licanism, Burnet did his best to secure Howard's release.
Although his intercession for Stafford was unsuccessful, he
angered the Duke of York, since James believed that the
viscount had implicated him in the plot. The Opposition
leaders too were chagrined at his defense of Stafford. 464

5. The Exclusion Controversy, 1679-1681: Burnet's
Literary And Political Activities

During his tenure at the Rolls and at St. Clement's
Burnet also began in 1681 to keep his Secret Memoirs which
were a diary of personal and political events with notations

463 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time,
2(1900): 299-300; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author,"
in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:688-
90, footnote K; Barnett, pp. 902-903; Davis, pp. 171-72;
Gooch, pp. 82-83; Reid, p. 166; Turberville, p. 299.

464 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time,
2(1900): 275-78; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in
Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:689;
of his opinions and thoughts upon them. Later on he would gradually transform the Secret Memoirs into the History of My Own Time. This was published posthumously in two volumes by two of Burnet's sons in 1724 and 1734. Unlike the Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton and the History of the

465 Burnet in a codicil to his will gave "all . . . [his] Papers to . . . [his] Son Gilbert, with this express Order, That none of them be printed; . . . except out of this General Order, a Book entituled, Essays and Meditations on Morality and Religion. And the History of my own Time, together with the Conclusion and the History of my own Life" (Burnet, "The Last Will and Testament of Dr. Gilbert Burnet, Late Bishop of Salisbury," in John Macky's Memoirs of the secret services of John Macky, pp. vi-vii [The italics are in the original.]. In accordance with his father's wishes, Gilbert (1690-1726) prepared the first part of the History of My Own Time for publication in 1724. This first part of his father's work concluded with the Glorious Revolution and the subsequent accession of William and Mary. After Gilbert's untimely death, the task of preparing the second part of the History for publication devolved upon the bishop's youngest son, Sir Thomas Burnet (1694-1753). Thomas had the second part of his father's work published in 1734. The bishop concluded this part of the History with the peace of Utrecht. Given Thomas' Whiggish predilections—for he had become associated with the 'Mohocks' among the shifting Whig factions—it is not at all surprising that many of his late father's detractors believed that Thomas had "castrated" the second part of the History (Thomson, Memoirs of Viscountess Sundon, 1:171-73; Foxcroft's Introduction to her Supplement, pp. xxii-xxix; DNB s.v. "Burnet, Gilbert," by Osmund Airy; DNB, s.v. "Burnet, Sir Thomas," by John Andrew Hamilton, lord Sumner of Ibstone). Many of these individuals accepted Thomas Hearne's view of Sir Thomas: "a Young, little impudent Brat [who] is said to be one of the principal of the Mohocks; . . . indeed all Whigs are look'd upon as Mohocks, their Principles & Doctrines leading them to all Manner of Barbarity & Inhumanity" (Doble and Rannie, Collections of Thomas Hearne, 3(1886):327-28). Consequently, many Tories and Jacobites subscribed to Hearne's judgment of Burnet's history as a "Romance or Libell [sic] . . . [which] shews the Author to be a canting Enthusiast" (Doble and Rannie, Collections of Thomas Hearne, 11(1921):415).
Reformation, the *History of My Own Time* was devoid of documentation, being only the notes which he had jotted down in the maelstrom of contemporary politics. Like the two preceding works, the *History of My Own Time* was an apology, in this case, the *apologia pro vita sua*.

He also exercised influence over people of widely differing characters. He ministered to Mrs. Roberts, one of Charles II's mistresses, on her deathbed, and he secured her conversion. Also, he reclaimed John Wilmot, the second Earl of Rochester, who was a notorious libertine, from licentiousness and from atheism. This was but one more of his famous deathbed conversions. During their weekly conversations, Burnet and Rochester did not limit themselves exclusively to religious subjects. In fact, from his talks with Wilmot, he became more and more suspicious of Charles II's motives and his consequent behavior. After the first volume of Burnet's *History of the Reformation* had been published, the earl "wondered why he [Charles II] would use a writer of History ill, for such people can revenge

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themselves." 467 In Burnet's own words, "the King answered [that] I durst say nothing while he was alive[,] when he was dead[,] he should not be the worse for what I said." 468. His weekly conversations with Rochester provided him with material for another biography. After Wilmot's death, he published in 1680 Some Passages of the Life and Death of the right honorable John [Wilmot] Earl of Rochester who died 26 July, 1680. Even Samuel Johnson, who was as sturdy a Tory as Jonathan Swift, praised the Whig historian's biography of Rochester. He recommended Burnet's work to the "critick ... for its elegance, [to] the philosopher for its arguments, and the saint for its piety." 469

During the last stage of the Exclusionist crisis (1681), there had been an unsuccessful attempt by some members of the Country faction to bar James from the throne. Burnet aligned himself with the moderate part of the Opposition. Like Sir Thomas Littleton and George Savile, marquis of Halifax, he favored the scheme of limitations over the design of exclusion. In Burnet's opinion, James should be allowed to ascend the throne; however, a regent or protector should be appointed to govern for James.

467 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 486.
468 Ibid.
469 The quotation is taken from Johnson, 8:137.
William of Orange was his choice for protector or regent. After the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament on 28 March 1681, which marked the failure of the Exclusionist movement, he wisely decided to go into political retirement, at least for the moment. At this time, he devoted himself to natural philosophy. He hoped to placate both Charles and James by keeping a low profile. Yet, even though he built his own laboratory, and restricted his circle of friends to Halifax, Russell, and Essex, he was unable to extricate himself from the welter of contemporary politics. During this period in London, he continued to receive many visits from members of the Court faction. Although he was

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471 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):286-88, 300-301; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:690; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 170-80; Foxcroft, Supplement, p. 107.
"emphatically an honest man," it is difficult to believe that Burnet could ever have removed himself entirely from political affairs. For he still lived next door to Littleton. Besides, his choice of friends—Halifax, Russell, and Essex—indicated that he still was keenly interested in political developments. Without impugning his veracity, it is a little too much to believe that when he conversed with Russell, Essex, and Halifax that they only talked about experimental science and mathematics. Indeed, he had hopes that Halifax had enough political influence to obtain the mastership of the Temple for him. During the ministerial changes of 1682, he was frequently consulted by Halifax.

472 The quotation is taken from Macaulay, 2(1856): 129-30.

473 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):299-301; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:689-90; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 107-108; Gooch, pp. 82-83.

Granted even if he had abandoned the society of Essex,
Halifax, and Russell, and even if he had not been visited by some members of the Court faction, given Burnet's salient personality traits—"his undissembled vanity, his propensity to blunder, his provoking indiscretion, his unabashed audacity," and his lack of tact—it would have been difficult for him to have given up all political activity.

During the years 1675-1682, Burnet gradually associated himself more and more with the Country faction, notwithstanding the fact he refused to subscribe to their cardinal doctrine that in extraordinary circumstances the political nation could use physical force against their


\[475\] The quotation is taken from Macaulay, 2(1856): 129-30.
sovereign. At this time, Burnet still espoused the doctrine of passive obedience, his beloved "doctrine of the Cross." Even though he conceded that the members of the political nation possessed the natural\textsuperscript{476} right of self-defense in extremis, he was extremely vague as to when the natural leaders of society could lawfully resist their sovereign. In this matter, Burnet was only restating Thomas Hobbes' sentiment that the sovereign could not lawfully command a subject to take his own life.\textsuperscript{477} Burnet simply took Hobbes' argument regarding an individual and applied it to a collective noun, the political nation. Considering that Burnet sincerely believed in the doctrine of passive obedience, his loophole for the political nation's natural\textsuperscript{478} right of self-preservation was necessarily a very small one. In fact, it was not any bigger than the eye of a needle.

Given his political convictions, it might seem strange to find Burnet allying himself with the Country faction. However, Burnet's options in this matter were quite limited. After he had revealed Lauderdale's treasonable

\textsuperscript{476}The italics are mine.


\textsuperscript{478}The italics are mine.
schemes before a committee and later at the bar of the House of Commons, Burnet earned the implacable hatred not only of Lauderdale and his creatures, but of nearly every other member of the Court faction as well. At this juncture, James, then duke of York, was the only member of the Court faction whom Burnet had not alienated. Before he appeared at the bar of the House of Commons, he already had lost the support of the Hamilton clan. Consequently, in terms of practical politics, Burnet was obliged to ally himself with the Country faction, inasmuch as he needed them to shield him from the wrath of the Court faction. In this instance, politics did indeed make strange bedfellows.

Despite the fact that Burnet had allied himself with the Country faction, he tried to maintain an independent political posture. A clear-cut illustration of this was his attitude towards the Popish Plot and its aftermath. Unlike the other members of the Country bloc, Burnet refused to use this political and religious imbroglio to embarrass the king and his ministers, let alone to extort concessions from the Court faction. Moreover when he considered his precarious political situation, Burnet decided to rent a house that was next door to Sir Thomas Littleton's residence. At this time, he was intent on using his friendship with Littleton to indirectly influence the parliamentary agenda and strategy of the members of the Country bloc. From Burnet's
perspective, his friendship with Littleton was merely a useful means to a necessary end.

During those early and middle years of his first English period (1675-1682), Burnet started to create a network of political correspondents who could provide him with reliable political and religious intelligence. In part, this explains why he remained in such close contact with George Savile, marquis of Halifax. This was especially true during the Exclusionist Crisis. Throughout his public career, Burnet continued to expand his network of political correspondents, thereby providing himself with timely information on the latest tergiversations of the Court and Country blocs in the Commons. In addition, Burnet's network of political associates along with his own legal training allowed him to escape the fate of Lord Warriston, Algernon Sydney, and William Lord Russell, since he knew not only when to leave England, but also where to find a safe retreat in the Continental wilderness. Later on Burnet's network of correspondents proved to be invaluable to William and Mary, inasmuch as his network not only provided the princely couple with reliable political and religious information, but it also allowed William and his advisers to communicate with the members of the English political nation. When the Prince of Orange's expeditionary force sailed for England on 30 October 1688, Burnet, who by this time had become
William's "Domestick Chaplain," as well as his de facto secretary of state for British affairs, already had transformed his inchoate network of correspondents into a powerful engine for disseminating the stadtholder's propaganda. Considering that oftentimes Burnet himself was either the author, or the editor and translator of William's manifestoes, pamphlets, and tracts, it is not surprising that he was able to effectively change his informal network for gathering political and religious intelligence into a highly efficient propaganda machine.

Notwithstanding his own natural ability and the indefatigable work ethic that he had inherited from his father, Burnet's organizational and tactical successes had been greatly enhanced by his association with the earl of Shaftesbury. During the early and middle years of his first English period, Burnet had the good fortune of observing Shaftesbury create a "Whig organization [which operated] at the highest pitch of efficiency." In J. R. Jones' words, Shaftesbury's Whig organization was a "party machine which

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479 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "A Meditation on My Voyage for England," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 525.
481 The quotation is taken from Jones' The First Whigs, p. 211.
... appear[ed] to "be revolutionary and unprecedented." Undoubtedly Burnet benefited from the earl's political labors. Even though he did not regard the earl's "party machine" as providing him with a blueprint for his own propaganda machine, Shaftesbury's organization proved to be a valuable point d'appui for Burnet. Without Shaftesbury's pioneering work, Burnet would have encountered many more difficulties in transforming his loosely structured network of political associates into a disciplined propaganda machine. In spite of the fact that he would have denied it, Burnet learned much from the political experiences of Shaftesbury. Ironically enough Burnet's detractors and apologists were in agreement on this one point: neither his friends, nor his foes, believed that Burnet's political thinking and his consequent political behavior had been influenced by the earl's political labors. From Shaftesbury's political experiences, Burnet realized that practical politics had a logic of its own. When he set about the task of transforming his own political network into a more effective propaganda machine, he took a leaf from Shaftesbury's book. In this matter, Burnet shared the earl's conviction that in order to achieve any measure of success a political organization had to take into account the political milieu in

482 Ibid., p. 213.
which it would function. Both men believed that the struc-
ture of politics at any given time would determine the suc-
cess or failure of any given political organization. 483.

483 Haley, The First Earl of Shaftesbury, pp. 403-746
passim; Jones, The First Whigs, pp. 211-17.
THE LAST YEARS (1683-1685) OF BURNET'S FIRST ENGLISH PERIOD: THE RYE HOUSE PLOT AND THE "STUART REVENGE"

1. The Rye House Plot And Its Effect On Burnet's Political And Ecclesiastical Career

The Rye House Plot of 1683 and the consequent "Stuart Revenge" affected Burnet more deeply, both personally and politically, than either the Popish Plot or the Exclusion Controversy had done. In 1683 a heterogeneous coterie of...

484 Gilbert Burnet, "An account of what past concerning his last speech and paper betweene my Lord [Russell] and the Doctor. The larger papers of passages and discourse I gave my son about [1]705," in John Peter Bernard, Thomas Birch, and John Lockmanham's A general dictionary, historical and critical: in which a new and accurate translation of that of the celebrated Mr. Bayle, with the corrections and observations printed in the late edition at Paris, is included; and interspersed with several thousand lives never before published. The whole containing the history of the most illustrious persons of all ages and nations particularly those of Great Britain and Ireland, distinguished by their rank, actions, learning and other accomplishments. With reflections on such passages of Bayle, as seem to favor scepticism and the Manichee system, 10 vols. (London: J. Bettenham, 1734-41), 8:821-22; Gilbert Burnet, ["Burnet's Journal of Lord Russell's last week,"] in Lord John Russell's The Life of William Lord Russell; With Some Account Of The Times In Which He Lived, 3d ed., 2 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, & Brown, Pater-noster-Row; And James Ridgway, Piccadilly, 1820), 2:262-79; Burnet, "Memorandum for Mr. Brisbane, in Napier's Memorials of Montrose and His Times, 2(1850):79-82; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 488-89; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's
malcontents, made up of discontented Cromwellian soldiers, impecunious lawyers, and some disaffected Whigs, conspired either to kidnap or to kill Charles II. Their plans were very nebulous; for they were uncertain what they would do if the king forcibly resisted them. However, they did know what they would do if the Duke of York was with the king. They had only agreed to meet at the Rye House at Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire, where they could easily intercept Charles II as he was going to or returning from the horse races at Newmarket. Unfortunately for the conspirators' cause, the two royal brothers returned home early because of a fire in the town of Newmarket. Consequently, the conspirators' plans were nipped in the bud. To add to their troubles, the plotters had not been discreet. They had allowed their numbers to multiply. Later, one of the would-be conspirators was to sell their secret plans to the government.

History of His Own Time, 6:691; Foxcroft, Life and Letters of Sir George Savile, 1:363, 394-95; Macaulay, 2(1856):130-32; Rachel Wriothesley, [Lady Russell] "My letter to the King a few days after my dear Lord's death," [written sometime after 21 July 1683] in Bernard, Birch, and Lockmanham's A general dictionary, 8:822.

Charles II was a shrewd political contriver who did not have any desire to embark on his travels again. The revelations of some of the would-be conspirators proved a godsend to him and the members of the Court faction. Just as some of the Country or Whig faction wanted to profit from the hysteria that the Popish Plot and its aftermath had created, even if they had to manufacture evidence and to suborn witnesses, so Charles II was determined to manipulate the hysteria that had been generated by this Protestant Plot in order to strike at and destroy the foundation of the Whig faction's political power. The king correctly perceived that the taproot of the opposition's political power was their ability to control the municipal corporations. These municipal corporations, like the London city corporation, not only dominated the parliamentary elections, but they


also exercised direct and indirect judicial functions, especially in their selection of sheriffs and in their influence over grand juries. By the issuance of writs of quo warranto to municipal corporations that had supposedly exceeded the powers granted to them in their charters, Charles II was able to purge or to remodel those boroughs that were rotten with Whigs. As one town after another "voluntarily" surrendered its charter to crown lawyers in order to forestall having their officials charged with malfeasance, the town received a new, remodeled charter. By purging the boroughs, especially those that were rotten with Whigs, Charles II intended not only to destroy the grass roots support for the Whigs as well as their local organizations, but he also wanted to eliminate the entrenched privileges of these corporations, so that he could more easily set up an absolute monarchy in England. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this had been a common policy of most European monarchs.


The Rye House Plot and its aftermath would further alienate Burnet from the two royal brothers as well as from the remainder of the Court or Tory faction. While he had been in self-imposed retreat in his London home, Burnet had broadened his friendship with Halifax, Essex, and Russell. After the disclosure of the abortive Protestant Plot in 1683, two of these friends, Essex and Russell, were incarcerated in the Tower. To add to the onus of suspicion, he had corresponded with Shaftesbury and Algernon Sidney. Sidney, too, was implicated in the plot, and he was imprisoned along with Russell and Essex in the Tower. Shaftesbury was in poor health; he fled to Holland, where he died in early 1683.

Charles II was convinced that Burnet, even


490 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):337-38, 350-58, 370-73, 400-404; Ashley, pp. 146-47;
though it could not be proved, participated in this plot. 491 To make matters worse for Burnet, the principal conspirator in Scotland was Robert Baillie of Jerviswood, whose wife—like Burnet's mother—was a sister of Lord Warriston. 492 He felt that his career had been ruined again. In October 1684, he was dismissed from his lectureship at St. Clement Danes by royal mandate, while two months later, Charles II had him removed from his position at the Rolls Chapel. Furthermore, he was forbidden to preach in London. 493 For


492 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):355, 366, 397-98, 426-27; Clark, p. 117; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 186, 189; Lodge, p. 208; Donaldson, Scotland, pp. 374 & 379.

493 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):384-86, 441-42; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 490; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:691-92; Davis, p. 177; Foxcroft, Life and
good measure, Burnet, because of his close personal rela-
tionship with Russell, was interrogated before the king in
council. Even after Burnet's appearance before the privy
council, Charles remained convinced that Burnet had a hand
in the Rye House Plot. Following Russell's execution, the
king remarked to William Douglas, later duke of Hamilton,
that "he [Charles II] beleeved [Burnet] would be content to
be hanged to have the pleasure to make a speech on the
scaffold, but he would order drums so that . . . [Burnet]
should not be heard." When he was informed of the king's
remarks, Burnet gave a most injudicious reply: "[He] anss-
ered when it came to that . . . [he] should put . . . [his]
speech in such hands that the world should see it if they
could not hear it." 

Needless to say, his rejoinder was exquisitely calcu-
lated to give umbrage to Charles II. But he was fortunate
that his friend Halifax was lord privy seal; for he probably
intervened on his behalf. Otherwise, Burnet's house might
have been searched, and his papers confiscated. In this
moment, Halifax was his guardian angel.

Letters of Sir George Savile, 1:394-95; Le Clerc, p. 23;
Turberville, p. 299; Barnett, p. 903.

494 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough
Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 488.

