

A Study of Satire in a Seventeenth Century Pamphlet

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Abstract

A rapid expansion in the production of cheap, printed pamphlets of various kinds, most notably the prototypical newspapers known as ‘newsbooks’, took place during the early years of the English Civil War. Such pamphlets have been extensively studied to date but there has been relatively little attention paid to the use of satire in them despite the social importance of this genre. In this paper I discuss how satire was used in one such pamphlet and show how a close reading of the text’s satirical elements can provide much information about the social context in which it was produced.

1. Introduction

The early years of the English Civil War were marked by a dramatic expansion in the production of cheap, printed pamphlets of various kinds including petitions, proclamations, sermons, ballads and prophesies. Of this flood of printed matter the vast majority of pamphlets were devoted to the supply of a single commodity: news. The importance of such ‘newsbooks’ to media historians lies in the fact that they represent the earliest prototypes of the mass news media in Britain. As such, in recent years they have received considerable scholarly attention.¹ Indeed, one of the most authoritative recent studies of the Civil War period, Braddick’s *God’s fury, England’s Fire* (2008) draws heavily on this wealth of popular literature.² However, in this paper, I would like to approach the question of how news was conveyed through these pamphlets from a somewhat unusual angle, namely satire.

Satire is a serious business: the terrorist attack on the Paris office of *Charlie Hebdo* in 2015 reminds us that, while the pen may be mightier than the sword, those who wield it take their lives in their hands. The principal weapons of the satirist are wit, sarcasm, irony and ridicule. These are brandished not simply for comic effect but to expose the shortcomings of individuals, groups or society as a whole with the ultimate aim of reforming them. Beneath the humorous surface of the best satire lies a deep vein of social criticism, directed principally at the powerful. The degree to which satire is tolerated by officialdom is a good

measure of the state of civil liberties in a particular society. It follows from the above that through an attentive reading of the satirical literature of a given time and place we may gain an appreciation of three things. Firstly, the type of people or behaviour which a society finds worthy of censure and the values underlying those judgements: we may refer to this aspect as ‘satire as sociology’. Secondly, the degree of freedom of expression enjoyed by the citizens, which I shall term ‘satire as barometer’. Thirdly, the ways in which language was used to create the satirical effect, which I shall term ‘satire as discourse’.

2. Aims and Method

In this paper, rather than discussing a range of texts, which is how Civil War pamphlets are usually studied, I shall examine in fine detail how satire operated in a single pamphlet which purported to be reporting news. In so doing my aim is to demonstrate how the text functions as an organic whole to present its readers with a view of the world that is both comic and tragic.

The greatest barrier to interpreting the satirical content of texts such as this is the enormous gap in terms of shared background knowledge (or ‘members’ resources’ in Fairclough’s terms) between the modern analyst and the contemporary discourse community.³ For example, there are numerous places in the text where the authors make a passing reference using a now obsolete slang term to something they clearly assumed would be familiar to their readers who would therefore ‘get the joke’ without difficulty. Accordingly, much use has had to be made of reference works beginning with the *Oxford English Dictionary* but also encompassing, in particular, Evans (1881), Opie & Opie (1997), Partridge (2006), Plomer (1907) and Williams (1994).⁴ The method employed in this study entailed deciphering the various allusions in the text and then linking them to their social context. Finally, throughout the analysis I shall draw a number of parallels to contemporary satirical publications exemplified by the leading British satirical magazine *Private Eye* to show how much the old and the new have in common.⁵

3. *Pigges corantoe*

The pamphlet that I have selected for this study is entitled *Pigges corantoe or News from the North*.⁶ Note that the transcript of the entire text is given in the Appendix.⁷ It was a pamphlet published in London on or around 26 March 1642. It was characterised by Quaritch as ‘four leaves of curious satirical matter by

a royalist, printed and arranged to resemble a news-letter' (1884: 2210)⁸. More recently, Fissell described it as 'an obscure source, but full of absolutely typical images and language' (2004: 194), which is one reason why I have deemed it suitable for this study.⁹

The word coranto¹⁰ refers to a printed pamphlet containing news. The earliest known corantos written in English were published in 1620 in the Netherlands and brought clandestinely to London.¹¹ These early corantos were single sheets with text in two columns on each side of the sheet and they dealt exclusively with foreign news. The following year the first corantos to be printed in England appeared. Over the next two decades corantos, or newsbooks as they were also called, developed in three main ways. Firstly, they became smaller in size (generally quarto) but with more pages (typically eight). Secondly, they aimed to provide news on a periodical (generally weekly) basis. Thirdly, they increasingly turned their attention to domestic news, particularly towards the end of the 1630s and early 1640s as the country headed towards civil war and official restrictions on the press broke down. *Piggies Coranto* appears at first glance to be just such a newsbook, indicating that the satirists (and their intended audience) possessed a sound understanding of the conventions of that genre. Of course, bearing a title roughly equivalent to 'Piggie's News' gives a fairly clear cue to its humorous content but the subtitle implies that readers might expect to find within its pages more serious fare concerning a part of the country about which they would have been avidly curious, the King and court having recently left London for York.

