

REVISITING EARLY MODERN PROPHECIES (c1500-c1815)

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ABSTRACTS

ADCOCK, RACHEL (Loughborough)

‘Baptist Women’s Experiential Writings and Fifth Monarchist Prophecy’

The proliferation of women’s prophecies in the Fifth Monarchist movement of the late 1650s has often been noted in scholarly studies of the prophetess Anna Trapnel, whose activities were well-documented in the popular press. These studies, however, have not always taken into account some lesser-known Fifth-Monarchist women’s works, particularly the Baptist women Deborah Huish (1640-1662) and Katherine Sutton (*fl.* 1655-1663). Deborah Huish’s work, *The Captive Taken from the Strong* (1658), is a conversion narrative that indicates how women and their male co-religionists could interpret providential happenings (namely Huish’s recovery from the machinations of Satan) as a sign for the future of the Baptist/Fifth Monarchist movement. Katherine Sutton’s prophetic songs were published later, in 1663 as *A Christian Womans Experiences*, but date from as early as 1655, and are warnings to England to reform its behaviour before the second coming of ‘King Jesus’. Compiled after Sutton’s passage to Holland in the early 1660s with her minister Hanserd Knollys, her prophecies declare God’s growing dissatisfaction with an unrepentant nation as a published resistance to the Restoration, but also as a comfort to her co-religionists in exile.

As well as bringing together the prophetic works of Trapnel, Huish, and Sutton dating from the 1657/8 period, exploring their contribution to Baptist/Fifth Monarchist objections to the Protectorate (as well as to prominent Baptists who supported the government), this paper will also focus on how these women and their co-religionists took prophetic meaning from their experience of adult baptism by full immersion, portraying the coming of Christ as the coming of a ‘broad river’ that would separate those in receipt of the covenant from those who were not.

AKILLI, SINAN (Hacettepe)

‘The Antichrist-ian Turk in Seventeenth-Century English Public Imagination’

From the mid-sixteenth century onwards, a distinct tradition of astrological prognostications emerged in England and this tradition became established in the seventeenth century, especially during the Civil War, through the wide circulation of astrological and prophetic texts. A significant number of these texts were either influenced by or the translations of astrological and prophetic texts originating in continental Europe, especially Germany. Therefore, images and depictions – constructed mostly in Antichrist-ian terms and in association with the events of the end of the

world– of ‘the Turks,’ who were among the main concerns of the continental astrologers and prophets in the centuries in question due to Ottoman territorial expansion, found their way into the English tradition. Moreover, in England of the same period there was a visible interest in the Ottoman Turks and their empire and the diabolic imagery associated with the Turks became tools of propaganda at the hands of various parties that used and exploited texts of astrology and prophecy for their political interests. The wider impact of such exploitation of the images of the Turks by individual parties was the discursive construction of a negative image of the Turks in the seventeenth-century English public imagination. Therefore, after a brief explanation of the historical background and the relevant context, this paper will offer comments on a select number of texts that were found on the *Early English Books Online* (EEBO) database to reveal and explicate one of the ways by which popular beliefs and assumptions held by the English people of the Turks in the early modern period in general, and in the seventeenth century in particular, were formed.

AKOPYAN, OVANES (Warwick)

‘*Praenotio vs Prophetia*. Giovan Francesco Pico della Mirandola and the Forms of Supernatural in the Renaissance’

Giovan Francesco Pico della Mirandola (1470—1533), nephew of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463—1494) and one of the most zealous followers of Girolamo Savonarola (1452—1498), still remains in the shadow of his famous mentors. However, the first Renaissance sceptic and author of *Examen vanitatis doctrinae gentium* was one of the leading thinkers of the early 16th century. In his fundamental *De rerum praenotione*, written in 1506—07 he criticized various forms of superstitions and, using the ancient philosophical concept of *praenotio*, proposed an important distinction between ‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ types of supernatural knowledge. Strongly influenced by Savonarola’s sermons and by eschatological ideas of the late 15th and early 16th centuries, Giovan Francesco Pico pointed out the difference between *prophetia* or divine revelation (even if it does not concern religious matters) and *praenotio* or ‘preunderstanding’ – the prohibited magical practices questioning God’s omnipotence and human free will. As a severe antagonist to Greek philosophers, including those who had dealt with *praenotio* in their philosophical works, Giovan Francesco tried to purify the high and divine knowledge of preternatural magical sources. Although Giovan Francesco Pico’s attacks on philosophy were often criticized, his sceptical ideas, especially related to *praenotio* and false prophecies, were supported by many thinkers. Suffice it to say that he influenced Cornelius Agrippa’s turn from magic towards scepticism; and it was, probably, due to his influence that in Francis Bacon’s treatises the term *praenotio* was used only in negative context.

AMPOLLINI, ILARIA (Trento)

‘Comets and Catastrophes in the Age of Enlightenment: between Prophecies and Previsions’

The aim of my talk is to provide a critical discussion of why, at the end of XVIIIth century, comets were still object of popular superstitions and the previsions of their transit were acknowledged by the audience more like prophecies.

In 1773 the French astronomer Jérôme Lalande (1732-1807) wrote the *Mémoire sur les comètes*: in there, he stated that a comet might have come extremely close to the Earth causing catastrophic events – possibly, even the destruction of the whole planet. Lalande emphasized the problem of the prevision, on the basis of the calculation of probabilities and observed that no proof

of the absence of any danger for the Earth could be given, because of the infinite number of these celestial bodies and their instable trajectories.

However, when the Paris *Académie des sciences*, due to lack of time, cancelled Lalande's lecture, - which subject had already been announced - people immediately thought he had been censored, in order not to let him reveal an imminent apocalypse. Rumors spread out. Lalande promptly sent clarifying articles to newspapers to reassure the public. He subsequently published a popular version of his essay, titled *Réflexions sur les comètes qui peuvent approcher de la Terre*. Nevertheless, the panic did not stop. The scientific form 'mathematically and physically not impossible' was translated into ordinary language as 'possible, probable' and Paris feared a forthcoming catastrophe.

Astronomers, literates and amateurs debated on the issue. Voltaire (1694-1778) wrote the *Lettre sur la prétendue comète* (1773), criticizing the irrational and unjustified reactions. Short-stories, poems and even theatre plays about the matter began to circulate. Lalande's *Réflexions* reached the provinces of France and then foreign countries (German version: Zürich: 1773; Italian versions: Napoli: 1773; Venezia: 1778).

Despite the renewed approach of modern science, comets' orbits remained, still for some time, in a boundary area between scientific investigations and superstitious heritage.

ATKINS, GARETH (Cambridge, CRASSH)

“‘The Ships of Tarshish’: naval power, prophecy and Israel in British thought, c. 1600-1815”

‘Israel and England, though they lye in divers climat, may be said right Parallels; not so unfit in Cosmographicall, as fit in Theological comparison.’ Drawing connections between ancient Israel and the Christian state of their own days was a stock device for early modern preachers. Yet Israel was not the only parallel available for those concerned both with typology and with their nation's place in the unfolding of Old Testament prophecies. Sodom and Gomorrah, Nineveh and the Asian churches of Ephesus and Laodicea all featured in pulpit jeremiads.

In Britain, the successes of the navy in the eighteenth century meant that the ‘Ships of Tarshish’ mentioned in Isaiah 60:9 and elsewhere came to be read by many as prophecies of national greatness. Far from fading away in the early nineteenth century, if anything the upheavals of the revolutionary period lent such language added potency. The text seemed to deal with the restoration of the Jews to their ancient homeland, leading not just to outbursts from the outré self-appointed prophet Richard Brothers, but to debate among mainstream prophetic exegetes like J.H. Frere, G.S. Faber and James Bicheno regarding whether ‘Tarshish’ was in fact Britain, and as to when and how she would fulfil her providential destiny. Such ideas fuelled Protestant support for early Zionism, but they also drove fierce debate about the Bible and about prophecy more specifically: how reliable, if at all, were the relevant texts? How were they to be deciphered? What did they mean?

This paper seeks to demonstrate the continuing potency of early modern notions about providence and ‘chosen nation’ rhetoric in nineteenth-century religious discourse. In an era of geopolitics and civilizing mission, as I shall argue, British people continued to view themselves, and the world, with open Bibles in their hands. What that Bible meant, however, was more and more open to interpretation.

BARBIERATO, FEDERICO (Verona)

‘Prophetism, Millenarianism and mysticism in the Republic of Venice (seventeenth-eighteenth century). Research paths’

Between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, prophetism is a phenomenon in which both religious and secular authorities became interested within the territories of the Republic and in the city of Venice itself. The “political” content of prophecies and visions, triggered by the alternate outcome of the persistent conflict against the Turks and by diplomatic difficulties with other European countries, intersected religious and chiliastic topics that significantly worried the Holy Office and the Venetian government. The paper will consider some of these factors by trying to weave together the different threads that, from the seventeenth century onwards, interconnected instances of mysticism, prophetism, Millenarianism and supernatural manifestations in general, which require, accordingly, an overall, integrated study.

