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DRYDEN AND THE PROPHETIC MODE:
AN EXAMINATION OF HIS POETIC THEORY AND PRACTICE
IN LIGHT OF SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CONCEPTS OF PROPHECY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Thomas Francis Woods, B.S. in S.S., A.M.

The Ohio State University
1973

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CHAPTER I

THE PREVALENCE OF PROPHECY

"And the reason I said to myself how historical, how traditional, when I opened The New York Times and saw Philip Berrigan pouring blood on draft files, the reason I was never put off by the Berrigans' mild attack on property, but rather astounded by their traditionalism, is that such actions have been performed since time immemorial by men with an apocalyptic turn of mind."

--Francine du Plessix Gray

Mrs. Gray is right, of course: men of an apocalyptic turn of mind always have performed such acts. She herself instances such figures as Jeremiah, Jesus Christ, and William Lloyd Garrison. In our own time we have often been forced to respond to rather apocalyptic attitudes, for we have seen the attempt, among some at least, to identify the seat of the Antichrist at first with Berlin, then with Moscow, and now with Washington. For students of literature, the intriguing question, one being asked more and more often, is the extent to which the apocalyptic—or, more broadly, the prophetic—turn of mind has colored the themes and structures embodied in the works of literary artists. Those "prophetic" writers who come immediately to mind seem to have written at times of crisis, times when doom seemed imminent or when opportunities appeared to open. We think, perhaps, of Langland's Piers Plowman or of Pope's Dunciad or of Whitman's Leaves of Grass.
Like these writers, Dryden wrote in an age that was, to the people who lived in it, a time both of impending doom and of expanding opportunity. This schizophrenic sense of despair and of hope is reflected in a comment by John Spencer, a contemporary of Dryden, a scholar, and an enemy of the sectaries:

The Age in which our lot is fallen is an Age of Action and Expectation, and in such times, prophecies generally take confidence to become publick, being then most grateful to men, usually very impatient of uncertainties where they are hugely concerned. Among the Jews we find Prophets and Oracles especially consulted in times of some public distraction. . . . Besides, 'tis a time of improvement in all humane and divine knowledge, and that happy day seems risen upon us to which God hath promised an increase of Knowledge. . . .

As Spencer's comment indicates, fascination with prophecy—Biblical and modern—was intimately bound up with the hope and despair that seventeenth-century Englishmen felt concerning their times. This fascination—which was manifested in a number of ways—evidently was caused by two beliefs held by many during the period: a belief that England was a new, Christianized, Israel; a belief that the apocalyptic books of the Bible predicted the history of Christianity.

The intense interest that prophecy held for the seventeenth-century English is discernible in political discussions during the Interregnum, in sermons and popularizing works of scriptural exegesis, and in scholarly writings. During the Interregnum the English heard much about apocalyptic prophecy from radicals in the Army. (Of course, from the Puritan preachers and in Foxe's Actes and Monuments the English had been hearing for some time about the dangers of the papist Antichrist and of the coming of
the New Jerusalem; the movement of some Puritans to the New World constituted an attempt to escape the former and find the latter. During the debates in the Army Council after Charles I was captured, Colonel Goffe, who was aligned with the Fifth Monarch Men, argued that Charles I should be deposed on the grounds that the king had been doing the work of Antichrist. Goffe argued that the king's title, Defender of the Faith, and that the Anglican prayer acknowledging the king of England's absolute power, were signs of the Mystery of Iniquity, of Antichrist: "Now Jesus Christ his work in the last days is to destroy this mystery of iniquity . . ."; furthermore, Revelation says "That in this work of Jesus Christ he shall have a company of Saints to follow him." John Lilburne, too, argued in council and in pamphlet after pamphlet, for policies based on Daniel and Revelation. His vision of the New Jerusalem was somewhat secularized, however; he sought, says Haller, "not personal conversion but the general good. The struggle of Christ's redeemed ones became a struggle for the redemption of the state. The holy community, the New Jerusalem, came to be conceived rather as a going community of free citizens than a withdrawn though visible congregation of the elect." In and out of jail, fighting for Parliament but opposing prelacy, Lilburne was widely popular, in part because his fellow Puritans believed with him that the struggle between Christ and Antichrist was about to be consummated. Widespread belief in the nearness of this consummation engendered the career of James Naylor, "The Quaker Jesus," and inspired the last gasp of the Interregnum, the desperate rising of the Fifth Monarchy Men in January, 1661.
Those Englishmen who were made conscious of apocalypse and ordinary prophecy by events could read about them in sermons, tracts, and books published during both the Interregnum and the Restoration. On the popular level, about one-third of booksellers' lists (such as William London's Catalogue of the Most Vendible Books in England [1657, 1658, 1660] and Robert Clavel's General Catalogue[s] of Books Printed in England Since the Dreadful Fire of London) consists of titles of divinity books, many of which are commentaries on either the whole Bible or on a book of an Old Testament prophet or on Revelation.7 A reader paging through Clavel's Catalogue for 1660 to 1680 constantly finds, among the anti-papist tracts and moral guides and commentaries on other parts of Scripture, listings such as the Explication of the Vision of the Book of Revelations, wherein is Shewed the Accomplishment of things Past, and Thence, Ascertaining the Fulfilling of things Yet to Come, or the Spirit of Prophecy, a Treatise to Prove that Christ and His Apostles Were Prophets.8 Another bookseller, Chiswell, is reported to have said that "for twenty years together, after the return of King Charles II, the Mystery of Godliness [sic] and Dr. More's other works, ruled all the booksellers in London."9

Henry More's name is significant here because it reminds us that prophecy was of interest, not only to radical sectaries and to the popular audience for whom exegetical hackwork might be churned out by run-of-the-mill clergymen, but also to serious scholars. One of the great scholars of his day, More focussed many of his works on Daniel and Revelation. Perhaps an even greater scholar than More, his teacher, Joseph Mede, also spent
much of his career explicating Daniel and Revelation. John Smith, like More, a Cambridge Platonist, wrote an analysis of the nature of prophecy in a major chapter of his only published book. Moreover, several writers whom we think of as focussing on secular, not religious, topics discuss prophecy either extensively or in such a way as to reveal a pretty thorough acquaintance with the subject. Thus, Thomas Sprat discusses prophecy in The History of the Royal Society; and Thomas Hobbes, as we shall see later, comments extensively on prophecy in his discussion of a Christian commonwealth in Leviathan. Even Isaac Newton wrote a commentary on Daniel and Revelation.\(^\text{10}\)

To any twentieth-century reader who is accustomed to thinking of the seventeenth century as the dawn of the modern period, as the age of Cartesian and Newtonian advances in mathematics and physics, as the age of Lockean advances in political liberalism, it may seem odd that interest in such a religious subject as prophecy was not only wide enough to include the populace but also deep enough to interest the learned. But we must not allow our own fascination with science and with the advent of modern democracy to blind us to the importance of the Bible in the seventeenth century. "Here," says Haller in a discussion of the Bible's importance in engendering the habit of reading, "was the all-sufficient book, supplying the prime apparatus of thought and expression concerning not only the inner drama of the breast but also the great drama of the world's affairs."\(^\text{11}\) The special interest of the English in prophecy was apparently the consequence of two effects of this intense interest.
in the Bible: The English began during the reign of Elizabeth to conceive of England as an antitype of Israel; and as Protestants they took special interest in the apocalyptic books, Daniel and Revelation.

The English identification with the Old Testament Israelites is interesting in that both the Puritans and the Anglicans shared the habit. Among the Puritans this identification seems to have had its roots in the "Judaizers" of the Elizabethan church, those who wanted to conduct the life of the nation according to the laws of the Old Testament. Not many of the later Puritans would have gone so far, but in the growing crisis of the 1630s, the self-identification of the Puritan preachers with the Hebrew people was still very strong, mostly, says Haller, because

in the Old Testament they had a store of pregnant narratives concerning an elect people, now faithful, now unfaithful; now betrayed by corrupt rulers and misled by false priests and prophets; now redeemed by virtuous kings and enlightened by men who walked with God; now downtrodden, oppressed, driven out, and their city laid waste; now redeemed, restored, and their city rebuilt in glory. Here was the perfect typological mirror in which to make their hearers see themselves and the crises and predicaments through which they were themselves passing.

Quite naturally, this concept of themselves or of England as the New Israel shows up in Puritan literature, which is laced with explicit and implicit references to it. The idea had been given special piquancy by the Elizabethan Puritan John Foxe in his *Actes and Monuments*, the eighth edition of which appeared in 1641. As Haller notes, Foxe held that all of Christian history centered "upon England and the English Church," upon
the "struggle of Christ and Antichrist for the souls of men, particularly of Englishmen. The climax of that struggle began with the Reformation and is destined to end in Christ's approaching final triumph in England." Foxe's assumptions are made explicit in the writings of Interregnum Puritans. In The True Levellers' Standard Advanced (1649), the authors mount an attack on landlords who have "stolen the earth from their fellow creatures, that have an equal share with them by the law of reason and creation as well as they." After rehearsing some Biblical accounts in which Israel was conquered, the authors move to a contemporary application, castigating "the Norman bastard William himself, his colonels, captains, inferior officers, and common soldiers, who are still from that time to this day in pursuit of that victory, imprisoning, robbing, and killing the poor enslaved English Israelites." The pamphlets of Milton are also filled with comparisons of England to Israel. In The Readie and Easie Way, for instance, he attacks the principle of kingship on the basis of I Samuel, and later, portraying himself as a Jeremiah, Milton establishes as a recurrent metaphor a comparison of the Englishmen who want a king to the Jews about to go blindly to Babylon.

These examples from Foxe and Milton might give the false impression that the notion of England as Israel operated only on the level of a rhetorical metaphor. Instead, the idea was so important to the Puritans that it became part of their legal theory and daily lives. A crucial question of law among the revolutionaries was the extent to which the authority of the civil
magistrate could enter church affairs; debate on the question nearly always centered on the degree to which the laws of the Israelites should apply in England. A few Puritans, such as William Aspinwall, argued, like the Elizabethan Judaizers mentioned earlier, for literal application of Old Testament Law: "For no action or case doth, or possibly can, fall out in this or other nations . . . but the like did or possibly might, fall out in Israel."¹⁷ Others, such as Henry Ireton and Philip Nye, argued during the Army Debates at Whitehall, that the New Testament had abrogated the Old, that Christian liberty must be free from interference by the magistrates, that the civil censures of the Israelite church are a "type" of the wholly spiritual discipline that the Christian church and its members must exercise within themselves; in other words, they argued that the New Israel was within them.¹⁸ The Old Testament was also important as a model for the Puritan practice of engaging in covenants—a practice obviously derived from the covenants that God made with Abraham and Moses for the Hebrew people.¹⁹ The Congregationalist Puritans were the leaders in establishing church covenants, in which a group of Christians agreed to meet, worship, debate, and admit new members under certain rules.²⁰ The notion of covenant also governed most Puritan thinking about secular government. Puritan theorists such as Samuel Rutherford easily found models for secular covenants in such Old Testament passages as II Samuel 5.3, in which he thought David made a covenant with the Hebrew people to be their king: "the people gave the crown to David covenant-wise, and upon condition that he should perform such and such duties to them."²¹ Such legal
steps as the Solemn League and Covenant, the Agreements of the People, and the Solemn Engagement of the Army also reveal the pervasive and consummate importance of the covenant-idea and the extent to which the Puritans looked upon themselves as Christianized Jews. 22

This deepfelt identification with the Jews of the Old Testament was not confined to the Puritans and Parliamentarians; the Anglicans and royalists had the same habit. Like the Puritans, the Anglicans based much of their political thinking upon the model of Old Testament Israel. F. J. Shirley notes, for instance, that the Elizabethan bishops tended to establish their Erastianism upon the relationship between the king and the priests in the Old Testament. 23 And Richard Hooker argues for the oneness of church and state on the basis of the Hebrew model: "In a word, our estate is according to the pattern of God's own most ancient elect people, which people was not part of them commonwealth, and part of them the Church of God, but the selfsame people whole and entire were both under one chief Governor, on whose supreme authority they all did depend." 24 Hooker provided an example for the arguments of such Restoration royalists as Roger L'Estrange, Samuel Parker, and William Sherlock, all of whom argue on the basis of the Jewish kingdom for kingly supremacy over a unified church and state. 25

In addition to providing a legal precedent for royalist political arguments, the notion of England as the antitype of Israel seems to have seeped so far into the royalist psyche that it became an automatic part of the royalist response to political crises. Thus in Israel & England Parallel'd, a sermon published.
in 1648 (after the capture of Charles I) and again in 1681 (during the Exclusion Crisis), the Anglican priest Paul Knell compares at length the benefits that Israel and England had received from God, and then does the same with the sins with which each nation had replied to Him. Knell forces home the identification of the two nations by a tissue of Biblical quotations, the chief of which is Amos 3.2: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities."

When pointing out the benefits that England has received from God, he repeatedly quotes the first half of the verse; when citing English sins, he repeatedly quotes the second half. Pious John Evelyn may be taken as an example, though perhaps an extreme one, of just how far such thinking became habitual to the Anglican layman. In 1655 when Cromwell has forbidden any liturgical celebration of Christmas, Evelyn cries: "The Lord Jesus pity our distressed Church, and bring back the captivity of Zion!" In 1657, when the Fifth Monarchy Men are trying to "set up the kingdom of Christ with the sword," Evelyn reacts by lamenting: "To this pass was this age arrived when we had no king in Israel." In 1658, Evelyn hears a sermon much like Paul Knell's: Dr. George Wild has preached "in a private place on Isaiah 1.4, showing the parallel betwixt the sins of Israel and those of England." And when Charles II has returned to the throne, Evelyn believes that it is "the Lord's doing, for such a restoration was never mentioned in any history, ancient or modern, since the return of the Jews from their Babylonish captivity. . . ."27

Because Englishman of all kinds tended to think of
themselves as the new Israelites, the seventeenth-century interest in prophecy had fertile ground to grow in. But the idea that England was a new Israel was not the only cause of that interest: the ground was watered by the habitual Protestant fascination with apocalyptic passages in the Bible. This water flowed, in England, in two streams: at first, in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, apocalyptic sections of the Bible, chiefly Daniel and Revelation, were used as gloomy anti-Catholic propaganda in which the Millennium was believed to be in the past, the universe was believed to be in decline, and the final struggle with Antichrist along with the end of the world were believed to be near; later, after the mid-seventeenth century, Revelation was seen as a celebration of the rise of science in which the Millennium (now seen as the Protestant and scientific triumph over Catholicism and ignorance) was thought to be in the near future.28

The gloomy interpretation of Revelation that prevailed from the mid-sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries drew upon two principal sources: Reformation pessimism about the decline of the world, pessimism which in turn fed into the second source, Luther's interpretation of Revelation. One locus classicus of Reformation pessimism was St. Cyprian's Epistle to Demetrianus, in which he sets forth the notion that the earth, because it is getting old, is declining: "... you must in the first place know this, that the world has now grown old, and does not abide in that strength in which it formerly stood; nor has it that vigour and force which it formerly possessed. This, even were we silent, and
if we alleged no proofs from the sacred Scriptures and from the
divine declarations, the world itself is now announcing, and
bearing witness to its decline by the testimony of its failing
estate." As evidence of the decline, Cyprian points to the
exhaustion of the earth, the decreasing influence of the heavens
over earthly affairs, and the decline in morals. Another source
of Reformation pessimism was St. Augustine's interpretation of the
thousand years binding of Satan. Because he had a thoroughly
spiritual concept of the church, Augustine found materialistic
interpretations of the Millennium revolting. Consequently he
suggested (as was his habit anyway) allegorical interpretations of
the Millennium: perhaps, he said, it is a symbol of eternity;
perhaps it refers to the first one thousand years after the
Incarnation. Reformation Protestants accepted the latter
interpretation and assumed that the degeneration of the church and
the world began after A. D. 1000.

These ideas about the decline of the world occur during
the Reformation itself in a crucial document, Martin Luther's
preface to Revelation in his 1546 edition of the Bible. Luther
assumes that the book "is intended as a revelation of things that
are to happen in the future, and especially of tribulations and
disasters that were to come upon Christendom. . . ." Hence, to
interpret the book exegetes must take "from history the events and
disasters that have come upon Christendom till now, and hold them
up alongside of these images and so compare them very carefully.
If, then, the two perfectly coincided . . . we could build on that
as a sure, or at least an unobjectionable, interpretation."
Sixteenth-century Protestant interpretations of Revelation developed, mostly out of Luther's preface, a fairly set historical scenario based on these premises: first, Revelation arms us against temptations by warning us about them ahead of time and by comforting us with the knowledge that righteous people who suffer will be rewarded; second (from St. Cyprian), man's nature is growing steadily more corrupt, and the world is on its way to death, is declining; third, the pope is the Antichrist. Once the pope achieved supreme power (A. D. 1000), Satan was loosed; nature and man have been degenerating ever since. Eventually, however, St. John's words, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth," will come true--Christ will defeat the Antichrist and the world will be renewed. "Not that the substance of them [heaven and earth] shall utterly perish," says Henry VIII's propagandist, John Bale, "but that their nature, shape and figure shall change into a much more pure and perfect similitude." "Never shall be more eating or drinking, whoring nor banqueting, travelling nor sleeping, nor other such doings, pertaining to the corruptible life."33 The English were made conscious of this conception of history in the sermons and plays of Bale, in a symposium of commentators on Revelation published by Arthur Golding in 1574, and by Henry Bullinger's "century" of sermons, certainly the most influential of the gloomy interpretations of Revelation after it was translated into English in 1573. This vision of history became central to the lives of English Protestants, indeed to Protestants everywhere, in their battle against popery. As Tuveson says: "It involved the rightness of the cause on which they had staked their careers, their
lives, and their souls."  

Eventually, though, this vision underwent a change—it became more optimistic. In part, this change was the result of the Reformation itself; commentators on Revelation who noticed that the Lord had raised up among them men such as Erasmus and Melancthon to combat the popes could no longer say that the whole human race was degenerating. In part, the change was the result of the analytic pressure of the cyclic theory of history promulgated by Jean Bodin and Loys le Roy. By pointing out historical inaccuracies in the commentators who tried to match the events in the prophecies with the events in known history, Bodin, who agreed with Calvin that Revelation was impossible to understand, attacked theories, based on the Book of Daniel, that the world was in decline. Together, Bodin and Le Roy offered the cyclic theory of history and, in contradiction to the gloomy apocalyptic historians, theorized that their own period was in a cycle on the upswing; Le Roy even thought that the speed of the cycle—though subject to natural calamities, wars, overabundance, and God's punishment of those who misuse knowledge—was in part subject to the control of men, if they would remain virtuous. The ideas of these continental writers became known in England through Francis Bacon; they became dominant in Europe as well as in England after George Hakewill argued in 1627, against the gloomy predictions of Godfrey Goodman, that history was not a process of decay, but a series of cycles. 

Cycles, however, only allow for the possibility of progress; they do not guarantee progress. It was the interpretation of
Revelation as a guarantee of progress that captured men's minds and justified their activities in the middle and late seventeenth century. The thinkers responsible for turning the English interpretation of Revelation from a pessimistic to an optimistic one were Joseph Mede and Henry More. Joseph Mede was the teacher of Henry More and perhaps of John Milton (Marjorie Hope Nicolson has conjectured that Mede is the "old Damoetas" of Lycidas). Using the relatively new techniques of scholarly philology, Mede, in The Key of the Revelation, made it clear that in the book of Revelation the Millennium is to occur in the future, at the culmination of human history; it had not occurred in the first one thousand years after the Incarnation. But, despite his challenge to that old Protestant interpretation of the Millennium, Mede did maintain that Revelation provides a one-to-one allegory with the major events of history. According to Mede, however, there had been no decay of nature or of the church, but rather an amelioration: the pouring out of the seven vials in Revelation represents the stages in the gradual defeat of the Antichrist (which is still identified with the Roman Catholic Church); the saints must not merely suffer the onslaughts of the Antichrist, but also struggle to defeat it. The gradual defeat of the Antichrist is being accomplished by a gradual increase in human knowledge—a point picked up by Dr. Twisse, the author of the introduction to Mede's Key, who sees a parallel to the modern increase in navigation and scientific knowledge in the coming of the Millennium as described in Daniel. Thomas Sprat articulates a similar faith in a scientific Millennium when he says, "We may well guess that the
absolute perfection of the True Philosophy is not now far off"; his modern editors note that the essays Sprat includes in the History of the Royal Society are mainly technological and commercial in focus.⁴⁰

Mede's ideas were too attractive to be left alone. Henry More, for instance, whose books were (as I pointed out earlier) among the most popular of his time, broadened Mede's notion of the gradually increasing power of the Protestant Church over the Catholic Antichrist into the proposition that Revelation is about the spiritual evolution of the individual and the race. The earth itself was being transformed—not through direct intervention by God, but (More's Cartesianism is evident here) through second causes. More makes all of the wars and struggles in Revelation allegorical; even the destruction of Antichrist is not to be by means of physical fire but by a spiritual fire in which all people—presumably even Catholics—will simply be converted.⁴¹

The interest of the seventeenth-century English in prophecy is, then, entirely understandable. Because their intense reading of the Bible encouraged them to think of themselves as the new Israelites, they could at first turn the hortatory "history" in Daniel and Revelation into doom-ridden propaganda against the dangers of Catholicism and Louis XIV. Later, still keeping the anti-Catholic posture, they could turn Revelation into a justification for their increasing interest in trade, navigation, and science while at the same time thinking of themselves as building the New Jerusalem. Their interest in prophecy was therefore intense because it answered to a need, as suggested at
the beginning of this chapter, during a time of crisis and opportunity. But before that interest can be of use to us in the study of Dryden's poetry, we must examine the seventeenth-century definition of the prophet—his character, his inspiration, his language, and his missions.
Footnotes to Chapter I


2 Spencer, A Discourse Concerning the Vulgar Prophecies (London, 1665), p. 5.


5 Haller, Liberty & Reformation, pp. 269-272, 255-256; see also Haller, Rise of Puritanism, pp. 286-287.


8 Clavel's Catalogue, 1680, pp. 19, 15.

9 Quoted in Bowes, Books of Cambridge, p. 29.

Haller, Liberty & Reformation, p. 139.


Ibid., p. 47; see also Wiener, "Beleaguered Isle," pp. 27-62.


Aspinwall's Description of the Fifth Monarchy, p. 10, is quoted in Woodhouse's "Introduction" to Puritanism and Liberty, p. [407]; see also pp. [65-69].


Woodhouse, "Introduction," pp. [72-73].


Woodhouse, "Introduction," pp. [72-73].


In discussing the seventeenth-century interpretations of Daniel and Revelation, I depend heavily on Tuveson, Millennium and Utopia, pp. ix-x, 1-126.


Ibid., pp. 15-16.


Tuveson, p. 29.

Ibid., pp. 46-48.

Ibid., pp. 59-64.

Ibid., pp. 66-67, 71-74.


40Twisse, "Preface," to Mede's Key of Revelation, n. pag.


CHAPTER II

AN ECLECTIC DEFINITION OF THE PROPHET

"NEWTON [sitting at a table while reading the Book of Daniel]: Twelve hundred and ninety days. And in the very next verse thirteen hundred and thirty-five days. Five months difference! And the king's daughter of the south: who was she? And the king of the south? And he that cometh against him? And the vile person who obtains the kingdom by flatteries? And Michael? Who was Michael? (He considers this a moment; then suddenly snatches a sheet of paper and writes furiously.)"

— Shaw, In Good King Charles's Golden Days

This little scene occurs in George Bernard Shaw's play just after Isaac Newton has managed—for a moment, anyway—to rid his house of George Fox, Charles II, and several of Charles' mistresses. Newton immediately throws himself into the complex exegetical problem outlined in his speech. The play is fantasy, of course, but quite accurate in depicting the interest that, as we saw in the preceding chapter, Biblical commentators of the time had in prophecy, particularly in apocalyptic prophecy. (In Shaw's play, Newton would rather do exegesis than mathematics.)

And as they explicated the prophetic books (which for these seventeenth-century Christians included many parts of the Bible besides the ones by and about the Hebrew prophets) the exegetes also worked out concepts of the prophet. By examining these explications we can extrapolate a working definition that—while
admittedly not wholly agreeable to every seventeenth-century exegete—includes the main attitudes towards prophecy and prophets held by these commentators.

In brief, most important commentators would have agreed with most of the following definition: A prophet is a man of high intellectual and moral qualities who, upon receiving inspiration (in the form of visions and dreams) from God when He wishes to reveal information about the past, present, or future or to reveal His will on matters political and moral, writes in language that is elliptical or allegorical but always intelligible to good Christian men aware of the allegorical key. To this definition the royalist commentators added that the prophet must be subordinate to and speak for the king, usually in order to engender public tranquillity. But before examining this definition at length, we had best look briefly at the men from whose writings it is drawn; in this way we can determine how representative they are and understand what sort of pressures they were subject to whenever they commented on prophets and prophecy.

The writers upon whom I have mainly drawn for the seventeenth-century definition of prophecy are representative of the religious and secular forces at large in their time. Among the writers of explicitly religious orientation, Richard Hooker (the only Elizabethan I shall draw upon extensively) discusses prophecy only incidentally while writing about political issues. Later, in the first quarter of the
seventeenth-century, Joseph Mede used the growing resources of Biblical scholarship to write about prophecy; somewhat Puritan in orientation, he offered a perspective on prophecy that, as we saw in Chapter I, profoundly influenced the whole course of English intellectual life. Mede's scholarly approach to prophecy was continued by the Cambridge Platonists, principally Henry More and John Smith; these two writers offer, I suspect, theories of prophecy that are quite close to Dryden's. Two other religious and scholarly works represent collections of popular commonplaces about all of the Bible, including the prophets. Matthew Pool's *Annotations upon the Holy Bible*—which took sixteen fellow scholars to complete after his death—is a verse-by-verse commentary, directed at the unlearned layman, on the whole Bible. Francis Robert's *Clavis Bibliorum* is in the same mould, though unlike Pool he does not reprint the text of the Bible itself; Roberts is fond of giving the reader lists of rules on how to read each book. A third popularizer, Thomas Wilson, wrote a *Christian Dictionary* that was edited by John Bagwell and then re-edited by Andrew Simson; not so scholarly as the works by Pool and Roberts, it is a set of widely accepted definitions of words that appear in the Bible. Of the laymen upon whom I have drawn, Isaac Newton, in *Observations upon the Books of Daniel and Revelations*, is the most unrelenting in his effort to match up the "predictions" in Daniel and Revelation with the events of history. The remaining works are political in focus. John Spencer, in *A Discourse Concerning Vulgar Prophecies*, tries to protect the Restoration settlement by
decimating the enthusiastic prophets of the 1660s. Finally, Thomas Hobbes explicates the Bible in such a way that the prophet becomes the servant of the secular Leviathan.

When we read the results of their labors, we should remain aware at all times of the kinds of conflicting pressures these exegetes, especially those (like More and Smith) who came after Nede, were under as they worked out their points of view about prophecy. Most of these writers shared the chiliastic faith in science, the attachment to a Biblical scheme of history, and a nationalistic Protestantism that made them dislike the Romish Antichrist. All of these shared attitudes and responses made the exegetes respectful of apocalyptic and more ordinary prophetic writing; moreover, most of these exegetes seem willing to acknowledge that Biblical predictions were coming true, that God's hand was a shaping force in the events of their own time. Thus Henry More announces that one of his purposes is to apply his definition of the Antichrist, as it is derived from a study of Biblical prophecies, "unto the Apostatized state of the Church for so many ages to our own times." And Thomas Hobbes says that, when describing a Christian commonwealth, "whereof there dependeth much upon supernatural revelations of the will of God; the ground of my discourse must be, not only the natural word of God, but also the prophetical."

On the other hand, many of these exegetes had lived through the Interregnum and so were afraid of prophecy in many ways: they feared the brand of millennialism and attitudes towards modern prophecy common among Cromwell's sectaries,
feared the recurrence of civil upheaval, and knew that any scholarly statement about prophecy might have enormous political consequences. Hobbes, for instance, bent every Biblical text available in an effort to get the prophetic word under the control of the king: for, writing during the Interregnum, the philosopher thought that religious enthusiasm culminating in false prophecy was a great danger to the state. Others among the commentators shared Hobbes' opinion about the political danger of false prophecy. John Spencer speaks for them when he says that "... bodies Politick have been often choked (like Adrian) with gnats, ruined by some occasions they despised and thought most beneath their caution, (Prophecies and Enthusiasms among the rest). ..." To Spencer, writing during the Restoration, this bit of history is not just an abstract lesson, for in his own time, he says, "Folly is as busy as Wisdom. Never greater talk of terrible Signs, Revelations, new-lights, Prophecies and Visions in our own and other Kingdoms then now."

Because they were so acutely aware of what they believed were the dangers of prophecy to the state, many of the commentators were led to respond to two questions: (1) Is reading prophecy, especially Daniel and Revelation, possible or desirable? (2) Is modern prophecy possible at all? To the first question, many had responded, No. Thomas Newton (the eighteenth-century bishop, not Sir Isaac) sketches a history of such negative responses:

But to this book of the Apocalyps or Revelation it is usually objected, that it is so wrapt and involved in
figures and allegories, is so wild and visionary, is so dark and obscure, that any thing or nothing, at least nothing clear and certain, can be proved or collected from it. So learned a man as Scaliger is noted for saying that Calvin was wise, because he wrote no comment upon the Revelation. A celebrated wit and divine of our own church [Robert South] hath not scrupled to assert, that that book either finds a man mad or makes him so. Whitby, though an usefulcommentator on the other books of the New Testament, would not yet adventure upon the Revelation. "I confess I do it not (says he,) for want of wisdom; that is because I neither have sufficient reading nor judgment, to discern the intendment of the prophecies contained in that book."14

The weight of seventeenth-century exegetical theory was against such negative opinions, however. The basic argument in support of studying Revelation was formulated by Joseph Mede and Thomas Twisse: in an improving age, the findings of philology and science allow men to understand the prophets as they could not have been understood before; moreover, the fact that we do understand them is a sign that we have progressed through many of the predicted events and are living near the apex of history, the Millennium. 15 In the preface to Mede's Key of Revelation, Dr. Twisse summed up his own and Mede's attitude: the "increase of knowledge, which these latter times have brought forth, appears in nothing more remarkably, then in the interpretation of this mysterious book, the Revelation of Saint John."16 Henry More extended and shored up this position by arguing, intensely and lengthily, that the apocalyptic books were clear to any man who had "Integrity of heart and Unprejudiceness of Mind," if only that man would use the "Alphabet of Iconisms," and "Prophetick Schemes," and the four rules for interpreting prophecy that More set out. To a man who
would use More's techniques, "... it is as easie a thing to render a Prophecy or a Vision out of this Prophetick style into ordinary language, as it is to interpret one language by another." Moreover, though he is willing to admit that shallow readings of Daniel and Revelation can lead to civil turmoil and upheaval, he firmly believes that careful reading can lead to personal sobriety and civil peace. Mede, Twisse, and More, then, uphold the intellectual respectability of reading the prophetic and apocalyptic sections of the Bible.

The respectability of modern prophecy, that is, of the possibility of a modern man's prophesying in the manner of the Biblical prophets, found fewer scholarly defenders, however. Being wary of a person who claims to be a prophet is quite natural, of course, especially to established churches. Consequently, most of the writers under discussion here agree with Richard Hooker's stance: "Take heed to prophecies, but to prophecies which are in Scripture; for both the manner and the matter of those prophecies do shew plainly that they are of God." Other prophecies are not Scripture and may even be against Scripture; therefore, "my brethren, beware of such prophecies and take heed you heed them not." Maintaining Hooker's position, though with certain differences in polemical intent, Thomas Hobbes, John Smith, and John Spencer all argue that God's revelation ended with the conclusion of the writing of the Bible; among the chief arguments of Hobbes and Spencer is that miracles and accurate foretelling have ceased—hence men no longer have a way to test
anyone who claims to be a prophet.  

But this position was not, I suspect, acceptable to most Englishmen, excepting, of course, a small group of sophisticates in and out of court. One basis for believing that the argument against the validity of modern prophets was unacceptable to most Englishmen is simply that, as we saw in Chapter I, the English tended to hold millennial beliefs of some sort and to perceive England as a new Israel—two habits of mind that might easily predispose people to a belief in the possibility of modern true prophecy. Indeed, neither Smith nor Spencer nor Hobbes would have felt constrained to attack modern prophecy had his readers not already believed that modern true prophecy existed.

Moreover, even if the English populace had been disposed to consider the arguments Smith, Spencer, and Hobbes raise against the validity of modern prophecy, readers probably would have found these arguments unconvincing on at least two grounds. First, Smith's and Spencer's arguments against modern prophecy are so tentative that the arguments would not have persuaded any one who believed in it. Second, Hobbes and Smith, even though they argue against it, do so in the context of arguments and assumptions (all integral to their thought) that support the possibility of there being modern true prophets. Hobbes presents his very brief argument against the possibility of modern true prophecy in Leviathan, Part III—the very section in which he assumes (so that he can argue that the modern clergy should be under the king's control) that modern prophets do exist, in the form of Christian
priests. Similarly, John Smith's arguments against modern prophecy occur in a context that might well have forced his readers to a contrary conclusion. For, as a Cambridge Platonist, Smith believes (and this theme runs all through "Of Prophesy") that every man's reason is susceptible to God's light; if that belief is true, then any man, even a modern, is capable of receiving new revelations and hence of being a prophet.

But it remained for the irrepressible Henry More to see the full implication of these Cambridge Platonist assumptions and to argue explicitly for the possibility that modern true prophets might arise. Angered at one point by the Roman Catholic Church's attempted arrogation of the power to interpret Scriptures (one of the senses of "prophecy" at the time, as we shall see), More asserts that the "Spirit of Prophecy . . . is excluded no where but out of a wicked and polluted heart, out of every Soul that is subject unto sin." Then he quotes from the book of Wisdom (7.11) in such a way that "prophecy" takes on a wider sense than "interpreting Scriptures": "And being but one she [the "Spirit of Prophecy"] can doe all things, and remaining in her self she maketh all things new; and in all Ages entring into holy Souls she makes them friends of God and Prophets." 22

In a way, whether the kind of prophecy the commentators discussed is Biblical or modern is not important; nor is their personal belief about whether modern prophecy is possible. For whichever kind of prophecy they discussed or whatever they themselves believed, they were contributing to the endemic
consciousness of prophecy sketched in the preceding chapter: surely many Englishmen (including Dryden) were aware of the concepts of the prophet that emerged from their work. But it is important to understand that these exegetes knew they were handling intellectual dynamite. The excitement, puzzlement, fear, and doubt about prophecy in their own minds and in the minds of their readers exerted strong pressure on these writers as they (and others like them) discussed the prophet's qualifications, his inspiration, his language, and his mission.

The Qualifications of the Prophet

Because claimants to the office of prophet arose during the Restoration, and because false prophets were difficult to detect, some of the commentators, especially those who had experienced the political turmoil caused in part by modern "prophets" during the Interregnum, spent a good deal of time defining the personal qualities of the true prophet and establishing tests to detect a false prophet. The personal qualities focussed upon in these discussions are best summed up in a Jewish maxim that John Spencer quotes from Maimonides (whose influence was pervasive among the exegetes): "Prophecy rests not but upon a wise, a valiant and a rich man..."24 Spencer considers the predicate of this maxim word by word; we may well do the same.

Spencer says that wisdom is important because it secures the prophet from the suspicion that he is apt to deceive himself.25
Smith agrees, saying that enthusiasts "pretend to Revelations" and become confused, "whereas the Prophetical Spirit acting principally upon the Reason and Understanding of the Prophets, guided them consistently and intelligibly into the understanding of things." Both Spencer and Smith worry a great deal about keeping the irrational element in prophecy under control by means of the "wisdom" of the "intellectual faculty." What that meant can best be understood in the light of Maimonedes' theory of the degrees of "cognitive influence" on the operations of the soul. In the first degree, the cognitive influence on the soul co-operates with the rational faculty, allowing "the distinct apprehension of Metaphysicall Truths, from whence . . . arise the Sect of Philosophers, and Contemplative persons." In the second degree, the cognitive influence operates on the "Rational and Imaginative faculties together, and from thence springs the Sect of Prophets." In the third degree, cognitive influence co-operates with the imaginative faculty only, "from whence proceeds the Sect of Politicians, Lawyers, and Lawgivers (whose conceptions only run in a secular channel,) as also the Sect of Diviners, Incanters, Dreamers and Soothsayers."

As a Cambridge Platonist, Smith naturally favors the first degree of cognitive influence above all others; but if there must be a second degree, if there must be prophets, then Smith (and Spencer too) desperately wants to give the rational faculty dominance over the imagination and to make rational prophets dominant over the irrational soothsayers in the third degree. That
dominance is what these two writers mean by "wisdom." In support of his notion that within the prophet's soul the rational faculty must be in control, Smith quotes Plato's Charmides: "But if you will we will grant the Gift of Divination to be a knowledge of what is to come; but withall that it is fit that Wisdome and Sobrietie should be Judge and Interpreter."28 Spencer insists on the same kind of rational control: prophets must be "sober and rational, even while acted by the Prophetick Spirit [sic], fully able to conceive and express what was sealed upon their minds by the hand of God upon them."29 And since he thought that the prophet must be wise or rational, Smith also thought that the prophet must be given control over the mad soothsayer or diviner. To support this idea, Smith quotes Plato's Timæus: because "no sober man is touch'd with this Power of Divination," it is therefore "a law that Prophets should be set as it were Judges over these Enthusiastic Divinations. . . ."30

In general, then, "wisdom" in a prophet means the dominance of the rational faculty over the imagination when together they are brought information by the cognitive faculty. A more detailed definition is offered by Spencer in his distinction between the sources of wisdom, whether natural or divine. Natural wisdom is almost a donnée, a matter of temperament, for it involves "a firm and sound constitution of the body, that there appear no shew of a person crazy and sunk into phantasms." And, as mentioned, even while acted on by the Prophetick Spirit, the prophet must be "sober and rational." Divine wisdom, on the other hand, is something
acquired by education. It enables the prophet to control his irrational insights by means of "great skill in the Law of God, and the mysteries relating to the person and kingdom of the Messiah, in conjunction with a divine Philosophy, the knowledge of the works of Nature, with reference to piety and virtue. . . ."\(^{31}\)

Added to the wisdom of the prophet must be "valiancy," or what Smith calls "fortitude." He defines "fortitude" as "that Power whereby a good man subdues his Animal part."

Generally, Smith and Spencer agree that the prophet shows his self-control in three interrelated ways: presence of mind, control over concupiscence, and gravity or purity of life. Spencer says that presence of mind or courage was so important in the Biblical prophet that the title of "stout or valiant became the almost distinctive Epithete of a Prophet." The principle of controlling concupiscent urges Spencer derives from Maimonides, who said that the prophet has "power over inordinate affections"; Smith agrees, citing "the Hebrew Doctors," who say that the prophet is "one whose passions are allay'd." Finally, Smith and Spencer quote similar passages from Rabbi Albo and Maimonides respectively in which "singular gravity and severity of life and manners" are attributed to the true prophet, "for hitherto there was never any that could say that God did cause the divine Majesty to dwell in a vitious person, unless he had first reformed himself." Smith seems to associate this kind of purity of life with holiness.\(^{32}\)

Gravity and purity of life do not imply grouchiness, however, for Smith and Spencer agree that the prophet, in addition to being
wise and valiant, must also be "rich," or, to use their own synonyms, "cheerful," "contented." "The divine presence," says one of Smith's rabbinical sources, "... doth not reside where there is grief and dull sadness, laughter and lightness of behaviour, impertinent talk or idle discourse; but with due and innocuous cheerfulness it loves to reside, according to that which is written concerning Elisha, Bring me a Minstrel: and it came to pass when the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord was upon him, 2 Kings 3." A bit later, Smith cites the example of Saul to show that melancholy leads to bad prophecy.33 Spencer develops the same idea, except that to him (he is quoting Maimonides again) the prophet is cheerful and contented because he "rejoyceth in his portion, of riches, honor, health, pleasure, which his father hath allotted to him"; the mind that "is most receptive of a prophetick image and impression" is the one "not scyled with covetous desires as with earth, nor discomposed with anger or sorrow."34

In their discussion of the three qualities of a prophet, Smith and Spencer (especially Spencer) seem intent on getting those who aspire to be prophets to examine themselves so that they do not attempt anything of which they are not worthy. Accordingly, Smith established a kind of test by which the aspiring prophet can know within himself whether an inspiration is genuine. Smith argues that the true prophet never loses intellectual control, even while undergoing inspiration. The true "Prophetical spirit doth never alienate the Mind"; "... it doth not ravish the Mind, but inform and enlighten it." The
"Pseudo-prophetical spirit," however, can "rise no higher then the Middle reason of Man, which is his Phansy," where it "dwell as in storms and tempests." Smith goes on to point out the irrationality of well-known Greek and Roman prophets (e.g., Cassandra, the Sybil) whom he considers false, and then he quotes a number of the Fathers of the Church who support his distinction between false and true prophecy. Of these, Chrysostom seems to sum up Smith's position best: "It's the property of a Diviner to be Ecstaticall, to undergoe some violence, to be tossed and harried about like a mad man. . . . But it's otherwise with a prophet, whose understanding is awake, and his mind in a sober and orderly temper, and he knows every thing that he saith." Because only the prophet knows what is going on inside his soul, inspiration "can only satisfie the mind of him to whom it is made, of its own Authoritie and Authenticalness. . . ."

