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William Lawrence's *Newes from Geneva, or The Lewd Levite* (1662): recovering a manuscript restoration play

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ABSTRACT

William Lawrence (c. 1636–1697) was a lawyer, man of letters, translator, and estate owner. This article considers a manuscript play by Lawrence from 1662 called *Newes from Geneva, Or The lewd Levite. A Comedy* which is largely unknown to scholars of Restoration drama. I begin by outlining the bibliographical and performance history of the author and the play. I then go on to consider the main and, particularly, the sub-plot in relation to the broader post-Restoration historical and literary context. By examining the depiction of the non-conformist minister Levi, and by recovering a set of contemporary sources for the sub-plot, I argue that Lawrence advances an accommodationist position towards non-conformity in the play.

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William Lawrence (c. 1636–1697) was a lawyer, man of letters, translator, and estate owner.[1] This article considers a manuscript play by Lawrence from 1662 called *Newes from Geneva, Or The lewd Levite. A Comedy* which is largely unknown to scholars of Restoration drama.[2] In what follows, I sketch out the bibliographical and performance history of the author and the play. I then go on to consider its main and sub-plots in relation to the broader post-Restoration historical context. As Lawrence has no entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, I have compiled a brief biographical sketch from what little work there is on him by the historians Gerald Aylmer and Iona Sinclair.[3] Lawrence was born around 1636 and grew up in Hackney. His uncle owned an estate in Shurdington, Gloucestershire, and William was named as the heir. He probably studied at one of the Universities (although there are no records of this) and he entered Gray's Inn in 1654, then moved to Middle Temple around 1660. He was called to the Bar in 1662 though it seems that he did not practice law for long. William eventually inherited the estate at Shurdington at his uncle's death in 1682, a wait that caused him some exasperation. Before that, he lived with relatives of his wife, and seems to have led a life dedicated mainly to books, translations, and letter writing. Lawrence was a keen and well-connected observer of politics and religion, and the small amount of scholarly work that has been done on him is by historians interested in his diary and letters as a lens on Restoration politics and culture, and by horticultural historians interested

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in his gardens at Shurdington.[4] In 1692, Lawrence begun work on the formal layout and gardens at Shurdington. Based on French and Dutch designs, the gardens were a memorial to past generations of the Lawrence family, but particularly to William's wife Anne and son, also William (Willy), both of whom died in 1691.[5] Lawrence died six years later in 1697.

Lawrence's politics were broadly royalist and conformist, though not straightforwardly so, as I will discuss below. He was also a very witty writer, at once caustic and satirical. A large folio volume in the British Library (Add. MS. 88,928) contains an array of literary works that he produced throughout his life.[6] These include translations of Giovanni Botero's *Della Ragion di Stato* (1589), undertaken in the late 1650s when Lawrence was a student at Middle Temple, and of Diego Saavedra Fajardo's *Idea de un Principe Politico Christiano* (1642), dated 1672 and dedicated to his uncle, William. The volume also contains a miscellany of letters to William's brother, Isaac, a merchant, as well as some poems, heraldic and genealogical material, and an essay on numismatics. This article is concerned with *Newes from Geneva*, the second item in the folio, covering some thirty-seven pages and dated 1662 in the manuscript. As far as I know, there is no record of the play being published, although it does contain several songs, quite detailed stage directions, and some intriguing, if partial, records of performance. As I will argue, this play throws new light on Restoration performance culture, especially in relation to radical religion. By examining several of the play's biblical and literary sources, I show how Lawrence adapts those sources to argue against the persecution of non-conformity and for a more accommodationist position.

Plot and performance contexts

The first two pages of the manuscript are damaged and so a note concerning the play's performance, as well as the Argument of the play, are unfortunately incomplete. The play's main plot is a romantic comedy of mistaken identity and sexual peril. The sub-plot concerns the non-conformist minster, Levi, his seduction of a parishioner, aided by his confederates Soaker, a drunken sailor, and Plump, a glutton. This is what remains of the Argument in the manuscript:

> Lysander, to satisfy his owne jealousy and to try the love of his wife Halisca, as soone as they were marry'd pretends a sudden occasion to goe to Sea, and causeth it to be given out that his ship was stranded at such a place, and he drowned. Halisca goes thither to enquire after his body: at which instant Clearchus, who was contracted to Lycidia, suffer'd shipwrack. Lycidia was taken up by pyrats, and sold to [Pyrgus] steward to Lysander, under the name of Clarissa.[7]

Although nominally set in Geneva, the geographical detail is a little shaky: it is not entirely clear which sea these pirates operate on. The opening scene takes place on a ship where the villain Pyrgus threatens Clarissa with rape. They are joined on the ship by Levi, Plump, and Soaker. There is a storm and some of the passengers are thrown overboard but survive. Halisca enters and her presence prevents Pyrgus's assault on Clarissa. Halisca has fallen in love with Clearchus who, unknown to her, was contracted to Clarissa, who tells Halisca of Pyrgus' villainy: she vows to protect the younger woman. Clearchus enters and Halisca promises herself to him. He initially refuses as he is of lower rank and still

thinks about Clarissa. He considers switching his affections to Halisca but receives a letter from Clarissa and cannot decide between the two. In Act Two, Halisca asks Clarissa's help in winning Clearchus' love. In the sub-plot, we see Levi seducing one of his parishioners, Abigal. Plump and Soaker mock Pyrgus. Lysander then enters, disguised, recognises Pyrgus, reveals himself, and the two plot their revenge. Act Three begins with Clearchus and Halisca resolving to marry. Lysander enters disguised, vowing to kill the pair, but hesitates and gives his wife a letter telling her that Clarissa is in fact Lycidia and betrothed to Clearchus. She is angry but promises not to abandon him to Lysander's rage. Meanwhile Pyrgus gets Soaker, Plump, and Levi arrested by the constable and put in the stocks, where he mocks them. Pyrgus tries to persuade Clarissa to betroth herself to Lysander, and again attempts to rape her before she is saved by a servant.