BECKER, MICHAEL (Heidelberg)

‘Alberico Gentili’s unpublished treatise “De papatu Romano antichristo” and its influences on political thought’

Alberico Gentili was one of the most influential Protestant theoreticians of international law in the 16th and early 17th century. His works on legations and the law of war that were the fruits of his academic teachings at Oxford University exerted strong influence on the system of international law in the subsequent years. Yet, while many researchers have concentrated on the juridical aspects of his works, his theological ideas are almost overlooked: Not only his works on international law contain various references to the Bible and contemporary theological discourses. But also Gentili himself got engaged in theological debates and even wrote a voluminous treatise on the papal antichrist, which has not been edited, but is preserved in the Bodleian library at Oxford. In my paper, I intend to bring together the different approaches to Gentili’s work. First, I concisely present Gentili’s rather unknown treatise on the antichrist. Second, I analyse the connections between Gentili’s theological ideas expressed in the treatise on the antichrist demonstrating that there exist remarkable parallels between his apocalyptic thought and the juridical works. Thus, focussing on three examples – the perception of papacy, the concept of religious tolerance in „De iure belli“ and the right of laymen to interpret the Bible – I raise the question of whether and in what manner ideas discussed in „De papatu Romano antichristo“ became relevant in Gentili’s juridical and political thought.

BIASIORI, LUCIO (Pisa)

“‘A letter has been sent by the Master of the Hospitallers...’: The European Circulation of a Prophecy (from the 14th to 18th century)’

In my paper I would like to examine one of the most widespread and long-lived prophetic texts of late medieval and early modern Europe. The basic elements of this text are topical: a letter sent by the Master of Hospitallers from the East testifies that a monstrous child was born in Babylon from a humble woman and an unknown father. His birth had been accompanied by prodigious signs, a subversion of Christ’s life. Within two months he began speaking like an adult announcing himself to be the son of God, making many miracles and explaining obscure passages from the Scriptures.

What makes that text worthy of analysis is first of all its long life: from the 14th to the 18th century. But, more importantly, unlike other examples of longlasting prophecies, the Babylonian

child enjoyed many transformations, according both to the form his message was given and to the ever-changing political, social and religious contexts in which his birth took place.

While its medieval circulation has been partially studied, its diffusion in the early modern period has been totally neglected. From the 14th century French catharism, the text joined the prophetic predications of Joan of Arc's follower, the wars among Italian *signorie* and the apocalyptic processions of the *flagellanti* at the dawn of 15th century, the hermetic Humanism, the beginning of the Reformation and the Augsburg *interim*, the French wars of religion, the first English Revolution, the messianic expectations of the Jewish communities from the 16th century Portugal to the early 18th century Sabbatianism, until two prominent philosophers wrote against it: Hugo Grotius, who rejected it in his works, and a true champion of philosophical scepticism, as Pierre-Daniel Huet, who in 1708 philologically demonstrated its spuriousness and said that «no one believes in it but the common people (*tunicatus popellus*)». Unlike the philosopher of the early 18th century, today historians are very interested in the *tunicatus popellus*. From this point of view, this prophecy offers a wide range of reactions (from credulity and panic, to political-religious interpretations and scepticism), crossing also another core topic of cultural history: the political use of monsters.

BRAGAGNOLO, MANUELA (Lyon)

‘Divination, Physiognomy and Religion in Late Renaissance Italy. The “Natural Physiognomy” (*Fisionomia Naturale*) by Giovanni Ingegneri († 1600)’

This paper analyses the links between divination, physiognomy and religion in the late sixteenth century. It focuses on “Natural Physiognomy” (*Fisionomia Naturale*) by Giovanni Ingegneri, who was a jurist educated in medicine and also the Bishop of Capodistria from 1576 to 1600. Published anonymously and posthumously by Ingegneri's nephew, Angelo, in Naples in 1606, *Fisionomia Naturale* circulated widely during the seventeenth century; from 1615 onwards it was republished several times within the Italian edition of Giovan Batista della Porta's *De Humana Physiognomonia* (1586), with which it shares many common points.

Belonging chronologically to Counter Reformation literature, Ingegneri's *Fisionomia* was composed at a crucial moment in the history of divination, during the violent battle waged by Pope Sixtus V, with his bull *Coeli et terrae creator* (1586), against judicial astrology and the other divinatory arts, to which physiognomy was closely linked. This battle also involved Della Porta's *Fisionomia dell'huomo* (1598). Like Della Porta's treatise, Ingegneri's *Fisionomia* contains a clear defence of physiognomy, and raises some very interesting interpretative questions about the dissident voices within the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

In my paper, I will look at Ingegneri's attitude towards the Roman Church's teachings and ecclesiastical censorship. I will focus on the intellectual and rhetorical strategies he adopted to legitimate the art of physiognomy. In particular, I will pay attention to his attempts to avoid ecclesiastical prohibition by distinguishing physiognomy from astrology and the other arts of divination, thus emphasising its scientific value. To help us understand this process, I will consider the author's medical education, related to his active participation in academic life at the University of Padua. I will also analyse the context of his writing and the possible circulation of the *Fisionomia Naturale* as a manuscript, as well as the context and aims surrounding the edition produced by his nephew in Naples, and the possible links with Della Porta's circle.

I will endeavour therefore to understand if Ingegneri's work contributes to a “dissident” discourse, expressing a different sensibility from the leading institutional orientation of the Roman Church.

CALSONI LIMA, VERÔNICA (São Paulo)

‘Prophetic texts in a bookstore at the Crown in Pope's Head Alley (1646-1665)’

The political agitations of the English Revolution were responsible for the decrease of the control systems, proportionating a new moment to the information circulation, in which the printing press became a system of ideas communication, not only used by the elites, but also by a variety of people and groups. The book trade was filled with printed texts from different political-religious conceptions, including prophecies, visions, tracts, exegesis, speeches, and all sort of interpretations of that social context.

Thus being, this text aims to focus on the prophetic and millenarian works produced and widespread by a bookstore located at the Crown in Pope's Head Alley, in London, that was responsible for selling several radical printed texts, between 1646-65. This workshop, initially belonged to Benjamin Allen, but it was transferred to his wife, Hannah Allen, shortly after his death in 1646. The widow worked as a bookseller, publishing principally seditious texts, until 1651, when she married one of the workshop apprentices, Livewell Chapman. He became the leading bookseller of the Fifth Monarchy Men, publishing texts that proposed a reorganization of the society with the expectation of the arrival of a millenarian kingdom, in which Christ would have a universal government over the mankind. His activities in the book trade stood out between 1650-60 and were the subject of controversies, accusations and persecutions.

Therefore, this reflection intends to identify the prophetic texts sold by Allen and Chapman, and to attempt to how these works were associated to the dissident editorial activities developed by these two booksellers. Through this study, it's possible to think these publications as practices associated to the prophetic-political projects of millenarian groups that criticized the worldly governments – among them, Charles I's monarchy and Cromwell's protectorate –, by the wide diffusion of eschatological and apocalyptic forecasts during the seventeenth century.

CHOW, SZE TING (Renmin)

‘Antichrist and Animals: Images reflected in the Protestant Woodcuts during the Reformation’

The capacity of visual images to convey spiritual and textual message has been discovered by Protestant propagandist during the Reformation and being used as a top-of-the-line weapons in the great battle with Rome. In the second half of the fifteenth century, the explosion of interest in woodcut arts and the emergence of the printed books has created the largest and reliable market for woodcut artists. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, woodcuts were even more enormous outpouring, printers and publishers developed new genres to tempt the interests of buying public: the portraits of Luther were often idealized, depicted him as a doctor, an apostle and a common man. On the contrary, the pope and his clerical minions were excoriated in a series of witty, satirical and bawdy portraits. They were shown as dragon, wolves, pig, cat, goat and dog. These negative imagery was made use of a range of animal associations from the popular culture and prophecy from the Bible, for instance, the great dragon in *Revelation*. The church was peopled with monsters and antichrist disseminated false Gospel. As gifted a theorist as a propagandist, Luther was among the first who was aware of the impact of images, “simple folk... are more easily moved by pictures and images to recall divine history than through mere words or doctrines.” Luther's friend, Lucas Cranach has also created a series of influential polemical woodcuts, *The Passion of Christ and Antichrist*, published with texts provided by Phillip Melancthon, to give a narration of great antithesis, Jesus and the antichrist Pope. The expressive and direct nature of woodcuts could reach a larger audience and these prints were an effective and cheap way of spreading propaganda.

Despite its social reach were difficult to qualify, they have increased the understanding of the range of visual edification available in the Reformation.

