**Author I**

**Ithuriel’s Spear: Barbauld, Sermons, and Citizens 1789–1793**

This chapter focuses on the years between the start of the French Revolution and the beginning of war between Britain and France. I argue that pulpits and printed sermons became a key battleground for debates about how to interpret the past, present, and future of British liberty and monarchy. Religion and ideas of liberty were so mutually constitutive that sermons became a focal point for the future of the nation. I discuss a range of related sermons and texts alongside A.L. Barbauld’s *Civic Sermons for the People* (1792) and *Sins of Government, Sins of the Nation* (1793).

Keywords:Barbauld, sermons, dissenters, church, nation

“The genius of Philosophy is walking abroad,” warned Anna Laetitia Barbauld in 1790, “and with the touch of Ithuriel’s spear is trying the establishments of earth.”[[1]](#footnote-1) Milton’s truth-revealing angel is an appropriately literary and Protestant guardian of virtue, and the reference to “establishments” is monitory: George III, Parliament, and the Church of England would all be tested by the spear of print in her publications. The regency crisis of 1789, the national celebration of George III’s recovery, and the failure of bills to end discrimination against Protestant Dissenters and to outlaw slavery meant that the discussion of events in France took place in a particularly fraught domestic setting. While the Bastille was being torn down, the French royal family executed, and the country purged of established religions, in Britain fears of a repeated civil war and regicide took increasingly vivid shape. In response to the turmoil at home and abroad, days of public fasts and thanksgiving were proclaimed by George III, with special forms of prayer published by the King’s command to be used in all churches and chapels throughout England and Wales. In this article, I argue that Anna Laetitia Barbauld’s decision to publish in the sermon form in the 1790s needs to be understood in the context of the increased importance of the pulpit during the 1790s.

**Liberty, Literature, and Religion**

These were years particularly concerned with language and definitions of liberty, of rights, of national progress. It might generally be agreed that, as the bishop of London, Beilby Porteus, claimed in his April 1789 thanksgiving sermon preached before George III, “There is not a nation upon earth, that has been favoured with a greater number of providential deliverances than our own,” but the composition of that nation, and the true purposes of the “providential deliverances” of Protestantism, were fiercely contested.[[2]](#footnote-2) High Churchmen and Tories were horrified by the idea that the history of Protestant liberty in Britain, as secured by the Glorious Revolution of 1688, might lead—as Charles James Fox suggested—to the lifting of civil penalties on Protestant Dissenters by his proposed repeal of the discriminatory Corporation and Test Acts in 1790.[[3]](#footnote-3) Fox’s argument, that because the Church of England always upheld “Universal Rights of Human Nature” it was logical to vote for repeal, reflects the complex relationship between the emerging discourse of human rights and Protestantism in Britain.[[4]](#footnote-4) This dimension is still regularly overlooked: even Peter de Bolla’s otherwise illuminating recent work on the concept of rights in the eighteenth century does not engage with it, despite its undoubted importance as, in his terms, another “alternative conceptual form [. . .] that operated according to a different grammar and syntax and with an axiomatic modality.”[[5]](#footnote-5) Whether radical or loyalist, eighteenth-century claims that “Britons *never will be slaves*” were rooted in an understanding of Britishness as Protestant, and as refusing the slavery of the Church of Rome.[[6]](#footnote-6)

The identification of liberty as something particularly Protestant and British had been mobilised in support of the antislavery campaign in the years leading up to the French Revolution debates. In 1785, William Cowper asserted that ‘Slaves cannot breathe in England’; the very air of British Liberty was so potent that when slaves inhaled it, their shackles instantly fell from them, and ‘that moment they are free’. [[7]](#footnote-7) Such arguments became commonplace in antislavery writings, and sermons were central to a movement which had emerged from churches in the 1780s.[[8]](#footnote-8) Its emphasis on the immorality and hypocrisy of a Christian nation’s trade in the enslavement of humans resulted in some startling imagery. Writing in anger at the House of Commons’s rejection of the motion to abolish the slave trade, Barbauld depicted the supposedly Christian parliament as populated with “scoffing fiends” whose “laugh of hell” at the evidence of horrors of slavery should shame the nation.[[9]](#footnote-9) Those who stood against slavery, “Around whose steady brows, in union bright, / The civic wreath, and Christian’s palm unite,” were the “generous band / Whose efforts yet arrest Heav’n’s lifted hand.”[[10]](#footnote-10) The nation’s rights and sins were imbricated with its religious faith to the extent that the Houses of Parliament could be accused of housing devils when it betrayed Protestant liberties in its legislation. Literature, in its then broader sense of print culture, was the realm where these questions of liberty and rights were to be decided. “Few Engines can be more powerful, than literature,” observed the radical philosopher William Godwin in 1793, and his Tory opponents agreed.[[11]](#footnote-11) T. J. Mathias, moved to typographical frenzy by conviction, asserted that “LITERATURE, *well or ill conducted,* IS THE GREAT ENGINE *by which,* I am fully persuaded, ALL CIVILIZED STATES *must ultimately be supported or overthrown.*”[[12]](#footnote-12)

Literature as it is studied in the academy today, however, has been strangely resistant to acknowledging the basic fact that, as William Gibson points out, “in the eighteenth century about eight pages of sermons were published for every one page of fiction.”[[13]](#footnote-13) Sermons were an immensely popular genre: they not only sold, but did so variously in expensive and cheap editions, forming a lucrative and layered sector of the publishing industry and outselling all other genres.[[14]](#footnote-14) They were bought and read in coffeehouses and inns as well as in bookshops and were borrowed from circulating libraries to be shared and discussed by families and friends. Jennifer Farooq observes that “it would have been difficult for any Londoner engaged in the social, cultural, or political life of the capital to avoid preaching,” and the same was true for the rest of the country.[[15]](#footnote-15) Churches were a unique focal point in any community, bringing together rich and poor as no other place did: as Barbauld argued, churches were “the only place where human beings, of every rank and sex and age, meet together for one common purpose” and were “the only place, to enter which nothing more is necessary than to be of the same species.”[[16]](#footnote-16)

Sermons could be highly emotional and deeply involving, and they could command lengthy standing ovations, as did the one given by Bishop of St. David, Samuel Horsley, when he used the occasion of his sermon on 30 January 1793, marking the death of Charles I, to lament the more recent regicide of Louis XVI, who was “butchered” in France, a land “swarming with Assassins, filled with violence, deluged with blood.”[[17]](#footnote-17) (The sermon was swiftly printed and went into three editions in just one year.) Sermons also offered a means of understanding and experiencing group identity on a denominational, regional, and national level. Gibson notes that “some of the commonest words heard by most people in this period were those of the sermon,” and within the Church of England the history of the nation was collectively heard and marked through the structure of the annual commemorative sermons set in the *Book of Common Prayer*.[[18]](#footnote-18) The nine anniversary sermons celebrating events such as the death of Charles I (30 January), the restoration of the monarchy (29 May), and the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot and the triumph of the Glorious Revolution (both 5 November), were important in creating a communal identity of Britain as a “highly favour’d isle, / and Heav’n’s peculiar care.”[[19]](#footnote-19) By 1789, England, in combination with changing components of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, also had an ancient tradition of celebrating special days of thanksgiving or penance.[[20]](#footnote-20) As we shall see, these days of national celebration and atonement were to become particularly important in the years 1789–1793.