In Act Four, Clearchus enters dressed in Clarissa's clothes in order to attain her pardon, but he's spotted by Pyrgus and Lysander and they engineer his arrest. Lysander wishes to rid himself of his rival Clearchus, and Pyrgus tells Halisca that Lysander is in love with Clarissa and has slept with her: again, she promises to save Clearchus. Lysander, Pyrgus and Tryphorus hatch a plot to turn Halisca against Clearchus. At the start of Act Five, Levi and confederates turn the tables on Pyrgus and Tryphorus, who are now stocked. Abigal's husband, the Butcher, enters vowing revenge on Levi. He wishes to castrate the minister, but the Magistrates deny this punishment. Meanwhile, Pyrgus tells Clearchus that Clarissa is dead: he is mad with grief and taken to trial where he is accused of seducing Halisca, abusing the office of a husband, and cross-dressing. He admits his guilt and says he murdered Clarissa/Lycidia. The Magistrates bring out the rack, but Lycidia's father Eumenes enters at the last moment and says the accusations are false. Lycidia and Clearchus are reunited, Pyrgus admits his guilt and is sold into slavery; Lysander is rebuked and pardoned. The play ends with the marriage of Lycidia and Clearchus. In common with many post-Restoration plays dealing with sexuality and religion, the play uses comedy (perhaps even tragicomedy) to explore questions of male and female fidelity and the place of religious non-conformity in society.

Turning to performance, the incomplete note reads as follows:

In anno

there was

but privatly

with a

the Butcher[8]

The Butcher is a character in the play, but there is no record of who may have played him. The reference to "but privatly" could suggest either a domestic performance, or perhaps one at Middle Temple, although in the absence of any corroborating evidence both suggestions must remain conjecture.[9] The manuscript contains several references to performance practices. Music was clearly part of the first performance. Levi and his confederates sing a song in Act Two, scene one, as does Euphonia in Act One, scene five,

and "Musick playes" to accompany a speech by the disguised Lysander in Act Three, scene 3.[10] When the storm hits the ship in Act One, scene two, spectators may have been reminded of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which uses the ship of state metaphor to debate competing ideas of civic order and includes music.[11] The Greek names of the characters in the main plot, and the lower rank comic characters of the sub-plot, may evoke *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. There is a stage direction in Act One, scene two that reads "They reele to the other side", suggesting the physical business of the actors and at least a rudimentary ship structure on stage.[12] As the storm gets worse, Levi and his companions throw various items overboard and Levi gets a "planke" to swim with. As the marginal stage direction notes: "He straddles over a ioynt stoole, and swims with his armes".[13] Apart from the physical comedy, the *OED* notes that a joint-stool is "A stool made of parts joined or fitted together; a stool made by a joiner, as distinguished from one of more clumsy workmanship". The entry also observes that the phrase is often used "in allusive or proverbial phrases expressing disparagement or ridicule, of which the precise explanation is lost".[14] The fact that Levi performs his swimming on a joint-stool is clearly supposed to augment the humour here.

There are various directions on the clothing, prosthetics, and speech used by Levi. At the start of Act Two, scene one, Levi is described in a stage direction as follows: "Levi with a little Ruff. short haire, large counterfeit eares, and a long nose".[15] This note is significant for two reasons. First, Lawrence was clearly concerned with how costume and prosthetics would mark Levi out visually. Wherever the play was first performed, the company had access to a decent array of theatrical accessories. Second, it tells us something about how religious radicals were depicted on the Restoration stage – the short hair, large asses' ears ripe for cropping at the pillory, and the large nose. Levi's speech is also marked by a nasal, canting delivery. In both appearance and speech, then, the depiction of Levi draws on a long pre-Reformation tradition of religious radicals in the theatre.[16] I will consider the specific theatrical and political implications of these depictions in further detail below. For now, I want to turn to a final performative context, namely race.

As noted earlier, Lawrence's brother, Isaac, was a merchant who travelled widely, including to Syria, Greece, and Egypt. The British Library also holds a collection of Isaac's letters, and as his and William's letters show, the brothers were clearly involved in the trade in material and human goods. In a passage from a letter dated 27 June 1659, William complains that the addressee, W. H., has been spreading rumours about an affair with a woman and impugning Lawrence's reputation. Lawrence says that even if his friend doubts the woman's virtue this should not reflect on him: "It is an inference below the Reason of a Man, and much like that little African that we kept chain'd in our Kitchin, who, if any one strook him, would always snarle another waye and flye at the next".[17] Here, an offhand, even callous reference to a nameless chained African slave is used to defend white, masculine virtue. In the play, the language of race and slavery runs throughout the first act especially. In Act One, scene one when Pyrgus is attempting to assault Clarissa, she says:

> Away, hasten to a Forrest, and there
> Choose out some Leopard to engender with,
> Things that are spotted like thy self: thy lust
> Lookes hideous in my eye.[18]

While this passage condemns Pyrgus' assault, it also alludes to Jeremiah 13: 23: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? *then* may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil".[19] As Kim F. Hall observes, this verse and its proverbial uses "is perhaps the dominant troping of blackness in the period".[20] The spots that Clarissa perceives on Pyrgus are not just moral marks: they could mean that the actor playing Pyrgus had cosmetically darkened skin. Pyrgus certainly uses racialised language himself. He says that Clarissa should yield "else you had walk't the market/In state, Lady, with your price writ on your forehead", an allusion to the practice of selling slaves that Lawrence may have picked up from his brother or else through personal experience.[21] Later Pyrgus says that Clarissa is better off with him than the alternative:

> such a Crew
> Of insinuating hands, plying about
> Your Belly peeces, that your petticoats
> Must have had as many slits as a slash'd doublet,
> To have made roome for all. From this full shame
> And slavery have I redeem'd you now,
> And giv'n you here both Freedome and protection.[22]

Pyrgus' misogynistic logic – that one sexual assault is better than multiple attackers – is also cast as a dubious redemption from slavery. Clarissa responds by pointing out the contradiction: "I am your wretched/Captive still, and feele the weight and misery/Of Bonds, in that which you stile Liberty".[23] If Pyrgus was depicted as black, then Clarissa's status as his bond slave adds a further twist to her fate. Later when Halisca enters and saves Clarissa from assault, the former exclaims: "be for ever free/From bondage and from Pyrgus".[24] Indeed, at the end of the play, Pyrgus' punishment is to be sold into slavery. In drama and in real life, Lawrence affirms the troubling racial hierarchies produced by slavery.

Levi, Restoration nonconformity, and the Butcher's revenge

This is clearly a manuscript written with performance in mind. Lawrence draws on a variety of dramatic effects – music, staging, props, acting style, costume, make-up, prosthetics, and spoken delivery – suggesting a theatrical context of some sophistication as well as a cast of some dramatic ability. While there is much of interest to scholars of drama in the main plot, including discussions of sexual desire, violence, race, rhetoric, cross-dressing, and jealousy, in the remainder of this article I will focus on the sub-plot, particularly its sustained and rich depiction of post-Restoration non-conformity. The British Library Archives and Manuscripts catalogue calls this an "anti-Puritan subplot" and, to an extent, that is true.[25] As noted, it features three characters, Captain Soaker, Plump, and Levi. All three are clearly figures drawn from Shakespearean and Jonsonian comedy, and who represent the Old Cause of parliament and the republic. All are associated with hypocrisy, gluttony, drunkenness, and in the case of Levi, lechery. There are five scenes featuring Levi: Act Two, scene one, is a scene of seduction between him and Abigal, a member of his congregation; Act Three, scene one, is a drinking scene; Act Four, scene one, when the three associates are placed in the stocks by Pyrgus and

Tryphorus; Act Five, scene two where the tables are turned and the associates mock Pyrgus and Tryphorus in the stocks; and lastly Act Five, scene five when Abigal's husband appeals to the court to punish Levi for seducing his wife.