In a phrase quoted from his rabbinical authority Abarbinel, Smith says that the prophet can distinguish between true and false inspiration by gauging "the vigor and liveliness of the perception." Spencer, however, thinks that, because the ancient pagans, whom Smith cites, had the same theory, Smith's test is not much good. Who living today, asks Spencer, would believe that the pagan prophets were genuinely inspired by God?

Spencer's question embodies what was a very real difficulty for the commentators. For even if the prophet is satisfied in his own mind that he has the three essential qualities of a prophet, even if he is satisfied that his inspiration is genuine, how is
the public to know that his claim is true? The question is
important, of course, because the public must be able to protect
itself from the dangers inherent in believing a false prophet.
As a consequence of their recognition of this danger, the
commentators (even Smith, who, as we have just seen, argues in
serene self-contradiction that only the prophet himself can know
if he is genuine) establish tests by means of which the public
may recognize a true prophet.

In general, the exegetes who discuss the question of tests
agree that the prophet must manifest some sort of supernatural
power; most of them focus on his ability to perform miracles,
or to foretell the immediate future, or to be recognized by
another prophet. Smith asserts that in order to know whether or
not another person is truly inspired, an observer "must also
either be inspired, and so be in \textit{gradu Prophetica} in a true sense,
or be confirmed in the belief of it by some \textit{Miracle}, whereby it
may appear that God hath committed his Truth to such an one, by
giving him some signal power in altering the course of
Nature...."

Matthew Pool and Thomas Hobbes agree with
Spencer, who says that true prophecy will involve "the constant
coming to pass [within a few months or days] of Events foretold
in very critical and contingent circumstances." To these
generally agreed upon tests, Spencer, who is most thorough on
this subject, adds several others: (1) knowledge of something
undiscoverable by ordinary means ("secrets of the heart, counsels
of the bedchamber"); (2) extraordinary abilities "gotten suddenly
and without humane industry"; (3) God's speaking from Heaven to
the prophet before witnesses; (4) God's answering the prophet's
prayers. Despite the length of this list, we have not
exhausted the subject of tests for the prophet, for, as we shall
see, the royalists, including Hobbes, added some very special
criteria to these.

ii

The Inspiration of the Prophet

Much of this discussion about the prophet's character
was prompted, as I said earlier, by the dangers that, in the view
of many exegetes, the prophet posed in the political and
religious life of the middle and late seventeenth century. A
similar caution, prompted by similar considerations, runs through
some discussions of the prophet's inspiration. Essentially,
most of the exegetes would accept Richard Hooker's statement
about the nature of prophetic inspiration: ". . . God himself
was their [the prophet's] instructor, he himself taught them,
partly by dreams and visions in the night, partly by revelations
in the day." But because such statements about the nature of
inspirations are so broad, they could be interpreted as allowing
irrationality. Consequently, John Smith strives to construct
his own theory of the nature of inspiration so that no
irrationality is left in the soul of the true prophet. Since
Smith's impulse to restrain irrationality was powerful in his
own time, and since he influenced even a popular and learned
writer like Spencer, we will do well to follow out Smith's definitions of inspiration.

The first important issue in the discussion is the immediate cause of the prophet's inspiration. Hooker, as we have just seen, says that the immediate cause is God, and so does Thomas Wilson's *Christian Dictionary* in its discussion of "vision"; and Matthew Pool, commenting in Isaiah 48.16, says that the Holy Spirit is the cause of the prophet's inspiration.  

John Smith, however, takes great pains to qualify this broad notion that God is the immediate cause of inspiration; he does not want the inspired prophet to have any reason at all to lose self-control. First, Smith defines inspiration in such a way that it can only be a quiet, gentle event: it is "a free influx of the Divine Mind upon our Minds and Understandings. And as it ariseth out of nothing else but the free pleasure of the Divinity, so without any natural determination it freely shines upon the Souls of men where and when it listeth. . . ." Later, quoting Maimonides, Smith defines inspiration as rationally controlled (cf. his use of Maimonides in the discussion of "degrees of cognitive influence," pp. 32-33 above): "The true essence of Prophecy is nothing else but an Influence from the Deitie upon the Rational first, and the Imaginative faculty, by the mediation of the Active intellect." Then Smith makes God—who according to Hooker was the immediate cause—into a remote cause by insisting that an angel comes between God and the prophet. This time Smith quotes, among others, one Rabbi Eechai: "... the Divine influence
comes by the ministrie of Angels, who order and dispose the word in the mouth of the Prophet according to the mind of God. . . .

Hence the prophet has no excuse to lose self-control.

Another focus of the discussion concerning prophetic inspiration is the quality of the dreams and visions to which the prophet is subject. All of the exegetes would agree with Hooker that the prophet does in fact receive inspiration in dreams and visions—God Himself, speaking in Numbers 12.6-10, gave assurance of that. But again John Smith enters the discussion, this time to try to make dreams and visions into rational exercises. He advances three lines of argument: (1) non-prophetic or ordinary dreams are "weaker" than truly prophetic dreams; (2) truly prophetic dreams are intelligible, whereas ordinary dreams are not; (3) visions and dreams are essentially the same. The first argument is based on the contention that the dream of a false prophet or an ordinary man occurs in "the more terrene parts of man's soul, his Passions and his Phantasie"; consequently such a dream is "weak" and has something in it that is, according to the Jewish exegete Abarbinel, "void of reality and insignificant." To the true prophet, though, the truly prophetic dream makes itself known (still according to Abarbinel) "by the vigour and liveliness of the perception whereby he apprehends the thing propounded." In the Bible, the strength of this perception is signified by various figures of speech; e.g., some prophets in the Bible hear a loud voice, some hear the wind, some a trumpet.

In addition to arguing that non-prophetic dreams are "weak,"
Smith also argues that they are unintelligible, whereas prophetic dreams are immediately intelligible to the prophet. While the true Biblical prophets were undergoing inspiration, "certain Visa and Simulacra were represented to their Understandings, just indeed as they are to us in our common Dreams; only that the Understandings of the Prophets were alwaies kept awake and strongly acted by God [sic] in the midst of these apparitions, to see the intelligible Mysteriess which were symbols of some spiritual things, to behold the Antitypes themselves. . . ."49 In Smith's view, then, the prophet sees the types in action on a kind of stage, just as we do in ordinary dreams; but God keeps the prophet's intellect awake so that he can interpret the meaning of the action. Only "if there be an Interpretation of the Dream in the Dream itself, so that the Mind of the Dreamer be fully satisfied both in the meaning and divinity thereof . . . [is the dream] truly Prophetical."50 God does not keep awake the rational powers of ordinary men or of false prophets during their dreams, of course. Smith's third tactic in trying to make dreams and visions seem more rational than they ordinarily do, is based on the natural assumption that a person is more rational when awake than when asleep. Hence the Jewish exegetes had agreed that visions are superior to dreams because a vision "seizeth upon the Prophet while he is awake." Smith, however, argues that the prophetic dream is as rational, and therefore just as high in the hierarchy of types of inspiration, as the prophetic vision. After all, he says, "the presentation of Divine things by some Sensible images
or some Narrative voice must needs be in both of them"; anyway, the prophetic visionary often falls asleep in the midst of his vision and it turns into a dream. The point of Smith's jockeying about is to abolish the distinction between dreams and visions and thereby to raise the respect of his audience for dreams. His argument may seem to us convoluted and finally ineffective, but it is nonetheless characteristic of his striving to make all religious knowledge somehow rational.

Also characteristic of this striving is his effort to minimize the importance of the tremendous impact divine inspiration has on the prophet. Discussion of such an impact or shock is something of a commonplace among the exegetes. Thomas Wilson mentions the "Enthusiasts among the Heathen, men possest with diabolical Furies," and Thomas Hobbes mentions the prophets of the oracle at Delphi who, upon becoming "intoxicated with a spirit or vapour from the Cave of the Pythian oracle, . . . were for the time really mad, and spoke like madmen. . . ." Smith agrees that such pagan prophets, or diviners, are "Ecstaticall" and "undergo some violence" while being "tossed and hurried about like a mad man." His task here is to minimize the importance of such effects upon true prophets; his tactic, quite typically, is to concede that the true prophet experiences such effects but to deny that they matter. Smith admits that true prophets undergo "a Transportation." He admits (quoting Philo Judæus) that "When divine light ariseth upon the Horizon of the Soul of Man, his own humane licht sets," and that "Therefore, the setting of a mans own
Discursive facultie and the eclipsing thereof begets [sic] an Ecstasie and a divine kind of Mania." Smith admits that the prophet's "Animal part" is affected by the influx, that prophets feel pain around the heart, feel drunk, feel carried away. He even quotes Isaiah 21.3: "Therefore are my loins filled with pain, pangs have taken hold upon me as the pangs of a woman that travaileth..." But Smith asserts that none of this matters, for after all of this "perturbation the Prophetical influx settles itself upon the Rational Facultie." And despite the enormous shock to the prophet's physical and psychological system, "the Prophetical spirit doth never alienate the Mind," for the true prophet's understanding remains "awake, and his mind in a sober and orderly temper, and he knows everything that he saith."56

As we saw earlier, seventeenth-century exegesis of the nature of inspiration and of dreams and visions turned on Numbers 12.6-8. That same passage also was the basis of discussions concerning degrees of inspiration, and discussing degrees of inspiration often led the exegetes into discussions of degrees of prophecy and of prophets. In the passage, God says He will make Himself known to a prophet in a vision or a dream, but "My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold." Now in the King James rendering, the passage seems to imply that Moses is not a prophet at all, but the exegetes took it to mean that Moses was a special kind of prophet, one inspired in a way superior to all
others; therefore, the exegetes thought, there must be different degrees of prophets. Matthew Pool, for instance, paraphrases God's statement: "... know [that] there is a difference among prophets, nor do I put equal authority and honour among all of them." Hobbes (adding that, once the Jews reached Israel, the high priests in the Tabernacle were on a par with Moses) agrees with Pool's interpretation of the passage: "... Moses, and after him the high-priests, were prophets of a more eminent place and degree in God's favour..." John Smith, too, agrees with the general direction of Pool's interpretation of Numbers 12.6-8: "The Prophetical Spirit did not always manifest itself... with the same clearness and evidence, in the same exaltation of its light: But sometimes that light was more strong and vivid, sometimes more wan and obscure..." But, as we might expect, Smith, with his characteristic interest in the psychology or epistemology of prophecy, finds more than the two degrees of inspiration with which most of the other exegetes seem satisfied. Instead he finds four, the value of each depending upon what parts of the true prophet's soul are most affected by God's inspiration.

To Smith, all true prophecy is the result of the "extraordinary impression of the Divine light... [upon] the Rational and Imaginative power[s]"; distinctions among the four degrees (which he derives from the Jewish exegete Albo) are determined by which of these two powers is dominant. (Smith's remarks about the first and lowest degree of true prophecy somewhat contradict his statements about the intelligibility of truly
prophetic dreams and the unintelligibility of ordinary dreams.)

In the first degree, the "imaginative power is most predominant, so that the impressions made upon it are too busie, & the Scene becomes too turbulent for the Rational facultie to discern the true Mystical and Anagogical sense of them clearly; and in this case the Enthusiasms spend themselves extremely in Parables, Similitudes and Allegories, in a dark and obscure manner," as in Zachary, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The divine influx makes so powerful an impression on such a prophet's "phansie, as that his Minde was not at the same time capable of the mystical meaning, yet that was afterward made known to him, but yet with much obscurities still attending to it." Such prophets, many of whom lived during the decline of Judah and during the Captivity, have weaker understandings than other prophets. 61

Smith has much less to say about inspiration of the second and third degrees, perhaps because he died before finishing this discourse, perhaps because he is not much interested in them. According to Albo, Smith's source, a prophet of the second degree is superior to one of the first degree because in the former "the strength of the Imaginative and Rational powers equally ballance one another." A prophet of the third degree is still more superior because in him the rational power predominates: thus the "Minde of the prophet is able to strip those things that are represented to it in the glass of Phansie of all their materiality and sensible nature, and apprehend them more distinctly in their own naked Essence." 62
Smith is much more interested in the fourth and highest degree of inspiration, the *gradus Mosaicus*. This degree is the highest because no imagination is involved: Smith interprets "face to face" (from Numbers 12.6-8) to mean that God shed His light directly on Moses' intellect. According to Maimonides, Smith's source here, the *gradus Mosaicus* involves some other, less important, characteristics too. First, Moses received prophecies while awake and standing, other prophets in a vision or a dream when their senses were not functioning. Second, God was friendly to Moses and Moses was not afraid, whereas the other prophets were frightened. Third, Moses could prophesy any time, but the ordinary prophets had to wait until God chose to reveal something to them. According to Smith, this familiarity with God and this clarity of inspiration make the prophet of the *gradus Mosaicus* speak clearly; thus this degree is most fit for lawgiving of the kind characteristic of Christ in the New Testament.

Smith's discussion of the *gradus Mosaicus* closes his definition of the degrees of inspiration that he is willing to identify with true prophecy. He also discusses, however, two more degrees of inspiration, neither of which he considers false, both of which he considers valid because they happened to good men in the Bible, both of which he hesitates to call truly prophetic inspiration. The first and most important of these is inspiration by the *Ruach hakkodesh* or the Dictate of the Holy Spirit. According to Smith's Jewish sources, this sort of
inspiration was responsible for the Hagiographa or "Writings" in the Bible—e.g., Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes. Smith is, I think, strongly attracted to this kind of inspiration, and he seems to have two reasons for wanting to include it among the degrees of inspiration identified with true prophecy. First, some of his favorite Jewish sources say that all of the prophecies were inspired by the Holy Spirit; second (a point I shall expand upon in a moment), it is a type of inspiration that is almost entirely rational. He is, however, prevented from calling Ruach hakkodesh truly prophetic inspiration for two reasons. For one, Jesus, in Luke 24.44, distinguishes among the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, "where by the Psalms may seem to be meant the Hagiographa." For another, this sort of inspiration did not come to the writer "by any Dreams or visions." Clearly, then, Smith felt forced by the dictum of Jesus and the premises of all his discussion about true prophecy to place Ruach hakkodesh in a special category just outside of prophetic inspiration.

Nevertheless, Smith was, as I said, greatly attracted to this sort of inspiration, principally because of its rational nature and because it never can cause the prophet to lose control. By "Holy Spirit" is not meant the Third Person of the Trinity but, according to Smith's rendering of Maimonides, "some Power" that arises within the prophet and rests upon him, urging him to speak... whilst he is waking, and hath the ordinarie vigour and use of his Senses...... Smith thinks that this sort of inspiration is also discussed in the Timæus when Plato says,
"This degree or Enthusiastical character, shining so bright with the Intellectual influence, is pure and venerable, receiving its perfection from the Father of the Gods, being distinct from humane conceptions, and far transcending them..." While discussing its intellectual quality, Smith emphasizes that in the Dictate of the Holy Spirit the imagination, a physical faculty, plays little part: "This kind of Divine inspiration was alwaies more pacate and serene then the other of Prophesie, neither did it so much fatigate and act upon the Imagination." In it "there was no labour of the imagination"; it seated itself principally in the Higher and Purer faculties of the Soul. In his discussion of this purportedly lower degree of inspiration, a degree not even truly prophetic, he makes it sound almost identical to the gradus Mosaicus, the very highest degree of true prophecy.

Quoting Abarbinel, Smith is careful to insist that only the qualified prophet is inspired by the Dictate of the Holy Spirit: "The same Prophet prophesies sometime in the form of the Supreme Prophetical Degree, and sometime in a lower Degree..." Later, Smith cites Moses, David and several lesser prophets as examples of those who, in addition to true inspiration, experienced Ruach hakkodesh. They seem to have achieved this sort of inspiration by means of habitual goodness and meditation: "...the Prophets, being so much accustomed to divine visions as they were, might be able sometime per vigiliam, without any Prophetical Vision, to speak excellently by the Holy Ghost..." After discussing true prophecy and Ruach hakkodesh at
length, Smith includes a short chapter on the lowest degree of revelation (he does not call it inspiration), Bath Kol or Filia Vocis, the Daughter of the Voice. This kind of revelation consisted of "nothing else but some Voice which was heard as descending from Heaven, directing them [the Jews] in any affair as occasion served. . . ." Smith in no way considers this, as he does Ruach hakkodesh, to be a variation of truly prophetic inspiration: it was a "kind of Revelation [that] might be made to one . . . that was no way prepared for Prophesie," and was frequent after the cessation of true prophecy in the Old Testament. Smith says that it may have guided the Sanhedrin and identifies it with the voice from Heaven heard after Christ's baptism.

iii

The Prophet's Use of Language

Having examined the commentators' attempts to establish the qualifications of the true prophet, to define the nature of his inspiration and to rid both his character and his inspiration of any tendency towards or imputation of irrationality, we may now turn to exegetical remarks concerning the most important way in which a prophet makes himself known—his language. Here again, some of the commentators—mainly Kede, Kore, and Smith—made a defense of the rationality of the ordinary prophet, this time by insisting that his language, no matter how elliptical or rough it appeared, was really quite intelligible. They argued
that, because of the nature of his inspiration (other than in the gradus Mosaicus), the prophet spoke in figurative language that was intelligible to any good Christian who had the key to the figures of speech typical of prophecy.

According to John Smith, the impact of the inspiration so transports the ordinary prophet's mind that the revelation is manifested in abrupt, erratic exposition; further, the nature of the inspiration ("visa" and "simulacra" represented upon the "stage" of the prophet's imagination "symbollicollie, as in a Masque") sometimes caused the ordinary prophet to speak or write "in Parables, Similitudes and Allegories, in a dark and obscure manner. . . ." 73 Henry More agrees with Smith about the "Obscurity and Mysteriousness" of prophecy, and he also thinks that the cause is partly psychological: in prophetic allegories that look forward to Christ, the effect of God's inspiration was such "that while they [the prophets] prophesied or spoke of some considerable Priest, Prophet or King [of their own time or the near future]... they were so actuated and transported, that in that fatidical Rapture they were caught up into, the Sense of their Mind and Words was carried further than the particular Person they began to describe." 74

Language such as More and Smith describe is subject to the charge that it will cause confusion in its hearers or readers: it is just too close to the kind of language associated with the Delphic oracle and enthusiasts. Consequently, some of the seventeenth-century exegetes set out to find a way to defend
the language of true prophets against such a charge at least as forcefully as Smith had defended the rationality of inspiration. These commentators defended the prophet's language by insisting that it is deliberately and only superficially obscure and by insisting also that such language is intelligible, even easy to understand, once the reader, who must be a good Christian, knows of the special figures of speech that the prophet uses.

Henry More offers two reasons for the deliberate obscurity of the prophet's language, particularly the language of Daniel and St. John. First, the nature of the prophet's subject matter is such that some sort of special language is called for; after all, the prophet speaks divine truths, truths of a sort "that are the greatest and most beyond our natural reach." Second, the prophet must couch his message in such language so that the Antichrist will be confused: if the popes knew what St. John meant, they would move away from the seven hills of Rome. Thomas Wilson transforms this same point into an affirmation of the truth of Protestantism: "Before the time of the fulfilling of all things, this Book of the Revelation shall be made as clear, as if John were come to prophesie again before men." Wilson's assertion is an assumption among the other exegetes; they simply must argue that prophecy is ultimately intelligible, at least to good, presumably Protestant, men. In this view, figures of speech occur in prophecy partly because God adjusts His own and the prophet's rhetoric to the limitations
of human nature. "Divine truth," says Smith, "becomes many times in Scripture incarnate, debasing it self to assume our rude conceptions, that so it might converse more freely with us, and infuse its own Divinity into us." If God spoke to us "in the language of Eternity, who could understand him, or interpret his meaning?" If he spoke to us only in the abstract language of philosophers, "how should then the more rude and illeterate sort of men have been able to apprehend it?" Consequently, "Truth is content, when it comes into the world, to wear our mantles, to learn our language, to conform it self as it were to our dress and language. . . ."

Implicit in Smith but explicit in More is the other argument, a qualification of the first: the prophet's language can be understood by anyone of limited learning, provided he is a true Christian: "I . . . am certainly persuaded, that neither any such greatness of Parts nor exuberancy of Learning, as Integrity of heart and Unprejudicedness of mind, is requisite to the understanding of these things. For if that Spirit of life be once revived in a man, he will, by virtue of his Regeneration or new Birth, not onely see with his eyes, but feel with his hands the truth of these Mysteriess."

Nonetheless, the prophet does use language that needs interpreting. When Smith says that divine truth is content "to wear our mantles, to learn our language, to conform it self . . . to our dress and fashions," he is admitting what is all too obvious: prophets, particularly Daniel and St. John, speak in figures, more often than not in figures that tax the mind
which tries to understand them. The exegetes remove this apparent difficulty by saying that the good Christian of limited learning need only have the key to the prophetic style: he need only know the special devices that prophets use when they write, and all will be made clear to him (obviously there is vagueness here about the definition of limited learning). The key—the importance of that term is represented in the title of Joseph Mede's great book—has two sides: The reader must understand (1) that prophets write allegories, and (2) that prophetic allegory involves the use of a special set of figures and symbols.

If it were not already obvious to any reader of the Bible, the notion that prophets write allegories is implied again and again, as we have seen, in Smith's statements about the nature of prophetic inspiration and in his own and others' casual references to prophetic language. Henry More refines this widespread assumption by distinguishing between a "perfect" allegory and a "mixed" one. A perfect allegory occurs, says More, when all of the prophet's expressions about the person who is purportedly the subject of his discourse "do very well and naturally fit him, but may be interpreted . . . of some more illustrious Person that comes after." A mixed allegory is "that which is partly allusory, as being applicable to some more Inferior Person, whether King, Prophet or Priest, and then to the Messiah, and partly simple and express, not applicable to any but the Messiah himself. . . ." In a mixed allegory, the prophet is "so actuated by the Spirit of God that . . . [his expressions

"
reach] further than the Person that is the Type, and strike into such Circumstances that are not at all true but in the Antitype."  

There was a widespread agreement that, in writing their allegories, the prophets, particularly the writers of Daniel and Revelation, used a certain set of figures and symbols. An awareness of these figures and symbols seems to have begun with Joseph Mede, who argued that the meanings of the symbols in Revelation were based on or derived from the symbol systems of ancient Near Eastern dream interpreters. One of the first great Biblical philologists, Mede asked why, if we are willing to learn the meaning of Hebrew by studying the languages of the peoples surrounding the Hebrews, "should we disdaine the same here in the significations of propheticall figures and representations? . . ." Mede himself does not hesitate to discuss such figures and symbols, and he includes at several places in his Key of Revelation lists of the meaning of such symbols as a "man mounted upon a courageous horse."  

Smith and Wilson are also conscious of such a symbol system, but it is Henry More who, with the systematic energy so typical of him, provides his readers with a list or table of "Prophetic Figures or Schemes." He lists (and then discusses) ten of them: "Diorismus, Hylasmus, Henopœia, Zoopœia, Israelismus, Ellipsis, Ketalepsis, Homonymia, Antichronismus, Icastmus." Many of these may be standard figures with new names or new figures with old names, but More always defines them by instancing their use in prophetic books, usually Revelation or Daniel. For instance: "Israëlismus is a . . .
speaking of the affairs of the Christian Church under the names
and with allusion to such places, or persons, or things as did of
old concern the Israélites and people of the Jews... " Icasmus,
which seems to be More's generic name for the oriental icons or
symbols that Kede discusses, is "but the Representation of things
by such Symbols as bear some similitude with the things and events
they stand for." 82

Besides finding that prophecy was characterized by certain
figures of speech and certain symbols, the exegetes discovered
(or thought they discovered) in prophetic allegories, particularly
in Daniel and Revelation, still another device: the manipulation
of time. The prophet, according to the exegetes, could transcend
and manipulate time in his allegories, often in order to pass
judgment on some past, present, or future person, group, or
institution. (The material that follows is more fully explored
in the Appendix.)

We have already noticed, for instance, Henry More's
classification of prophetic allegory into two sorts, perfect and
mixed. In the former, the prophet writes about some contemporary
person in such a way that what is said about the contemporary is
also completely true of some future person; in the latter, what
the prophet says about a contemporary is partly untrue of the
contemporary but partly true of some future person. In both cases,
the prophet is divinely inspired in such a way as to transcend time.

Another way in which the exegetes believed that the prophet
could manipulate time in allegories was by means of "synchronals,"
a device that Joseph Mede was the first to discover in the Book of Revelation. According to Mede, the predictive chapters of Revelation, Chapters 4-22, fall into two divisions, Chapter 4-10.7 and Chapters 10.8-22. The events depicted in the first set of these predictive chapters would occur, according to Mede's theory, at the same time as and would be often identical to the events depicted in the second set of predictive chapters, even though the second set appears to follow the first in the narrative sequence. For example, in Revelation 8.6 to 9.13 occurs the blowing of the six trumpets; this event, according to Mede, is contemporaneous with the seven prophecies (from the Measuring of the Temple to the Fall of Babylon) in Revelation 11 to 13 and 17 to 18.3. To apparently sequential but actually contemporaneous sets of events such as these two, Mede gives the name *synchronisms* or *synchronals*. His analysis of the synchronals (it is actually a bit more complex than indicated here) was accepted by the popularizer Francis Roberts and by Henry More.83

Mede made (or thought he made) still another discovery about the manipulation of time in prophetic allegories, and again More accedes to his predecessor's wisdom. This discovery was that the prophets, particularly Daniel and St. John, used a special set of temporal symbols, a time code. The code, according to Mede, has three parts. First, because the sun is associated with light and governs days and years, the prophet portrays events involving the forces of good as occurring in days and years; and, because the moon is associated with darkness and governs months, the prophet
portrays events involving the forces of evil in months. Second, within Revelation at least, forty-two months of activity by the forces of evil is roughly equivalent in length to three and one-half years of activity by the forces of good— that is, both periods comprise roughly 1260 days. Third, the prophet uses a day in his prophecy to indicate one year in history: in Revelation, then, 1260 days (or three and one-half years or forty-two months) actually means 1260 years in history. Similarly, the word "time," at least in Revelation, is a way of saying "one year," which of course means 360 years allegorically. 84

The prophet did not manipulate time merely for the sake of writing allegories, however; instead, he wrote allegories in which time is manipulated so that he might pass judgment. But upon whom were the prophet's allegorical judgments being passed? To this question the exegetes gave three answers, which were not mutually exclusive; each answer depends on the kind of relationship that the exegetes thought existed between the events in a prophet's narrative and the events in history. One answer is that between the events in some kinds of prophetic narrative and the events in history there exists a typological relationship. That is, while speaking of and passing judgment on some contemporary of his (a contemporary who actually exists), the prophet is at the same time speaking of and passing judgment on some person who will live after the prophet's lifetime. The prophet's contemporary is the type; the person who will live in the future in the antitype. Thus King David, who actually lived,
is a type of Christ, who is the antitype of David. This kind of allegory is what Henry More means when, as we saw earlier, he discusses "perfect" and "mixed" allegories.

The second answer assumes that between the events in history and the events in some kinds of prophecy there exists a purely predictive relationship. In this kind of writing, the prophet is not recording events in his own experience or events of his own time; rather he is recording some vision or dream vouchsafed him by God, a vision or dream about events in the future. This is the sort of prophecy about which John Smith appears to be concerned when he speaks of the impact of Divine inspiration upon the "terrene" parts of the prophet's soul, an impact that results in symbolic images parading in the prophet's mind as on a stage (above, p. 50). This sort of prophecy is also the kind that Joseph Mede and Henry More appear to have in mind when they discuss the icons characteristic of prophecy (above, pp. 54-55). Implicit here is the assumption that the prophet transcends time (he sees the future) in order to pass judgment by means of his symbols: St. John, through the symbol of the Great Whore of Babylon, condemns popery that will arise in the future.

Hugo Grotius, however (and this is the third answer to the question posed above), thought that a prophet could use symbols to discuss events in the past, present, or future. Grotius believed, for instance, that the heads of the Beast in Revelation are symbols of individual Roman Emperors, some of whom lived before St. John, some of whom were contemporaries of St. John,
one of whom lived after St. John had died. Thus each judgment the prophet passed by means of his symbols had historical or contemporaneous or predictive import; unlike a typological symbol, this sort of symbol did not have two simultaneous implications, one for the prophet's lifetime and another for some person who would live in the future. Grotius's theory was not acceptable to the exegetes whom we have been analyzing, but it was widely enough known for both Mede and More to have spent a lot of time attacking it. 86

Mede, More, Roberts, and Grotius are working with "obscure" prophecy, especially the language of Daniel and St. John, who write in figures of speech because (as prophets of the first degree) they are overwhelmed by inspiration or because they wish to hide God's meaning from evil men. But the true prophet, says John Smith, may also write in figurative language when he is under the influence of Ruach hakkodesh, the Dictate of the Holy Spirit. In such a case, the writer uses "Parables and Similitudes," but not because he is overwhelmed by inspiration: "This kind . . . of Divine Inspiration was alwaies more pacate and serene then the other of Prophesie, neither did it so much fatigate and act upon the Imagination." Nor do such writers try to confuse the Antichrist. Instead, they "seem only to have made use of such a dress of language to set off their own sense of Divine things, which in itself was more naked and simple, the more advantageiously. . . ." Smith has high praise for the clarity and delightfulness of this language; it is "pure and elegant,"
"full of beautie and comeliness, concise, yet withall exceedingly accurate," so that everyone who knows the writer "admires him for this excellent knowledge and composure of words. ..." 87

More's catalogue of figures and Smith's characterization of hagiographic language as elegant might almost be discussions of poetry. Indeed, the exegetes seem to think that some prophets, especially writers of the Hagiographa, were poets of a kind, that some prophetic language is the same as poetic language. Noting that the prophets were often accompanied by music, Smith warns that we must not think of them as singers, but as composers: in I Chronicles 25, "Asaph, Heman and Jeduthan composed their rapt and Divine Poems at the sound of the Quire-Musick of the Temple. Another famous place we find for this purpose [is] I Sam. 10. which place (as well as the former) hath been (I think) much mistaken and misrepresented by some of Singing; whereas certainly it cannot be meant of any thing less than Divine Poetrie, and Composure of Hymns. ..." 88 Hobbes, citing I Corinthians 11.4-5, makes a similar point: "... prophecy, in that place, signifieth no more but praising God in psalms and holy songs. ... And in this signification it is, that the poets of the heathen, that composed hymns and other sorts of poems in the honour of their gods, were called vates, prophets; as is ... evident (Tit.i.12), where St. Paul ... acknowledgest that the word prophet was commonly used to signify them that celebrated the honour of God in Verse." 89

Figurative language is not, however, the highest sort of
language used by the prophets—at least not according to John Smith. To him, the highest sort of prophetic language was brought about by the birth of Christ. Smith repeats the famous passage from Plutarch in which the historian tells us that "the Poetrie that was usually interlaced with Riddles and Parables was taken away in his time. . . ." Instead, says Plutarch, God "hath so ordered them to speak to those that consult them, as the Laws do to the Cities under their subjection, and Kings to their people, and Masters to their Scholars, in the most intelligible and persuasive language." Smith associates this plain style with the gradus Mosaicus, but asserts that it really belongs not to Moses nor to Plutarch's oracles, lawgivers, and teachers, but to the greatest of all prophets, Christ, whose birth brought it about for Plutarch and his contemporaries.  

iv

The Prophet's Mission

As important as the ways in which a prophet says things are the kinds of things he has to say. Hence the seventeenth-century exegetes spend a great deal of energy explaining what uses the prophet is to make of his inspiration and technique of language. A remark make by Matthew Pool (in a comment on Judges 1.4) is representative in several ways of this discussion:

... the Word prophets or prophetess is very ambiguous in both Testaments; sometimes being used of persons extraordinarily inspired by God, and endowed with a power of working miracles, and foretelling things to come; and sometimes of persons
endowed with special, though not miraculous, gifts or graces, for the better understanding of and discoursing about the word and mind of God, for praising of God or the like. 91

Pool admits that the precise meaning of the term "prophet," when defined with reference to purpose, is ambiguous in the Bible. That is certainly so; and the exegetes are true to their source here. For they do not do as might be expected; that is, they do not try very hard to formulate a clearcut definition of the prophet's functions in the same way that, say, More does of the prophet's techniques. (Even Hobbes, who does try hard, ends in something of a muddle. 92) Instead, many of their definitions of the prophet's mission are made indirectly or on the way to making some other point. Nonetheless, if we make allowance for some difference in detail and emphasis, a consensus does emerge from their comments, and Pool's remarks contain many of the points of that consensus.

Two minor points in the consensus are indicated towards the end of Pool's remarks. For one thing, he and the other exegetes seem to agree, at least implicitly, that a distinction must be made between the importance of the functions of some prophets as opposed to the functions of others: one kind of prophet, the most important kind, makes predictions and works miracles; a less important kind of prophet praises God and preaches. This same distinction is only implicit in the order of Wilson's list of definitions of "prophet" and "prophesie," but it corresponds, from the perspective of function, with John Smith's distinction,
from the perspective of psychology, between "true" and hagiographic inspiration (above, pp. 46-48). The second minor point has to do with indicating the less important functions of prophecy. Pool here mentions "discoursing about" and praising God; in a note on I Samuel 10.5 he says that the lower order of prophets devotes itself "to preaching . . . and to the making or singing of psalms or songs of praise to God." The same sorts of activities are indicated by Wilson, who speaks of the "true Minister of the Gospel, endued with Wisdom to interpret and apply the Scripture" and of "singing and praising God, forming of divine Hymns, and singing them to God." And Smith says that the writers of the Hagiographa utter "words of Wisdome, or Song, or Divine praise." The identification of this lower set of prophetic functions with the psalmists and with the preachers of the early Church is pretty firm.

Pool's brief discussion of the meaning of "prophet" is indicative of still another item in the consensus—the importance, among the major purposes of the prophet, of prediction. True, Pool mentions performing miracles as well, but to the other exegetes, the performance of miracles was important only as a sign of the authenticity of the prophet. True also, prediction was, as we have seen (p. 37), important as a test of a prophet's authenticity. But the exegetes make a distinction between the kind of short-range prediction suitable as a test and long-range prediction meant as an important instruction or warning. Pool himself makes this distinction in a note on I Kings 13.1-5,
wherein an unnamed prophet of Judah foretells that desecration will be wrought upon the bones of Jereboam by Josiah in three hundred years. But the unnamed prophet also confirms his prophecy by predicting that, during the day on which he is making his long-range prediction, the altar Jereboam has erected to false gods will fall and its ashes pour out; both his short range "test" prediction and his long range "warning" prediction come true (see II Kings 23.15-16).

Perhaps a result of their fascination with Daniel and Revelation, long-range foretelling looms so large in the minds of the seventeenth-century exegetes that its importance cannot be overstated: the reader of seventeenth-century exegetes encounters it again and again whenever they discuss prophecy. To Thomas Wilson, foretelling is "the ordinary notion" of prophecy. Richard Hooker uses "prophesied" as synonymous with "predicted" in a remark on the enemies of the Church: the apostles, he says, citing Phillipians 3.18-19, "had not only declared what they heard and saw in the days wherein they lived, but they have prophesied also to men in time to come." Mede also uses "prophet" to mean "foreteller" in a statement that contradicts the ordinary seventeenth-century reading of the psalms as a lesser kind of prophecy: "The Book of Psalms is a book of Prophecies; witness the frequent citing of them by our Lord and his Apostles; witness the Surname of King David, who, being the pen-man of no other but this book is styled the Prophet David." In Robert's long discussion of his rules for
understanding the prophets, the assumption common to most of the rules is that prophecy involves a long-range prediction; a similar assumption is also shared by Smith, More, and John Locke. [100]

Despite the usefulness of his brief discussion of the missions of the prophet, Pool does not at that point take note of one role that other writers assume or state to be of major importance: in Hobbes' words, the prophet also functions as "a prolocutor; that is, he that speaketh from God to man." [101] The other writers do not use Hobbes' term, but they do share in their discussion his general notion that the prophet states God's perspective on events or the nature of things and also tells people God's will or law. Thus Smith says that prophecy is simply the "way whereby the knowledge of Divine Truth" is revealed to us; he means by divine truth supernatural revelation or instruction in the broadest sense. [102] As Pool says, the prophets were given "a supernatural knowledge of Divine Mysteries." [103]

The exegetes discuss two activities that seem to be subsumed under the prophet's role as the one who tells the people about God's perspective on human affairs: (1) the prophet composes historical books of the Bible, and (2) he comments on current events. The notion that the prophet operates as a writer of Scriptural history occurs among the exegetes more as an assumption than as a contention. Thus Pool says casually in the Argument to his notes on the Book of Joshua that "it is not material to know who was the penman of this book whether Joshua... or some other holy prophet"; in the Argument preceding the Book of
Judges he says, equally casually, that "the author of this book is not certainly known, whether it is Samuel, or Ezra, or some other prophet; nor is it material to know." The idea that Daniel and Revelation are in part historical might have reinforced the identification of the prophet as one who writes history from a divine perspective. Hugo Grotius evidently thought that Revelation is less a predictive prophecy than a history, a position which was known widely enough that both Pool and More take the trouble to castigate Grotius for having offered it. Of course, Pool himself allows that, while the last six chapters of Daniel are "prophetical" (i.e., "predictive"), "the first six chapters are historical." All of these statements are incidental, however. It remained for Thomas Wilson to offer the definition (admittedly, it is but one among many others) straightforwardly: the prophets are "all those holy men of God who be the Pen-men of the Holy Scriptures."

Prophets do not only write history and make predictions, however; they also state to their contemporaries God's attitudes towards contemporary people and events. Joseph Mede, for instance, makes this clear in a statement later echoed in More's analysis of allegory in prophecy (pp. 53-54 above): an Old Testament prophecy "so foretells of things to come, that it [is] concerned also [with] the time present; it foretells the state of the Church in the Gospel, and yet meant something that concerned the present Church of the Law." Naturally such a statement of God's point of view often involved a judgment of some sort. Thus Francis Roberts
asserts that one of the "chief aims" of Isaiah is "To detect, reprove, aggravate, and condemn the sins of Judah and Jerusalem especially, and after that, the iniquities of the Ten Tribes of Israel. . . ." Roberts also says that in the Book of Revelation Christ "intends to reveal and make known unto his Apostle, and beloved disciple JOHN, and by JOHN unto the Churches, both the present things that then were, when the Revelation was given, and the future things that should be afterwards. . . ." By the "things that then were," Roberts means the letters to the seven churches, letters that mix praise, reproval, and exhortation.

When the prophet is functioning as a prolocutor, one set of his activities involves, then, keeping the people apprised of God's attitudes towards the past and the present; his other activity as a prolocutor, an equally important one, is to transmit or declare God's will or law. As Wilson says, one of the senses of "to prophesie" is "To declare the Will of God to any, by Revelation or Mission from Him." The exegetes seem to have thought of these declarations of God's will as falling into three broad and interrelated categories. The moral law of Moses, which itself was sometimes thought of as the basis for all other prophecy, constitutes the first category. Abarbinel, one of John Smith's sources, says that Moses "received not only the Prophecies, but also the very Words and Phrases" directly from God, "and accordingly as he heard them, so he wrote them in the Book of the Law. . . ." Smith agrees, if by "law" Abarbinel meant the positive moral law of the Decalogue. Smith goes on to claim that
the gradus Mosaicus was the Basis of all future Prophesie among
the Jews: For all the prophets mainly aim at that to establish
[sic] and confirm the Law of Moses, as to the practical
observation of it... Thomas Wilson seems to agree when
he says that the prophet is "an extraordinary Minister of the Old
Testament, ordained for the Instruction of the Church, by
interpreting and applying the Law."111

These statements by Smith and Wilson define the prophet as
one who transmits and applies the religious and moral side of the
Mosaic Law. Sometimes, however, the prophets, including Moses,
are also seen as promulgators of a second kind of law, political
law. Smith himself says that the prophet inspired by the Dictate
of the Holy Spirit can discourse concerning "wholesome Rules of
good living, or matters Political and Civil."112 Thomas Hobbes
attributes to God "a twofold kingdom, natural and prophetic:
natural, wherein he governeth as many of mankind as acknowledge
his providence, by the natural dictates of right reason; and
prophetic, wherein having chosen out one peculiar nation, the
Jews, for his subjects, he governed them... by positive laws,
which he gave them by the mouths of the holy prophets."113

Nor is the prophet limited to declaring general laws
for the kingdom; he also, according to some exegetes, has power
in specific political and religious situations. Smith says that
the high priests spoke under the inspiration of the Dictate of the
Holy Spirit when they consulted those mysterious oracles, the Urim
and Thummim, in times of political crisis.114 And Pool says that
during the founding of the Hebrew kingdom, Samuel's role was to bring to the people what the Lord said "by his word of command, which he chose to deliver to Israel by his [Samuel's] mouth. . . ."\textsuperscript{115} When Elijah slays the prophets of Baal, Pool justifies the prophet's action by arguing that the prophet can carry out judgments against those who break God's law: Elijah "had sufficient authority to execute" a sentence of death as "a Prophet and an extraordinary minister of God's vengeance against sinners."\textsuperscript{116}

\textbf{v}

\textbf{Two Royalist Criteria}

Most seventeenth-century Englishmen—except those sectaries who distained learning of any sort—would agree, I think, that a prophet ought to meet the definition outlined heretofore. But if we are to study Dryden as a prophet, we must add to the definition two criteria peculiar to the royalist view of prophecy: (1) the prophet, who must be subordinate to the king, is the king's spokesman; (2) the prophet must attempt to keep the peace. (Both of these royalist criteria accord quite nicely with the desire of Smith and Spencer, outlined earlier, that in a prophet wisdom should rule inspiration.)