The pamphlet consists of eight quarto pages printed in black type. The reverse sides of the cover (page two) and the seventh page (page eight) are blank. The main body text is printed using a Dutch-style roman serif font and is arranged in a single column format with 38 lines per page. The distribution of italicized text is as shown in the Appendix.

The cover page is refreshingly uncluttered in its layout compared to many contemporary newsbooks such as those I have discussed previously (Haig 2015, 2016).¹² It includes the title and subtitle 'PIGGES / CORANTOE / OR / NEVVES FROM the North.' which together extend down nearly to the middle of the page, followed by a circular abstract decorative device centred on what appears to be a female head and torso emerging from the centre of a flower. The torso lacks arms but the head or back is bedecked with dragonfly-like wings. At the foot of the page is printed information about the pamphlet's publication: 'LONDON, / Printed for

L.C. and M.W. / 1642.’

The third page, which is where the actual content of the pamphlet begins, has a decorative woodblock border of foliage and entwined serpents across the top edge, immediately below which the pamphlet’s title (but not the subtitle) is repeated in large type capitals on two lines. Somewhat remarkably for such an important word in this prominent position, the second G in PIGGES is printed in an approximately 60% smaller size and in a different typeface to the rest of the word. The capital T of the first word, ‘The’, of the introductory paragraph is printed as a foliage-decorated square woodblock that extends across almost one third of the page and down to the bottom of the paragraph eight lines below. Following the title and the introductory paragraph the heading ‘Forraigne Newes’ introduces that section which begins near the foot of this page with an item headed, ‘From France’. All subsequent pages are undecorated but the pamphlet ends at the foot of the seventh page with the word ‘FINIS’ in large italics.

4. A note on authorial identity

The value of establishing authorial identity is arguably just as great in the case of satirical texts as with purportedly straightforward newsbooks. On the one hand, when dealing with early modern English newsbooks the partisan nature of authorship, favouring either Parliament or the Crown, is of crucial importance when it comes to adjudicating on matters of verisimilitude and bias. On the other hand, in the case of satire one is dealing with material that may well stray into the vicinity of the libel courts, for which very reason authorship might need to be concealed.

Such being the case, it is perhaps unsurprising that references to authorial identity contained in the text are too vague to allow attribution to be made. At the foot of the cover page we find the phrase ‘London, Printed for L.C. and M.W. 1642’. However, a search of the standard reference works on the London book trade of the period (including Plomer, 1907 and the *British Book Trade Index*) produced a number of individuals with the corresponding initials, but as yet I have not been able to definitively link any of them to this pamphlet. Assuming that the initials themselves are not fictitious, it is not even possible to assert that they refer to the authors rather than to those who simply ordered the manuscript to be printed such as a pair of commissioning booksellers perhaps. The fact that the actual name of the printer is also not given contributes to the sense of this being a somewhat

disreputable publication, even judged by the decidedly lax standards of the time.

Despite the dual authorship hinted at by the above inscription, it is notable that throughout the pamphlet, 'honest Pigge' is always referred to in the singular¹³. This usage finds parallels amongst British satirical magazines in the way *Punch* would refer to itself as 'Mr Punch' and, more recently, in the way *Private Eye* refers to its fictitious proprietor as 'Lord Gnome'. Of the 13 instances of self-reference in the pamphlet, most imply that Pigge was usually to be found in London. That he had recently made a visit to York, though, is suggested by the very last sentence of the pamphlet which concludes '... not beholding to *Pigge* till he returne again from *Yorke*.'¹⁴

5. Analysis

In this section I shall present my analysis of the text section by section. Readers are advised to familiarize themselves with the text (given in the Appendix) before reading this section.

5.1 Introductory paragraph

Notwithstanding the fact that this pamphlet was conceived as a work of satire, the opening assertion that, *The generall newes is, no body knows what to make of this World* might seem like an inauspicious opening gambit for a work purporting to convey news to its readers in exchange for their hard-earned or ill-gotten penny. Yet, in fact, this phrase accurately reflects the public mood in England at the time of the pamphlet's publication when to many observers the dysfunctional relationship between Parliament and sovereign appeared set to tip the whole kingdom into anarchy. The paragraph's conclusion that *the Rumors of warres makes all beleve Doomefday is at hand, and hath caused more tales in every mans mouth then truth* reflects this same mood, while also highlighting the important religious dimension to the conflict. Above all, it reminds us of the dearth of reliable information available at that time which led to the explosion of printed newsbooks and pamphlets made possible by the temporary breakdown in the official control of printing.

5.2 Forraigne Newes

Given the pamphlet's subtitle, at first sight it may appear odd that it should include any foreign news at all. However, when we consider that after the foreign

news the entire remainder of the pamphlet's text comes under the heading 'From London' and that there is actually very little concrete information 'from' the North and little more even 'about' the North, it begins to appear as if the topical reference in the subtitle to the part of the country to which the King and court had recently departed was included more as a sales-ploy than as an accurate description of the contents.