Following the Restoration in 1660 several playwrights targeted religious radicalism. In the years between 1660 and 1663, plays and entertainments like John Tatham's *The Rump* (1660), the anonymous *The Life and Death of Mrs Rump* (1660), Francis Kirkman's *The Presbyterian Lash* (1661), Abraham Cowley's *The Cutter of Coleman Street* (1663), and Robert Howard's *The Committee* (1663) all draw on longstanding anti-Puritan stereotypes to poke fun at nonconformity and to assert the values of religious conformity and political obedience.[26] Yet scholars have shown that such plays rarely maintain a straightforward binary division between conformity and nonconformity.[27] Tatham's *The Rump*, for instance, combines satire with glimpses of accommodation towards nonconformity.[28] The play acknowledges the power that radical religion offers to those of lower rank. The city prentices are associated with potential civil chaos but are brought to heel by the army with a promise of a free parliament. Those who aided the republic directly are reduced to hawking their wares at the burning of the Rump. The play mocks religious radicalism, but it does not punish it. In the carnivalesque final scene, one apprentice remarks that "we are beginning the world again", a reminder of the millenarian ideas that fuelled the revolution. Tatham may not have a fully articulated vision of what a free state should look like, and he distances himself from what the epilogue calls "Phanatick[s]".[29] But he also knows that radical religious ideas will not simply disappear when the King returns. Kirkman's *The Presbyterian Lash* is an explicit exposé of the Presbyterian minister Zachary Crofton – called Noctroffe in the play – who whips his maid servant for his own sexual gratification. Yet the play ends with Noctroffe escaping censure, reconciling his parishioners, and exalting in his villainy, claiming that in time he will "prove an *English Pope*".[30] We see a similar ambivalence in Robert Howard's *The Committee* which aligns "sexual licentiousness and political radicalism" to attack Presbyterianism yet remains uncertain about aspects of the new order.[31] In Rachel Willie's words: "The criticism of presbyterian deviousness and valorisation of honourable cavaliers expounded in *The Committee* could therefore be as much an implicit criticism of Restoration negotiations as it is an explicit satire on commonwealth politics".[32]

As this brief survey shows, religious radicalism offers a good target for dramatic comedy and satire in the aftermath of the Restoration. It also presents a problem. Playwrights knew that Pandora's Box had been opened. The radical religious passions that impelled the Civil Wars had not dissipated. For all the euphoria of the Restoration, no one in those first few years could be certain that it would hold. The failed uprising of the Fifth Monarchist Thomas Venner in 1661, alongside several other plots, some more serious than others, were a reminder of those religious passions, hardening the association made by conformists between nonconformity and rebellion. The political reality also hardened between 1660 and 1663.[33] In the Declaration of Breda, Charles had promised a "liberty to tender Consciences" for those who held different religious views from the state Church.[34] For more conservative nonconformists like the Presbyterians, this offered the hope that an accommodation with the state Church could be found. Many Presbyterians supported the restoration of the monarchy, as is shown in Robert Wild's hugely popular poem *Iter Boreale* of 1660.[35] Yet in a series of punitive penal laws passed against nonconformists and dissenters, the King and the government moved in

a different direction, squandering the opportunity that had existed for a more plural, wide-ranging settlement, and opting instead for antagonism.[36] In August 1662, nonconformist and dissenting ministers were given until the 24th, St Bartholomew's Day, and the date of the infamous French massacre of 1572, to conform to the state Church or face ejection from their livings. Over 2000 ministers were deprived in the Great Ejection, including Puritans, Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists. Conformity, dissent, or the grey area in between the two: the treatment of religious radicals of all stripes by the Restoration government ensured that nonconformity remained a festering, self-inflicted sore throughout Charles' reign. After Wild was ejected in 1662, he wrote a series of poems arguing that religious nonconformity and political loyalty are not incompatible.[37] Other dissenters saw little possibility of accommodation within a persecutory state.

The 1662 ejection of nonconformist and dissenting ministers is a direct context for William Lawrence's *Newes from Geneva* because of a letter he wrote to his brother Isaac on the 29th of August 1662, five days after St Bartholomew's Day. I want to spend a little time examining this letter as it contextualises several important themes developed in the sub-plot. As is his wont, Lawrence uses a satirical tone, writing of the ecclesiastical clothing of nonconformists:

> The habit of a Levite is a cassock and a girdle, upon his head he wears a hat at large, the crown of it being bigger than a church bucket and the brims spreading as wide as an umbrella. If my business calls me out when it rains, I usually take a parson with me to save the expense of a coach; for I can walk very dry under the eaves of his hat, and still find it as secure as a penthouse.[38]

This quotation gives a good sense of Lawrence's style: wry, sardonic, and intertextual. The satire here works on three levels. The first is ecclesial. Clerical clothing had been a matter of contention for nonconformists since the mid-Elizabethan period, but with the exclusion of the Bishops by the Long Parliament, mandated clerical clothing went by the wayside. Under the 1662 Act of Uniformity, ministers once more had to adopt a set form of ecclesial clothing following the Book of Common Prayer.[39] Those like Lawrence's Levite chose to mark their separation from the state Church by defying these laws.[40] In the letter, the crown (resonant word) of the Levite's hat exceeds the size of the church bucket for putting out fires. The Levite's clothes are a synecdoche for an excluded clerical class who think themselves above temporal and spiritual authority. Lawrence brings them back down to earth with a merry tale that extends the aqueous imagery:

> I will now tell you a pleasant and true story of Parson White, his girdle, as is usual, hath two great tassels, and passing drunk through the Strand in the open day, he went to piss against the wall of Exeter House; but instead of his member he holds forth one of his tassels: the stream ran plentifully down his breeches, and when he had discharged his bladder of the burden, he very decently shook his tassle, and put it up instead of his bauble.[41]

The nonconformist does not know his tassle from his bauble: these tropes of bodily incontinence are developed in the play.