We will do well to begin by taking up the question of whether the royalists believed that the prophet must be subordinate to the king. The evidence that they did so is implicit in royalist theory about the king's supremacy and explicit in
statements by at least two royalists. The implicit evidence lies in the royalist theory of society. In English society, said the royalists, church and commonwealth are two sides of one entity, all of the officers of which are under the king's control. In England, says Hooker, "one society is both church and commonwealth," an arrangement "according to the pattern of God's own ancient elect people," the Jews. Now it is apparent from other royalist statements, some by Hooker and some by Cowley in the Davideis, that the royalists considered the prophet a kind of ecclesiastical officer. Consequently, as a holder of ecclesiastical rank in the commonwealth, a prophet, according to the internal logic of royalism, must be subordinate to the king.

But we need not rely on implicit evidence alone to demonstrate royalist belief in the subordination of prophets to kings; at least two writers made explicit statements on this question. One of these writers is Thomas Hobbes, with whom, even though they attack him often, the orthodox royalists have much in common—a situation recognized by Filmer and Samuel Parker. Dwelling on the examples of Saul and David (I Samuel) and of Solomon (I Kings), Hobbes, like the orthodox royalists in their discussions of the king's supremacy in political matters, argues on the basis of the Old Testament that prophets should be under the king's control:

Of the prophets ... some were supreme, and some subordinate: supreme were first Moses; and after him the high-priests, every one for his time, as long as the priesthood was royal; and after the people of the Jews had rejected God, that he should no more
reign over them, those kings which submitted themselves to God's government, were also his chief prophets; and the high-priest's office became ministerial. And when God was to be consulted, they put on the holy vestments, and enquired of the Lord, as the king commanded them, and were deprived of their office as the king thought fit. 120

Thus the king is the chief prophet, and he rules all the ecclesiastical officers of the state, even the high priests. The king is most certainly in charge of all other prophets, says Hobbes, for even when a subordinate prophet is said "to speak in the spirit or by the spirit of God, we are to understand no more, but that he speaks according to God's will, declared by the supreme prophet [the king]." The people of a commonwealth ought to be very careful about obeying prophets, says Hobbes, unless "the prophet is the civil sovereign, or by the civil sovereign authorized." 121

The other writer who explicitly insists that kings have control over prophets is an orthodox royalist, John Spencer. In the Preface to A Discourse Concerning Vulgar Prophecies, Spencer simply assumes as a given that the state (and thus the king) have available "Penal Statutes provided to prevent the spreading of seditious Prophecies, by the Severities of which those may be whipt into their wits, whom the Physick of an Argument cannot cure of their Prophetick Frenzies." In the body of the argument he appeals, as any good scholar of his day might, to classical precedents: "The Ancient Ethnick States-men seem very sensible what a ready weapon of Sedition this sacred Opinion of Prophecies in the people was, and therefore, being unable to wrest it from
them, they endeavoured . . . to blunt its edg; by subtil maxims
such as . . . that none but a King or a General was . . . preferred
by the Gods the Prophet of a City: Or by appointing some
prudent Over-seers and interpreters of Prophecies."\(^{122}\)

If Spencer's strictures about the necessity of
subordinating the prophet to the sovereign are negative in force,
Hobbes' are not. Hobbes, it appears, merely articulates the
logical conclusion implicit in royalist theory: the prophet, as
an ecclesiastical officer subordinate to the king, is the king's,
and thus God's, servant and spokesman. The prophet, says Hobbes,
"speaks according to God's will, declared by the supreme prophet
[the king]." If the populace doubts the validity of some
claimants to prophecy, then it should "leave to the
sovereign . . . to uphold, or to forbid them, as he should see
cause; and if he should disavow them, then no more to obey their
voice; or if he approve them, then to obey them, as men to whom
God hath given a part of the spirit of their sovereign."\(^{123}\)
Hobbes is here articulating what is in the hearts of the orthodox
royalists: the prophet is an ecclesiastical officer who speaks
God's will for the king.

Hobbes, powerful advocate of the supremacy of magistrates,
and orthodox royalists thought they had good reason for classifying
as legitimate only those prophets who were subordinate to and
spokesmen for the king; the reason was fear of civil tumult like
that of the Interregnum—a civil tumult that was, as we saw in
Chapter I, aggravated by the sort of prophets who rose among the
sectaries in the revolutionary army. Thus Spencer wrote his *Discourse Concerning Vulgar Prophecies* and *Discourse Concerning Prodigies* during the 1660s in order to combat a recurrence of revolutionary fervor among the old sectaries who believed that the Millennium would dawn (and all antichristian kingly rule be overthrown) in 1666. And Hobbes speaks for all royalists when he says that false prophets, those not under the aegis of the king, destroy "all laws, both divine and human, [and] reduce all order, government, and society, to the first chaos of violence and civil war." One consequence of this fear of civil tumult was, as we have just seen, a royalist insistence on subordination of the prophet to the king; another consequence was the royalist belief that the prophet who does speak for the king should encourage the public peace.

Like the evidence for the royalist belief in the supremacy of kings over prophets, the evidence for the royalist belief that prophets should encourage public peace is implicit and explicit. The evidence is implicit in the prophets' subordination to the king, for as his ecclesiastical officers, they must serve his interest, they must carry out his will; and if his interest is (as it appeared to Hooker, Filmer, and Hobbes) in having a peaceful state, then by implication prophets must do their best to carry out his wishes by encouraging the public peace. This conclusion, implicit in royalist theory, is stated explicitly by royalist Henry More in the course of an attack on the sectarian prophets for disturbing the public peace.
and for not understanding the lessons of Elias and Elijah:

What a goodly Specimen do those high-flown Boosters give their Elias-like Spirit, who though they imitate something of the Wind, Earthquake and Fire, that appeared before that great prophet, yet are utterly unacquainted with that still and small voice in which alone the Lord was heard to speak? This Rending and Tearing, this Faction and Siding is the fruit of the Flesh, and not of the Spirit: Nor was Elias zealous about anything but the indispensable Laws of God. Nor is his office to divide, but to cement and make up the Breaches of the Church of Christ, to reconcile the People to their Governours, and their Governours to the People, according as it is written, Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet, and he shall turn the heart of the Fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their Fathers; lest I come and smite the Earth with a curse.175

To the royalists, then, the prophet was an ecclesiastical officer subordinate to the king. As the king's servant, the prophet had to speak God's will for the king, generally in order to encourage public peace.
Footnotes to Chapter II


2 Hooker, *The Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. by John Keble, 2nd. ed., 8 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1841). In the pages that follow, I shall use the terms "exegete" and "commentator" to denote each of these writers, though strictly speaking not all of them were theologians.

3 Mede, *The Key of the Revelation*, trans. Richard More (London, 1643). The copy that I used from the Ohio State University Library's Special Collection is bound with several of Mede's works that were published at different dates; the volume has the title *Medes Discourses* on its spine. Ernest Lee Tuveson says, in *Millennium and Utopia* (1949; rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1964, p. 226, n. 8), that the Key had three previous Latin editions (1627, 1632, 1642) as *Clavis Apocalyptica*; Wing lists a 1650 edition of the Key and a 1648 edition of Mede's *Works*; there was also a 1672 edition of the *Works*.


8 Newton, *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John* (London, 1733). I use this 18th-century
book only to show that some ideas were held continuously during and after the Restoration.

9Spencer, A Discourse Concerning Vulgar Prophecies (London, 1665), bound with A Discourse Concerning Prodigies ... To Which is Added a Short Treatise Concerning Vulgar Prophecies (London, 1665); this is the second edition of the Prodigies; the Prophecies seems to have been published separately as well. Though both of these works are politically motivated and directed at a popular audience, Spencer was a great scholar; he wrote De Legibus Hebræorum, in which he was the first to connect the rites of the Hebrews to those of other Semitic races. The DNB says that this work laid the foundation for the study of comparative religions: see Thomas Cooper, "Spencer, John, D.D.," DNB (1909).

10Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, ed. & intro. by Michael Oakeshott (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960). Part III, ch. 36, pp. 282-285. I should note here that the seventeenth-century exegetes were not as aware as we are that apocalypse is a special form of Biblical writing; they considered Daniel and Revelation only as especially difficult prophetic books.


13Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 4, 6-7; this same sort of thinking is present in More (see Modest Enquiry, p. 195) and in the preface written by the editor of Smith's Select Discourses (p. xxiv).


15Tuveson, Millennium and Utopia, pp. 81-82, 85.

16Twisse, Preface to The Key of the Revelation (1643), n. pag.


18Ibid., p. 186.

19Sermon V, sec. 2, in Works, V, 661.


23Harold Fisch, Jerusalem and Albion: The Hebraic Factor in

24Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 33-34; John Smith ("Of Prophesie," pp. 244-245) outlines the same three criteria and quotes a different translation of the same maxim.

25Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 33-34.


27The following discussion is based on Smith, "Of Prophecies," p. 192.


29Vulgar Prophecies, p. 35.


31Vulgar Prophecies, p. 36.


34Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 37-38.


36Ibid., p. 199.

37Ibid., p. 266.

38Ibid., p. 208.

39Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 80-81.

40"Of Prophecies," p. 266. See also: Hobbes, Leviathan, Part III, ch. 32, pp. 244-246; Spencer, Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 63-64; Pool, note on Dt. 18.20-22, in Annotations, I, 373.

41Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 63, 55-56; Hobbes, Leviathan, Part III, ch. 32, pp. 245-246; Pool, Annotations (Dt. 18.20-22), I, 373.

42Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 61-65; on the second point, see Smith, "Of Prophecies," pp. 241-242, 244, 252-257.
43 Hooker, Sermon V, sec. 3, in Works, V, 661.


46 Ibid., p. 216; Hobbes seems to agree with Smith that God does not speak directly to prophets (Leviathan, Part III, ch. 36, pp. 278-282).

47 See notes 43-44, above.

48 "Of Prophesie," pp. 203-208. That Smith's reasoning begs the question is not relevant to the point I am making; see above, p. 31, for Spencer's reply.

49 "Of Prophesie," p. 179.

50 Ibid., p. 189.

51 Ibid., pp. 181-182.


54 Ibid., pp. 278-279.

55 Ibid., pp. 201-202.

56 Ibid., pp. 177, 199; see also p. 183.

57 Annotations, I, 286.


60 Ibid., p. 178.

Throughout this discussion, Smith calls the four degrees either degrees of inspiration or degrees of prophecy; he limits himself to the word "inspiration" when discussing Ruach hakkodesh and to "revelation" when discussing Bath Kol, however (see pp. 49-50 below).

Smith, "Of Prophesie," p. 205; Wilson, "leopard," in Christian Dictionary, n. pag.; see also Newton, Observations, pp. 18, 24; Roberts, Clavis Bibliorum, p. 440. Despite his apparent awareness of such a system, Smith, in opposition to Mede and More, denies on the basis that the inspiration is too powerful, that the prophet can exercise any conscious artistry in presenting his material ("Of Prophesie," pp. 277-278); this assertion is, of course, a typical Smithian contradiction of all he says about the rationality of prophetic inspiration.

Modest Enquiry, pp. 213-225.

Mede, Key of Revelation, Part I, pp. 1-16; Mede's exposition of his theory is difficult to follow; those who wish a guide through Mede's argument should consult Francis Robert's lucid summary in Clavis Bibliorum, pp. 581-582. Roberts, who credits Pareus with an earlier but imperfect version of a system similar to Mede's, recommends Mede's reading of Revelation above all others; Henry More, in Synopsis Prophetica (the second part of Modest Enquiry) devotes a good deal of space to refining Mede's synchronals.

Mede, Key of Revelation, Part I, pp. 2-3; Part II, pp. 46-47, 122-123; More, Modest Enquiry, pp. 214, 224-225, 255.


More, Modest Enquiry, p. 196; John Worthington, editor of the 1672 edition of Mede's collected Works, twice alludes to Grotius's explications of Revelation as though they were well known: see "The Life of the Reverend and Most Learned Joseph Mede, B.D." in Mede's Works, pp. x, xxvii.

"Of Prophesie," p. 231.

Ibid., p. 249. Because he thinks that prophetic inspiration is so powerful that it will not allow the prophet to control his language, Spencer objects to what he thinks is Smith's notion of poetry in prophecy; Spencer ignores, however, Smith's careful distinction between truly prophetic inspiration and the quiet inspiration of the Dictate of the Holy Spirit (pp. 47-49 above), the latter being the sort of inspiration that Smith thinks is the basis of hagiographic poetry (Vulgar Prophecies, pp. 52-55).

Leviathan, Part III, ch. 36, p. 276.

"Of Prophesie," pp. 264-265; Smith conveniently ignores Christ's use of parables and paradoxes.

Annotations, I, 463.

93. Annotations, I, 536.


95. See also John Locke, "A Paraphrase and Notes on I Corinthians" (I Cor. 12.10), in The Works of John Locke (London: Thomas Tegg, 1823), VIII, 151. In calling preaching and expounding upon Scripture a minor category of prophecy, I am following my sources. This sense of prophecy may have been more widely esteemed than I have allowed, however; see Jeremy Taylor's Liberty of Prophesying (London, 1647), which is about prophecy only in the sense of expounding upon Scripture.


108. Clavis Bibliorum, pp. 414, 583-584; emphasis Robert's.


113 Leviathan, Part III, ch. 31, pp. 233-234.
115 Note on I Sam. 3.21, in Annotations, I, 523.
116 Note on I Kings 18.40, in Annotations I, 702.
117 Hooker, Polity, VIII, i, 7 (Works, III, 340); see also Polity, VIII, i, 4 (Works, III, 334).
120 Leviathan, Part III, ch. 36, p. 280.
121 Ibid., pp. 281, 283.
122 Preface to A Discourse Concerning Vulgar Prophecies, n. pag.; Vulgar Prophecies, p. 9.
124 Ibid., p. 285.
126 Modest Enquiry, p. 195 (in this section of Modest Enquiry, More's text is in italics and his quotations are in roman; for ease of reading, I have reversed that practice in this quotation); see also remarks by the anonymous editor of John Smith's Select Discourses in "To the Reader," pp. xxii-xxiv.
CHAPTER III

DRYDEN AND PROPHECY: PREDISPOSITIONS AND PRACTICES

"... Let me take your Mantle up..."

--John Dryden

Because we know that Dryden's contemporaries were fascinated enough by millenarianism and prophecy to have developed detailed concepts of the prophet, the temptation arises to proceed immediately to the central issue: Did Dryden, believing that the power and beauty of his works and the success of his public purposes would be served, adopt in his major poems the rhetorical stance ("voice" and missions) and devices of language appropriate to a prophet? The temptation is, however, one that, for two reasons, we had best resist. First, since we have as yet no assurance that Dryden was interested in millenarianism and prophecy, that he knew anything about them, or that he thought either of them might be useful to a poet, we might "read into" the poems and see in Dryden's art prophetic techniques or millennial motifs where none exist. Second, even if Dryden did know something about seventeenth-century concepts of the prophet, we have at this point no assurance that he knew and cared about all of them; he might have known about only a few of the exegetical concepts of the prophet, or, knowing about most of them, he might have thought...
only a few of them useful to poets. In sum, to analyze his major poems without having assayed beforehand what Dryden knew and thought about millenarianism and prophecy or about the usefulness of prophecy to poets might lead to inelegant readings—to readings that omit notice of some prophetic technique in which Dryden said he was deeply interested or to readings accurate in outline but inaccurate in emphasis.

We would do well, then, to precede any search for prophetic stances or devices of language in his major poems with an examination of Dryden's statements that reveal his awareness of and considered judgments about millenarianism and prophecy. Here we encounter a difficulty: Dryden's comments on either subject are only rarely, if ever, explicit or extensive. Consequently we must examine those passages—scattered and generally brief—wherein he says anything at all about millenarianism, prophecy, or closely related subjects; and we must do so with a careful eye to context in an effort to infer the state of his knowledge and the nature of his opinions. Furthermore, when trying to assess Dryden's awareness of and opinions about prophecy, we must focus, in so far as possible, on passages which allow little chance of our seeing a comment about prophecy when Dryden intended none—that is, we must focus, unless there is good reason for doing otherwise, on passages wherein the words "prophet," "prophecy," or one of their variants appear.

Assuming that evidence can be gathered which reveals Dryden's awareness of and attitudes towards prophecy, I believe
that we should have positive answers to three questions before investigating Dryden's major poems to see if he adopted the prophetic voice and prophetic devices of language in them. The first question is, Was Dryden aware of the millennial theories prevalent among his contemporaries? The answer to this question is important for two reasons: (1) millenarianism was so bound up with the seventeenth-century exegesis of prophecy (e.g., in the works of Mede and More) that if Dryden was aware of millenarianism, we can be encouraged to look for an awareness of seventeenth-century exegesis of prophecy in his writings; (2) knowing something of the extent of Dryden's interest in and knowledge of millenarianism may guide us later when we investigate the themes and structures of his poems. The second question to which we should have a positive answer is, Was Dryden aware of the seventeenth-century concepts of the prophet? If he was, then we can be encouraged to look later for ways in which he may have used those concepts of the prophet in his major poems. More importantly, however, a positive answer to the second question should encourage us to ask the third: Did Dryden believe that poets should use prophetic techniques, and if so, when did he first begin to consider the possibility? If he did advocate that poets make use of the prophetic in their works, then we may examine Dryden's major poems to see whether he adopted the prophetic stances and prophetic devices of language in the service of his high artistic and public purposes; if we can ascertain when he became interested in using the prophetic in
his poems, we can begin to look, with some assurance that the effort will be fruitful, at poems he wrote from that period on.

In addition to these three crucial questions, we may ask two ancillary questions, positive answers to which also would encourage us to look in Dryden's major poems for rhetorical stances and for devices of language characteristic of prophecy. First, even if he knew about millenarianism and seventeenth-century theories of prophecy, even if he discussed the possible usefulness of the prophetic to poets, is there any evidence that Dryden would have been willing to use prophetic techniques in his own works? Second, did he clearly use the rhetorical stances or devices of language appropriate to a prophet in his minor poems or in his prose works? If we find that he adopted the prophetic voice or prophetic devices of language in his minor poems or in his prose, then we can be encouraged to look for such a voice and for such devices in his major poems too. In short, positive answers to these five questions would reassure us somewhat that we are not "reading into" his major poems if later we discover in them what look to be the rhetorical stances and the devices of language appropriate to prophecy, for we shall be able to make the responsible assumption that Dryden was predisposed to prophesy.

Dryden's Awareness of Millenarianism

As we saw in Chapter I, seventeenth-century millenarianism fused a strong attachment to England, a conviction that the reign
of Antichrist was ending, and a conviction that the impending reign of Christ was signalled by the contemporary increase in commercial activity and in knowledge. (By "knowledge" the exegetes meant insight into the puzzling sections of the Bible, especially Daniel and Revelation, and into physical nature.) Broadly speaking, two kinds of emphasis are discernible among the seventeenth-century millenaries that we examined in Chapter I (see especially pp. 14-17): some (e.g., Cromwellian sectaries), tending to emphasize the role of Christ and of divine control as an immediate cause in political developments that would further the spiritual progress of mankind, may be labelled "religious" millenaries; others (e.g., members of the Royal Society), tending to emphasize the role of men as God's agents in bringing about commercial and scientific progress, may be labelled "secular" millenaries. Dryden often appears to deny the possibility of progress, or to believe only in the refinement of existing conditions, or to hold a cyclic rather than chiliastic view of history. Nonetheless, he refers to both kinds of millennial emphasis—and in such a way as to reveal deep awareness of each.

Dryden's awareness of the religious millenarianism characteristic of the dissenters is apparent in much of the writing he did during the Exclusion Crisis; he is always critical and contemptuous of this brand of millennial thought. In the "Prologue at Oxford, 1680," for instance, he sees great danger to the freedom of poets and to students of traditional theology if the dissenters have their way:
In the preface to Religio Laici Dryden mocks those extremists among the sectaries who dub "themselves the people of God, which 'tis the interest of their Preachers to tell them they are, and their own interest to believe; and after that, they cannot dip into the Bible, but one text or another will turn up for their purpose: If they are under Persecution (as they call it,) then that is a mark of their Election; if they flourish, then God works Miracles for their Deliverance, and the Saints are to possess the Earth." In Absalom and Achitophel he manifests the same sort of contempt for those who trust to "inspiration," misuse the Bible, and seek to overthrow the existing government in order to bring about the Millennium: as the nation grew more and more overheated in response to the supposed dangers of the Popish Plot, the Presbyterians "Resum'd their cant, and with a zealous cry/Pursued their old belov'd Theocracy"; after the Presbyterians,

A numerous Host of dreaming Saints succeed;
Of the true old Enthusiastick breed:
'Gainst Form and Order they their Power employ;
Nothing to Build, and all things to Destroy.
(Ll. 529-532; Cal. II, 21.)

On the other hand, Dryden no matter what he really believed about the possibility of man's achieving a paradise on earth, generally manifests, at least by implication, an approving attitude towards secular (i.e., commercial and scientific) millenarianism; generally he does so in a rhetorical effort to assert the importance and value of contemporary literature. In the
opening lines of *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, for instance, he establishes the cultural importance of the debate among Neander and the others by noting that it occurred on "that memorable day ... wherein the two mightly and best appointed fleets which any age had ever seen disputed the command of the greater half of the globe, the commerce of nations, and the riches of the universe" (Watson, I, 18). Later in the *Essay* (Watson, I, 26), Dryden has Crites denigrate contemporary drama by arguing that natural philosophy, not literature, is the "genius" of the Restoration:

> Is it not evident in these last hundred years (when the study of philosophy has been the business of all the virtuosi of Christendom), that almost a new nature has been revealed to us? that more errors of the school have been detected, more useful experiments in philosophy have been made, more noble secrets in optics, medicine, anatomy, astronomy discovered, than in all those credulous and doting ages from Aristotle to us? so true it is, that nothing spreads more fast than science, when rightly and generally cultivated.

Crites' statement reveals Dryden's knowledge of scientific and commercial millenarianism, but not perhaps, Dryden's own conviction about the state of literature; for, of course, as everyone knows, Dryden allows Neander, who argues for the superiority of English drama and for the possibility of perfecting contemporary drama, to have the last word—a tactic which allows the author of the *Essay* to imply that, in the effort to achieve new heights of civilization, literary progress is as important as commercial and scientific progress. Such a thesis is made explicit in "Defense of the Epilogue," wherein Dryden says that his purpose is to call to his readers' attention those qualities in which Restoration drama is superior to Elizabethan so "that poetry may
not go backward, when all other arts and sciences are advancing" (Watson, I, 169). In "A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire," where he introduces his scheme for using Christian machinery in the epic, he reasons that "something new in philosophy and mechanics is discovered almost every year; and the science of former ages is improved by the succeeding"; we must see to it, he argues, that poetry does not lag behind (Watson, II, 88).

Often Dryden eschews the scientific and commercial note when he plays upon millennial themes; in passages of this sort, the classical Golden Age becomes his symbol for a literary Millennium, a time when the heights of achievement in poetry become possible. Thus in "To the Earl of Roscomon," he implies that, since Dante had "restor'd a silver, not a Golden Age," it fell to England to do the job, which has now been completed "in Charles his Reign, and by Roscomon's Pen." Similarly, while asserting the superiority of the drama of his own time to the drama of Shakespeare's time, Dryden says in "Defense of the Epilogue" that "... the language, wit and conversation of our age are improved and refined above the last ..."; hence, any man who diligently reads the plays of Shakespeare and Fletcher "will find in every page either some solecism of speech, or some notorious flaw in sense. ..." That is only natural, Dryden implies, for "... the times were ignorant in which they lived. Poetry was then, if not in its infancy among us, at least not arrived to its vigour and maturity. ..."

"Those who call theirs [Elizabethans'] the Golden Age of poetry
have only this reason for it, that they were then content with acorns before they knew the use of bread; or that ["enough of acorns"] was become a proverb," says Dryden, using an allusion that finally makes plain the millennial motif in this progressivist argument.7

ii

Dryden's Awareness of Prophetic Exegesis

Because Dryden was aware enough of the millennial currents of his time to have developed towards them attitudes of approval and disapproval, we can inquire with some hope of a positive answer whether or not he was aware of the definition of the prophet implied in so much of the exegesis that grew out of millennial interest. The answer to this question is important; for if Dryden knew the seventeenth-century definition of the prophet, then he might well have had definite ideas about ways in which a poet could make use of prophecy. I believe Dryden was conscious of the exegetical definition of the prophet: strong indications of this awareness lie in his references to ideas that occur in works in which prophecy is discussed and in his uses, however scattered and incidental, of such words as "prophecy" and "prophet."

Dryden appears to have read at least some of the exegetical books, particularly those by the Cambridge Platonists and by Hobbes, in which discussions of prophecy occur. Four times Dryden refers to ideas that occur in the works of the Cambridge Platonists. The first instance is in "Of Heroic Plays," where,
defending the imaginative freedom he believes necessary to writers of heroic works, Dryden says he dares to "affirm that the whole doctrine of separated beings, whether those spirits are incorporeal substances (which Mr. Hobbes, with some reason, thinks to imply a contradiction), or that they are a thinner and more aerial sort of bodies (as some of the Fathers have conjectured), may better be explicated by poets than by philosophers or divines." In the next paragraph, Dryden continues the argument: "Some men think they have raised a great argument against the use of spectres and magic in heroic poetry by saying they are unnatural: but whether they or I believe there are such things is not material; 'tis enough that, for aught we know, they may be in nature; and whatever is, or may be, is not properly unnatural" (Watson, I, 161-162). Jackson I. Cope has demonstrated that Dryden's defense here against the "realism" or "naturalism" proposed for writers of epic by Davenant and Hobbes (to whom we shall turn in a moment) is based on two positions adumbrated by Cambridge Platonists (e.g., Henry More in *The Immortality of the Soul*). The first position which Dryden appears to have derived from the Platonists is that angels may exist as beings whose material substance is highly refined or "subtle." The second position is that, given God's plentitude, if a man can imagine something, God probably created that entity, though perhaps not precisely as the man imagines it; therefore there may be spirits. 8

Dryden almost certainly refers to the Cambridge Platonist concept of angels in "The Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy" (1679):
"... spirits, according to Plato, are vested with a subtle body; according to some of his followers [spirits] have different sexes ..." (Watson, I, 253). Such theories of angels are common, according to Cope, in the works of the Cambridge Platonists, but it is worth noting that they recur again and again in several works by Henry More, works in which he is discussing apocalyptic, prophetic, and millennial subjects: The Immortality of the Soul, The Grand Mystery of Godliness, and A Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity.

Dryden also refers to the Cambridge Platonist ideas about angles in a passage crucial to the whole question of his interest in prophecy. In "A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire," he says that the "perusing of one chapter in the prophecy of Daniel, and accommodating what there they [poets] find with the principles of Platonic philosophy as it is now Christianised, would have made the ministry of angels as strong an engine for the working up heroic poetry, in our religion, as that of the Ancients has been to raise theirs by all the fables of their gods. ..." Dryden argues that since, as is clear in Daniel, guardian angels are appointed over each nation, and since guardian angels could not know the whole of God's will, they struggle with one another, each for the good of his own nation. Furthermore, Dryden says, the guardian angels' job is complicated by the designs of the fallen angels (Watson, II, 88-91). Watson suggests Henry More's Philosophical Works and Exposition of the Prophecies of Daniel as Dryden's sources for these ideas, but similar passages
occur as well in More's *Modest Enquiry* (pp. 227-228) and, extensively, in *The Grand Mystery of Godliness* (e.g., pp. 24ff.), both works in which More discusses prophecy at length. In a representative passage, heavily laced with political language, from *The Grand Mystery of Godliness*, More discusses the two kinds of angels:

> Out of the whole mass... of the Anglical Nature... there arise since their Fall two distinct Kingdoms, the one of Darkness... the other of Light, which is the true Kingdom of God...
>
> Now the inward Life and spring of Motion in each Kingdom being so different, it follows that these two Kingdoms must always be at odds, and there must be a perpetual conflict till Victory. (P. 26.)

The fourth passage (one in which Dryden refers explicitly to the Cambridge Platonists) occurs in his "Life of Plutarch"; there he opines "that the Genius of Socrates... was no more than the strength of his imagination; or to speak in the Language of a Christian Platonist, his Guardian Angel" (Cal. XVIII, 256-257). This equation between imagination and guardian angel, however ironically meant on Dryden's part, is reminiscent, not of anything in Henry More's writings, but rather of the extensive discussion (noted in Ch. II, pp. 39-40) of prophetic inspiration and the imagination in John Smith's "Of Prophesie." Smith asks "by whom these Representations [in dreams and visions] were made in the Prophet's Imagination, or who ordered the Prophetical scene, and brought up all those Idolums that therein appeared upon the Stage." He answers that "the Immediate Efficient seems not to be God himself... but indeed an Angel..."¹⁰

All four of these passages allow us at least to say that
Dryden was familiar (however casually) with some Cambridge Platonist theology; furthermore, at least one of the passages—the one from "A Discourse Concerning Satire"—clearly indicates that Dryden had read and thought carefully about some Cambridge Platonist discussions of prophecy.

And, though he nowhere explicitly discusses any of Hobbes' ideas about prophecy as they occur in Book III of *Leviathan*, Dryden probably read them and thought carefully about them. We know certainly that Dryden read and thought carefully about Hobbes' materialism and political philosophy: scholars have been tracing Hobbesian ideas in Dryden's plays for some time. Evidence that Dryden had specifically read Hobbes' concepts of prophecy lies in the passage from "Of Heroic Plays" (Watson, I, 161) that we looked at just above; there Dryden refers to Hobbes' theory of the corporeality of angels, a theory adumbrated in *Leviathan*, Book III, wherein Hobbes discusses at length the nature of prophecy and the place of the prophet in a Christian commonwealth. Thus, given both Dryden's broad familiarity with Hobbes and this specific allusion to Book III, it is highly likely that Dryden read Hobbes' discussion of prophecy.

The likelihood that Dryden was aware of the concept of the prophet held by his contemporaries is supported not only by this evidence that he had read discussions of prophecy, but also by his own remarks on prophets and prophecy. I do not mean that Dryden reflects a detailed awareness of or interest in every part of the definition shared by his contemporaries, but rather that,
unsystematic and (often) ironical as his remarks on the subject are, the concepts that emerge from Dryden's uses of such terms as "prophecy" and "prophet" resemble in many ways the exegetical concepts of the prophet's qualifications, inspiration, and missions.\textsuperscript{12}

As we saw earlier (Ch. II, pp. 31-35), the seventeenth-century exegetes thought that a man could qualify to be a prophet only by being wise (i.e., sane, intelligent, learned), valiant (of good character), and rich (contented). Dryden never comments explicitly on the personal qualities necessary for prophecy. We may yet note, however, that during his discussion of prophetic poetry in "A Discourse Concerning Satire" Dryden outlines qualities he believes necessary to write modern heroic poetry, and that these qualities accord very well with qualities (i.e., wisdom, sanity, intelligence) which the exegetes say constitute the "wisdom" of a prophet. A writer who undertakes an heroic poem, says Dryden, should be one "who to his natural endowments of a large invention, a ripe judgment, and a strong memory, has joined the knowledge of the liberal arts and sciences, and particularly moral philosophy, the mathematics, geography, and history . . ." (Watson, II, 90). A few pages later, he notes that "in an epic poet . . . besides universal genius is required universal learning . . ." (Watson, II, 96).\textsuperscript{13}

To the personal qualities of wisdom, valiance, and contentment, the royalists added the criterion that the prophet must be loyal to the king (above, Ch. II, pp. 69-74). Dryden is
explicit about this criterion, and his belief in it is not surprising, of course: like the other royalists, he subscribed to the Biblical, cosmological, and patriarchal arguments for the king's supremacy; furthermore, like the other royalists, he held the belief that church and state are one, a belief which underpinned the royalist argument that kings rule even the clergy, among whom (as we have seen, pp. 69-72) were numbered the prophets. Hence, in the Dedication of the History of the League, wherein he warns Charles II that, though the Exclusion Crisis is over, the Whigs are still very strong, Dryden, not surprisingly, puts Elijah and Elisha in a favorable light for giving good advice to kings who may or may not be good rulers:

I shall be glad to be found a false prophet; but he [Elijah, in I Kings 18.41-46] was certainly inspired who, when he saw a little cloud arising from the sea . . . gave immediate notice to the king [Ahab], that he might mount the chariot, before he was overtaken by the storm. If so much care was taken of an idolatrous king, an usurper, a persecutor, and a tyrant, how much more vigilant ought we to be in the concernments of a lawful prince, a father of his country, and a defender of the faith, who stands exposed by too much mercy to the unwearied and endless conspiracies of parricides? He was a better prince [Joash, in II Kings 13. 14-20] than the former whom I mentioned out of the sacred history, and the allusion comes yet more close, who stopped his hand after the third arrow: Three victories were indeed obtained; but the effect of often shooting had been the total destruction of his enemies.

In Absalom and Achitophel--where prophets, like those in Hobbes' Leviathan, are transparently representative of the clergy--Dryden goes beyond putting prophets who are loyal to the king in a favorable light; he praises the "prophets' college" for encouraging its students to model their conduct after Zadoc and
the Sagan of Jerusalem and for thereby instilling loyalty in fledgling prophets:

The Prophets Sons by such example led,
To Learning and to Loyalty were bred:
For Colleges on bounteous Kings depend,
And never Rebell was to Arts a friend.

(ll. 870-873; Cal. II, 31.)

Dryden's remarks about the prophet's inspiration are rather more frequent than his statements about the qualifications for prophecy. Generally, like John Smith and John Spencer, Dryden seems to distrust the sort of inspiration claimed by pagans. True, in the Preface to Eleanora, he says that "we who are priests of Apollo, have not the inspiration when we please; but must wait till the god comes rushing on us, and invades us with a fury which we are not able to resist. . . ." He adds that he has "already felt it on this occasion, and prophesied beyond" his natural powers. All of this, however, is by way of a rather formal compliment to the dead lady who is the subject of the poem. Dryden's ordinary attitude towards the classical furor poeticus occurs in his explanation for the cessation (discussed by Flutarch) of the Oracle at Delphi: "I am apt to imagine the natural vapours arising in the Cave where the Temple afterwards was Built, might work upon the Spirits of those who entered the holy place . . . and incline them to Enthusiasm and prophetic madness: that, as the strength of those vapours diminished . . . so the inspiration decreas'd by the same measures: . . . That the Oracles ceas'd to be given in Verse, when Poets ceas'd to be the Priests . . . ." (Cal. XVII, 256-257).
Doubts about supernatural modes of inspiration also seem to have governed Dryden's awareness of a second exegetical commonplace—that inspiration occurs in dreams. The clearest evidence of such an awareness lies in those lines of *The Hind and the Panther* during which the Martin, who is portrayed as a false prophet, tries to get the Swallows to stay where they are instead of flying to safety. The Martin has a "boding dream/Of rising waters and a troubled stream" and consults a Sybil's leaf before advising the Swallows to stay. The poet's skepticism about prophetic dreams is evident in the next few lines: "some stagers of the wiser sort" (undoubtedly spokesmen for Dryden himself) attack the Martin's predictions on the grounds that "least of all, Philosophy presumes/Of truth in dreams, from melancholy fumes."

If the passages we have examined are representative, then Dryden is chary of believing those pagans and moderns who claimed divine inspiration as the source of their knowledge; like John Smith, John Spencer, and Thomas Hobbes, he seems inclined to find natural causes to explain pagan and modern false prophecy. As he says of Polybius, "the best sort of prophets . . . predict from natural causes those events which most naturally proceed from them."17

Still, Dryden does not seem consistent in his attitude towards inspiration. In "Of Heroic Plays" he speaks approvingly of it and even appears to encourage modern poets to be visionaries. He quotes with approval the passage wherein Petronius recommends that the epic poet try to make his work appear like
"the prophecies of an inspired soul." A bit later in the same essay, Dryden recommends that when portraying immaterial beings, the poet "let himself loose to visionary objects"; Dryden also praises Cowley for using "angels and visions in his Davideis" (Watson, I, 160-162). These statements encouraging inspiration appear to be qualified in two ways, however. First, Dryden seems to encourage writers of heroic poems to give the appearance of inspiration and visions rather than to be inspired or to have visions; second, even if we assume that he is willing to allow inspiration, Dryden seems to limit the subject matter of inspiration to immaterial beings. In short, Dryden is aware of his contemporaries' interest in inspiration, and he is willing to have poets play on that awareness, but, like many educated men of his time, he is suspicious of the process of inspiration and of saying that inspiration can bring a pagan or a modern person true information about the everyday world.

Though he seems not to have believed that pagans or moderns could be divinely inspired, he manifests no such distrust when he speaks of Biblical prophets. Elijah, says Dryden in the Dedication of The History of the League, "was certainly inspired" to foresee danger to Ahab in a cloud arising from the sea; so, presumably was Elisha when telling Joash to shoot the arrows. Another passage in which Dryden acknowledges the inspiration of Biblical prophets occurs in The Hind and the Panther; there, arguing for the necessity of Catholicism's "oral tradition" on the grounds that the Mosaic law, even though written down, has
been misinterpreted by commentators who have spoken without divine guidance, the Hind says:

No written laws can be so plain, so pure,
But wit may gloss, and malice may obscure,
Not those indited by his first command,
A Prophet grav'd the text, an Angel held his hand.

(II, 318-321; Cal. III, 149.)

Dryden, I believe agreed with the Hind's implication that Moses was divinely inspired to give the Law to the Hebrews. Furthermore, the allusion to the angel in this passage may indicate that Dryden had read John Smith's "Of Prophesie," where angels are said to be the immediate causes of prophetic inspiration (above, Ch. II, pp. 39-40).

Dryden appears, then, to have given careful consideration to the question of the prophet's inspiration. His writings also suggest that he had considered carefully several of the prophet's missions: expounding upon Scripture, foretelling, transmitting God's truth and law. Dryden comments on the practice of expounding upon Scripture in The Medall, where he puts the word "prophecy" in an ironic context to attack the enthusiasts for engaging in the practice irresponsibly:

[The Bible] was fram'd, at first, our Oracle t' enquire;
But, since our Sects in prophecy grow higher,
The Text inspires not them; but they the Text inspire.

(Ll. 164-166; Cal. II, 48.)

Similarly, although he broadens the sense so that the word refers to "religious leaders," Dryden uses the word "prophets" to mean "interpreters of Scripture" in this revelation by the Hind of difficulties the Panther, who lacks authority, faces when trying to enforce unity among English Protestants:
Now this your sects the more unkindly take
(Those prying varlets hit the blots you make)
Because some ancient friends of yours declare,
Your onely rule of faith the Scriptures are,
Interpreted by men of judgment sound,
Which ev'ry sect will for themselves expound:
Nor think less rev'rence to their doctours due
For sound interpretation, than to you.
If then, by able heads, are understood
Your brother prophets, who reform'd abroad,
Those able heads expound a wiser way,
That their own sheep their shepherd shou'd obey.

(II, 422-433; Cal., III, 152.)

The chief purpose of the prophet and the ordinary sense of
the term "prophecy" were indicated in the seventeenth century by
one word: foretelling (Ch. II, pp. 63-65). As might be expected,
this is one of the senses in which Dryden uses the term "prophecy"
most often, though he does not always seem to believe in the
possibility that predictions, particularly predictions made by
moderns or pagans, are caused by supernatural inspiration.

Flecknoe says:

... ancient Decker prophesi'd long since,
That in this Pile should Reign a mighty Prince,
Born for a scourge of wit, and flayle of Sense...

(II. 87-89; Cal. II, 56.)

But it is not clear that we should believe Flecknoe's assertion
about any subject; nor is it clear in the exquisite raillery of
this passage that Dekker should be approved for vaunting the
accession of a prince whose artistic inabilities so closely
approximate his own; nor is it clear that Dekker needed
supernatural inspiration to make such a prediction. Such
undercutting of any implication that modern persons have a
supernaturally inspired ability to foresee also occurs at times
in The Hind and the Panther. In the Tale of the Swallows, for
instance, the Swallow observes falling leaves and the beginning of cold winds:

Sad auguries of winter thence she drew,
Which by instinct, or Prophecy, she knew...  
(III, 441-442; Cal. III, 174.)