495 Ibid.

496 Burnet, "Memorandum for Mr. Brisbane," in Napier's
Memorials of Montrose and His Times, 2(1850):79-82; Burnet,
in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):405-406;
During the Rye House Plot and its reaction, the "Stuart Revenge," Burnet continued to brave Charles' wrath by not breaking off his friendship with Essex and Russell. Although he disapproved of their conduct, for he was still a proponent of passive obedience, he did not desert his two

David Ogg employed the epithet "Stuart Revenge" to refer to the political and the religious repression that characterized the last years (1681-85) of Charles II's reign. In Ogg's view, the king intended to purge the disparate Whig factions from the political nation. He was determined to make the Whigs pay dearly not only for their "management" of the hysteria that had been triggered by the Popish Plot, but also for their schemes to limit James' exercise of the royal prerogative. Furthermore, he asserted that in these years (1681-85) Scotland experienced a "reign of terror" (Ogg, England in the Reign of Charles II, 2:620-56 passim).

friends, even though it would have been politically expedi-
ent to have done so. Both as a friend and as a minister
of the gospel, he was deeply distressed by Essex's suicide
in the Tower. According to Burnet, his friend Essex had not
only sinned against the powers that be by his participation
in the abortive plot, but by taking his own life, he had

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Dutiful Subject, in Two Sermons, pp. 28-48; Burnet, "The
Royal Martyr Lamented, in a Sermon Preached At the Savoy, On
King Charles the Martyr's Day, 1674/5," in The Royal Martyr
and the Dutiful Subject, in Two Sermons, pp. 3-26; Burnet, A
Sermon Preached at the Funeral Of Mr. James Houblon, Who was
buried at St. Mary Wollnoth Church in Lombard-street, June
28, 1682, pp. 1-38; Burnet, A Sermon Preached before the
Aldermen Of The City of London, At St. Lawrence-Church, Jan.
30. 1680/1. Being the day of the Martyrdom of K. Charles I.,
pp. 4-19; Burnet, "To the Reader," in Burnet's A Vindication
of the Church and State of Scotland--there is not any pagi-
nation in the original.

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Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time,
2(1900): 355-56, 368-86; Burnet, "An account of what past
concerning his last speech and paper betweene my Lord
[Russell] and the Doctor. The larger papers of passages and
discourse I gave my son about [1]705," in Bernard, Birch,
and Lockmanham's A general dictionary, 8:821-22; Burnet,
["Burnet's Journal of Lord Russell's last week,"] in John
Russell's The Life of William Lord Russell, 2:262-79;
Burnet, "Memorandum for Mr. Brisbane," in Napier's Memorials
of Montrose and His Times, 2(1850):79-82; Burnet, "Rough
Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 488-
89; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's
Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:691; Rachel
Wriothesley, [Lady Russell] "My letter to the King a few
days after my dear Lord's death," [written sometime after 21
July 1683] in Bernard, Birch, and Lockmanham's A general
dictionary, 8:822; "Devonshire House 'note book,'" [also
known as the Halifax MSS] cited by Foxcroft in Life and
Letters of Sir George Savile, 1:393-94; "Dr. Tillotson's
Letter to the Lord Russel," [ca. 20 July 1683] in Somers
Tracts, 9(1813):371-72; Foxcroft, Life and Letters of Sir
George Savile, 1:394-95; Macaulay, 2(1856):130-32; Ranke,
4:178-81.
lost his immortal soul. Yet, Burnet's admiration for Lord Russell as well as his participation in Russell's defense reinforced the king's prejudice against him: Charles II was more than ever convinced that his initial suspicion about Burnet having been privy to the plot was correct. Although Burnet rejected Russell's theory—which later became the touchstone of Whiggism—that the people could employ physical force against the government when their religion and liberties were threatened, he refused to abandon his friend in the face of political expediency. However much he admired Lord Russell, especially his courage, he could not condone his actions. He believed that Russell as

500 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):371-72, 398-99; Evelyn, in De Beer's The Diary of John Evelyn, 4:326-27 [Friday, 13 July 1683]; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 120-23; Ranke, 4:175-76.


well as Essex had gone to unjustifiable lengths in opposing the government. Notwithstanding these reservations, he appeared on behalf of Russell at his trial, and attempted to demonstrate how flimsy the evidence was against his friend. He also ministered to Lord Russell in the Tower. Subsequently, he accompanied Russell to Lincoln's Inn Fields, the place of his execution, where he and John Tillotson, then dean of Canterbury, attended on the condemned at the scaffold. After they performed the last offices on the scaffold, Russell gave Burnet his watch, and then read his vindication. At a later date, Burnet wrote a journal of Russell's last days before his execution. By preparing this journal for the victim's family, Burnet only further aroused


Charles' suspicions about his participation in the plot. In this matter, the king deliberately chose to ignore the fact that Burnet's action was a quite legitimate function of a minister attending upon a nobleman awaiting death. Persuaded of his complicity, Charles II came to believe that Burnet also wrote Russell's dying vindication. Even after Lady Russell wrote to the king exculpating Burnet from the charge, Charles remained unconvinced, believing that Burnet had done much more than just give Russell suggestions about the arrangement of his arguments.

Charles' suspicions in this matter were neither exaggerated nor unfounded. After all, this was the same man who notwithstanding his youth not only had administered "fraternal" correction to the entire Scottish episcopate, but who had also admonished His Majesty for all of his sins of omission and commission. In order to promote his own self-interest, Burnet could play well the role of a sycophant, as

505 Ibid.
evidenced by his two position papers entitled, Resolution of
two important Cases of Conscience, as well as by his A Vin-
dication of the Church and State of Scotland. Consequently,
it is quite understandable that Charles refused to believe
that Burnet only edited Russell's speech. If one takes into
account his most salient personality traits, as well as his
past behavior, then it is difficult to take at face value
Burnet's jejune remark that Lord Russell "thought it was
necessary for him to leave a paper behind him at his death:
and because he had not been accustomed to draw such pa-
pers, he desired me to give him a scheme of the heads fit
to be spoken to, and of the order in which they should be
laid."\textsuperscript{507} The king was angered justifiably by the fact that
only a few minutes after Russell's execution printed copies
of his speech were hawked about the streets.\textsuperscript{508} Considering
Burnet's past behavior, it is not at all surprising that the
king impugned Burnet's veracity. By this time, Charles had
come to realize that Burnet was not simply a precipitous and
ego Centric busybody.

In regard to his lordship's speech, Burnet protested
far too much. Even though he had not "penned"\textsuperscript{509} Russell's

\textsuperscript{507}The quotation is taken from the second volume of
Airy's edition of Burnet's History of My Own Time, p. 379.

\textsuperscript{508}Ibid., p. 384; Foxcroft, Life and Letters of Sir
George Savile, 1:394-95, footnote 2, 394.

\textsuperscript{509}Burnet himself chose this word (Burnet, in Airy's
Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2[1900]:384).
speech, Burnet, given his past behavior, did more than just rearrange the paragraphs that his friend had already written. While at this juncture, Burnet still espoused the doctrine of passive obedience, he nonetheless came to regard Russell, and to a lesser extent Essex, as a martyr for "the liberties of the English nation and the Protestant religion." In spite of the fact that he would have denied it, Burnet's efforts on Russell's behalf helped to secure for his friend a place in the Whig pantheon.


511 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):372-86; Burnet, "An account of what past concerning his last speech and paper between my Lord [Russell] and the Doctor. The larger papers of passages and discourse I gave my son about [1705]," in Bernard, Birch, and Lockmanham's A general dictionary, 8:821-22; Burnet, "Burnet's Journal of
At this time, Burnet was experiencing a conflict between his rational faculties and his emotions. By editing his friend's speech, he was able to assuage his own internal conflict, since he was able to vent his pent-up emotions in his friend's speech. Consequently, he could still maintain publicly his subscription to the doctrine of passive obedience—Burnet oftentimes preferred to call it "the doctrine of the Cross"—while at the same time he expressed his deep-seated disapproval of the Stuart monarchs' cult of thaumaturgic kingship, and their policies of religious and political absolutism. In part, as a result of his research into the "great and lasting mischiefs of civil wars" in Scotland, Burnet surmised that it was far better that other men die for principles that he would one day espouse, than for this fate to befall him. Despite his protestations to


512 The quotation is taken from Burnet's letter to Dr. James Fall, then rector of Glasgow University (Gilbert Burnet to [Dr. James Fall,] ca. 26 September [1686,] quoted in Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 219-21).

513 The quotation is taken from Airy's edition of Burnet's History of My Own Time, 1(1897):3.
the contrary, Burnet who frequently venerated the idol of self-interest concluded that it was better to be a martyr-ologist than a martyr, whether it be for latitudinarian Anglicanism or for "the liberties of the English nation."

Unlike many of his contemporaries, he did not find the principle of passive obedience on hereditary divine right. Rather, like Grotius and his own father, he based the principle of passive obedience upon motives of religious quietism and political expediency. The experiences of the civil wars in Scotland and in England only confirmed him in this belief in the doctrine of passive obedience. Although conscious of the sword of Damocles suspended over

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his head, for at any moment Burnet felt that he could be arrested and his property sequestered, he continued to espouse this doctrine.\textsuperscript{516} Nevertheless, the following statement from the \textit{Original (Secret) Memoirs}\textsuperscript{517} revealed that he had a powerful struggle with himself to control his propensity for more dynamic principles:

\begin{quote}
\ldots if I am able to search any one thing to the bottom, I have done it in this matter; and indeed my aversion to the ill conduct of affairs, and somewhat of natural heat and carelessness in my temper, has given me the bias rather in favor of resistance than against it; so that nothing but the force of reason and conscience has determined me against it.\textsuperscript{518}
\end{quote}

Needless to say, Burnet's reference to "my aversion to the ill conduct of affairs" would hardly have endeared him to Charles II. Later on in this same fragment from his \textit{Secret Memoirs}, he reiterated his belief in passive obedience:

\begin{quote}
And thus I have taken occasion to give this full and plain account of my opinion as to civil government
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[517] After a painstaking collation of fascicles of the Secret Memoirs in both the Bodleian Library at Oxford and the British Museum in London, Foxcroft inferred that Burnet penned these lines sometime after the execution of Lord Russell on 21 July 1683, but before his departure for France at the end of August 1683 (Foxcroft's Introduction to her \textit{Supplement}, pp. v-xxx).
\item[518] The quotation is taken from Foxcroft's \textit{Supplement}, p. 35.
\end{footnotes}
and all rebellion against it; which I have so openly and
frequently declared both in books, in sermons, and in
familiar discourses, that if I had not seen too much of
the injustice and baseness of the world to wonder at any­
thing I should wonder much to find myself aspersed as a
favouer of rebellion; whereas I think there is no man
living whose principles determine him more steadily
against it. 519

Even though he supported and defended the doctrine
of passive obedience, he did not subscribe to the Stuart
theory of kingship, especially as it had been enunciated in
James I's The Trew Law of Free Monarchies and in Sir Robert
Filmer's Patriarcha or the Natural Power of Kings. Accord­
ing to Burnet, "When any Authority is asserted in general
and indefinite Terms, these are always to be understood
with those Restrictions and Limitations that the nature of
things require, to be supposed even when they are not ex­
pressed."520 In addition, he maintained that "in all those
large Phrases of Obedience, there are some necessary Re­
serves and Exceptions to be understood."521 He could there­
fore justly assert the continuity of his own political opin­
ions; for he had always left a loophole, albeit a very tiny
one, for the exercise of the subject's right of self-pres­
servation in extreme circumstances.522 After the Glorious


520 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Reflections
On The Relation Of The English Reformation, Lately printed
14.

521 Ibid.

522 Burnet, "At the Hague the 30th of July 1687," in
John Jay Hughes' "The Missing 'Last Words' of Gilbert Burnet
Revolution, many of the apologists for the Jacobite cause as well as many of the propagandists for the Tory faction, especially Charles Leslie, George Hickes, and Jonathan Swift, condemned Burnet as a political apostate. 523 These men believed that he deserted the ship of passive obedience at a propitious moment, when the ship was sinking.

Although he attacked many Catholic theologians, especially the Jesuits, for their use of casuistic arguments, 524 Burnet himself was not immune to the wiles of casuistry. In his political thought, he employed the same casuistic arguments that he condemned in others. An excellent


523 See footnotes 10 and 11.

illustration of Burnet's mastery of casuistic arguments was his statement to Tillotson that "hee had now brought my Lord Russell to bee sensible of the unlawfulness of Resistance, and desired . . . [Tillotson] to acquaint . . . [Halifax] with it, that . . . [Halifax] might tell it to the King, as that which might in some degree soften . . . [the king] towards my Lord."  

When the dean next visited Russell, he informed his lordship "how glad hee was of what Dr. Burnet had informed him."  

However, Tillotson was dismayed by Russell's rejoinder that "Dr. Burnet was under a mistake, for that he had only said that hee was willing to bee convinced, but not that hee was so."

When Tillotson later condemned Burnet for providing him with misinformation, "and for making him the instrument to send . . . a wrong message to the King," Burnet replied "that he [Burnet] said it positively to Dr. Tillotson, though my Lord only said it in such a manner as gave him [Burnet] hopes hee would bee converted from his former opinion, but hee [Burnet] took it in the largest sense, because hee [Burnet] believed it might do . . . [Lord Russell] a good office to the King." This is the quintessential Burnet. If the

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525 "Devonshire House 'notebook,'" [also known as the Halifax MSS] quoted by Foxcroft in Life and Letters of Sir George Savile, 1:393.

526 Ibid., p. 394.

527 Ibid.

528 Ibid. The italics are mine.
circumstances seemed to warrant it, he could behave in a quite eel-like manner. On these occasions, Burnet was certain that he was not guilty of any wrongdoing. In his own mind, he believed that he had not lied. He merely had phrased his responses in the most ambiguous manner possible. Consequently, he was not to blame if someone misinterpreted his remarks. Although he would have denied it, Burnet employed the casuistic practice of amphibology. Apparently he never experienced any difficulty in presenting a calm exterior, while his mind was busily engaged in formulating mental reservations. Moreover, when he snared Tillotson in his casuistic trap, Burnet had not bamboozled a mere acquaintance, but rather a friend with whom he was deeply involved emotionally. For Burnet, it was the moral equivalent of lying to his father.

After Burnet had lost Lauderdale's support and his favored position at Charles II's Court, he attempted to ingratiate himself with the members of the Country faction by asserting that he had always left a small loophole in his political writings that could be interpreted as allowing the people the use of physical force against their sovereign. This time Burnet was using casuistic arguments in order to rationalize his past political behavior. According to Burnet, even in his *A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland*, he had asserted that His Majesty's Christian subjects could resist their king if he commanded them to
abandon a religious creed which they conscientiously pro-

fessed. However in this work, Burnet made it clear that
when he spoke of "resistance," he meant passive resistance.
Subjects were forbidden to use physical force against their
monarch, for the king of Scotland was "a Sovereign unac-

countable Prince," to whom these subjects owed "absolute
obedience." Needless to say, Burnet conveniently forgot
to mention this fact to his new political associates. When
he discussed political matters with them, he gave them the
impression that when he spoke of "resistance" he meant the
use of physical force. At this time, Burnet believed that
if his new political allies did not specifically ask him how
he defined the term "resistance," he was not morally obli-
gated to provide them with this information. Hence he was
not guilty of any wrongdoing. It is not surprising that
many of his former political opponents (the Country faction)
failed to perceive Burnet's loophole for popular resistance.
They had not been convinced by Burnet's arguments. Further-
more, many of these individuals not only failed to appreci-
ate the subtlety of his arguments but they were unimpressed
by his seeming ability to split hairs on many occasions.

529 Burnet, A Vindication of the Church and State of
Scotland, pp. 6-156 passim.
530 Ibid., pp. 153-54.
531 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "To the
Reader," in his A Vindication of the Church and State of
Scotland--there is not any pagination in the original.
While he was in "voluntary" exile in the United Provinces (1686-1688), Burnet once again tried to rationalize his past political behavior. On this occasion, he argued that he had always asserted that "when the root of our Constitution was struck at, 532 and when "the designe of being a totall subversion," 533 subjects were not "bound to

532 The quotation is taken from the following works of Burnet: "At the Hague the 30th of July 1687," in John Jay Hughes' "The Missing 'Last Words' of Gilbert Burnet in July 1687," The Historical Journal 20 (March 1977):225; "An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority; and of the Grounds upon which it may be lawful or necessary for Subjects to defend their Religion, Lives, and Liberties," in the Harleian Miscellany, 1(1808):446-48; "A Letter Containing Some Reflections On His Majesty's Declaration For Liberty of Conscience. Dated the Fourth of April 1687," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 30-31; An Enquiry Into the Present State of Affairs: And in particular, Whether we owe Allegiance to the King in these Circumstances And whether we are bound to Treat with Him, and call Him back again, or not?, pp. 4-5, 9-10; Reflections Upon A Pamphlet, Entituled, [Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson, Occasioned by the Late Funeral-Sermon of the Former upon the Later.], pp. 29-46, 50-53, 57-58, 66-67, 72-75, 141; A Sermon Preach'd in the Cathedral-Church Of Salisbury, On The 29th Day of May, in the Year 1710 (London: J. M. for J. Churchill, 1710), pp. 8-9; "A Memorial drawn by King William's special Direction, intended to be given in at the Treaty of Ryswick, justifying the Revolution, and the Cause of his Government. In Answer to two Memorials that were offered there in King James' Name," in Somers Tracts, 11:110; "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 488; Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):355.

submit and suffer"\textsuperscript{534}; they then had "a just cause of resistance."\textsuperscript{535} Nevertheless, during both his Scottish career (1643-1674) and his first English period (1675-1685), Burnet's loophole for "resistance" was so small that it would have been easier for the proverbial camel to have passed through the eye of a needle than through Burnet's loophole. For those forty odd years it would have been difficult for Burnet to have found "a just cause of resistance" for the people.

After the execution of Lord Russell on 21 July 1683, Burnet decided to return to his laboratory, and devote himself entirely to experimental science and mathematics.\textsuperscript{536}

Although his interest in the scientific movement of his day

\begin{quote}
Majesty's Declaration For Liberty of Conscience. Dated the Fourth of April 1687," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 30-31; An Enquiry Into the Present State of Affairs: And in particular, Whether we owe Allegiance to the King in these Circumstances And whether we are bound to Treat with Him, and call Him back again, or not?, pp. 4-5, 9-10; Reflections Upon A Pamphlet, Entituled, [Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson, Occasioned by the Late Funeral-Sermon of the Former upon the Later.], pp. 29-46, 50-53, 57-58, 66-67, 72-75, 141; A Sermon Preach'd in the Cathedral-Church Of Salisbury, On The 29th Day of May, in the Year 1710, pp. 8-9; "A Memorial drawn by King William's special Direction," in Somers Tracts, 11:110.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{534} The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Meditation on My Voyage for England," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 524.

\textsuperscript{535} The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 488.

\textsuperscript{536} Burnet, "Memorandum for Mr. Brisbane," in Napier's Memorials of Montrose and His Times, 2(1850):80; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 489; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:690.
was genuine—which was reflected not only in his membership in the Royal Society, but also in some of his works, especially those found in his travel letters—he seemed always to retreat to his laboratory when he offended the powers that be. It should be remembered that science and religion were complementary disciplines in his time before the secularization of European thought; most of the experimental scientists and many of the Christian theologians believed that the new science could be and should be the handmaiden of revealed religion. Since neither the guardians and the defenders of the Christian tradition, nor the propagandists for the new science had as yet experienced any cognitive dissonance, they failed to perceive that experimental science and revealed religion might become antagonistic disciplines, let alone mutually exclusive ones.\(^537\) Hence, Burnet thought that the new science with its l'esprit géométrique was a useful adjunct for the study of theology and philosophy.\(^538\) Notwithstanding Burnet's assertion that


\(^{538}\) Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 461, 464.
experimental science was a valuable ancillary discipline for his theological studies, the new science, however, was most valuable to Burnet because it "furnished . . . [him] with a good excuse for staying much at home." Whenever he was in political difficulties, he retreated to his laboratory. Given his sentiment regarding experimental science as well as his past behavior, it is not at all surprising that after the abortive Rye House Plot and its aftermath of political repression that Burnet demonstrated once again a renewed interest in natural philosophy.

During the "Stuart Revenge" when Charles II and his supporters were nurturing and manipulating the hysteria that had been triggered by the stillborn Rye House Plot, Burnet's behavior showed a seemingly fundamental contradiction. This was merely the outward manifestation of the inner turmoil that the man was experiencing; for his psyche was the battleground for his own warring emotions. Like many other men, Burnet was able not only to entertain and to experience, but also to act upon—sometimes it seemed almost simultaneously—the most antithetical affective states. This predilection for acting upon his passions—whatever they might be—was an integral part of his personality. By way of illustration, on the one hand, he displayed great courage.