COMENSOLI ANTONINI, LORENZO (Paris)

‘Prophecies in Rome at the time of Gregory XIII and Sixtus V’

I focus a dozen of letters, written from 1578 to 1587 by some *familiars* of the Cardinal Giovanni Girolamo Albani to his nephew, Claudio Albani. Gregory XIII in the 1578 was 77 years old and in Curia there were rumors on his health: the first letter (4/5/1578) reports an unknown prophecy that predicts the vacancy of the Holy See. It is called with the expression “*brevi spatio*”, because it foresaw the death of the pope in a brief time. In the letter of 4/23/1585 (pope Gregory died on 4/10) Giovanni Battista Landini writes that two previsions are now became a reality and he hopes that also the third could soon come true; for sure this last concerns the election of Cardinal Albani in the Conclave which on 4/24/1585 votes instead for Cardinal Peretti. After this delusion the other letters report the prediction the enigmatic sentence “*recedet S [Sixte?] sequetur P*”.

In the last series (4/11 to 6/6/1587) the cardinal’s secretary Cattaneo cites another obscure Latin prophecy. It is the famous prophecy which in 1595 Arnold Wion published for the first in his *Legnum vitæ* time with the name of “*Prophetia Sancti Malachie*”. Analysing these letters we will discover something new about Malachy’s prophecies.

CROME, ANDREW (Manchester)

‘The Neglected Role of Prophecy in the “Jew Bill” Controversy of 1753’

Examinations of the controversy surrounding the Jewish Naturalization Act (or “Jew Bill”) of 1753 have tended to concentrate on either the role of systematic anti-Semitism (e.g. Todd Endelman, Frank Felsenstein) or political expediency (e.g. Thomas Perry) in attempting to explain the sudden, violent uproar that the Act occasioned among the English population. This paper argues that while both of these approaches shed light on the controversy, they ignore the central role of prophecy in debates surrounding the Act, both for its proponents and opponents. For those opposed to the Act, it represented an attempt to discredit prophecies of Jewish separation and, in turn, denigrate scripture. In arguing in this way, both politicians and popular prophets returned to seventeenth-century models of providential thought to explain the judgement that England would bring about by naturalising Jews. For those in favour of the Act, however, naturalisation offered England a unique opportunity to fulfil prophecy. Supporters therefore saw the Act as allowing the nation to take the first steps in fulfilling the apocalyptic role God had prepared for it as the nation that would “bless” the Jews and restore them to Palestine. Both sides therefore made use of both biblical prophecy and (at a popular level) supposed direct prophetic revelations in the debate on the Act. This paper constructs its argument by examining a range of material surrounding the controversy including parliamentary debates, sermons, tracts and newspaper reports.

DAGENAIS, SIMON (Montréal)

‘The art of trying to be (almost) always right : astrological predictions in the almanac of Mathieu Laensbergh (1636-1820)’

The almanac of *Mathieu Laensbergh* (or *Almanach de Liège*) was, with the various editions of the *Messenger Boiteux*, the popular almanac of french language with the greatest diffusion during the

Ancien Régime. Predictions and the important space they occupied inside the *Mathieu Laensbergh* were its principal distinct feature. As it was forbidden in France to print works containing judicial astrology, the *Mathieu Laensbergh* of Liège had a huge success in the neighboring kingdom. Indeed, the book censorship of the ecclesiastic government of Liège was totally inefficient in his regulation of the content of popular almanacs. Even though Voltaire had emitted bitter critics about the predictions of the *Almanach de Liège*, no scholar had studied them systematically.

Astrological prediction were present every year in two different sections of this almanac. The calendar included the different phases of the moon, while pictograms indicated activities that were suitable to do at this moment : cutting hair, taking medicine, etc. A specific section was devoted to monthly predictions, about the weather during each phase of the moon and various predictions of judicial astrology. Those predictions were especially vague in time of peace and could apply to various locations and situations. In time of war, the predictions were mainly about issues of battles and of peace negotiations.

This paper will identify the different prediction pattern used by the successive writers of the almanacs. First of all, I will look at the predictions in the calendar and about the weather, which had few variation. Next, we will see the different patterns of predictions in time of peace and then in time of war. I will put in light hints that shows how the various editors of the almanacs took inspiration from earlier issues of it. As I will expose long term tendencies and slow change, such as the influence of the ideas of the Enlightenment, I will also show that the political climate and the general european situation had a great influence over the predictions.

DE MARTINI, MARCUS (Santa Maria)

‘Millenarianism in the prophetic works of Father Antonio Vieira’

The Portuguese Jesuit Antonio Vieira (1608 - 1697), most known from his sermons and the defense of the Brazilian Indians, had to face the Inquisition between 1663 and 1667 due, in short, to his defense of the resurrection of the late deceased king D. João IV (1604 – 1656) and the coming of the 'Fifth Empire', which would be, in his words, the "Kingdom of Christ on Earth". Vieira based his ideas mainly on the widespread prophecies of a Portuguese cobbler, Gonçalo Annes Bandarra (1500 – 1556), who had been himself condemned by the same trial a century earlier. So our paper aims at presenting the possible origins of Vieira's prophetic ideas, specially their millenarian bias, through the analysis of the texts composed during his trial. This study indicates that Vieira's millenarian ideas come from messianic trends, either from popular and ecclesiastical origins, triggered by the discovery of America, the lost of Portugal's independence to Spain from 1580 to 1640 and other minor factors, which would be interpreted through popular beliefs and erudite ideas that, in both cases, could be traced back, in general, to the work of the Calabrian abbot Joachim de Fiore (c. 1135 - 1202). Since there is not properly a millenarianism in Joachim’s works, the millenarianism attributed to him comes from the Spiritual Franciscans, the Jesuits and also from some apocryphal texts. Hence Vieira’s millenarianism, very often related to the abbot’s thought by the critics, would be derived from Joachite circles and some pseudo-Joachite texts. Therefore, an indirect presence of Fiore’s ideas in Vieira’s works is highlighted, which is due to the Portuguese popular culture of that time and to late followers of Joachim, who, after disseminating the abbot’s ideas in many different ways, would reach Vieira not just through Bandarra's prophecies, but specially through biblical commentaries from the Sixteenth Century.

DEAN, RODNEY (Independent)

‘Aspects of Millenarianism and the French Revolution: the case of the abbé Henri Grégoire, constitutional bishop of the Loir-et-Cher’

This paper will concentrate on the ideas of the abbé Henri Grégoire, one of the leading catholic thinkers and activists in the Constituant Assembly that met between July 1789 and September 1791 to draft a new Constitution for France. He had been influenced by the thinking and works of the early 18th theologians Duguet and d’Étémare, who had developed a method of studying the Scriptures that became known as Figurism. Their interpretations emphasised the conversion of the Jews to Christianity, the return of Elijah and the Second Coming of Christ. During much of the 1790s, before the coming to power of Napoleon Bonaparte, the abbé Grégoire (from 1791 an elected bishop of the Constitutional Church) remained indifferent to the activities of most millenarians, and in particular to those of his fellow deputy, the carthusian monk Dom Gerle, and the prophetess Suzette Labrousse. However, his interest in millenial ideas was later triggered, both by his friendship with the Italian priest Degola and when, probably in 1800, he was given the text of a work by the Chilean Jesuit Emmanuel Lacunza. Warming subsequently also to the writings of the priest Bernard Lambert, of the doctor Charles Saillant and of the lawyer Pierre-Jean Agier, he was to welcome in Paris in 1815 Mordecai Noah, the Jewish Zionist, who set up a Jewish State in Buffalo early in the nineteenth century. This paper may well add to the research that needs to be done on the influence of millenarianism on the course of the French Revolution, and in particular on the sources of the stress on social justice and of the hostility to the Catholic Church and its priests, shown by many revolutionaries once the Revolution had got under way.

DOWNING, JONATHAN (Oxford)

“I was carried away in a dream” - Prophets, Imagined Spaces, and the Biblical Visionary Mode’

The writings of Richard Brothers – particularly the infamous *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecy and Times* – contain a number of accounts of visionary experiences in which the prophet is granted intimate access with God and is privy to a revelatory unveiling of the true nature of London. Similar vision accounts are to be found in the writings of Brothers's supporter, Sarah Flaxman in which heavenly spaces are revealed to her in dreams. In this paper I would like to explore the form and rhetorical function of such visions by examining closely two accounts from Brothers and Flaxmer as test-cases: the former's vision of the Holy Spirit and Satan walking through London and the latter's account of a vision of a city. Firstly, I draw upon the work of biblical scholar Kathryn Lopez, whose analysis of apocalyptic vision accounts in Daniel and I Enoch may provide a helpful heuristic lens by which we can uncover the rhetorical and political thrust underpinning these accounts. Secondly, I will demonstrate that an implicit claim in recounting these visionary episodes is that these prophets share a mode of revelation with biblical prophets such as Daniel and John of Patmos. These recounted visions – and their juxtaposed biblical commentary – serve two key purposes. They imaginatively draw upon biblical language and cadence to construct Foucaultian “heterotopias” which helps them to articulate an alternative political and religious worldview. They also solidify their identity as prophets inspired by the same spirit as their biblical predecessors. Paying attention to the construction of these visions, helps us to see figures such as Brothers and Flaxmer primarily as readers of the Bible whose engagement with the text demonstrates the tenacity of the biblical visionary mode.