When the Panther speaks here as though "prophecy" and "instinct" were interchangeable terms, we may be inclined to see her malice towards the Catholic Swallows behind the remark; Dryden may not share her opinion about prophecy. But in an earlier passage in the same Tale, the Swallows condemn the Martin's prediction of the future:

Most prophecies are of a piece with these,
Each Nostradamus can foretell with ease:
Not naming persons, and confounding times,
One casual truth supports a thousand lying rimes.  
(III, 519-522; Cal. III, 176.)

The Panther's malice towards the Swallows or towards the Martin may be behind this attack on people who make predictions, but it is more likely that Dryden is using the Panther's voice to attack Father Petre and that Dryden himself distrusts modern men who lay claim to supernatural powers of prediction.

On the other hand, Dryden sometimes refers to moderns who engage in making predictions as though he approves of them. He praises Sir Robert Howard's poems:

... your Verse no lesse
The Prophet than the Poet doth confesse.
Ere our weak eyes discern'd the doubtfull streak
Of light, you saw great Charls his morning break.  
("To Sir Robert Howard," 11. 87-90; Cal. I, 19.)

In the Preface to Religio Laici, speaking of the dangers of Presbyterianism, Dryden quotes "our venerable Hooker," who "breaks
out into . . . [a] Prophetick speech" to foretell the difficulties that Presbyterianism will cause posterity (Cal. II, 107). These passages in which modern men are approved for making predictions are transparently hyperbolic, however, for in each case the "prophet" merely noticed evidence that no one else paid attention to at the time: Howard "discern'd the doubtfull streak/Of light"; Hooker perceived the dangers of Presbyterianism in that sect's doctrines and actions during his lifetime. The one unqualified exception to Dryden's distrust of people who make predictions occurs in the passage from the Dedication of The History of the League which we examined earlier as evidence for Dryden's belief that prophets should be loyal to kings and as evidence for his belief that Biblical prophets were supernaturally inspired. In the same passage, Dryden praises two Biblical, not pagan or modern, prophets for foretelling the future.

In addition to speaking of the prophet's missions as a Biblical commentator and as a predictor of future events, Dryden also appears to speak—though, again, often ironically and obliquely—of the prophet's mission to be a prolocutor. As a prolocutor, according to the exegetes (Ch. II, pp. 65-74), the prophet writes books of the Bible, proclaims the truth (i.e., God's or the king's point of view) and the laws of God and the king. Dryden does not speak of the prophet as a writer of Biblical books, but in some passages he does seem aware that the prophet communicates the truth and the law of God. Dryden ironically portrays the prophet as a proclaimer of the truth in Flecknoe's
apostrophe to Shadwell: "Thou last great Prophet of Tautology" (Mac Flecknoe, l. 30; Cal. II, 54). The idea of the prophet as proclaimer of the truth may also be implied in a letter to John Dennis: acceding to Wycherley’s judgments about whether a mutual friend should get married, Dryden says, "there is Moses and the Prophets in his [Wycherley’s] counsel"—an allusion (to Acts 26.22 or 28.23) that suggests the prophetic functions of seeing the truth about human nature and then advising action on the basis of the insight. Finally, in the passage from the Dedication of The History of the League that we have already examined in several other contexts, Dryden presents Elijah and Elisha as prophets who provide their kings with information from God.

The Hind and the Panther alludes several times to lawgiving as though it were a prophetic function. For instance, in order to criticize Luther for doing away with Catholic laws of fast and abstinence, Dryden mentions Mohammed as a prophet who, rather than making laws to control his followers’ sensuality, did just the opposite:

Though our lean faith these rigid laws has giv'n,
The full fed Musulman goes fat to heav’n;
For his Arabian Prophet with delights
Of sense, allur’d his eastern Proselytes.
The jolly Luther, reading him, began
T'interpret Scriptures by his Alcoran...
(I, 376-381; Cal. III, 134.)

Tenuous in that passage, the connection between prophecy and lawgiving is articulated quite clearly in a later passage that refers to Moses:
No written laws can be so plain, so pure,
But wit may gloss, and malice may obscure,
Not those indited by his first command,
A Prophet grav'd the text, an Angel held his hand.

(II, 318-321; Cal. III, 149.)

Here the Hind is defending Catholicism's "oral tradition" on the basis that, though engraved in stone, the Decalogue was obscured by unauthoritative commentaries. Dryden, then, accepts the idea that the prophet could transmit God's laws.

The evidence that he had read seventeenth-century discussions of prophecy and the evidence that he could refer (however incompletely, casually, or ironically) to the qualifications, inspiration, and missions of the prophet establish, I believe the strong possibility that Dryden was aware of the exegetes' concept of the prophet. Moreover, Dryden appears to have gone beyond mere awareness of these concepts, for he manifests decided opinions about some of them, as we have seen. With regard to the qualifications for prophecy, he evidently believes the prophet should be "wise" (i.e., sane, intelligent, learned) and almost certainly believes the prophet should be loyal to the king. Dryden seems to distrust claims that pagan and modern prophets are divinely inspired, but he seems to believe that Old Testament prophets did operate under divine inspiration.

With regard to the prophet's missions: Dryden knows that expounding upon Scripture is considered "prophecy," but he always refers to this activity disparagingly; similarly, Dryden knows that prophets are thought to predict the future, but, doubting that pagans and moderns are divinely inspired, he believes
that some men can discern future events in signs manifested naturally in the present, that some (especially pagans and moderns) who make predictions are self-deluded or fraudulent, but that Old Testament prophets actually did see the future; finally, he seems to know that prophets are thought of as proclaimers of the truth, and he appears to accept the idea that the prophet transmits God's laws.

iii

Dryden on the Usefulness of the Prophetic to Poets

Since Dryden had read and thought about prophecy carefully enough to have some considered judgments about it, the question of whether he thought the prophetic could be useful to poets is in order. If we find that Dryden said anything about the ways in which poets might use the prophetic, then we must pursue two lines of inquiry: (1) as fully and accurately as possible we must ascertain what uses, if any, Dryden believed poets could make of the prophetic; (2) to identify, for purposes of later analysis, those of his major poems in which he may have made use of the prophetic, we must ascertain as nearly as possible when he first thought of using the prophetic in poems.

We have already noticed, in the preceding section, that in "A Discourse Concerning Satire" Dryden unmistakably says that modern poets should use certain devices present in the prophecy of Daniel or developed in Cambridge Platonist discussions of prophecy. Since it contains Dryden's clearest and lengthiest
exposition of his beliefs on this matter, "A Discourse Concerning Satire" demands careful examination. The essay reveals, I think, that Dryden had a carefully thought out scheme for improving modern heroic poems through prophetic devices. In addition, I believe, Dryden implies two other conclusions in the course of the essay: first, that modern satire (as a species of the heroic susceptible of being perfected by moderns) can be as great a genre as the epic (a species of the heroic perfected by the ancients); second, that poets, in order to write great modern satires, should use prophetic devices in them.

Our first consideration must be the plan Dryden sets forth in "A Discourse Concerning Satire" for a modern heroic poem comprised, at least in part, of prophetic devices. He introduces the plan with a discussion informed by the sort of "secular" millenarianism that, as we noticed earlier, sometimes occurs when he is arguing for the necessity of improving modern poetry: "Something new in philosophy and the mechanics is discovered almost every year; and the science of the former ages is improved by the succeeding." To help poets keep up with their contemporaries in other fields, he offers to "advance an invention of . . . [his] own, to supply the manifest defect of . . . new writers." The sources of his "invention" are appropriate to the millennial note in his introduction: modern poets should be engaged in the "perusing of one chapter in the prophecy of Daniel, and accommodating what there they find with the principles of Platonic philosophy as it is now Christianised . . ." (Watson, II, 88).
The plan itself has three parts. The first part, evidently the most important to Dryden, is the use of angels and devils, treated from a Cambridge Platonist perspective, as "machinery": guardian angels, acting as "tutelar genii" of various nations but ignorant of God's overall plan for history, may legitimately be presented as opposing one another and the good of nations not their own, much as the Greek and Roman gods oppose one another in classical epics and just as the angel of the Persians and the angel of the Greeks oppose one another in Daniel; of course the devils might try, principally "by their fraud and cunning," to bring confusion upon whatever good ends the angels were trying to achieve. Second, having suggested means of generating conflict, Dryden discusses subjects that he had considered earlier in his career: "... I was doubtful whether I should choose that of King Arthur conquering the Saxons ... or that of Edward, the Black Prince, in subduing Spain, and restoring it to the lawful prince. ..." Third, having already indicated that he would have used the prophetic device of tutelary angels, Dryden suggests another prophetic device, the use of typologies for "prediction": "... after Virgil and Spenser, I would have taken occasion to represent my living friends and patrons of the noblest families, and also shadowed the events of future ages, in the succession of our imperial line" (Watson, II, 88-92). His mention of Virgil, whose Aeneid is historical allegory of a kind, might seem at first to suggest that Dryden has this classical model foremost in mind, but we must remember that he
begins this discussion with Daniel, that Spenser is a religious
and allegorical and therefore (in the Cambridge Platonist
exegetical sense) prophetic poet, and that an important verb
phrase in the sentence ("shadowed the events of future ages")
echoes the language of Biblical exegetes who discuss prophetic
allegory and figura.\textsuperscript{21} Hence, Dryden may be implying here a
fusion of the classical and Biblical, the kind of fusion that
some critics have found to be typical of him.\textsuperscript{22} We are safe in
saying, then, that of the three ingredients Dryden discusses for
a modern epic, one—feuding angels—certainly has its origin in
his reading in prophecy and prophetic commentary and that
another—allegory—may have its origin in such reading.\textsuperscript{23}

But "A Discourse Concerning Satire," I think, embodies, in
addition to this clearly outlined scheme for a modern heroic poem
comprised in part of prophetic devices, implications about the
relationship of the satiric to the heroic and about the use of
prophetic devices in modern satire. As Sanford Budick points
out, "... for Dryden the critic, satire and epic are not
conflicting modes. He asserts, in fact, that satire is
'undoubtedly a species' of 'heroic poetry.' This is not an
offhand statement. It is a conviction that is supported by the
entire design of the lengthy essay, A Discourse Concerning the
Original and Progress of Satire (1693), in which it occurs.\textsuperscript{24}\\nDryden, implies Budick, did not insert the digression on his
plan for a Christian epic into the "Discourse" by accident:
the poet deliberately intended the reader to see the possibility
of using heroic devices in satire.

Eudick is correct, but he does not, I think, go far enough. For the implications of the design of the "Discourse" are not merely that satire is a species of heroic poetry, but that modern satire can be as great as ancient epic and, furthermore, that the poetic devices that would be useful to writers of modern epics also would be useful to writers of modern satire. Dryden implies these conclusions, I believe, by introducing, overtly or implicitly, five propositions as his essay proceeds:

1. Though perhaps no modern writer could succeed at epic as well as the ancients, nonetheless, some "ages have been more happy than others in the production of great men, in all sorts of arts and sciences," and it is possible in our age that "... some great genius many arise to equal any of the Ancients..."; indeed, "... this age and the last, particularly in England, have excelled the ancients in both [tragedy and satire]" (Watson, II, 81).

2. Modern heroic poetry, using machinery derived from the Cambridge Platonist commentaries on the prophecies of Daniel, may be possible; indeed, a great writer following such a model "may build a nobler, more beautiful, and more perfect poem than any yet extant since the Ancients" (Watson, II, 90; see also pp. 88-92).

3. In part because the more ancient an art form is, the greater it is, epic is greater than tragedy (Watson, II, 96). Satire, which is "almost as old as verse" (Watson, II, 97), is very ancient too—and therefore as great as epic.
4. Modern writers of satire would do well to emulate Boileau, who uses heroic versification (i.e., iambic pentameter) for purposes of ridicule (Watson, II, 147-149).

5. Satire "is undoubtedly a species" of "heroic poetry, itself" and hence should use "the beautiful turns of words and thoughts" requisite to heroic poetry (Watson, II, 149).

As I see it, these propositions converge to form an argument that runs as follows: A modern who concentrates on satire can "equal any of the ancients" (emphasis mine), presumably even writers of ancient epics (Proposition 1). And there is no disgrace in concentrating on satire rather than epic, for satire is, like epic, a species of heroic poetry, and at least as ancient as epic (Propositions 3 and 5). The ambitious modern would do well to use the traditional devices of heroic poetry in his satires (Propositions 4 and 5). And he would do well to write his satiric poem, which might be greater than any modern epic ever written, using not only these traditional devices, but also devices borrowed from the Cambridge Platonist commentaries on the prophecy of Daniel (Proposition 2). Thus, by placing his "digression" on modern epic in the context of his comments about the nature of satire, Dryden, if I am correct, does not really digress at all from the subject of his essay, but instead both raises the merits of satire and calls for the use of Cambridge Platonist devices, prophetic devices, devices appropriate to a modern Christian poem, in it.

Since Dryden has reflected so carefully on the possible
usefulness of the prophetic to modern poets, we can be encouraged to examine his major poems to see if he ever moved beyond theory to incorporate prophetic devices in them. But in order to know which of the major poems to examine, we should first determine—in so far as is possible, given the fragmentary evidence available—just when Dryden began to think that modern poets should make use of the prophetic. After all, he may not have considered such a possibility until 1692, when "A Discourse Concerning Satire" appeared; in that case, we could look for prophetic devices only in his very late poems. The evidence points the other way, however, for indications in his critical writings are that Dryden was considering using prophecy in poems at least as early as 1672—and perhaps as early as the 1660s.

One intriguing note that may help us determine when Dryden had connected Cambridge Platonist theories of prophecy to a theory of the epic is his statement in the "Discourse" itself that his sketch for a Christian heroic poem is the fruit of years of thinking: the sketch, he says, is but "a rude draught" of a poem that he has been long considering; he had once intended to leave the stage in order to write this poem, which would have taken his lifetime to complete (Watson, II, 91). Now Dryden's first public avowal of intent to leave the stage to "make the world some part of amends for many ill plays by an heroic poem" occurs in the Dedication of Aureng-Zebe, a dedication written in 1676 (Watson, I, 191). And hints in this and other essays of the 1670s suggest that Dryden has in mind the same sort of epic that
he elaborates upon later in "A Discourse Concerning Satire" (1692). In the Dedication of Aureng-Zebe, for instance, he seems to hint at the subject of the Black Prince's settling the Spanish succession and at the device of a historical allegory (Charles II "and his royal brother are the heroes of the poem"). In "Of Heroic Plays" (1672), he quotes approvingly, as we observed earlier, the passage from Satyricon in which Petronius recommends that the "free spirit [of the epic poet] . . . plunge into allusions, into divine interventions, and strive after mythological references, so that there appears rather the prophecies of an inspired soul than the precision of a statement made by oaths before witnesses." In the next paragraph, Dryden himself—on the authority of arguments derived, as we have seen, from Cambridge Platonists—says that since the poet has complete freedom when portraying immaterial beings, he must "let himself loose to visionary objects, and to the representation of such things as [depend] not on sense . . . ." (Watson, I, 161); and in the following paragraph, he commends Cowley for making "use of angels and visions in his Davideis" (I, 162). In "The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry and Poetic Licence" (1677; but The State of Innocence, to which it formed the preface, was probably written in 1673), Dryden advocates the use of hippocentaurs, chimeras, angels, and immaterial substances on the grounds that (1) images of unnatural beasts are but the combination of images derived from nature, and (2) images of angels and immaterial substances "are authorized by Scripture in their description: and herein the text
accommodates itself to vulgar apprehension, in giving angels
the likeness of beautiful young men" (Watson, I, 204).

Taken together, these passages from his writings of the
1670s reveal Dryden's interest in the relationship between
prophetic visions and epic visions, his interest in justifying
on the basis of Scripture the use of angels as machines, his
interest in the subject of the Black Prince and in the use of
history to write a predictive allegory—all concerns of the
later essay of 1692, in which he explicitly connects epic poetry
and Cambridge Platonist theories of prophecy. Now the earliest
piece in which this scheme is broached with any clarity is the
Dedication of Aureng-Zebe (1676); but there Dryden tells the
Earl of Mulgrave, much as he tells Dorset in the "Discourse
Concerning Satire," that "Your Lordship has been long acquainted
with my design. . . ." Hence, I think we are justified in
accepting Dryden's earliest mention of prophecy and epic as
evidence that the Cambridge Platonist scheme is taking shape in
his mind. That earliest mention occurs, as does the passage which
justifies our belief that he had read Cambridge Platonist theories
of angels and Hobbes' discussion of prophecy (above, pp. 91-95),
in the comments on Petronius in "Of Heroic Plays," which was
written in 1672.

Yet indications that he thought about the possibility of
using prophetic devices begin earlier than 1672—at least as
early, if I am correct, as 1667. One of these hints is his
observation, during his discussion in "A Discourse Concerning
Satire" of using angels and devils as machinery, that Milton had already used angels and crafty devils for this purpose: Milton "has given us an example of the like nature, when Satan, appearing like a cherub to Uriel, the Intelligence of the Sun, circumvented him even in his own province, and passed only for a curious traveller . . ." (Watson, II, 91). Even though the "Discourse" appeared in 1692, this sentence introduces the possibility that upon the first publication of Paradise Lost in 1667 Dryden knew Milton was using devices similar to those analyzed by the Cambridge Platonists (Henry More discussed his theory of angels as early as 1659). Another indication that Dryden may have been thinking about prophecy and poetry as early as 1667 occurs in a work he published that year—the "Account of the Poem" prefixed to Annus Mirabilis. There Dryden uses the image of the spaniel to explain the nature of the fancy—an image probably borrowed, as we have seen, from Leviathan, in Book III of which Hobbes presents his theory of prophecy.

These two slender hints that Dryden may have been thinking about the usefulness of prophecy to poets by the 1660s are supported by others, admittedly even more slender. For one, as a student at Cambridge, Dryden may well have known the work the Platonists were doing while he was there; aside from the new scientists, the Platonists were, after all, the most interesting and controversial minds at Cambridge during that time. For another, as an early student of epic and as an admirer of Cowley, Dryden undoubtedly read Cowley's preface to Poems (1656),
where, in the course of defending the subject of the *Davideis*,
the idol of Dryden's youth derides classical subjects and
expatiates at length upon the proposition that "all the Books
of the *Bible* are either already most admirable and exalted pieces
of Poesie, or are the best *Materials* in the world for it":

> When I consider . . . how many other bright and
> significant subjects . . . the Holy Scripture affords
> and proffers, as it were to *Poesie*, in the wise
> managing and illustrating whereof the *Glory of God*
> Almighty might be joyned with the singular utility
> and noblest delight of Kankinde: It is not without
> grief and indignation that I behold that *Divine*
> Science employing all her inexhaustable riches of
> *Wit* and *Eloquence* . . . [in flattery or upon trivial
> subjects].

> It is time to recover it [poetry] out of the
> *Tyrants* [Devil's] hands, and to restore it to the
> *Kingdom* of God, who is the *Father* of it.31

Dryden's point is not as evangelistic as Cowley's, and the
later poet's focus is upon technique rather than subject matter;
nonetheless, the direction of his argument and his impatient
attitude towards classical gods as opposed to the Judeo-Christian
God indicate that in "A Discourse Concerning Satire" Dryden may
have had in mind Cowley's argument for using the Bible:

> . . . Christian poets have not hitherto been acquainted
> with their own strength. If they had searched the Old
> Testament as they ought, they might there have found
> the machines which are proper for their work; and those
> more certain in their effect than it may be the New
> Testament is in the rules sufficient for salvation.
> The perusing of one chapter in the prophecy of Daniel,
> and accommodating what there they find with the
> principles of Platonic philosophy as it is now
> Christianised, would have made the ministry of angels
> as strong an engine for the working up heroic poetry,
> in our religion, as that of the Ancients has been to
> raise theirs by all the fables of their gods, which
> were only received for truths by the most ignorant
and weakest of the people.  
(Watson, II, 88-89.)

Thus, when he says in 1692 that he has been "long labouring in" his imagination about the possibility of using prophetic devices in an heroic poem, Dryden may well be referring to a point as early in his career as the 1660s. 32

iv

Dryden's Attitude Towards the Prophetic: Ancillary Considerations

The convergence of evidence, then, indicates strongly that we would find it worthwhile to investigate Dryden's poems written during and after the 1660s to see if in them he acted as a prophet and used prophetic devices of language (i.e., figures of speech and symbols): he appears to be aware enough of the millennial currents of his time and of the definition of the prophet shared by his contemporaries to have considered opinions about these subjects; he advocates that Christian poets, in their attempt to bring modern poetry to heights of perfection that would match or surpass the heights reached by the ancients, use prophetic techniques; from a point early in his career, he considers using these techniques to enhance the power and perfection of his own art.

To the major pieces of evidence adduced so far may be added two ancillary, but nonetheless significant, indications that Dryden is predisposed to adopt the prophetic mode in his major poems. First: enormously confident of his ability to control and transform whatever subject or technique comes into his ken,
Dryden is willing, in the service of his artistic purposes, to adjust or to use anything in the stock of subjects and devices available to poets. Second: he often adopted the "voice" of a prophet in his prose and minor poems.

Even if Dryden did not advocate (as he does) the use of techniques derived from prophecy, his mere awareness that they are available, when coupled with his awareness that his readers are profoundly interested in prophecy, should make us suspect that he would somehow assimilate the prophetic into his poetry. For in his statements about adjusting poetic techniques to his audience and subject matter, Dryden reveals himself, I think, as a deep-dyed pragmatist; my impression is that, in the attempt to overmatch the power and perfection of the ancients, he was willing to make any adjustment necessary if doing so would enhance the effectiveness and perfection of the work at hand. As he says in "The Defense of An Essay," "... my chief endeavours are to delight the age in which I live" (Watson, I, 116). Similarly, discussing poetic license in "The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry," he says that he does not know how far a poet should take liberties with figures of speech, "but it is certain that they are to be varied, according to the language and age in which an author writes"; two paragraphs later he adds that wit is "a propriety of thought and words; or in other terms, thought and words elegantly adapted to the subject" (Watson, I, 205-207). 33

And, in addition to his willingness to adjust poetic
techniques to enhance the effectiveness and perfection of his work, Dryden, confident of his masterful control, believes that he can shape any subject matter or technique to his own high purposes. He is not afraid to use "known fables," he says, because what matters is not so much the fable itself but what is done with it: "The materia poetica is as common to all writers as the materia medica to all physicians," he says. He is even willing to use poetic devices without believing in their ontological or theoretical bases. In the Preface to Albion and Albanius, for instance, he defends at length the use of gods and goddesses in opera, even though he is himself a Christian, and he defends the use of sweet but rather meaningless songs rather than "lofty, figurative, and majestical dialogue": both the gods and meaningless song are a part of operatic form, he says, and "the first inventors of any art or science . . . are, in reason, to give laws to it; and according to their model, all after-undertakers are to build" (Watson, II, 34-35).

No doubt his advocacy of the use of prophetic and Cambridge Platonist material is informed, at least in part, by such lofty and confident pragmatism. For in his discussion of the prophetic style advocated by Petronius, Dryden insists that an epic poet is more likely to be successful if allowed scope in subject matter:

... an heroic poet is not tied to a bare representation of what is true, or exceeding probable: but... he may let himself loose to visionary objects, and to the representation of such things as depending not on sense; and therefore not to be comprehended by knowledge,
may give him a freer scope for imagination.
(Watson, I, 161.)

Similar pragmatic concern for the freedom of the poet occurs when Dryden is discussing the use of machinery adopted from the book of Daniel: Dryden says that he does not want to be prescriptive, that he wants instead to leave the manipulation of the tutelary angels to the discretion of those who aspire to write heroic poems: "... how far these controversies and appearing enmities of those glorious creatures may be carried; how these oppositions may best be managed, and by what means conducted, is not my business to show or determine: these things must be left to the invention and judgment of the poet" (Watson, II, 90).

Moreover, as if it were not enough that he is aware of the millennial and prophetic theories of his time or that he advocated and would be perfectly willing to use prophetic techniques, Dryden on occasion explicitly speaks in the voice of a prophet in his minor poems and in his prose works. True, he sometimes does so casually or hesitantly or with mild self-irony; nonetheless, he does speak as a prophet, and sometimes quite seriously. Early in his career, he praises Robert Howard, who had published a book of poetry, as a prophet and celebrator of famous men; then Dryden concludes the poem by adopting the prophetic pose himself:

Yet let me take your Mantle up, and I
Will venture in your right to prophesy.

"This Work by merit first of Fame secure
Is likewise happy in its Geniture:
For since 'tis born when Charles ascends the Throne,
It shares at once his Fortune and its own."
("To Robert Howard," ll. 101-106; Cal. I, 20.)

He is more playful than that in the "Prologue to the Second Part
of The Conquest of Granada," where, after first establishing as
a vehicle the guessing of the playhouse wits at the identity of
a lady in a mask, he continues by exposing the tenor:

Just so I Prophecy, these Wits to day,
Will blindly guess at our imperfect Play:
With what new Plots our Second Part is fill'd;
Who must be kept alive, and who be kill'd.
(ll. 21-24; Kinsley, I, 134.)

In "To Mr. Congreve," the pose is not playful, for Dryden seems
intent upon claiming for himself and for Congreve the same exalted
positions ironically denied Flecknoe and Shadwell in Mac Flecknoe:

... this I Prophecy; Thou shalt be seen,
(Tho' with some short Parenthesis between:)
High on the Throne of Wit; and seated there,
Not mine (that's little) but thy Lawrel wear.
(ll. 51-54, Kinsley, II, 853.)

Quite earnest is the passage quoted earlier (p. 97) from the
Dedication of The History of the League, a passage in which Dryden
adopts the pose of a prophet (though he would be happy to be found
a false one) in order to warn Charles against the dangers of
treating the sectaries too gently after the Oxford prorogation.

The evidence that Dryden, in the interest of making his art
as effective and perfect as possible, was pragmatist enough to have
used any technique or material available to poets suggests, in
light of his knowledge of millennialism and prophecy and in light
of his having advocated the use of the prophetic in poems, that
looking for the prophetic in his major poems would be worthwhile.
His use of the prophetic "voice" in prose and in minor poems
suggests, I think, that not to look for such a voice in his major works would be irresponsible.

Dryden's Prophetic Practices

It is time, then, to examine Dryden's major poems closely in an effort to determine whether, in the interest of his artistic and public purposes, he adopts the rhetorical stances (i.e., the manner and missions) of a prophet and whether he uses devices of language identified as prophetic by his contemporaries.

The Prophet's Rhetorical Stance. From the perspective of what we know about Dryden and his place in the kingdom, his assumption of a prophet's stance in major poems seems almost inevitable. He was aware, so far as we can tell, that his times were alive with millennial expectation and prophetic concern; and he was a writer keenly aware of the need to find a "voice," to adopt a tone, a posture, to which his audience would respond. Furthermore, as Historiographer Royal and Poet Laureate—to put it bluntly, as a spokesman for the king—his place in the kingdom lent Dryden just the sort of authority that the royalists would have demanded of a prophet. After all, King Charles II is said to have asked this poet to write Absalom and Achitophel and The Medall; and Dryden himself hints that Charles asked him to translate The History of the League. Nor is Dryden hesitant to cloak himself in his rank, for in
those poems that he wrote in the service of a king—Annus Mirabilis (written even before he became Historiographer Royal and Poet Laureate), Absalom and Achitophel, The Medall, The Hind and the Panther—he adopts the tone of a man who has confidence in his political position and in his perspective on the truth.

A prophet's stance is determined only in part by an authoritative "voice," however; according to the seventeenth-century exegetes, that voice must inform and give life to a special set of missions: expounding upon Scripture, predicting, and acting as prolocutor for God and the king. Expounding upon Scripture is the chief concern of Religio Laici, and it occupies significant portions of The Hind and the Panther (e.g., I, 460-495, in Cal. III, 136-137). Chiliastic prediction dominates the conclusions of Annus Mirabilis (where London rebuilt is envisioned as the New Jerusalem) and of Absalom and Achitophel ("Henceforth a Series of new time began"37); a large part of Mac Flecknoe is taken up with Flecknoe's predictions of what Shadwell's reign will be like; a plague of sectarian vermin is among the predictions at the end of The Medall (ll. 304-305; Cal. II, 52); and The Hind and the Panther closes, in the stories of the swallows and the chickens, with two apparently contradictory predictions about the fate of the Catholics in England. Nor, though Dryden's belief in the certitude of their fulfillment is doubtful, are these incidental or joking predictions; each is part of a serious poem, and each (excepting perhaps Mac Flecknoe) is an effort on Dryden's part to shape the intentions
and actions of the populace toward some goal that Dryden considered of crucial public concern.

Dryden's major poems also fulfill the prophet's complex mission as prolocutor. According to the exegetes, one of the prolocutor's chief functions is to tell the people God's truth, generally by writing sacred history in a book of the Bible or by commenting on current events and people from a divine or royal perspective (above, pp. 64-74). Dryden writes his own quasi-Biblical book in Absalom and Achitophel, and it very likely that, as Sanford Budick says, "The Hind and the Panther is . . . an adaptation of allegorical Holy Writ--of the complex beast fable of Daniel." 38

Writing books of the Bible is only one role subsumed under the title prolocutor; the other role is to inform the people of God's (or the king's) will in matters of religion, morals, and politics, and to judge the people on the basis of whether or not they live up to His (or the king's) commands. Dryden is often concerned with communicating God's (and the king's) will on religious matters in his poems, principally, of course, in Religio Laici and The Hind and the Panther; in its preface, he even defends the Horatian style of Religio Laici on the grounds that in a poem "designed purely for Instruction . . . the Poet is presum'd to be a kind of Law-giver . . . " (Cal. II, 109). He celebrates God's and the king's will concerning political affairs in the concluding vision of London as a New Jerusalem in Annus Mirabilis (e.g., Sts. 293-295 in Cal. I, 203), and in
Absalom and Achitophel he pauses (11, 753-810; Cal. II, 28-29) to explain the divine basis for the rule of kings. The most startling examples of his assumption of the right to pass judgment in God's or the king's name occur in The Medall, which ends with a curse predicting all the evils that will fall on the kingdom if the sectaries triumph over the king (ll. 288-317; Cal. II, 51-52), a curse preceded by another one for Shaftesbury:

What Curses on thy blasted Name will fall!
Which Age to Age their Legacy shall call;
For all must curse the Woes that must descend on all.
(ll. 260-262; Cal. II, 51.)

But such outright curses are rare in Dryden, whose every impulse, as would be expected of a royalist prophet (above, pp. 72-74), is to achieve the public peace:

What Prudent men a settled Throne woud shake?
For whatsoe'r their Sufferings were before,
That Change they Covet makes them suffer more.
(Absalom and Achitophel, ll. 796-798; Cal. II, 29.)

... after hearing what our Church can say,
If still our Reason runs another way,
That private Reason 'tis more Just to curb,
Than by Disputes the publick Peace disturb.
(Religio Laici, ll. 445-448; Cal. II, 122.)

Harsh passages—such as the curses in The Medall, or the biting language directed at the Calvinists in the preface to Religio Laici and in The Hind and the Panther—may seem out of place if Dryden is acting as a peacemaker; but he is being harsh in those places only because he believes the sectaries will not accommodate themselves to the Restoration settlement and hence, for the sake of public peace, must be absolutely subdued. As he says in Absalom and Achitophel (ll. 925-926; Cal. II, 33), "... no
Concessions from the Throne woud please,/But Lenitives fomented the Disease."

In short, Dryden's rhetorical stance in the major poems accords very well with the stance that, in the light of the exegetical discussion of prophetic missions, might be expected of a prophet. That is not to say, of course, that Dryden never adopted any other voice or purpose in his writings or even that he never fused the prophetic role with other roles in his major works---e.g., his claims to be acting as an "historian" in Absalom and Achitophel or as an Horation lawgiver in Religio Laici nicely complement what may be his prophetic role in each of these two poems.

The Prophet's Devices of Language. Dryden seems also to have adopted a number of devices of language that the seventeenth-century exegetes thought the Biblical prophets used (above, Ch. II, pp. 52-61; below, Appendix). Here we are on dangerous ground. One danger lies in assuming uncritically that, because one writer's rhetorical theory resembles a second (and contemporary) writer's practice, the second writer necessarily drew upon the first. In this case, we might be assuming without warrant that, because More (for example) is a contemporary of Dryden and because More's theory of prophetic rhetoric includes devices that Dryden uses, Dryden necessarily drew upon More's theories when writing poems. The danger is somewhat less than it might be, however, for, as we saw earlier, Dryden was aware of contemporary prophetic theories, and he had thought about and advocated using
some prophetic devices, at least in epic.

But lessening one danger immediately engenders another. For Dryden’s discussions and advocacy of prophetic devices in his critical statements are, at first glance, somewhat limited in scope: he refers explicitly only to one prophetic book, Daniel, and to Cambridge Platonist theories about angels, theories found (according to Watson) in Kore’s *Immortality of the Soul* (1659) and *Exposition of... the Prophet Daniel* (1681); moreover, Dryden appears to discuss the use of Cambridge Platonist theories of angels only in relation to "heroic poems," not in relation to satire or to specific poems of his own. The danger, then, lies in assuming that More and Smith had a greater influence on Dryden’s poetic practice than the evidence will allow us to believe reasonably.

Once more, however, the danger is probably more apparent than real. There are several reasons for believing so. First, as we shall see later, many of Dryden’s images seem to be identical, even in phrasing, to those analyzed by Kore in the second part of *A Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity*. Second, any critic of Dryden may count on the poet’s wide-ranging and assimilative intellect: whatever his own position, Dryden’s reading and understanding of the political, literary, and religious issues of his age was broad and thorough, especially regarding issues that concerned him deeply. Consequently, we are fairly safe in assuming that, just as he thoroughly studied for the writing of *Religio Laici* the implications of deism and of Father
Simon's textual principles, just as he thoroughly studied and understood the ancient and modern theories of drama, so also, since he was demonstrably interested in its usefulness, would he have read more widely in the exegesis of prophecy that The Immortality of the Soul and the Exposition of the . . . Prophet Daniel. Indeed, as we saw earlier, Dryden gives some indication of having read (at least as early as 1672) More's Grand Mystery of Godliness and Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity, and John Smith's "Of Prophesie."

A third reason for asserting that there is little danger in assuming that Dryden was widely knowledgeable about theories of prophecy is that his poetic practice is often broader than or different from his stated critical principles. The differences between the two are illustrated in the emphases on different habits of his mind discussed in two recent books on Dryden; the books are entitled (for my purpose here, almost too neatly) Dryden's Criticism and Dryden's Poetry. Both books are attempts to see Dryden in the light of his times, and both agree that he is a Christian humanist. But Earl Miner, in Dryden's Poetry, sees the poet drawing upon the theology of the humanists (Aquinas, Hooker), seventeenth-century religious belief, royalist politics, and Renaissance individualism, while Robert D. Hume, in Dryden's Criticism, sees the critic drawing upon the classicism of the English humanists, French neo-classicism, and Hobbesian empiricism. Neither book is mistaken of course, nor, I suspect, would either scholar deny the truth of what the other has to say;
each writer might lament the other's emphasis, however, because
each is studying a different area of Dryden's works. The
important point is that Dryden's critical theory does not
always represent a full statement of the issues and techniques
that occupy him in his poetry.

Fourth, it would probably be a mistake to assume on the
basis of what he says about the usefulness of prophetic devices
to composers of heroic poems that Dryden did not perceive the
possible usefulness of such devices to writers of poems other
than epics. As we saw earlier (pp. 111-112), Dryden seems to
imply in "A Discourse Concerning Satire" that, since epic and
satire are both species of heroic poetry, prophetic devices
should be used in both kinds of poems.

We may now begin an examination of Dryden's rhetorical
devices with some confidence that they are derived in part from
those noticed by seventeenth-century exegetes in their analyses
of Biblical prophecy. Three such devices are apparent, I believe,
in Dryden's poems: (1) a style that is sometimes heavily
figurative or allegorical ("obscure" or "dark"), sometimes less
figurative and more "concise," "pure and elegant"; (2) the use
of prophetic figures of speech and of what More calls prophetic
icons; (3) the manipulation of time.

In "A Discourse Concerning Satire," the same essay in which
he appears to advocate that poets use prophetic devices, including
allegory, in satire, Dryden agrees with Heinsius that the satirist
should speak "figuratively and occultly"; in its context, this
dictum may indicate that Dryden perceived a similarity between the nature of allegory as it occurs in Biblical prophecy and in classical satire. If in fact Dryden did perceive such a similarity (again, the context indicates to me that he did), then the allegorical nature of some of his works demands examination, for Dryden's practice in some of them may be in accord with the nature of allegory as it is discussed by the seventeenth-century exegetes. The allegories in three of his major poems are interesting in this regard. Mac Flecknoe, on its face a panegyric about the heir to the throne in the Realms of Nonesense, is an allegory about the nature and tradition of dullness in English literature; Absalom and Achitophel is a Biblical allegory bearing on the Exclusion Crisis; and The Hind and the Panther is a beast allegory about the struggle between the True Church (in Dryden's eyes) and various heresies or schismatic groups. Now according to the exegetes (above, Ch. II, pp. 49-52), an allegory is "dark" or unintelligible to some men, but not to those possessed of requisite information. In all likelihood, each of these three poems would have appeared "dark" (to differing degrees and in different ways) to some seventeenth-century readers, but not to all of them. Mac Flecknoe—with its rapidly shifting chiarascuro of allusions to the classics and the Bible, to Cowley's Davideis, to seventeenth-century playwrights—was probably unintelligible to any seventeenth-century reader unacquainted with all of these elements; on the other hand, the poem probably was lucid enough to the relatively small group of wits and poets moving in the
world of the court and playhouse. *Absalom and Achitophel* was intelligible (on a basic level) to an audience wide enough to make the poem a best seller; on the other hand, the poem would have remained dark to persons (probably a small number in Dryden's England) not acquainted with II Samuel and the Exclusion Crisis, and certainly the poem's classical motifs were lost to all but the educated. *The Hind and the Panther*, though its theological debates are clear in exposition, is called "this Mysterious Writ" by Dryden himself (III, 2; Cal. III, 161), and a good deal of the poem's meaning evidently remained obscure even to seventeenth-century readers who, like Montague and Prior, failed to perceive its integration of beast fable and theme, imagery and argument. 43

The exegetes do not always think of the prophetic style as obscure and allegorical, however; John Smith, as we saw in Chapter II (pp. 59-60), has high praise for the style inspired by the Dictate of the Holy Spirit, a style he characterizes as "pure and elegant," "full of beautie and comeliness, concise, yet withall exceedingly accurate"; prophets writing in this style use "such a dress of language [i.e., figures and parables] to set off their own sense of Divine things, which in itself was more naked and simple. . . ." This style, thought Smith, was characteristic of the Psalms, where it is used to praise God, but in other books (e.g., Proverbs, Ecclesiastes) it is used, according to Smith's version of Maimonides, to "discourse concerning the Sciences or Arts . . . or profitable and wholesome
Rules of good living, or matters Political and Civil, or such as are Divine. .. ." These comments by Smith suggest, I think, not only the style, but also the subject matter of Religio Laici as Dryden described them:

The Expressions of a Poem, design'd purely for Instruction, ought to be plain and Natural, and yet Majestick: for here the Poet is presum'd to be a kind of Law-giver, and those three qualities which I have nam'd are proper to the Legislative style. (Cal. II, 109.)

True, Dryden defends the legitimacy of this style by appealing to Horace, and, as J. W. Corder has pointed out, Religio Laici has the structure of a classical oration.45 But neither of these classical models precludes Dryden's having the hagiographic style also in mind; and if, as Sanford Budick has argued, Religio Laici is substantially dependent for its theology and unity on the Cambridge Platonists (including John Smith),46 the same may be true of its style.

Besides writing at times in styles that appear to accord with exegetical descriptions of styles appropriate to a prophet, Dryden also uses, apparently with allegorical significance, figures of speech and iconographic images that strongly resemble the prophetic figures of speech and icons outlined by Henry More (above, Ch. II, pp. 53-55; and below, Appendix). Several times Dryden uses figures of speech resembling four of those in More's list—zoopœia, hylasmus, henopœia, and Israelismus. Two passages in Dryden's poems seem to be modelled directly on More's examples of the varieties of zoopœia.47 In the first variety, says More, some inanimate thing is represented by "what has life, be it a
Person, or any other living Creature." More gives as one example Revelation 11. 8-9, wherein St. John says that the "two witnesses" will be killed, after which "their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt"; there "the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see dead bodies three days and a half. . . ." More says that the two witnesses may represent "the Two Books of the Old and New Testament." In the coronation procession in Mac Flecknoe, Dryden presents the books of the bad authors as though the books were the authors' bodies, and he shows them scattered in a street of Augusta:

No Persian Carpets spread th' Imperial way,  
But scatter'd Limbs of mangled Poets lay:  
From dusty shops neglected Authors come,  
Martyrs of Pies, and Reliques of the Bum.  
Much Heywood, Shirly, Ogleby there lay,  
But loads of Sh— — almost choakt the way.