539 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 489; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:690.
as he stood on the scaffold and ministered to Russell. Furthermore, he not only corresponded with, but he also sent books to, his cousin-german Baillie of Jerviswood, who was incarcerated in Scotland for his share in the plot. Yet, for a short time, Burnet lost his nerve. He played once again the part of a toady when he sent a memorandum to Mr. Brisbane, written just after the suicide of Essex, and on the eve of the execution of Russell. Burnet wanted John Brisbane, Esq., who was then secretary of the admiralty, to be his good angel. At the time, he hoped that Brisbane would transmit his memorandum of 17 July 1683 to either Charles II or to the Marquis of Halifax, who was then lord privy seal. When he wrote this memorandum, it appears that he was experiencing paroxysms of anxiety, which were triggered in part by fear and guilt. The very language of the memorandum revealed the hysteria that Burnet was experiencing:

I am upon this occasion positively resolved never to have any thing to doe more with men of business, particularly with any in opposition to the Court, but will divide the rest of my life between my function and a very few friends, and my laboratory . . . ; I ask nor expect nothing but only to stand clear in the King's thoughts; for preferment, I am resolved against it, tho' I could obtain it. I would have done this sooner, but it might have lookt like fear or guilt, so I forebore hitherto. . . . I choose rather to write it than say it, . . . that you may see how sincere I am in it, as also because I am

540 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):355, 366, 368-69, 397-98, 424-27; Clark, p. 117.

now so overcharged with melancholy that I can scarce endure any company, and for two nights have not been able to sleep an hour. One thing you may . . . tell the King, that tho' I am too inconsiderable to think I can ever serve him while I am alive, yet I hope I shall be able to doe it to some purpose after I am dead; this you understand, and I will doe it with zeal. So, my dear friend, pity your poor melancholy friend, who was never in his whole life under so deep an affliction. . . . Doe not come near me for some time, for I cannot bear any company. . . . Adieu, my dear friend, and keep this as a witnesse against me if I ever fail in the performance of it. . . .

Fortunately, Brisbane died in the following year (1684). He was, therefore, deprived of the opportunity of testing the sincerity of his "poor melancholy friend."

Needless to say, Burnet did not spend the remainder of his life performing his clerical duties, conversing with his friends, and conducting laboratory experiments. Death, mental derangement, and physical enfeeblement, these were the only things that could have removed Burnet from the political stage. In the end, it was death that removed Burnet.

As it was, Burnet did not fulfill his gratuitous promise to Charles II. When his History of My Own Time was published posthumously, it was found that he had pointed to a parallel between the late king's character and that of the Roman emperor Tiberius. It is not surprising that the

542 The italics are in the original.

543 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Memorandum for Mr. Brisbane," in Napier's Memorials of Montrose and His Times, 2(1850):80-82.

544 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):470.
Tories took umbrage at what they believed to have been a villainous character sketch of Charles II. Jonathan Swift for instance accused this "Vile Scot" of malice and falsehoods. In order to rescue Charles' character from obloquy, Swift countered by giving a stinging reproof to Burnet as a historian: "He was certainly a very bad prince, but not to the degree described in this character, which is poorly drawn, and mingled with malice very unworthy [of] an historian, and the style abominable, as in the whole history, and the observations trite and vulgar."

From all this we gather that during the Rye House Plot and its aftermath, Burnet, just as during the Popish Plot and its concomitant hysteria, had lost his nerve for a time. Although he certainly was not a coward, there were times when his emotions—fear, guilt, and anxiety—paralyzed his rational faculty. At those moments, when his feelings were dominant over his reason, he made promises which he could never keep, among them the one to remove himself from the political stage and to retreat to his laboratory. As soon as his reason once more gained the upper hand, these promises were soon forgotten.


546 Ibid., p. 353.
As the political barometer rose, he began to feel more and more uncomfortable in England. Believing that his own position would soon become quite untenable, he once more prepared to travel briefly on the Continent. In early September, when he again embarked on his travels, Burnet had been in political retirement for approximately two months. Like Halifax he could on occasions act like a trimmer. Whenever the maelstrom of political and religious affairs threatened to engulf him in treasonable schemes, he usually either retired to his laboratory as we have seen, or decided to embark on another European tour.

2. The First Sojourn In France

In early September 1683, Burnet left England for France. He did not return home until late October 1684. While he was in Paris, he found himself the cynosure of every eye in polite society. Scholars jostled one another for the privilege of an interview. Like Benjamin Franklin nearly a hundred years later, he became a social lion in the salons. Both men savored this esprit de société. During this sojourn in France, he made the acquaintance of some of the most important people in church and state. He was introduced to Father François de la Chaise, Louis XIV's Jesuit

confessor, as well as to Father Louis Maimbourg, the author
of histories of Lutheranism and Calvinism, who advocated the
forcible suppression of heresy. He also met Louis Bourda-
loue, the eloquent court preacher. In addition, he made the
acquaintance of Marshal Frederic-Armand de Schomberg and
Louis II, prince de Condé, both renowned military leaders.
But his stay in France also afforded Burnet the opportunity
of meeting the leading Huguenot clergymen. 548

In part, his very favorable reception in France was
due to his fame as the paladin for Protestantism. As we
have already noted, after publication of his first two vol-
umes of his History of the Reformation, he had begun to
acquire a European reputation; for his history had been
translated into the leading languages of Europe. By this
time, he was becoming the historian of Protestantism par
excellence. Consequently, he was quoted by many Protestant
apologists, while many Catholic controversialists vituper-
ated him and his work.

Burnet not only was introduced to some of the most
distinguished and powerful individuals in church and state,
but he also was accorded a very flattering reception at
Versailles. Louis XIV patronized the celebrated Protestant
historian. For a time, he had an honored place at the Sun

548 Burnet, in AIRY'S Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):390-94; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in
Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:691-92;
Wodrow, Analecta, 3:190, 319-20; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp.
199-200; Clark, p. 117; Davis, p. 176.
King's Court. Not only were royal coaches, including one of the dauphin's, placed at his disposal, but he also occupied a place of honor at the royal levée. The fountains played expressly for him at Versailles. However, he paid dearly for his favorable reception at Versailles, since he incurred the wrath of the official English diplomatic community in France. Richard Graham, the English ambassador, was convinced that Burnet was there as the accredited envoy of the English opposition. He was baffled as well as angry at Burnet's reception in the salons. Graham not only failed to understand why he was accorded extraordinary honors, but he was also perplexed why a mere man of letters was so caressed by the best people of both sexes. The English ambassador concluded one of his letters from Paris with this remark: "I shall only add that no minister of the king's hath had, that I hear of, such a reception." Moreover, the Duke of York also took offense at the favor the French king had shown to Burnet. By this time, James like his brother Charles, believed that Burnet had been "too busy." For James, Burnet was already a persona non grata. He personally disliked the celebrated Protestant historian, and was

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549 Ibid.

550 Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 199-200; Davis, p. 176; Foxcroft, Life and Letters of Sir George Savile, 1:408, footnote 2.

551 Quoted in Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 200-201.
suspicious of his machinations. His flattering reception at Versailles only reinforced James' jealousy of him. Although politeness costs nothing, Louis XIV had an ulterior motive for honoring Burnet. When he arrived in France in September 1683, Burnet had already acquired a European reputation as a defender of Protestantism. However, the Sun King was little concerned with his historical labors. Louis XIV, in order to serve his own ends, was more interested in the impact that Burnet's favorable reception at Versailles would have on the papal nuncio. At this time, the Most Christian King of France was at loggerheads with the papacy over the affair of the régale. While he was in England, Burnet had been following this dispute, which was essentially a question about the use of vacant ecclesiastical properties and the revenues generated by those church properties.

552 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):389-90, 395; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 489; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:691-92; Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 200-201.

553 James' hatred of Burnet was unabating. While his brother lived, James was content to hurl imprecations at Burnet. By the time that James ascended the throne, he had already decided that imprecations alone were not going to silence this "insolent divine." Consequently, he gave his approval to various schemes either to assassinate or to kidnap Burnet. In each case, Louis XIV gave his tacit consent. Ironically enough, while Louis played upon Burnet's overweening egocentricity by allowing him to believe that he enjoyed a preeminent place at his court, in private Louis was conspiring to hand him over to his English cousin (Macaulay, 2[1856]:176-77). If any of James II's schemes had been successful, Burnet would have experienced the same fate as that of Lord Warriston, his maternal uncle.
lands. The king asserted that the crown's régale applied to all the bishoprics in his realm. In other words, the affair of the régale was part of the larger and the more complex issue of defining "the Gallican Liberties" of the French Church. Considering the strained relations that existed between the Vatican and Versailles, the French king believed that this paladin for English Protestantism could be of service to him in his dispute with the papacy. Shortly after the publication of the second volume of his History of the Reformation, Burnet had written three tracts about the confrontation between Pope Innocent XI and Louis XIV.


555 The following three pamphlets were Burnet's contribution to this political and religious problem in the French Church: The history of the rights of princes in the disposing of ecclesiastical benefices and church-lands. Relating chiefly to the pretensions of the crown of France to the regale, and the late contests with the court of Rome. To which is added, A collection of letters written on that occasion: and of some other remarkable papers put in an appendix (London: [Richard Chiswell,] 1681); News from France: in a letter giving a relation of the present state of the difference between the French king and the court of Rome. To which is added, the Popes brief to the Assembly of the clergy, and the protestation made by them in Latin, together with an English translation of them (London: R. Chiswel, 1682); An answer to the Animadversions on The history of the rights of princes, &c (London: Chiswell, 1682). Given his Protestant predilection, as well as the Erastianism that he inherited from his father, it was a foregone conclusion that Burnet would support the French king, rather than the pope.
Consequently, the Sun King used Burnet to put pressure indirectly on the papacy. By honoring the celebrated Protestant, the king wanted it to appear as if he were flirting with schism. Although he sometimes acted as if he were going to take a leaf from Henry VIII's book, neither Louis nor the pope had any intentions to carry matters to that extremity; they were both simply pursuing a strategy of ecclesiastical brinkmanship. Nevertheless, Burnet was a useful pawn, much like Charles and James were, in Louis' diplomatic chess game. In this matter, Burnet allowed himself to be used by Louis XIV, much like he had allowed himself earlier to be used by Lauderdale. After all, if the king could not have manipulated him to serve his own ends, how could he have endured not only this transplanted Scotsman's incessant talking, but also his meddling in ecclesiastical matters? In Wodrow's *Analecta*, one finds this comment about Burnet's behavior in France:

> That the Bishop spoke the French tongue very ill, but his confidence and assurance carried him fully out, and talked for ever, and as much before the King as in his own room. The gentleman who waited on him took the freedom to tell him, that he was affrayed he took up too much room in conversation, especially at Court, but the Bishop did not amend, and the King bore it all. 557

The preceding passage reveals once more one of Burnet's most salient personality traits, his tactlessness.

556 See footnotes 548, 550, and 554.

557 The quotation is taken from Wodrow's *Analecta*, 3:320.
Social indiscretions were as much a part of his behavioral patterns as were his judicious political retirements, his strategic retreats to his laboratory, and his periodic travels on the Continent. Throughout his life, he remained "proverbially absent." In Macaulay's words, "his want of tact . . . [was] such that, though he frequently gave offense, he never took it."

3. The "Stuart Revenge" And Its Effect On Burnet's Private Life And Public Career

In defiance of the fact that he was a persona non grata to both Charles and James, Burnet returned to England in late October 1684. Even though some of his friends

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558 The quotation is taken from Mark Noble's three volume edition of A Biographical History Of England, From The Revolution To The End Of George I's Reign; Being A Continuation Of The Rev. J. Granger's Work: Consisting Of Characters Disposed In Different Classes, And Adapted To A Methodical Catalogue Of Engraved British Heads; Interspersed With A Variety Of Anecdotes, And Memoirs Of A Great Number Of Persons, Not to be found in any other Biographical Work (London: for W. Richardson, Darton and Harvey, and W. Baynes, 1806), 1:84. Noble's work provides us with another excellent example of just how socially indiscrete Burnet could be in polite society:

[Burnet] asked, earnestly asked, to dine with prince Eugene, when entertained by Marlborough: "Bishop, you know how absent you are; will you be accurate?" -- "Your grace may depend upon it." --The prince observing a dignified ecclesiastic at table, enquired of the bishop whether "he was ever in Paris." -- "Yes, I was there when the princess was taken up on suspicion of poisoning --. "Now this lady was the mother of the prince. Recollecting the affinity when too late, he retired, covered with confusion. (Ibid., 1:84-85).

559 The quotation is taken from Macaulay, 2(1856): 130-32.
urged him to remain abroad, Burnet, not conscious of having committed any crime, decided not to heed their warnings. In doing so, he displayed as great a personal courage as when he had stood on the scaffolds with Warriston and Russell. Before long he had the opportunity of experiencing directly the "Stuart Revenge." At the end of October, as we have already noted, he was summarily dismissed from his lectureship at St. Clement Danes through the personal intervention of Charles II, followed two months later by the loss of his chaplaincy at the Rolls. This time it was also the work of Charles, who had commanded Grimstone to dismiss him from his position at the Rolls. Nonetheless, Burnet helped to precipitate his own departure from the Rolls Chapel; for on the fifth of November, which was the seventy-ninth anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, he preached a vehement sermon against popery. For two hours, amid great applause, he harangued against the Romish tyranny:

A Church that has substituted this Wildfire of Rage and Cruelty, to these gentle Flames of Love and Charity; and that, instead of making us love one another, makes us destroy and burn one another, is the most opposite thing possible to a Society founded on the Gospel. . . . All means possible are taken to impose this Cruelty on the World. . . . 562

. . . here is an Enemy that if it prevails it must either swallow up our Souls, or will be sure if that

560 See footnote 552. 561 See footnote 493.
562 The quotation is taken from Burnet's A Sermon on the Fifth of November, 1684, pp. 3-4.
projects [sic] fails, to succeed in that which it has in reserve, it will devour our Bodies.\textsuperscript{563}

In fairness to Burnet, one should recall that on certain anniversary days, such as 17 November which marked the accession of Elizabeth to the English throne, 29 July, which called to mind the defeat of the Spanish Armada, 30 January, which commemorated the execution of Charles I, and 25 May, on which was celebrated the restoration of Charles II, the pulpits of Restoration England reverberated with patriotic and Protestant litanies.\textsuperscript{564} On these \textit{journées}, religious and national consciousness were fused. The faithful were deluged with political sermons in religious dress. In late Stuart England, the pulpit remained not only the best means of communication, but it also was the most powerful engine for propaganda.\textsuperscript{565} At least five times every year, His Majesty's subjects had their patriotic and Protestant prejudices reinforced by these sermons. On these emotionally charged anniversary days, the preachers made use of a common stock of simple, straightforward, and hackneyed themes: 1.) the pope is antichrist; 2.) the pope is the Great Whore of Babylon; 3.) the pope is the Scarlet Woman; 4.) England has thrown off the Roman yoke; 5.) popery and arbitrary government form an indissoluble union; 6.) in the halcyon days of "good Queen Bess," England staved off Philip II's Catholic

\textsuperscript{563}Ibid, p. 4.  
\textsuperscript{564}Straka, pp. 41-42, 224-35.  
\textsuperscript{565}Ibid., p. 40.
Crusade; 7.) King Charles I was a martyr, and he is now a saint; 8.) rebellion and regicide are heinous sins; 9.) through the workings of Divine Providence, Charles II was restored to his throne; 10.) on Gunpowder Treason day, it was demonstrated again that the papists could not be loyal subjects. Every one of these anniversary days heightened the political and the religious consciousness of Englishmen.
On these intensely emotional journées, Englishmen reaffirmed their own unique variety of Protestantism as well as their Ancient English Constitution. In some senses, these English anniversary days are analogous to the nineteenth century Frenchmen's demonstrations at the funerals of military leaders and their commemorations of the unsuccessful Polish revolts. For politically conscious Frenchmen, these two occasions provided them with splendid opportunities for reaffirming their own revolutionary tradition.

The sermon that Burnet preached on Gunpowder Treason day was the straw that broke the camel's back. Although he certainly was not the only clergyman who on this national holiday had participated in the anti-popery hysteria, the king consciously and shrewdly used his sermon as a pretext to strike at his position at the Rolls Chapel.

Once more, he found himself adrift in London. He was again without employment. To make matters worse, he was forbidden to preach anywhere in London.567 Just then another calamity was added to his lot. Lady Margaret Kennedy, his first wife, was seriously ill. According to Burnet, she "fell under such a decay of memory and understanding that for some years she knew nothing and no body."568 He added

567 See footnote 493.

568 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 481.
that his wife's prolonged illness presented him with many occasions which sorely tried his patience. 569

After he was deprived of his positions, Burnet, as was his wont, decided to go into political retirement again. From the time of his dismissal at the Rolls (December 1684), until he left the realm again to go into "voluntary" exile on the Continent (May 1685), Burnet tried hard to steer clear of any entanglements in politics. This was one of the very rare occasions in his life when he made herculean efforts to remove himself from the political stage. Despite the fact that he remained a great meddler, Burnet at this time was able to keep himself from being pulled into the maelstrom of political factions only because most of his political associates—Shaftesbury, Essex, Sidney, and Russell—were now dead.

Burnet realized that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to assuage the anger of Charles and James. By this time, he was beginning to perceive the vast extent of the "Stuart Revenge." He now became aware of the fact that the king intended to purge all malcontents from the political nation. In his own inimitable way, Charles II was proceeding to "new model" the constitution in church and state. Although Burnet could plainly see the handwriting on the wall—for he intuitively knew that the king was a secret

569 Ibid.; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:722.
proponent of political Catholicism—Burnet still subscribed to the doctrine of passive obedience. Notwithstanding the realization that Charles was using the Stuart Terror in his attempt to transform his limited monarchy into an absolute monarchy, like the one Louis XIV helped to create in France, Burnet was not yet convinced that "the root of our Constitution was struck at." 

While he was in political limbo, his literary activities continued. During his first English period (1675-1685), when Burnet seemed to be involved in endlessly futile political activities, his literary output had not been impaired. He had translated Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*.

Burnet remained in political retirement from December 1684 until May 1685. Even after the death of Charles II on 6 February 1685, his position remained precarious; for he was still a *persona non grata* to James II. He had ambivalent feelings about Charles' death. Unlike some others, he...

was not "under a great terroir about it." On the one hand, as a minister of the gospel, he "heartily pitied him for the state his soul was in." On the other hand, Burnet as a public man regarded Charles II's death as a godsend, believing that it "was a deliverance, otherwise his smooth and cautious way might have undermined us." He added, "I knew what he was at bottom but he would never have put things to hazard whereas I knew his Brother's hot and eager temper would soon open the eyes of the Nation."

Following Charles II's death, he began to feel more and more uncomfortable in England. Just like after the Rye House Plot and its aftermath, he believed himself to be in great jeopardy. At this juncture, he could without any difficulty perceive the crown's course of action, its continual movement towards political and religious absolutism. He realized that not only was the new king not going to dismantle his brother's apparatus for political terror, but also that James was going to carry Charles' policies to their logical conclusions. The king was determined at whatever the cost to re-catholicize the realm. Burnet also believed that James would intensify his brother's policy of purging the municipal corporations.

571 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 490.
572 Ibid.
573 Ibid.
574 Ibid.
575 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):34-35, 420-27, 442-43; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My
rightly perceived that in a great many of these privileged corporations, the Whig faction had an entrenched point d'appui.