Once again, the complaint made by Pigge in the opening paragraph that continental politicians enjoyed better intelligence of English affairs than he does reflects the popular feeling of the times. So too does the emphasis on foreign threats, about which there was at this time great anxiety and consequently news was eagerly sought.

From France

The king referred to here is Louis XIII (1601–1643) who, at around this time, was preparing to lay siege to Perpignan, then the capital of the mainland territories of the Kingdom of Majorca. Whether or not the pamphlet's authors were aware of this and were alluding to it, or whether they just wanted to find a peg on which to hang the satirical verse is not clear. But the metaphorical reference to the king's resolution to 'dance French broiles after the Defender of the Faiths Mufick', where 'Defender of the Faith' refers to the English sovereign, appears again to be (or to be a parody of) a typical attempt to instil fear of foreign enemies.

The reference to 'old Tarlton' is to Queen Elizabeth I's favourite jester, Richard Tarlton (1530-1588). However, the pamphlet's suggestion that he was the source (or even just a singer) of the 'song' about the King of France which is appended to this paragraph seems unfounded. This is because *Pigges Corantoe* has the distinction of containing, in this song, the oldest surviving version of the English nursery rhyme 'The Grand Old Duke of York'. Given Tarlton's enormous fame it is hard to imagine that, had he been the song's author, no reference linking him to this song from a more contemporary source would have survived. Moreover, in their discussion of the origin of this nursery rhyme, Opie and Opie (1997) quote the following passage from a letter written in 1620 by the Anglo-Welsh historian James Howell, who at the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 became the first holder of the office of historiographer royal:

'France as all Christendom besides was in a profound peace ... when Henry the

fourth fell upon some great Martiall designe ... he levied a huge army of 40,000 men, whence came the Song, The King of France with forty thousand men.’¹⁵

The event referred to by Howell occurred in 1610, long after Tarlton’s death. It is only towards the end of the 19th century that we find written examples of the Duke of York being substituted for the King of France. A further incidental connection with *Private Eye* is that the magazine regularly features a parody of this nursery rhyme to comment humorously on military affairs.

From Spaine

The king referred to here is Philip IV (1605–1665) who at the time was under financial and military pressure to abandon his ‘Netherlands first’ strategy in the Franko-Spanish war in order to concentrate on fighting rebels in Catalonia. The ‘disgrace’ alluded to was the celebrated defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and specifically the capture and imprisonment of Don Pedro de Valdés, knight of the Order of Santiago and captain general of the kingdom of Andalusia. The implication, however, that the king was now seeking an excuse for revenge seems improbable. Rather, we see here a somewhat parodic reflection of the contemporary atmosphere of fear towards foreign states.

From Rome

That ‘popery’ was behind almost all of England’s troubles was the dominant trope in much of the popular literature at this time as its frequent appearance amongst the Thomason Tracts well attests. However, such views were largely confined to those texts which supported Parliament or at least took a neutral stance. Therefore it is somewhat surprising to find a supposedly Catholic satire making such fun of the Pope as we find here.

5.3 From London

This is the largest section of the pamphlet consisting of 20 paragraphs (1551 words, 84% of the total) all but one of which introduces a new topic with the word ‘That’ in the same way as was used in the three foreign news sections. The order of the topics covered are as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Order of topics covered in the 'From London' section of *Pigges Corantoe*.

Paragraph	Topic
1	Criticism of the Projectors
2	Appearance versus reality amongst the religious
3	Shortcomings of the young gallants of London
4	Pigge's encounter with his tailor in the street
5	Lawyers and ship-money
6	Creditors and sergeants
7	Intentions of usurers and others regarding the war
8	The trained bands
9	Pigge's willingness to serve in the war
10	War as theatre
11	Old soldiers
12	Commanders and brave blades
13	The cause of the distemper
14	The number of honest women in Yorkshire
15	Ladies of pleasure that are gone to yorke
16	Sexual disease
17	The world is turned upside downe
18	Pigge and his horse in Yorkshire
19	Those going to Yorke
20	Luck is all

Due to limitations of space it is only possible here to discuss a selection of these various topics that have particular relevance to the use of satire in this pamphlet.

Criticism of the projectors

The section opens with a richly figurative paragraph (1) blaming 'certaine vermine called Projectors' for the nation's troubles. In the sense denoted here, these were the people who today might be called 'schemers' or even 'swindlers' – often quite wealthy people with money-making plans and projects to promote.¹⁶ The OED gives a quotation from a seventeenth century source referring to 'Intreaguers and Projectors, the very Machiavels of their Age' while another advises 'Let not the Projector pretend the publike good, when he intends but to robbe the riche and to cheat the poore'. Needless to say, this class of people were a favourite target of the popular press and several pamphlets satirized the projectors in terms of being 'knavish' or 'priviledged cheats'. Of particular interest here is one such pamphlet also to be found in the Thomason Tracts that was printed just four months later in

the same year. Its title was *Hogs character of a projector. Wherein is disciphered the manner and shape of that Vermine.*¹⁷ The long subtitle continues thus:

With some other witty conceits unhappily falling out in these distracted times, in the Kingdom of *England*, and *Ireland*. And in Relation to a Book lately Printed, Intituled Pigs Corantoe, or News from the North,

Unfortunately, there is no textual evidence to link anyone involved in the production of this pamphlet to *Pigges Corantoe*. Since it is not parodying the newsbook genre the structure of the text is quite different. Neither 'Hog' nor 'honest Pigge' appear personally in the text as narrators and most of the paragraphs begin with 'He is' and give particulars about the projector such as the following:

He is a maker of Newes, as well as of new invention, and for the most part happy in his proceedings; for which one and the same devise, he can both tickle the ears of the King, and the purses of the Commons

The young gallants

Paragraph (3) pokes fun at the fashionable young men who were too foppish to enlist as Royalist soldiers. The humorous image of a gallant tottering along on precariously tall shoes¹⁸ and 'stradling after the French fashion' (an allusion to the gait of syphilitics suffering from painful swellings in their groins) while holding an improvised helmet visor made out of an earthenware pot (his 'pipkin Beaver') in one hand and a cane in the other is a striking one. It is interesting to observe Pigge here criticizing his fellow Royalists. It has been a characteristic of many of the greatest satirists down the ages to not take sides but to distribute their barbs with an even hand. On the other hand, it could be precisely because he *is* a royalist that he wants to goad the young men into taking up arms in support of the King.

Pigge's tailor

In contrast to the aristocratic gallants, paragraph (4) presents the working classes, a more obvious target for a Royalist perhaps, moving *en masse* through London with a new-found confidence in their social position. They frighten Pigge, demanding money with menaces, and he fears that he might have to fight a duel¹⁹ with his tailor over an unpaid bill. The precise import of 'sheepe-biters' is unclear.

It was obviously meant as an insult as shown for example in *Twelfth Night* where Sir Toby Belch inquires, with reference to Malvolio, ‘Wouldst thou not be glad to have the niggardly rascally sheep-biter come by some notable shame?’²⁰ But precisely what the nature of the insult is intended to be is unclear. Some authorities describe it quite vaguely as being a ‘cant word for a thief’ or a ‘morose, surley and malicious fellow’. Others suggest it might have a sexual connotation, equivalent to a ‘mutton eater’, that is, one with an overactive appetite for ‘mutton’ (i.e. women). In short, a whoremonger. There is even a suggestion that it relates to the practice of orally castrating farm animals! Whatever its precise provenance, however, Siegel asserts that at least in Shakespeare’s day it was a stock epithet for a Puritan, something that would no doubt have amused Pigge’s fellow royalists.²¹

The lawyers and ship money

Lawyers and judges have long been considered fair game for satirists. In paragraph (5), Pigge ridicules the lawyers for being in favour of the ship money tax while trying to wriggle out of paying it themselves. Fittingly, the phrase *the cafe is altered quoth Ployden* is a reference to Edmund Plowden, an eminent Catholic lawyer during the reign of Elizabeth I at a time when Catholicism was illegal. In his discussion of this proverb Ray favours the following origin (Ray 1813: 179): Plowden was arrested in a sting operation while attending a secret mass but at his trial, on discovering that the person performing the mass was not actually a priest he is reputed to have said ‘Why then, gentlemen, the case is altered; No priest, no mass.’²² Ray comments that the proverb ‘is usually applied to such lawyers, or others, as being corrupted with larger fees, shift sides, and pretend the case is altered’.

The trained bands

In paragraph (8) we find a counterweight to the satire on the royalist young gallants in a criticism of the lack of valour of the trained bands (militia), which in London were largely supportive of Parliament. The satire here involves a series of double entendres relating to food and sex that begin right at the start with the alternative name for Shrove Tuesday given as *Saint Fretters day*. In fact, there was no such saint: *fretter* means ‘devourer’, reflecting the fact that this was a day for carnivalesque eating and drinking before the fasting of Lent. The term might also have served to suggest that it was a day when people were at risk of being ‘devoured’ by sexual disease. The term *fresh water fouldiers* refers to the militia’s raw recruits

so perhaps it is not surprising that their wives or miftreffes accompanied them to the training with festive food on this festive day. But *Conny* is a variant spelling of 'cony' meaning rabbit which was a symbol of female sexuality and therefore the meaning of *providing them a Conny to supper* seems clear when we consider that the Latin for rabbit, *cuniculus* is easily confused with the Latin word *cunnus* meaning vulva.

The old souldiers

At the opposite end of the age spectrum to the new recruits satirized above, in paragraph (11) Pigge turns his critical gaze to the army veterans, a group usually thought of, in these enlightened times at least, as deserving of our sympathy but whom he depicts rather callously. This raises the issue of whether there should be any taboo subjects for satirists, something which frequently exercises the minds of letter writers to *Private Eye*, whose customary course of action in the face of satire which they adjudge to have gone beyond the pale is to cancel their subscriptions.