If rhetoric offers the second level of satirical wit here, the last is provided by Scripture. In the Old Testament, the Levites are descended from Aaron. They "are subordinate Temple officials who never obtained full priesthood" and who perform secondary and menial tasks within the Temple in Israel.[42] I will return to the broader significance of the Levites in Restoration polemics later, but for now I want to focus on the social rank of the

Levites. When they are first mentioned in the Bible in Deuteronomy, they are in fact afforded equal rights with the rest of the priestly class. In Deuteronomy 12: 19, the Israelites are enjoined: "Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth".[43] But after the reign of King Josiah, the subordination of the Levites to the Jerusalem priesthood begins, and the rest of the Old and New Testament sees them as secondary in rank. Anti-Presbyterian polemics written after the Restoration often draw on this narrative: the nonconformist Levites should know their place. Lawrence's mockery of the Levite reflects the status of nonconformists after St Bartholomew's Day: once granted equality and respect, and now reduced. By taking the minister out with him in the rain, Lawrence does not forsake the Levite; but equally his treatment of the Levite as a human umbrella signals the minister's subordinate status. Lawrence thus pivots between his desire to satirise nonconformity and a residual sympathy for the second-class position that ejected ministers now found themselves occupying. It is a view developed in the play.

The letter continues:

> But while the fat of the land hangs very thick about the bellies of the orthodox clergy, the lamentable presbyter looks very lean, and is indeed turned Independent, having nothing to trust to: the Quaker and all the petty prophets begin to foresee their fall, and the whole crew of new lights which have thus long rambled about the lower region and misled many, are themselves lost: their opinions, like thin exhalations, being too slight and empty to burn long.[44]

The phrase "the fat of the land" is taken from Genesis 45: 18 and is spoken by the Pharaoh when he releases Joseph from captivity in Egypt and allows him to return home with his brothers. If the orthodox clergy are Joseph and his family, then presumably Charles is Pharaoh, an association that is not entirely laudatory. By contrast, the Presbyterians grow lean with their deprivation and even turn towards Independency, a warning that outlawing moderate nonconformists will only serve to make them more extreme, like the Quakers whose apocalyptic prophecies foretell the fall of the new Jerusalem. Again, Lawrence cannot pass up the opportunity to poke fun at the social and sexual immorality of the "new lights", the sectarians who ramble "about the lower region". But the interchange between mockery and sympathy continues in the final paragraph, the peroration of the letter:

> St Bartholomew is now struck out of their calendar; for very sad was the business of Sunday last, when the mournful Presbyter took leave of his Brethren: many gales of sighs issued from their religious lungs and the churches were so wet with the tears of the Saints, that one might have stood up to the ankles in holy brine. Much weeping and howling there was, had there been but gnashing of teeth too (but their tears might show, their teeth they durst not) one of the wicked might have dropped a Hell in their Divinity. I verily believe there was more salt dropped that day from their pious eyes, than would have pickled up all the herrings in the Nation.[45]

Lawrence again picks up the aqueous imagery that marks the letter, this time the tears shed by the deprived ministers. The reference to weeping, howling, and gnashing of teeth is an allusion to Matthew 8: 12. However, the significance lies in the broader context. Christ makes this allusion while responding to the Centurion whose servant he heals. The Centurion submits to Christ's authority, and Christ responds by saying that those who

only submit to Roman authority "shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth". It is a passage that pits the claims of temporal and spiritual power against each other. In the letter, the ministers weep and howl, but they do not gnash their teeth: they are not quite like the wicked. There is something ridiculous about the tears of the godly picking all the herrings in the nation. Yet Lawrence is a careful writer, one attuned to the intertextual power of allusion. In his partial quotation of the biblical text, Lawrence may well signal a grudging admiration for those who refuse to bow down to Caesar.

Given the 1662 date in the manuscript of the play, the letter either just predates, or is coterminous with, the writing of *Newes from Geneva*.[46] Both letter and play are interested in the biblical and polemical significance of the Levite, in the moral failings of the nonconformists, but also in their plight, and in how they might best be accommodated within civil society. As noted, Lawrence is not unsympathetic to nonconformity, but that sympathy goes hand in hand with his impulse to satirise those who would remain outside the bounds of the state church. Lawrence's conception of satire, then, does not follow a simple binary model where the correction of nonconformist vice is offset by the praise of conformist virtue; it also aims to find a point of accommodation between competing views of civil and ecclesial obedience. This is seen in the play's treatment of Levi and his confederates, and in its use of biblical intertexts and literary sources. The play's subtitle is *The lewd Levite* and, as I will suggest, the play asks us to consider which character in the play best deserves this designation.

In the opening scene of *Newes from Geneva*, a couple of passing references to the Civil Wars and the Rump parliament establish the post-Restoration context.[47] Lawrence also sets up Levi's lechery as he lusts after the heroine Clarissa:

> A wench! make roome:
> I must accost her, she's my right and property.
> 'Faith, Brethren, I have been Vicar of
> A parish these seaven years, and to my comfort
> Have not one barren thing in my whole precinct.
> My Talent will n'ere be found drowsing in
> A Napkin: Let me have her, pray Captain,
> I beseech you, good Captain.[48]

Underlying this passage is a polemical argument, popularised in texts like Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*, that Presbyterian parishes are analogous to petty popedoms in their exercise of discipline.[49] Levi abuses this ecclesial role in claiming Clarissa as his sexual property and right. Once Levi is on dry land, his abuse of his ministerial role is explored more fully. Act Two, scene one is a seduction scene between Levi and his parishioner Abigal. Like several scenes, it contains marginal directions like this one already quoted: "Levi with a little Ruff. short haire, large counterfeit eares, and a long nose".[50] The shape of the nose draws on an anti-Semitic stereotype about hooked noses that may have been used to depict Jewish characters on stage, although as James Shapiro cautions, evidence for this practice is thin.[51] There is stronger evidence that Lawrence is mocking the polemical argument where Presbyterians and Congregationalists compare themselves to the Jews in their covenanted religion, seeking to rebuild the Temple and so save the nation from idolatry, a common theme in works of the 1650s.[52] Levi's long nose also gives Lawrence the chance to mock what Butler calls "the sound and *twang of Nose*" (1.3.1157), the canting, nasal style associated with religious radicals. Another stage direction reads as follows:

Levi speakes the syllables thus mark't __ long and ith' nose.[53]

There are a number of these underlined syllables in Levi and Abigal's lines, with the latter clearly mimicking the former's speech. This is evidence of rhetorical *pronuntiatio*, what Jennifer Richards has recently called the "performance variables rather than the grammatical features of a language: both facial expressions and gestures but also the qualities of voice including pace and tone that we now group under 'tone'".[54] Here is the opening exchange between the two with the elongated syllable marked:

Abigal. – Peace be with you, brother Levi.
Levi. – What, sister, not at the Lecture to day?
What temptation hath so prevailed upon you?[55]

The lengthened syllable (perhaps giving the actor an opportunity to trill between the "a" and "i" vowels or else make the vowels exaggeratedly nasal) enables us to hear the vocal tone of the stage Puritan. It also gives us another theatrical context: laughter. In addition to offering tangible evidence of how a non-conformist sounded on the Restoration stage, Lawrence expected his audience to recognise this nasal whine and to find it amusing.