Tormented by fears about England's gloomy prospects, he made one last attempt to ingratiate himself with James II. He begged for a private audience with the new king, in order to warn James of the terrible folly of the policies that he was pursuing.\textsuperscript{576} When Burnet was refused an audience, he felt again that "it was convenient for ... [him] to go abroad for some time."\textsuperscript{577}

Despite the serious illness of Lady Margaret, he already had decided to embark again on his travels. If he remained in England, he believed he would be compromised by the Duke of Monmouth's treasonable schemes. Although he had not been privy to any of Monmouth's machinations, he remained convinced that if he stayed in England James and his supporters would implicate him somehow in Monmouth's unsuccessful rebellion.\textsuperscript{578} Even if he had not been afraid


\textsuperscript{577} The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's \textit{Supplement}, p. 490.

of being implicated in Monmouth's ill-fated rebellion, he probably still would have embarked on another European tour, for he now believed that his presence in England did not serve any purpose. After he made provision for the care of Lady Margaret, he asked James' permission to leave the country. James II gladly granted him permission so that he could go into "voluntary" exile on the Continent. The new king hoped that he would lose himself on the Continent. 579 From James' perspective, Burnet was more than just a gossipy and meddlesome preacher. Those were his good qualities. James regarded him as a gadfly who should share Socrates' fate. 580 By allowing Burnet to leave the country, the king believed that he had rid himself of a most troublesome preacher, who had he remained in England might well have become a cancer on the body politic. 581

What the king did not foresee was that the events of the next few years would permit Burnet to be far more troublesome abroad than at home. 582 Had he remained in England,

579 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):442-43; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 490; Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:692; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 151-52; Clark, p. 118; Davis, p. 177; Gooch, p. 85; Turberville, p. 299.


581 Thomas Burnet, "The Life of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:692.

582 Ranke, 6:52.
Burnet not only would not have been the most effective anti-Stuart propagandist of the late seventeenth century, but he also would not have been the apologist par excellence for the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Moreover, if he had stayed in England, he would have played only a minor role in the revolutionary drama, whereas by retiring to the Continent, he ingratiated himself with Mary, and subsequently became William of Orange's special adviser on English ecclesiastical affairs. By virtue of this "special relationship" with William and Mary, Burnet became one of the protagonists in the revolutionary drama.

When he crossed the English Channel this time, he had not foreseen that his action would be a turning point not only in his private life, but also in his political and ecclesiastical fortune. It was to be the dénouement of his first English period. This retreat to the Continental wilderness in May 1685 profoundly altered his modes of thought. By electing to resume his travels again, he helped to set in motion a train of events that would ultimately lead him first into a direct, personal confrontation with James II, and subsequently, to the abandonment of his cherished doctrine of passive obedience. When he returned after several years absence, it was as an armed Protestant prophet.

Burnet's second coming stood in marked contrast to his first arrival in England. In 1675 he had stayed in England in order to escape from Lauderdale's clutches, whereas, in 1688 he triumphantly returned to England with the vanguard of William's forces. During his many self-imposed political retirements, as well as during his many self-imposed political exiles, Burnet bore witness to the truth of the Biblical dictum that a prophet was without honor in his own country. Apparently, he shared Machiavelli's sentiment about unarmed prophets; for when he returned, he returned sword in hand.\(^{584}\) Burnet never forgot—at least for very long—what the fate of an unarmed prophet was. Unquestionably, he was a very courageous man; some would say a foolhardy man. Yet like the other members of the Latitudinarian party, he was not actively seeking the crown of martyrdom. There was a decided element of cautious opportunism in his conduct. Just as Voltaire used to select carefully his places of residence, whether at Cirey or Ferney, so that he could quickly cross the French frontier, so too Burnet used to monitor carefully the political barometer in order to know when to go into political retirement or "voluntary" exile.

After he had made provision for the care of his sick and nearly senile wife, Burnet in great haste resumed his travels again. On the evening of 10 May 1685, James Hamilton, earl of Arran, informed him that the Earl of Argyle, a week earlier, had left Holland, and was sailing for Scotland so that he could raise a rebellion in the northern kingdom. Within twenty-four hours of receiving these tidings, Burnet had made out his will, and left for France. Even though he had not been in correspondence with Argyle, he had some premonitions of the dark schemes that Argyle had been concocting with James Scott, duke of Monmouth.


586 James Scott (1649-1685) was one of Charles II's many natural children. His mother was Lucy Walter. He was given the title of Duke of Monmouth, for Charles was especially fond of him. Like his father, Scott was regarded as "most charming both in his person and his engaging behaviour, a fine courtier, but of a most poor understanding as to cabinet and politics and given wholly up to flatters and knaves by consequence." During the Exclusion controversy, Shaftesbury had attempted to have parliament alter the royal succession so that Scott, rather than James, would become the next king. Shaftesbury worked unsuccessfully for Scott's legitimation (Ashley, James II, pp. 167-68; Haley, The First
the fact that he was not involved, either directly or indi-
rectly, in any of Monmouth and Argyle's machinations, he be-
lieved that if he remained in England his situation would
become extremely perilous. Burnet feared that he would be
implicated somehow in their treasonable schemes. Since
he and Argyle were old friends, Burnet was convinced that
James II would never believe that he had not been privy to
this conspiracy.

At this time, Burnet still publicly espoused the

Earl of Shaftesbury, pp. 585-746 passim; Kenyon, The Popish
Plot, pp. 33, 183-84; Roberts, Schemes & Undertakings, pp.
78-106 passim; Roberts, The Growth of Responsible Government

587 Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 152-57; Routh's Bishop
Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:692.

588 Burnet became acquainted with Argyle during his
Scottish career, for the Earl was then a member of the
Scottish privy council. While Burnet enjoyed Lauderdale's
patronage, the Earl allied himself with Lauderdale. Burnet
often served as a peacemaker between Argyle and Lauderdale.
While Lauderdale pursued a policy of religious conciliation,
the Earl remained his ally. In this matter, Burnet and
Argyle were both opposed to the persecution of the disaf-
fected Covenanters of the southern and western counties.
When Lauderdale abandoned his policy of religious concili-
ation, Argyle ceased to ally himself with Lauderdale's
creatures. Although Burnet did not return to Scotland after
he had incurred Lauderdale's enmity, he continued to receive
information about Argyle's activities. Just before the
government became aware of the Rye House plotters' plans,
Burnet already had learned from his brother in Scotland that
Argyle was deeply involved in this plot (Burnet, in Airy's
Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2[1900]:354-66; Ashley,
James II, pp. 138-39; Haley, The First Earl of Shaftesbury,
pp. 710-11; Lodge, pp. 247-48; DNB s.v. "Campbell, Archi-
bald," by Osmund Airy).
doctrine of passive obedience. Yet, he allowed himself, just as he had during the preliminaries to the Rye House plot, to be used as a sounding board by several of the would-be conspirators. Even though he had not personally participated in the planning of the projected rebellions in England and Scotland, Burnet was much more than a mere innocent bystander. Just as in the early stage of the Rye House Plot, Burnet was privy to more of the conspirators' plans than he dared to admit to in public. After James II's coronation, Burnet acknowledged that he was aware of "the discontent that was over England":

... [there were] some hot men in London, such as Wildman and Charleton, [who] fancy that it might be a fit time now for the duke of Monmouth to raise a rebel lion. I knew they met often together, and were often

589 In the aftermath of the Rye House Plot and the subsequent executions of his friends, Burnet at least in his Secret Memoirs still asserted his belief in the doctrine of passive obedience. Burnet wrote that he "wonder[ed] much to find ... [himself] aspersed as a favourer of rebellion; whereas ... [he thought] there ... [was] no man living whose principles determine[d] him more steadily against it (Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 38-39). Moreover, as we know already, Burnet in his letter to his old friend, Dr. James Fall, once again reiterated his unconditional belief in the doctrine of passive obedience. On this occasion, Burnet remarked that he was "so entirely possessed with the doctrine of the Cross that ... [he was] further than ever from all things that ... [led] to drawing the sword against those in whose hands God hath put it (Gilbert Burnet to [Dr. James Fall,] 26 September [1686], quoted in Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 219-21). It was not until the publication of his Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority in 1688 that Burnet repudiated his belief in the doctrine of passive obedience.

590 Foxcroft, Supplement, p. 151.
shut up in little cabals; some of them came to see me, and talked in general. . . . 591

However, Burnet protested that he had neither sought out, nor had he encouraged these would-be intriguers. The real culprit in this matter was James II. Burnet argued that when James refused to allow Halifax "leave to present . . . [him] . . . [so] that . . . [he] might kiss his . . . [sovereign's] hand, which all people did[,] . . . the king [thereby] had put . . . [him] in great credit with . . . [these conspirators]." 592 In this matter, Burnet maintained that he just happened to have been in London when the conspirators were concerting their plans. Later in the same passage, Burnet urged the plotters to reconsider carefully the consequences of their contemplated actions:

. . . . I proposed to them . . . that I did not yet think the king had done enough to justify any such extreme counsels; a raw rebellion would be either presently crushed, and so raise the power of the court and give them a colour for keeping up a standing army, or, on the other hand, if it grew strong it would throw us into a commonwealth or lasting civil wars, and either of these would be the ruin of the nation, and would drive the king to bring over a French army. 593

The preceding passage reveals that Burnet's argument was founded upon political expediency, rather than upon his beloved "doctrine of the Cross." 594 Needless to say, Burnet

591 Ibid. 592 Ibid. 593 Ibid., p. 152.

594 Once again, this quotation is taken from Burnet's letter to his friend James Fall, then rector of Glasgow University. See footnote 589.
no longer referred to the Stuart kings as "Sovereign unaccountable Prince[s]" to whom subjects owed "absolute obedience." On the eve of the Glorious Revolution, Burnet attempted to clothe this doctrine of political expediency with a philosophic dress, by contending that "when the root of our Constitution was struck at," and "the designe being a totall subversion," "wee...

595 Burnet, "At the Hague the 30th of July 1687," in John Jay Hughes' "The Missing 'Last Words' of Gilbert Burnet in July 1687," The Historical Journal 20 (March 1977):225; Burnet, "An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority; and of the Grounds upon which it may be lawful or necessary for Subjects to defend their Religion, Lives, and Liberties," in the Harleian Miscellany, 1(1808):446-48; Burnet, "A Letter Containing Some Reflections On His Majesty's Declaration For Liberty of Conscience. Dated the Fourth of April 1687," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 30-31; Burnet, An Enquiry Into the Present State of Affairs: And in particular, Whether we owe Allegiance to the King in these Circumstances And whether we are bound to Treat with Him, and call Him back again, or not?, pp. 4-5, 9-10; Burnet, Reflections Upon A Pamphlet, Entituled, [Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson, Occasioned by the Late Funeral-Sermon of the Former upon the Later.], pp. 29-46, 50-53, 57-58, 66-67, 72-75, 141; [Burnet,] A Sermon Preach'd in the Cathedral-Church Of Salisbury, On The 29th Day of May, in the Year 1710, pp. 8-9; [Burnet,] "A Memorial drawn by King William's special Direction," in Somers Tracts, 11:110; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 488; Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):355.

bound to submit and suffer."\textsuperscript{597} At this time, in early 1687, Burnet fancied himself the standard-bearer for the public liberty of the oligarchs, even though his Whig brethren as well as later generations have accorded this honor to John Locke.\textsuperscript{598}

Present State of Affairs: And in particular, Whether we owe Allegiance to the King in these Circumstances And whether we are bound to Treat with Him, and call Him back again, or not?, pp. 4-5, 9-10; Burnet, Reflections Upon A Pamphlet, Entitled, [Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson, Occasioned by the Late Funeral-Sermon of the Former upon the Later.], pp. 29-46, 50-53, 57-58, 66-67, 72-75, 141; [Burnet,] A Sermon Preach'd in the Cathedral-Church Of Salisbury, On The 29th Day of May, in the Year 1710, pp. 8-9; [Burnet,] "A Memorial drawn by King William's special Direction," in Somers Tracts, 1:110.

\textsuperscript{597}The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Meditation on My Voyage for England," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 524.

Notwithstanding Burnet's disavowal of any prescience of the Argyle-Monmouth rebellions, he became so agitated by the plotters' machinations that he pleaded with Lady Rachel Russell, William Lord Russell's widow, "not to enter into any communication with . . . [the conspirators]."\textsuperscript{599} In this matter, Burnet maintained that he had warned Lady Russell about the conspirators only because he believed that they might take advantage of her. Since Lady Russell not only "had great resentments for her husband's death,"\textsuperscript{600} but also "was mistress of a great estate, and by that means could raise much money,"\textsuperscript{601} Burnet felt that she was in a very vulnerable position. Given that the conspirators needed money, "which was the thing they wanted most,"\textsuperscript{602} Burnet contended that Lady Russell could not be too careful, for these intriguers "were factious and wicked people."\textsuperscript{603} On the one hand, Burnet still asserted that he was only aware of "the discontent that was over England"\textsuperscript{604} and "talk . . . in general."\textsuperscript{605} Yet on the other hand, Burnet admitted that not only "was [he] in great credit with all the party that were against the court,"\textsuperscript{606} but that he "knew . . . all the men that were for the duke of Monmouth."\textsuperscript{607}
From the preceding discussion, it is evident that Burnet was attempting to provide himself with a rationale for his political behavior. By once again retreating to the French desert, Burnet believed that he could thereby avoid any direct involvement with either Argyle or Monmouth's supporters. After all, he had physically removed himself from Great Britain. Moreover, if any of the would-be rebels attempted somehow to implicate him indirectly in any of their schemes, Burnet had ready a tripartite defense. First, he had knowledge of only "talk . . . in general," and "discontent . . . over England." Consequently, he was not privy to any of the rebels' detailed plans. Second, he still believed in the doctrine of passive obedience. After all, both he and Tillotson believed that Russell and Essex had gone to unjustifiable lengths in resisting the government. Finally, whenever a political topic was under discussion, or was about to be discussed, Burnet "plainly told . . . [his auditors] . . . that remote fears and bad practises, tho the tendency of them was ever so evident, were not a just cause of resistance when the root of our Constitution was struck at, then and not till then it seemed to me lawfull to enter upon such consultations and till that was lawfull I did not think it lawfull to conceal any thing that might be told me of such councils." 608 Burnet added that

608 the quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 488-89. The italics are mine.
"this did effectually secure . . . [him] from having any thing of that sort communicated to . . . [him], so that . . . [he] was never charged with any thing. . . ."  

This caveat of Burnet's saved him from experiencing the fate of either his friend Russell, or his maternal uncle. This is a clear-cut example of how Burnet's early legal studies influenced his later speech, writings, and behavior. Burnet oftentimes went to the very precipice of treason. However, on account of his legal expertise, Burnet in his speech, writings, and behavior always stopped short of anything that could be construed as treason. This knowledge of the law also distinguished him from many other Anglican clergymen who had not received any training in either the civil or the common law. 610

Burnet decided to go into political retirement in France. In part, he selected France on account of the very favorable reception that he had received there in 1683. 611 Moreover, through the good offices of Paul de Barrillon, the French ambassador at Whitehall, Burnet learned that James approved of his going into "voluntary" exile in

609 Ibid., p. 498


611 Davis, p. 177.
France. By residing in France, he hoped to mollify James II, since France in the late seventeenth century had become a laboratory for absolute monarchy. When he selected France as his political sanctuary, Burnet was able to remain aloof from the haunts of the English and Scottish dissidents who jostled one another in many of the port towns of the United Provinces, thereby succeeding temporarily in placating James II. At the same time, he was not privy to any of their petty intrigues or squabbles. Since the Scottish and English exiles would neither forget, nor forgive him for deliberately scorning them, Burnet paid dearly, however, for this attempt to pacify James. Long after William and Mary had been crowned, these former exiles recalled with great bitterness that Burnet had deliberately chosen to ignore them in 1685. Many of them regarded Burnet either as an apostate, or at least, as someone in whom "Int'rest in all his actions was discern'd." 

Ironically enough, this was one of a very few things on which many of the Whig exiles as well as most of the High Tories, Jacobites, and Nonjurors were in agreement. In spite of their political and religious differences, the

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613 Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 209; Davis, p. 177; Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 151 & 157; Gooch, p. 86; Lodge, pp. 246-47; Ranke, 4:238-42; Ashley, James II, pp. 168-70.

614 The quotation is taken from John Dryden's The Hind and the Panther, line 2443.
members of these factions perceived Burnet as a wretch who had long ago abandoned his principles, if he had ever had any originally. The former Whig exiles excoriated Burnet for his attempt to placate James II by dissociating himself from the other members of the Country faction, while on the other hand, the High Tories, Jacobites, and Nonjurors anathematized Burnet as "A true dissenting zealot . . . [in] Lawn Sleeves," who for the sake of political expediency, had feigned a belief in the doctrine of passive obedience. In this matter, both Whigs and Tories looked askance at Burnet in the belief that the mainspring for his behavior was enlightened self-interest.

Neither faction ever really trusted Burnet. For their part, many of the Whig exiles impugned the genuineness of Burnet's "conversion" to resistance principles. Along with the High Tories, Jacobites, and Nonjurors, many of his Whig brethren reminded Burnet that only a few years earlier he had referred to the king of Scotland as "a Sovereign unaccountable Prince" to whom his subjects owed "absolute obedience." Notwithstanding his protestations to the contrary, most of the members of the Country faction chose to ignore the small loophole in Burnet's political writings for popular resistance. The High Tories, Jacobites, and

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615 The quotation is taken from "Upon Burnett," lines 18 and 4, in Doble and Rannie's Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne, 5(1901):44.
616 See footnote 530.
617 See footnote 531.
Nonjurors, for their part, denied that Burnet had ever con-
scientiously professed the doctrine of passive obedience.
Otherwise, they argued, he would not have jettisoned this
doctrine—what Burnet preferred to call "the doctrine of the
Cross"—so quickly. In the end, Burnet fell between two
stools, since neither the Tories nor the Whigs could brook
his independent posture.

Burnet's veracity and, with it, his credibility had
been further damaged by his tract entitled, The Resolution
of two important Cases of Conscience. As we know already,
this position paper had been intended for Charles' private
reading. Nonetheless, this pièce d'occasion, like his "long
and warm Memorial" to the Scottish episcopate, was cir-
culated abroad. For Burnet's Whig and Tory detractors, The
Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience reinforced
their negative opinion of him, while for Burnet's few Whig
supporters, this work proved to be a continued source of
embarrassment.

In the end, neither the leadership nor the rank and
file of the Country faction forgave Burnet for spurning them
in 1685, nor did they allow his authorship of various pièces
d'occasion to go unnoticed. This was especially true for

618 See footnote 589.
619 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 472.
his A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland, as well as for his The Resolution of two important Cases of Conscience. By joining forces with the Tory factions when they attacked not only Burnet's character, but also his motives, the Whig remnant did more than heap obloquy upon Burnet's person, they unwittingly undermined their own position: since Burnet was one of the chief protagonists in the revolutionary drama whose post-1687 political writings, particularly his A Collection of Eighteen Papers, provided the Whig faction with its justification for the Glorious Revolution. Even though John Locke is usually credited with formulating the Whigs' political credo, Locke's justification for the Revolution of 1688 is virtually the same as Burnet's. If Burnet was a scoundrel whose only principle was political expediency, then the former Whig exiles, including Locke, were not any better or any worse than the man whom they despised. The former exiles were piqued with Burnet, because they believed that they had suffered many more hardships for "the liberties of the

620 This will become apparent to anyone who compares Locke's Two Treatises of Government with Burnet's An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority; and of the Grounds upon which it may be lawful or necessary for Subjects to defend their Religion, Lives, and Liberties, and his An Enquiry into the Present State of Affairs: And in particular, Whether we owe Allegiance to the King in these Circumstances And whether we are bound to Treat With Him, and call Him back again, or not?
English nation and the Protestant religion" than Burnet had.