The cause of the distemper

The long chain of blamers blamed in paragraph (13) suggests that the satirist took a most liberal view of where to direct his scorn. In producing this rather nonsensical list though, he was in fact just reflecting the prevalent atmosphere of the pre-war months when there was no clear or at least generally convincing explanation for the nation's 'distemper'. The view of the 'filly Frenchman' that religion is the root cause is summarily dismissed but Pigge concludes by saying that his opinion as to the cause is the same as that of the church. Not only is this paradoxical but it also begs the question of what precisely he is referring to since within the Church of England at that time there were a number of conflicting views ranging from the Puritans who were demanding radical reforms of Protestantism to the more conservative groups who wished to retain the traditional beliefs and Catholic practices.

5.4 News from the North

It is only in the last few paragraphs of the pamphlet that readers are provided with any information about what was going on 'up north'. And even then much of what Pigge does write is concerned more with the people *going to* the north rather than what people are actually *doing* there. Indeed, there is almost nothing in these paragraphs to suggest that the author has paid a recent visit to Yorkshire rather

than having simply picked up news from travellers on the streets of London. Nevertheless, the suddenness with which the narrative switches to matters at least *related* to the north (in a section of the pamphlet headed *From London*, let us remember), together with a stylistic shift to a higher reliance on sexual innuendo, a less harsh kind of satire, and the use of punning²³, may be due to a change of authorship at this point, something that might account for the two sets of initials previously noted on the title page.²⁴

In paragraph (14) Pigge offers a prediction regarding the chastity of the Yorkshire maidenhood in their coming encounter with southern men. The term *green sickneffe* used by Pigge refers to chlorosis, a kind of anaemia, more vulgarly called ‘virgin’s disease’ which some people thought could be cured by copulation. The expression *Kentish long-tayles* refers to the fact that ‘Long-tail’ is the nickname for Kentish folk which derives from the belief on the continent from mediaeval times that all Englishmen had tails. The sexual connotation of its use here is obvious.

Paragraph (15) notes that accompanying those soldiers travelling north are a number of *Ladyes of pleasure* too, while (16) alludes to the (presumably military) doctors’ inadequate screening for sexual disease of these camp followers who would therefore *helpe to weaken the rest of the Army that are not by that time infected*. In this context, the *nofes* mentioned might well be prosthetic ones as used by those disfigured by syphilis.

Pigge’s lament in (17) that *now the world is turned upside downe* was another common trope in those pre-war days. Discussing Pigge’s usage of it here, Mary Fissell writes:

This theme of inversion is utterly commonplace in the 1640s, although I would call attention to the fact that [her examples] date from 1641 and 1642. Before most of the upheavals that we emphasize in the 1640s – war, regicide and the like – cheap print already imagined and circulated an image of utter confusion and inversion. (2004: 193).²⁵

While several authors have made a similar point about the ‘pamphlet wars’ (Holstun 1972)²⁶ or ‘paper combats’ (Braddick 2008) that prefigured the actual fighting, their focus has largely been on serious political or literary texts. But clearly even humorous texts such as this one both reflected and made a contribution to the general mood of foreboding.

Finally, we may note that Pigge's allusion to the problems he and his horse are likely to encounter in Yorkshire, in paragraphs (18) and (19), are carefully phrased to leave open the question of whether by this stage he had actually been to that county or not. His fears of being sued for trespass while being billeted there might not have been ungrounded though since the billeting of soldiers was a major source of friction and complaint at that time.

6. Conclusion

In this paper I have attempted to illustrate how language was used for satirical effect in one particular pamphlet. I have tried to do so by elucidating the terms and expressions which today are largely unfamiliar to modern readers and also by relating the text to significant elements in its social context. Now, having discussed the text itself and its production, I should like to conclude this study by making some general observations about the consumption of this pamphlet. It is important to remember that the pamphlet was intended as *satire*. Nevertheless, it is a far from simple task to know to what extent contemporary readers were aware of that fact, particularly if we assume (as a survey of the contents of Thomason's collection permits us to do) that at the time of its publication there were few precedents for this kind of text. Those readers that *were* aware of its satirical nature would have approached the pamphlet with the expectation of being entertained rather than informed. However, it is conceivable that a fair proportion of readers would have been reading for factual information, at least until the realization gradually dawned on them, as it should have done in all but the dullest of readers, that it was indeed satirical. In this regard, it would, of course, be fascinating to know what sort of sales-talk was used by the so-called 'mercury women' who sold this kind of material on the streets of London. But what I would like to emphasize here is that it is entirely possible that, while knowing that the work was intended as satire, some readers may have nevertheless expected to learn something, albeit tangentially, about current events. I say this as one who quite frequently experiences such a situation with respect to my own consumption of *Private Eye* here in Japan.²⁷ For it is frequently through reading its spoof news articles that I get my first inkling of what has been going on in Britain, particularly with respect to issues the reporting of which are mainly confined to the tabloid press. Therefore, I would argue that this pamphlet and others like it should be read on at least three levels: as entertainment and moral instruction certainly, but also as

a source of facts about the world. Such being the case, I would suggest that there is considerable scope for future research into the value of such hitherto relatively neglected satirical pamphlets as a source of historical information.