**Sermons and Debate**

Sermons might not immediately be identified as such by the modern reader, as they appeared under terms such as “discourse,” “appeal,” or “address.” Sermons were often in debate with each other, flung off the press or from the pulpit, outraged or persuasive in tone. Arguments might be between individual clergy—the High Church bishop Samuel Horsley and the Unitarian Joseph Priestley, for example—or between Dissenting and Anglican communities. The Baptist Samuel Pearce’s sermon *The oppressive, unjust, and prophane nature, and tendency of the Corporation and Test Acts, exposed* (1790) was printed at the request of seven Dissenting congregations of three different denominations. Preachers were not simply speaking from the pulpit to passive audiences, but were being used by congregations in turn as the voices of communities in the world of print. Pearce pointedly quoted the Litany of the Church of England as his epigraph—“That it may please thee to defend all that are oppressed”—and contrasted it with his biblical text, in which David lamented that “Princes have persecuted me without cause” (Psalms 119:161). The implication was that the Church of England was acting against its own publicly avowed principles in persecuting nonconforming Protestants by denying them full citizenship rights.[[21]](#footnote-21)

It is often forgotten that it was a sermon, the Dissenting minister Richard Price’s *Discourse on the Love of our Country* (1789), which prompted Edmund Burke to write his enormously influential *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). Sermons had also sparked the two greatest pamphlet wars in the first half of the century, though in both those cases the authors had been Anglican clergy.[[22]](#footnote-22) Dissenters published proportionally more sermons than clergy in the Established Church, and the occasion of Price’s sermon offers a Dissenting mirror to the Church of England anniversary sermons: the fifth of November was an important Protestant anniversary for the Established Church, as it marked the providential rescue of parliament and crown from Roman Catholic forces.[[23]](#footnote-23) Price’s *Discourse* took Psalms as its text and celebrated the centenary of the Glorious Revolution as an instance of the progress of liberty and the spread of the “UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE” of Christianity; “Nothing can be more friendly to the general rights of mankind,” he argued, and he praised the two other “glorious revolutions” he had witnessed in America and, most recently, France.[[24]](#footnote-24) Horsley disagreed. His prayer was, he explained in the preface to his republication of an earlier pamphlet against allowing Protestant Dissenters full rights, that Dissenters would accept “that Toleration on the part of Government, and a cheerful submission, on the part of the Tolerated, to some necessary restraints, are the only terms, upon which Churchmen and Dissenters *can ever walk together as friends*.”[[25]](#footnote-25) For loyalists, the important date to remember was not 5 November, but 30 January, the date of the “martyrdom” of Charles I.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Speaking in support of his bill to repeal the discriminatory Corporation and Test Acts that prevented Dissenters from receiving full citizenship rights, Charles James Fox wryly predicted that “for the attempt he had made, he might, perhaps, be stigmatized as another *Oliver Cromwell*,” and he was right: in Figure 1, satirists duly depict him as the reincarnation of the Protector, flanked by Puritan clergy.[[27]](#footnote-27) Philip Withers, writing as Theodosius against the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, warned that the Dissenters were gathering and plotting, and that “Parliament is to be taken by storm!!!”[[28]](#footnote-28) As the title *Meeting of Dissenters Religious and Political* (Figure 1) suggests, the two types of dissent were readily lumped into one regicidal mass, gathering under the gory sign of the King’s Head pub. In vain did Fox ask the House to see the absurdity in the persistent discrimination against Dissenters and Roman Catholics when Britain was enjoying “an age of superior refinement, liberality, and understanding” and point to various instances of Dissenting patriotic action in support of the monarchy after the Restoration; the whiff of historic rebellion resulted in fear trumping vanity of “superior refinement,” and the repeal motion was defeated by 189 votes.[[29]](#footnote-29) Popular understanding of history was against Dissent, as was the strain of biblical prophecy that peppered loyalist papers and prints with demons, serpents, and other monsters of hell. In Barbauld’s *Appeal to the Opposers of the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts* (1790), she took as her text for the opening paragraph Exodus 8:1–3, scornfully alluding to the fear that once Dissenters were allowed full rights they would swarm into Anglican churches, palaces, and homes like the biblical plague of frogs.[[30]](#footnote-30) As frogs or toads feature on the Parisian heraldic device, and the application of the biblical story supported the identification of Britain with Israel, God’s chosen nation, this reference became commonplace in anti-French satire over the 1790s.[[31]](#footnote-31) Burke, speaking of the ghosts of regicidal revolution conjured up by radical Dissenters in 1793, cautioned that they needed “exorcism,” and describing Unitarians and their fellow radicals as “insect reptiles,” observed that “whilst they go on only caballing and toasting, [they] only fill us with disgust; if they get above their natural size, and increase the quantity whilst they keep the quality of their venom, they become objects of the greatest terror.”[[32]](#footnote-32) In 1812 Wordsworth wrote in reactionary disgust that he had encountered “the old Snake Laetitia Barbauld.”[[33]](#footnote-33)