In spite of the fact that he alienated himself from these political and religious exiles, one important benefit accrued to Burnet when he chose France as his political refuge. Barrillon promised to give him ample warning if James should ever demand his extradition. This agreement with Barrillon proved to be very important to Burnet after Monmouth's short-lived rebellion. So by wandering in the

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French desert, Burnet purchased a brief respite from James' mailed fist.

When Burnet reached Paris sometime after 11 May 1685, he was to find a completely different political and religious milieu than he had experienced in the French capital in 1683. At this point, Louis XIV was on the verge of revoking the Edict of Nantes. Consequently, the Sun King no longer had any need to appear to be flirting either with Protestantism or with any of its principal exponents. Needless to say, on Burnet's second visit, not only did the fountains at Versailles not play for him, but also royal coaches most certainly were not placed at his disposal. He did not receive an honored place at the royal levée. In Louis XIV's mind, the good work of the dragonnades, whereby the Huguenots were compelled to embrace Roman Catholicism again, was of much greater importance to him than attempting to salve the wounded feelings, and the inordinately tender conscience of a gossipy English Protestant. With Louis no longer striving either to embarrass or to pressure the papacy—for the problem of the régale had been temporarily solved—Burnet became acutely conscious of the fact that neither his presence nor his counsel were much esteemed by the French king. 623

While in Paris however, Burnet was approached by one of the archbishop of Paris' subalterns who inquired whether he would be interested in writing a history of Louis XIV's reign. In Burnet's own words, the primate's emissary promised that "if . . . [he] would undertake to write the King's history in English . . . [he] might have what reward . . . [he] pleased." Burnet brusquely informed the archbishop's representative that "the religion that . . . [he] professed made that . . . [he] could not employ . . . [his] pen for the honour of a prince that was employing his whole force for the destruction of it." Undoubtedly, Burnet made much too much out of the feeler that the metropolitan put out. In this case, as in so many others, his amour propre blinded him to the reality of the existing situation. Just as French gold was used to purchase votes in the English House of Commons, Louis' ministers with the same bags of gold purchased the services of panegyrists for the Sun


624 The quotation is taken from Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 229.

625 Ibid.
King. Burnet was only one of many writers whose pen some royal servants had tried to hire. After all, many *hommes de lettres*—they included Jean Baptiste Poquelin Molière and Jean Racine, Jean de la Fontaine and Nicolas Boileau—as well as a host of lesser writers had poured forth paeans to Louis XIV and his achievements. Since Burnet had already earned a European reputation as the historian of English Protestantism, it is not surprising that some of the Sun King’s servants tried to recruit his literary talents in Louis XIV’s service.

Burnet remained in political retirement in France from the middle of May 1685 until the beginning of August 1685. During this three month period, he tried to keep a low profile by behaving in a very discreet manner. In Paris, Burnet claimed that in order "that ... [he] might be quiet and less suspected, ... [he] took a house," and

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"lived by . . . [himself]"\(^{627}\) retired from company being jealous indeed of all . . . [his] countreymen."\(^{628}\) Although he was ostensibly doing historical research in Paris, it is extremely difficult to believe that he was doing much, if any, serious work. This is especially evident when one considers the character of his amenuenses. Ralph Montague, who was Lady Russell's brother-in-law, was his first amenuensis. Like Burnet, Montague was in voluntary exile. He had earned the reputation of being "the most accomplished liar of a not very scrupulous day."\(^{629}\) Burnet's second researcher was Colonel Jean Baptiste Stouppe, who was an unemployed Cromwellian spy. Stouppe, like Titus Oates of the Popish Plot, was "a man of bad character and supreme effrontery."\(^{630}\) Both Lord Montague and Colonel Stouppe were second-rate intriguers who were much more concerned with magnifying their own self-importance than with objectively collecting historical data. If one considers the caliber of his research assistants, one will then wonder how serious Burnet

\(^{627}\)The quotation is taken from Foxcroft's *Supplement*, p. 157.

\(^{628}\)The quotation is taken from Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's *Supplement*, p. 490.


\(^{630}\)The quotation is taken from Clark's *The Later Stuarts*, p. 93.
was about doing his work while he was in "voluntary" exile in France. 631

As we know, Burnet was a very prolific, not to say prolix writer. Oftentimes, he worked at a white heat. In twelve months, he had written *An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England*. Although he had spent two years doing the research for his second volume of the *History of the Reformation*, he wrote it in just six weeks. Yet, with all the help of these two "research assistants" during his three month residence in Paris, Burnet, if one excludes his *Secret Memoirs*, neither researched, nor wrote, nor published any major work. His translation of Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, which was published in 1685, had already been completed in 1683. Since he quite often was researching, writing, and publishing different works almost simultaneously, it was rather atypical for Burnet to allow his literary talents to lie nearly fallow. But at this point, he was much more interested in corresponding with the leading members of the English Opposition at home, especially with Halifax, than with adding to his literary

output. Consequently, this was not seedtime for any of his later works. In fact, Burnet was using historical research as a smoke screen so that he could continue to meddle in political and religious matters. As on so many other occasions, Burnet could never completely divorce himself from political and religious developments. No matter where he was—Scotland, England, Belgium, Holland, France, Switzerland, or the Germanies—he could not remain long in the wings. He felt that at the very least he should be a participant-observer.

After the suppression of the Argyle-Monmouth rebellions, France was no longer a safe refuge for Burnet. On three separate occasions, Barrillon warned Burnet to leave France. In Barrillon's view, James was going to demand his extradition on a charge of complicity in Monmouth's rebellion. And since the political and the religious climate in France had definitely changed, Barrillon was convinced that James' request would be granted. For in the political sphere, Louis no longer believed that it was politic to be coquettting with any members of the Country or Whig faction. During the reign of Charles II, he had adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the Whig exiles so that he could use them to pressure or to coerce the Court faction in England.

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By appearing to favor the Whig exiles, the French king many times could cajole, bully, or frighten Charles and his ministers into following his dictates. Later on, when the two royal brothers made themselves virtually pensioners of France, the Whig exiles became something of an embarrassment to Louis XIV. This was especially true after James ascended the throne.633

There was no longer any good reason why Louis XIV should not have allowed Burnet to have been extradited. If the French king gave his approval to Burnet's extradition, James would be even more deeply indebted to him. While taking Barrillon's warnings seriously, Burnet refused to leave Paris until early August 1685. If he had left before the trials and the subsequent executions of the Earl of Argyle and the Duke of Monmouth, Burnet believed that some people might think that he abandoned France because he feared "discoveries."634 He did not want to give the impression that he was apprehensive for his own personal safety. By deliberately prolonging his stay in France, he intended to give "severe and incontestable proof" to James and his supporters that he was not afraid of any of them.635

633 Clarke and Foxcroft, pp. 210-11; Davis, pp. 177-78.
634 Quoted by Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 211.
635 Ibid., pp. 210-11.
It almost seemed as if he were daring James II to try to extradite him. Since Burnet fancied himself to be the nonpareil defender of "the liberties of the English nation and the Protestant religion," he took great delight in taunting James II. During his entire three-month stay in France, Burnet continued to bait James. At the very least, he was intent on waving a red flag in front of James' nose, so long as he was safely across the English Channel.

Long after he had settled at the princely court of Orange in 1686, Burnet's hostility towards James II remained unabated. Neither the English king nor Burnet were inclined to end their dispute. Consequently, Burnet still hoped to be able to so antagonize His Majesty that James would be driven finally either to acquiesce in one of the ill-advised schemes to kidnap him, or to exert diplomatic pressure on the States of Holland to consent to his extradition. In this matter, Burnet believed that whatever course of action the English court pursued that James II would be the real loser. Burnet was confident that having been "naturalized in Holland ... during ... [his stay there] ... [his] Allegiance ... [was] translated from his Majesty to the Soveraignty of this Province." As a consequence, he was


637 The quotation is taken from Gilbert Burnet's "The Citation Of Gilbert Burnet, D.D. To answer in Scotland, on the 27th of June, Old Stile, for High treason: Together with
convinced that the States of Holland would never agree to
his extradition, even if he had not married a Dutch lady of
Scottish ancestry. If the English government continued
to demand Burnet's extradition, this policy would only
exacerbate the tensions between these two nations. Such a
policy would alienate the Prince and Princess of Orange
directly, since Burnet already had ingratiated himself with
William and Mary. Burnet felt that if James gave his tacit
consent to some dark scheme to kidnap him, he would receive
ample warning of any plot to spirit him away to Great Brit-
ain. He undoubtedly thought that the intrigue-filled

his Answer: And Three Letters writ by him upon that Subject,
to the Right Honourable the Earl of Middletoun, his Majes-
ty's Secretary of State" (n.p., 1687), in A Collection of
Eighteen Papers, pp. 147-48.

In late May 1687, Burnet wed Mary Scott. At the
time of their marriage, Burnet was forty-four years old,
while Mary was only twenty-seven years old. Like his first
wife, Mary believed in "Absolute Predestination." In addi-
tion, Mary Scott like Lady Margaret Kennedy came from very
comfortable material circumstances. In fact, Burnet re-
marked that Mary "was an only child and was bred at a great
expense as one of the best fortunes at the Hague." For
Burnet, his second marriage proved to be a godsend, since he
no longer had to concern himself with the Sisyphean task of
earning a living. Shortly before his death, Charles II had
Burnet dismissed from his chaplaincy at the Rolls as well as
from his lectureship at St. Clement Danes. Consequently,
Burnet's finances were strained, since his only source of
income was the proceeds from the sales of his books and
pamphlets. After his second marriage, Burnet was able to
channel all his time and energy not only into gathering
political intelligence, but also into plotting the overthrow
of James II (Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in
Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 492-93; Thomas Burnet, "The Life
of the Author," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His
Own Time, 6:695).
atmosphere that prevailed in so many of the Dutch towns would work to his advantage.

In early August 1685, Burnet decided to take Barrillon's warnings to heart. Considering the political and religious conditions then prevalent in France, Burnet realized that his own position was quite precarious. The longer he stayed in France, the more difficult his situation would become. However, by this time the Argyle-Monmouth rebellions had been quelled, and the leaders had been executed. Consequently, Burnet now felt he could leave France without fearing "discoveries." Shortly thereafter, Burnet accompanied by Colonel Stouppe, one of his former research assistants, left France, and resumed his European travels. Italy was to be the first stop on Burnet's itinerary. 639

5. The Argyle-Monmouth Rebellions: Their Consequences For Great Britain As Well As For Burnet

While Burnet was in political retirement in France, two abortive rebellions had erupted in Great Britain. The Earl of Argyle on 2 May 1685 had sailed from Amsterdam with an expeditionary force of three hundred men aboard three small vessels. 640 Later in May, the earl set up his


640 Archibald Campbell, the ninth Earl of Argyle,
standard at Campbeltown with the motto, "No Prelacy, No Erastianism." At the time, the earl hoped to raise an army from his clansmen in Argyllshire, and from the disaffected Covenanters of the southern and western districts. He was confident that these "hot gospelers" would flock to his colors, since they had remained unalterably opposed to the restoration of the episcopal regime in the Scottish Church. In a word, these former Covenanters were the spiritual heirs of Burnet's maternal uncle, the Lord Warriston. Although the English government was aware of Argyle's activities in the United Provinces, James and his advisers believed that the earl was in the pay of the Venetians. Consequently, they were taken by surprise when his forces disembarked at Campbeltown.

While the Earl of Argyle was creating this diversion in Scotland, the Duke of Monmouth with his force of 150 men landed at Lyme Regis, in the south-west of England. The "Protestant Duke" selected Lyme Regis because he believed that his greatest strength lay in the south-western

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financed his entire expedition with only 10,000, for that was all the money he could raise. It had been the contribution of one Mrs. Smith, a rich widow in Amsterdam (Ashley, James II, pp. 168-69; Clark, The Later Stuarts, p. 274; Lodge, pp. 247-48; Ranke, 4:245-46).


642 Foxcroft, Supplement, p. 156.
counties. Not only were these shires powerful centers of Nonconformity and Whiggery, but they were also the areas in which Monmouth had courted the enthusiasm of the people by his earlier progresses. Before the Duke of Monmouth and his forces had disembarked at Lyme Regis, the "Protestant Duke's" agents were not only to have created a network of revolutionary cells in those counties as well as in London, but they were also to have organized a mode of communication among these heterogeneous nuclei. Unfortunately for the duke, his men were incompetents who bungled miserably the entire scheme. Christopher Battiscombe was unable to secure the support of the gentry of Somerset and Dorset, while Henry Booth, second Lord Delamere, did nothing for Monmouth's cause in Cheshire, and John Wildman failed to foment a rising in London.

The Argyle-Monmouth rebellions proved to be a godsend for James II. They greatly strengthened his hand when he dealt with parliament. Not only did James receive very generous subsidies—well over 400,000—but he also proceeded to create a standing army which supposedly would be


used to crush the rebels. Since the militia had been ineffective against Monmouth's troops, James concluded that a well-disciplined standing force was indispensable to guard against all disturbances from without and from within. With the acquiescence of his parliament, James II erected one of the twin pillars of absolute monarchy, a large standing army under royal control. He also used the occasion to bring many avowed Roman Catholics into his "New Model Army."

Unquestionably, if Burnet had stayed in Great Britain, he would have been arrested, brought to trial, and executed. With the judges dependent upon the executive, Burnet's trial would have been a travesty of justice. The Stuart judicature was extraordinarily subservient when they were adjudicating political cases, especially those in which the crown had a vital interest. Even those judges who were men of legal acumen and judicial fairness oftentimes allowed themselves to become the king's tools, whenever a case

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646 Clark, The Later Stuarts, p. 121; Ranke, 4:269.

concerning the government or the royal prerogative was brought into their courts. During the "Stuart Revenge," Algernon Sidney had been executed merely because his academic theories of tyrannicide might conceivably have been put into action. 648 George Jeffreys went so far as to contend that all Presbyterians were rebels. In the aftermath of the Argyle-Monmouth rebellions, the Lord Chief Justice maintained that "there is not one of those lying, snivelling Presbyterian rascals but one way or other had a hand in the late horrid conspiracy." 649 Given that the tenure of Stuart judges was durante bene placito (during the king's pleasure), rather than for quamdiu se bene gesserit (during good behavior), it was not at all surprising that so many of the judges allowed the crown to manipulate them and to influence their decisions. In many instances, the king and his ministers employed the judges to further their repressive policies. 650

In view of the fact that Burnet was a Scotsman, he


649 Ibid.

would have been under the jurisdiction of an even harsher judicial system, since he would have been deprived of all the safeguards of the English Common Law. Halifax had once remarked that in Scotland a man could be convicted on evidence that would not have hanged a dog in England. In political trials then, not only was the use of torture a commonplace, but also juries were frequently imprisoned for their verdicts. Under such circumstances, the executive in Scotland could exert even greater influence on the judicial bench than its counterpart in England. Considering the crown's preponderant influence over the judiciary, it is evident that in the administration of the law, Scotland resembled France rather than England. 651

Burnet's apprehensions about the inequities inherent in the Scottish legal system were exacerbated by recent developments in the administration of the criminal law in his native land. In 1683 his cousin-german, Baillie of Jerviswood, was found guilty of complicity in the Rye House Plot and was fined £6,000 by the Scottish privy council. Shortly after his appearance before the privy council, Baillie was once again charged with complicity in the late plot. This time however Baillie's case was adjudicated by

the justiciary court. 652 Baillie was once again found guilty of complicity in the Rye House Plot and was sentenced to death. He was executed on the same day as he had been sentenced. 653 Moreover, before Baillie's trial began in the justiciary court, Burnet knew that the privy councilors had allowed his cousin to be tortured. 654 Burnet believed that Baillie's trials were a travesty of justice. In the History of My Own Time, he wrote that:

Thus a learned and worthy gentleman, after twenty month's hard usage, was brought to such a death, in a way so full in all steps of it of the spirit and practice of the courts of Inquisition, that one is tempted to think that the methods taken in it were suggested by one well studied, if not practised, in them. 655

In this matter, he refused to accept the explanation offered by some members of the privy council. Burnet wrote that:

The only excuse that was ever pretended for this infamous prosecution was, that they [Scottish privy councilors] were sure he [Baillie] was guilty: and that the whole secret of the negotiation [Rye House Plot] between the two kingdoms was trusted to him, and that

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652 In Scotland the justiciary court was a royal court whose principal task was the administration of the criminal law. The jurisdiction of the justiciary court and that of the Scottish privy council oftentimes overlapped, for neither the jurisdiction of the court, nor that of the council, had as yet been precisely defined (Donaldson, Scotland, pp. 223-24, 288, & 400).

653 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):425-26; Donaldson, Scotland, p. 374.


655 The quotation is taken from Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):366-69, 397-98, 426.
since he would not discover it, all methods might be taken to destroy such a man.656

Burnet's misgivings about the administration of the criminal law in Scotland initially had been aroused by the judicial murder of John Mitchell. In 1668 Mitchell was indicted for the attempted murder of James Sharp, archbishop of St. Andrews and primate of the Scottish Church.657 After he was indicted, three privy councilors worked out an agreement with Mitchell. In exchange for his guilty plea, the privy councilors promised Mitchell that his life would be spared.658 Unfortunately for Mitchell, the privy councilors failed to keep their promise.659 According to Burnet, these privy councilors decided instead to follow Lauderdale's advice: "Let Mitchell glorify God in the Grass Market, which was the place where he was to be hanged."660

The fate of Baillie of Jerviswood and Mitchell was not lost upon Burnet. He realized that if the king's ministers "were once possessed of an ill opinion of a man,"

656 Ibid.
657 Ibid., 2(1900):135-36; Donaldson, Scotland, p. 374.
658 Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):136; Donaldson, Scotland, p. 374.
659 The three privy councilors were Andrew Leslie, earl of Rothes, Charles Hatton, and Sir Archibald Primrose (Burnet, in Airy's Burnet's History of My Own Time, 2(1900):136.
660 Ibid., 2(1900):141.
they . . . [would] spare neither artifice nor violence, but [they would] hunt him down by any means." 661 By this time, Burnet was convinced that the principal task of the Stuart judges was to provide the Crown with a convenient set of legal rationalizations. In Burnet's view, this was another aspect of Charles II's, and later James II's, plan to "new model" the Ancient English Constitution so that they could transform their limited monarchy into an absolute one.