Finally, I should like to offer the observation that practically the only profession not directly satirized in this pamphlet was that of the newsbook-makers themselves. But as is well-known, criticism of newsmen and women is almost as old as the newsbooks themselves, dating from such works as Ben Jonson's play *The Staple of News*, which was first performed in 1625 just five years after the very first English newsbooks appeared, and continuing to the 'Street of Shame' column of *Private Eye* today. However, by utilizing the generic conventions of newsbooks for satirical effect, we might argue that 'honest Pigge's' last joke, no less his ultimate criticism, was on them.

Appendix

In the transcript below the following symbols are used. Page numbers are indicated in [square] brackets. Paragraph numbers for the 'From London' section are indicated in (curved) brackets. The one decorated initial letter is indicated by {curly} brackets. Illegible letters are indicated by #. Legible but unintelligible words are indicated by an asterisk.

[1]

Pigges Corantoe /or /Nevves from the North

London, / Printed for L.C. ad M.W. / 1642.

[3]

Pigges Corantoe.

{T}He generall newes is, no body knows what to make of this World, and that all think there is a better, but its ten to one they doe not hit on't, that future ages are more subject to alteration then the present, that the Rumors of warres makes all beleve Doomefday is at hand, and hath caufed more tales in every mans mouth then truth.

Forraigne Newes.

That those Politicians that steere the course of all the States beyond the Seas imitates Hocus Pocus his Mejesties Jugler, that can play fast, and loofe when he

lift, for they know the English affairs at that distance, better then honest pigge a great deal nearer.

From France 1. March, Stilo Novo

That the Christian King is in a strange Quandary, and resolves with Fortie thousand men (remembering that Jerfey and Garnfey were once his) to dance French broiles after the Defender of the Faiths Mufick, So makes good, old Tarltons song.

*The King of France with forty thousand men,
Went up a Hill, ad so came downe agen.*

[4]

From Spaine 3. March,

That his Catholique Majesty fues for peace of the Hollanders, and blowes the coales now to be revenged, for the disgrace was put upon him in 88. when Don Pedro was taken prisoner.

From Rome 6. March.

That the old Signior with his Triple Crowne laughes in his sleeve at the Rebellion in Ireland, and hath proclaymed two Iubiles this year, by the advice onely of the Cardinall of France, that thinks to make his Master Sovereigne of the Narrow Seas with flat bottom'd boates, and supposes that the English are growne like Mermaides, halfe flefh, and halfe fish.

From London, March 26. Stilo Novo.

- (1) That for many yeares past, certaine vermine called Projectors have bredd in the body politique, and entred themselves like Crabb-lice between the flefh and the skinne, procuring a great itch which is now broken out into a Scabb, not to be dried up with any salve but the balme of Gilliad.
- (2) That *Quidam videntur & non sunt* some seeme to be and are not, as your Bishops, and *Quidam sunt & non videntur*, some are and appeare not as your Iesuits in *England, Nam latet anguis in herba*, that is in plaine English, thereby hangs a tale.
- (3) That every compleat young gallant in London may perchance have a heart that hath not a hand to serve the King, for with one hand hee holds on his pipkin Beaver if any wind stir, and with the other supports his tender carkaffe with a Cane, who totters on his Gallocias as upon ftits, and stradling after the French fashion, you may overthrow him with a Leicesterfhire Beaneftraw.
- (4) That Pigge saw a great many Taylors, Chanlours, Shoo-makers, *cum multis aliis* go downe Holborne the other day like sheepe-biters, and Honest *Pigge* did

but crose through Fetter lane, and he met them [5] again in fleet street, and then they were all made Gentelmen and looked as furious as Effex Lyons, and Pigges Taylor was fo valiant as to present him with a long bill in the streete for money, but honest Pigge durst not call him sawcy knave for asking his owne fo unmannerly in open street for feare of the Court of Honour.

- (5) That the Lawyers are of opinion (the Country being now in danger) must pay ship-money, but being sent unto themselves, they demurd and returnd the old answer, the case is altered quoth Ployden.
- (6) That there is a filone* drawn over the hearts of all Creditors, and if you meet with any shoe-shining with Lambe black, looke but behind them, there are Sergeants sneaking and peeping into Coaches and Sedanns, and if they once seaze, there is no hope of Redemption for fear the party will go for Ireland for there is more danger in staying then going, (unlesse you hold a prison in London the safest place) because there is more fear of Sergeants then Irish.
- (7) That all ufurers, scriveners, procurers, bawds, pimps, players & panders, are absolutely ####ke, and intend to turn honest, during this war, which they pray may be speedily appeased, that they may return to their profession which they resolve to follow all their lives after.
- (8) That on Saint Fretters day *alias* Shrove Tuefday the city and suburbs trayned onely to keep the poor prentices in awe and that all fresh water souldiers and trayned bands are valiant fo farre as their wives or mistresses serve for their knapfacks to bring them pancakes and puddings into the field to dinner and provide them a Conny to supper at night, for they are like dunghill cocks that cannot fight without their hens.
- (9) And if pigge were in the Countrey, hee would excuse any trayned Souldier for God a mercy, and goe on in his place, for pigge is a pretty fellow in Buffe, and would not be denied by the Captain that receives them though he were not allowed by the Deputy Lieutenants.
- (10) That the Cavalleers have much more experience then their Horses, and there is some fo simple to think that all this preparation is in jest, because all players stay behind, and instread of Souldiers there go babes and fucklings and things with patches on their faces like Ladyes to hide parke and troops of Gamesters and poets who outbrave the Grecians in open field, now when they come upon the Stage if the Sceane should alter, and they fall too't in good earnest, the play were spoiled, and then there would be no time to alter it again from a