Abigal tells Levi that she has been suffering from "a very great Scruple"[56] and he asks her to say more:

Abigal. – I have been a Yoake = Fellon/[w?] these seaven months
And feele no effects of the Spirit to stirre
Within me: I would know whether it be
Not lawfull to looke out for a Helper,
That so we may hasten on that great worke
Of propagating the Breathren.
Levi. – The case as you put it, may be good, for
How can the purity of our Zeale more
Appeare, then in that great love and community
Which is between the Breathren and the Sisters.
But doth your Conscience tell you, that it is not [he speakes loud
For the love of man, nor for the pampering [and quick
Of the flesh, nor for the feeding of your carnal
Desires, but only for the enlarging of the Brethren. [his voice falls[57]

The variations in pitch and speed of delivery emphasise that Levi's heightened emotional state, which as a minister should be directed spiritually, is oriented instead towards lasciviousness. This passage also takes aim at the Holy Trinity of Puritan devotion, namely spirit, zeal, and conscience, the demands of which, according to conformist critics, allow religious radicals to transgress civil and religious limitations. Rather than propagating piety, Abigal and Levi cloak their carnal lusts in spiritual guise. In a 1661 poem by John Milton's nephew John Phillips, the "Sunday Levite" preaches an apocalyptic sermon on Daniel that has a similar aim: "My Brethren all prick up your ears, and put on/Your senses all while I the words unbutton".[58] In most anti-Presbyterian polemic of this kind, it is the male minister who is usually the seducer. In Lawrence's play, however, Abigal is just as sexually assertive as Levi, as can be seen in this speech:

Truly my bowels doe ev'n
Yearne for the getting in of the Saints unto me,
And have, as it were, ev'n a Zealous lusting
After them. – you will come to me in all hast?
I will first goe to prayer, and desire
I may be strengthened in that great Tryall.[59]

Partly this is another biblical in-joke: Abigail in the Old Testament – the second wife of David – is traditionally associated with virtue and obedience, making Abigal into an inversion, or antitype of the godly saint. But Abigal's assertiveness can also be understood, as I will show later, in relation to Lawrence's source texts for the sub-plot.

Before this, I want to look at Levi's concluding speech in this scene, his longest speech in the play. Here, like Noctroffe in *The Presbyterian's Lash*, he exults in his scheming and villainy:

Had ever any sonne of the pulpit
A better trading? O what a blessing 'tis,
To have prick = eares, and a nose in tune,
To preach downe plumbroth, or quarrel with
A Surplice, or bring a Text for Rebellion,
O 'tis a most certain signe of piety.
What a fine deale of practice have I got,
Not a night but I have a plump thing
To lye by me; my congregation is well
Fitted for a Shepherd; y'faith half the Flock
In my parish are Rams.
My Father (who indeed was a pious Botcher
And had first brought me up in his owne Trade,
Which I quickly forsook, being rightly told
There was no life to a preaching Hipocrite)
Gave me a strict charge, when he dy'd, to be
At open warres with the Whore of Babylon,
And told me I should know her by her fearles
petticoate; but y'faith it runs against
my Conscience; for why should I offer
To destroy one Whore, who have made twenty.[60]

"Prick = eares" refers to the close-cropped hair favoured by parliamentarians and Puritans, but it also alludes to the animalistic, sexual, and performative associations with radical religion seen earlier. Levi offers a metatheatrical reflection on his protheses. They allow him to perform the role of the seditious, malcontented Presbyterian, one who quarrels with the Prayer Book and preaches sedition. Lawrence also mocks a Puritanical conscience that prefers chasing real petticoats instead of preaching down the Whore of Babylon. The gendered violence traditionally directed at that archetypal Scriptural figure of religious corruption is subsumed into Levi's cynical treatment of his female parishioners. But perhaps the most striking feature is Levi's claim that his father was a butcher.

On one level, this lowly lineage alludes to conformist complaints that religious radicals promoted unlearned, mechanical preachers, thus blurring the properly ordered boundaries between ministers and their flock. In 1660, Richard Standfast draws on the figure of Corah, who rebelled against Moses and rejected the difference between Levite and priest, to explain the danger of allowing Levites (i.e., Presbyterians) to retain their ministries:

> While *Corah* sought to remove the bounds between the *Priest* and the *Levite*, there were others, that were as busie with the same tools to pull down the pale, between the *Levite* and the *People*, and by laying all in common to bring all to confusion. If the *Levite* will own no *Priest*, the *People* will own no *Levite*, or thus; If the *Levites* will all be *Priests*, the *People* will be ready to thinke, that they may all as well be *Levites* and that *all the Congregations are holy*, as well as they, *even every man of them*.[61]

As the passage shows, at the root of much anti-Presbyterian polemic and satire is the fear of all social boundaries being disregarded and everything returning to the common and confused state that supposedly marked the extremes of radical religion during the Civil Wars. Levi's sexual escapades are more than just a vehicle for sexual satire: his promiscuity is a metaphor for the threat that Presbyterianism posed to the civic boundaries between a conformist and nonconformist ministry – order and disorder – that the Restoration sought to reinstate. Levi's language of the shepherd, flock, and rams alludes to Ezekiel 34 where God warns the shepherds of Israel to do a better job of looking after their animals, casting himself as the true protector of the flock. Of course, Levi manipulates this scriptural injunction for his own ends, something that a biblically literate audience would notice. This radical abuse of scripture was observed by anti-Presbyterian polemicists too. This is Sir John Birkenhead writing in 1663: "sometimes (to shew his skill in *Keckerman*) he *Butcher's* a Text, cut's it (just as the *Levite* did his *Concubine*) into many dead Parts, breaking the Sense and Words all to pieces, and then they are not Divided, but *shatter'd*, like the Splinters of Don Quixot's Lance".[62] Lawrence is clearly setting up a similar polemical association between mangled exegesis, butchery, and the Levite. It is not until Act Five that its full dramatic implications become clear.