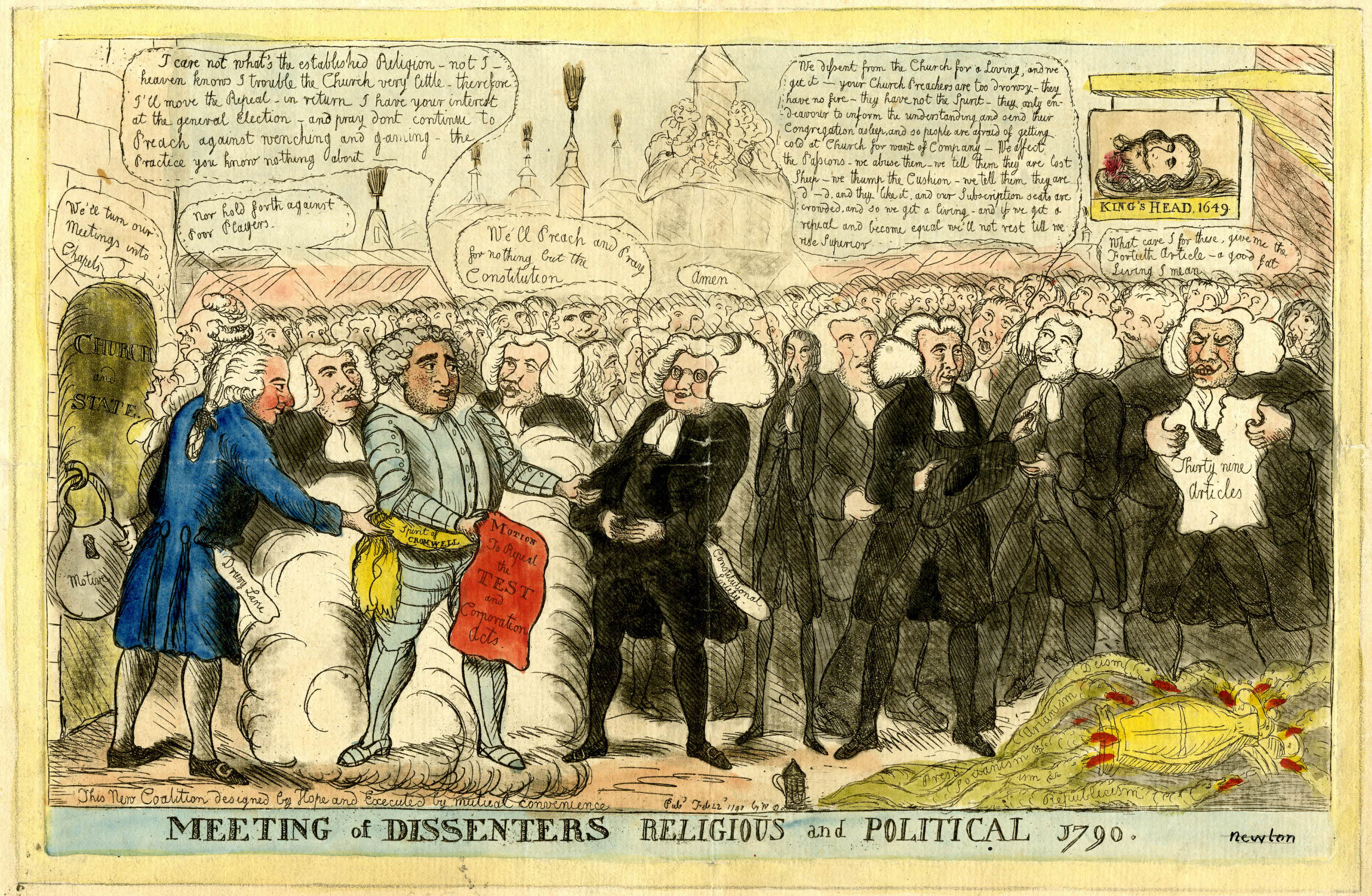


Figure 1. William Dent, *Meeting of Dissenters Religious and Political* (1790)

**The Restoration of Kings**

The shadow of regicide was evident in the spring of 1789 when the nation celebrated George III’s recovery. The Regency Crisis of 1789 had left the public feeling protective toward the king, and the degree of patriotic fervor prompted by the special day of national thanksgiving for his recovery surprised many at the time. The declaration of a day of national worship to celebrate a monarch’s return to health was unprecedented, but response was prompt and manifested itself in emotional, imaginative, and commercial ways: advertisements for royal memorabilia proliferated in newspapers alongside notices of properties to let along the procession route, and the plans and proceedings of the celebrations were detailed in the press.[[34]](#footnote-34) The sale of “Restoration gloves” reflected the defiantly royalist tone, and suggests a provocative translation of Whig proposals for a regency into wishful Whig king-killing.[[35]](#footnote-35) *The Times* reported that Fox was hissed at by the crowds as he made his way to St. Paul’s on the day of the thanksgiving service and described the Whigs as like Milton’s Satan, hating from their moral darkness the bright beams of the divine king.[[36]](#footnote-36) These bright beams had been spectacularly and literally represented in Lord Heathfield’s illuminations, which depicted Britannia and the royal family on massive transparencies “illuminated by a blazing sun in its meridian splendor” to “most striking and brilliant effect, particularly the fire ball, which might be seen at a vast distance.”[[37]](#footnote-37) Print copies of Porteus’s sermon that day swiftly sold out, and Dissenting, Roman Catholic, and Jewish services were reported in London and around the country.[[38]](#footnote-38) According to notes in Porteus’s papers, the music for the service at St. Paul’s was to be largely by George Frideric Handel, that most influential composer of Britain’s dreams of itself as the new Israel, and even the Roman Catholic thanksgiving prayer for the king’s recovery invoked the patriarchs that populate Handel’s oratoria: James Butler, archbishop of Thurles, ordered his Roman Catholic clergy to pray that God would bless the king, who was “endowed with the faithfulness of Abraham, strengthened with the fortitude of Joshua, and adorned with the wisdom of Solomon.”[[39]](#footnote-39) Following the celebration of Mass, the choir was to sing “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people.”[[40]](#footnote-40)

Despite the apparent universal cheer, there was a potentially regicidal ruthlessness to some Dissenting thanksgiving sermons. When the Baptist minister James Dore took as his text Deuteronomy 32:39, “I wound and I heal,” for his thanksgiving sermon celebrating the recovery of George III, his account of Providential interventions protecting Protestant Britain had included the example of the “seasonable” death of Queen Anne “to prevent the iniquitous operation of the Schism-Bill.”[[41]](#footnote-41) His musings about “the sudden vicissitudes of providence” that led from the nation’s “warmth of gratitude and exultation of joy” in celebrating the centenary of the Glorious Revolution to weeping “on account of the affliction of our most gracious Sovereign” implied that the king’s health might be linked to the securing of Protestant rights.[[42]](#footnote-42) “Methinks,” asserted Dore at the end of his sermon, “I see new laurels to adorn his brow. Methinks I hear the trumpet of fame waxing louder and louder in sounding forth his praise” as the “auspicious days” of a nation freed from the Corporation and Test Acts prompt Protestant Dissenters “to swell the song in praise of George our King.”[[43]](#footnote-43) Dore, an active abolitionist, looked forward to the day when British liberty, having been extended to the Dissenters, would be extended to slaves by George III. Yet however assiduous Dissenters and their supporters were in affirming their commitment to the House of Hanover, they were seen as a domestic menace, and “God Save the King” became increasingly identified with the loyalist cause. In 1793, Ann Jebb commented that the song “God Save the King” was sung so often and hawked from so many street corners that it seemed to have become “an amulet against republicanism.”[[44]](#footnote-44)

The Bible was central to discussions of national piety, which often seemed urgent and framed by eschatology. In a popular sermon that was soon preached from Anglican as well as Dissenting pulpits, the Dissenting Independent minister William Kingsbury celebrated the king’s recovery but warned that “the time is drawing near apace, when every earthly distinction will be done away, when all the sovereigns of the world must resign their crowns and sceptres; and together with the innumerable multitudes over which they have reigned, give up their final account.”[[45]](#footnote-45) The emphasis here, as so often in Dissenting sermons, was on the “KING OF ALL”; although loyalty to George III was typically lavishly expressed in such texts, it was with the Unitarian Jonathan Edwards’s caveat that “when a competition arises between the king of England and the King of the universe, it is surely my duty to obey the latter and not the former.”[[46]](#footnote-46) Praise of royalty in Dissenting sermons thus existed in a conditional framework. The choice of biblical text was particularly heavily freighted with significance: the Psalms were a popular choice across all denominations, offering as they did parallels between the young David and the British monarch, but where the Anglican Porteus chose Psalm 27:16 (“trust in the Lord”), the Dissenting Kinsgbury selected “God giveth salvation unto Kings” (Psalm 144:10), placing George III in a more vulnerable and less entitled position. The Church of England’s sometimes complacent self-imagining of itself as leading God’s modern Israelites was further challenged by Dissenting readings of the Psalms which turned the Church of England into the corrupt oppressor of the purer Protestants. Porteus took as his text Psalm 27 and claimed that the sight of St. Paul’s packed for the royal thanksgiving service was a “spectacle more striking, more aweful, more dignified, more interesting, more edifying” than had ever been presented to the observation of mankind”; but the popular Birmingham Baptist Samuel Pearce used Psalm 119 to show that Protestant Dissenters were the modern suffering inheritors of David, like him unreasonably persecuted for their faith.[[47]](#footnote-47) Given the Church of England’s long tradition of claiming to be the injured David, attacked by the corrupt earthly powers of the Roman Catholic Church, this was a textual appropriation that was guaranteed to infuriate the Established Church.