Tragedy to a Comedy, nor to repent themselves they were Actors where they might have been but spectators only. [6]

- (11) That on a Sunshine day, you may meete your old Souldiers, some limping with old hurts like Vulcan, and some with one legge shorter then another like Badgers, with losse of a Leather heele, crawling to White hall, halfe starved, and halfe naked puft up onely in the face with Tobacco and hope of employment. And do petition that they may have a months time to pray and make their wils, and give away nothing, and a months pay to recover their bodies with good dyet, leaft when they come to the point, they have more stomach to eate then to fight.
- (12) That the greatest Commanders are those that command money, but the best those that can command men, that if those brave blades that spent their lives at Rce* were there again they should be employed if they had money and cloaths, but those that are alive and spent their fortunes there, can get none.
- (13) That a great inquiry is made what should be the cause of this distemper, the ufurer layes the fault on the prodigall, the prodigall on the Scrivener the Scribe on the broker, the broker on the Gallant, the gallant on the Cittizen the cittizen on the courtier, the courtier on the projector, the projector on the common wealth, the common wealth on the ambitious, he upon the drunkard, the drunkard upon the whoremonger, so one honest man puts it upon another, the papist on the protestant, the protestant on the Jesuite, the Jesuite on the puritane, the puritane on the Brownist, the Brownist on the family of love, the family of love on the sincere hypocrite, he upon the pastors, they upon the lay-men, who tumble the question among the School-men, till at last it come to the Logicians, where a silly Frenchman gets it by the end (the very fame that made his mother believe he could make two eggs three) and he ends that brabble with a fine distinction, and concludes that Religion by what name or title soever it be called *Est causa sine qua non*, But pigge is of another opinion he believes as the church believes.
- (14) That there are more honest women in Yorkefhire this year then there are like to be the next, what with Kentish long-tayles before, and Cavaliers behind, ther's not a laffe hath the green sickneffe, nor hardly her Mayden-head.
- (15) That there is a list (at *Piggs* command) of your Ladyes of pleasure that are gone to yorke, and the poore ones get places amongst the Baggage, as soone as your poore Cavelers have employment.

- (16) That the Phifitians follow the times that sends them away first that have beft cloathes, and never examine whether they be able of body or [7] not, and the rest that can purchase new Nofes about the latter end of May, may meete at the Randevous at their owne charges, and helpe to weaken the rest of the Army that are not by that time infected.
- (17) That the old world us'd to goe round, peace brought forth plenty, plenty spirituall pride, pride temporall warre, and warre peace; But now the world is turned upside downe, and all are acting the Antipodes young boyes command old Souldiers, wife men stand cap in hand to fine fooles maidens woe widowes married women rule their husbands, Clergy men turne Lawyers, and Lawyers honest men, Mafters obey their servants and favourites lay their faults on their Prince; It was not so in *Temporibus* Noah, ah no.
- (18) That poor Pigge and his Horfe are like to bee starved by a *Yorkeshire* Attorney that threatens if his Horfe doe but picke a fallet in his ground he will serve him with green waxe, *Quare Clausum fregit*, And if Pigge doe but peepe into the Henrooft, he has him up with another *Quare vi & armis*, etc. and rejoyceth to tell his neighbours how many trespaffes there will be in *Yorkeshire* the next yeare.
- (19) That honest *Pigge* is no Prophet, hee cannot tell how many goe to *Yorke* that are not resolved what Religion or what fide they will be off when they come there, nor how many are valiant, before they bee drunke, nor how many will fight without money; nor *Pigge* cannot by Art Magick defery a Captaine from a Gentleman Vther in Buffe, nor a Whore from an honest woman by her face, nor a Cuckold from a Citizen by his forehead; and *Pigg* hath heard that every man hath liberty to goe and carry as much money and fine cloathes to *Yorke* as he can get, but bring none backe againe, and that there are a great many commanders left behind till there be roome made for them by exchange of Buffe Coates for blew Bonnets, and then *Pigge* thinkes those that followes will not make great fuit for employment.
- (20) That in conclusion luck is all for we are all hoodwinckt & know neither times nor seasons, nor beginnings nor periods, for from little springs flow great streames as the warres in Germany & great shewes may produce small effects which every one may apply as occasion shall serve, and not beholding to *Pigge* till he returne again from *Yorke*.