In Act Five, scene one, Abigal's husband enters looking to revenge himself on Levi for being cuckolded. Unlike the other characters, he is named for his profession:

> Butcher. – Zounds what a divelish Vicar is this, thus
> To make a Beast of a good honest Butcher!
> [. . .]
> we shall have our wives shortly
> Be deliver'd of Boyes with little Ruffs[63]

According to proverbial understanding, butchers were both bawdy and violent. Having found his sexual role usurped by Levi, the Butcher is determined to prove his prowess in brutality. He intercepts a letter from Abigal to Levi and plans to catch them in the act. He wants to punish Levi by hanging him by his heels "like a Calfe" and then flaying and dismembering him.[64] This violent plan recalls the story of the Levite and the Concubine alluded to earlier. We find this tale in Judges 19, and it is one of the most disturbing narratives in the Old Testament. It tells of a Levite who lives in Israel during a period when there was no king. He had a concubine who, as the text says, "played the whore against him, and went away from him unto her father's house [. . .] and was there four whole months". (Judges 19: 2) The Levite goes to the father's house to win the woman back. The father persuades the Levite to stay longer than he wishes, but when he eventually leaves, he, the woman, and a servant plan to travel to Jebus near Jerusalem. However, ignoring the servant's advice, the Levite does not stay in Jebus but travels on to Gibeah instead, which is under the control of Benjamin. They get lodgings with an Old Man, but the house is surrounded by "certain sons of Belial" (Judges 19: 22) who threaten the Levite. The Old

Man refuses to give up the Levite to the mob, and instead hands over the woman, who is sexually assaulted by the men. She falls down dead at the door of the house and in the morning the Levite takes her body back to his house: "And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, *together* with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel". (Judges 19: 29)

This horrific narrative underlies the representation of the Butcher in *Newes from Geneva*. Lawrence also adapts the story for his own ends. To understand how he does this, it is useful to look first at how the story is used in anti-Presbyterian polemics. Often it is invoked to defend the dissolution of the Rump parliament and to defend Charles II's right to put the pieces of the state back together. Here is an example from Alexander Brome's popular collection of Rump songs and poems:

> Two Parliaments dissolv'd! then let my heart;
> As they in Faction, it in fraction part,
> And, like a Levite sad with rage, ascribe
> My piece-meal Portion to each broken *T*ribe,
> *A*nd say, that *Bethlehem, Judahs* love, hath been
> Wrong'd by the Fag-end crue of *Benjamin*.
> O let such High presumption be accurst,
> When the last Tribe shall wrong the best, and first;
> While, like the Levite, our best *Charles* may say,
> The Ravenous Wolf hath seiz'd the Lions prey.[65]

This is not a straightforward verse, but at first the narrator is the Levite who stands over the mangled corpse of the state, marked by factious religious tribes. Then Charles II becomes the Levite who, in the conclusion to the story in Judges 20 and 21, calls up an army that avenges itself on the tribe of Benjamin. Less militantly, the story is invoked to plead for religious uniformity. This is Richard Henchman in 1660: "*Vnity amongst Christians is very necessary, that God thereby might be glorified* [...] And therefore there is not a greater *scandal to Religion*, and *Holiness*; then when those, that do believe, are as the *Levite's Concubine*, that was Cut into *many pieces*".[66] In both examples, the mutilated body of the Concubine is a synecdoche for the body of a state where disparate religious groupings multiply and unity is lost. However, I think that Lawrence takes the less bellicose line in the play. It is notable that the Butcher is aided in his planned revenge by Pyrgus and Tryphorus. In this passage, Tryphorus and the Butcher decide to take a different kind of revenge on Levi:

> Tryphorus. – No, no, wel' have a better way, wee'l geld him.
> Butcher. – Agreed: but it is I must pare the Jew
> And have the honour of the Circumcision.
> Tyrphorus. – Yes, yes: Lord, how it tickles me to persecute
> This vsurper, this juggler in Religion.
> A fellow that when he's ith' pulpit, looks
> For all the world like a Hocus pocus peeping
> Out of a Night cap.[67]

The theological implications of circumcision, in both its Old Testament and Pauline manifestations, are complex in seventeenth-century exegesis. As Shapiro has noted, the Pauline distinction between inward and outward circumcision is crucial to early modern understandings of this biblical trope: literal outward circumcision is superseded by a spiritual inward circumcision of the heart. It is a typological move from the old law

to the new that defines the shift from Jewish to Christian identity. As Shapiro writes of Paul: "If he can deny that outward physical circumcision alone defines the Jew from generation to generation, he can insist on a figurative reading of the law".[68] There is nothing figurative about the revenge of Tryphorus and the Butcher – their very literal plan to castrate Levi aligns them with the unregenerate Jews who lack faith and spiritual insight. The words of Romans 2 28–29 are relevant here: "For he that is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God". (Romans 2: 28–29) Lawrence turns this Pauline logic into comedy.

Moreover, as Tryphorus makes clear, this planned castration is a form of religious persecution, one that adheres to a literal, sacrificial interpretation of the old law. However, the enactment of this terrible punishment is, in an echo of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, halted by the intercession of the civil law. Lawrence implies that a persecutory ethos supported by rakes and the lower ranks is unlikely to lead to civil unity. When Levi is arrested by the magistrate, the Butcher says: "the law hath got/The Levite; what a mischief is this/That I can't compass my revenge, and pare/Away his pebbles".[69] This does not prevent the Butcher pleading before the magistrates for the right to carry out his original punishment against Levi, "this fructifying Vicar".[70] This is part of the scene before the magistrates:

> Butcher. – He has got more children then will furnish
> A plantation: there is the thirty third
> Edition of him come out already,
> Besides the many Coppies that are ith' press
> Ready to come forth. [. . .]
> I desire he may be gelt.
> 3 Mag. – Our law admits no such punishment.
> Butcher. – Then I desire, my Lords, that no man, not
> In orders, may have the priviledg to get
> Children without a Licence. Geneva
> Ells will be like a Field of Standing Corne,
> Nothing to be seene but Eaves. History
> will hereafter call it by the name
> Of the Land of Luggs.
> 1 Mag. – This cannot be granted.[71]

This scene dramatizes a culture trying to work out how best to deal with religious nonconformity. Should the law punish or accommodate such individuals? The fact that the Butcher is denied his revenge points to the second conclusion, as does the magistrate's summation on Levi's fate: "We can give no iudgement, till we have/Consulted with the Synod; therefore till/Then let him be remanded".[72] Judgment is suspended until the Synod, the organising body of Presbyterianism, is consulted. On one level, this is an apt dramatic conclusion for a court that sits in Geneva, home of Presbyterianism. Viewed in another way, the ending could also be read as a political affirmation of the Synodical structure, of the right of Presbyterians to organise their parishes along these lines. Lawrence thus opposes the more extreme anti-Presbyterian, anti-Synod polemics found in the likes of Brome's Rump poems and other theological polemics. Levi should be punished; but proportionately and reasonably, according to his chosen faith. Accommodation is preferable to persecution.