If Burnet had not gone into "voluntary" exile on the Continent, he most certainly would have been arraigned in Scotland after the suppression of the Argyle-Monmouth rebellions. Notwithstanding the fact that Burnet's judgment was frequently flawed, he nevertheless realized that James II would brook no opposition to his policies. Consequently, Burnet knew that he could not expect any clemency from James. 662

During the Rye House Plot and the consequent "Stuart Revenge," Burnet behaved quite hypocritically. At this time (1683-1685), Burnet himself further emasculated what was left of his personal integrity. One consequence of this was that his Whig brethren oftentimes reviled him as unsparingly as the Tories. Despite the fact that he had endured the hardships of exile on three separate occasions, many of his

661 Ibid., 2(1900):426-27.

662 Ashley, James II, pp. 178-79; Lodge, p. 251.
confrères still regarded him as an unprincipled rascal, who was motivated primarily by self-aggrandizement. Unlike so many other political and religious malcontents who had experienced the rigors of exile, Burnet was unable, in spite of his own exilic experiences, to forge a common bond with his fellow Whig exiles. He was never able to mollify these Whigs, inasmuch as they suspected his motives. In their eyes, Burnet was not to be trusted, since he shared neither their political principles nor their tactics. These members of the Country faction realized that he had only rallied to their standard because he had incurred the enmity of most members of the Court faction. Later on when he returned to England with the vanguard of William's expeditionary force, these former English and Scottish exiles still looked askance at Burnet. Like so many other political and religious exiles, these Whig partisans were convinced that while they were suffering many hardships in order to preserve "the liberties of the English nation and the Protestant religion," Burnet was either playing the sycophant at Louis XIV's court, or ingratiating himself with the princely couple at The Hague. Furthermore these former exiles proved to have long memories, inasmuch as they never forgave Burnet for having deliberately shunned them. In this matter, the

663 See footnote 510.
Whig remnant's hatred of Burnet was as unabating as that of James II.

Ironically enough, these disgruntled Whig partisans, as well as their eighteenth century brethren, never realized that Gilbert Burnet, rather than John Locke, had formulated their political credo. Unlike Locke's _Two Treatises of Government_ which was "an Exclusion Tract [and] not a Revolution Pamphlet," many of Burnet's post-1687 political writings were pieces d'occasion which had been written in direct response to specific political and religious crises in Britain. Among these writings, the Collection of Eighteen Papers, Dr. G. Burnet's Tracts, A Memorial drawn by King William's special Direction, and The Bishop of Salisbury His Speech On the Impeachment of Dr. Henry Sacheverell were Burnet's political rationalizations for the Glorious Revolution and the consequent Revolution Settlement. These

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665 Among his post-1687 political writings, these two sermons should also be included: A Sermon Preached at the Coronation of William III. and Mary II., [on] April 11, 1689, and A Sermon Preach'd On The 29th Day of May, in the Year 1710.
works constitute the classic Whig justification for their Bloodless Revolution, as well as their emergent oligarchic régime.

Notwithstanding the fact that Burnet not only was the principal theoretician for Revolutionary Whiggism, but was also the chief architect of the eighteenth century constitution, Burnet's Whig confreres as well as their eighteenth century brethren remained willfully ignorant of his contributions to their party's principles and tactics. In fact, the Whigs of the Revolution, as well as their eighteenth century counterparts, denigrated his contribution to classical Whiggism, the formulation of their political credo. When these Whig oligarchs impugned Burnet's "supple" principles, they were unwittingly undermining the ideological foundations of their own nascent oligarchic regime. In this matter, the Whig oligarchs had allowed their own emotions to obfuscate their political judgments, inasmuch as Burnet had fashioned the Whig mythology that provided a

convenient set of political rationalizations for the Whig oligarchs of his own as well as succeeding generations. If his Whig brethren had been successful in eviscerating his "supple" Revolution principles, they would have jeopardized their own oligarchic régime. When the Whig magnates attempted to discredit Burnet's Revolution principles, they played into the hands of the Jacobites and Nonjurors. If his Revolution principles had proved to be fallacious, then Burnet's Whig mythology which helped to legitimatize this nascent oligarchy would have collapsed like a house of cards. Unfortunately for Burnet, most of his Whig partisans continued to distrust him. They regarded him either as an ingrate, or a parasite, or a blatherskite.
CHAPTER IV

THE SECOND GRAND TOUR

When Burnet left Paris in early August 1685, he embarked upon another grand tour of the Continent. From early August 1685 until 20 May 1686, he visited the principal cities in Italy, Switzerland, the Rhineland, and Southern France. This grand tour had two significant effects, both on Burnet's reputation as the standard bearer for European Protestantism, as well as on his intellectual and emotional development. On the one hand, his European reputation as an eminent spokesman for Protestant Christianity was enhanced. He was graciously received in Rome, where he not only had a series of theological discussions with Cardinal Cesar d'Estrees and with Cardinal Philip Howard, but also declined a private audience with Pope Innocent XI. In Geneva, Burnet acted as an "honest broker"

667 Gilbert Burnet, Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 2 vols. (London: Joseph Downing, Henry Woodfall, and Thomas Ward, 1724-34), vol. 1(1724): From the Restoration of King Charles II. To The Settlement of King William and Queen Mary at the Revolution: To which is prefix'd A Summary Recapitulation of Affairs in Church and State from King James I. to the Restoration in the Year 1660, ed. [Gilbert Burnet (one of the bishop's sons)], p. 655; Burnet, "The Fifth Letter. From Nimmegen, the 20th of May 1686, [Gilbert Burnet to Robert Boyle, 20 May 1686,] in Burnet's Some Letters, from Burnet's Dr. G. Burnet's Tracts 1(1689):262-65.
in the subscription controversy over the Consensus Helveticus. On the other hand, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the employment of physical and psychological terror by Louis XIV's dragoons made an indelible impression on Burnet's mind.

1. The Italian Journey

When Burnet left France in the first part of August 1685, most of his friends tried to dissuade him from making his Italian journey. They were particularly offended when they learned that part of his itinerary would include a visit to the Romish Babylon. Indeed, Lord Montague, one of his former "research assistants," was the only one of his friends who not only encouraged Burnet to embark on his

Italian journey, but also convinced him to visit the center of Romish superstition and tyranny. Montague reassured Burnet that when he arrived in Rome he would not find himself in a lion's den. Burnet, like so many others who had been influenced by the Cambridge Platonists and the Latitudinarians, was not seeking the crown of martyrdom. In Montague's view, the goals of papal foreign policy would ensure that Burnet would receive a kindly reception in Rome, for the pope as well as the college of cardinals were much more concerned with thwarting various schemes of Louis XIV for French aggrandizement than with extirpating Protestant Christianity. At this juncture, the papal policy toward Protestant Christendom was one of peaceful coexistence. French hegemony and the military monarchy of Louis XIV were a greater threat to the papacy than the vociferous descendants of the sixteenth-century heretics. For the time being the primary goal of papal foreign policy was the containment of the France of Louis XIV, rather than crusades against the spiritual heirs of the sixteenth century Reformers.

669 Burnet, Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, vol. 1(1724): From the Restoration of King Charles II. To The Settlement of King William and Queen Mary, pp. 660-61; Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 490.

670 Burnet, Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, vol. 1(1724): From the Restoration of King Charles II. To The Settlement of King William and Queen Mary, pp. 660-61; Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 213.
Consequently, when Burnet arrived in Rome, he received a very gracious reception from several of the chief dignitaries of the Catholic Church. Only one day after his arrival in Rome, Burnet received a personal message from Pope Innocent XI in which he was informed that the pope would gladly grant him a private audience, if he would request one. Burnet wisely declined Innocent's magnanimous offer. Ostensibly, he declined the Pontiff's gracious invitation on account of his "speaking Italian so ill as . . . [he] did." The real reason was his fear of the adverse repercussions that it would provoke among some members of the Country faction. This was a noteworthy occasion, since Burnet behaved with a great deal of tact.

Instead of having an audience with the pope, Burnet conferred with Cardinal D'Estrées and Cardinal Howard. With Cardinal D'Estrées, Burnet defended the canonical regularity or validity of Anglican orders. When he met with Cardinal Howard, they discussed the political and religious situation in England. Both parties, for very different reasons, were

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671 Burnet, Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, vol. 1 (1724): From the Restoration of King Charles II. To The Settlement of King William and Queen Mary, pp. 660-61.

672 Ibid., p. 661.

673 The quotation is taken from Burnet's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, volume 1 (1724): From the Restoration of King Charles II. To The Settlement of King William and Queen Mary, page 661.

674 Ibid.
greatly concerned with James' policy of Romanization. Even though Howard shared James' ultimate goal, to re-catholicize Great Britain, the cardinal believed that the king was moving much too fast. In his view, if the pace of James II's policy of Romanization was not slowed down, it would not only exacerbate the latent feelings of anti-Romanism which were lying dormant just below the surface, but his short-sighted policy would also alienate the political nation in the two kingdoms. Notwithstanding the fact that Howard, just like the other Princes of the Church, wanted to reimpose the papal yoke on Great Britain, he as well as other churchmen were much more concerned with the military might of the France of Louis XIV. They had hoped to use James II as a counterpoise to Louis XIV, since they believed that in the fullness of times Great Britain would once again return to the faith of her fathers. When James became the pensioner of Louis however they were greatly dismayed. These members of the Curia now felt that James' myopic political as well as religious policies would prove disastrous not only to their cause, but also to the House of Stuart.

Burnet's reception in Rome in 1685 enhanced his European reputation as much as his stay in Paris had done in 1683. Who would have thought that the Princes of the Church would have chosen to hobnob with a notorious heretic? In fact, Burnet had such free access to Cardinal Howard that

675 Ibid., pp. 661-62. 676 Ibid.
many Frenchmen, who were looking for relics, implored Burnet to intercede for them with the cardinal of Norfolk. 677 Since Burnet had always considered relics as one of the most abominable excrescences of Catholic superstition, this situation was quite ironic. Like so many other of the Protestant Reformers, he had damned the medieval Church not only for encouraging, but also from profiting by this practice. At best, he regarded the encouragement, the collection, the sale, and the worship of relics as pious frauds. Later on, especially after the publication of his travel letters in 1687, Burnet maintained that the continued use of relics along with the other dregs of popery, such as the fabrication and the multiplication of specious miracles, had transformed Christian worship into an otiose pageantry that had so vitiated the essence of Christianity that it would make straight the way for libertinism and atheism. 678 Notwithstanding his later, trenchant criticism of the use of relics as well as of other Catholic practices, Burnet, while he was in Rome, remarked to Cardinal Howard that he found himself in the untoward situation of helping to distribute "the ware of Babylon." 679

677 Ibid., p. 662.


679 The quotation is taken from Burnet's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, volume 1(1724): From the
While he was in Rome, he conducted himself in an admirable and a discreet manner. He was neither absent, nor was he imprudent in conversation. Nevertheless, even there Burnet had not put away the weapons of a controversialist. He still perceived himself as the defender of Protestantism. Although he was in the very bowels of Catholic Europe, whenever anyone was so bold as to attack any of the Reformation movements, or the work of an individual Protestant Reformer, Burnet was always ready to enter the lists. 680 Like St. Paul, Burnet had "put on the whole armor of God, that [he] ... may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." In Burnet's view, "tho'... [he] did not provoke any to discourse of points of controversy, yet ... [he] defended ... [himself when] ... attacked ... with the same freedom that [he] had done in other places." 681 Needless to say, his behavior "began to be taken notice of." 682 Consequently, Prince 683 Borghese

Restoration of King Charles II. To The Settlement of King William and Queen Mary, page 662.

680 Ibid., pp. 662-63. 681 Ibid.

682 The quotation is taken from Burnet's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, volume 1(1724): From the Restoration of King Charles II. To The Settlement of King William and Queen Mary, page 663.

683 I have not been able to find out Prince Borghese's first name. Although I have checked the indexes as well as the text of several editions of Burnet's History of My Own Time, they included the folio edition of 1724-1734, Routh's edition of 1833, the 1838 edition, and Airy's edition of 1897-1900, none of these editions gave Borghese's first name. They simply referred to him as "Prince Borghese." In
informed Burnet that it was "time for . . . [him] to go." 684

2. The Calvinists' New Jerusalem

From Rome Burnet turned to Geneva, where he further enhanced his reputation as paladin of Protestantism. Even though he received a very cordial reception in this cradle and citadel of Calvinism, Burnet believed that even in this city set on a hill, corruption still had to be uprooted. 685 Notwithstanding the fact that he was given help so that he could minister to a small English congregation, and as a consequence he confessed to being happier "than . . . [he] had thought it was possible for . . . [him] to have [been] anywhere out of England," 686 Burnet could be just as unsparing and censorious a critic of Protestant errors as he had been of Catholic superstition. 687 Nevertheless, Burnet was

addition I checked the indexes and the text of Foxcroft's Supplement, as well as the Clarke and Foxcroft biography. Once again these works referred to Borghese as simply "Prince Borghese." When I looked over Burnet's travel letters and his various commentaries upon them, among them were his Some Letters, the Supplement to Dr. Burnet's Letters, the Three Letters Concerning the Present State of Italy, and the Animadversions on the Reflections, they did not provide me with any clues. In this matter neither Burnet's Rough Draught of My Own Life, nor his son's The Life of the Author were of any help.

684 Ibid., p. 662.
686 Quoted by Clarke and Foxcroft, p. 214.
687 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 490-91.
not a restless malcontent, who was unceasingly on the move, ostentatiously and nervously searching for godly things to do.

During his four-month stay in Geneva (December 1685 - March 1686), Burnet's strategic intervention in a theological dispute among the ministers was instrumental not only in salving the tender and the scrupulous consciences of some pastors who experienced great difficulty in subscribing to their church's confession of faith (Consensus Helvetius), but also in broadening the doctrinal and the liturgical base of the Reformed Protestant Church in this heavenly city. It should have surprised no one that in this subscription controversy among the Genevan clergy Burnet allied himself with the faction that espoused a limited religious liberalism. Like some of the younger ministers who constituted this left wing of Genevan Calvinism, Burnet, as we know already, believed that the principles of Christianity were few and simple. Consequently, he agreed with some of the younger pastors who believed that their church's consent of doctrine, which they were all compelled to sign, was much too positive on many points that

688 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 490-91.
689 Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:666-69.
were really adiaphorae. Given that Burnet had been deeply affected by the teachings of the Cambridge Platonists, and as a consequence regarded himself as a man of Latitude, it was only natural that he would have supported the position of the younger ministers. Burnet had spoken and written often "of the folly and wickedness of those impositions." Moreover, he was troubled by the fact that many of the most promising candidates for the ministry either subscribed to the consent of doctrine with numerous equivocations, or went into exile so that they would not violate their consciences. In any case, Burnet, like so many earlier religiously and politically conscious Elizabethans and Jacobeans, maintained that the Genevan church in particular, and Reformed Protestant Christianity in general, lost much more than they could ever possibly hope to gain by attempting "to make windows into men's hearts and secret thoughts . . . ."

When the ecclesiastical authorities relaxed the rubric governing the compulsory subscription to the Consensus Helvetius—for ministers were now subject to censure only if they wrote or preached against their church's confession of

690 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 490-91.

691 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 490.

692 Ibid., pp. 490-91.

693 Quoted by Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, p. 23.
faith--Burnet regarded this as his own personal tour de force. In this instance, Burnet again revealed his own self-conceit and egocentricity. He had already convinced himself, and subsequently had endeavored to convince other people, that he alone had been responsible for the relaxation of this rubric. At this time, Burnet fancied himself to be the measure of all things Protestant. In the Rough Draught of My Own Life, Burnet wrote that he "had then such credit among them ... since ... what ... [he] spoke upon that subject was not without effect for they are now released from those fetters...".

Burnet's successful mediation of this theological dispute further elevated his reputation as an eloquent spokesman for Reformed Protestantism. In this matter, Burnet was even more gratified by his experiences in Geneva than he had been by his gracious reception in Rome, because he had been able to effect changes in that church's constitution. Overlooking the fact that Burnet was a self-appointed mediator, his behavior during this theological controversy in Geneva prefigured how he would behave during

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694 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 490-91.
695 Ibid.
696 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's Supplement, pp. 490-91.
697 Ibid.
the protracted struggle between the High Church and the Low Church factions in the Anglican establishment. This would be especially true in the case of his exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles where Burnet attempted to find and to follow the via media.  

Although Burnet often excoriated other Scottish ministers, particularly "the hot gospelers," for their intolerance, he himself was an exponent of only a limited religious toleration. The beliefs and practices of certain groups were in his view so inimical to the peace of civil society that they could not be tolerated. Those creeds and sects, Burnet maintained, had to be as carefully isolated as any other highly communicable diseases. Even though he

698 Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:634-37. In addition, see footnotes 187, 188, 189, 190, & 198.

699 See footnotes 153, 154, & 155.

700 Burnet, "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:634-37, 649-50, 666-69; Burnet, "Reasons Against the Repealing the Acts of Parliament Concerning the Test," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 2-4; Burnet, "Dr. Burnet's Vindication of Himself from the Calumnies with which he is aspersed, In a Pamphlet, entituled, Parliamentum Pacificum. Licensed by the Earl of Sunderland, and Printed at London in March, 1688," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 186-88; Burnet, An Enquiry Into The Present State of Affairs: And in particular, Whether we owe Allegiance to the King in these Circumstances? And whether we are bound to Treat with Him, and call Him back again, or not?, pp. 8-9; Burnet, "A Letter Containing Some Reflections On His Majesty's Declaration For Liberty of Conscience. Dated the Fourth of April 1687," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 27-37; Burnet, Reflections Upon A Pamphlet Entituled, [Some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson, Occasioned by the Late Funeral-Sermon of the Former upon the Later.], pp. 29-46, 50-53,
disclaimed any desire to put constraints upon a man's conscience—since he, along with so many other of the Protestant theologians, asserted that every individual's conscience was sacrosanct—Burnet believed that since the body politic could never by completely immunized against


701 Ibid.
these infectious diseases that the members of these groups should be deprived of the right of corporate worship as well as of the right of public discussion. Papists, non-Trinitarian Christians (Socinians), freethinkers (agnostics), and atheists—all of these people were beyond the pale. 702 Burnet's views on religious toleration were to be important, since they would be embodied in the Toleration Act of 1689.

Although Burnet never forgot the many kindnesses that his Protestant brethren had shown him in Geneva, he still preferred the climate of Latitudinarian or Liberal Anglicanism to that of orthodox or classical Calvinism. Since Burnet was an Englishman at heart, he sometimes felt uneasy in Calvin's utopia. He obviously did not share Guillaume Farel's sentiment that he "would rather be last in Geneva than the first elsewhere." 703

3. The Revocation Of The Edict Of Nantes And Its Effect On Burnet's Temperament

En route from Rome to Geneva Burnet made a journey through the French Languedoc in December of 1685. That October Louis XIV had revoked the "perpetual and

702 Ibid.

irrevocable" Edict of Nantes. Consequently, when Burnet "toured" Languedoc, he witnessed the very zealous as well as the very barbarous work of the Sun King's dragoons. The task of these new French "missionaries" was to prepare the way for "the undisturbed reign of Jesus Christ . . . in France." Since legal chicanery, pettifogging interpretations, and the conversion bureau (Pellisson fund)

704 The quotation is taken from Foxcroft's *Supplement*, p. 203.


706 The quotation is taken from Ogg's *Europe in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 303.

707 Ibid., p. 305.

708 The Pellisson fund was named for Paul Pellisson, a former Huguenot intellectual who had embraced Roman Catholicism. While he was in Louis XIV's employ—he was helping the king prepare his Memoires for the dauphin's education—Pellisson suggested to Louis that pecuniary inducements might accelerate the pace of the Huguenots' conversion. The
had all failed to bring the Huguenots back to the Catholic fold, Louis XIV and his ministers decided that it was now time to use more forceful means in order once again to bring about religious uniformity in France.  

The work of Louis XIV's dragoons left an indelible impression on Burnet's mind. Just as his childhood and early adolescent education under his father's tutelage had molded his ideas about the locus and the nature of political and religious authority, so too the "prodigious achievements," of the dragonnades transformed Burnet's latent anti-Catholicism into a virulent and a fanatical hatred of everything that was even remotely associated with Roman Catholicism. Although he still maintained that some papists


710 Burnet, "Reasons Against the Repealing the Acts of Parliament Concerning the Test," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 2-4; Burnet, "Dr. Burnet's Vindication of Himself from the Calumnies with which he is aspersed, In a Pamphlet, entituled, Parliamentum Pacificum. Licensed by the Earl of Sunderland, and Printed at London in March, 1688," in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 186-88; B. [Burnet,] "Reflections on a Pamphlet entituled, Parliamentum Pacificum, Licensed by the Earl of Sunderland and printed at London in
were good and decent men, as well as pious and sincere Christians, he believed that the essence of Roman Catholicism was "Rage and Cruelty." For the rest of his long and active public life (1686-1715), Burnet both feared and


hated the multifarious popish menace. After the publication of his travel letters in 1687, Burnet oftentimes would act as if there were a thoroughly Jesuitical papist behind every tree and every shrub, as well as under every rock. During times of national crisis, his now deep-seated fear and hatred of popery frequently was transformed into quasi-paranoia. On these occasions, he behaved like those proud, patriotic, and Protestant Elizabethans who had industriously ferreted out priests' holes and priests' nests. In this matter, Burnet was not able to perceive any kind of difference between the more recent and the more remote past. Thus, Constantine and St. Augustine as well as Anne Boleyn and "good Queen Bess" were as real to Burnet as were his contemporaries.