DRIEDGER, MICHAEL (Brock University)

‘Revisiting Anabaptist Münster: Shifting the Frames for Interpreting an Infamous Episode in the History of Early Modern Prophecy and Violence’

While prophets were certainly of major importance in Anabaptist Münster from 1534 to 1535, their role as instigators of violence has been and continues to be exaggerated in most general and even some specialist discussions. This presentation examines a dominant pattern in the ways that scholars have portrayed Anabaptist prophets, and ways that they could revisit and reconceptualize these prophets’ roles. The most common pattern borrows key assumptions from early modern polemical histories, particularly Hermann von Kerssenbrock’s *History of Anabaptist Madness*. For example, Norman Cohn relied heavily on Kerssenbrock in his concluding chapter to the influential *Pursuit of the Millennium* (1st edn, 1957) that is about prophecy at Münster. In that book Cohn argued that a few prophets, particularly Jan van Leiden, were responsible for leading the majority of poor and gullible Anabaptist believers in a foolhardy, utopian, violent rebellion. Authors of history textbooks and studies of religious violence tend to find the Kerssenbrock-Cohn thesis particularly attractive. The presentation will outline major problems with this thesis by proposing alternative interpretative frameworks that highlight the intricacies and complexities of this case study. These broad historiographical frameworks include: the study of failed prophecy in 20th-century “cults”; regional and global histories; and Foucauldian approaches to heresy. The larger purpose of the presentation is to raise some big questions about the study of the supposed link between prophecy, violence, and fanaticism.

DUNKELGRÜN, THEODOR (Cambridge, CRASSH)

‘Prophecy and Authorship: Closing the Pentateuch, 1500-1815’

Throughout the early modern period, questions of prophecy were closely related to questions of textual criticism. It was one thing for there to be variants between two manuscripts of a Greek play by Aeschylus or a Latin poem by Propertius, quite another for there to be variants among texts deemed prophetic. How was one to admit human error of transmission or transcription while simultaneously preserving the divinity of a text? The emergence of historical criticism over the long early modern period and into the nineteenth century made such questions even more troubling. Indeed, as Noel Malcolm, Jonathan Israel and others have shown, the most radical works of biblical criticism, such as Hobbes’s or Spinoza’s, comprised implicit or outright denials of prophecy. Such debates intensified in the nineteenth century as seventeenth-century commentaries were taken up and considered afresh.

This paper will revisit these questions by looking at ways of reading the last verses of Deuteronomy in the long period 1500-1815. The closing lines of the Pentateuch, which are both ascribed to Mosaic prophecy but also describe the death of Moses, provide an ideal focal point through which to study the tension between prophecy and criticism, and the various ideas and theories about Pentateuchal authorship emerged from reading these verses which were either written by or about one of the most important, if not the single most important of prophets – Moses – but could not be both by and about him.

EGLOFF, JENNIFER (NYU)

‘Apocalypse by the Numbers: Biblical Indexing, Numerology, and Millenarianism in Early Modern England and British North America’

Around the mid-sixteenth century the use and manipulation of numbers began to figure more prominently in various aspects of Anglophone people’s lives. Numbers played a particularly important role for Protestants, because biblical verse numbers—which were introduced in the 1550s—allowed them to take a more proactive approach to their salvation by concisely discussing specific scriptural passages and to following detailed theological arguments. In “Apocalypse by the Numbers: Biblical Indexing, Numerology, and Millenarianism in Early Modern England and British North America,” I discuss the multivalent ways that some Anglophone individuals used numbers to contemplate whether the apocalypse was imminent.

In addition to serving an indexing function, some verse numbers became essentially synonymous with the apocalyptic passages they referenced, and were repeatedly disseminated in print, transmitted orally via sermons, discussed amongst the faithful, and contemplated in personal diaries. Certain individuals applied the calculation techniques of numerology to prophetic books of the Bible in attempts to unlock the secrets of Armageddon. While the relatively few people who performed numerological exegesis took a personal and private interest in the apocalypse, the frequent printing of information regarding the time that had passed since momentous religious events—such as the creation of the Earth or Noah’s flood—had occurred made Biblical chronology public. Since this information was often published in popular and widely disseminated almanacs, almost everyone was invited to contemplate when Judgment Day would occur. The fact that numbers were used so many different ways—for indexing, symbolically, numerologically, and temporally—when contemplating the apocalypse illustrates that numbers were not just benign tools used to quantify and calculate, but that they had a multiplicity of important cultural functions in early modern Anglophone culture.

FERNANDEZ GUERRERO, EDUARDO (Madrid)

‘The Apocalypis Nova: Notes on the Circulation of a Renaissance Prophecy’

The *Apocalypsis Nova* (or ‘New Revelation’) is a doctrinal prophecy written in Latin at the end of the XVth century that describes the allegedly revelations given to the Franciscan friar Amadeo Mendes da Silva who was the confessor of Sixtus IV and the founder of the, today extinct, congregation of the amadeits. This theological manifesto circulated widely as a manuscript and prophesized the upcoming of the Angelic Pope who would unite the two churches and convert all infidels under the same faith (*unum ovile et unus pastor*; John 10:16). It also dealt with theological and exegetical matters, such as the creation of the world or the Immaculate Conception together with other unorthodox and polemical contents. These features granted it a long circulation as a prohibited book from the XVIth up to the XVIIIth century.

The research on the *Apocalypsis Nova* has been focused so far on matters as authorship and sources (both biblical and theological). I intend though to study its circulation across Europe and America by bringing to light 35 new copies of this work, some of which containing interesting notes and commentaries by their readers, such as Guillaume Postel, the pope Alexander VIII, or even the Swedish mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg among many others. My aim is to show not just how books have traveled through Europe between the boundaries of permission and banning but also that the *Apocalypsis Nova* may be connected to many spiritual and political movements of Early Modern Europe.

FINNEGAN, DAVID (Warwick School)

‘Prophecy as Consolation: Irish Catholic and British Protestant Understandings of Fortune’s Wheel in the Seventeenth Century’

Between 1560 and 1660 the Kingdom of Ireland experienced change – religious, political, socio-economic and teneurial – on a scale that no other contemporary European polity approached (indeed it was more akin to the transformations that historians of indigenous societies of the Americas have assessed). A unified kingdom ruled by the English monarch replaced the patchwork of polities that had dominated Ireland for centuries, perhaps 170,000 newcomers immigrated there, and more than half of the island’s land came into their possession. Such profound change elicited a variety of responses from Ireland’s Catholic inhabitants; ranging from passive acceptance to collaboration, non-cooperation to rebellion. A key interpretative device, but one that has received little beyond antiquarian interest, used to explain these radically altered circumstances was prophecy. This paper aims to fill a lacuna in Irish scholarship by tracing precisely how the conceit was deployed; it will thereby also seek to make a contribution to understanding how Catholics deployed prophecy in the early period. This paper will explore the development of prophecy and providence in Ireland from its earliest roots to its re-emergence in the late sixteenth century as an ideological weapon to resist and then reverse the English conquest (completed in 1603). It will evaluate the political prophecies, their additions, interpolations and glosses, to evaluate the role prophecy played in mobilising opposition to the cataclysmic changes unfolding in Ireland.

It will also trace how prophecies functioned as ‘time-travelling texts’ by tracing Messianism – the idea of a providential deliverer.

FONT PAZ, CARME (Barcelona)

‘Deare Reader, thou mayst marvel!’: Seventeenth-century Prophecy and the Quest for Authorship’

It has been suggested that women prophets in the culture of seventeenth-century England represent the first significant group of women to establish the political authority of self-conscious female identity, and that as such they represent a foundational moment in the development of modern feminist consciousness.

The political, religious and social upheavals in the English Revolution witnessed an explosion of prophetic speech among women. As a result, women prophets forged a widely-read literary genre which suited both their private and public concerns; at the same time, this venue allowed them to approach a sense of feminine writing away from the *topos* found in the *Querelles des femmes*.

According to Phyllis Mack, some three hundred women prophesied during the 1640s and 1650s. Not all of these women’s visions appeared as published tracts, but documentary evidence indicates that in the years 1641 to 1660, some 50 women prophets produced roughly 156 published treatises. Given that only 39 female-authored first editions of any genre appeared in the first forty years of the seventeenth century, the women prophets’ publishing record represents a significant contribution in women’s literary history.

In the manner of the Hebrew prophets of old, many female visionaries understood themselves to be called by God to warn political leaders. For these women, calls to prophesy and to intervention in the public sphere could take the form of dramatic visions, complex dreams, and audible voices. Likewise, prophetic messages themselves ranged from dramatic pronouncements of doom to carefully plotted exegetical commentary.

My paper will study these issues focusing on three prophetic discourses: Eleanor Davies *To the Citty of London* (1645); Anna Trapnel *The Cry of a Stone* (1654); and Katherine Evans and Sarah Cheevers *A Short Relation of their Sufferings* (1662).