In the second type of zoopœia, says More, "free actions are attributed to free agents, of which notwithstanding they may be no more the causes then if they were inanimate Beings, or not in being at all." One of his examples is taken from Revelation 6.9, wherein the souls of the faithful under the altar cry out, "How long, O Lord . . . dost thou not avenge our blood? . . ." In The Hind and the Panther, Dryden, trying to present Catholics in the best possible light, transforms the passage from Revelation into a plea from Catholics that God forgive their enemies: the "vocal blood" of the Catholic Martyrs "arose/And cry'd for pardon on their perjur'd foes . . ." (I, 15-16; Cal. III, 123).

The figure hylasmus, says More, "impresses strongly upon
the Phancy by exhibiting crass and palpable Objects, such as in Logick would bear the Notion of Subject or Matter." In using one kind of hylasmus, the prophet represents a person or group allegorically by discussing some physical object—More gives the example of a city and a temple—somehow associated with them; in another kind, the prophet uses physical qualities or the shape of the object to evoke allegorically the spiritual characteristics of an individual or group. Dryden uses a figure bearing a strong resemblance to the first type of hylasmus in Mac Flecknoe, to characterize the mood of the people of London:

Close to the Walls which fair Augusta bind,
(The fair Augusta much to fears inclin'd).

(Ll. 66-70; Cal. II, 55.)

Both kinds of hylasmus occur in The Medall, I believe. One section of the poem begins with a figure that appears to be an hylasmus of the first type (here it is also an apostrophe):

London, thou great Emporium of our Isle,
O, Thou too bounteous, thou too fruitfull Nile,
How shall I praise or curse to thy desert!
Or separate thy sound, from thy corrupted part!

(Ll. 167-170; Cal. II, 48.)

Then, using physical details to indicate a spiritual condition, he continues the passage with what appears to be an hylasmus of the second type:

I call'd thee Nile; the parallel will stand:
Thy tydes of Wealth o'rflow the fattend Land;
Yet Monsters from thy large increase we find;
Engender'd on the Slyme thou leav'st behind.

(Ll. 171-174; Cal. II, 48.)

He follows this image with an enumeration of the virtues and faults of the populace. Earlier in the same poem occurs a passage
that strikingly fulfills More's definition of the second type of hylasmus, the physical characteristics of an object (in this case, the medal) used to represent allegorically the character of the person under discussion (Shaftesbury):  

Never did Art so well with Nature strive;  
Nor ever Idol seem'd so much alive:  
So like the Man; so golden to the sight,  
So base within, so counterfeit and light.  
(Ll. 6-9; Cal. II, 43.)

Henry More discusses two kinds of henopæia, only one of which Dryden appears to use. One creature, beast or man, says More, may represent either a multitude or a succession of persons. As examples, More cites the use of the chimerical and ordinary beasts to represent kings and kingdoms in Daniel and Revelation (see Appendix). Dryden seems to be using this sort of henopæia in lines 541-681 of Absalom and Achitophel. The passage, which is preceded by an explanation of the various sects that were in full cry during the Exclusion Crisis, begins

Such were the tools; but a whole Hydra more  
Remains, of sprouting heads too long, to score.  
(Ll. 541-542; Cal. II, 21.)

The hydra, of course, had long been associated with the beast of Revelation 17, in part because the beast seen by St. John had seven heads. Accordingly, Dryden's list of excessively tall heads that remain to be scored includes, from Zimri to Corah, seven names. A similar passage occurs in the opening section of The Hind and the Panther, wherein, after introducing the "Milk white Hind," Dryden catalogues, from the "bloody Bear" to the Panther, seven beasts opposed to the Hind (I, 1-150; Cal. III, 123-137).
Each, of course, represents a multitude of individuals. The passage concerning "false Reynard" is particularly interesting because, just as in part of More's explanation of henopœia, the fox also allegorically represents a succession of persons and groups, including Arius, Socinus, and their followers down to modern times:

False Reynard fed on consecrated spoil:
The graceless beast by Athanasius first
Was chas'd from Nice; then by Socinus nurs'd
His impious race their blasphemy renew'd,
And natures King through natures opticks view'd,
Revers'd they view'd him lessen'd to their eye,
Nor in an Infant could a God descry:
New swarming Sects to this obliquely tend,
Hence they began, and here they all will end.

(I, 53-61; Cal. III, 124.)

Israelismus, says More, consists of "speaking of the affairs of the Christian Church under the names and with allusion to such places, or persons, or things, as did of old concern the Israelites and the people of the Jews, and that in a mystical or spiritual meaning." Referring to Revelation 11.8, wherein Jerusalem is called, "spiritually," Sodom and Egypt, he adds that the Christian Church may also be represented by those titles. This figure seems to have been particularly attractive to Dryden, perhaps because he lived in a nation in which the people often thought of themselves as the New Israelites and at a time when political theorists thought of church and state as one (see above, pp. 6-10, 70). In any case, the poet appears to have made effective, and often extensive, use of the figure in his works. One minor but telling passage in which Israelismus seems to occur is in The Hind and the Panther, where, having sketched the
martyrdoms, difficulties, and increases in numbers of the Catholic population in England, Dryden sums up the Romanists' situation:

So Captive Israel multiply'd in chains
A numerous Exile, and enjoy'd her pains.

(I, 19-20; Cal. III, 123.)

The figure is particularly effective here because the English, as I said, were used to thinking of themselves as Israel; they were also used to thinking of the Catholic Church (controlled by those two Antichrists the pope and Louis XIV) as Egypt; but Dryden wittily reverses all that by making the Catholics appear as Israelites exiled to an Anglo-Egyptian bondage.

He also uses, in Absalom and Achitophel, a figure that fulfills More's definition of Israelismus—so obviously and pervasively that this apparent instance of the figure need not be illustrated here. The crucial question about the presence of Israelismus in this poem is whether Dryden's use of it came about, at least in part, because he read More. There are two possible objections to a claim for More's influence. First, we know that the story of Absalom and Achitophel's revolt had been used as early as the reign of Charles I and had been applied to Shaftesbury and Monmouth during 1679-1680; second, we also know that Nathaniel Lee, in his complimentary verses (1677) on The State of Innocence, had urged Dryden to use the Davidic parallel to tell Charles II's story. But the mere fact that Dryden saw others using the parallel does not preclude his being aware that he was using a figure of speech Henry More considered prophetic.
Furthermore, the place and time of Lee's urging of the parallel suggest that Lee is encouraging Dryden to use a device Dryden himself had discussed with Lee at an earlier date: Lee's verses are attached to The State of Innocence in 1677; but as we saw earlier (pp. 115-118), Dryden probably had been thinking about using prophetic devices by that time and even hints at their use in his preface to the same opera. Moreover Dryden's use of Israelismus at this time in his career does not seem to be restricted to Absalom and Achitophel; he appears to use the device again, in a different way, almost immediately, in The Medall.

In conjunction with his use of the analogy between Israel and England in Absalom and Achitophel, Dryden's use of the analogy in The Medall illustrates his ability to use any given tool at his disposal in different ways. In Absalom and Achitophel, wherein England always appears as Israel and London as Jerusalem, Israel dominates the poem; in The Medall, Israel is more submerged but still all-pervasive. For though England is clearly seen as England and London as London, they are both painted in decidedly Hebraic colors and judged by God in the same manner as He judges the Hebrews. Dryden achieves the Hebraic coloring and judgment by alluding to Numbers, Exodus, Judges, I and II Kings—Old Testament books in which the Jews or their leaders constantly fall into idolatry and then, after being punished by the Lord, temporarily rise out of their fallen state only to fall into idolatry again.

Crucial examples of Hebraic coloring and judgment in Old
Testament allusions lie in lines near the beginning and near the end of the poem, lines that help to frame The Medall in the same situations that open and close Exodus 32. In the first verses of Exodus 32, the gathered people persuade Aaron to make a golden calf; in The Medall, "English Ideots" run in crowds to see the golden idol of the Whig medal. The last line of Exodus 32 tells us that "the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf . . ."; the penultimate lines of The Medall (294-305; Cal. II, 51-52) tell us that plagues will be visited upon the English. Some of these plagues—"Frogs, and Toads, and all the Tadpole Train"—allude to an earlier passage in Exodus (8.3-7), though there they are directed against Egypt; and Dryden's sarcasm about the English who are never satisfied—"We loath our Manna, and we long for Quails" (1. 131; Cal. II, 47)—alludes, of course, to Hebrew complaints and their overwhelming consequences in Numbers 11, a chapter which, like The Medall and Exodus 32, closes with the Lord's smiting "the people with a very great plague." Other allusions to Old Testament books occur in the poem, and we shall examine some of them in the next chapter; but it should be clear by now that such allusions serve not only to paint England as another Israel, but also as Israel in her worst colors. Hence the allusions function as devices of judgment.

Along with prophetic figures of speech like Israelismus and the others, Dryden also uses iconographic images that appear to be derived from the prophetic iconisms (i.e., allegorical images and symbols characteristic of and having special significance in
prophecy) listed by Henry More. In fact, the poet often uses images with precisely the significances—sometimes a dual significance, political and spiritual—that More indicates; sometimes the poet even uses phrases that appear to echo More's.

In *Annus Mirabilis*, for instance, Dryden, writing the passage of transition from the war at sea to the fire of London, says,

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Each Element his dread command obeys,
Who makes or ruines with a smile or frown;
Who as by one he did our Nation raise,
So now he with another pulls us down.
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(St. 211; Cal. I, 91.)

The element with which God raised England was, of course, the water of the seas on which the war with Holland was fought; the element with which God is to pull England down is the fire with which much of London is to be consumed. More discusses the significances of water under the headings *Water*, *Sea*, and *Rivers*, where in addition to spiritual interpretations, he gives this element several secular significances that Dryden implies: water signifies "the gathering together of people into one Body Politick, Kingdom or Jurisdiction; a calm sea means that a king will enjoy his kingdom in peace..."

"Waters are also meant of worldly affluency..." Fire, says More, "is a various Symbol, and signifies as well good as ill, but always in a way of Consumption or Destructiveness: but when it destroys that which is bad it is good." As an illustration of a prophetic passage supporting that last interpretation he quotes Malachi 3:

"Who shall abide the day of his coming? For he is like a refiner's
fire, and like fuller's sope [i.e., soap]: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purifie the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.\(^5\) Dryden has the same concept in mind, for the fire that is to pull London down (St. 211) will not do merely that, but will also, like the fire in which the world will end, cause the city to "fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire" (St. 212; Cal. I, 91); later, Dryden says, in language that echoes Malachi (and Revelation), that

\[\text{... from this Chymick flame,} \\
\text{I see a City of more precious mold:} \\
\text{Rich as the Town which gives the Indies name,} \\
\text{With Silver pav'd, and all divine with Gold.} \\
\text{(St. 293; Cal. I, 103.)}\]

Dryden also uses images that closely resemble More's iconisms in Absalom and Achitophel. Under the heading "philtre" More explicates the "wine of the wrath" of the Whore of Babylon's fornication; he says that the wine of wrath signifies wrath, poison, venom, and thus is a love potion suitable to a whore; to support this interpretation, he quotes Deuteronomy 32.33:

"Their wine is the poison of Dragons, and the cruel Venom of Asps." Serpents, of course, because of the "Serpentine shape which deceived Adam and Eve," are always associated with the devil in prophecy. And drunkenness is an icon for "being so filled and intoxicated with the pleasures and affluences of this world, as to be regardless and senseless of the things of God." More quotes Isaiah 29 to establish this interpretation of drunkenness: "They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink."\(^5\) Dryden portrays Achitophel's
temptation of Absalom in images startlingly close to those More
discusses. First, Achitophel, whom Dryden has already associated
with Milton's Satan (ll. 145, 169-173, 202-203), begins,
serpentlike, to work on Absalom:

Him he attempts, with studies Arts to please,
And sheds his Venome, in such words as these.
(Ll. 228-229; Cal. II, 12.)

The temptation speech that follows has suitable poisonous and
intoxicating effects on Absalom:

Th' Ambitious Youth, too Covetous of Fame,
Too full of Angells Metal in his Frame:
Unwarily was led from Vertues ways;
Made Drunk with Honour, and Debauch'd with Praise.
(Ll. 309-312; Cal. II, 14.)

His worldly drunkenness continues and increases ("Desire of
Greatness is a Godlike Sin," he exclaims) during and after his
reply to Achitophel; Dryden presents the boy's condition in the
same word that More quotes from Isaiah 29: "Him staggering so
when Hells dire Agent found . . ." (Ll. 373; Cal. II, 16;
emphasis mine). This worldly drunkenness of Absalom identifies
him with the Great Whore of Babylon in Revelation 17.6.

In The Medall, Dryden carries out much of the
characterization of Shaftesbury in imagery similar to that
discussed in More's list of icons. Discoursing on the significance
of water as an "Hieroglyphick of Words and Speech," More says,
quoting Proverbs 13.28. that "the mouth of the wicked poureth out
evil things. But never so bad as when it poureth out such
speeches as tend to strife and contention, which is like cutting
a bank in the Sea and over-flowing all." Dryden discusses
Shaftesbury's advice about the Triple Alliance in precisely those terms:

Thus, fram'd for ill, he loos'd our Triple hold;
(Advice unsafe, precipitous, and bold.)
From hence those tears! that Ilium of our woe!
Who helps a pow'rfull Friend, fore-arms a Foe.
What wonder if the Waves prevail so far
When He cut down the Banks that made the bar?
Seas follow but their Nature to invade;
But He by Art our native Strength betray'd.

(Ll. 65-72; Cal. II, 45.)

Still attacking Shaftesbury's use of language, Dryden uses again the images of whore, serpent, poison, and disease that he has already used in Absalom and Achitophel:

But thou, the Pander of the Peoples hearts,
(O Crooked Soul, and Serpentine in Arts,)
Whose blandishments a Loyal Land have whor'd,
And broke the Bonds she plighted to her Lord;
What Curses on thy blasted Name will fall!
Which Age to Age their Legacy shall call;
For all must curse the Woes that must descend on all.
Religion thou hast none: thy Mercury
Has pass'd through every Sect, or theirs through Thee.
But what thou giv'st, that Venom still remains;
And the pox'd Nation feels Thee in their Brains.

(Ll. 256-266; Cal. II, 50-51.)

These motifs are continued in lines 294-297.

One of Dryden's most complex uses of icons similar to those discussed by More occurs in The Hind and the Panther during the tale of the swallows. There, in Part III, lines 595-621, Dryden has the Panther use a set of interrelated images—sun, moon, stars; eclipse; wind and hail—to foretell allegorically disasters that the Panther believes will overtake the English Catholics. The Panther begins this part of the story by setting the scene: the sun having just entered the winter solstice,

An infant moon eclips'd him in his way,
And hid the small remainders of his day. . . .

(III, 601-602; Cal. III, 179.)

Consequently, darkness falls on the swallows:

Night came, but unattended with repose,
Alone she came, no sleep their eyes to close,
Alone, and black she came, no friendly stars arose.

(III, 607-609; Cal. III, 179.)

More says that, according to Achmetes, the sun can represent the king, "the Moon the next in power to him, and the rest of the bigger Stars the Princes or Nobles of the Kingdom." So far, then we can see that if he is using More's list, Dryden has created a little political allegory: James II (the sun) is removed from power and succeeded by someone else (the moon); no friendly nobles (stars) arise to help the Catholics. But evidently the allegory in the passage is more thorough than that, for the sun is blocked by an eclipse, which brings on the night. That is altogether fitting according to More's schema, wherein the sun is associated not only with the king, but also with "the works of Righteousness" and the moon with "the works of Darkness." Furthermore, according to More the "inglorious obscurity and duskiness" of an eclipse "is referred to the person of the King, and implies an imminution of his glory." Darkness, or "the extinction of . . . [lights] against a Man's will," represents "affliction and distress from a man's enemies proportionable to the darkness." The Panther appears to be predicting that James II's rule will end at the hands of a rebel; she also appears to be predicting the end of protection for Catholics. In the darkness that will come "alone and black,"
they will be in deep trouble indeed.

In imagery apparently derived from Henry More's discussion of the icon hail, the poem continues the series of disasters encountered by the swallows. They seek shelter under wings of their mother, but she "could not cover all"; then,

T'augment their woes, the winds began to move
Debate in air, for empty fields above,
Till Boreas got the skyes, and pow'r'd amain
His rattling hail-stones mix'd with snow and rain.

(Ill, 618-621; Cal. III, 179.)

The similarity between this passage and More's discussion of the icon hail is quite striking in language and political significance:

_Whenas Winds and Storms signify Political Commotions and Warres, as is acknowledged by Grotius and all other Interpreters that they doe, as in Daniel 7:2 (where the Four Winds of Heaven are said to strive upon the great Sea,) well may a storm of Hail signify War and Incursion of the enemie; and especially if they come from the North, the congealedness of this Meteor bearing upon it the character of that Quarter._

In addition to using in his poems figures of speech and icons similar or identical to those pointed out by the exegetes as characteristic of prophecy, Dryden also uses another device that appears to be derived from exegetical analyses of prophetic rhetoric: the manipulation of time. According to some exegetes (see Chapter II, pp. 55-59, and Appendix), the prophets, especially Daniel and St. John, have three ways to manipulate time: (1) the use of a time code, involving such metaphors as day:night::sun:moon::good:bad; (2) the use of synchronals, that is, either the telling of the same allegorical story in two different ways and at two different places in the prophecy so that
the prophet appears to be telling two different stories, or the narration of two different but simultaneous events in such a way that their simultaneity is not immediately apparent; (3) the use, apparently based on the assumption that the prophet temporarily transcends time, of fictional or actual characters and events to render judgment on past, contemporary, or future men and events. Dryden appears to use all three of these techniques in his major poems.

The prophetic time code involved, in part, the use of a set of natural symbols to indicate whether good or evil forces were affecting the lives of God's people. The day and the sun represented a period when good forces were operating; the moon and night represented a period when evil forces were operating. The difficulty with pointing out this particular cluster of symbols in Dryden's poetry lies, obviously, in their very naturalness: any poet unaware of exegetical commentary might use them. Nonetheless, such symbols do appear in some of Dryden's poems, and sometimes in contexts that indicate that he is most likely drawing upon More or upon some catalogue of icons similar to More's. One such occasion is the passage that we examined a few pages ago from *The Hind and the Panther* (III, 596-621) wherein the sun's eclipse by the moon brings on a night of troubles for the swallows. Two elements of the context indicate that this use of sun/moon/night imagery probably comes from More (or from another exegete who lists prophetic icons). One is that the other images—eclipse, stars, wind and hail—have meanings so
close to those indicated by More that we may assume justifiably that he (or another seventeenth-century student of icons) is the source for sun/moon/night. A second indication is the obvious political meaning of the passage, a meaning so close to More's explication of identical images that to deny the probability of his influence (or, at least, of the influence of seventeenth-century studies of prophetic iconography) would be irresponsible.

Another occurrence of the imagery of the time code is in a passage of *Annus Mirabilis* concerning the night before the third day's battle; Albemarle, believing he will be defeated the next morning, looks out at the sea and broods:

The Moon shone clear on the becalmed floud,
Where, while her beams like glittering silver play,
Upon the Deck our careful General stood,
And deeply mus'd on the succeeding day.

That happy Sun, said he, will rise again,
Who twice victorious did our Navy see:
And I alone must view him rise in vain,
Without one ray of all his Star for me.
(Sts. 99-100; Cal. I, 74.)

The presence of the moon makes it clear that this is an evil time for the English; but though Albemarle does not know it, the "happy sun" will bring a victory for God's people. Albemarle should know, however, that a "becalmed floud" bodes well, for according to More, if a king "see the Sea calm, he will enjoy his Kingdom in peace."63 It is, of course, the juxtaposition of moon and sun images in the context of the calm sea image that makes it highly likely that Dryden was borrowing from a catalogue of icons such as More's.

Whether Dryden used synchronals, the second device
available to prophets who manipulate time, is more problematic than his use of the time code. As we observed in Chapter II (pp. 55-56), the prophet using synchronals does one of two things: so that he appears to be telling two different stories, he tells the same story in two different allegories and in two different places within the same overall allegory; or he narrates two different but simultaneous events in such a way that their simultaneity is not immediately apparent. I do not believe that Dryden does precisely either of these. I suspect, though, that he is influenced by the first of these techniques in his narration of the two predictive allegories on the future of English Catholics at the end of The Hind and the Panther. Admittedly, the Tale of the Swallows implies the abdication or death of James II, while the Tale of the Chickens implies his staying in power, and so, strictly speaking, the stories do not predict the same events. But the similarities to the synchronistic technique are striking. The subject of both stories is the same: the future of Catholics under James II. Both stories are allegories. And both are essentially similar in plot: a "false" church (Catholic or Anglican) is (at least apparently) destroyed when it puts faith in someone (the Martin or the Buzzard) who is foreign to the best in its nature.

If Dryden's use of synchronals in the major poems is somewhat problematical, his use of the device of transcending time in order to pass judgment is not. An important example of his use of this technique is The Hind and the Panther. There he
transcends time by constructing a beast fable fashioned upon emblematic and apocalyptic models and by focussing throughout on a central figure, the Hind, that is "immortal and unchang'd" and that is involved with and discourses upon the past, present, and future (the successive emphases of Parts I, II, and III). Unlike the characters in Absalom and Achitophel or The Medall, the characters in this poem are not ostensibly historical but *prima facie* fictions—beasts who talk and act, not because they ever did in reality, but because the poet makes them do so. Having no reality of their own, they, unlike King David or Shaftesbury, have no significance of their own; they attain significance because the poet puts certain kinds of them together (the same kinds as occur in Daniel and Revelation and the sacred zoographies) and then makes them talk on certain subjects and act in certain ways so as to establish their significance for the reader. Once they are in the context of the poem, these fictional beasts become icons of certain groups (e.g., the Wolf of Calvinists, the Fox of Socinians) or individuals (e.g., the Martin of Father Petre). But as icons, they also become devices through which the prophet may pass judgment. Any panther, for instance, has evil significance because of its characterization in the sacred zoographies as crafty, subtle, and cruel; any Panther seen with a bear and a lion in a poem about religion is related somehow to the evil and (in seventeenth-century eyes) antichristian leopard of Daniel 7:3-7. The
Panther in this poem not only brings associations of such qualities into the poem, but also acts them out. Hence she becomes a fictional construct through which the speaker can pass prophetic judgment on an actual group of people: Anglicans. This sort of poetic construct, in which Dryden speaks of the past, the present, and the future while passing judgment on groups and individuals by means of imagery, somewhat resembles the nature of prophetic allegory as it is analyzed by Grotius (above, Ch. II, pp. 58-59; below, Appendix). According to Grotius, the writer of Revelation uses allegorical constructs (i.e., the heads of the Beast) to portray and pass judgment on individuals and groups; some of these existed in the past, some are his contemporaries, and some will exist in the future.

* * * * * *

We have been examining Dryden's major poems analytically—as though they were laboratory specimens: having cut them open, we have found that they give every sign of being constituted, to some extent at least, of prophetic parts. But if we stop there, we shall have done a disservice both to the poems and to their modern readers; for poems, of course, are more than specimens dissected on a table. To serve Dryden's art properly, we must go on to answer still another question, one that goes beyond mere analysis: Does understanding that Dryden was influenced by seventeenth-century exegetes of prophecy and that he incorporated prophetic devices into his major poems help us to read each of them with greater sensitivity and with greater
pleasure than we do at present? In other words, we must begin to look at these poems with new eyes.
Footnotes to Chapter III

1Footnotes to Chapter III

Dryden, "To Sir Robert Howard," l. 101, in The Works of John Dryden, ed. by E. N. Hooker, H. T. Swedenberg, Jr., et al. (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1961- ), I, 20. Nearly all of the quotations from Dryden's poems in this chapter are from this edition; citations (henceforward placed in parentheses within the text whenever possible) include, after the numbers of the lines quoted or referred to, the volume number and page(s) of the California edition, e.g.; l. 101; Cal. I, 20.


3For Bodin's cyclic view see above, Ch. I, p. 15. For Dryden's cyclic views, see the following passages in John Dryden: Of Dramatic Poesy and Other Critical Essays, ed. by George Watson ("Everyman's Library," London: Dutton, 1962): Essay of Dramatic Poesy, I, 26, 44; "Parallel Betwixt Poetry and Painting," II, 192; "A Discourse Concerning Satire," II, 81. All subsequent references to this edition will be cited as "Watson"; whenever possible, citations will be placed in parentheses in the body of the chapter.

A. E. W. Maurer notes that Dryden sometimes questions and sometimes denies the possibility of progress; see the commentary on the Life of Plutarch, in Cal. XVII, 436-437. Earl Miner argues that Dryden, while holding that absolute perfection must wait for the Second Coming or for heaven, does believe in progress, or at least refinement: Miner, "Dryden and the Issue of Human Progress," PQ, 40 (January 1961), 120-129.


5Preface to Religio Laici, in Cal. II, 108; see also the similar passage in the Postscript to The History of the League, in The Works of John Dryden, ed. by Walter Scott and George Saintsbury (London: 1882-1893), XVII, 158-160. In subsequent notes, this edition will be cited as S-S.

Watson, I, 170-172 (phrase in brackets is Watson's translation of a Greek phrase that Dryden quotes); see also pp. 178-181, where millennial motifs occur later in the same essay during a discussion of refinement in courtliness and wit in Dryden's generation.


In the examples that follow I limit myself to poems and prose of which Dryden is the sole and original author; I eliminate from consideration those works which Dryden translated or on which
In "Dryden and 'Satire'" (SEL, 11 [Summer 1971], 401-416), a thoughtful exposition of the background, structure, and implications of A Discourse Concerning Satire, William Frost notes (pp. 412-415) that Dryden uses the Earl of Dorset as a model for the personality of the ideal satirist. According to Frost, Dryden's portrait of Dorset is an attempt to overcome the image, inherited from the Elizabethans, of the "satyr character," the coarse, lubricious, woodland fellow who incoherently curses townspeople for their sins. This portrait of Dorset does not occur directly in Dryden's discussion of prophetic devices, and so the connection between the portrait and the character of the prophet is highly tenuous. Still, I should like to raise the possibility that the character Dryden gives to Dorset is informed by the list of qualifications that John Smith and John Spencer supply for the character of the prophet. Such a possibility exists if, as I shall argue later in this chapter, Dryden is arguing that modern epic and satire should embody devices derived from Biblical prophecy.

The exegetes asserted that the prophet should be "wise" (sane, intelligent, knowledgeable), of good character, and "rich" (contented). Dryden indicates Dorset's "wisdom" by saying that the nobleman is a man of "good sense," of "an elevated understanding," possessed of "a happy, abundant, and native genius," that in Dorset as in Homer and Shakespeare are found "all arts and sciences, all moral and natural philosophy." Dryden indicates Dorset's good character by praising his patron's great inclination to do good, by pointing out how attractive a personality Dorset has, by calling Dorset the "best of men," a man of "good nature" who writes satire full of "candour." Finally, Dorset must be considered a contented man, for, as Dryden points out, the Earl is prosperous and generous—in fact, he is so contented with his lot in life that it has made him an indolent writer. (See Watson, II, 72-77.) We must allow, of course, for the ceremonial nature of this passage, but even so, the correspondences between this characterization of Dorset and the exegetical list of qualifications for prophecy are striking.

submit breeds dissension and turmoil in the kingdom (Cal. II, 102-108)—an argument common to such royalists as Hooker, Spencer, and More (above, Ch. II, pp. 69-73).

15 "To the King" (Dedication of The History of the League), S-S, XVII, 85-86. Note the patriarchal assumption in Dryden's second sentence.

16 "To the Right Honourable the Earl of Abingdon, etc." (Prefixed to Eleanora), in Watson, II, 61.

17 "Character of Polybius," in S-S, XVIII, 48. Lines 236-238 of Absalom and Achitophel (Cal. II, 12) allude to Joel 2.28, where prophets are said to have dreams, but that sense is not quite clear in Dryden's syntax.

18 "To the King" (Dedication of The History of the League), in S-S, XVII, 85-86.

19 "Letter to John Dennis" (1694), in Watson, II, 180.

20 Sanford Budick has also noted the importance of this section of "A Discourse Concerning Satire"; see his Dryden and the Abyss of Light, Yale Studies in English, No. 174 (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 191-207, where he discusses the passage as a theoretical basis for the machinery of The Hind and the Panther. I discuss his analysis, which differs somewhat from mine, below, pp. 110-111.


A recent book on Dryden's uses of typology—Dryden's Political Poetry: The Typology of King and Nation, by Steven N. Zwicker (Providence: Brown Univ. Press, 1972)—arrived too late to affect the direction and details of my argument but not too late to prevent me from discussing here the nature and importance of Zwicker's argument or to prevent me from recommending the book to all serious students of Dryden.

In his first chapter, Zwicker provides a general definition of typology: "the practice of scriptural exegesis that reads in various Old Testament figures, events, and institutions a Christian, if not specifically Christological meaning"; he points out that in the 17th century, exegetes emphasized the special relationship—pre-ordained, historical—between an OT type and its fulfillment in a NT antitype (usually Christ). Then Zwicker makes an extremely useful distinction between devotional typology (in which OT events...
foreshadowing events in the life of Christ were used as paradigms of events in the spiritual life of Christians) and correlative or political typology (in which OT events [e.g., Absalom's rebellion], institutions [e.g., Israel], and persons [e.g., David] are in a special, pre-ordained historical relationship to contemporary events [e.g., Exclusion Crisis], institutions [e.g., England], and persons [e.g., Charles II], and in which both of these--OT past and English present--are seen as "shadows" of events, institutions, and persons in the NT). If I had had these distinctions in hand, my own discussion of the prophet's use of language (e.g., Israelismus) would be more exact.

In the course of making these distinctions, Zwicker introduces four interrelated considerations that are important for an understanding of the force of correlative typology:
(1) The English (Puritan and Anglican) tendency to see England as the New Israel was not merely a metaphor, for Englishmen believed (2) that the relationship between ruler and people in England was convenantal and justified on the basis of OT models, (3) that England was continually re-enacting the Christian paradigm (rebellion and Fall in Eden, followed by misery and then by redemption under a Christ-like monarch), and (4) that England (as the New Israel) was leading the world to the Millennium. Except for the third of these items, I discuss these matters in Chapters I and II; I regret not having considered the third item, for it accords nicely with my discussion in Chapter II of the prophet's transcendence of time.

Having distinguished between the kinds of typology, Zwicker proceeds to distinguish among typology and allegory (which he presents as a purely literary device in which the events, institutions, and persons ostensibly under discussion are not as important to the author or the readers as the "obscurely" presented truth) and analogy (which Zwicker, differing with Alan Roper, sees as too loose a term to be particularly useful in discussing Dryden's poems).

In his second chapter, Zwicker makes some very important points concerning the history of typology in the 16th and 17th centuries (1) Puritans tended to use Judges to justify a commonwealth, while the Anglicans tended to use David, Solomon, and other Jewish kings to justify a monarchy; (2) Elizabeth and James I were usually presented as David, Solomon, and Christ, but Charles I's execution caused sermon writers and others to present him as Christ during the Passion and to present the people of England as recalcitrant Jews (as in Numbers); (3) after the Restoration, royalists presented themselves as the loyal Jews who had undergone a Babylonian exile during the Interregnum; (4) during the Restoration, royalists tried to re-establish the typology of OT king and covenanted people. Had I been aware of it, this history of the uses of typology in the 17th century would perhaps have caused me to alter slightly some perspectives that I offer in Chapter IV and here in Chapter III.

In the spirit of constructive criticism (for it is clear that Zwicker and I agree more than we differ on these matters),
I should like to suggest that some difficulties occur in the course of Zwicker's argument (no doubt he would perceive some in mine). (1) He focuses precisely and intently but, I believe, too narrowly upon typology and thus upon historical books of the Bible (e.g., Numbers, Samuel). This narrowness of focus is caused, I suspect, by Zwicker's failure to grasp the importance of chiliasm (a subject he mentions but does not really explore) to 17th-century exegesis. Thus Zwicker does not see (or at least does not perceive accurately) the importance in the 17th century of allegorical books (Daniel and Revelation), and he does not perceive the possible relationships (pointed out in More's discussion of mixed allegory) between typology and Biblical allegory. Consequently, though he does not misread Dryden's poems, Zwicker, I believe, does not grasp as fully as he might the extent to which Dryden made use of Biblical devices (not, of course, that any of us do). (2) Zwicker assumes—apparently on the basis of very little direct study of the question (see p. 13 of his book)—that Dryden had thought carefully about 17th-century typological exegesis. I think Zwicker is correct, but I also think that he should have made a more thorough search in Dryden's works for statements (such as the one quoted paragraph to which this note is appended) relating to exegesis and typology; furthermore, Zwicker might have examined those of Dryden's works (e.g., The History of the League) in which Dryden explicitly presents "parallels." In these ways, by drawing upon Dryden's theory and practice outside of the poetry, Zwicker might have gained a somewhat precise understanding of Dryden's attitudes towards typology and thus a more refined or complete understanding than he now has of Dryden's Biblical practices. (3) At one point (pp. 63-64), Zwicker discusses the 17th-century understanding of two prophetic missions (advising and foretelling) and asserts that Dryden fulfills these missions; but, accurately or not, Zwicker makes these assertions only briefly and bases them on evidence that is quite slender indeed. Again, had he followed this issue up, perhaps his focus would have widened, thus allowing him to see a greater number than he now does of the various prophetic roles that Dryden plays in the poems.

In Chapters 3-5, Zwicker analyzes uses of typology in several of Dryden's political poems; despite the criticisms I have outlined above, I believe he there establishes more firmly than has been done heretofore the importance of the Bible to Dryden the poet. In Chapter IV (below), I have appended, to my discussion of each of the poems that we have both taken up, a note containing an assessment of Zwicker's argument regarding that poem.


Budick, Abyss of Light, pp. 192-193.

Before either of us had read Budick's Abyss of Light, Professor A. E. W. Maurer alerted me to the possibility that in this digression Dryden is trying to raise the importance of satire by presenting satire as a form of heroic poetry, but Professor Maurer is not responsible for the formulation of the argument that follows on the next few pages.

Dedication of Aureng-Zebe, in Watson, I, 191.

This translation of Dryden's quotation from the Latin of Petronius is by Watson (I, 160, n. 1). Dryden quotes Petronius as follows: Non enim res gestae versibus comprehendenda sunt, quod longe melius historici faciunt: sed, per ambages, deorumque ministeria, precipitandus est liber spiritus, ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat, quam religiosae orationis, sub testibus, fides. Dryden himself reads vaticinatio to mean "prophecies," for he says that Petronius is speaking of "the fury of a prophet" (Watson, I, 160). The passage from Petronius was a locus classicus of Renaissance criticism: see W. P. Ker, ed., Essays of John Dryden (New York: Russel & Russel, 1961), I, 309, note for p. 154, 1. 4.


"Account of the Poem," in Cal. I, 53. See also "To Roger, Earl of Orrery" (Prefixed to The Rival Ladies), in Watson, I, 8, n. 2; Hobbes, Leviathan, Part III, Ch. 32 (pp. 242-246), and Ch. 36 (pp. 272-285).


Sanford Budick seems to imply that Dryden was familiar with books on prophetic theory written as early as the 1650s: Dryden and the Abyss of Light, pp. 201-207.
Dryden was fond of this definition of wit: see the "Account of the Poem" (Prefixed to *Annus Mirabilis*), in Cal. I, 53, and the Preface to *Albion and Albanius*, in Watson, II, 34.

Preface to *Don Sebastian*, in Watson, II, 48-49. See Budick's comments on this passage in *Abyss of Light*, p. 192.

In this paragraph I discuss only four instances in which Dryden adopts the pose of a prophet. He does so in four other places, which, to keep the discussion from becoming repetitious, I do not quote: "Prologue Spoken at the Opening of the New House," in Cal. I, 148-150; Dedication of *An Evening's Love*, in Cal. X, 198; Preface to *The Spanish Friar*, in Watson, I, 279; Preface to *Eleanora*, in Watson, II, 74.

For the story of the King's suggestions that Dryden write *Absalom and Achitophel* and *The Medall*, see Tonson's introduction to *Second Part of Miscellany Poems*, 4th ed. (London, 1716), I, 196; see also Joseph Spence's *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men, Collected from Conversation*, ed. by James K. Osborn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), II, 614. The story that Charles II spoke to Dryden directly about the design of *Absalom and Achitophel* before the poem was written has been seriously questioned by A. E. W. Maurer in "Who Prompted Dryden to Write *Absalom and Achitophel*?," *PQ*, 40 (January 1961), 130-138; Maurer offers evidence to show that Seymour suggested to Dryden the writing of such a poem.


Budick, *Abyss of Light*, p. 227; in Ch. IV, I shall argue that *The Hind and the Panther* is adapted from Revelation as well as from Daniel.


Watson, II, 143; noted by Budick, in *Abyss of Light*, p. 227.

43 Budick, Abyss of Light, pp. 229-237; Miner, Dryden's Poetry, pp. 147-148, 192-199.


46 Budick, Abyss of Light, pp. 75-77, 46-162.

47 More's explanation of zoopœia occurs in A Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity, Part II (Synopsis Prophetica), pp. 219-220.

48 Mac Flecknoe, 11. 98-103, in Cal. II, 56-57; see also 11. 169, 212-213.

49 More discusses hylasmus in Modest Enquiry, p. 217.

50 A. E. W. Maurer—in "The Design of Dryden's The Medall," PLL, 2 (Fall 1966), 293-304—argues that, to respond to the Whig medal, Dryden "struck his own medal" in verse; if Maurer is correct, then the whole of the poem qualifies as an extended hylasmus.

51 More, Modest Enquiry, pp. 218-219.


53 More's discussion of Israelismus occurs in Modest Enquiry, pp. 221-223.


55 Modest Enquiry, pp. 248-249, 250, 256; More directs that the reader examine all of these icons to understand the full significance of the water icon.

56 Ibid., p. 237.

57 Ibid., pp. 246, 250, 235.

58 Hoffman, Dryden's Imagery, pp. 77-81; Bernard Schilling, Dryden and the Conservative Myth (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press,

59 More, Modest Enquiry, p. 256.

60 Ibid., p. 252.

61 Ibid., pp. 255, 236, 232-233 (see "Darkness," then "Candle").

62 Ibid., p. 240.

63 Ibid., p. 250.

64 Miner, Dryden's Poetry, pp. 158-160; Budick, Abyss of Light, pp. 191-237.

65 Miner, Dryden's Poetry, pp. 158-160.

66 Miner (Dryden's Poetry, pp. 158-160) uses the word type here, but too loosely, I think, by seventeenth-century standards, according to which the word type seems to be limited in application to historical entities but is not used to denote fictional constructs. See Zwicker, Dryden's Political Poetry, pp. 3-27 (discussed above in n. 21) and my Appendix, n. 2.

67 Miner, Dryden's Poetry, pp. 164-165.

68 Budick, Abyss of Light, pp. 198-200.
CHAPTER IV

JOHN DRYDEN'S PROPHECIES

"[Poetic] abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God rarely bestow'd, but yet to some (though most abase) in every Nation: and are of a power beside the office of a pulpit, to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue, and public civility . . . to celebrate in glorious and lofty Hymns . . . what he [God] suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church, to sing . . . the deeds and triumphs of just and pious Nations . . . to deplore the general relapses of Kingdoms and States from justice and Gods true worship."