When the Peace of Utrecht was concluded in 1713, just two years before Burnet's death, it raised his anti-Catholicism to a white heat. From Burnet's perspective, the terms of these treaties ensured that not only a Second Stuart Restoration and a concomitant Second Popish Restoration in Great Britain were inevitable, but also that French hegemony would soon be restored in Europe. Given the ignominious as well as the suicidal nature of the Peace of Utrecht, the aged Burnet was certain that the treaties would be sealed shortly by the assassination of Queen Anne, as well as by the inauguration of an auto-da-fé directed against anyone

713 See footnotes 660 & 665. 714 Clark, p. 121.
who would not prostrate himself before the Great Whore of Babylon. 

After the peace treaties were signed, Burnet's hatred of popery became so pronounced that Swift lampooned him as being so "absolutely party-mad [that] he saw Popery under every bush." By this time, Burnet was convinced that England was on the eve of a second, and an even more terrible, Marian persecution.

Although most of the western European powers were at peace in 1713, Burnet most certainly was not. He clung steadfastly to the Whig shibboleth, "no peace without Spain." After his latent anti-Romanism had been transformed into quasi-paranoia, he lost his historical perspective.

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Given his distorted view of the world, Burnet sometimes acted as if he saw the blazing fires of Smithfield, heard the screams of the Protestant martyrs in their death agonies, and smelt the stench of the burnt and the decomposing corpses of the Protestant saints. Using the pseudonym "Gregory Misosarum," Swift parodied Burnet's philippics against the peace treaties. At this juncture, the dean offered his explanation of the now aged bishop's lachrymose vaticinations. According to Swift, Burnet had "been poring so long over [John] Foxe's Book of Martyrs that he imagine[d] himself living in the reign of Queen Mary." In this matter, Burnet's feelings obfuscated his judgment. Once again, Burnet was the close prisoner of his own emotions. He therefore he never realized that the Utrecht Settlement provided safeguards for vital British naval, commercial, and colonial interests, and remained oblivious of the fact that the Treaty of Utrecht "was a milestone on the road that led to the first British Empire."

Burnet's tour of the Languedoc was one of the turning

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718 Ibid.


points in his life, since Louis XIV's treatment of the Hugue-
not remnant left many scars on his highly impressionable
mind. 721 In fact, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes,
and the subsequent success of the dragonnades, exacerbated
Burnet's already deep-seated anti-Catholic predisposition.
Notwithstanding the fact that retailing slander concerning
the Great Whore of Babylon as well as expatiating upon the
gross idolatry of Romish superstition had become part of the
staple of many Protestants, Burnet's political and religious
thinking was permanently altered by the French court's move-
ment towards religious absolutism. 722 After he learned of
the suffering of his Protestant brethren, Burnet confessed
that "what . . . [he] saw and knew there from the first hand
hath so confirmed all the ideas that . . . [he] had taken
from books of the cruelty of that religion that . . . [he]
hope[d] the impression . . . [would] never end but with . . .
his] life." 723 Thereafter he believed that it was impossi-
ble for Protestantism and Catholicism to coexist peacefully.
He now asserted that Europe was divided into two hostile
power blocs, the Protestant and the Catholic. Since Burnet
believed that the crescendo of tensions that existed between
these power blocs was the product of the irreconcilable

721 See footnotes 705 and 710. 722 Ibid.
723 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "The Fifth
Letter. From Nimmegen the 20th of May, 1686," [Gilbert
Burnet to Robert Boyle, 20 May 1686,] in Burnet's Some
Letters, from Burnet's Dr. G. Burnet's Tracts, 1(1689):
262-63.
differences that separated the two communions, he concluded that sooner or later these endemic tensions would precipitate another conflict. 724

By this time (1686), he was convinced that Roman Catholicism was an expansionist and an irrational system, whose dynamics were aggrandizement and hegemony. In fact, Burnet's analysis of Roman Catholicism as a political, religious, and economic system bears similarities to Hannah Arendt's analysis of Nazi totalitarianism. Both Arendt and Burnet maintained in their respective analyses that these two expansionist and anti-rational regimes relied internally on a highly integrated apparatus for generating terror and externally on aggrandizement and hegemony. 725 On the assumption that hegemony and aggrandizement were the principal components of the dynamics of Roman Catholicism, it is not surprising that Burnet came to believe that war between the two blocs was inevitable. When Luther nailed his theses to the cathedral door at Wittenberg, Burnet regarded the monk's action as analogous to lighting a long fuse on a powder keg that would eventually threaten western and central Europe. By his day, Burnet was certain that the fuse would shortly set western and central Europe ablaze. 726

724 See footnotes 711, 712, 705, and 710.

By the time that Burnet completed his second grand tour of the Continent in late May 1686, his political thinking definitely had changed. This change is exemplified best by his travel letters which were published in early 1687. The death of Charles II and the subsequent accession of his brother James acted as a leaven upon Burnet's political thinking. His second grand tour of western Europe furthered this leavening process that was already well begun. These travel letters reveal that Burnet's political views had crystallized. They were no longer an amorphous mass of seemingly shopworn political maxims and pious platitudes.


Notwithstanding the fact that Burnet continued to taunt James II, for he never toned down his verbal pyrotechnics against his former friend so long as he was in a safe continental haven, these travel letters disclosed that Burnet was unalterably opposed to Roman Catholicism as a political, religious, and economic system. At this juncture, Burnet's opposition to James' régime was based upon his analysis of the Roman Catholic régimes in Switzerland, Italy, and France. 729 This is quite evident from his travel letters. However, one must add this caveat: whenever Burnet discussed James' policies, his personal animosity towards James always should be taken into consideration.

Besides the standard Protestant diatribe of the evils of Catholic superstition, Burnet in his travel letters devoted a considerable amount of space to differentiating "an easy Government" from "a severe Government." 730 Supposedly,

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729 Ibid. 730 Ibid.
when Burnet constructed his two models of Government, they were the direct result of the empirical data that he had gathered during his exilic experiences on the Continent.  

Once again, this is another clear-cut example of how the scientific movement of Burnet's day affected other areas of men's thought. In this regard, the members of the Royal Society, like so many other of their confrères in western Europe, did not restrict their use of the scientific method exclusively to the realm of natural philosophy. Burnet was neither the first, nor the last of his countrymen, who attempted to apply the methodology developed by the experimental scientists to the study of politics.  

By the time that his travel letters had been published, Burnet had concluded that the touchstone for a good government was salus populi suprema lex esto. For Burnet, this was the fundamental distinction between "an easy Government," and "a

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731 Ibid.

In "The Conclusion" to the History of My Own Time, Burnet remarked that "there is not any one thing more certain and more evident, than that princes are made for the people, and not the people for them." Even though Burnet penned these lines in 1708, I believe he could just as easily have written them in late 1686.

Notwithstanding the fact that Burnet had not yet publicly repudiated the doctrine of passive obedience, however, in his private thoughts, he had already disavowed his belief in his beloved "doctrine of the Cross." During the trials of the Rye House conspirators, Burnet began to re-examine his political opinions. This proved to be a quite lengthy process. Although Burnet started his re-examination in 1683, he did not conclude it until 1688. With the publication in 1688 of his An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority; and of the Grounds upon which it may be lawful or necessary for Subjects to defend their Religion, Lives, and Liberties, he publicly renounced his belief in the doctrine of passive obedience, his beloved "doctrine of the Cross." It was now evident that Burnet's political views had changed, since he no longer

733 See footnote 728.

734 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "The Conclusion," in Routh's Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time, 6:664-65.

referred to the Stuart kings as "Sovereign unaccountable Prince[s]"\textsuperscript{736} to whom subjects owed "absolute obedience."\textsuperscript{737} With the publication of \textit{An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority}, Burnet concluded his lengthy re-examination of his political views. In this sense the years 1683-1688 saw Burnet's political views in a state of flux; he was moving away, slowly and oftentimes unconsciously, from his beloved "doctrine of the Cross."

Although Burnet's travel letters were published before he had completed his re-examination of his political opinions, they already mark a stage in the metamorphosis of his thought. The tone of these travel letters is so markedly different from Burnet's other works. In them, he was so extremely contentious that he seemed intent upon insulting his Roman Catholic readers. It is little wonder that their publication angered James II. His Majesty came to regard them as an affront to his royal dignity, and their appearance started a personal dispute between James II and Burnet. This war of words reached its climax in 1688 with the publication of Burnet's \textit{A Collection of Eighteen Papers}. In 1715 it finally ended with the death of the last combatant.

After this tour and the publication of his travel

\textsuperscript{736}The quotation is taken from Burnet's \textit{A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland}, pp. 153-54.

\textsuperscript{737}The quotation is taken from Burnet's "To the Reader," in his \textit{A Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland}--there is not any pagination in the original.
letters in 1687, Burnet would identify or equate popery with arbitrary government. He asserted that the reimposition of the papal yoke on England would strike at "the root of our Constitution," since a Romish regime in the church would lead inevitably not only to the subversion of the Ancient English Constitution, but also to the establishment of arbitrary government in the state. Conversely, the triumph of arbitrary government would necessitate a Catholic Restoration in England. From Burnet's perspective, political Catholicism, that is arbitrary government, and Roman Catholicism were two sides of the same coin. By this time (1686-1687), he was firmly convinced that political Catholicism and Roman Catholicism were inextricably bound together. 738

Ultimately, Burnet identified arbitrary government with absolute monarchy. He was never able to discriminate between the two. In this regard, Burnet had become a prisoner of his own prejudices. He so loathed the France of Louis XIV, especially all the symbols which the Sun King so judiciously manipulated, that he was unable to discern that absolute monarchy was not necessarily arbitrary government. 739 This was neither the first, nor the last time when Burnet would be so captivated. A splendid illustration of the preceding point was Burnet's discussion of the birth of

738 See footnotes 724 & 715.
739 Ibid.
James II's "supposititious" heir and the concomitant myth of the warming pan baby. 740

4. The Translation Of Saint Thomas More's Utopia

While Burnet was making his second grand tour of the Continent (August 1685 - May 1686), his translation of Sir Thomas More's Utopia had been published anonymously in England. Although Burnet had finished his translation in 1683, and had his work licensed in 1684, his Utopia was not published until Michaelmas Term, 1685. Like so many other savants of the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, Burnet was interested in translation not only as a vehicle for making the ideas of the classics more readily available to his countrymen, but also as a means of improving English prose style through discipline. 741

Burnet's Utopia merits more than an explanatory footnote: not only because it became the eighteenth century's best-known version of More's work, but also because some students of seventeenth-century English literature have detected a "possible polemic motive"742 in Burnet's

740 For further information, see Gilbert Burnet's "An Edict in the Roman Law: In the 25 Book of the Digests, Title 4. Sec. 10. As concerning the visiting of a Big-Bellied Woman: And the Looking after What may be born by Her" (n.p., 1688), in A Collection of Eighteen Papers, pp. 110-18.


742 Ibid.
translation. In his doctoral dissertation, Leon Vinson Driskell maintained that Burnet's work "was probably intended as a comment on English current events." Driskell believed that it was "significant that Burnet's *Utopia* did not appear until after James II's accession to the throne and Burnet's departure from England." It is difficult however to follow Driskell's reasoning and to accept his subsequent conclusions. The approximately two-year time interval between Burnet's completion of his translation, and its subsequent publication, does not prove either that he had a polemical motive for his translation, or that his work was an indirect attack on James II's régime. Burnet's *Utopia* was not the only one of his works wherein there was a significant interval of time between the completion of the text and its subsequent publication. For example, Burnet had his manuscript of the *Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton* ready for his publisher in 1671. However, this work was not published until 1677. During this six-year time interval, Burnet furnished Charles II and Lauderdale with manuscript copies of his work. After the two men had perused this work, they suggested to Burnet that he incorporate their "corrections" into his text. It would be absurd however to maintain that Burnet's work remained in limbo for six years because Charles and Lauderdale found some egregious errors in the *Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton*.

743 Ibid., footnote 2. 744 Ibid.
One can argue more convincingly that Burnet's *Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton*, rather than his translation of *Utopia*, was an indirect attack on the Stuarts' theory and practice of kingship. During this six-year period, Burnet's mettle was sorely tried by several reverses of fortune. He not only alienated Lauderdale and Charles II, but he also felt constrained to resign his professorship at Glasgow. Later, his name was struck off the list of royal chaplains. At this point, Burnet was just beginning to experience what it meant to incur the anger of a "Sovereign unaccountable Prince." Clearly Fortuna had not looked favorably on any of his activities. In his *Rough Draught of My Own Life*, Burnet provided additional support for our argument. He remarked that "this [the writing of the *Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton*] brought the character of King Charles the first very low with me. . . ."\(^{745}\)

Driskell concluded that "Burnet . . . appears to have viewed the book [his translation of *Utopia*] as openly defiant of Roman Catholic authority—thus appropriate for publication in 1685."\(^{746}\) To support his contention, he quoted Raymond Wilson Chambers' remarks concerning Burnet's

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\(^{745}\)The quotation is taken from Burnet's *Rough Draught of My Own Life,* in Foxcroft's *Supplement,* p. 479.

\(^{746}\)Driskell, "An Evaluation of the Writings of Gilbert Burnet on the Basis of Stylistic Evidence,* p. 199, footnote 15."
translation, and its effect on the eighteenth century reading public:

Burnet, an admirer of Utopia, held that when (More) wrote Utopia, he had "emancipated himself, and had got into a scheme of fine thoughts"; later he was "entirely changed" and became the tool of "the blind and enraged fury of the priests." It was probably under the influence of Burnet that Horace Walpole wrote of More as one who "persecuted others in defense of superstition that he himself had exposed." 748

Unfortunately for Driskell's theory, Burnet was neither perspicacious nor subtle enough to have used his translation of Utopia as a vehicle for indirectly attacking James' policies. In his pamphlets, printed sermons, tracts, and translations, Burnet was about as subtle and indirect as the proverbial bull in the china shop.

However, Driskell is correct when he maintained that in Burnet's other major translation venture, A Relation of the Death of the Primitive Persecutors. Written Originally in Latin by L. C. F. Lactantius, that "one detects a possible polemic motive." In this translation, as in so many other of his works, Burnet was not concerned with abstruse problems, or with intellectual conundrums, but with concrete problems and present reality. When one reads his

747 R. W. Chambers is a distinguished biographer of Thomas More.

pieces d'occasion, especially his prefaces, one can quickly perceive what position or cause Burnet was defending or attacking. Like the Reformers of the sixteenth century, Burnet very often wrote when he stood in the eye of political or religious hurricanes. In this matter, Burnet was accustomed, whatever cause or position he was attacking or defending, to bludgeon his readers repeatedly with the point that he was trying to make. 749

Consequently, it is difficult to subscribe to Driskell's hypothesis that Burnet's Utopia was either an indirect attack on James II's regime, or "a comment on English current events." Although Burnet's critics have composed litanies of his many sins, both venial and mortal, his detractors, unlike Driskell, have never accused him of being either oversubtle or too indirect. In fact, there were times when Burnet had all the finesse and all the exquisite courtesy of a fishmonger's wife. Let us recall once again that this was the man who had censured the public as well as the private lives of most members of the Scottish episcopate, who had reprimanded Charles II for his public and private vices, who had stood on the scaffold with both Warriston and Russell, who had unsuccessfully tried to woo

James back to the Anglican fold, and who had presumed to lecture William III about his supposedly negative personality traits. Considering his past behavior, Burnet had not yet gleaned enough of the serpent's wisdom to have used his translation of *Utopia* as a stalking-horse, or more aptly as a Trojan horse, that could be employed to undermine the Stuart theory of kingship in particular, as well as the mystique of monarchy in general.

The second grand tour was a watershed in Burnet's political thinking. By the time that he had completed his grand tour of the Continent, and had settled at The Hague so that he might be near the princely court, Burnet's political thinking definitely had changed. In his own mind, Burnet already had abandoned the doctrine of passive obedience, notwithstanding the fact that he did not publicly repudiate this doctrine until the publication in 1688 of his *An Enquiry into the Measures of Submission to the Supreme Authority*. With the publication of this work, it was obvious that Burnet had renounced his belief in his beloved "doctrine of the Cross."

Burnet's odyssey towards resistance principles had indeed been a very long one. In this matter, he did not

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suddenly jettison his belief in the doctrine of passive obedience. Nowithstanding his many political tergiversations and the subsequent attacks of his political enemies and Whig confrères, Burnet clung tenaciously to the doctrine of passive obedience. Unfortunately for Burnet, his detractors refused to believe that he had ever sincerely believed in the doctrine of passive obedience. In their eyes, he only paid lip service to this doctrine. They believed that Burnet's sincerity was on the same plane as that of the Pharisees. Nonetheless in his Original (Secret) Memoirs, Burnet revealed that he had a powerful struggle with himself to control his propensity for more dynamic principles:

... if I am able to search any one thing to the bottom, I have done it in this matter; and indeed my aversion to the ill conduct of affairs, and somewhat of natural heat and carelessness in my temper, has given me the bias rather in favor of resistance than against it; so that nothing but the force of reason and conscience has determined me against it.751

Before he publicly repudiated this doctrine, Burnet had undertaken an agonizing reappraisal of his political views. This re-examination proved to be quite lengthy, considering that it took him five years to complete it. During this five-year period (1683-1688), his political views were in a state of flux. He was moving away, slowly and oftentimes unconsciously, from the doctrine of passive obedience, his beloved "doctrine of the Cross."

751 The quotation is taken from Foxcroft's Supplement, p. 35. The italics are mine.
The first clear-cut sign that a metamorphosis had taken place in his political thinking was the publication of his travel letters in January or February 1687. Even though these travel letters were published before he had completed his exhaustive re-examination of his political views, the tone of these letters was indicative of the fact that Burnet's political views had changed. In these letters, Burnet was so markedly hostile towards Roman Catholicism that he seemed determined to insult every one of his Roman Catholic readers.
After he completed his second grand tour of the Continent, Burnet decided to settle temporarily in Holland. Even though he had left England voluntarily so that he could not be implicated in any of Argyle's or Monmouth's dark schemes, Burnet fully intended to continue to meddle in English politics. At this juncture (late 1686 - early 1687), he was confident that the United Provinces would provide him with a safe haven. Burnet's decision to settle temporarily in Holland was an adroit move on his part. By retreating to the Dutch desert, Burnet, since he no longer considered himself to be one of His Majesty's subjects, could redouble his verbal attacks upon James' person, his policies, and his supporters. Despite the fact that he was across the Channel and therefore out of harm's way, Burnet was able to preserve and to perfect his system for gathering political and religious intelligence. Burnet was kept informed of the latest political and religious developments in England by some of the leaders of the Country faction. For his part, Burnet was able to make his views known to these leaders of the English opposition.

While Burnet was in political "retirement" in Holland, he wed Mary Scott in May 1687. This second marriage
would have a direct impact upon his political and ecclesiastical career. Now Burnet no longer had to concern himself with earning a living since his second wife was an extremely wealthy woman. Consequently, he was able to devote all of his time to spearheading the attack on James II's regime.