By 1793, eschatology had assumed a far more menacing and oppressive role in public debates, and a sense of living in end times was spreading.[[48]](#footnote-48) Royal proclamations were being made not for the celebration of the king’s recovery but for public fast days to placate God and seek divine support for war with France. Escalating violence in France, the execution of Louis XVI, and growing fear of revolution and bloodshed in Britain meant that by 1793 Dissenters were often treated with a suspicion that added to their sense of disappointment and martyrdom. Jonathan Edwards, Priestley’s successor at Birmingham, lamented the spirit of denominational hostility that seemed to be mounting and dividing Protestants, but he told his congregations and readers that their duty was to God and not to the king: they must act in accordance with conscience, not royal directive, and support their nation not by fasting but by leading virtuous lives. Then they might at least have the comfort of reflecting that ‘mansions of peace are prepared for the righteous’, ‘though war, and famine, and pestilence, should scourge the iniquities of mankind’. [[49]](#footnote-49) According to Edwards, Dissenters are the despised but “righteous” chosen people of God, fighting national degeneration by promoting peace and virtue rather than supporting the war for which they have been asked to pray by their king. Their obedience to a higher power would, Edwards hoped, form “a wall of fire” and offer the best protection to their morally endangered country.

Edwards’s sermon is urgent in tone and compelling in content. The popularity of Dissenting preachers was something feared by the Established Church: these were ministers selected by the congregation and directly paid by them, instead of through the compulsory tithes paid by all, Anglican and otherwise. Although the Church of England occupied a secure position as the established religion of the nation, with the monarch at its head, and a power which Horsley claimed “it were treason against the paramount authority of God” to deny, it had nevertheless been criticised throughout the century as rich, lazy, and corrupt.[[50]](#footnote-50) While the Church of England cast itself as the suffering Israel, enduring persecution by the corrupt Roman Catholic Church and, later, a godless France, Dissenters and Whigs suggested it might itself be guilty of unchristian persecution of fellow Protestants. Fox speculated that rather than fearing Puritan mobs, the Church of England should look to Jacobite Roman Catholic sympathisers in its own ranks. A mob of High Church bishops, he warned, might yet strike against the Protestant succession and seek to overturn the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Comparing his opposers’ intolerance to that of the mobs of the Gordon Riots in 1780, he warned “the *cry* of a Mob was *constantly* the same; and whether it issued from a Mob of Gentlemen, or a Mob of Bishops, or a Mob from Newgate, it proved equally odious.”[[51]](#footnote-51) The famous golden mean of the Church of England, its renowned *via media* between Protestant fanaticism and Roman Catholic superstition, is corrupted in Barbauld’s *Appeal* into a taste for gold that renders the Church of England greedy and morally decayed. She accuses the opposers of protecting “the rich benefices” and “golden prebends”; Dissenters, she points out, are the more truthful for having “no favours to blind us, no golden padlock on our tongues.”[[52]](#footnote-52)

A chilling version of the Church of England appears in Barbauld’s “Vision of Anna,” in which the richly clad, wealthy church refuses to remove her foot from her weak, poor Dissenting sister’s neck, or to lay down the sword she holds above her.[[53]](#footnote-53) For Barbauld, the sins of the church were a betrayal of the nation, the Bible, and God. She believed that the solution to the oppression of Dissenters lay in the realm of literature. Parliament and the church might use their institutional powers against Dissenters, but although they “have set a mark of separation upon us, and it is not in our power to take it off,” yet “it is in our power to determine whether it shall be a disgraceful stigma or an honourable distinction.” Print culture and education would foster the gradual improvement of society, and like her friend Richard Price she felt confident she could “appeal to the certain, sure operation of increasing light and knowledge, which it is no more in your power to stop, than to repel the tide with your naked hand.”[[54]](#footnote-54) The insidious power of hope and intellect would triumph via the printed word, she argued, as integrity would command instinctive recognition, and a shared love of liberty and virtue would transcend prejudice, for “You will read our books and imbibe our sentiments.”[[55]](#footnote-55)

**Barbauld and Things by Their Proper Names**

“It is time, so near the end of the eighteenth century, it is surely time to speak with precision, and to call things by their proper names.”[[56]](#footnote-56) An insistence on truthfulness in language characterises Barbauld’s writings during the 1790s, and it is significant that she turns to the sermon form in order to promote this clarity. By 1790 she had been an acclaimed poet for seventeen years, had written well-received essays, and had published a highly successful series of children’s books. Her return to publication after nine years’ absence was prompted by the defeat of the bill to repeal the Corporation and Test Acts. She was excited by events in France, and dismayed by the failure of two political campaigns in which she felt deeply invested: the defeat of the repeal in 1790, and the failure of the Anti-Slavery Bill in 1791. In both cases she intervened by using print culture to speak directly to the Houses of Parliament, and in both cases she wielded Ithuriel’s spear in the cause of Protestant liberty. In 1792 she took an important part in a debate about public worship by issuing her *Remarks on Mr Gilbert Wakefield’s Enquiry into the propriety or expediency of public worship* and published two *Civic Sermons to the People*, and in 1793 she responded to the king’s proclamation for a national fast day with *Sins of Government, Sins of the People*. All these popular publications were preoccupied with the Protestant possibilities for public worship. In them, she praises the integrity of Dissenters, using concepts of the British nation and the reading public to refute the validity of the othering of Dissenting culture, and to undermine claims that patriotism and culture were the sole preserve of members of the Church of England.