—John Milton

When critics proceed to read Dryden's major poems in the light of his interest in prophecy and in prophetic devices, they may find that images sometimes thought to be conventional are shimmering with apocalyptic colors, that passages often considered transitional or dull are in fact crucial and charged with prophetical fervor, that poems already acknowledged as masterpieces are even greater achievements than has been recognized. My purpose here, however, falls rather short of demonstrating the truth of these predictions. I merely wish to go some distance towards showing that understanding Dryden's prophetic bent can alter, to at least some degree, our perception of some of his major poems. Sometimes—as in discussing *Annus Mirabilis*—I shall take issue with prevailing opinion; in most cases—that is, in discussing *Mac Flecknoe*, *Absalom and Achitophel*,

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The Medall, and The Hind and the Panther—I shall try to build upon what critics have said before. Nor is it my purpose here to be exhaustive: the discussion of each poem is meant as a suggestion, an encouragement toward what I believe to be a fruitful approach to understanding the poem's meaning and beauty, rather than as a complete argument. In short, I want to explore rather than to conquer.

i

Annus Mirabilis

If we read Annus Mirabilis as a prophecy, we will find, I think, that the poem is better than modern critics realize. Alan Roper, in Dryden's Poetic Kingdoms, articulates an attitude that appears to be commonplace among current readers of the poem: he charges that Annus Mirabilis, which he thinks of as an historical narrative in the classical mould, is not unified, that the section of the poem dealing with the Dutch War (Stanzas 1-208) is not as good as the section dealing with the Great Fire (Stanzas 209-304). He offers two explanations for the weakness of the first part of the poem. First, the Dutch War section lacks sufficient "narrative coherence"; it is "too long for the effective control of its panegyric themes," and there is "too great a sameness in the accounts of various engagements." Second, says Roper, the first section of the poem lacks "imaginative intensity": Dryden does not use language "creatively to reveal the public values of the poem"; instead he uses "exotic similes
which draw attention to their merely decorative function" and which "remain subordinate to" statements of "literal description." Roper argues that Dryden should have done in the first section of the poem what he did in the second section and in *Absalom and Achitophel*: used analogy creatively in "ubiquitous allegory or extended metaphor."\(^2\)

Roper's accusations are telling, and he argues them forcefully; at present, I cannot answer them fully. Nevertheless, the structure and imagery of the poem, including its first two-thirds, do seem more justifiable than Roper admits if the work is looked upon generically less as an historical narrative in the classical mould than as a prophetical narrative in the Judeo-Christian mould--more precisely, as a seventeenth-century apocalypse. One reason for suspecting that the poem may be an apocalypse is that, as E. N. Hooker has pointed out, it was written--like John Spencer's *Discourse Concerning Vulgar Prophecies* and *Discourse Concerning Prodigies*, like sections of Thomas Sprat's *History of the Royal Society*--to meet the political crisis of the year 1666, a crisis engendered by the apparent fulfillment (in the Great Fire and the plague) of prophecies hinted at in the series of apocalyptic pamphlets severally entitled *Mirabilis Annus*.\(^3\) Writing in an apocalyptic atmosphere and confronting apocalyptic pamphlets, Dryden may easily have thought that his best strategy would be to turn his opponents' tactics against them. A second reason for wondering whether *Annus Mirabilis* might be an apocalypse is the presence of
apocalyptic overtones—e.g. allusions to Isaiah, to the Dies Irae— in the Great Fire section: Dryden was perhaps wise enough to have built such overtones into the first two-thirds of his poem. These grounds for thinking the poem apocalyptic appear confirmed when we read the poem carefully in light of Revelation and of some apocalyptic literature of the period. Then we find, I think, that the whole of Annus Mirabilis is apocalyptic in its outline and that Stanzas 1-208, usually thought to be uneven or flaccid, are—in the conflicts they portray, in their millennial motifs, and in their apocalyptic imagery—as apocalyptic as Stanzas 209-304.

In outline, the poem appears to be modelled loosely on the Book of Revelation, which may be seen as falling into three major parts: first, the prefatory epistles to the churches of seven cities (Chapters 1-3); next, the conflict between the forces of evil and the forces of good (Chapters 4-20); finally, the vision of the millennial New Jerusalem (Chapter 21-22). If we include some of its introductory apparatus, Annus Mirabilis seems to fall into three parts roughly similar to those of Revelation: first, the prefatory letter "To the Metropolis of Great Britain"; next, the conflict between France and Holland on the one side and England on the other (Stanzas 1-208); finally, the burning of London and the vision of London reborn (Stanzas 209-304). To the objection that this outline of Annus Mirabilis leaves out the "Account of the Ensuing Poem" following the epistle "To the Metropolis of Great Britain," I answer that the "Account," largely a discussion of
poetic technique, is an interruption of the themes opened in the epistle and continued in the poem itself and that the themes of Dryden's epistle to London (the protection by Providence of a virtuous city in a time of trial) quite clearly echo the themes of some of St. John's Epistles to the Seven Churches, particularly those to Smyrna (Rev. 2.8-2.11) and Philadelphia (Rev. 3.7-3.13). Hence, seeing the "Account" as outside the scope of the whole work, of which the epistle to London is a part, does not seem unreasonable.

Another indication that the whole, not just the last one-third, of Annus Mirabilis may be apocalyptic lies in the importance and prevalence of its commercial and scientific motifs. Roper and other critics have recognized that these motifs help to unify the poem, at least thematically, but have not realized just how charged with apocalyptic importance these themes are. As we saw in Chapter I, seventeenth-century Englishmen believed that the contemporary advancement of science and an increase in trade signalled the imminence of the Millennium; this belief was mingled with English nationalism and an identification of England as Israel. Thus, upon reading its opening lines, the seventeenth-century reader probably would have known that what was at stake in Annus Mirabilis and in the war itself was not England's selfish commercial triumph, but the fate of the world, the course of history under God's hand as that history had been predicted in Daniel and Revelation. Furthermore, the seventeenth-century reader probably would have recognized that the "Digression Concerning Shipping
and Navigation" and the "Apostrophe to the Royal Society" were neither empty exercises in panegyric nor even true digressions; instead, probably he would have seen that they were accurate statements of his own belief that the Royal Society, which could discern the laws of nature in God's mind (St. 165), was an important means of increasing scientific knowledge, knowledge which would in turn help navigation and trade to "make one city of the universe" (l. 651), thus bringing about the Millennium. Moreover, the seventeenth-century reader would probably have felt, though perhaps quite unconsciously, that the conclusion of the poem, a vision of London as a New Jerusalem and dominant trade center of the world, followed naturally upon the motifs of war, trade, and science occurring earlier and that the conclusion played upon the whole complex of apocalyptic and nationalistic myths in which his consciousness was at home. In short, because all these issues and motifs were so charged with apocalyptic import for him, he would have felt that Annus Mirabilis, always touching upon one or another of them, was unified and charged with feeling throughout.

But the seventeenth-century reader probably would have found that poem unified and charged with apocalyptic significance in still another way: Dryden's presentation of conflicts. The two major conflicts in the poem are, obviously, the war between England and Holland in the first two-thirds and the struggle to quell the Great Fire in the final one-third. As we have observed, Roper and the California editors recognize the fire sequence as
apocalyptic, and, on the basis of its imagery, they generally credit it with an imaginative intensity that, they believe, the war sequence lacks. Had they concentrated first on examining the conflicts out of which the imagery of the Dutch War sequence grows, these critics might have perceived that Stanzas 1-208 are as apocalyptic as the Great Fire sequence. More specifically, the conflicts in both sections of *Annus Mirabilis* appear to be derived largely from the Book of Revelation, principally from Chapters 13 and 19.

Revelation 13 tells the story of dragons or beasts or false prophets (there is some shifting in appellation) that enslave the peoples of the world. The story has two parts. In the first part, a beast, which is given its power by a dragon (13.4), rises "up out of the sea" (13.1), receives a deadly wound that heals (13.3), and makes war with the saints to try to overcome them (13.7). In the second part, a second beast that speaks "as a dragon," comes "up out of the earth" and "exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him" (13.11-12). The second beast (or dragon) makes people "worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed" (13.12). The second beast, who has power to do miracles "in the sight of the [first] beast" (13.14), performs three wonders: first, "he maketh fire come down from heaven in the sight of men" (13.15); second, he gives life to a speaking image of the first beast, an image which the people are forced to construct (13.14-15); third, "he causeth all ... to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he
that had the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (13.16-17). The number of the first beast is, of course, 666. This story is concluded in Chapter 19, wherein Christ, riding a horse at the head of his army, defeats the two beasts (the second identified here as a false prophet): "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image" (19.20).

In my view, Dryden uses allusive parallels to this story to present the villains and conflicts of both parts of Annus Mirabilis. First, if I am correct, he portrays Holland and France, and the relationship between them, in language calculated to remind the reader of the devilish beasts and dragons of Revelation 13 and 17. Dryden represents Holland in beast imagery in the second line of the poem: "In thriving Arts long time had Holland grown/ Crouching at home, and cruel when abroad. . . ." France is presented in language that suggests Satan: she has a "secret Soul" that "preys" on Holland (1. 31), is a kind of false God (1. 155), is envious (1. 168), hates secretly (1. 162), and is a tyrant (1. 176). Furthermore, Dryden appears to allude to Revelation 13 in his presentation of the relationship between France and Holland and in his presentation of the places from which the two attacks on England originate. In Revelation 13, the first beast, which arises from the sea, derives its power from the dragon; and then the second beast, which arises from the land, derives its power "in the sight of" the first beast. In the Dutch
War section of **Annus Mirabilis**, the Dutch, who attack on the sea, are supported and controlled by the French, who are on land (Stanza 9):

> Such deep designs of Empire does he [France] lay O're them [Hollanders] whose cause he seems to take in hand: And prudently, would make them Lords at Sea, To whom with ease he can give Laws by Land.

In the second part of the poem, the "seeds of fire" (l. 866), as though to satisfy the "envious eyes" (l. 840) of the French and Dutch, arise, much like the second beast in Revelation 13, from under ground (Sts. 217-218), become an "infant monster" that walks "boldly upright with exalted head" (ll. 871-872), and, perhaps like the "image of the beast" that is given life by the second beast, is "impell'd" by "a Belgian wind" (St. 230; Dryden's italics). Finally, in Revelation 13, the second beast puts the mark 666 on the people it enslaves and will not allow anyone to "buy or sell save he had the mark"; in **Annus Mirabilis**, subtitled **The Year of Wonders, 1666**, the Dutch awe the English merchants, and control all commerce: "Trade, which like blood should circularly flow,/Stop'd in their [Dutch] Channels, found its freedom lost" (St. 2; cf. Sts. 3-4 to Rev. 18).

Revelation 13, then, apparently affords Dryden allusive parallels for the villains and for the origins of the conflicts in **Annus Mirabilis**; similarly, Revelation 19 seems to afford him allusive parallels for the heroes and for the resolution of conflicts. In this chapter of Revelation, Christ, on horseback at the head of his army, defeats the two beasts (whose leader, the dragon, is hurled back into the bottomless pit by an angel in
Chapter 20.2). Similarly, two beasts of Annus Mirabilis, the Dutch navy and the fire, are defeated by English Christ-figures, Prince Rupert and Charles II. Rupert appears as a surrogate Christ during the third day of the battle between the Dutch and the English under admiral Albemarle, whose forces, outnumbered by the Dutch, are in dire need of rescuing. One passage serves to characterize both Rupert and the Dutch, who place their ships behind some shallows:

The wily Dutch, who, like fall'n Angels, fear'd
This new Messiah's coming, there did wait,
And round the verge their braving Vessels steer'd,
To tempt his courage with so fair a bait.
(St. 114; Dryden's italics.)

Just how firmly this identification of Rupert with Christ dominated Dryden's invention is illustrated by the first version of Stanze 105, a version which Dryden altered, apparently because it verges on blasphemy:

For now brave Rupert's Navy did appear,
Whose waving streamers from afar he knows:
As in his fate something divine there were,
Who dead and buried the third day arose.6

In addition to appearing in imagery calculated to remind us of Christ the Rescuer, Rupert is, of course, on England's and therefore Heaven's side against the devilish Dutch. Dryden twice makes it clear that Heaven is on England's side. In the first instance, when Charles assembles the fleet, angels, in order to see the mighty navy,

... drew wide the Curtains of the skies:
And heav'n, as if their [sic] wanted Lights above,
For Tapers make two glaring Comets rise.
(St. 16.)
In the second instance, which occurs a bit later, a Dutch admiral is killed in the battle off Lowestock; faced with this circumstance, "The Dutch confess'd Heav'n present, and retir'd . . ." (l. 87).

Revelation 19 also appears to provide the parallel for the resolution of the conflict, in the last part of the poem, between Charles II and the Great Fire. In this section of the poem, of course, Charles is a surrogate Christ; the allusions in Stanzas 261 to Jesus in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:37-39) establish several parallels: like Jesus, Charles prays and weeps at night, surrenders himself to the Father's will, and asks that the Father's wrath be visited upon him rather than upon the people (this last item is implied, not stated, in Matthew). Dryden, I think, provides a further point of identification by giving Charles an army like Christ's in Revelation 6-7. Christ's army, made up of the saints, "followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." Charles' followers are not quite saints; nor are they mounted or dressed in white. Nonetheless, they are an army, and they are in the service of a Christ-like king on horseback: "The helpful and the good about him run, /And form an Army worthy such a King" (ll. 971-972). In Revelation 19, Christ and His army of saints defeat two beasts. In the first section of *Annus Mirabilis*, if my reading of the poem is accurate, one beast (the Dutch navy) is defeated by a naval force under a surrogate-Christ (Rupert); in the second section, the poem's other surrogate Christ (King Charles) defeats the
second beast (the Great Fire). And there can be little doubt, as we have seen, that the fire is like the second beast in Revelation; nor can there be any doubt that it is the Christlike Charles who defeats the fire by means of his prayer:

Th' Eternal heard, and from the Heav'nly Quire,
Chose out the Cherub with the flaming sword:
And bad him swiftly drive th' approaching fire
From where our Naval Magazins were stor'd.

(St. 271.)

A bathetic stanza, surely, but one that in addition to establishing the agency of Charles in defeating the fire, has every appearance of alluding to (though it alters) Revelation 19.21, where Christ, with a sword that "proceeded out of his mouth," slays servants of the beasts.

Having constructed a poem that appears to be apocalyptic in its outline and in the pattern of its conflicts, Dryden, I believe, took one more step: he drew upon a source of imagery that many of his readers would recognize as apocalyptic, the *Mirabilis Annus* pamphlets which his poem was in part designed to combat. Furthermore, if I am correct, he wittily turns the imagery he takes from the pamphlets to make the king's side look good and the king's enemies—Dutch and English—look bad.

The Dutch War section of *Annus Mirabilis* contains at least ten images that seem to be drawn from the pamphlets; I have space here to discuss only a few. The pamphlets give a good deal of space to the appearance of comets, meteors, and stars that act strangely: the frontmatter of *Mirabilis Annus* I includes two pages of pictorial plates, the first of which contains, among
others, two separate pictures of shooting stars or comets (the pamphleteers do not distinguish carefully between them). The text of the pamphlets explains the time and place of such "prodigies" and interprets them as portents of attacks that the King and his Anglican armies will mount against the sectarian faithful or as portents of wars that God will visit upon the kingdom for its wicked ways. Generally by hearkening to earlier comets and meteors and to the disasters that followed thereupon, these interpretations predict the future only by implication. For example, after reporting "a fiery Meteor in the form of a Ship-streamer," one pamphlet goes on to explain that "Such a prodigious sign in this Form . . . appeared in Anno 1550. when the persecuters began to wax hot in Scotland against the possessors of Truth" (MA I, p. 5). Later, after reporting a comet, the pamphleteer says that he "need not mention the Comet seen in the year 1618, and what bloody wars did ensue immediately both in Germany, Poland, Italy and indeed all the Christian world over" (MA I, pp. 38-39). Unfortunately for the royalists, two comets actually had appeared, though they did not do so until 1664 and 1665, three years after the ones mentioned in this pamphlet; but they continued until the month in which Charles II declared war on the Dutch.

Dryden's problem was to confute the implications of these two comets; as I have mentioned, his device was, I think, to use images from the pamphlets, but in such a way as to enhance the portrait of the king and his loyal kingdom. Specifically, in a
stanzas that we looked at earlier, he makes the comets of 1664 and 1665 into signs of God's approval of the king's navy as it goes to sea against the Dutch:

To see this Fleet upon the Ocean move
Angels drew wide the Curtains of the skies:
And Heav'n, as if their [sic] wanted Lights above,
    For Tapers made two glaring Comets rise.
    (St. 16.)

Other images that I believe Dryden takes from the pamphlets but turns (in the Dutch War section) to the advantage of the royalist cause are pillars of fire, pillars of smoke, and clouds. Pillars of fire occur, like the comets and shooting stars, in the set of pictures in the frontispiece of Mirabilis Annus I, the text of which explains that "certain Tradesmen saw a very great Light upon the Ground," which light at first spread out and then "gathered up into a Pillar of Fire, and therein they clearly discerned an Army brandishing a Flaming Sword" (p. 12). Mirabilis Annus II, ii, reports the occurrence of another "Pillar of Fire reaching down from the Heavens to the Earth" (p. 4), but no army with a flaming sword. Pillars of smoke occur in Mirabilis Annus I: "Also at Bishops-gate there appeared seven Pillars of smoke ... [reaching] up towards Heaven as high as the beholders could well discern" (p. 6). Dryden, by alluding to Exodus 13.21-22, turns pillars of fire and smoke into signs of God's approval of the English navy, defender of His chosen people: Albemarle's "fiery Canon ... guide" the passage of some of his weaker ships,

And foll'wing smoke obscur'd them from the foe.
Thus Israel safe from the Egyptian's pride,
    By flaming pillars and by clouds did go.
    (St. 92.)
At one point in *Mirabilis Annus I*, the pamphleteer tells a long story of a cloud that kept metamorphosing into various shapes, among them an oak, and a whale (pp. 25-29). Both of these images recur in the Dutch War section of *Annus Mirabilis*. The oak in the pamphlet evidently stands for Charles II, who escaped capture after the Battle of Worcester by hiding in an oak tree; according to the pamphlet, the cloud changed shape so that the oak "vanished after a short season." The oak in Dryden's poem is Albemarle, who acts as a staunch stand-in for Charles II:

Our dreaded Admiral from far they threat,
Whose batter'd rigging their whole war receives.  
All bare, like some old Oak which tempests beat,
He stands and sees below his scatter'd leaves.

(St. 61.)

The whale in the pamphlet has its mouth open; in Dryden's poem, the English, having defeated the Dutch fleet, waylay Dutch merchants:

So, close behind some Promontory lie
The huge Leviathans t' afford their prey:
And give no chace, but swallow in the frie,
Which through their gaping jaws mistake the way.

(St. 203.)

Like the Dutch War section, the Great Fire section contains at least ten images resembling items in the pamphlets. Moreover, as in writing about the comets in the Great Fire section, Dryden had to confront the pamphleteers' quite accurate prediction that half of London would burn: after observing "for some hours together a great flame of fire over the City of London" one of the eyewitnesses "believed he should the next morning have heard that half the City had been consumed by fire . . ." (*MA I*, pp. 23-24).
The pamphlets also had predicted that St. Paul's would burn: "some persons of credit" saw "directly over Pauls a sheet of fire mingled with blood" (HA I, 18). In the context of the pamphlets, of course, such events are God's punishments for the wickedness of monarchy. As critics have recognized (though without having noted the specific predictions in the pamphlets), Dryden overcomes the difficulty posed by the fire through the expedient of presenting it as God's punishment, not for monarchy, but for the Interregnum. He associates the beginning of the Fire with the birth of Cromwell (Sts. 213-214) and he indicates that St. Paul's is burned because it was tainted during the rebellion (Sts. 275-276). As I mentioned earlier, another of his devices to transform the implications of the fire is to associate the growth of the fire with a "Belgian wind" (St. 230).

In the Dutch War section Dryden also appears to take anti-royalist images from the pamphlets, images not necessarily associated with the prediction of a fire, and to transform them into attacks on the sectaries. One such transformation in purpose occurs, I believe, in Stanza 223:

The Ghosts of Traitors from the Bridge descend,
With bold Fanatick Spectres to rejoice:
About the fire into a Dance they bend,
And sing their Sabbath Notes with feeble voice.

Here Dryden is obviously attacking the sectaries whose dead leaders supposedly dance and rejoice at the destruction of London. He is, I think, borrowing and transforming a description of an apparition, from Mirabilis Annus I, that glorifies executed sectarian leaders: on the day when "Colonel Scroop, Col. Jones, and some Others were
Executed . . . was seen in the Aire towards the Evening . . . the appearance of five naked Men exceeding bright and glorious, moving very Swiftly . . . " (MA I, 5-6). Like several other images that Dryden evidently borrows from the pamphlets, this one occurs not only in the text, but also in the pictures at the front of Mirabilis Annus I.

Dryden also appears to borrow from the pamphlets an image of an angel with a sword; in the poem, the angel appears for the purpose of driving back the Fire in response to King Charles's prayer:

Th' Eternal heard, and from the Heav'nly Quire,  
Chose out the Cherub with the flaming sword:  
And bad him swiftly drive th' approaching fire  
From where our Naval Magazins were stor'd.

The blessed Minister his wings displai'd,  
And like a shooting Star he cleft the night:  
He charg'd the flames, and those that disobey'd,  
He lashed to duty with his sword of light.  
(Sts. 271-272.)

We looked at Stanza 271 earlier, in the analysis of the relationship between Revelation 19 and the poem, but now we are in a position to understand the import of the stanza more fully. For, though it does seem to allude to Revelation 19, the stanza also alludes, I believe, to images, in all three Mirabilis Annus pamphlets, of swords that come down from the sky to threaten England for being wicked. In one report of such a sword, "six sober and discreet persons saw a fiery apparition in the Air, wherein they discerned two or th[r]ee Steeples and several Cathedrals, some burning, others rent and torn irreparably, others subverted with Pinnacles downwards, and by one of the
Pinnacles stood an Angel with a flaming Sword" (KA I, 17). In the description of another apparition, three stars fell out of a cloud and "were joyned at some distance each from other by a contiguous flame" which in turn "did form it self into the fashion of the blade of a very broad Sword . . ." (KA II, 1, p. 1). What Dryden does in Stanzas 271-272 is, I think, now apparent: he takes from one pamphlet the image of the angel with the sword (an image which is in the pamphlet itself an allusion to Revelation 19), combines it with the image from another pamphlet of the shooting stars that turn into a sword, and turns both apparitions into indications that God is protecting, not threatening, the kingdom.

If this analysis of Annus Mirabilis is correct, then not all of Alan Roper's charges against the poem will hold. In part they will not hold because his premise, that the poem is an historical narrative in the classical sense, does not appear to be true: despite Dryden's talk of Lucan and despite the allusions to Virgil, the poem bears inescapably strong resemblances to a seventeenth-century apocalypse, that is, a story told in religious language, of God's chosen people undergoing a time of extreme trial (by war and fire) after which they will achieve a kind of paradise. Roper's premise, I believe, misleads him in two ways. First, it keeps him from seeing what I think are the strengths of the Dutch War sequence: narrative coherence achieved by the ubiquitous parallels to Revelation 13 and 19; imaginative intensity and the revelation of public values achieved by means of
apocalyptic allusions and by the introduction of the apocalyptic issues of trade, navigation, science, the fate of the nation. Roper's premise, in my opinion, also keeps him from perceiving the unity of *Annus Mirabilis*, a unity that Dryden accomplishes, if I am correct, by building his poem on the outline of *Revelation*, by presenting the conflicts and their resolutions as parallel to those in Revelation 13 and 19, and by permeating the poem with apocalyptic language and imagery from both *Revelation* and the *Mirabilis Annus* pamphlets. *Annus Mirabilis* may have its flaws—Roper is perhaps right in saying that the battle sequences are too much alike and in complaining about merely decorative similes. But the poem is better than we have understood it to be.

**ii**

*Mac Flecknoe*

Within the dense complexity of *Mac Flecknoe*, scholars have recognized for some time a pattern of allusions to prophecy and to Christ, allusions that establish Flecknoe and his "son" as Antichrists. Recently, Thomas Maresca has studied the antichristian nature of Flecknoe and Shadwell from the perspective of seventeenth-century interest in atomic theory, the idea that all reality is matter and that all matter is composed of irreducible particles. Dryden, argues Maresca, renders Flecknoe and Shadwell as Antichrists by revealing that they reproduce their physical selves endlessly—in dramatic characters, in generations
of writers, and in words—thus parodying God the Father's reproduction of Himself in the Son's role as Logos, as the Word that creates the world, unites the world to the Father, and gives the matter of the world significance. This endless reproduction of their physical selves traps Flecknoe and Shadwell, their readers, and one suspects, their culture in a world that is entirely darkly, excrementally, and cancerously material, a world without wit or lucidity, a world, in short, without Spirit.¹¹

Maresca's argument, though conducted largely without reference to specific philosophical or theological documents, is enormously suggestive, not only because it alerts us to the possibility of a materialist motif in the poem, but also because it indicates possible relationships between the materialist motif and the Antichrist motif. Like Maresca, I should like to explore the hypothesis that these two motifs pervade Mac Flecknoe and that they are somehow linked. More specifically, I should like to suggest the possibility that Dryden conducts his attack on the Realms of Nonesence at least in part by way of images and accusations designed to remind the reader of images and accusations that occur in Protestant attacks on popery as Antichrist (or as the Mystery of Iniquity), an apocalyptic matter of continual concern in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹² Further, I should like to raise the possibility that, if the Antichrist motif is introduced into the poem in the way that I suggest, and if the materialist motif is as pervasive as Maresca argues, then the clue to the link between the two may lie not only
in the theology of the Trinity, but also in Hobbes' _Leviathan_.

In exploring the possibility that in _Mac Flecknoe_ Dryden draws upon Protestant attacks upon Antichrist, I shall treat two seventeenth-century texts—Henry More's _Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity_ and Thomas Hobbes' _Leviathan_—as representative of such attacks. I have chosen to consider the poem in light of these books for two reasons: (1) these two books are mid-seventeenth-century examples of attacks on Antichrist, and thus the charges they mount may be taken as representative of the kinds of attacks on Antichrist that Dryden, as a seventeenth-century English Protestant, is likely to have read (see Ch. III, pp. 86-88); (2) indeed Dryden may well have read _A Modest Enquiry_ (which is a possible source of the prophetic figures of speech and icons that seem to occur in his work: see Ch. III, pp. 133-146), and he almost certainly read _Leviathan_.

Of course, More and Hobbes do not approach the subject of the Mystery of Iniquity in quite the same ways. More examines the Mystery of Iniquity according to a pattern that had become traditional, perhaps even outdated, by the time he published _A Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity_: he defines certain modes of thought and action (e.g., idolatry, usurpation of the titles and offices of Christ, lack of charity) as antichristian, and, having looked about for the cause of such unholy and mystical evils, finds that they are engendered by the Catholic Church. Hobbes, who believes neither that mysteries of a spiritual nature exist nor that the pope claims to be Christ, takes a less mystical
approach than More's: in *Leviathan* the Antichrist myth provides a convenient set of metaphors by means of which Hobbes can attack the intellectual errors and political dangers characteristic (in his eyes) of Catholicism. Despite these differences, both More and Hobbes believe (though perhaps Hobbes only pretends to) that the errors of Catholicism will be overwhelmed by Christ at the Second Coming. And despite the differences in approach between the two writers, the attacks that these two men mount on Catholicism tend (though not completely) to fall into a pattern: specific charges—based on its origins, pretensions, and abuse of language—are levelled against Romanism, which is continually perceived as the Kingdom of Darkness opposed by the Kingdom of Light. The resemblances between this pattern of attack on Rome and Dryden's attack on the world of Shadwell are striking.

We had best begin with imagery. Both More and Hobbes use a Protestantized, Johannine imagery to present popery as the Kingdom of Darkness opposed to the true Christians who constitute the Kingdom of Light. Christ, says, More, is the Light (a term signifying wisdom and knowledge) and His followers are the Light of the World. "Wherefore to endeavour to keep the people in a worse then Egyptian darkness under pretence of raising their devotion to God . . . were plainly to Antichristianize against this . . . Title of Christ, The Light, and to defeat the End of his coming into the World. . . ."15 Hobbes opens Part IV of *Leviathan* ("Of the Kingdom of Darkness") with imagery similar to More's: "Besides these sovereign powers, divine and human, of which I have hitherto
discoursed, there is mention in Scripture of another power, namely, (Eph. vi. 12) that of the rulers of the darkness of this world [ , ] (Matt. xiii. 26) the kingdom of Satan [ ; ] . . . in consequence hereunto, they who are under his dominion, in opposition to the faithful, (who are the children of the light,) are called the children of darkness."

Careful examination of Mac Flecknoe suggests that Dryden may be using the three parts of this Kingdom of Darkness image—i.e., "kingdom," "darkness and light," and "opposition"—to alert the reader to the true nature of dullness. Dryden early establishes the "kingdom" or imperial motif: Flecknoe "young/Was call'd to Empire and had govern'd long" (ll. 3-4); the poet even calls Flecknoe's empire the "Realms of None-sense" (l. 16), a phrase grammatically parallel and equivalent in meaning to "Kingdom of Darkness." A concurrent motif in the poem establishes the antipathy between darkness and light, dullness and wit, in Flecknoe's and Shadwell's realms:

Some Beams of Wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through and make a lucid intervall;
But Sh----'s genuine night admits no ray,
His rising Fogs prevail upon the Day. . . .
(11. 21-24.)

These lines allude, of course, to the creative Word discussed in John 1. 3-5: "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." But the fog and darkness images are also strikingly similar to the language used by More and Hobbes to
accuse the Mystery of Iniquity of raising darkness, mists, and clouds against the daylight and intelligence of true religion. Catholic doctrines of justification, says More, turn "the joyfull and glorious Day of the Gospel into a cloudy Egyptian night." Dryden transforms the opposition between darkness and light into a war between dullness and wit: the Realms of None-sense in Mac Flecknoe "wage immortal War with Wit" (1. 12). Shadwell even promises in his coronation oath

That he till Death true dullness would maintain;
And in his father's Right, and Realms defence,
Ne'er to have peace with Wit, nor truce with Sense.
(Ll. 115-116.)

In More's Modest Enquiry and Hobbes' Leviathan, the Kingdom of Darkness image constitutes a sort of metaphoric lens which permits the reader to see the full implication of the specific accusations levelled against Catholicism; in Mac Flecknoe, the Realms of None-sense image operates in a similar way with regard to Dryden's charges against Flecknoe and Shadwell. In A Modest Enquiry and Leviathan, Catholicism is accused of having illegitimate origins, and of using evil methods that have evil effects; in Mac Flecknoe, the Realms of None-sense are accused, I think according to a pattern similar to this Protestant attack on popery. In addition, the details in which Dryden mounts his general attacks on Flecknoe and Shadwell seem to resemble the details in which the Protestants mount their general attacks on Catholicism. If I am correct about these two matters, then Dryden is implying that Shadwell's evil as somehow essentially the same as the evil (in English Protestant eyes) of antichristian Catholicism— and thus
this implication may be among Dryden's most biting attacks upon the poet called, by whomever added the subtitle to Mac Flecknoe, the True Blue Protestant.

One line of attack that More and Hobbes take against Catholicism is to accuse it of originating as an imitation of the Roman Empire. This accusation cuts at Catholicism in two ways: (1) it suggests that Catholicism is heathenish in its nature and practices; (2) it suggests that the titles of the pope are hollow imitations of something once great but now dead. Hobbes argues that the canonization of saints is a "relic of Gentilism": "The first that ever was canonized at Rome, was Romulus" to whom "the senate gave public testimony of his sanctity. Julius Caesar, and other emperors after him, had the like testimony; that is, were canonized for saints. . . ." Hobbes argues further that the popes came to be called Pontifex Maximus by assuming a title that originated with Augustus Caesar. And in a later chapter, Hobbes clearly articulates his general accusation: "... the Papacy is no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman empire, sitting crowned on the grave thereof. For so did the Papacy start up on a sudden out of the ruins of that heathen power." Many details in Mac Flecknoe resemble this line of attack upon popery in More and Hobbes. Flecknoe, of course, is ridiculously "like Augustus" (l. 13), and Shadwell, who is called "Rome's other hope" (l. 109)—a line that may be thought to accuse the True Blue Protestant of both paganism and popery—undergoes a coronation(l. 126-131) that is a parody of the coronation of Ascanius and of the founding of
The attack upon Catholicism by way of its origins is fused, in the writings of More and Hobbes, with an attack on the absurd pretensions of popery, pretensions designed to increase clerical control over kings and common folk. Both More and Hobbes accuse the pope of being an usurper who, on the most absurd and pretentious grounds, tries to act as emperor of the world's kings. In More, this line of attack is triggered by Catholicism's supposed usurpation of Christ's offices of King, Priest, and Prophet; that Dryden attacks Flecknoe and Shadwell for similar usurpations is familiar to any reader of criticism on *Mac Flecknoe*. Hobbes' approach is more secular. By arrogating to himself the title of leader of the Church Militant, the pope, says Hobbes, "prevailed with the subjects of all Christian princes, to believe, that to disobey him, was to disobey Christ himself; and ... to abandon their lawful sovereigns; which is in effect an universal monarchy over all Christendom." In a manner that may be calculated to remind the reader of these imperial pretensions of popery, Dryden attacks Flecknoe and Shadwell for being absurdly imperialistic: "Heavens bless my Son," says Flecknoe,

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... from Ireland let him reign
To farr Barbadoes on the Western main;
Of his Dominion may no end be known,
And greater than his Father's be his Throne.
Beyond love's Kingdom let him stretch his Pen. ...
(1. 139-143.)
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Between Ireland and the Barbadoes, of course, is a waste of water.

According to More and Hobbes, Catholicism attempts to dominate not only kings but also common folk. In part, this latter
aim supposedly is accomplished through the use of superstitious devotions to saints and martyrs. Dryden does not speak directly about the domination of the common folk by Flecknoe and Shadwell, but at one point Mac Flecknoe does contain language that alludes, albeit scatologically, to two Catholic practices, preserving saint's relics and paying homage to martyrs:

No Persian Carpets spread th' Imperial way,
But scatter'd Limbs of mangled Poets lay:
From dusty shops neglected Authors come,
Martyrs of Pies, and Reliques of the Bum.
(LL. 98-101.)

Perhaps it is significant that these Catholic practices are alluded to in description of a ritual procession leading to a coronation; for Hobbes and More despise not only the veneration of saints and martyrs, but also the paraphernalia used in such rituals as anointings, consecrations of places, and baptism: oil, water, salt, candles, vestments. Catholic clergy undergo an elaborate ordination, says More, so "that by these Histrionical disguises and peculiar adornings they may become more honourable in the eyes of the People, who are much struck with outward shews . . . and that their Persons may be accounted very holy, whose Ordination is with such pompous Ceremonie, and whose sacred Unction makes it in some sort to vie with the Coronation of Princes." Dryden directs a similar attack upon the paraphernalia used in Shadwell's coronation:

The King himself the sacred Unction made,
As King by Office, and as Priest by Trade:
In his sinister hand, instead of Ball,
He plac'd a mighty Mug of potent Ale;
Love's Kingdom to his right he did convey,
At once his Sceptre and his rule of Sway...  
(II. 118-123.)

Earlier, "Rome's other hope and pillar of the state" (I. 109) is said to have been made for "anointed dullness" (I. 63).

Henry More—in addition to attacking its origins, usurpations, and ceremonies—attacks what he thinks of as the pretensions of popery in still another way: he argues that Vatican City, which he identifies with Sodom and Gomorrah, is little more than a whore house that infects the whole world with licentiousness. He accuses the pope of suffering "known Curtesans," magnificently dressed and accompanied by clergymen, to walk the streets "in his own See"; of accepting "part of the Gains of these Nuns of Venus"; of being a "Persecutor of Marriage, and a Patron of Brothells."24 Dryden undercuts the glory of Augusta by saying that near the Barbican (a name similar in sound to "Babylon" and "Vatican"),

... Brothel-houses rise,  
Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys;  
Where their vast Courts the Mother-Strumpets keep,  
And, undisturbed by Watch, in silence sleep.  
(II. 65-73.)

Elsewhere, Flecknoe is characterized in sexual puns as being "worn out with business" (I. 9) and a "hoary Prince" (I. 106).

The imperialistic and ceremonial pretensions of popery are, in the eyes of More and Hobbes, means by which the pope attempts to control the world. But the most dangerous weapon in the Catholic armory, according to Hobbes especially, is the use of words to deaden intellect. In Leviathan, nearly all of Book IV accuses Catholicism of misusing such words as "essence," "consecrate," and "tyranny" in order to suppress reason and to maintain the clergy
in power. "The natural philosophy of these schools," says Hobbes, mocking the Greek philosophers that were the ancestors of Scholasticism, "was rather a dream than science, and [was] set forth in senseless and insignificant language...." As for the scholastics themselves, their writings are "nothing else for the most part, but insignificant trains of strange and barbarous words... which if any man would see proved, let him... see whether he can translate any School divine into any of the modern tongues, as French, English, or any other copious language: for that which cannot in most of these be made intelligible, is not intelligible in the Latin. Which insufficiency of language... hath a quality, not only to hide the truth, but also to make men think they have it, and desist from further search." Similarly, More attacks popery for keeping "the Law of God in an Unknown Tongue" and thereby rendering it unintelligible to all but the clergy; he also, like Hobbes, accuses Catholicism of double talk in doctrinal pronouncements, especially in those concerning the Eucharist.25

Like the Catholic clergy as depicted by More and Hobbes, the heads of Realms of Nonesense abuse words too: Shadwell is, of course, the "last great Prophet of Tautology" (l. 130); even the feet of his Psyche fall "like tautology" (l. 56). Furthermore, his writings never deviate into sense, though Flecknoe feels compelled to remind him to retain "natural" floweriness:

But let no alien S--dl--y interpose
To lard with wit thy hungry Epsom prose.
And when false flowers of Rhetorick thou would'st cull,
Trust Nature, do not labour to be dull;
But write thy best, and top; and in each line,
Sir Formal's oratory will be thine.
(ll. 163-168.)

Later, Flecknoe advises Shadwell to write anagrams and acrostics, forms wherein the new Emperor, like Hobbes' scholastics, may "torture one poor word Ten thousand ways" (l. 208). Like the incoherent philosophical and theological language of the scholastics, the "artistic" language of Flecknoe and Shadwell has effects opposite those ordinarily hoped for: "Like mine thy gentle numbers feebly creep,/Thy Tragick Muse gives smiles, thy Comick sleep" (ll. 197-198).

I have been suggesting that Dryden, in his attack upon the Realms of None-sense, may be drawing upon the imagery and lines of argument typical of Protestant attacks upon the Catholic Antichrist. At this point I should like to make a further suggestion—that Hobbes' Leviathan is in some way indicative of the link in the poem between this Antichrist motif (if indeed it really exists in the poem) and the materialist motif noted by Maresca. Three indications, taken together, suggest that Hobbes' Leviathan may somehow be important to readers of Mac Flecknoe. One indication lies in the number and nature of the similarities that, as we have already noticed, seem to exist between Hobbes' attack on Catholicism and Dryden's attack on the Realms of None-sense: both attacks are dominated by the darkness vs. light metaphor; both are levelled against the targets' origins, pretensions (imperial and ceremonial) and abuses of language.

A second indication that Leviathan may somehow be an
important consideration for readers of *Mac Flecknoe* lies in the similarities between Hobbes' attack on the Fairie Land of Catholicism and Dryden's attack on Acrostick Land, one of the Realms of None-sense. Towards the end of *Mac Flecknoe*, Flecknoe tells Shadwell:

> Thy Genius calls thee not to purchase fame
> In keen Iambicks, but mild Anagram:
> Leave writing Plays, and chuse for thy command
> Some peaceful Province in Acrostick Land.
> There thou maist wings display and Altars raise,
> And torture one poor word Ten thousand ways.

(II. 203-210.)

These lines have been thought to refer to Herbert's shaped poems and to Shadwell's *Psyche*, in which "cupids with wings and Olympian altars are part of the lavish, emblematic mise en scène." No doubt; but they also may allude to Hobbes' characterization, at the end of *Leviathan*, of Catholicism as a "Kingdom of Faieries" whose ecclesiastical inhabitants use a debased form of Latin to suppress the power of reason in students; according to Hobbes, these ecclesiastics also "pinch" disobedient princes and raise "enchanted Castles" (cathedrals). The fairies, says Hobbes, "have no existence, but in the fancies of ignorant people, rising from the traditions of old wives, or old poets." Earl Miner, without referring to Hobbes, says that these lines "have an air of magic, of a kind of fairyland--of an 'arostic land' that Alice might find beyond the looking glass. Dryden creates a world which is perfect in its macabre kind. Industry leads to the assumption of misguided divinity [and to] penal torture."
to consider when reading *Mac Flecknoe* is the possibility, suggested by Maresca, that materialism is an important motif in the poem. The vast structure of *Leviathan* is built, as everyone knows, on the premise that all of reality is corporeal, or, to put it negatively, that in all of reality there is no spirit. So it is, if Thomas Maresca is correct, in the Realms of None-sense. As Maresca has argued, though without direct reference to Hobbes, Flecknoe has engendered Shadwell as Flecknoe's *Love's Kingdom* has engendered Shadwell's *Psyche* as Shadwell has engendered Sir Formal, Bruce, and Longvil—but all this reproductive activity is tautological, for the sons are the same as their fathers: "Sh----alone my perfect image bears" (1. 15), says Flecknoe, who later says of Shadwell's characters that they should all be "by thy own model made/Of dullness" (11. 157-158), "All full of thee and differing but in name" (1. 162). And, as the scatological language ("full of thee") forces us to recognize, they are all creatures of matter only: Shadwell wields "Papers" in his "threshing hand" (1. 52); the "authors" that crowd the street for the procession are "Reliques of the Bum" (1. 101); during the procession, "loads of Sh---- almost choakt the way" (1. 103); and before the procession Flecknoe praises Shadwell for being "Swell'd with the Pride of [a] Celestial charge;/And big with Hymn" (11. 40-41)—a metaphor that makes Shadwell's spirituality mere flatulence.