FONTANA CASTELLI, EVA (Milan)

‘Nicolò Paccanari, a “false” prophet in late eighteenth-century Rome’

In late eighteenth-century Rome apocalyptic prophecies, Marian miracles and prophecies of restoration of the Society of Jesus were widespread. Against this background unfolds the story of Nicholas Paccanari, soldier of the papal army and founder of the Society of the faith of Jesus, a religious institute that sought to revive the suppressed Jesuit order. This institute, while modeled after the Ignatian Constitutions, presented peculiar characteristics, some of which were also shared by monastic orders. Paccanari was condemned in 1808 by the Holy Office on charges of simulation of holiness.

My paper aims to highlight the nascent stage of the 'paccanarist' institute, when it took the form of an enthusiastic group, tightly-knit around the charismatic figure of its founder. This feature emerges from the analysis of some of the prophetic texts attributed to Paccanari. In particular, I will analyze the contents of a text discussing the meaning of the Marian miracles that occurred in the city in the period immediately preceding the proclamation of the “Jacobin” Roman Republic. “Gli ultimi avvisi di Maria” (The last warnings of the Virgin Mary) is a work of apocalyptic inspiration in which the Virgin acts as an intermediary between God and Humanity.

To Paccanari and his brethren, “Gli ultimi avvisi” represented the new “Spiritual Exercises” for the “End of the World”. In this text we also have a detailed description of the “Filosomia (sic) of Mary SS.ma” (the physiognomy of Virgin Mary) as she had appeared to Paccanari, which refers to a specific iconography. The contents and distribution of these prophecies would be judged by the Holy Office and would eventually lead to the conviction for simulation of holiness.

FROHNAPFEL, MONIKA (Mainz)

‘Prophecies in early modern Spain. Religious women and the Spanish Inquisition’

In early modern Spain prophecies were part of the daily reality, indeed of every social level. The providers of these services as well as the demanding clients had very different social backgrounds. As a form of exercising belief the Spanish Inquisitions supervised also prophecies. But it seems as if the institution admitted prophecies to a certain degree.

The trial records of the process of faith against the *beata* María de la Concepción (Sevilla, 1645) tell about the disturbance and scandals she had caused with her divinations about the future of some persons belonging to Sevilla’s upper class. It is mentioned explicitly that among her clients there had been many “luculent” and “noble” persons, not only members of the lower classes. Probably this was the reason why – and this makes the case a special one – the Inquisitors went to her personally to check the suspicion in person – what they normally never did. It seems as if María’s prophecies had been taken very seriously.

The case of Lucrecia de León, a young middle-class woman living in Madrid in the late 16th century who had hundreds of dreams and most of them published, show another form of prediction. In the beginning these dreams had been quite harmless, but as time went by her dreams included more and more a sharp criticism on the reign of Philipp II., so that the Inquisition could no longer tolerate this, but had to take it very seriously.

It seems as if on the part of the Spanish Inquisition prophecies had been admitted to a certain extent as long as they did not cause too much disturbance or criticized the authorities publicly. This paper wants to show up this “extent”.

GILL, CATIE (Loughborough)

‘How doth all excess abound’ (George Fox, A Warning to all in this Proud City of London [1654]): Quaker Prophecy 1650-1665

By focussing the depiction of locations in England, and, in particular, early-modern London, this paper will take a twin approach to Quaker prophecy. It will characterise Quaker writing about towns and cities in England as primarily admonitory. Quakers often upbraided inhabitants by calling on them to repent or reform, which is a key element of prophetic writing. I will argue that prophecy both presents the specific and the universal. It represents something particular to a place by characterising the economy and social structure of a location. In addition, it comments on the apparent instability of towns and cities in order to extrapolate from this a religious message. In order to show how the particular and the general interrelate, I will show how coded language in city-focussed prophecy points to a wider purpose. Through symbols, Biblical in origin, early-modern Quakers referred to the perceived ungodliness of cities. The language of Babel, but especially the symbol of Babylon, registers as a signifier of what Quakers feel is happening in urban spaces. By looking at this aspect of prophecy, it is possible to see many features of Quaker writing in action, since in the process of describing a town or a city, key anti-materialist and egalitarian messages emerge. Both are fundamental to the sense of what is at issue in Quaker writing, and hence, to the prophetic mode that was extensively used during the first period of Quakerism.

GOODARE, JULIAN (Edinburgh)

‘Witchcraft and Prophecy in Scotland’

In early modern Scotland, many prophecies were made by, or at least ascribed to, ‘witches’. These witches were largely distinct from the numerous victims of the Scottish witch-hunt. This paper will examine both the prophetic witches themselves and the prophecies they made. Typically the main protagonist of the story was a male political figure who sought a ‘response’ from a witch or witches; these political figures will also receive attention.

The prophetic witches’ activities will be reconstructed through various indirect sources, as we meet only a few of them directly. We do know a good deal about one prophetic witch: Janet Boyman, who participated in the political conspiracy of Sir William Stewart of Luthrie in favour of the imprisoned Mary queen of Scots in 1568. Boyman was a visionary magical practitioner who consulted spirits. She gave Stewart a good deal of advice about his future, not all of it encouraging; she also contradicted the prophecies of a Norwegian witch whom Stewart also consulted.

It is not at all clear that magical practitioners like Boyman thought of themselves as ‘witches’, although that term seems to have been used about them by others. The paper will address the difficult question of how prophetic magical practitioners presented themselves. Words like ‘divineress’, ‘enchantress’ and ‘soothsayer’ are encountered.

Finally, the paper will pay special attention to the witches’ prophecies themselves. Prophecies were of two contrasting kinds: inexorable and enigmatical. The story of Macbeth had examples of both. The inexorable prophecy was that Macbeth should become king. The enigmatical prophecy was ‘that he suld nevir be slane with man that wes borne of wife; nor vincust, quhill [i.e.

until] the wof of Birname wer cum to the castell of Dunsinnane'. The structures of these and other prophecies will be discussed and contextualised.

GREEN, JONATHAN (North Dakota)

'Dietrich von Zengg in Print'

The print transmission of the German prophecy known as "Dietrich von Zengg" in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is characteristic for the genre of prophecy, including in ways that call into question the boundaries usually assumed to exist between periods, authorial identities, texts, genres, and media. While most editions were published in the first three decades of the Reformation, others precede the Reformtaion, and the prophecy enjoyed an active reception as late as the 1620s, another period of crisis in Germany. The prophecy made the leap from manuscript to print at least twice, while some later manuscripts are derived from print sources. The medium of print gave the prophecy its lasting identity as the work of one "Dietrich von Zengg," supposedly a Franciscan monk from Senj in present-day Croatia, a shared authorial attribution that is not found in the fifteenth-century manuscripts. But the medium of print did not stabilize the text or its alleged author. The prophecy was attributed in some editions to an anonymous Carmelite monk of Prague, and "Dietrich von Zengg" evolved from a monk into a bishop in several editions, and was replaced altogether by "Jeremias von Paris" in another. The transmission of "Zengg" includes both compilation of the prophecy together with other prophetic works; extracting of passages from "Zengg" into other prophecies; extension of "Zengg" with material borrowed from other prophecies; translation of "Zengg" into Latin for use in Lutheran polemic; discussion of "Zengg" in learned debates about prophecy and political fortunes; and use of "Zengg" for oral preaching by a popular prophetic figure of southwest Germany.

GREIG, MARTIN (Ryerson)

'Elijah in Dorset: prophecy in early 18th century rural England'

It was towards the end of May 1681 that nineteen year old William Freke, who was resting in his lodgings in London recovering from a bout of small pox, experienced a 'Strange and Remarkable Dream'. At the time he had no idea what this vision meant, but it stuck in his mind and he wrote it down. It was not until nearly two decades later that God would reveal to him the meaning of his dream, and also bestow on him a special skill in reading all divine visions and prophecies that had come to him throughout the 1680s and '90s. By this time, however, Freke had left London and would spend the rest of his life ensconced in the manor house of his family's estate at Hinton St Mary in Dorset. There, not only did he assume the life of a country gentleman, but from about 1720 onwards he served as a JP for the county of Dorset. It was from his country seat at Hinton St Mary that Freke, armed with his God-given talent in reading divine visions and prophecies, proceeded to decode some of the key prophecies contained in the Book of Revelation as well as some of his own visions, and in doing so set forth a highly unusual account of the coming millennium. In my paper I will examine the influences on Freke's ideas, particularly the works of the Huguenot theologian Pierre Jurieu and the English poet and prophet George Wither. I will also discuss the impact that Freke's geographical location and social standing had on his works and on his ability to attract followers.

GRIBBEN, CRAWFORD (Belfast)

'Revolution and apocalypse: John Owen and the re-visioning of puritan eschatology'

This paper will describe the ferment in English protestant apocalyptic thinking which was both a cause and consequence of the execution of Charles I in 1649. It was in this context that John Owen, who preached to Parliament on the day following the regicide, began to develop a reading of Revelation which emphasised its applicability to first-century contexts. This movement away from millennialism set out an alternative path of development for English protestant apocalyptic thinking, but did not widely engage the imaginations of his peers. The paper will explore some of the reasons why Owen's preterist reading of Revelation did not make a wider impact.