It is extraordinary that some otherwise perceptive critics retrospectively secularise Barbauld’s writings, dwelling on the language of rights rather than considering what legitimates those rights. Barbauld herself understood faith as central to all her writings, whatever the genre, yet it often seems as if, like the later Wordsworth and Coleridge, the academy thinks her Dissenting beliefs spoiled her as an author, though perhaps for different reasons: the Lake Poets’ disdain stemmed from their confirmed Anglicanism by that point, whereas modern-day readers simply prefer their radical writers not to embarrass them by being religious.[[57]](#footnote-57) Yet this is to patronise Barbauld, and also to overlook the full ambitions of her choice to harness the most popular and most influential form of the day by experimenting with the sermon. Barbauld’s decision was strategic and informed. She knew the cultural valence of the different genres and was, after all, a member of the Aikin family, which had been described in 1822 by the influential liberal periodical *The Monthly Repository* as one “which has perhaps done more than any other family in England for the promotion of knowledge and the gratification of literary taste.”[[58]](#footnote-58)

The power of Barbauld’s eloquence was acknowledged at the time, and her fame was mentioned by all reviewers: the hostile *British Critic* described her as “a lady well known, and certainly of distinguished accomplishments,” before lamenting that such literary skills should have been used to advance such radical ideas.[[59]](#footnote-59) Reviewers repeatedly excused themselves for the amount of space they had given to her antiwar fast-day sermon *Sins of Government, Sins of the Nation* (1793), even when—as with the *British Critic—*the review disagreed with the arguments. The openly sympathetic *Analytical Review* explained that they had discussed the text at length partly because it possessed literary merit, “but chiefly because we are of the opinion that, with a most happy union of energy and moderation, it inculcates sentiments of political and moral wisdom of the highest importance to the peace and prosperity of this country.”[[60]](#footnote-60) The *Analytical Review*, run by Joseph Johnson, drew on a denominationally broad range of contributors; its theological editor was the Roman Catholic Whig scholar Alexander Geddes, who argued amiably with Protestant Dissenting friends such as Joseph Priestley.[[61]](#footnote-61) Its review of *Sins*, like those in the *Monthly Review* and *British Critic*, praised the literary style of Barbauld’s sermon, but the emphasis on “moderation” and “peace and prosperity” reflected the need to assuage a public that was becoming increasingly anxious about the ghosts of civil war and regicide, as events in the French Revolution seemed to fulfill Edmund Burke’s gloomy 1790 prophecies by tainting the language of rights with the blood of a king.

The *Analytical Review*, like Barbauld and her fellow Dissenters, had to identify itself carefully as firmly rational Dissent, with no alarming symptoms of revolutionary or puritan excess.[[62]](#footnote-62) But healthy kings did not belong to the Church of England alone, and Barbauld refused to be excluded from national worship. According to her, St. Paul’s was hosting “a virtual declaration of the rights of man,” for “[e]very time Social Worship is celebrated, it includes a virtual declaration of the rights of man.”[[63]](#footnote-63) So divided was society, she argued, that it was only at public worship that the poor man would ‘learn that he is of the same species’; only in a church would the faithful be able to see that they were of the same “*race*,” she claimed in the first *Civic Sermon* (1792).[[64]](#footnote-64) The Unitarian minister John Disney, joining in the debate about the value of public worship, insisted that “public worship is a great mean, and, in our present circumstances, the most effectual one, of publishing religious instruction.”[[65]](#footnote-65)

The Dissenters’ well-established interest in pedagogy was evident in the ways they tried to make their textual interventions “effectual.” Barbauld opened her first *Civic Sermon* by addressing her “Brethren” and explaining that she used this term “because we are truly brethren,” and that by sharing in this sermon they would refute those who “think that poor people, or those who work to maintain themselves” lacked the ability to “discourse” and so “ought to be led and governed like brutes”; ‘good sense’, she pointed out, ‘is found in every rank of life’, as her listeners will have observed for themselves. [[66]](#footnote-66) She took as her unreferenced text Luke 12:57, silently invoking a chapter in which Jesus warned against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and asked his listeners “why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?” This chapter of Luke also contains the assurance that we should “fear not,” for God cares for all his creations, from humans down to the hapless sparrows that are sold five for two farthings in the market (Luke 12:6–7). These sparrows had featured often in the sermons on the King’s recovery in 1789, where they were produced as reassuring evidence of God’s Providential plan for the nation.[[67]](#footnote-67) Here, Barbauld is taking the same text and applying it to the lowliest of that monarch’s subjects; she urges her brethren to remember, and to instil in their children, that the nation is composed of the individuals, families, and communities around them.[[68]](#footnote-68)

For her second Civic Sermon, Barbauld took as her epigraph and text the phrase “from mutual wants spring mutual happiness” from Sir William Ashhurst’s charge to the grand jury at Middlesex.[[69]](#footnote-69) Ashhurst’s charges were often published

in the press, “perhaps because they were somewhat idiosyncratic”; he reproduced the king’s proclamations of 21 May (against seditious writings) and 1 December (in favour of the militia) 1792 as appendices to his *Charge* of winter 1792.[[70]](#footnote-70) The Society for the Preservation of Liberty and Property Against Republicans and Levellers were great admirers, republishing his *Charge* because it “breathes so much the SPIRIT of the ENGLISH LAW, and is so well suited to CURB the LICENTIOUS SPIRIT of the TIMES, that it must be read with Heart-felt Satisfaction by every TRUE ENGLISHMAN.”[[71]](#footnote-71) In his *Charge*, Ashhurst reflected on the importance of law in securing civil liberty and the benefits of civil society, and, possibly paraphrasing Alexander Pope’s well-known phrase from the *Essay on Man*, “On mutual wants build mutual happiness,” asserted that “from mutual wants spring mutual happiness.”[[72]](#footnote-72) The quotation was not credited by Barbauld, but the implication was clear: by taking Ashhurst for her text, she was explaining the language of the law in her sermon, and by quoting an actual judge, she was showing how one might answer the question asked by the text for her first Civic Sermon, “why [. . .] judge ye not what is right?” (Luke 12:57). As elsewhere in the Revolution debate—in Mary Wollstonecraft and Tom Paine’s disdain for Burke’s flowery diction, for example—prose style itself became a powerful dimension of an argument’s rebuttal. Where Ashhurst repeatedly addressed his charge to “Gentlemen,” Barbauld insisted on using the term “brethren” and moving between the first person plural and the second person, translating the language of government into the everyday.[[73]](#footnote-73)

In encouraging her readers to understand terms of government by means of a sermon, Barbauld told her readers that she was helping them in their citizenly duty as recently enjoined by the king in his Proclamation. How were his subjects to “guard against” the “divers wicked and seditious writings” about which he had warned them, or “to know whether the purposes for which any correspondencies you are entered into are *wicked* and *criminal*”?[[74]](#footnote-74) She spoke of the “wicked and seditious” behavior of the Priestley riots at Birmingham in 1791, where Church and King mobs “pulled down the houses, destroyed the goods, and endangered the lives of quiet and worthy citizens, to the very great shame and disgrace of this kingdom”: this was, of course, not the example of sedition George III, Pitt, or Ashhurst would have selected.[[75]](#footnote-75) It is perhaps unsurprising that reservations were expressed in some quarters about Barbauld’s translations of royal proclamations. The reviewer in the *British Critic* lamented Barbauld’s use of irony in the advancement of “an argument as false and fallacious as we ever remember to have seen upon paper,” addressed her as *Madame*, andasked “What then does the following interpretation of the royal Proclamation speak, but the direct language of the present Convention of France?”[[76]](#footnote-76) The reviewer was, however, in this case objecting to the irony used in another of Barbauld’s sermonic responses to a royal proclamation, her 1793 *Sins of Government, Sins of the People*, in which she again summoned her listeners on the grounds of a royal command. The sermon was offered specifically for the occasion of the national fast-day designated by the king for the whole country to repent of its sins and pray for Britain’s success in its new war against France. She commended “the wisdom and piety of the governing powers” in announcing a day on which “the nation, in the midst of its business, its pleasures, and its pursuits, makes a sudden stop,” “for the declared purpose of confessing your sins, and humbling yourselves before the Supreme Being,” since “few individuals have any immediate share in these public acts, we might be tempted to forget the responsibility which attaches to the nation at large with regard to them”; the king’s proclamation was an important reminder “that, for every violation of integrity, justice, or humanity in public affairs, it is incumbent upon every one of us, to humble himself personally before the tribunal of Almighty God.”[[77]](#footnote-77) Irony can be a powerful means for those customarily excluded from a narrative to read themselves, willfully, back into it. In obeying the king’s instructions, and accepting a share of national guilt, individuals also possessed the idea of agency in government.