Taken together, these three points of possible connection—between Hobbes' attack on popery and Dryden's attack on Shadwell, between Hobbes' discussion of Fairy Land and Dryden's discussion of
Acrostick Land, between the materialism in *Leviathan* and the materialistic motif that is perhaps in *Mac Flecknoe*—indicate that Hobbes' *Leviathan* may somehow be important to the poem: *Leviathan*, both a powerful attack on the Mystery of Iniquity and the most comprehensive statement of materialism in the seventeenth century, may have been the clue which indicated to Dryden that the two motifs might be fused in his attack on the Realms of None-sense.²⁹

But it may be that the fusion of materialistic and Antichrist motifs operates not only against Shadwell but also against their source—against, perhaps, *Leviathan*. For by presenting Flecknoe and Shadwell as merely corporeal in all their works, Dryden implies that artists need to have souls—they need spirit to see, to create art that enlightens with wit, to use cogent language, to celebrate meaningful rituals, to create in art a lighted and intelligible mirror of reality. Dryden may be drawing upon Hobbes for *Mac Flecknoe*, but if so, then the poet—in effect, if not in fact—lectures the philosopher too; for Dryden, if my suggestions are correct, takes upon himself the prophet's role as prolocutor, affirming a Christian vision, God's truth, in opposition, not only to the apocalyptic iniquity in the Realms of None-sense, but also to the iniquitous materialism of *Leviathan*.

iii

**Absalom and Achitophel**

Modern scholars have been puzzling over the genre of *Absalom and Achitophel* ever since Verrall—³⁰and with good reason.
Careful readings of the poem have discovered in it structures, rhetorical devices, and allusions that appear to have their origins in such disparate sources as the Bible, Virgilian epic, classical histories, and Milton's biblical epics. The difficulty has been to agree on which of these is the central model of the poem. Other difficulties are caused by the term "satire": Dryden speaks in the work's preface of "rebating the Satyre," of "the true end of Satyre"—and follows those comments twelve years later with the remark that Absalom and Achitophel is a Varronian satire. Perhaps he considers Absalom and Achitophel a satire. If so, then why does he subtitle it A Poem instead of A Satyre, the subtitle he attaches to The Kedall? When he speaks, in the preface of Absalom and Achitophel, of softening the satire and of the true end of satire, is he thinking of the whole poem or only of the characterizations of the anti-royalists? If he is thinking of the whole poem, then what are we to make of the panegyrical characterizations of David and the loyalists? When later he calls the poem a Varronian satire, is he speaking from hindsight, and does "satire" have the same meaning there as it does in the poem's preface? The tone of the poem raises further difficulties: Absalom and Achitophel seems to move through sections of varying tonalities, including the urbane, generous, witty opening lines, a Dutch-uncle lectures on politics, and a reverently awed conclusion. Can we accurately call such a poem either satiric or epic in tone? Or is Ian Jack correct in saying that the governing tone, which he terms "witty heroical," is
elevated though ironical? 32

Depending upon which of these issues they choose to confront and depending, apparently, upon what sort of background they bring to the questions, scholars have fastened an interesting variety of generic labels on Absalom and Achitophel. One school—which, following Verrall and Reuben Brower, sees matters from a classical perspective—says that the poem is one or a blend of the classical or neo-classical kinds: epyllion (miniature epic with satiric elements), epic fragment, Varronian satire, mock epic, witty heroic, or "neo-classical history, the moral history of the Sallustian monograph fused with the mythic and panegyrical history of the Virgilian epic and pastoral." 33 Other scholars, who see the poem in light of the Bible and Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained, tend to identify Absalom and Achitophel as a biblical epic or miniature Biblical epic. 34 Paul Ramsey glances wryly at Polonius after opining that it is "an occasional, polemical, historical, satirical, panegyrical, truncated, narrative, allegorical poem." 35 Bernard Schilling and Earl Miner border on a kind of despair worthy of visitors to the Malabar Caves, the former saying that the genre of the poem is indeterminate, the latter that, though probably an historical poem, its genre may not matter. 36

I hesitate to add my voice to these earnestly booming echoes; and I do not believe I can settle the matter once for all. Nonetheless, I cannot but observe that the genre of Absalom and Achitophel may be fairly obvious: at its core, the poem is probably an "imitation" of a book of the Bible, a prophecy. I am
led to this possibility for several reasons. The first is, of course, that Dryden's central concern is, on the surface, the same as the concern of II Samuel, i.e., the rebellion of Absalom against his father, King David. Second, Dryden consistently maintains a Biblical fiction by referring, with only one exception (Annabelle), to Biblical persons exclusively. Dryden's rhetorical stance in the poem appears to match in some ways the rhetorical stance that readers of seventeenth-century exegesis might expect of a prophet: Dryden's pose as "only the historian" of the time of David is entirely in accord with those exegetical remarks noted earlier (Ch. II, pp. 65-66) establishing that one of the prophet's missions is to write historical books in the Bible, and Dryden's promulgation of David's point of view is entirely in accord with the royalist idea that another of the prophet's missions is to be the king's spokesman (Ch. II, pp. 69-70). Furthermore, some of Dryden's contemporaries seem to have acknowledged that the poem is an imitation of a Biblical book, for their responses, such as Tonson's Key and the hostile Christopher Nesse's Key (with a Whip) to open the Mystery and Iniquity of . . . Absalom and Achitophel, have in their titles a word common to exegetical books: Key of the Revelation (Joseph Hede), Clavis Bibliorum (Francis Roberts). Finally, the term "imitation" in Dryden's period—says Harold Brooks in discussing imitations by Cowley, Davenant, Pope, and Johnson—appears to denote a poem in which a modern author translated, loosely, an ancient writer's poem in such a manner and including such allusions as to make the older
work applicable to the modern writer's era. Such, though based on II Samuel rather than on a classical model, appears to be Dryden's procedure in Absalom and Achitophel. 38

All of these considerations are, of course, only grounds for speculating that Absalom and Achitophel might be an "imitation" of a Biblical book, a prophecy; but the conjecture turns into a serious possibility, I think, when we examine the allegory, the transcendence of time, the devices of language, and the allusions in the poem. The allegorical device by means of which Dryden gives his "history" significance to the Restoration appears to be Biblical and prophetic, for the relationship between Old Testament "present" and New Testament "past" in the poem is entirely consistent with Henry More's analysis of "mixt allegory" in Biblical books. More explains, as we saw in Chapter II, that a mixed allegory is "partly allusory, as being applicable first to some more Inferior Person, whether King, Prophet or Friest, and then to the Messiah, and partly simple and express, not applicable to any but the Messiah himself. . . ." Hence the prophet's expressions reach beyond "the Person that is the Type, and strike into such Circumstances that are not all true but in the Antitype." 39

If we substitute Charles II (whom the poet often calls "God-like") for the Messiah in that formula, we have a description of the allegorical method of Absalom and Achitophel, wherein the figure of David often refers at once to the Biblical David and to King Charles, but sometimes to Charles alone. Much of the narrative focus of the poem is on the eras of both David and Charles, of
course; and such a detail as David's singing and composing on a harp (ll. 196-197, 437-440), as Kinsley and Roper note, may refer as well to Charles II's singing and playing some pretty dull songs, of his own composition, on a guitar. But Charles, not David, has the brother mentioned in line 437 and elsewhere as Absalom's rival for the throne, and Charles, not David, lives when guns have been invented (l. 131). Thus Absalom and Achitophel is like a book of the Bible not only in its story line and characters, but also in the allegorical procedure by means of which it refers to the "future" events of the Restoration.

Understanding that the poem fulfills More's definition of a mixed allegory is interesting enough in itself, but this perspective is also useful, I think, when we try to understand just how Dryden passes judgments—satirical or panegyrical—on the principal characters of the poem. Recently critics have pointed out that in Absalom and Achitophel the combination of two histories—Israel's and England's—provides the poet a device with which to pass judgment on England's history. In A. W. Hoffman's words, "By fastening a set of English persons and a set of English events to a sequence of Jewish events, Dryden has set history in a moral order." Earl Miner believes that Dryden's method originated in tropological readings of Scripture common among Anglicans—readings in which a Scriptural story was paralleled to a contemporary situation in order to provide an ethical guide for contemporary men. Hoffman and Miner have perceived a relationship between Dryden's allegorical method and the judgments
he passes upon the principals of the Exclusion Crisis. But, if we accept the proposition that the poem is a mixed allegory, I think we are in a position to understand, more precisely than these critics do, just how those judgments are carried out.

The judgments appear to be carried out, in part, through the prophetic device of transcending time. As was noted in Chapter II (pp. 55-59), a writer of a Biblical narrative that is true not only of his own era but also of some future era stands somehow outside of time. As a consequence, any judgments he passes on the people of his own time (the types) are also true of the future people to whom his narrative refers (the antitypes). This formula accords nicely, I believe, with the one followed in Absalom and Achitophel. Dryden pretends to be living in Old Testament times and to be writing the history of a rebellion, the full consequences of which are not known; thus, in the Preface he says that he still hopes for a reconciliation between David and Absalom: "Things were not yet brought to an Extremity where I left the Story: There seems, yet, to be room left for a Composure; hereafter, there may be only for pity" (Cal. II, 4). Nonetheless, although he does not in the poem precisely foretell the events of his own, Old Testament, era, the narrator can foresee, in those Old Testament events he has witnessed, what will occur in the Restoration. This sort of foretelling is possible because, to borrow a phrase from Henry More, the prophet is "so actuated by the Spirit of God, that in the sublimity of the divine Heat he is in," he speaks from the perspective of
eternity. Thus the negative judgments that the narrator passes on Achitophel and the rebels also bear on Shaftesbury and the sectaries; and the positive judgments the narrator passes upon David also bear on Charles.

Furthermore, the negative judgments in the poem are brought about, at least in part, by a cluster of allusions, prophetic figures of speech, and prophetic icons (the latter two devices, perhaps borrowed from Henry More) that serve to identify Absalom, Achitophel, and their party with the party of Satan in the Book of Revelation. Earlier (Ch. III, p. 136), examining the possibility that he uses the figure henopæia, we saw that Dryden introduces his catalogue of the chief enemies of the king with lines that identify the seven of them with the seven heads of the Beast in Revelation 17.7: "... a whole Hydra more/Remains, of sprouting heads too long, to score" (ll. 541-542). Then we (pp. 142-143) examined the possibility that Dryden uses the icons "philtre," "serpent," and "drunkenness" (perhaps borrowed from Henry More) to reveal two crucial points about the evils of the chief rebels and their enterprise: Achitophel's devilish nature and the venomous nature of his language (ll. 228-229); the intoxication with worldly greatness that Achitophel's poison causes in Absalom (ll. 309-312, 371-372), who then becomes reminiscent of the Whore of Babylon in 17.6. Furthermore, Dryden may have intended Absalom's appeal to the populace and his progress among them (ll. 682-752) as analogues to the Great Whore's spreading her drunkenness and debauchery to the kings and
nations of the earth in Revelation 17.2 and 18.3. In any case, Dryden certainly intended us to recognize the young man as Antichrist, for Achitophel addresses him as "Saviour" (l. 240), and the crowd adores him as "their young Messiah" (l. 728).

On the face of it, these negative judgments are passed, I repeat, upon figures that Dryden pretends are his Old Testament contemporaries; only because the prophet, who transcends time, sees the Exclusion Crisis shadowed forth in Absalom's rebellion are these judgments passed upon the antitypes, Shaftesbury and Monmouth.

In his essay on the relevance of Sallust and Virgil to Absalom and Achitophel, R. G. Peterson has argued that the poem, "for all its Biblical superstructure, rests on the foundation of Roman classicism." As must be clear by now, I would reverse that judgment, for Absalom and Achitophel does not appear to be Biblical in the names of its characters only. Dryden also seems to have rendered his poem Biblical in nature by "imitating" II Samuel, by constructing a "mixt allegory," by manipulating time, by using prophetic devices of language, by casting his story in apocalyptic allusions—all in order to pass judgments, satirical and panegyrical, on parties and men. Dryden, I believe, is writing prophecy, not epic or "neo-classical ideal history."

Not that epic elements are absent: the use of "He said" in imitation of Virgil's "Dixit," the invocations to the muse (ll. 854-863, 898-899), the catalogues of villains and heroes, and the heroic couplets are all epic devices; and no doubt the
authority of statement in the poem is supported as much by Dryden's epic idiom as by his assumption of prophetic authority. But I do not believe any of these neoclassical devices to be at the conceptual center, at the core, of the poem Dryden wrote. Instead, these neoclassical devices are, I think, much like the clothes on David in the seventeenth-century Biblical illustration that Earl Miner reproduces in Dryden's Poetry (p. 126): Roman dress on a Hebrew figure.

In "The Demythological Mode in Augustan Verse," Sanford Budick approaches The Medall (and other Restoration and eighteenth-century works) from two perspectives of twentieth-century theology. First, on the basis of a twentieth-century analysis of the keryx (herald or prophet) in classical and biblical culture, he notes that the authority of a Greek herald or a Biblical prophet depended upon some higher power—the king for the former, God for the latter. The keryx or prophet proclaimed for some higher power. Then Budick takes up Rudolf Bultmann's theory of demythologization. Bultman, says Budick, argues that twentieth-century Christians must strip away the "irrelevant" trappings of the Christian story; modern Christians must do so in order to proclaim a revitalized version of the Gospel story, a version that presents an "existential description of life which the configurations of the [old] myth represent. . . ." One myth
is demythologized "in order to proclaim another." Demythologizing, says Budick, is Dryden's essential procedure in The Medall: the poet pierces to the core of the golden idol to show it—and thereby Shaftesbury and all Whiggery—to be a "papier-maché myth."

The pattern of section after section in the poem is first to establish and then to attack the Whig's view of themselves or of Shaftesbury; Budick calls this procedure "a turn." Finally, at the end of the poem, Dryden reveals and prophetically proclaims the "true" myth that will grow out of the fruits of acting on the basis of the "false" myth; this true myth is, of course, the necessity for a strong king. 46

Budick has put his finger on some essentials of Dryden's procedure in The Medall, but I believe that for a full understanding of this procedure we must step outside the perspectives of twentieth-century theology to examine the poem from the perspective of seventeenth-century English attitudes about the analogies between the English on the one hand and Old Testament Jews or New Testament Saints on the other. When we do so, we discover, first, that one of Dryden's chief means of "demythologizing" Shaftesbury and the Whigs is to puncture their pretensions through Biblical analogies that contradict the rebels' images of themselves. Second, we can see that these Biblical analogies, along with his assumption of the right to curse, establish Dryden as an angry prophet who, standing outside of time, acts as a spokesman as much for God as for the king. In short, Dryden's practice in The Medall 47 is to use techniques and
to adopt a stance that conforms to the seventeenth-century definition of a prophet.

One of the ways Dryden established biblical analogies in *The Medall*, as I noted earlier (Ch. III, pp. 139-140), is to use a figure that fits Henry More's definition of "Israelismus," the prophetic device, derived from the Book of Revelation, of discussing a current group of Christians as though they were Old Testament Jews. In *The Medall*, the figure, submerged but pervasive, lends Hebraic coloring to Dryden's analysis of the cycles into which the English throw their politics by ignoring the authority of the king and God: like the Jews in Exodus 32, Numbers 11, and the Books of Judges and Kings (all of which Dryden alludes to), the English continually disobey, are punished, and return to chastized obedience—only to disobey and undergo the whole cycle again. These allusions are "demythological" and particularly corrosive because, as we saw in Chapter I, the English—from the reign of Henry VIII, through the Interregnum, and right into the Restoration—had thought of themselves as Jews, as God's chosen people, fulfilling His purposes in history. Naturally they thought of themselves as righteous and obedient Jews, as servants of the Law. Such a vision of themselves was particularly strong among the Whigs' predecessors, Cromwell's followers (some still active during the Exclusion Crisis). Consequently, when Dryden presents the Whigs as worshipping a false, golden idol (ll. 7-8) and as bringing plagues upon England (ll. 294-303), as bemoaning their diet of manna (l. 131), as being
not Jews but Canaanites (l. 178), the demythologizing irony is more than usually piercing.

Dryden also establishes a network of allusions to the Book of Revelation in order to shatter Whiggish pretensions. Many of the sectarian Whigs, thinking of themselves as Christ's army, as the saints fighting on the side of the Lord to bring about the Millennium, where they would be rewarded (Rev. 19-20), were in the habit of labelling anyone who opposed their policies—popes, bishops, kings—as the Antichrist or as the Tail of the Beast. We can only imagine the Whigs' shocked outrage when they read through The Medall to find themselves identified as the Mystery of Iniquity that they abhorred. One of Dryden's tactics in making this identification is to equate the Whigs and other democrats with historical figures, specifically with the pope and the Turks, identified as the Antichrist in many Protestant commentaries on Revelation. Shaftesbury, says Dryden, preaches sovereignty, and thus "sets the People in the Papal Chair" (l. 87). Later Dryden refers to these antichristian figures when he points out that reliance on popular will destroys the possibility of universal truth:

The common Cry is ev'n Religion's Test;
The Turk's is, at Constantinople, best;
Idols in India, Popery at Rome;
And our own Worship onely true at home. . . .

(1l. 103-106.)

Besides identifying them with historical figures widely regarded as antichristian, Dryden introduces other images that identify the Whigs directly with those persons in Revelation who
are slaves to the Beast and to the Great Whore of Babylon: the Whig jurymen, having freed Shaftesbury, find "Their Mayden Oaths debauch'd into a Whore" (l. 153); the populace of London are, like the populace of Babylon (Rev. 18), merchants who care only about wealth (ll. 192-196). Apparently playing on Henry Kore's idea that the "wine of wrath" of the Great Whore's fornication (Rev. 14.8) is a poison or venom,50 Dryden further indicates the subservience of the masses to her--i.e., to Shaftesbury--in a vision that closes the poem:

The swelling Poison of the sev'ral Sects,  
Which, wanting vent, the Nations Health infects,  
Shall burst its Bag; and fighting out their way  
The various Venoms on each other prey.  
(ll. 294-297.)

As in his attack on the Whigs and the populace of London, Dryden demythologizes Shaftesbury by means of allusions to the Old and New Testaments. Shaftesbury is a "new Jehu" (l. 119); like the Jehu in II Kings 9-10, he is a hypocritical zealot who pretends at first to serve the Lord but ends as an idolator. Shaftesbury is also the idol of the English idiots, an idol "so golden to the sight,/So base within, so counterfeit and light" (ll. 8-9). Golden idols occur in at least two places in the Old Testament: once in Exodus 32, where Aaron's golden calf causes the Lord to plague the Jews; once in I Kings 12, where Jeroboam's golden calves serve to further divide Israel and Judah. In addition to being labelled a Jehu and false idol, Shaftesbury is called Lucifer (l. 21), perhaps an allusion to Isaiah 14.12: "How thou art fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art
thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

These Old Testament allusions that identify Shaftesbury as a false god and as a devil (the two are equated in Paradise Lost) are reinforced by Dryden's New Testament allusions, many of them given special import by More's icons. Lucifer, for instance, was thought to be referred to not only in Isaiah, but also in Revelation 12.7, where he is the dragon or Satan (i.e., Antichrist) cast out by Michael during the war in heaven. And if the English are, as we noted earlier, debauched and poisoned by the Great Whore, it is no wonder, for Shaftesbury, their idol, is "the Pander of the Peoples hearts/...Whose blandishments a Loyal land have whor'd" whose "Mercury/Has pass'd through every Sect," whose "Venom still remains" within them so that the "pox'd Nation feels...[him] in their Brains" (1. 256-266). The identification of Shaftesbury's leadership and ideas with wine is made a few lines later, where the sectaries, using Shaftesbury's "Stumm," "ferment their fainting cause" (1. 270). Again, these images of vinous, diseased whoredom appear to be based on Henry More's idea that the wine of the wrath of the Great Whore's fornication is a kind of poison.

A false god, an antichristian whore who debauches, who infects with the pox, and who poisons with wine—that, I believe, is Dryden's image of Shaftesbury in The Medall. Along with the corresponding image he presents of the English (especially of the sectaries and Whigs) as debauched, disobedient, and poisoned Jews, this image of Shaftesbury certainly punctures a version of
reality that the poet considered false. The poem must have stunned Dryden's enemies and delighted his allies. Even more startling than these ironic reversals of Whiggish myth is the authority, the assurance, with which Dryden speaks in the poem. "Who made you Judges in Israel?" he asks the Whigs in the "Epistle." They might well have asked him the same question, to which we must suppose, he would have replied by pointing to the king. Still, the assurance with which Dryden speaks in the poem somehow arises out of elements he himself built into it—specifically, out of the device of transcending time and out of his assumption of the right to curse.

As I point out in Chapter II (pp. 55-59) and in the Appendix, transcending time is, according to seventeenth-century exegetes, one of the characteristics of prophetic writing. Obviously, if he can compose a poem in which he makes himself appear to have transcended time, a writer can thereby gain a great deal of authority, for a man who stands outside of time is in a good way to compare and contrast the past, present, and future in his quest for the truth. His perspective on history resembles God's. Dryden attains (or makes himself appear to have attained) this perspective in The Medall, as we have just seen, by comparing Shaftesbury and the Whigs to the devil and to the unfaithful Jews in the past (Old Testament), by presenting the master politician and his followers as present-day fulfillments of the predictions of the Antichrist and slaves (New Testament), and, in the last section of the poem (ll. 287-322), by predicting the future of the English in
light of their own recent history. Thus, although intensely a poem of its time, The Medall's supra-historical perspective lends the author an almost divine authority.

If having this supra-historical perspective allows Dryden to see the truth about Shaftesbury and the Whigs, then perforce this quasi-divine knowledge allows him to see just how far they have strayed from a divine norm; they deserve a divinely-ordained punishment, and so Dryden, on the basis of the authority he gains through his divine perspective on events, finds it easy and useful to take an additional step (above, Ch. II, pp. 66-69): he assumes the right to curse, and he curses with great assurance.

First he curses the Whig merchants:

Those let me curse; what vengeance will they urge,
Whose Ordures neither Plague nor Fire can purge.
(L. 187-188.)

Then he curses Shaftesbury:

But thou, the Pander of the Peoples hearts,
(O Crooked Scul, and Serpentine in Arts,)
Whose blandishments a Loyal Land have whor'd
And broke the Bonds she plighted to her Lord;
What Curses on thy blasted Name will fall!
Which Age to Age their Legacy shall call;
For all must curse the Woes that must descend on all.
(L. 256-262.)

Finally, in lines that we must read aloud to savor the angry, bitter urgency of their rhythms, Dryden dooms the shortsighted English to a future identical to their past:

The Presbyter, puft up with spiritual Pride,
Shall on the Necks of the lewd Nobles ride:
His Brethren damn, the Civil Pow'r defy;
And parcel out Republique Prelacy.
But short shall be his Reign; his rigid Yoke
And Tyrant Pow'r will puny Sects provoke;
And Frogs and Toads, and all the Tadpole Train
Will croak to Heav'n for help, from this devouring Crane.
The Cut-throat Sword and clamorous Gown shall jar,
In sharing their ill-gotten Spoiles of War:
Chiefs shall be grudg'd the part which they pretend;
Lords envy Lords, and Friends with every Friend
About their impious Merit shall contend.
(II. 298-310.)

A speaker who can condense, integrate, and bring to bear
so much of the past on the present and the future, and who can
do so in such firm phrases, does not allow his audience much room
for doubt: he sees, speaks, and demythologizes with the authority
of a prophet.

v

The Hind and the Panther

Students of Dryden seem to be on the edge of achieving a
thorough understanding of The Hind and the Panther. Recently,
two scholars in particular have offered important readings of the
poem. Earl Miner's essay on The Hind and the Panther is too
thoughtful and complex to summarize here; I can indicate, however,
that he makes at least three important contributions: (1) he
demonstrates that at least some of the sources for Dryden's
metaphoric structure lie in theriophily, Aesopian beast fable,
and sacred zoographies; (2) he demonstrates that the themes of the
poem grow out of the moderate realism of Aquinas and are in accord
with beliefs held by the moderate wing of English Catholicism;
(3) he illuminates the temporal outline of the poem and the
relationships among the temporal, immortal, and eternal modes as
Dryden presents them. Sanford Budick has also made three
important contributions: (1) he emphasizes the poem's connection with seventeenth-century discussions of Antichrist; (2) he perceives, in part, the apocalyptic nature of what Miner calls Dryden's beast fable; (3) he understands that the metaphoric structure of the poem is in some way deliberately mysterious.\textsuperscript{52}

My interest here lies in both extending and qualifying some of the findings of Miner and Budick by examining Dryden's use of certain Biblical passages—from Daniel, Revelation, Proverbs, Psalms, and Matthew—to lend apocalyptic texture to the narrative and characterizations in \textit{The Hind and the Panther}.\textsuperscript{53}

Some narrative threads in the poem resemble, at least in part, a narrative pattern that occurs in Daniel and Revelation. In Daniel, God's chosen people, bereft of their land, undergo extreme adversity but are promised ultimate triumph. The Book of Revelation includes all these narrative elements except the "lost land" (though the nations of the earth are conquered by Babylon). In writing \textit{The Hind and the Panther}, Dryden uses all of the narrative pattern established by Daniel and echoed in Revelation. At the outset of the poem (I, 19) he identifies the Catholic Hind with "Captive Israel," God's chosen nation; later Dryden presents the Catholic Church as the chosen Bride of Christ (Rev. 19.7-8):

\begin{quote}
Now, to remove the least remaining doubt,
That ev'n the blear-ey'd sects may find her out,
Behold what heav'nly rays adorn her brows,
What from his Wardrobe her belov'd allows
To deck the wedding-day of his unspotted spouse.
\end{quote}

(II, 515-519.)
And of course, as the counterpart of "Captive Israel," the Hind has lost her kingdom: like Israel, she has "multiply'd in chains/A numerous Exile" (I, 19-20); a few lines later she is said to wander "in the kingdoms, once Her own" (I, 26). Moreover, like the Jews in Daniel and the Christians in Revelation, English Catholics suffer adversity: the Hind herself, "though fated not to dy," had "oft been chas'd with horns and hounds,/And Scythian Shafts"; of her sons, moreover, "a slaughtered army lay in bloud" (I, 5-8, 13). The persecution theme is recalled in the discussion of the Exclusion Crisis (II, l-17), in the destruction of the Swallows, and in the persecution of the Catholic Chickens by King Buzzard and the Pigeons (III, 588-638, 1058-1227). Nonetheless, like the Jews in Daniel, the Catholic Church in England is destined, according to Dryden, to survive and ultimately to triumph. The Hind is, after all, "immortal," "fated not to dy" (I, 1, 8). In the Hind's tale, the Anglican Pigeons may become a feast for the Buzzard, but the Catholic Chickens are protected by the husbandman's "Doom/Of Sacred Strength for ev'ry Age to come" (III, 1233-1234). In the Panther's tale, even the Catholic Swallows, who appear to be killed by the winter weather, are, as Miner points out, the Panther's unwitting symbols for the truth and immortality of the Catholic Church, for, in the words of one of the sacred zoographies, "As the swallow lies hidden in winter, so the Church endures in persecution." At the end of the poem, having bested but not converted the Panther with arguments, the Hind looks forward to her ultimate
triumph:

Ten thousand Angels on her slumbers waite
With glorious Visions of her future state.

(III, 1297-1298.)

In addition to this apparent use of Daniel and Revelation for certain narrative elements in The Hind and the Panther, Dryden, I think, drew upon these books of the Bible for a complex of allusions that helps him in characterizations. Take, to begin with, Dryden's presentation of the beasts that dominate Part I. Miner argues convincingly that the characterization and significances of these beasts are derived from theriophily, emblem literature, Aesop's fables, and, principally, from sacred zoographies. Budick, on the other hand, argues that some of the beasts in Dryden's poem are based on Daniel 7. In his view, Daniel's lion becomes Dryden's Henry VIII; Daniel's bear becomes Dryden's "Independent beast"; Daniel's leopard, Dryden's Anglican Panther; and Daniel's unnamed fourth beast, Dryden's Wolf. Budick implies that Miner's argument about the sources of characterization and significance for the beasts is correct, but too narrow—that the imaginative wellspring for the beast fable itself is Daniel 7 and the commentaries upon it. Budick is correct, I believe, but he is himself too narrow in saying that the beasts are derived from Daniel 7 alone. Dryden also seems to have drawn upon other apocalyptic sources.

Almost certainly, one of these sources is Revelation, particularly Chapters 13 and 17. Here is Revelation 13.1-2:

And I stood upon the sand of the sea; and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten
horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. . . .

There are three similarities between the beasts in The Hind and the Panther and the beast from the sea. One is that the names of the parts of this beast are, like the beasts in Daniel, identical to some of the beasts in Dryden’s poem. A second similarity, less exact, but nonetheless worth noting, is that, like some of the beasts in Daniel 7, both this beast in Revelation 13.1-2 and Dryden’s Panther are chimerical. The beast in Revelation has a leopard’s body, but a bear’s feet and a lion’s mouth. Dryden’s Panther is, like the Minotaur, “a creature of a double kind”:

Her upper part, of decent discipline,  
Shew’d affectation of an ancient line:  

But what disgrac’d and disavow’d the rest  
Was Calvin’s brand, that stigmatiz’d the beast.  
(I, 396-402.)

The third similarity is contained in the last line of that quotation—in the mention of a "brand, that stigmatiz’d the beast."

This remark alludes to verses at the end of Revelation 13, wherein a second beast marks the people on the earth with a sign of the first beast: "And he [the second beast] caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in right hand, or in their foreheads . . ." (13.16). Dryden, rather slyly, has his Panther marked on a lower part of her anatomy.

As might be expected from the location of the Panther’s mark, Dryden, in addition to characterizing her by allusion to
Revelation 13, also does so, if my reading of the poem is correct, by allusion to Revelation 17, where St. John presents the Great Whore of Babylon. Like the Whore, the Anglican Panther is lubricious. In Part I, Dryden indicates that the Panther, estranged from the Lion, has not yet had intercourse with the Wolf; nonetheless, "Though unpolluted yet with actual ill,/She half commits, who sins but in Her will" (I, 339-340). Later in Part I, the poet calls the Wolf the Panther's "new chosen mate" (I, 449). The Hind pulls no punches: at one point she says to the Panther that the Wolf is "your Adulterer" (II, 251); at another, that the Panther's "Sons of Latitude" are probably illegitimate:

... I blush you honesty to blot,
Pray god you prove 'em lawfully begot:
For, in some Popish libells I have read,
The Wolf has been too busie in your bed.

(III, 163-166.)

The Panther is also like the Great Whore (and like the beasts in Daniel 7 and Revelation 13) in being cruel. The Whore's cruelty is established in Revelation 17.6: John "saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus..." The Panther's cruelty is established in part, as Miner points out, by the significance attached to leopards in the sacred zoographies. Dryden does not let the matter rest there, however. He calls her a "beast of Prey" when she is first mentioned (I, 330), and later, three times, a "salvage" (II, 222; III, 22, 358). Sometimes physical details signal her character:
Her glowing eye-balls glitt'ring in the dark
(II, 225.)

[She] civily drew in her sharpn'd paws,
Not violating hospitable laws,
And pacify'd her tail, and lick'd her frothy jaws.
(II, 718-720.)

Early in Part III, the Hind anatomizes the state of the Panther's soul only to find there, among other nasty qualities, "canker'd malice" and "Revenge, the bloody minister of ill" (III, 71-75). Most revealing is the viciousness of the fate that the Panther wishes upon the swallows. When the Panther concludes her tale,

The patience of the Hind did almost fail,
For well she mark'd the malice of the tale:
Which Ribbald art their church to Luther owes,
In malice it began, by malice grows,
He sow'd the Serpent's teeth, an iron-harvest rose.
(III, 639-643.)

Dryden evidently uses Revelation 17 to characterize the other Protestant beasts, too. St. John "saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns" (Rev. 17.3). An angel tells John that the beast will turn on the Whore: "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire" (Rev. 17.16). In Part I of The Hind and the Panther, Dryden discusses seven schismatic or heretical beasts: Bear, Harc, Ape, Boar, Fox, Wolf, Panther. (I do not count the Lion, for it represents not a heresy but kings—both bad, like Henry VIII, and good, like James II.) Like the body of the beast with seven heads in Revelation 13.1-2, the Anglican Panther is the main heresy, at least in Caledon. And like the Whore riding on
the beast with seven heads in Revelation 17, the Panther is losing control of her supposed servants, who hate her.\textsuperscript{58}

Thus is the Panther neither lov'd nor fear'd,
A meer mock Queen of a divided Herd;
\ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots 
Now, mixing with a salvage crowd, she goes
And meanly flatters her invertebrate foes,
Ruled while she rules, and losing ev'ry hour
Her wretched remnants of precarious pow'r.
(I, 497-510.)

None of her sylvan subjects made their court;
Levees and couchées pass'd without resort.
So hardly can Usurpers manage well
Those, whom they first instructed to rebell. \ldots
(I, 515-518.)

Shall she command, who has herself rebell'd?
Is Antichrist by Antichrist expell'd?
(II, 279-280.)

Dryden carefully stresses that the Panther might be killed by the sectarian beasts. As the Hind reminds the Panther, the Popish Plot was aimed at both Anglicans and Catholics:

Those toils were for your own dear self design'd,
As well as me; and, with the self same throw,
To catch the quarry, and the vermin too,
(Forgive the sland'rous tongues that call'd you so.)
(II, 19-22.)

And the Hind invites the Panther to stay the night for fear that the other beasts will attack the feline on the way home:

[The Hind] fear'd that travelling so late,
Some evil minded beasts might lye in wait;
And without witness wreak their hidden hate.

The Panther agrees, for "since she had to deal/ with many foes,
their numbers might prevail \ldots" (II, 681-694).

So far in our consideration of apocalyptic motifs in The Hind and the Panther, we have focussed only on the evidence for Dryden's dependence upon Daniel and Revelation. But I believe
that other Biblical texts also permeate Dryden's presentation of narrative incident and character in the poem. These Biblical passages are not in Daniel and Revelation but are nonetheless apocalyptic, either in themselves or because they are rendered apocalyptic by allusions to them in Daniel and Revelation. Specifically, Dryden evidently adds to the apocalyptic texture of his poem by alluding sometimes to Matthew 24 and sometimes to Proverbs 5 and Psalm 42 (which are alluded to in the major apocalyptic books).

We may begin with those passages in the poem that appear to allude to Proverbs 5 and Psalm 42. The salient verses of Proverbs 5 are these:

... the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. (Vss. 3-4.)

Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. (Vs. 15.)

Let thy fountain be blessed; and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and the pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. (Vss. 18-19.)

The first three verses of Psalm 42 are also important:

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, So panteth my soul after thee, 0 God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night. ... .

In Revelation, St. John alludes to both Proverbs 5 and Psalm 42:

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living
fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. (Rev. 7.17.)

And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. (Rev. 8.10-11.)

Perhaps Dryden began with Revelation 7-8, noticed the imagery of fountains, waters, and wormwood, then recalled that similar images occurred in Psalms and Proverbs, where he found the deer images. That, of course, is speculation. What appears more certain is that he fuses and transforms these images from Psalms, Proverbs and Revelation into symbols central to *The Hind and the Panther*. Sanford Budick, without mentioning Psalm 42, has noticed how thoroughly images of fountains and water permeate the poem:

The Hind repeatedly insists on her association with "the fountain of eternal grace" (II, 627), the "fountain head" (III, 123), the "immortal spring" (III, 807), and the "limpid stream drawn from the native source" (II, 614).

[Finally] the metaphor of "lineal course" (II, 615) or fountain head (II, 616) is represented as "unconfin'dly spread" (II, 617) and becomes one of the major images associated with the Hind in the poem. The unfathomed deep . . . becomes a symbol of God's mystery and glory which demands total immersion in the divine.

Thus one, thus pure, behold her largely spread
Like the fair ocean from her mother bed;
From East to West triumphantly she rides,
All shoars are water'd by her wealthy Tides.

[Budick also argues that in using the Hind as a symbol of]
the Catholic Church, Dryden was at once confuting Henry More's interpretation of the Hebrew word *tsebi* in Daniel 11.45 as the city of Rome and playing upon other meanings of *tsebi* (such as "roe," "glorious place," "Judea") that establish the Hind as an admirable beast. We can be more specific than Budick, however. First, the hind in Proverbs 5.18 and the hart in Psalm 42.1 are also called *tsebi* in the Hebrew. Second, both of these *tsebi* are associated, like Dryden's Hind, with water and fountains. Third, Dryden seems to work carefully in Part I to echo Psalm 42.1-2: the Hind is "panting" (I, 25) as the poem opens and, as Part I closes, she comes with the other creatures to drink (I, 521-531). (Incidentally, this image, almost certainly taken from Psalm 42.1, of the Hind or Hart at the water may have a long tradition: Quarles, who quotes Saints Cyril and Augustine, wrote on this verse an emblem in which the Hart at the stream symbolizes the soul immersed in God's grace. Quarles' Hart, like Dryden's Hind, is pursued by hunters.) Fourth, like the roe in Proverbs 5, Dryden's Hind is a bride, the Bride of Christ to whom men are to be faithful (II, 515-519). In short, if I am correct, what Dryden does in Part I is to establish an image—the Hind at the water—that confutes More's definition of *tsebi* and establishes the Hind as a creature of grace; then, as Budick points out, by having the Hind constantly associated with fountains and water in the course of the poem, Dryden echoes and extends the significance of that initial image as the poem proceeds. It is a complex, skillful, and highly poetic achievement.
But we must not forget the revelance of Psalm 42 and Proverbs 5 to the Panther. As we have already seen, she appears to be thoroughly identified with the second beast in Revelation 13 and with the Great Whore of Babylon in Revelation 18. Once that is understood, the possibility that the Panther participates in the allusive pattern we are now discussing becomes more easily perceptible: the Panther, I think, is the "strange woman" of Proverbs 5, whose lips "drop as an honeycomb," whose mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood. . . ."

The Hind notes the Panther's honeyed but vicious rhetoric:

(Hind.) The Panther's breath was ever fam'd for sweet, But from the Wolfe such wishes oft I meet: You learn'd this language from the blatant beast. . . .

(II, 228-230.)

If the Panther is the "strange woman" of Proverbs 5.3, then she is perforce opposed to the wife, the "loving hind," the "running water," the "fountain" in verses 15-19. And naturally the Panther's ends are "bitter as wormwood"--she may be killed by the other beasts, and her story, the story of the swallows, is bitter in tone. In effect, like the star called Wormwood in Revelation 8.10-11, the Panther embitters and poisons the waters of life.

Dryden's allusions to Proverbs 5 and to Psalm 42 are apocalyptic in nature because, as I have said, Proverbs 5 and Psalms 42 are alluded to in Revelation. But Dryden, it appears virtually certain, also adds apocalyptic texture to his poem by alluding to Matthew 24, a passage so like Revelation that it is often called the "little Apocalypse." He also--unquestionably, I think--alludes to the echoes of Matthew 24 that occur in Revelation.
In one of the passages from Matthew 24 to which I believe Dryden alludes, Christ is explaining the Second Coming:

For as the lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Vss. 27-30.)

This passage from Matthew is echoed and extended in Revelation 18 and 19, where the Great Whore is defeated and the Second Coming occurs:

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. (Rev. 18.1.)

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. (Rev. 19.11.)

Several elements similar to ones in these apocalyptic passages—sudden light in the darkness, an angel, carrion birds, a man on horseback at the head of an army—occur in Dryden's poem when the Hind finishes proclaiming herself as the True Church and offers to receive the Panther into the fold:

Thus, while with heav'nly charity she spoke, A streaming blaze the silent shadows broke: Shot from the skies a chearfull azure light; The birds obscene to forests wing'd their flight, And gaping graves receiv'd the wandring guilty spright.

Such were the pleasing triumphs of the sky For James his late nocturnal victory; The pledge of his Almighty patron's love,
The fire-works which his angel made above.
I saw my self the lambent easie light
Guild the brown horrour and dispell the night. . . .

(II, 649-659.)

Thus, if my analysis is correct, does Dryden validate the Hind's claim to authority, elevate the significance of James II's victory at Sedgemoor, and justify his own conversion—by portraying all three to be part of and to hinge on God's plan as that is predicted in Matthew 24 and Revelation 18-19.

Still other passages in The Hind and the Panther are evidently allusions to Matthew 24 (and, in an ancillary way, to Revelation); these allusions occur principally in the Panther's Tale of the Swallows but also in other parts of the poem. The verses in Matthew 24 to which Dryden seemingly alludes have to do principally with the rise of false prophets and with the suffering of the true Christians:

And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. (Vss. 19-21.)

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (Vs. 24.)

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. . . . (Vs. 29.)