FINIS.

Notes

- 1 See for example, Jason Peacey (2004) *Politicians and pamphleteers: propaganda during the English civil wars and interregnum*. Ashgate; Joad Raymond (1993) *Making the news: an anthology of the newsbooks of revolutionary England 1641 -1660*. St Martin's Press.
- 2 Braddick, Michael (2008) *God's fury, England's fire: a new history of the English civil wars*. Penguin.
- 3 Norman Fairclough (1989) *Language and power*. Longman.
- 4 Arthur Benoni Evans (1881) *Leicestershire words, phrases, and proverbs*. The English Dialect Society / Trubner; Iona And Peter Opie (1997). *The Oxford dictionary of nursery rhymes*. Oxford University Press; Eric Partridge (2006) *A dictionary of slang and unconventional English*. Routledge; Henry Plomer (1907) *A dictionary of the booksellers and printers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1641 to 1667*. The Bibliographical Society, London; Gordon Williams (1994) *A dictionary of sexual language and imagery in Shakespearean and Stuart literature*, Vol. 3. Athlone Press.
- 5 According to the latest available figures from ABC (Audit Bureau of Circulation), during the first half of 2016 *Private Eye* had an average circulation of over 230,000 copies per fortnightly issue, making it the best-selling news and current affairs magazine in the UK. <https://www.abc.org.uk/Certificates/47895461.pdf> (accessed 02-02-2017).
- 6 Thomason Tract E153(7) (Microfilm Reel 27). Wing (2nd ed.) P2223.
- 7 The transcription was made by the author from the microfilm version of the Thomason Tract held at Nagoya University Library. I am delighted to be able to record my gratitude to the library's reference staff for their assistance with this study.
- 8 Bernard Quaritch 1884 (Aug.-Nov.) *Catalogue of English literature, poetic, dramatic, historic, miscellaneous*, London.
- 9 Mary Elizabeth Fissell (2004) *Vernacular bodies: the politics of reproduction in early modern England*. Oxford University Press.
- 10 Spelling variations include *corant(e)*, *corrant*, *curranto(e)*, *coranta* and *caranto*. The word is related to *courier* meaning a running messenger which is still used in the title of several British newspapers (e.g. *The Inverness Courier*).
- 11 The earliest source in the OED is from 1624.
- 12 Edward Haig (2015) "Ideology and propaganda in English civil war news". *Studies in Media and Society*, 7 1-20; Edward Haig (2016) "Language and ideology in an English civil war pamphlet: a study in historical media discourse analysis". *Studies in Media and Society* 8 17-36.
- 13 For convenience, I shall henceforth refer to the author of this pamphlet in the plural.
- 14 In the mid-seventeenth century, the normal journey time between London and York was about one week and so the information concerning 'the North' contained in this pamphlet must have been at least a week old by the time it appeared on the streets of London.
- 15 Ibid. p. 207.
- 16 One might imagine an equivalent contemporary satire directed at hedge fund managers, bankers or multinational corporations.
- 17 This work is widely attributed to the celebrated dramatist Thomas Heywood but his name does not appear anywhere on the pamphlet and since he died the previous summer, well before both this pamphlet and *Pigge's corantoe* were published, that seems unlikely.

- 18 Although not given in the OED as a variant spelling, I suspect that *Galocias* refers to galoshes. cf. the Italian *galoscia*. A source from 1640 in the OED runs 'By his slashd doublet, high galloshes, and Italian purld band [hee should be] a French man. The mention of 'high' accords with *totters*. Both the French and Italian connections are probably an intentional disparagement of the gallants as being foppish and effeminate.
- 19 A Court of Honour was a venue, especially a military one, for adjudicating on matters relating to personal honour including duels.
- 20 *Twelfth Night*, Act 2, Scene 5.
- 21 Siegel, Paul (1980). "Malvolio: comic Puritan automaton", in Maurice Charney, ed., *Shakespearean Comedy*, New York Literary Forum, 217-30.
- 22 Ray, John (1813). *A complete collection of English proverbs*, 5th ed. George Cowie, London. p. 179.
- 23 See paragraph (17) for a pun on the name of Noah.
- 24 Specifically, I regard paragraphs (14) to (16) and then (18) and (19) as interrupting the flow of the rest of the text. It is these that I suggest may have been the work of another hand (or trotter!).
- 25 Whether this was to be regarded as a good thing or not, of course, depended on one's point of view. Pigge the royalist no doubt found the prospect appalling but Henry Denne, the prominent Baptist radical, from whose writings Christopher Hill took the title for his seminal work *The world turned upside down: radical ideas during the English revolution* (1972) seems to have welcomed the idea.
- 26 James Holstun ed. (1992). *Pamphlet wars: prose in the English revolution*. Frank Cass.
- 27 On a related point, I have sometimes given my Japanese university students copies of *Private Eye* spoof news reports to use as reading materials without telling them that they are in fact spoofs. It is remarkable how long it takes some of them to realize that something is amiss! This must surely be due at least in part to the skill with which the writers mimic the news report genre.