*Sins of Government, Sins of the People* asked its audience to consider the morality of public acts as judged by private morality, and, in a phrase of the day used by writers such as William Godwin and Robert Bage, insisted on telling “Things as they are.”[[78]](#footnote-78) Responding to the public prayer recommended for the fast day, Barbauld examined first the basic word for which they were to pray, noting that we should “do well to *translate* this word war into language more intelligible”: war budgets should, she said, list the exact costs of ‘letting loose the daemons of fury, rapine, and lust, within the fold of cultivated society, and giving to the brutal ferocity of the most ferocious, its full scope and range of invention.’[[79]](#footnote-79)

This was rising to Paine’s challenge, refusing to live “immured within the Bastille of a word,” and stepping outside the linguistic “circles drawn by the magician’s wand, to contract the sphere of man’s felicity.”[[80]](#footnote-80) With implacable logic, Barbauld went on to “*translate*” the prayer recommended by the king into a plea to God for assistance “in the work of slaughter,” to enable the nation more effectively “to tear in pieces our brethren of mankind.”[[81]](#footnote-81) The prayer for success in war suddenly became, in this sermon, a dodgy deal, the nation a tawdry figure attempting to bribe God: “Can we make anything like a *handsome offer* to the Almighty, to tempt him to enlist himself on our side?”[[82]](#footnote-82) The questions raised by Barbauld about the numbers involved and the extent of the nation’s investment in war became increasingly pressing: when France declared war on Britain in 1793, the regular army totaled approximately 50,000 men; by the end of the Napoleonic Wars, this had risen to almost 234,000.[[83]](#footnote-83) Families, the domestic suppliers of soldiers, had a very real investment in public policy, proving national worship was indeed a civic matter. In his antiwarsermon, Edwards took responsibility for what he termed “the cruel, the destructive, the unjust, the successless war with America”: it was, he said, “the war of the people,” and we should learn from this mistake.[[84]](#footnote-84) Where Barbauld replied to the king’s proclamations, Edwards appended extracts from Fox’s speech against the war to add weight to his own arguments, together with a prayer for the blessing of the king and the nation.[[85]](#footnote-85) Both sermons, while drawing on irony, also use the earnestness of the pulpit to encourage congregations to reflect on the responsibilities and possibilities of acknowledging their individual part in the sins of the nation.

Where the King, Ashhurst, and loyalist clergy and politicians argued that “the wise and wholesome provisions made at the time of the glorious Revolution [. . .] for the preservation and security of the Rights and Liberties of our faithful and loving subjects” required preservation rather than reform, and that “the Wealth, Happiness and Prosperity of the Kingdom do, under Divine Providence, chiefly depend upon a due submission to the Laws,” Barbauld and fellow Dissenters saw an opportunity to build on the achievements of the Glorious Revolution by extending citizenship rights to more Protestants.[[86]](#footnote-86) By educating readers and listeners through a range of genres, particularly the sermon, they exemplified the Dissenting ideals advocated by Price in the sermon that began the French Revolution debate: “Our first concern, as lovers of our country, must be to *enlighten* it.”[[87]](#footnote-87) In doing so, they tried to transform how people saw attendance at places of worship. “Public Worship is a *civic* meeting,” wrote Barbauld, and a church “is one place where the invidious distinctions of wealth and titles are not admitted.”[[88]](#footnote-88) Such principles, however, had dangerous tendencies: James Pilkington was ostracised by his Dissenting community for publishing his conclusions that “the language of Christ is neither figurative or doubtful; [. . .] That it was the intention of our Lord to lessen, if not entirely abolish all difference of rank and condition amongst men is [. . .] manifest.”[[89]](#footnote-89) Here indeed was the spirit of Civil War sectarianism risen up to haunt moderate, middle-class Dissenters and justify the insurrectionist fears of the loyalists.

The importance of the sermon in particular and religious writings in the development of the public sphere in Britain merits more attention. As Tony Claydon has argued in his discussion of the sermon and the public sphere in late seventeenth-century England, without acknowledging the existence of this rich strand of culture, “there is a danger of misunderstanding both the novelty and the nature of public discussion in the period.”[[90]](#footnote-90) If, as Claydon comments, “it is unsurprising that the state used the clergy as propagandists”—a description that flattens out the often more problematic relationship between individual clerics, their superiors, and the state—then Dissenting sermons and prayers need to be paid more attention.[[91]](#footnote-91) *The British Critic* reviewer perceptively observed that “Our rulers, when they appointed a day for a general fast, did not probably foresee that the ingenuity of their adversaries would embrace the opportunity of turning their own weapons against themselves,” and we, too, need to be more appreciative of the daring and excitement of civic sermons and anti-war prayers that assert the right of the Dissenting and the poor to be of the same species, race, and worth as the wealthy Anglican establishment that ruled over and against them.[[92]](#footnote-92)

1. Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *An Address to the Opposers of the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts* (London: J. Johnson, 1790), 32. I am grateful to the British Academy for the Mid-Career Fellowship that funded the project “Faithful Citizens 1789–1829”. Thanks also to Laura Davies, and to Jon Mee, Mark Jenner, Richard Rowland, Emilie Morin, and Annaliese Connolly for their various input and inspiration. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Beilby Porteus, *A Sermon, Preached at the Cathedral Church of St Paul, London, Before His Majesty, and Both Houses of Parliament, on Thursday April 23d, 1789, Being the Day Appointed for a General Thanksgiving* (London: J. F. and C. Rivington, 1790), 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. On this, see Daniel E. White, *Early Romanticism and Religious Dissent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 8–9; for more detail, Michael Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (1978; repr., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 484–87 and Richard Burgess Barlow, *Citizenship and Conscience: A Study in the Theory and Practice of Religious Toleration in England During the Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Charles James Fox, *Two Speeches Delivered in the House of Commons on Tuesday 2d of March, 1790, by the Right Honourable Charles James Fox, in Support of his Motion for a Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts* (London: J. Debrett, 1790),62. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Peter de Bolla, *The Architecture of Concepts: The Historical Formation of Human Rights* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 211. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. James Thomson, “An Ode,” in *Alfred: A Masque* (London: A. Millar, 1740), 42. Italics in original. On Thomson and national identity, see Dustin Griffin, *Patriotism and Poetry in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 77–91; and Suvir Kaul, *Poems of Nation, Poems of Empire: English Verse in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 131–82. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. William Cowper, “The Task,” in *The Task and Selected Other Poems*, ed. James Sambrook (London and New York: Longman, 1994), 85, Book II, ll. 40–42. Cowper was referring to the judgment of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield in 1772 that slaves were illegal in England. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Clare Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns 1780–1870* (London: Routledge, 1992). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Barbauld, *Epistle to William Wilberforce, Esq. on the Rejection of the Bill for Abolishing the Slave Trade* (London: J. Johnson, 1791), 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Barbauld, *Epistle*, 13–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Willliam Godwin, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, and its Influence on Morals and Happiness*, 2 vols. (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1793), I: 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. T. J. Mathias, *The Pursuits of Literature: A Satirical Poem in Dialogue* (London: T. Becket, 1797), i. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. William Gibson, “The British Sermon 1689–1901: Quantities, Performance, and Culture,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the British Sermon 1689–1901*, ed. Keith A. Francis and William Gibson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Gibson, “The British Sermon,” 19–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Jennifer Farooq, *Preaching in Eighteenth-Century London* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013), 257. On sermons at political crises, see Robert Hole, “English Sermons and Tracts as Media of Debate on the French Revolution 1789–1799,” in *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*,ed. Mark Philp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 18–39. Paul Langford, “The English Clergy and the American Revolution,” in *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century*, ed. Eckhart Hellmuth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 275–307. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Barbauld, *Remarks on Mr Gilbert Wakefield’s Enquiry into the Expediency and Propriety of Public or Social Worship* (London: J. Johnson, 1792), 44. See also, for example, James Wilson, *A Defence of Public or Social Worship, in a Letter to Gilbert Wakefield* (Stockport: J. Clarke, 1792), 33–34. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Robert Hole, “Horsley, Samuel (1733–1806),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition, ed. David Cannadine, October 2007, http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.york.ac.uk/view/article/13820. Horsley, *A sermon, preached before the Lords spiritual and temporal, in the Abbey church of St. Peter, Westminster, on Wednesday, January 30, 1793* (London: J. Robson, 1793), 23, 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Gibson, “The British Sermon,” 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. On the Church of England’s anniversary sermons see Mears et al., “Introduction,” in *National Prayers: Special Worship since the Restoration. Volume I: Special Prayers, Fasts and Thanksgivings in the British Isles, 1533–1688*, ed. Natalie Mears et al. (Woodbridge: Church of England Record Society and Boydell Press, 2013), l. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. See Mears et al., “Introduction,” xlvii–lxxii; on the role of crown and parliament in determining the events for occasions of special worship, see lxii and lxxxviii. The first proclamation for special worship was probably in 1009. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The appropriation of Psalms by Dissenters was also highly significant, suggesting as it did that Protestant Dissenters rather than the Church of England were the true descendants of the biblical Prince David. Given the Church of England’s long tradition of claiming to be the injured David, attacked by the corrupt earthly powers of the Roman Catholic Church, this was a textual appropriation that was guaranteed to infuriate the Established Church. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Henry Sacheverell in 1709, Benjamin Hoadly in 1717. See Farooq, *Preaching*, 258.  [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Isabel Rivers, “Religious Publishing,” in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, V: 1695–1830*, ed. M. Suarez and M. L. Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 591. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Richard Price, *A Discourse on the Love of our Country* (London: T. Cadell, 1789), 8 and 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Samuel Horsley, “Preface,” in *A Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters; with reference to the Corporation and Test Acts* (London: J. Robson, 1790), iii. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The full title of Horsley’s sermon of 30 January 1793 was Horsley, *A Sermon, Preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster, on Wednesday, January 30, 1793: Being the Anniversary of the Martyrdom of King Charles the First*. The date is still listed in the Church of England calendar as being that of Charles, King and Martyr, 1649. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Charles James Fox, *Two Speeches Delivered in the House of Commons on Tuesday 2d of March, 1790* (London: J. Debrett, 1790),51. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. [Philip Withers], *Theodosius: Or a Solemn Admonition to Protestant Dissenters, on the Proposed Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts* (London: J. Buckland, 1790), 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Fox, *Two Speeches*, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Barbauld, *Address*, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Emma Major, *Madam Britannia: Women, Church, and Nation, 1712–1812* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 267–68. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Edmund Burke, “Speech on a motion made in the House of Commons by the Right Hon. C. J. Fox on May 11, 1793,” in *Works of Edmund Burke*, 6 vols. (London: C. C. Little and J. Brown, 1839), 5: 375. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Quoted in William McCarthy, *Anna Laetitia Barbauld: Voice of the Enlightenment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 478. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Stephen Taylor, introduction to “George III’s Recovery from Madness Celebrated: Precedent and Innovation in the Observance of Royal Celebrations and Commemorations,” in *Church of England Record Society 18. From the Reformation to the Permissive Society: A Miscellany in Celebration of the 400th Anniversary of Lambeth Palace Library*, ed. Melanie Barber and Stephen Taylor with Gabriel Sewell (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press and Church of England Record Society, 2010), 223 and 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Taylor, “Introduction,” 219. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *The Times*, 136, Friday April 24, 1789, excerpted in “George III’s Recovery”, Barber and Taylor, ed., 258–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ibid., 252–53. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. According to James Wilson, a special prayer celebrating the recovery of the king was composed and used at synagogues: Wilson, *Defence*, 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Beilby Porteus, “Note of the music,” in “George III’s Recovery,” Barber and Taylor, ed., 246–47. [James Butler], *A Thanksgiving appointed to be said for the recovery of our most gracious sovereign king George III* (London: J. P. Coghlan, 1789), 11. On Handel, see Ruth Smith, *Handel’s Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).On fast-day sermons, see Warren Johnston, “Preaching, National Salvation, Victories, and Thanksgivings: 1689–1800,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the British Sermon 1689–1901*, ed. Keith A. Francis and William Gibson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 263–65. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. [Butler], *Thanksgiving*, 5.Michael A. Mullett, *Catholics in Britain and Ireland, 1558–1829* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 190; John Seed, *Dissenting Histories: Religious Division and the Politics of Memory in Eighteenth-Century England* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 172–75. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. James Dore, *A Sermon on the Happy Recovery of His Majesty King George the Third* (London: L. Wayland, 1789),21. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Dore, *Sermon*, 12–13. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid., 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Ann Jebb, *Two-pennyworth of truth for a penny: or, a true state of facts* (London: n. p., 1793), 16. On regicide, see John Barrell, *Imagining the King’s Death: Figurative Treason, Fantasies of Regicide, 1793–1796* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).On George III as a patriotic deity, see Linda Colley, “The Apotheosis of George III: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation 1760–1820,” *Past and Present* 102 (1984): 94–129. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. William Kingsbury, *The Sickness and Recovery of the King Hezekiah, Considered and Improved* (Southampton: T. Baker, 1789), 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Kingsbury, *Sickness and Recovery*, 36; capitals in original. Jonathan Edwards, *A Discourse Delivered on Friday 19 April 1793 at the Union Meeting in Livery Street, Birmingham, Being the Day Appointed by the King for a General Fast* (Birmingham: J. Thompson, 1793), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Beilby Porteus, *A sermon, preached at the Cathedral Church of St Paul, London, before his Majesty, and both Houses of Parliament, on Thursday April 23d, 1789, being the day appointed for a general thanksgiving* (London: J. F. and C. Rivington, 1790), 17; Samuel Pearce, *The oppressive, unjust, and prophane nature, and tendency of the Corporation and Test Acts, exposed* (Birmingham: J. Thompson, 1790), 5. Pearce’s sermon was also sold by Joseph Johnson in London. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. See Morton D. Paley, *Apocalypse and Millennium in English Romantic Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 1–31; and Major, *Madam Britannia*, 232–71. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Edwards, *Discourse*, 32, 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Horsley, *Sermon*, 12. See Joanna Innes’s “Parliament and Church Reform: Off and On the Agenda,” in *Liberty, Property and Popular Politics: England and Scotland, 1688–1815*, ed. Gordon Pentland and Michael T. Davis (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 39–57. On styles of preaching, see Farooq, *Preaching*, 9–16. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Fox, *Two Speeches*,83. See Ian Haywood and John Seed, eds., *The Gordon Riots: Politics, Culture and Insurrection In Late Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Barbauld, *Appeal*, 10, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Barbauld, “The Vision of Anna, Daughter of Haikin,” 1792, repr. with notes in *The Christian Reformer* 9 (1853): 112–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Barbauld, *Address*, 30–31. Price, *Discourse*, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Barbauld, *Address*, 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Ibid., 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. On Coleridge, Wordsworth, and their circle’s later hostility to Barbauld, see McCarthy, *Barbauld*, 399–402 and 444–54, and Emma Clery, “Stoic Patriotism in Barbauld’s Political Poems,” in *Anna Letitia Barbauld: New Perspectives*, ed. William McCarthy and Olivia Murphy (Lewsiburg: Bucknell University Press, 2014),190–91. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. *The Monthly Repository of Theology and Literature* 17 (1822): 771. On the Aikin family, see Anne Janowitz, “The Aikin Family, Retrospectively,” in *Religious Dissent and the Aikin-Barbauld Circle, 1740–1860*, ed. Felicity James and James Inkster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 205–29, and McCarthy, *Barbauld*. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Review of *Sins of Government, Sins of the Nation*, in *The British Critic* 2 (1793): 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Review of *Sins of Government, Sins of the Nation*, in *Analytical Review* 216 (1793), 185. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. On the *Analytical Review*’s strong connections with Unitarian and Presbyterian writers see Stuart Andrews, *Unitarian Radicalism: Political Rhetoric, 1770–1814* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003),155; on the *Analytical* and Barbauld in particular, see Helen Braithwaite, *Romanticism, Publishing and Dissent: Joseph Johnson and the Cause of Liberty* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 88; and McCarthy, *Barbauld*,280, 410–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. On rational dissent, see Watts, *Dissenters*, 479–90. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Barbauld, *Remarks*, 46. Italics in original. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Ibid., 45. Barbauld, “Civic Sermon I,” in *Civic Sermons To The People* (Dundee: Edward Leslie, 1792)*,* 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. John Disney, *A Defence of Public or Social Worship. A Sermon* (London: J. Johnson, 1792), 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Barbauld, “Civic Sermon I,” 2–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. See, for example, Robert Anthony Bromley, *A Sermon Preached at Fitz-Roy Chapel, on the Occasion of the General Thanksgiving, Appointed to be Held on Thursday, 23d Day of April, 1789* (London: J. Denew, 1789), 9; and Benjamin Dawson, *The Benefits of Civil Government, a Ground of Praise for God. A Sermon, Preached on the Occasion of the Late Thanksgiving, for the Restoration of His Majesty’s Health, April 23, 1789* (Ipswich: Shave and Jackson, 1789), 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Godwin read *Civic Sermons.* 6 June 1793, in *The Diary of William Godwin*, ed. Victoria Myers, David O’Shaughnessy, and Mark Philp (Oxford: Oxford Digital Library, 2010), [http://godwindiary.bodleian.ox.ac.uk](http://godwindiary.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/). [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. William Henry Ashhurst, *Judge Ashhurst’s Charge, to the Grand Jury of Middlesex* (Durham: L. Pennington, 1792), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Douglas Hay, “Ashhurst, Sir William Henry (1725–1807),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition, ed. David Cannadine, January 2008, http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.york.ac.uk/view/article/784. See Clive Emsley, “The London ‘Insurrection’ of December 1792: Fact, Fiction, or Fantasy?” *Journal of British Studies* 17, no. 2 (Spring, 1978): 66–86. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. *Publications Printed at the Expence of the Society for the Preservation of Liberty and Property Against Republicans and Levellers. Number One* (London: J. Sewell, [1793]), [1]. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man* (Dublin: S. Powell, [1733–34]), Book III, l.112. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Ashhurst, *Judge Ashhurst’s Charge*, [3], 4, 7, and 8. She used “Gentlemen,” however, in her 1790 *Address* to the MPs who had opposed the repeal. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Barbauld, “Civic Sermon I,”6. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Ibid. On the Priestley Riots, see Jonathan Atherton, “Rioting, Dissent and the Church in Late Eighteenth Century Britain: The Priestley Riots of 1791” (PhD diss., University of Leicester, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. “Review,” *The British Critic*, 81–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Barbauld, *Sins*, 1, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. See, for example, Godwin, *Things as They Are; or The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1793); Robert Bage, *Hermsprong: or, Man as He is Not* (1796). [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Barbauld, *Sins*, 27–28. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man: Being an Answer to Mr Burke’s Attack on the French Revolution* (London: J. Johnson, 1791), 67. See also John Aikin [and Barbauld], *Evenings At Home; or, the Juvenile Budget Opened*, 6 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1792–96), I: 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Barbauld, *Sins*, 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Ibid., 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Michael Snape, *The Redcoat and Religion: The Forgotten History of the British Soldier from the Age of Marlborough to the Eve of the First World War* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 73; and Catriona Kennedy, *Narratives of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: Military and Civilian Experience in Britain and Ireland* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Edwards, *Discourse*, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Ibid., 40–42, 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. “King’s Proclamation 21 May 1792,” in Ashhurst, *Judge Ashhurst’s Charge*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Price, *Discourse*, 11–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Barbauld, *Remarks on Mr Gilbert Wakefield’s Enquiry into the Expediency and Propriety of Public or Social Worship* (London: J. Johnson, 1792), 44, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. James Pilkington, *The Doctrine of Equality of Rank and Condition Examined and Supported by the Authority of the New Testament* (London: J. Johnson, 1795), 7–8. On Pilkington, see Paul A. Elliott, *The Derby Philosophers: Science and Culture in British Urban Society, 1700–1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 106–7; and Eileen Groth Lyon, *Politicians in the Pulpit: Christian Radicalism in Britain from the Fall of the Bastille to the Disintegration of Chartism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 38–39. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Tony Claydon, “The Sermon, the ‘Public Sphere’ and the Political Culture of Late Seventeenth-Century England,” in *The English Sermon Revised: Religion, Literature and History 1600–1750*, ed. Lori Anne Ferrell and Peter McCullough (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 211. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Claydon, “The Sermon,” 216. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. “Review,” *The British Critic*, 81–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)