HATZOPOULOS, MARIOS (Athens)

'Sons of Defeated Saints: Prophecy and Nationalism in early modern Greece and the Balkans'

The paper seeks to assess the role of pre-modern and early modern political prophecy for the persistence of a pre-modern community and the rise of a modern nationalist movement, all the while utilizing the theoretical approach of Anthony D. Smith. The paper focuses on a specific literature of Byzantine prophecy - the so-called "oracular literature" - which, since the middle and late Byzantine centuries, aimed at providing hope to the Greek-speaking part of the Orthodox community during critical times of threat, anxiety and change. The message conveyed therein was that tribulation would cease and glory would be restored to the community at a more or less foreseeable, and often calculable, point of time. Oracular prophecies were used to reinforce communal bonds in grim circumstances. Should the latter evolve into defeat and devastation, they were called upon to offer "divine" affirmations that the state of affairs which humbled the faithful would not last.

The paper will argue that, after the Ottoman conquest and expansion in the 15th -16th centuries, it was through prophecy that the subjugated Orthodox came to legitimise and, at the same time, challenge the new status quo. The ambivalence marked the way the defeated community came to terms with extended losses to an "infidel" enemy, thereby preventing its own world-view from total collapse. The paper will then turn its scope to the age of nationalism to argue that a great deal of the popular mobilisation during the Greek war of independence (1821-1829) could be explained on the basis of those prophecies. Acting as "validating charters" for actions that would have otherwise appeared far too revolutionary to the Orthodox masses, the old prophetic traditions advanced popular mobilization and ensured wide participation in what was essentially a modern nationalistic cause.

HENNY, SUNDAR (Basel)

'Self-fulfilling prophet? The merging of prophet and prophecy in the writings of Zurich pastor Johann Jakob Redinger (1619-1688)'

The phrase 'publish or perish' applies as much to prophecy as it does to today's academia. The mediality of prophecy and problems with publication are recurring themes in the Hebrew Bible – and in the writings of Johann Jakob Redinger (1619-1688), a Zurich pastor who was attracted to the millennialism of Comenius. Redinger saw his propagation of the prophecies of the Silesian visionary Christoph Kotter as the continuation of Reformation's struggle against idolatry and the double-headed Antichrist of Hapsburg and the Papacy. Such was the impact on him that he went on

a dangerous missionary journey to Hungary in order to convert the Ottoman Grand Vizier. Even though he could not convince the Turkish commander-in-chief and was later on severely punished in Zurich he did not change his mind.

The reason for his astonishing resistance – he was declared insane and had to endure confinement for nearly twenty years – did gain its momentum from the fact that with his journey to Hungary he had become himself part of the prophecy of Kottler who had envisioned such an episode long before. Having become part of sacred history Redinger blurred the distinction between prophet and prophecy as well as between objectivity and subjectivity. His writings in his defence, addressed to the city council, functioned as jeremiads which defended God's and his own interests at the same time. Even though the millennialism of Redinger and his kind – sometimes labelled Calvinoturcism – formally reproduced a rhetoric inspired by biblical prophecy and Reformation propaganda its universal, cross-cultural ambition was distinctly innovative and resonated, though in a tempered way, with such a 'modern' and 'cool' scientist as Leibniz.

HERMANN, JACQUELINE (Rio de Janeiro)

‘Between Religion and Politics: D. Sebastião and the case of the Venetian Imposter’

After the Portuguese defeat at the battle of Alcacer Quibir, North Africa in 1578, a messianic phenomenon emerged in Portugal known as Sebastianism. Arising as a result of the disappearance of the young, bachelor King D. Sebastião during the conflict with Muslim forces, this disaster triggered in Portugal a vague hope for the return of not only their Monarch but of husbands, fathers and brothers lost in war. Without direct heirs to the throne, the Kingdom faced successive disputes between 1578 and 1580. The strongest of the candidates proved to be the Spanish King, Felipe II, D. Catarina, the Duchess of Bragança and the illegitimate D. Antônio, Prior do Crato, who was the most daring opposition to the Catholic King. The immense power of Felipe II, ultimately conveyed him to the Portuguese throne, initiating the Iberian unification, between 1580 and 1640.

Amid religion and politics, Sebastianism presented itself in many forms; the aim of this paper is to explore one way in which it was expressed, discussing the case of four imposters who appeared between 1584 and 1603, claiming to be D. Sebastião. Specifically the “Venetian Imposter” of 1598, around whom gathered many former supporters of D. Antônio. Among these supporters, D. João de Castro stood out as the first to write about the life of D. Sebastião, and moreover, to state the belief that he had not died at the battle. He believed the King would return to rescue Portugal from the Spanish. When Castro heard of the re-appearance of the “King” in Venice he immediately joined the cause, spreading the news across Europe that the prophesized D. Sebastião had returned, the Longed for Portuguese King.

HESSAYON, ARIEL (Goldsmiths)

‘The Theosophical Society, Illuminati and separatist Swedenborgian New Jerusalem Church – late 18th century prophecy in contexts’

The peculiar masonic group known as the Illuminati was founded at Berlin in 1779 under the protection of Prince Henry, brother of Frederick II of Prussia. Three years later its founder Antoine-Joseph Pernety (1716–1796), a former Benedictine monk and French translator of the Swedish mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg, supposedly received a divine command to re-establish this community in a new location which he identified as Avignon – a papal enclave where Scottish Jacobites exiles had founded a lodge. The Illuminati attracted people with interests in alchemy, astrology and Kabbalah including the wealthy Polish nobleman Thaddeus Grabianka (1740–1807),

who adopted the title ‘King of the New Israel’. While visiting London in 1786, Gabrianka established links with the Swedenborgian Theosophical Society and other groups of believers who awaited an imminent spiritual millennium. Although the separatist Swedenborgians eventually broke with the Avignon group over doctrinal issues, some people familiar with Swedenborgian doctrine nonetheless travelled to Avignon. Among them were the artist Thomas Spence Duché (1763–1790), John Wright, a carpenter from Leeds, and William Bryan, a Shrewsbury-born bookseller turned copper-plate printer and former Quaker. Throughout the spring of 1789 Wright and Bryan were employed making extracts from the Avignon Society’s journals and learning of their remarkable prophecies about ‘the Lord’s second coming, and the restoration of his people, the whole house of Israel’. Then in June 1789 Wright received a vision ‘concerning the knowledge of the spirits and the spiritual world’, while Bryan claimed that a heavenly communication had shown the Avignon Society that Swedenborg’s interpretation of his own revelations was no longer correct and that God himself would form a new church. Wright and Bryan later became followers of Richard Brothers (1757–1824), a former naval officer who proclaimed himself Prince and Prophet of the Hebrews and Nephew of the Almighty. Furthermore, Brothers’s likeness above the legend ‘Prince of the Hebrews ... the Man whom GOD has appointed’ was engraved in April 1795 by the Swedenborgian William Sharp (1749–1824). It is noteworthy that Sharp had apparently taught Bryan copper-plate printing and that his earlier work included an engraving done from a portrait by Thomas Duché.

By exploring the interconnections between the Theosophical Society, Illuminati and members of the separatist Swedenborgian New Jerusalem Church established at London, this paper therefore intends to approach late eighteenth century prophecy through a variety of contexts as well as an emphasis on social networks.

JENNINGS, EMILY (Oxford)

‘Resurrection and Insurrection in 1606: A Case Study of a Puritan “Prophet”’

In autumn 1606, less than a year after the deliverance of the English king and parliament from the Catholic Gunpowder Plot, a suspected traitor of Puritan sympathies came under investigation by the Privy Council. Gervase Smith, a Suffolk clergyman, had allegedly questioned the legitimacy of the Stuart claim to the throne of England and uttered a prediction that King James would die before Christmas. He also stood accused of publicly expounding a prophetic text bequeathed to him by an elderly lodger. Apparently burned by Smith before it could be impounded as evidence, this political prophecy was said to have foretold a series of regime changes represented by a sequence of initials: e. i. m. e.

According to the key witness in the case, Smith had declared that the first two letters denoted Elizabeth I and James I and that the ‘m’ signified a Catholic queen, successor to James, who would be deposed by ‘e’, a champion of Protestantism. The accused had identified this ‘e’ as either Edward Seymour, heir to the Suffolk claim to the royal succession, or King Edward VI, returned from the dead.

Appealing to archival evidence, this paper will argue that the e. i. m. e. prophecy first circulated among persecuted Protestants during the ‘bloody’ reign of Mary Tudor and that the imprecision of its symbolism enabled Smith to revive the prophecy in 1606 as a protest against James’s perceived leniency towards Catholics. The paper will explore how the inherent ambiguity of both prophetic language and the treason law affected the enquiry into Smith’s imputed crime. It will also consider how an absence of textual evidence impeded official efforts to determine whether this orally-published prophecy had ‘compassed and imagined’ the death of the king.