By the publication of his anti-Stuart tracts, Burnet deliberately tried to undermine James' authority. These anti-Stuart tracts were published in a single volume entitled *A Collection of Eighteen papers* shortly after the Glorious Revolution. This publication served a twofold purpose. On the one hand, they formulated the classic Whig justification for the Revolution of 1688. In addition, they provide a rationale for Burnet's political behavior during the years 1686-1688. For by 1688 Burnet, usually quite impervious to outside influences, had become sensitized to the accusations of his many detractors. It was bad enough in Burnet's view that the Jacobites, Nonjurors, High Anglicans, and High Tories calumniated him as a political apostate, a veritable Judas Iscariot. To add to his troubles, many of his Whig brethren now attacked a part of Burnet's justification of the Glorious Revolution. In 1689 the House of Commons voted that Burnet's *Pastoral Letter* was to be burned by the common hangman. His fellow Whigs had refused to countenance Burnet's conquest theory of their Glorious

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752 Burnet, "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's *Supplement*, p. 492.
Revolution. In his **Pastoral Letter**, he had argued that William of Orange's title to the crown was founded in part on his conquest of James II's rights in a just war. Although this certainly was not a newfangled idea, since Henry VII had based his claim to the throne in part on this same theory, Burnet's espousal of the conquest theory incensed his Whig brethren, for they held firmly to the belief that parliament had bestowed the crown on William and Mary. The burning of his **Pastoral Letter** mortified Burnet. He would never forgive his Whig confreres for their public humiliation of him. Needless to say, Burnet never even mentioned the burning of his **Pastoral Letter** in the **History of My Own Time**.

In his **Rough Draught of My Own Life**, Burnet protested that when "... [he] came thro' Germany to Holland ... [that he] design ... [ed] upon his coming ... [to Holland] an absolute retreat [from English politics]." When Burnet penned these words, he once again must have been entertaining one of his mental reservations. Even though he was supposed to be in political "retirement," he remarked that "upon ... [his] first admittance to them [the Prince and the Princess of Orange] ... [he realized that great] pains had been taken to receive ... [him] well," inasmuch as the princely couple took "so full a freedome" with him,

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753 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Rough Draught of My Own Life," in Foxcroft's *Supplement*, p. 491.
and demonstrated "so entire a confidence" in him, that he "was soon taken into all their counsellors." Burnet protested once again that he sought "an absolute retreat" in Holland. Nonetheless, two sentences later Burnet stated that "the first thing that I proposed to the Prince was to put the Fleet of Holland in a good case for that would give England good hopes that they [the states of Holland] were preparing for a rupture." Yet this man was supposedly in political "retirement." According to Burnet, he had not planned to be "taken into all . . . [the Prince's] counsels." It just happened that shortly before he arrived in Holland that "Lady Russell and the Lord Halifax . . . had got such a character of . . . [him] infused into the Prince and Princess of Orange" that they took him into their confidence. Once again, Burnet was splitting hairs. In all probability, Burnet himself asked the Marquis of Halifax and Lord Russell's widow to write on his behalf to the princely couple. While he condemned the Jesuits for their casuistic practices, Burnet on his part proved to be quite as adroit at fabricating sophistical arguments. A clear-cut example of this was Burnet's explanation of how he just happened to have been taken into the Prince's "entire confidence," and consequently was "taken into all . . . [the Prince's] counsels."

Burnet was to use his political "retirement" to

754 Ibid. 755 Ibid. 756 Ibid.
ingratiate himself with the princely couple. In fact, he became effectively William's secretary of state for British affairs. William and his Dutch advisers particularly valued Burnet for his knowledge of English as well as of Scottish church affairs. Burnet, too, enjoyed a special relationship with William, for he translated and edited the Prince's three manifestoes which sought to justify his armed presence in England. Ever since Burnet had fashioned a reconciliation between the Prince and the Princess—for a question had arisen as to whether William and Mary were to be joint sovereigns, or whether Mary alone would wear the crown—Mary was also very favorably disposed towards Burnet. At a later point, Burnet became William's "Domestick Chaplain" in order that he might "wait on the Prince of Orange and . . . follow him. . . ."757 When William's expeditionary force sailed for England, Burnet supposedly accompanied William only in his new capacity as his "Domestick Chaplain." After William's troops had disembarked at Torbay, Burnet, who ostensibly only attended to William's spiritual needs, was allowed to command some of the Prince's troops. At the accession of William and Mary, they would reward him for his services. The joint sovereigns chose Burnet to be the new bishop of Salisbury.

By the time that the Prince's troops had disembarked

at Torbay, Burnet had become the de facto Supreme Governor of the Ecclesia Anglicana. While William remained at Exeter for approximately a fortnight in order to consolidate his military and political positions, Burnet took this opportunity to prepare a position paper regarding ecclesiastical preferment. In his memorandum, Burnet recommended that ten clergymen on account of their stout-hearted defense of the Anglican establishment deserved to be elevated to the episcopate. From Burnet's list, William, and later on Mary, nominated seven of these men to the office of bishop.

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759 In his position paper Burnet recommended that the following clergymen deserved to be elevated to the episcopate. "Dr. [John Tillotson, the most moderate and prudent clergyman of England, and, with submission, the fittest man of England to be Archbishop of York." Although Tillotson was not advanced to the archbishopric of York, he was elevated in 1691 to the primatial see of Canterbury. Dr. [Simon] Patrick, Dean of Peterborrow, a great preacher, and a man of an eminently shining life, who will be a great ornament to the Episcopal order." In 1689 Patrick was elevated to the bishopric of Chichester. A few years later (1691) he was translated to the see of Ely. "Dr. [Thomas] Tenison, Minister of St. Martin's. He is a rare man, and despises wealth, and has done more against Popery than any man whatever." Tenison succeeded Tillotson as archbishop of Canterbury upon the latter's death in 1695. "Dr. [Edward] Stillingfleet, Dean of St. Paul's. He is the learnedest man of the age, in all respects, and a man of great prudence and moderation." In 1689 Stillingfleet was elevated to the bishopric of Worcester. "Dr. [John] Sharp, Dean of Norwich. One of the best preachers in England, and a very moderate man." Sharp was elevated to the archbishopric of York upon the death of Thomas Lamplugh in 1691. "Dr. [William] Sherlock, Master of the Temple. He is the best and politest writer we have, but he has been very sour against the Dissenters, yet no man has writ with more strength against the Papists." Although Sherlock was never elevated to the
spite of the charges of his critics that he was a thorough-going partisan, Burnet contended that he had avoided being 

episcopate, on account of his having "been very sour against the Dissenters," he nonetheless was advanced in 1691 to the deanery of St. Paul's. "Dr. Ayrshott, Dean of Windsor. He is a worthy man, and was one of the first that began to appear against Popery. He married the Earl of Westmoreland's sister." Unfortunately I have not been able to find any additional information regarding Dr. Ayrshott's life. "Mr. [William] Wake, of Gray's Inn. He is the wonderfulest young man in the world, and the most popular Divine now in England, and it is an amazing thing to see with what force he has writ against Popery." In 1705 Wake was advanced from the deanery of Exeter to the bishopric of Lincoln. He later succeeded Tension as archbishop of Canterbury in 1716. "Dr. [Edward] Fowler. A very moderate man, that has been much prosecuted by the Papists. He was the main instrument in engaging the Clergy to refuse to read the Declaration." [James II's (Second) Declaration of Indulgence (1687)] Fowler was elevated to the see of Gloucester after the deprivation in 1691 of the nonjuring incumbent Robert Frampton. "Dr. [Anthony] Horneck, a high German of the Palatinate. A very good and pious preacher, and a very popular man." I have been unable to find out why Horneck was neither advanced to a deanery, nor elevated to the episcopate. (The quotations are taken from Gilbert Burnet's "Dr. Burnet To The Price of Orange, [A Paper on Ecclesiastical Policy, addressed to the Price of Orange in 1688] in R.[obert] Willis Blencowe's edition of the Diary of the Times of Charles the Second, by the Honourable Henry Sidney, (Afterwards Earl of Romney) Including His Correspondence with the Countess of Sunderland, and Other Distinguished Persons at the English Court; to Which Are Added Letters Illustrative of the Times of James II and William III, 2 vols. [London: Henry Colburn, 1843], 2:281-86. The italics are in the original. See also Charles J. Abbey and John H. Overton's The English Church in the Eighteenth Century, 2 vols. [London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1878]; Gareth Vaughan Bennett's White Kennett, 1660-1728: Bishop of Peterborough. A Study in the Political and Ecclesiastical History of the Early Eighteenth Century [London: S.(ociety for) P.(romoting) C.(hristian) K.(nowledge) for the Church Historical Society, 1957]; G.(areth) V.(aughan) Bennett's The Tory Crisis in Church and State, 1688-1730: The Career of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975]; Daniel Ray Hirschberg's "A Social History of the Anglican Episcopate, 1660-1760" [Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1976]; Roland N. Stromberg's Religious Liberalism in Eighteenth-Century England [London: Oxford University Press,
drawn into the maelstrom of political and religious factions. Nonetheless when he prepared his list of suitable candidates, Burnet, notwithstanding his many asseverations to the contrary, only selected Latitudinarian Low Churchmen who were favorably disposed towards Whiggism. In this way, he wanted to make sure that every future bishop and every future dean subscribed to his theological views, his ideal of moderate Episcopacy, and his political credo. Clearly the litmus test for future prelates would be their religious and political predilections. 760

At this time Burnet had a virtual monopoly on ecclesiastical preferment, since he was the only Anglican clergyman among the Prince's advisers. Since the stadholder and his Dutch advisers realized that their ecclesiastical polity differed markedly from that of England, they in most instances respected Burnet's judgment regarding ecclesiastical patronage. Moreover, when William's expeditionary force set sail for England, Mary did not accompany her husband. Consequently, Burnet's decisions regarding ecclesiastical preferment were in most instances allowed to go unchallenged, inasmuch as Mary was the only

person at the princely court who revered the Church of England, and as a consequence had formed her own opinions about the character and intellectual ability of many Anglican clergymen.

Burnet's position paper also reflected the Erastian views that he had inherited from his father. Considering that the ecclesiastical polity formed an integral part of the Ancient English Constitution, Burnet argued that the monarch as Supreme Governor of the Anglican church could nominate, suspend, and deprive churchmen from their livings. In ecclesiastical matters, parsons as well as prelates were subject to the monarch, inasmuch as he was the Supreme Governor of their church. Undoubtedly Burnet's Erastian views had been further strengthened by his study of the English Reformation, especially the caesaropapism of Henry VIII. He believed that the bench of bishops should support the king's policies. In his memorandum Burnet bluntly stated that:

... because a great many ill men have been put in the Church by the King, [James II] it may be considered if it is not surely fit to turn out all that have been put in by him, and then to restore such to their places whose behaviour may have deserved it.

From the preceding passage, it is obvious that Burnet felt

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762 The quotation is taken from Burnet's "Dr. Burnet To The Prince Of Orange," in Blencowe's edition of the Diary of the Times of Charles the Second, by the Honourable Henry Sidney, 2:286.
that William, despite the fact that James II was still the *de jure* Supreme Governor of the Anglican church, had the requisite authority to "purge" the episcopate of undesirable prelates. In this instance Burnet defined the undesirables as those bishops who regarded themselves as High Churchmen, and who found political solace in Toryism. Clearly Burnet believed that the episcopate should reflect the theological and the political orientation of the monarch. Although he would have vehemently denied it, Burnet just like James II wanted to "pack" the episcopate with his own creatures. Since he was on the winning side, it was far easier for Burnet to "pack" the episcopate with Latitudinarian Low Churchmen who were very favorably disposed not only towards William of Orange's cause, but also towards Whiggism in general. Moreover, having considered the importance of the royal chaplains, he concluded that their ranks should also be "purged." He wrote that:

> The whole number of the King's Chaplains ... ought also surely to be dissolved and a new set to be formed with more choice, for the rule was formerly to take all Bishops out of that body.\(^{763}\)

After the Glorious Revolution and the subsequent Revolution Settlement, Burnet was afforded the opportunity of "packing" the bench of bishops. By nominating Burnet to fill the first vacant see of their reign, William and Mary, but especially Mary since she would be the sole Supreme

\(^{763}\)Ibid.
Governor of the Church of England, were indicating to the Anglican clergy the requisite theological and political views that suitable candidates for ecclesiastical preferment must hold.\textsuperscript{764} The queen's message to the clergymen was quite clear: only Latitudinarian Low Churchmen who had supported William and Mary's cause and as a consequence were favorably disposed towards the Whigs would be elevated to the episcopate. In the ensuing three years, fifteen sees would become vacant, including the primatial see of Canterbury.\textsuperscript{765} Before the queen nominated a person to fill one of these vacancies on the episcopal bench, Burnet made sure that the nominee was suitable.\textsuperscript{766} In each case Burnet scrutinized the theological and the political views of every nominee to insure that the future bishop held the "correct" political and theological views. During the years 1689-1691, Burnet with Mary's support engineered fundamental changes in the theological and the political orientation of the Anglican episcopate. By 1692 he had succeeded in "packing" the episcopal bench with Latitudinarian Low Churchmen


\textsuperscript{765}Foxcroft, Supplement, pp. 358-60; Lecky, 1 (1888):84.

\textsuperscript{766}Bennett, The Tory Crisis in Church and State, 1688-1730, p. 47; Sykes, Church and State in England in the Eighteenth Century, p. 37.
who supported the Revolution Settlement. 767 Obviously Burnet exercised far more ecclesiastical authority over the Church of England than either Thomas Cromwell had when he was viceregent and vicar-general for spirituals, or for that matter when Thomas Wolsey was cardinal-legate.

With the accession of William and Mary to the throne, Burnet indeed had become Fortune's child, inasmuch as the reign of the joint sovereigns marked the apotheosis of his political and ecclesiastical career. After his successful mediation of the constitutional question regarding the princely couple—whether Mary would allow the Convention Parliament to proclaim her queen regnant, thereby excluding William from the regal power and limiting his role to that of his wife's gentleman usher, or whether she would allow the Convention Parliament to proclaim William king, thereby restricting her role to that of queen consort—Burnet became Mary's most trusted adviser. By the time that he had preached his coronation sermon before William III and Mary II, which was subsequently "Printed by Their Majesties Special Command," Burnet had already become emotionally involved with Mary. In one of his autographs of the History of My Own Time, Burnet wrote that:

In her [Mary's] devotions there is a solemn gravity that edifies all that see her; there is no sort of

affectation in it, but yet there is an exactness both in her secret and chappel devotions and at sacrament that showsthat she does not think the sublimity of her rank exempts her from the strictest duty of Christianity.\textsuperscript{68}

He concluded that:

\textit{... she seems to be a person raised and prepared by God Almighty to make the nations happy; of which she herself thinks so little, ... for in all these things the will of God was to be considered, and if it were not for the doing good to others, she said for her own particular it would be perhaps better for her to live and die what she was.}\textsuperscript{769}

In Burnet's eyes, Mary II was the archetypical Protestant princess. When she died unexpectedly in 1695, he was as grief-stricken as when his own father had died. Notwithstanding the fact that he had always been a faithful and considerate husband, as well as a devoted and patient father, Burnet's emotional bond with Mary was much stronger than his emotional bonds with either his wives or his children.

By the time that he had preached his coronation sermon before the joint sovereigns, Mary herself was already emotionally involved with Burnet. Clearly Mary regarded him as more than her husband's "Domestick Chaplain," and de facto secretary of state for British affairs. In fact the queen was emotionally dependent upon Burnet, inasmuch as she felt emotionally much closer to him than she did either to her husband, or to her father James II. Given his unique

\textsuperscript{768} The quotation is taken from Foxcroft's \textit{Supplement}, p. 194.

\textsuperscript{769} Ibid., pp. 194-95.
relationship with the queen, it is not surprising that Burnet's influence over Mary paralleled that of the most preeminent royal confessors over their most devout Catholic monarchs. In this regard, Burnet's influence over Mary was far greater than Father Edward Petre's influence over James II. So long as Mary II reigned, Burnet was the single most powerful individual in the Church of England. Although the Convention Parliament had proclaimed William and Mary to be joint sovereigns, William, realizing that his wife was a devout Anglican, allowed her to act on his behalf as the Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

While Burnet had been at the princely court, he had used his opportunity to instruct William and his advisers about the nature of the English constitution in church and state. Consequently the Prince and his advisers were quite well informed about the civil and ecclesiastical polities in England. William nonetheless decided that the Anglican establishment would be the exclusive preserve of his wife. 770 This proved to be a very wise decision on the Prince's part. Unlike so many of the Anglican divines, William regarded Jacob Arminius as a heresiarch, for the Prince was "a convinced Dutch Calvinist," 771 who believed in absolute

770 Bennett, The Tory Crisis in Church and State, 1688-1730, p. 47; Sykes, Church and State in England in the Eighteenth Century, p. 37.

771 The quotation is taken from Bennett's The Tory Crisis in Church and State, 1688-1730, p. 45.
predestination. Given the strongly Arminian orientation of many of the Anglican clergymen, William considered them Calvinist "heretics." Moreover, in the Dutch Reformed Church, Presbytery, rather than Episcopacy, was the accepted Church-order. One consequence of this was that the Prince was favorably disposed towards the former "hot gospelers," whereas he gave only lukewarm support to the Episcopalians, notwithstanding Burnet's labors on behalf of the Anglican establishment. William was also appalled by the many "popish dregs" that he found in the Church of England. 772 In this matter, Gareth Vaughan Bennett wrote that:

... on previous state visits to England he [William] had joined in Anglican worship, but in Holland he had clearly resented the services in Mary's chapel and had bullied and harassed her chaplains. 773

Furthermore, considering that he was preoccupied with his diplomatic and military maneuvers against Louis XIV, it is not surprising that William was not averse to having Mary act as the sole Supreme Governor of the Church of England, thereby concentrating all ecclesiastical patronage in her hands.

If Mary had not died so suddenly in 1695, Burnet would have been able to realize one of his lifelong dreams: the provision of an adequate system of income maintenance for the Anglican clergy. In 1696, and again in 1697, he prepared two memorials for the king in which he outlined his plan to augment the incomes of poorly endowed benefices by

772 Ibid. 773 Ibid.
having the crown apply its revenue from the first-fruits and tenths to these livings. Although William in principle was not opposed to this plan, he allowed Burnet's scheme to languish, since he was far more concerned with defeating Louis XIV than with effecting ecclesiastical reform at home. If Mary had been alive, she would have been able to carry out this proposed reform. In fact if the queen had still been alive, Burnet would only have had to prepare one memorial. Notwithstanding the fact that Mary II was "certainly in all respects the best wife that ever was, the most united to the prince in friendship, confidence, and affection,"\textsuperscript{774} she was nonetheless as devoted to the Anglican establishment as her younger sister Anne was. Consequently she would not have missed this opportunity to have provided increased clerical stipends in order that more capable men might be attracted to the ministry. Both Mary and Burnet realized that in far too many parishes the clergymen were little better than "dumb dogs." Ironically enough Burnet's plan was later adopted by Queen Anne, a monarch who loathed his person, his Latitudinarian theology, and his Whiggish politics.\textsuperscript{775}

\textsuperscript{774} The quotation is taken from Foxcroft's \textit{Supplement}, p. 194.

\textsuperscript{775} G. F. A. Best, \textit{Temporal Pillars: Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England} (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1964), pp. 5, 30-33, 86-87, & 89; Savidge, \textit{The Foundation and Early Years of Queen Anne's Bounty}, pp. 4-9, 12-26, & 107.
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The dissertation submitted by Paul Peter Pocus, Jr., has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

4/8/1983
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