Newes from Geneva and ballad culture

Is Levi the lewd Levite of the sub-title, the man who sleeps with his parishioners, cuckolding husbands, and fathering a slew of illegitimate children? Or is it the Butcher, who is associated with the extreme violence of the Levite in Judges, and who prefers a literal, Old Testament reading of the law? To an extent, both characters fit the bill. Nevertheless, by considering another series of sources for the play, a more definitive case can be made for the Butcher as the lewd Levite, and for Lawrence's accommodationist stance in *Newes from Geneva*.

Between the late 1650s and early 1660s, three ballads were published detailing the case of a vicar in Chelmsford in Essex who was castrated by a Butcher for having slept with his wife.[73] From various verbal similarities, it seems clear that Lawrence knew some of these ballads. The subtitle of the play, *Newes from Geneva*, connects the play to news-culture and the role of ballads in disseminating scandal and propaganda. Most significant, though, is how Lawrence departs from and even rewrites the tale that the ballads tell. The earliest ballad, *The Fanaticks Barber. Or, A New Cut for Non-Conformists* is the most anti-Presbyterian of the three. EEBO dates this text to about 1655, but from its anti-Presbyterian tone, I think a date closer to 1660 is more likely. The ballad combines wit and malice:

> Thus did it fall out there I say,
> The Parson there did live
> They say he was a *Presbyter*
> The which I do believe.
>
> Quoth he unto his Neighbours wife,
> My Bowels [y]earn for thee,
> Assist the feeder of thy soul
> In his necessity.
>
> Quoth she, Oh Sir, it cannot be
> That I my soul should damn:
> I'le warrant thee for that, quoth he,
> an't I thy Priest sweet Lamb?[74]

In this version of the story, it is the Parson's bowels, the seat of affection, that yearn for his parishioner. The ballad has a more straightforwardly patriarchal understanding of the seduction than the play, as does a second ballad which states that the woman "met her disadvantage when/Her Tutor prov'd her Tempter".[75] By contrast, Lawrence makes Abigal an equal partner in the seduction: it is her bowels that yearn for Levi. By rewriting his source text in this way, Lawrence dissipates the blame, making Levi and Abigal co-conspirators. If Levi is guilty then so is she. This is not to downplay the misogyny of Lawrence's text, but it is to say that his is a more tempered, less overtly violent treatment of the story than the one found in the ballad, one that does not cast most of the blame on the Presbyterian Levite. This passage describes the Butcher's violent revenge:

With that he whip'd the bed cloaths off
And in his hand he caught um,
Quo he I'le have it off every bit,
though 'twere a mile to the bottom,

O Caytiffe wretch, quo Parson then
to make my fate so heavy;
The Turk ne're gave so deep a wound
unto the Tribe of *Levy*.

Quo Butcher, pish – – so Parson laie,
in his own pickle sprawling:
Ye bitch, quo he, unto his wife,
I ha' spoil'd your caterwauling.

Therefore all you that have long ears,
reach them unto my text,
For faith y'are all so given to't,
that God knows who'l be next.[76]

This is the brutal ending of the story – presumably well-known – that the play rewrites. Through recourse to law and to the judgment of the Synod, *Newes from Geneva* avoids this fate for Levi, a further conciliatory alteration by Lawrence. The ballad may also allude to the story of the Levite and the Concubine in Judges: the conclusion of that story is a war between the Levites and the Benjaminites that the former wins. Lawrence's rewriting suggests that accommodation is the best way of avoiding such conflict.

Another ballad, *Bloody News from Chelmsford* was published in 1663 after the St Bartholomew's Day ejection and it uses the story to reflect on, as it says, "how poor *Levite* came to die/a *Martyr* to *Priapus*".[77] This is a more self-consciously literary ballad than the earlier one, particularly in its use of political allusion. There are references to roundheads, to Felton, the assassin of the Duke of Buckingham in the 1620s, and the narrator draws a political parallel with the castration:

Thus RUMP in Forest not content
to fell down Timber tall,
Fanatique Slaves stub'd root and branch,
nay, Underwoods, and all.

Now, Sir, (*said Swain*) *if ere you chance*
'hereafter to be Pope,
'There will not need a sacred Chair
'your Holiness to grope.[78]

The polemical claim that Presbyterians are like mini-Popes is transmuted into an allusion to Pope Joan, the fabled female pontiff whose election necessitated, according to anti-Catholic propaganda, elected Popes sitting in a hollow chair so that their genitals could be checked. There are, however, two ballads that do not refer to the parson as a Levite at all, and that are more conciliatory in approach. In the first, *The Careless Curate and the Bloudy Butcher* from 1662, the parson is associated with Presbyterianism, is castrated, and dies. Yet the ballad ends on a less extreme note:

> But now 'tis true I should conclude
> This fatal sad report,
> I hope ther's none will be so rude
> To judge the Clergy for't:
> They are but Men as well as we,
> And subject to infirmity:
> God keep us from Adultery,
> Malice, Revenge and Bloud.[79]

In verses like this, we see how Lawrence could also tweak the story for an accommodationist argument. Whether or not the story is true, at least one text casts doubt on the veracity of the whole tale. It is a ballad from around 1665 called *Hickedly-Pickedly: Or, The Yorkshire Curates Complaint* that pleads for a more lenient treatment of nonconformists. In it we find this verse.

> Or like those *Pamphleteers*, who (last Week)
> Canted in tone of *Prynne* and *Bastwick*;
> Filling the *Change* with false Tradition
> Of *Chelmsford's Vicar's Circumcision*,
> Who lost his *Tithes*, (as Story tells)
> For he was *Guelt of nothing else*.[80]

According to the evidence of this writer, the ballads about the castration of the Chelmsford parson are untrue, part of a popular campaign against nonconformity and Presbyterianism in the politically turbulent years immediately preceding and following the Restoration. While we cannot be sure whether Lawrence thought the story true or not, given its comedic treatment in the play, I am inclined to think not. As well as being a play that promotes a more accommodating attitude towards ejected Presbyterians, the evidence suggests that *Newes at Geneva* offers a riposte to those persecutory butchers who would subject all Levites to the extreme rigours of the old law.