KENT, SHELDON (Lancaster)

“Following the light of the sun, we left the Old World”: Columbus, Folk Religion and the Religion Building Imagination of Joseph Smith’

Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism (more formally known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), is one of the most complicated and fascinating individuals to come out of the religious milieu of 19th century America. There is much debate surrounding the accomplishments of this charismatic individual, though a great deal of the discussion is often dominated by either his proponents or critics, detracting from a thorough scholarly investigation into the true origins of the new religion which he founded and the social, cultural and religious elements that influenced his religion building imagination. My paper will, however, seek to explore some of these elements in order to more fully understand how they influenced the establishment of the early Mormon religion. Specifically, in my paper, I will look at the importance of prophecy and folk religion, and the role they played in early Mormonism. I will discuss the importance of a statement made by Christopher Columbus after he visited the Americas, which was supposedly foreseen by Book of Mormon prophets, and a prophecy made by Smith’s Grandfather, Asael Smith, in 1791 concerning the future of his family. This paper will shed new light on the origins of the Mormon religion and how Smith borrowed from a number of different sources and restructured them to fit his own emerging religious framework.

KILLEEN, KEVIN (York)

‘Selling the poor for a pair of shoes (Amos 2:6): Property and prophecy in Early Modern Thought’

Biblical rage centres on two subjects, idolatry and oppression of the poor. Again and again, from the psalms to the 12 minor prophets, through the rage of Elijah against Ahab, the sins of kings are economic as well as their more notorious ‘whoring after strange gods’ (Deut 31:16). This paper will address early modern accounts of poverty and dispossession that ventriloquize the biblical prophetic registers. It will, alongside this, consider the rhetorical and discursive manoeuvres of such writing, that voices a prophetic fury while negotiating the strictures of decorum, and it will note, in particular, the licence of the pulpit, in addressing this. The paper will take as its central example, the story of Ahab and Jezebel of Naboth’s vineyard, and the moral ferocity of preachers in deploying this story to condemn landlordism and poverty. The brutal end to this story was all the more troubling because, in a culture whose biblical frame of reference runs deep, Elijah, with his disdain for kings, is so evidently the mouthpiece of God. The paper will argue, that the prophetic voice in the era is heard most stridently in the deployment of a politicised and vehement bible, adapting itself to circumstances that are quotidian as much as apocalyptic.

KNEUPPER, COURTNEY (Mississippi)

‘The *Prophecy of Dietrich von Zengg* and its Habsburg Connections’

The late fifteenth century was a pivotal moment for popular prophecy in German-speaking Europe. This had to do with the rise of the Habsburg imperial house, and the devotion of Friedrich III and his successors to prophecy to represent their political and spiritual interests. *The Prophecy of Dietrich von Zengg* emerged during this pivotal moment, and therefore offers a useful window into the uses of prophecy during the transition to print.

This paper will address the early life of *The Prophecy of Dietrich von Zengg*, which appeared in nine manuscripts in the late fifteenth century, all in the German vernacular. This paper will begin with a discussion of the prophecy’s origins and significance for contemporaries. In particular, the prophecy contributed to two emerging discourses: one on German identity, the other on the reform of the Church. Equally significant, the earliest version is found in the work of Michel Beheim, poet to the emperor Friedrich III.

The prophecy predicts suffering and death, followed by a millennial age of justice and peace. It explicitly opposes the “German” people to the “Welsch,” and depicts the “Welsch” lands as targets of suffering. It foresees a time when the Germans will rise again “as if from new.” Significantly, the prophecy foresees that the Germans will retake the Italian peninsula. Then a righteous, vengeful German emperor (represented as a Habsburg) will forcibly reform the Church, heralding an era of peace, justice, sunshine and “no inflation.”

The Prophecy of Dietrich von Zengg was closely associated in several manuscripts with the Habsburg dynasty, which contributed greatly to its longevity. This connection reveals a relationship between imperial propaganda and prophecies. Following its path gives insight into the ways that early members of the Habsburg family employed prophetic material, the occult, and the desire for Church reform to advance their own prestige and interests.

KNIGHT, ALISON (Cambridge, CRASSH)

‘Do I Know that my Redeemer Liveth? Job 19:25-26 and prophecy in Anglican thought’

As one of the key passages of the Book of Common Prayer’s Order for Burial, Job 19:25-26 has been regarded by Church of England worshippers as a prophecy of Christ and the Resurrection since the development of the English liturgy. The language of Anglican worship – in the form of the Prayer Book, English translations of scripture, and English sermons – cemented the verses as clear, undeniable testimony of Christ in the English Protestant imagination from the early modern period onward.

The original Hebrew of the verses is, however, anything but clear, and allows for manifold interpretations. It was through choices in English translation, as well as homiletic language, that the prophetic potential of the verse was brought to the fore and reinforced for English audiences. With the development of textual criticism of the bible from the early modern period onwards, alternative interpretations of these verses became increasingly available; however, the inheritance of early modern linguistic traditions (particularly in the continued use of the Prayer Book and the King James Version) in subsequent centuries prompted preachers and audiences to continue to use the verse in traditionally prophetic ways.

This paper will examine the treatment of Job 19:25-26 in funeral sermons from the late sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries; due to their connection to the Order for Burial and their status as emotionally charged liturgical and literary occasions, funeral sermons demonstrate the tensions between traditional approaches to prophetic language and developing modes of criticism. As calls for revisions to the Prayer book and the King James Version grew from the late eighteenth century onwards, traditions established in the early modern period were particularly influential in determining the continued prophetic potential of biblical language.

LABORIE, LIONEL (Goldsmiths)

‘Terra Prophetica: Freedom and Resistance in 18th-Century Southern France’

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in October 1685 marked a major turning point in French history, leaving the Huguenots with only two options: conversion or death. Exile had been banned, but some 200,000 French Protestants nevertheless fled at their perils to seek refuge abroad. Beside this great Huguenot diaspora, another consequence of Louis XIV’s persecution of his Protestant subjects was the emergence of a prophetic culture in the provinces of Languedoc and Dauphiné.

Despite appearances, the response to religious persecution was anything but uniform within a clandestine Protestant community henceforth deprived of its ministers. Most opted out at first for passive resistance, while others –the Camisards– took up arms in 1702 under the alleged guidance of the Holy Spirit and fought what would become the last French war of religion (1702-1710). This traumatic period was soon followed by over half a century of clandestine assemblies shaped by the ministry of Antoine Court from 1715. His attempt to restore Calvinist discipline and contain charismatic inspirations still faced local resistance and met sporadic prophetic outcries.

This will paper will survey various responses to religious persecution in eighteenth-century Southern France. Looking at the case of the Couflaires, the Camisards, the Multipliants and other prophetic movements in both Languedoc and Dauphiné, it will show that Southern France provided a fertile ground for prophetic outbreaks throughout the eighteenth century. This clandestine prophetic culture played a significant role in the restoration of religious tolerance in the wake of the French Revolution.

LOCKLEY, PHILIP (Oxford)

‘When did early modern prophecies become modern? A transatlantic perspective’

The age of revolutions from 1780 to 1815 which closes this conference’s period engendered a culture of popular prophecy in the trans-Atlantic world as rich and dynamic as the long Reformation – in print culture, in claimants to prophetic insight, in political actions coloured by visionary rhetoric. This prophetic culture – notably prominent in Protestant contexts – can suggest a form of cultural continuity between responses to emblematic ‘modern’ events and reactions to dramatic change in preceding centuries. Recently, however, this age of revolution and its prophetic cultures on either side of the Atlantic have been subject to alternative interpretation. In two strikingly different studies, Susan Juster and Crawford Gribben have each suggested this period witnessed less the end of ‘early modern’ prophecy, and more the making of ‘modern’ cultures of prophecy. Yet the ‘modernity’ delineated in both works is rather indeterminate – no precise date of departure from ‘early modernity’ is given. This paper asks whether such a precise dating is possible, by exploring the factors and features which make a prophetic culture modern. In turn, it reflects again on early modern prophecy, and the character and scope of the cultures it created.

LORENZINI, CLAUDIO (Udine)

‘Stones, Woods and Blood. The *Messiah* of Sappada (Venetian Alps) revisited (1859-1860)’

The young Pietro Colle from Sappada, between July and October 1859, found two inscribed stones in a wood near his village. The content of those inscriptions, dating back to the early decades of the Thirteenth century, certified that the village owned the forest itself, contested by the neighboring community of Santo Stefano di Cadore by a century-old dispute.

Sappada/Plodn is small a German community within the Venetian Alps. Its population settled there at the beginning of the Thirteenth century, migrating from Tyrol. The first stone, written in German Gothic, was called «Archenstein», the ‘Stone of the Ark’; if preserved intact, as after the Flood, it would have supported the ownership of the property to the first twenty-five inhabitants who had moved to Sappada.