The Martin of the Panther's tale, I believe, is one of the false prophets of verse 24; his inaccurate predictions lead to the
disastrous flight of the swallows in darkness, almost certainly
an allusion to verse 29:

And what was ominous, that very morn
The Sun was enter'd into Capricorn;
Which, by their bad Astronomers account,
That week the virgin balance shou'd remount;
An infant moon eclips'd him in his way,
And hid the small remainders of his day:
The crowd amaz'd, pursu'd no certain mark;
But birds met birds, and justled in the dark;
Few mind the publick in a Panick fright;
And fear increas'd the horror of the night.
Night came, but unattended with repose,
Alone she came, no sleep their eyes to close,
Alone, and black she came, no friendly stars arose.

(III, 595-609.)

The Swallow, though not "with child," has children who

For succour to their helpless mother call[;]
She spread her wings; some few beneath 'em cry'd,
She spread 'em wider yet, but cou'd not cover all.

(III, 615-617.)

The apparent destruction of the swallows is completed during their
flight in winter, an allusion to verse 20:

T'augment their woes, the winds began to move
Debate in air, for empty fields above,
Till Boreas got the skies, and pow'red amain
His ratling hail-stones mix'd with snow and rain.

(III, 618-621.)

But, as Earl Miner has pointed out, the swallows are, without the
Panther's knowing it, a symbol of the True Church because they
disappear in the winter only to reappear mysteriously in the spring.
In this way, Dryden alludes not only to the beast fables that
Miner indicates, but also to one more verse from Matthew 24: "But
he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (vs. 11).

I have focussed here upon allusions in The Hind and the
Panther to certain Biblical passages—in Daniel, Revelation,
Proverbs 5, Psalm 42, and Matthew 24—that I believe Dryden uses to introduce apocalyptic texture into the narrative and characterizations of his poem. If I understand the function of these allusions correctly, then we must see the poem as having decidedly apocalyptic overtones: the Catholic Church is portrayed as "the loving Hind," which, though sustained by the Waters of Life and though specially chosen by the Lord, must suffer temporary persecution before achieving ultimate triumph in Eternity. The Catholic Church must suffer this apocalyptic persecution at the hands of heretics and schismatics, especially at the hands of the Anglican Church, which is portrayed as Antichrist—as a chimerical, vicious but increasingly powerless beast, as a whore, who like the "strange woman," embitters the Waters of Life. Dryden, then, appears to be writing a poem that is, at least in part, a Catholic apocalypse.

The apocalyptic nature of the poem is suggested by other indications which might turn into further evidence if they were followed up, but which I shall confine myself to sketching briefly here. One of these is Dryden's use of icons and figures of speech that, as I argue in Chapter III (pp. 144-146), appear to be based on discussions, like Henry More's in A Modest Enquiry, of the devices of language in Revelation. Another indication which it might prove fruitful to explore is that, as Miner has pointed out, the poem—while dealing with the temporal, immortal, and eternal orders—moves from past to present to future in Parts I, II, and III; thus Dryden evidently transcends time in a manner that might be
expected of a prophet. Furthermore, having apparently transcended time, Dryden passes judgments, judgments that he presents as representing God's and King James's point of view. Finally, if it is in fact an apocalypse, the poem is apparently a peculiarly Catholic apocalypse, for Catholicism is embodied not only in themes and in images that surround the Hind, but also, I believe, in Dryden's presentation of the Millennium. Seventeenth-century Protestant exegesis represented the Millennium as a future but temporal state (above, Ch. I, p. 12); Dryden, I believe, turns at the end of his poem to the Augustinian and traditionally Catholic view that St. John's Millennium is an allegory of future bliss that is attainable only in eternity: when, at the end of the poem, the Hind rests,

Ten thousand Angels on her slumber waite
With glorious Visions of her future state.
Footnotes to Chapter IV


Earl Miner—in Dryden's Poetry (1967; rpt. "Midland Book," Bloomington: Univ. of Indiana Press, 1971), pp. 9-27—argues that Annus Mirabilis is unified by animistic imagery and by a corresponding concern with life and death; but images and themes alone, though perhaps sufficient to unify a lyric, seem insufficient to unify a poem as long as Annus Mirabilis.

Steven N. Zwicker—in Dryden's Political Poetry: The Typology of King and Nation (Providence: Brown Univ. Press, 1972), 78-83—illustrates Dryden's use of types (e.g., David, Moses, Christ, Babylon) "to create a salvific identity for the king and a redemptive history for the nation," but Zwicker does not really try to account for the unity of the poem; in addition, if I may anticipate an argument which I shall make a bit later, Zwicker recognizes millennial motifs from Isaiah 60 in the conclusion of Annus Mirabilis, but does not see how these motifs are integrated into the whole of Dryden's apocalyptic design. For my assessment of Zwicker's central argument, see above, Ch. III, n. 21.

3 E. N. Hooker, "The Purpose of Dryden's Annus Mirabilis," HLQ, 10 (November 1946), 49-67; Hooker's researches into the background of Annus Mirabilis are condensed in California I, 258-259.

4 California I, 257; see also Roper, Dryden's Poetic Kingdoms, p. 81.

5 Roper, Kingdoms, p. 77; California, I, 257.

7. There were three pamphlets: Eniautos Terastios: Mirabilis Annus, or the Year of Prodigies and Wonders... (n. p., 1662); Mirabilis Annus Secundus, or the Second Year of Prodigies (n. p., 1662); Mirabilis Annus Secundus, or the Second Part of the Second Years Prodigies (n. p., 1662). I shall cite these pamphlets, respectively as MA I, MA II, i, and MA, II, ii.


13. For the full range of More's argument see his Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity (London, 1664) the Second Part of which is the Synopsis Prophetica wherein he sets forth those figures and iconisms that we examined in earlier chapters.


15. Modest Enquiry, pp. 118-119; see p. 113.

16. Leviathan, Part IV, Ch. 44, p. 397.

17. Mac Flecknoe, in California, II, 53-60.


20. Modest Enquiry, pp. 87-116; for critical commentary on this point, see Korn, "Mac Flecknoe and Cowley's Davideis," pp. 108-119 (Korn does not mention Christ, but rather, working with Davideis, refers mainly to Old Testament allusions); Earl Miner, Dryden's Poetry, pp. 93-96.


22. Modest Enquiry, pp. 34-38; see Leviathan, Part IV, Ch. 44, pp. 403-409.

23. Modest Enquiry, p. 61; see Leviathan, Part IV, Ch. 44, pp. 403-409.

24. Modest Enquiry, p. 154. This charge is a familiar one in anti-Catholic propaganda, of course, and Hobbes touches upon it briefly: Leviathan, Part IV, Ch. 47, p. 458.

25. Leviathan, Part IV, Ch. 46, pp. 438-439; Modest Enquiry, pp. 102-105.


27. Leviathan, Part IV, Ch. 47, pp. 457-459.


31. "To the Reader" (Prefixed to Absalom and Achitophel), in California II, 3, 5; A Discourse Concerning Satire, in John Dryden: Of Dramatic Poesy and Other Critical Essays, ed. & int. by George


Zwicker, in Dryden's Political Poetry (pp. 83-101), presents a very good explication of the ways in which details and patterns of details work to set the story in Absalom and Achitophel into the frame of the Christian paradigm—fall from God's grace, followed by misery and then by redemption under a Christ-like king. Instead of allegory, Zwicker uses the term correlative typology (see above, Ch. III, n. 21) to denote the relationship between Old Testament events and Restoration events: II Samuel and the Exclusion Crisis "are the two historical poles of the poem, and they bear to each other the relationship of correlative types. But the biblical characters themselves also have typological meanings that enlarge their importance within the biblical frame and that carry over into the contemporary frame. Furthermore, the contemporary story participates in the symbolic mode of the poem because it is a current manifestation of an eternal ordering of events [i.e., the
Christian paradigm]."


37 California, II, h.

38 Harold Brooks, "The 'Imitation' in English Poetry, Especially in Formal Satire, before the Age of Pope," RES, 25 (April 1949), 124-140. Without mentioning Brooks, Roper discusses, briefly, the way in which Absalom and Achitophel imitates II Samuel (Kingdoms, p. 186).


41 Hoffman, Dryden's Imagery, p. 73; Miner, Dryden's Poetry, p. 114; see also Chambers, "Absalom and Achitophel: Christ and Satan," pp. 592-596.

42 More, Grand Mystery of Godliness, in Theological Works, p. 207. In "Absalom and Achitophel: A Revaluation" (p. 68), Bruce King makes the following acute comment on the transcendence of time in Absalom and Achitophel:

"In Absalom and Achitophel the person and events are the immediate embodiment of a cosmic drama. They incarnate great archetypes which recur throughout history. They are related to their archetypes through broad analogies, local metaphors, allusion, imitative action, Christian symbolism, and other forms of correspondence. Often several moments of time are seen as symbolically equivalent. The narration utilizes the Christian view of time which treats all history as recapitulatory of archetypal events. Absalom and Achitophel shadows: the fall of Adam and Eve; major events in the Old Testament; the coming of the Messiah; and the triumph of God over His Adversary at the end of time. The ambiguous time scheme of the poem in which various ages are superimposed upon each other, and the continual flashbacks and jumps forward in time, are like the narrative dislocations in Paradise
Lost, an attempt to recreate imaginatively the simultaneity of all history, from the Creation to the Second Coming, as symbolically implicit within Genesis. Absalom and Achitophel imaginatively includes many ages of biblical history. The era could be before Aaron ('ere priestcraft'), before Moses ('no law denied'), or during the time of Abraham ('use of concubine and bride'). 'Israel's monarch' could refer to David or to the Messiah." Cf. Zwicker, Dryden's Political Poetry, pp. 83-101.

King ("A Revaluation") and Lewalski ("Scope and Function of Biblical Allusion") discuss allusions to Revelation; for the judgment passed upon Absalom, see Christopher Ricks, "Dryden's Absalom," ETC, 11 (July 1961), 273-284.

Peterson, "Larger Manners and Events," p. 244.


The Medall, in California II, 37-52. Zwicker's Dryden's Political Poetry arrived too late to have influenced my argument here; thus it is interesting that he identifies, in the characterizations of Shaftesbury and the Whigs, many of the same Old Testament allusions that I do (though he misses the allusions to Exodus 32 that I believe frame the poem), and he makes a similar argument about their function; Zwicker does not, however, identify the allusions to Revelation.


Ibid., pp. 26, 35, 82 (n. 3).

More, Modest Enquiry, Part II (Synopsis Prophetica), p. 246; see above, Ch. Ill, pp. 142-144.

"Epistle to the Whigs" (Prefixed to The Medall), in California, II, 39.


The Hind and the Panther, in California, II, 118-200.

Wolfgang Franzius, Historia Animalum Sacra (Wittenberg, 1612), p. 523, as translated by Kiner in Dryden's Poetry, p. 166.

56 Even though Dryden was a Catholic when he wrote *The Hind and the Panther*, I have continued to quote from the Authorized Version rather than from the Douai, for my purpose here is not a close study of parallels in diction and phraseology.


58 In addition to the quoted passages, see: I, 452-495; II, 100-136, 400-445, 538-542.


60 Ibid., pp. 207-217.


"Dryden had too much sense to pose as a prophet," said A. W. Verrall, one of Dryden's most sympathetic and perceptive critics, fifty years ago.¹ This view has not been widely held in the last fifteen years: Alan Roper and Arthur W. Hoffman, among others, have asserted that Dryden acts as a prophet in this or that poem. But even these recent critics limit the definition of "prophecy" to prediction or to prediction-as-praise within the topos of the Golden Age; Roper does this in his discussions of "To Congreve," and so does A. W. Hoffman in his analysis of Astraea Redux.² Furthermore, critical remarks about prophecy in Dryden's poems have almost always been scattered and incidental. Roper, for instance, is interested in discussing the allusive matrices made possible by the three "kingdoms" of Adam, Saturn, and Charles II; millennial prophecy is only part of his concern. Earl Miner, trying to bring a broad range of seventeenth-century material to bear on Dryden's poems, nearly always discusses prophecy and apocalypse, but, as in his discussion of Absalom and Achitophel, not at length and generally in relation to other matters.³ With the exception of A. L. Korn, in his analysis of Mac Flecknoe,⁴ only Hoffman and Sanford Budick have seen prophecy as central to some of Dryden's poems; but Hoffman does so only with minor poems such as "Anne hillegrew," "To Congreve," and
"To John Dryden" (Imagery, pp. 98-128, 133-138, 139-147), and Budick deals only with the allusions to the Book of Daniel in The Hind and the Panther. 5

My purpose here has been to show that the prophetic plays a larger and more central part in Dryden's thinking about poetry and in his poetic practice than the remarks of recent critics indicate. If I am correct, he was knowledgeable about millenarianism and prophecy as they were understood in the seventeenth century, and he adopted in his major poems rhetorical stances, figures of speech, and icons that seventeenth-century exegetes believed were characteristic of prophetic and apocalyptic writing. Moreover, the supposition—supported by evidence in his critical statements and by his poetic practices—that Dryden consciously used rhetorical devices characteristic of prophecy permits, I believe, a richer understanding than we have had heretofore of certain of his major poems: Annus Mirabilis appears to be structurally sound, unified, when read as a seventeenth-century apocalypse; Mac Flecknoe attacks Shadwell in language that may well be calculated to associate him and the ills he causes with the Mystery of Iniquity; Absalom and Achitophel is perhaps more of a Biblical poem than critics who focus on its neo-classical elements have recognized; The Medall seems to be an attempt to destroy Shaftesbury by means of prophetic curses and thereby to bring the wayward English Israelites back to God and king; The Hind and the Panther begins to look like a Catholic apocalypse.
Without asserting that I have fully explored Dryden's concept of prophecy or that I have finally and for all time established the prophetic and apocalyptic nature of these major poems, I would affirm that to ignore his thinking about and practice of prophecy would be irresponsible. In addition, I would suggest that the presence of the prophetic in Dryden's thought and practice has implications that go beyond the five poems with which I have dealt—beyond, perhaps, Dryden himself. The possibility remains to be explored that the prophetic plays some part in his dramatic writings and in poems not investigated here—Religio Laici, for instance, or Britannia Rediviva. If we widen our focus, we may find that the prophetic plays some part in the complex literary heritage that Dryden bequeathed to Swift and Pope. And investigation of that question may lead to a deepened understanding of the relationship between prophecy and apocalypse on the one hand and panegyric and satire on the other. Certainly, however, we have enough to do in trying to understand the part prophecy plays in the poetry of Dryden as he—in his role of spokesman for the ancient traditions of Jerusalem and Athens—fights his high-spirited, intense, brilliant, and intelligible holding action against those in his time who say that nature is unknowable, that politics is a matter of wilfully imposing upon the real world constructs of the human imagination, that the truths of faith should be shaped by the whims of individuals and by shifts in the climate of opinion.
Footnotes to Conclusion


4 Korn, "Mac Flecknoe and Cowley's Davideis," HLQ, (1951), 99-127; Korn's awareness of the variety of meanings for prophet is limited.

APPENDIX

NOTES ON THE RHETORIC OF PROPHECY IN THE
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

In the mix of seventeenth-century ideas about the rhetoric of prophecy, the three most important considerations are (1) Henry More's set of ten prophetic figures of speech, (2) the standard prophetic iconography, (3) the assumption that time is manipulated as a basis for prophetic allegory.

More's Figures

Each prophetic figure of speech noted by Henry More seems highly susceptible of use in allegory, probably because he developed his list of figures with an eye towards explicating Revelation. Most of these figures are very similar in nature to the standard figures that Sister Miriam Joseph has classified under "subject and adjunct," and that similarity is probably quite natural, given any allegorist's penchant for presenting in concrete imagery one or two characteristics of the quality or state he is trying to portray. Having explained that the allegorist of Revelation had to make his predictions deliberately obscure (see above, pp. 51-53), More points out that most of the figures he has discovered "do as well embellish and adorn the external Cortex of
Prophecies, as conceal and cover the more precious and inwards sense of them. Thereupon he lists and defines his figures:

1. **Diorismus** is a figure by which the prophet "polishes the outward letter with an appearing sense of a very exact and determinate account of things either as to **Number**, **Proportion**, or **Specification**. Which does the more strongly strike the fancy, as an object settled and unmoved makes a stronger impress upon the sight than that which is flitting. . . ."

   a. As examples of **Numerical Diorismus** Nore cites the 144,000 saints on Mt. Sion and the 666 followers of the beast; neither number, he says, is to be taken as exact.

   b. "**Proportional Diorisms** are such as these, Apoc. 8. The **third part of the trees** was burnt up. The **third part of the ships** was destroyed; The **third part of the sea** became blood . . . where third does not signify the proportion of that which was smitten nor that which did escape, but the empire at large which was smitten is indigitated by this number."

   c. **Specifical Diorisms** are really "**Synecdoches** . . . that put the **species** for the **genus**, which being a more determinate object strikes the fancy stronglier and with fuller gratification." So that the phrase to make war "is more determinate and specifick
then to oppose, and to be beheaded then simply to die or be killed. . . ."

2. **Hylasmus** "is a Prophetic Scheme bearing strongly upon the Phancy by exhibiting crass and palpable Objects, such as in Logick would bear the notion of Subject or Matter."

There are two kinds of hylasmus:

a. In the first type of hylasmus, a physical object associated in some way with a person or group is taken to represent him or them: "The first kind is coincident with Metonymia Subjecti; as when a City is put for the Inhabitants, or a Temple for them that worship therein."

b. In the second kind of hylasmus, the shape and qualities of palpable things represent spiritual qualities. "Examples of this kind are the Inward and Outward Court of the Temple, the one Symmetrical, the other Asymmetrical; which signifies the Christian Church, one while in her Purity, another while in her Apostasie to Idols." Henry More also instances the description of the New Jerusalem, which "signifies nothing else but the Church of Christ reduced again to Apostolical Purity."

3. **Henopoeia** is of two kinds:

a. In the first kind, sometimes one individual (usually a beast or person) represents a set of individuals contemporary to one another (e.g., a kingdom). For
example, in Daniel "one individual Lion . . . denotes the whole Kingdom of the Babylonians, one Bear the Kingdom of the Medo-Persians, one Leopard the Kingdom of the Greeks, and the fourth Beast the Roman Kingdom." On the other hand, sometimes one individual beast or person represents "a Succession of Individuals or Multitudes" (my emphasis). For instance, in Revelation "one Individual Beast represents not onely a Multitude of men under one Government, but the Succession of this multitude for many Ages. . . ."

b. In the second kind of henopoeia, one symbol can represent two or more distinct kinds of things, two or more things of different natures. An example occurs in Revelation 17, "where the Angel does declare that not onely Seven Kings but Seven Hills are couched under the Symbol of the Seven Heads of the Beast."

4. Zoopoeia is also of two kinds:

a. In the first kind, some inanimate thing is represented in the prophecy by "what has life, bo it Person, or any other living Creature, or part of that Creature." (Obviously this is the same as the classical figure prosopopeia.) More gives as an example the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11), who represent, he says, "the Two Books of the Old and New Testament."
b. A second kind of zoopœia occurs "when free Actions are attributed to free Agents, of which notwithstanding they may be no more the causes then if they were inanimate Beings, or not in being at all." More gives as a Scriptural example the "Souls crying under the Altar, O Lord, how long, &c. [Rev. 6.9]. Which is nothing but a Parable signifying that their death required Vengeance from the Justice of God." He also gives an example from Virgil: when Aeneas slays Turnus, "Pallas being dead is said to slay Turnus, though he did nothing here towards the slaying of him, but what he suffered onely gave occasion to Aeneas to take revenge."

5. Israelismus "is a Prophetick Scheme exceeding frequent, especially in the Apocalyps, which is a speaking of the affairs of the Christian Church under the names and with allusion to such places, or persons, or things, as did of old concern the Israelites and people of the Jews, and that in a mystical or spiritual meaning. Which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt [Rev. 11.8]. From whence is also insinuated that the Plagues on this Mystical Egypt, and the burning of this Spiritual Sodom, must be understood mystically and spiritually." (See above, Ch. I, pp. 6-11.) More gives several other examples of the ways in which the events in Hebrew history prefigure Christian history: the Jews in the Wilderness represent the Church, the Tabernacle
represents Christ, and the Passing through the Red Sea is a lively "Symbol of the Church's getting from under that servile yoke of the Romish Hierarchy.""

6. Ellipsis is of two kinds:

a. First is the ordinary sort consisting of the omission "of some word or words which are requisite to determine the sense." An example occurs in Exodus 3, says More, where "Moses asking God his Name, he returns this answer, I am that am: which is an Elliptical speech, and fully supplied, is My name is I am that am."

b. The second kind of ellipsis, according to More, involves the hidden meaning, the "mystical sense," that apocalyptic writers hide within the surface meaning of their works; this hidden meaning is intelligible only to the select few, those initiated into the ways of reading mysterious books. Apocalyptic (and cabalistic) writers, says More, deal with "a twofold traditionary knowledge, the one Truth, the other Types or Parables accommodated to the gust of the Vulgar." The existence of two kinds of meaning is alluded to when St. John says that the Volume of Visions "was written within and without [Rev. 5.1] according to the ancient manner of the Cabbalistic Mysteries." The second kind of ellipsis is not apparent to the uninitiated--the sense of
the text seems "compleat without the supplement understood." As an example More gives Revelation 17.8: "The Beast which thou sawest, was and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition. Which seems a smooth entire sense in the exterior Cortex of the Prophecy, wheras no good sense at all can be made of it unless" the reader can supply some missing phrase. More supplies that missing phrase in Greek; in English, the verse, with More's addition emphasized, reads: "The Beast that thou sawest is named 'Was-and-is-not; and-shall-ascend-out-of-the-bottomless-pit,-and-go-into-perdition.'"¹

7. Homonymia "is the Diversity of signification in one and the same Symbol, whereof one alone is to be understood, else it were coincident with an Henopoeia of the second kind." More says that homonymia may occur by accident, in which case its context will make the meaning apparent. If the figure is intended, however, the author is trying to "make up a more gracefull insculpture upon the external Cortex of a Vision." More takes his example from Revelation 11, wherein the two witnesses are said first (vs. 3) to prophesy for 1260 days and later (vs. 9) to lie dead for three and one-half days after being killed by the beast. More argues that "three days and a half" may signify either "three years and a half" or "1260 years," probably (in the context of vs. 3, where "1260 days"
means "1260 years") the latter. (The difference is important because, as we shall see in Note iii of this appendix, a "time" in Revelation was thought, by Joseph Mede and More, to equal three hundred sixty years; consequently the witnesses would lie dead for 1260 years.)

8. **Metalepsis** is "a Prophetic Scheme whereby an Effect or Event is transferred or communicated to some eminent Person merely . . . because the place and time is coincident with his; and there is the same reason of Things."

As an example from classical literature, More quotes a passage from Virgil in which "Taurus and Libra, because they are then in conjunction with the Sun, have attributed to them . . . those Effects which really are the Sun's onely and not theirs." His Scriptural example is the rider on the red horse (Rev. 6.4), "who is armed with a great sword in his hand, and is said to take peace from the Earth: Whenas nothing else is signified, but that in this Emperour's time there would be very furious killing and slaying in the Empire, though by no fault of his."

9. **Antichronismus** is an obscurative Scheme in Prophecy which sets down one measure of time for another; as a Week for Seven years, as in Daniel, a Month for Thirty years, a Day for a Year. Which Figure seems to be used in the Apocalyptic Visions not onely for concealment sake, but for proportion and Decorum, that the external Cortex of
the Prophecies may not want . . . [the] winning and pleasing Credibility of Story." Antichronismus is a result of henopæia, which "contracts vast Empires and other Bodies Politick with their long Successions into the figure or shape of Beasts or single Persons, whence, that the duration of their lives may not be over-proportional to their nature, it was necessary to declare their continuance also under a disguise, putting Days for Years." In Revelation 11.3, then, the two witnesses who are said to prophesy for 1260 days actually prophesy for 1260 years. See Note iii.

10. Icasmus "is a Prophetick Scheme that bears by far the greatest part in all the Visions of Daniel and S. John, and is nothing else but the Representation of things and events by such Symbols as bear some similitude with the things and events they stand for." More refers to the various beasts and their horns as examples and says that this sort of figure is similar to heraldry or blazonry. Since this sort of iconography is extremely important in the rhetoric of prophecy, we shall examine it at length in the next Note.

ii

Prophetic Iconography

Of the ten figures he offers, by far the most important to More is the last one, icasmus, the use of prophetic iconisms: he
spends thirty-five pages listing eighty-four of them (I list them below) and explaining their significance. More's idea for this list of iconisms is derived from his teacher, Joseph Mede, who, in his *Key of the Revelation*, paused now and again to explain that the symbolism in Revelation was based on the symbology of oriental dream interpretations as compiled in a book by the Arabian "onirocritic" Aposamar or Achmetes; according to Mede, a redaction of the book was published sometime in the seventeenth century by Nicolas Rigaltius. 5

Henry More acknowledges in nearly every one of his interpretations of the iconisms that his source is Achmetes. He argues for the acceptance of the list by citing important predecessors who used Achmetes: these interpretations, says More, are "approved even by Expositors of quite different ways, Grotius I mean and Mr. Mede, who has the honour of first breaking the ice in this business." 6 I give More's complete list here as a reference source, but, because of space limitations, it is impossible to list all his interpretations; I do supply them as need arises in the main body of the dissertation.

More's Alphabet of Prophetic Iconisms 7

| Angels | Character (Mark of Beast) |
| Ascension into Heaven | Clouds of Heaven |
| Air | Crown of Stones |
| Balances | Darkness |
| Beast | Day |
| Blasphemy | Death |
| Bloud | Desart |
| Bow and Arrows | Dragon |
| Buildings | Drunkenness |
| Burial | Eagles |
| Candel | Earthquake |
In addition to establishing a special set of figures of speech and a special iconography for prophecy, the seventeenth-century exegetes also offered (or thought they did) some insight into a third rhetorical device of the prophets: the manipulation of time. The awareness of the manipulation of time in prophecy may be said to begin with Luther's dictum that each event and each person or beast in Revelation must signify a corresponding event,
person, or group (say an army or a nation or a church) in subsequent history (see above, pp. 12-14). This dictum set off among the Protestant exegetes who succeeded Luther a hunt for one-to-one correspondences between the persons and events in Daniel and Revelation on the one hand and the persons and events in classical and "modern" history on the other hand. As we have seen, this search for correspondences was colored by the pessimistic view of history until the publication of the works of Joseph Mede (1627), who kept the theory of one-to-one correspondences but offered an optimistic theory of history.

The awareness of time in prophecy that began with Luther shows up in three interrelated sets of theories and assumptions about the rhetoric of time in prophecy: (1) the theory that Daniel and St. John used a code involving terms related to the units of time; (2) the theory of the prophetic use of "synchronals"; (3) the assumption that the prophet's manipulation of past, present, and future allows him to transcend time and to use certain rhetorical devices in order to render judgment.

The time code in prophecy. One consequence of the "historical" reading of the prophetic books was that the exegetes worked out a code to explain the relationship between the units of time in Daniel and Revelation (often days or months) and the units of time that events took in fact (often centuries); working out that code involved a further difficulty—explaining the relationships of the units of time within a prophetic book. Joseph Mede seems to have been the most important figure in
discovering the code accepted in the middle and late seventeenth century. He establishes three postulates:

(1) Because of the association of the sun with light and the moon with darkness, St. John uses days and years (which are governed by the sun) to portray events involving the forces of good; he uses months (which are governed by the moon) to portray events involving the forces of evil. This theory is reflected in one of Henry More's icons—"Sun, Moon, Stars."

(2) Mede's second postulate about the code (it is really less a postulate than an assumption) has to do with the relationship of the units of time in Revelation to the amounts of time taken up by events in history. He sometimes seems to assume that a "day" in Revelation is equivalent to a year in history; hence, since in Revelation forty-two months and three and one-half years each comprise roughly 1260 days, each is symbolic of 1260 years in history. He is not always consistent about this, however; in his explication of the 1000-year reign of Christ, he says that a "day" in Revelation is equivalent to "a length of time" in history. He hesitates to say just how long the Millennium will last. But if Mede is ambivalent about assigning a definite meaning to the units of time in Revelation, Henry More is not. More asserts unequivocally that in prophecy (he seems to include Daniel) "one measure of time" is set down for another, "as a Week for Seven years, . . . a Month for Thirty Years, a Day for a Year."

(3) Mede's third postulate (it is bound up with the
significance of the sun and moon and of days or years and months as they are explained above) has to do with the system of equivalencies within Revelation. This system has two parts. First, Hede argues for a set of equivalencies among the code words that St. John uses when portraying the forces of good: the word "time" is equivalent in meaning to the word "year"; "times" is equivalent to "two years"; "a half time" is equivalent to "a half-year"; "three and one-half times" or "three and one-half years" is equivalent to "1260 days." An example of Hede's use of this set of equivalencies occurs in his explanation of Revelation 12, wherein the Woman in the Wilderness is at first said to stay in the wilderness for 1260 days (vs. 6) but later for "a time, and times, and half a time" (vs. 14); Hede argues that St. John is merely re-telling the same story. The second part of the system of equivalencies has to do with the relationship between code words St. John uses when discussing the forces of good and code words he uses when discussing the forces of evil: "forty-two months" of activities on the part of the forces of evil is equivalent to (and often contemporary with) "three and one-half years," "three and one-half times," or "1260 days" on the part of the forces of good. For instance, Hede argues that some events in Revelation 12 and 13 are contemporaneous, not successive: the Woman remains in the wilderness for 1260 days at the same time that the seven-headed beast is restored and reigns for forty-two months.  

The "synchronals." Establishing that the prophecies
contained a code of time-related words was only one of Mede's contributions to the theory of time in prophecy. His other contribution was to read Revelation in the light of his system of "synchronals" or "synchronisms." Briefly put, Mede's theory is that many events that appear to take place separately and consecutively in Revelation actually take place simultaneously, and that sometimes St. John even presents the same event in two different places in Revelation under the guise of two different sets of symbols. In Mede's words, "... prophecies of things falling out in the same time run on in time together, or Synchronize." 17

An understanding of the system of synchronals depends upon a prior understanding of Mede's partition of Revelation. The first division consists, as Francis Roberts puts it, of The Things that Are, that is, of the letters to the Seven Churches (Rev. 1-3); the second division consists of The Things That Shall be Hereafter (Rev. 4-22). The second division is further subdivided into two important sections: the Prophecies of the Seals (beginning in Rev. 5), which, focussing on Christ's war with Rome, are largely political in nature; and the Prophecies of the Little Book (beginning in Rev. 10.6), which are spiritual and ecclesiastical in nature. 19

To find examples of the kinds of synchronisms in these two groups of prophecies, the place to begin is with the Prophecy of the Little Book, for it contains many events that Mede considers synchronal. He argues, for instance, that a major group
of synchronisms occurs in Chapters 11-14 and 17-18.3. Thus, the outer court of the Temple is trod underfoot by the Gentiles (11.2), while the two witnesses preach in sackcloth and are killed by the Beast (11.3-9), while Babylon sits on the seven-headed, ten-horned Beast and makes the people of the earth drink the wine of her fornication (18.3) . . . and so on, through four more events. That is one kind of synchronal, a synchronal within one of the two sets of prophecies. But there is another kind of synchronal as well: Mede argues that events in the Prophecies of the Seals synchronize with events in the Prophecies of the Little Book. For example, among the major events in the Prophecies of the Seals is the blowing of the first six trumpets (Rev. 8-6.10, 9.1, 9.13); these trumpets are blown—according to Mede's system—while the events that we just looked at (Rev. 11-13, 17-18.3) from the Prophecies of the Little Book are occurring. Thus the two sets of events—(1) the blowing of the first six trumpets and (2) the seven prophecies that include the two witnesses preaching in sackcloth—are synchronals. And, since the Prophecies of the Seals are political while the Prophecies of the Little Book are ecclesiastical and spiritual, St. John is sometimes presenting the same event from two different perspectives.

Knowing about these specific examples is not as important, however, as being aware that Mede has supplied the rhetoric of prophecy with another tool—the manipulation of events so that they look consecutive but are really contemporaneous and mutually
Past, present, and future in prophetic judgment. We have just examined some seventeenth-century theories about the interrelationships among events within a prophetic narrative; now we return to the set of difficulties with which this note opened, a set of difficulties summed up in one question: what is the temporal relationship between the events narrated in prophecy and the events in history? That question received a variety of answers in the seventeenth century—only one of those answers was the older one given by Luther; all of them imply that the prophet stands outside of time, and all of them imply a rhetoric of judgment.

1. One theory—evidently the dominant one—is that prophecy (especially Revelation 4-22) consists primarily of a set of visions in which the future is foretold; the visions themselves are thought to have no relation to the events of history in or before the prophet's lifetime.

This position appears to be Luther's; he speaks of the "visions" in Revelation and of the "pictures" to which we are to compare those events of history subsequent to the composition of the book. The same attitude is implicit in Rude's and More's discussions of dream symbolism (Ch. II, pp. 54-55; pp. 248-250 of this Appendix), in John Smith's discussion of inspiration (Ch. II, p. 41), and in Henry More's attacks on anyone who argues that some of the events and personages in Revelation 4-22 occurred before or during St. John's life.
2. A second theory is that the prophet's vision of the future is grounded in his present, that when he speaks of current events or persons he establishes types, the antitypes of which occur in the future. This theory is generally offered by exegetes who are discussing the first three chapters of Revelation (not the last nineteen) or some other, non-apocalyptic, book.25

Henry More puts forward this theory (not necessarily in contradiction to the position that we just saw him offer about the last nineteen books of Revelation) in the passages from The Grand Mystery of Godliness that we examined earlier (p. 54): the prophets, "while they prophesied or spoke of some more considerable Priest, Prophet, or King . . . were so actuated and transported, that in that fatidical Rapture they were caught up into, the Sense of their Minde and Words was carried further than the Particular Person they began to describe. So that according to this Supposition we will of our own accord acknowledge that several, and those of the most eminent prophecies that Characterize the Person of Christ, did first touch upon some other Person, which was but a fainter Resemblance of him."26 Another who offered this theory was Thomas Brightman, whose position is summarized (along with Mede's and others') by the popularizer Francis Roberts in Clavis Bibliorum. Speaking of the significance of the first three chapters of Revelation, Roberts makes it clear that most exegetes believe that the letters to the Seven Churches refer only to the churches of St. John's own time. Roberts does use a
very long note (note i; it takes up nearly one-half page) to explain Brightman's position, however. According to Roberts, Brightman agrees that the letters refer to St. John's own time, but he proceeds a little further, and conceives, That these seven Cities contain the universal condition of the Church among the Gentiles; and therefore to those seven Churches and Cities, according to their Order, situation and distances from each other as types; he joyns other fellow-Churches answering thereunto as Anti-types, Counter-Copies or Counter-pains, of these seven Churches. And so makes all these Epistles, as well Prophetical, in respect of the future Counter-pain Chambers: Historical, in respect of the present Anti-type Asian Churches. These Asian Churches he sets forth by their Characters and Counter-pains, as followeth, viz. 1. Languishing Ephesus, the first of these seven Cities: The Counter-pain of it. The first Christian Church from the time of the Apostles till the time of Constantine the great, which was the Principal of all other Churches. 2. Sweet-smelling Smyrna, an under-City of Ephesus, northward from it, and a Colony belonging to the Ephesians: The Counter-pain of it; The Church succeeding the first, beginning with Constantine, and continued till Gratian, till about Anno Dom. 352 according to Eusebius.27 And so on through all the seven churches. Henry More, in The Prophetical Exposition of the Seven Epistles, echoes Brightman's analysis of these three chapters.

3. A third theory (it is offered by Hugo Grotius) is that the prophet, in addition to speaking of the present and the future, can speak of the past as well. This position does not seem to have been in the mainstream of English prophetic theory in the seventeenth century, but it was probably widely known, for Grotius
was one of the prominent intellects of his day. Besides, Henry More, whose *Modest Inquiry* often proceeds by way of attack on many of Grotius's prophetic theories, goes out of his way to acknowledge Grotius's greatness and popularity, so this position could have been widely known simply through More's attacks on it. 28

An example of Grotius's theory that prophecy—even the Book of Revelation—can refer to the past as well as the present and the future is presented by More in a discussion of the seven-headed, ten-horned beast of Revelation:

The Scarlet Beast ridden by the Whore of Babylon is the old Roman Idolatry guided and dispensed by the ancient Ethnick Roman State or Domination, as he [Grotius] calls it. The Seven Heads of the Beast are seven Roman Emperours, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Ortho, Vitellius, which five were fallen when S. John had this Vision, or at the least wrote it. . . . But Vespasian was then reigning: Titus, the seventh, was not yet come; and when he was come, he was to continue but a while. But the Beast that was, and is not, and is the Eighth King, and consequently an Eighth Head, that's Domitian, who . . . reigned first in his Father Vespasian's absence, but receding from the government of the Empire at Vespasian's return, was then the Beast that was, but is not, but was after to emerge and resume the Empire again after Vespasian and Titus his reign, and to die a violent death. 29

Grotius, then, was allowing Revelation to be a book of history, of current events, and of prediction, but any given person or beast or head in Revelation must refer to a single person or group in the past, or present, or future. A person or beast in Revelation cannot refer (as it would in a typological reading) simultaneously to a person or group in the present and the future.
Each of these theories about the relationship between events in prophecy on the one hand and events in history on the other hand implies that the prophet stands outside of, transcends, time. According to the first theory, the prophet sees the future in symbols that have nothing to do with the present; according to the second theory, he somehow sees the future in the present; according to the third, he sees the past, present, and future in a complex symbol. None of these prophetic operations is possible unless the prophet, at least during his moments of inspiration, is allowed by God to have a quasi-divine perspective, a supra-historical perspective, on events.

But that the prophet does not transcend time or gain this quasi-divine perspective merely to report on the past, present, or future—he also passes judgments—is implied in the nature of the devices he uses to do his reporting. In the first and third theory, the prophet reports upon the past, present, and future by means of symbols, icons, figures of speech, nearly all of which he exploits for their positive or negative values. Hence if the Lord vouchsafes to the prophet a vision of a person or institution that will be evil, the prophet may present that institution as, say, a whore who uses poison to inflict damage upon innocents. In the second theory, the prophet passes judgments, by means of images, upon a type—some contemporary person, group, or event. Perforce those judgments are passed at the same time on the antitype—the future person, group, or event shadowed forth in the prophet's present circumstances.
Footnotes to Appendix


2Though the term "allegory" is accurate with regard to More's figures of speech, it may be so only in the broadest sense of the term. Strictly speaking, we should distinguish between naive allegory and figura. In the former, says Angus Fletcher (Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode [Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1964], pp. 26-28), personified abstractions "give a sort of life to intellectual conceptions; they may not actually create a personality before our eyes, but they do create a semblance of personality." In figura, though, the conceptualizing process is reversed: "... the poet treats real people in a formulaic way so that they become walking ideas. When they are historical persons taking part in God's providential structuring of time, as in Dante, the procedure is called figura or typology." Other modern scholars also note this distinction: Eric Auerbach, "Figura," in Scenes from the Drama of European Literature (New York: Meridian, 1959), p. 54; Rosamund Tuve, Allegorical Imagery (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1965), pp. 46-48. For some history of typological or figural exegesis in the seventeenth century, see William C. Hadsden's From Shadowy Types to Truth: Studies in Milton's Symbolism (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 16-53.

The key question here is whether or not the events and beasts in Daniel and Revelation have an historical base (see Note iii in this Appendix). If they do, then these books are figural; if they do not, then the books are allegorical.

3More, A Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity (London, 1664), p. 213; More gives definitions of the figures, in the order that I present them here, on pp. 213-225.

4Ibid., pp. 223-224; cf. More's translation from the Biblical Greek on p. 290 of Modest Enquiry. I am thanks to Professor Kenneth Abbott, Classics Department, The Ohio State University, for help with the Greek.

5Joseph Mede, The Key of the Revelation, trans. by Richard
More (London, 1643), Part I, p. 64.


8. That is why the seventeenth-century readings of Daniel and Revelation often seem closer to figura than to allegory; see n. 2 above.


10. Henry More seems to credit Mede with being a pioneer in exploring the time code in Revelation: see Modest Enquiry, p. 214.


12. Ibid., Part II, pp. 46-47.

13. Ibid., Part II, pp. 122-123.


15. Key of Revelation, Part II, pp. 46-47; More notes that everyone, even Grotius, agrees that this is the significance of the word "time" in Daniel: see Modest Enquiry, p. 255.


17. Francis Roberts, in Clavis Bibliorum, 4th ed. (London, 1675), p. 581, credits Paracelsus with an earlier but imperfect version of a system similar to Mede's; Roberts recommends Mede's system over all others.


19. Key of Revelation, Part I, pp. 12-13. Mede thinks that Rev. 10.11 ("thou must againe ... prophesie") is the transition
between these two sections, but that some of the Prophecies of the Seals extend into passages beyond Rev. 10; the Seventh Seal, for instance, is opened in Rev. 17.

20. Ibid., Part I, pp. 2-12.

21. In Mede's system, the trumpets are blown after the opening of the Seventh Seal: see Key of Revelation, Part I, p. 14.


25. See n. 2, above.


27. Clavis Bibliorum, p. 584.


29. Ibid., p. 342.
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