Notes

1. My thanks to the Leverhulme Trust for the award of a Research Fellowship which funded the research for this article, and to the anonymous reader for helpful suggestions. A version of the article was given as a keynote lecture at the *Restoration Theatre, Politics, and Religion* Symposium, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic, April 2021. I am grateful to the organisers for the invitation and to the participants for their questions and suggestions. Thanks to Barnaby Bryan, the Archivist at Middle Temple, for his assistance. I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Elaine Hobby for her interest in my research on Lawrence, and for reading the piece and commenting on it so generously.

2. In the only printed discussion of the play that I know, John Creaser offers a brief discussion of *Newes from Geneva* in his stage history of Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, noting the Jonsonian echoes in the play and the fact that, like Jonson's Zeal of the Land Busy, Lawrence's Levi also ends up in the stocks. However, there is no evidence for his claim that "Lawrence's connections and sympathies had previously been with the revolutionary government". See *The Cambridge Edition* https://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/k/essays/stage_history_BartholomewFair/12/) Lawrence was sometimes critical of the monarchy but remained broadly conformist in his views. As Aylmer and Sinclair both note, Lawrence also disliked the parliamentary/republican politics of his brother-in-law, Richard Bigge. See *The Diary*, xvi, and *The Pyramid*, 27-36. The play is listed in the third edition of the *Annals* as 'Unacted?' and, at the date of the third edition (1989), the MS was listed as being in private hands - see *Annals*, 160-161; 364.
3. See *The Diary*, and *The Pyramid*.
4. See *The Diary*, Sinclair, "The Greenway Garden", 283-286, and McBride, *Country House*, 154-155.
5. There are portraits of William, Anne, and William painted by the popular Dutch artist Johann Kerseboom – *The Pyramid*, 82.
6. *William Lawrence MS*, BL Add MS 88928. All quotations are transcribed as found in the MS.
7. William Lawrence, *Newes from Geneva. Or The lewd Levite. A Comedy*, in Ibid. fol. 125r.
8. Ibid. fol. 125v.
9. There is no reference to the play in the receipt books of Middle Temple for this period.
10. Lawrence, *Newes*, fols. 133v-134r; 131r-v; 140v.
11. In a possible nod to Shakespeare's play, Levi says, "A Storme is surely nigh, I'le to my Cabbin / And sleep the Tempest out" – Ibid. fol. 127v.
12. Ibid. fol. 127v.
13. Ibid. fol. 128r.
14. Def. 1, *Oxford English*.
15. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 132v.
16. For a good overview, see Poole, *Radical*.
17. "Letter to W. H., June 27th, 1659", in *Letter Book*, fols. 64v-64r.
18. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 126r.
19. See too Genesis 30: 32-39, and Jude 1: 23.
20. Hall, *Things*, 66.
21. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 126r. See Swingen, *Competing*, 56-81.
22. Ibid. fol. 126v.
23. Ibid. fol. 126v.
24. Ibid. fol. 129r.
25. https://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do
26. See Tatham, *The Rump, The Life and Death*, Kirkman, *The Presbyterian Lash*, Cowley, *Cutter*, and Howard, *The Committee*.
27. See Maguire, *Regicide*, 20, and Willie, *Staging*.
28. Streete, "Apocalypse", 211-243.
29. Tatham, *The Rump*, 63; 68.
30. Kirkman, *The Presbyterian*, sig. D4r.
31. Willie, *Staging*, 169.
32. Ibid. 175.
33. See Keeble, *The Literary*, 25-67, and Achinstein, *Literature*.
34. *King CHARLS II*, 5.
35. See Wild, *ITER*.
36. See Watts, *The Dissenters*, 221-238.
37. See for example Wild, *The Loyal*.
38. "Letter 5", in *The Pyramid*, 14.
39. See Holmes, "Nonconformist", 248-249.

40. Pyrgus says of Levi, "He hates a Surplice", and Tryphorus replies: "But adores a Smock" – Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 148v.
41. "Letter 5", in *The Pyramid*, 14.
42. *Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 434.
43. All biblical references are to the Authorised Version.
44. "Letter 5", in *The Pyramid*, 14.
45. Ibid. 14-15.
46. At the end of the letter, Lawrence mentions the ejection sermons of the non-conformist, Thomas Lye/Leigh – Lawrence could have attended Leigh's sermons or else read the text when it was published in 1662 – see Lye, *The FIXED*.
47. Lawrence, *Newes*, fols. 126r-127r.
48. Ibid. fol. 127r.
49. See Butler, *HUDIBRAS*, Canto 3, 114-120.
50. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 132v.
51. Shapiro, *Shakespeare* 33-34; 240.
52. See for example Hall, *Manus*, and Burroughs, *AN EXPOSITION*, 342-344.
53. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 132v.
54. Richards, *Voices*, 90.
55. Ibid. fol. 132v. The Puritanical use of the terms "brother", "sister", "brethren", and "zeal" that Lawrence uses in these scenes are also found in Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*.
56. The reference to the "scruple" may be another Jonsonian allusion – see *Bartholomew Fair*, I. iii.110-113; I.vi.36-38.
57. Ibid. fols. 132v-133r. On the language of the stirring spirit and carnal desires, compare Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, I.ii.57-76, and I.vi.36-51.
58. Phillips, *The Religion*, 6.
59. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 133r.
60. Ibid. fols. 133r-134v. Compare Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, III.vi.78-87.
61. Standfast, *A Caveat*, 42.
62. Birkenhead, *The Assembly*, 16.
63. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 155r.
64. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 155v.
65. Brome, *Rump*, 147.
66. Henchman, *A Peace*, 12.
67. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 155v. In *Bartholomew Fair*, Edgeworth threatens to geld Cokes – IV. iv.1-6-107.
68. Shapiro, *Shakespeare*, 119. Circumcision also features, literally or figuratively, in some early modern plays, for example Edward Sharpham's *Cupid's Whirligig* (1607) and John Mason's *The Turk* (1607-8), and in the numerous plays with Eunuchs, such as Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1606), William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* (1607), Philip Massinger's *The Emperor of the East* (1631), and William Hemming's *The Fatal Contract* (1653).
69. Lawrence, *Newes*, fol. 157r.
70. Ibid. fol. 162r.
71. Again, there are allusions to race and colonisation here, as well as to the eaves that we saw earlier in Lawrence's letter. Ibid. fol. 162r-v
72. Ibid. fol. 162v.
73. *The Fanaticks, The Careless*, and *Bloody News*.
74. Ibid. 1.
75. *The Careless*, 1.
76. *The Fanaticks*, 1.
77. *Bloody News*, 1.
78. Ibid. 1.
79. *The Careless*,1.
80. *Hickeldy-Pickedly*, 1.

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