The enthusiasm aroused among the population was amplified by the discovery of a third stone, due to a vision experienced by Peter, which indicated him as a new prophet. From that moment onwards, the young Messiah began preaching in his house and converting. His visions, full of apocalyptic experiences, left wide room to criticism to the clergy of Sappada, called «Priests of the Devil». Before them, he pierced his hands and his chest, drawing crosses with his blood.

Arrested for a first time by the authorities, but soon released, he continued his preaching by increasing the number of his proselytes. At the beginning of 1860 he was arrested again to be released after six months, when the manifest falsehood of those inscriptions was finally ascertained. My contribution aims at reviewing the prophecies of the Messiah of Sappada, reconsidering his story in the light of three aspects, in their changes and continuities: the role of the assets of commons for Alpine communities; the (symbolic and economic) meaning of boundary stones; the blood shed as a sacrifice.

MALENA, ADELISA (Venise)

‘Female Prophecy in the *Gynaecium Haeretico Fanaticum* by J. H. Feustking (1704’

In 1704, the Lutheran pastor and theologian, Johann Heinrich Feustking, published a work entitled *Gynaecium Haeretico Fanaticum*, or «a History and Description of False Prophetesses, Female Quakers, Fanatics and other Sectarian and Enthusiastic Female-Persons through which the Church of God has been disturbed». It is a collection of names and profiles of women who, from Eve onwards, in every time and place have arguably caused disturbance and unrest among the faithful. The central section of the work (divided into 3 parts), consists of a lexicon, in which the entries relating to ca. 170 female figures from different periods and geographic areas are listed in a single alphabetical series – from “Agape” to “Zenonis”. The overall design, therefore, appears to be that of a sort of encyclopedia of female heresy – or better, fanaticism.

Through an internal analysis of the wide spectrum of cases dealt with in the *Gynaecium*, my paper aims to investigate the topic of female prophecy and its representations, trying to elucidate those ideals and religious conceptions on which Feustking’s work is based, and following the thread of his reasoning.

MARTIN, LUCINDA (Gotha)

‘From Possession to Prophecy: A Cultural Pattern and its Transformation in Pietism’

In the early 1690s a wave of prophecy swept through German Pietist circles in central Germany. The ensuing crackdown by authorities led to a watershed in Pietism separating “church” Pietists from “radicals,” who afterwards had to live underground or in exile. Scholars have typically explained the prophecy as an expression of Pietist “heart religion,” yet the proposed paper will show that it was instead an outgrowth and transformation of a much older cultural pattern. Nearly all of the Pietist prophets first experienced divine or demonic possession. An enormous corpus of literature attests to such experiences from the 1500s onwards in central Germany. These accounts are identical to the episodes in early Pietism.

Yet a number of factors caused the older cultural pattern of “possession” to evolve in the context of Pietism: the social form of conventicles, Pietists’ belief that they were God’s “chosen people,” and eschatological expectations created a highly charged environment. The proposed paper will detail the development of the charismatic activity in Pietism from early crude “possessions” to full-blown prophecy, and will illustrate how women’s experiences were instrumentalized for ideological conflicts in which the women could only speak indirectly, as “vessels of God.” As in the older possession literature, most of the prophets were female and their mentors were male, but a new wrinkle in Pietism was the role of modern systems of knowledge. Jurists and physicians wrote expert opinions and carried out medical research to “prove” the validity of the prophecies. Their professional turf wars foreshadow a new era in which science and law stand for authority and religious truth is personal, not institutional.

MARTINUZZI, CHRISTOPHER (Pisa)

‘Prophecy and Revelation in Thomas Müntzer’s 1523-25 Letters’

Though Thomas Müntzer did not, during his short lifetime, prophesise the end of the World or the coming of the Millennium - and has wrongfully been described by some historians as an apocalyptic thinker, the role of the prophets and of direct revelation of God (through visions and dreams) was of paramount importance for the Stolberg reformer. Historiography has traditionally seen Müntzer as a reformer who drew heavily from the Old Testament and especially from the books of the prophets. His well-known 1524 *Sermon to the Princes* or *Interpretation of the Second Chapter of Daniel* has been thoroughly studied by scholars and has been recognized to be “one of the most remarkable sermons of the Reformation era” (G.H.Williams). In it the combination of prophetic thought and direct revelation comes to an apex. This very same spirit can be found in his correspondence, that (in what can be considered a humanistic trait) Müntzer meticulously collected and cared for. Through a survey on Müntzer’s *Briefwechsel* in the years 1524-25, those of the Great Peasants’ War in Saxony and Thuringia, this paper intends to shed light on the use of the biblical prophets and on the idea of direct revelation in the radical reformer’s final years of life. The so-called “revolution of the common man”, though primarily a socio-economic unrest, conveyed strong religious and to some extent prophetic tensions that are evident in many of Müntzer’s letters. In this perspective I will try to answer the following questions: what was the role of visions, dreams, and how could they be interpreted in the reformer’s thought? What part did the Peasants’ War play in shaping Müntzer’s ideas on prophecy and direct revelation, and where did he place himself in the *Bauernkrieg* upheaval?

MASSE, VINCENT (Dalhousie)

‘Foreign news and prophecies: the dreams of the Great Turk in French news bulletins, 1529-1614’

Among the thousands of short “news bulletins” (usually 2-8 pages, unbound) printed in France before the 17th c. rise of the periodical, are numerous accounts and tales from abroad, and foremost about the Ottoman Empire. In most cases, the proto-journalistic discourse to be found in those texts is interlaced with pessimistic or optimistic musings about the future – worried or celebratory reports on the expansion or setbacks of the Turks in Eastern Europe, interpreted as signs of things to come – as if the rhetoric involved in the description of events from the immediate past naturally calls forth the “description” of events of the immediate future. Pre-periodical news reports and predictive discourse appear to be intertwined. In several instances, prophecies are directly involved, and my paper will examine a specific series of such cases: short reports about the dreams of the “Grand

Turc” [the Sultan], accompanied by the interpretation thereof – interpretations which invariably announce the imminent conversion to Christianity of the head of the Ottoman Empire.

I will provide a preliminary recension of those texts (2 families and 9 editions discovered so far, ranging from 1529 to 1614), as well as a presentation of their context (including a few remarks on the concomitant Ottoman tradition where Sultans’ dreams are also reported publicly, and interpreted). Mainly, however, I will analyse them as an example of the intricacies of prophecies and their politico-religious conjunctions, both from a rhetorical perspective (by connecting the techniques of “news reporting” with those of “prophecies announcing”), and by considering the recycling and reappropriations involved; dreams once attributed to a previous Sultan are passed forward to the new one, as if short-term prophecies relied on the constant updating of their specific political circumstance to stay alive, that is, to stay “newsworthy”.

McDOWELL, NICK (Exeter)

‘Prophecy and the Praise of Folly from Erasmus to the English Civil Wars’

To what extent were the radical prophetic visions of the English Civil Wars shaped by textual traditions and by reading, as well as by social contexts and political events? The Erasmian ‘folly’ tradition, key to the development of humanist satire, may seem far removed from the activism of those who represented themselves as prophetically inspired amid the apocalyptic atmosphere of the Civil Wars and their aftermath. But for those with a high level of literacy and education, Erasmian folly offered a sophisticated textual model of self-representation and polemical attack, and one which undermined their opponents’ accusations of ignorance and insanity. This paper explores the ways in which the Erasmian satirical tradition, mediated by English works such as Robert Burton’s *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, became part of radical self-representation during the Civil Wars by considering the example of the New Model Army chaplain Henry Pinnell, who became one of the leading ‘antinomians’ of the mid-seventeenth century after the ‘blessed, glorious, and unspeakable Discovery’ of the prophetic vision that he experienced in December 1647 assured him of freedom from the external laws which bind the unregenerate.

MEGGITT, Justin (Cambridge)

‘Prophecy, early Quakers and constructions of Islam in the seventeenth century’

Early Quaker encounters with Muslims in the seventeenth century helped to generate some of the most distinctive and, at times, sympathetic responses to Islam found in anglophone cultures in the early modern era. Considerable resources were expended by the nascent movement in the 1650s in funding a number of ‘missions’ by male and female Quaker prophets to the Ottoman world, driven by a particular apocalyptic valuation of Islam which resulted in a number of unusual and striking interactions and legacies. In addition, some responses are all the more compelling as they came about as a reaction to the enslavement of a number of Quakers in North Africa, where, paradoxically, they often experienced religious freedom denied them at home and, as a radically aniconic movement, found many commonalities with the prevailing religious culture of their owners. These experiences also helped generate unusual texts such as George Fox’s epistle To The Great Turk (1680), in which he engaged in extensive, constructive exegesis of the Qur’an, something that demonstrates a conception of Islam and Muslims that disrupts many prevailing assumptions of the period, making use of but inverting assumptions found, for example, in Ross’ 1649 translation.

This paper seeks to explain how and why this heterodox, apocalyptic Christian sect created such unusual interpretations of Islam by analysing the records of both those Quakers who actively sought out Muslim interlocutors and those who experienced it as a consequences of enslavement, and scrutinising the distinctive, oppositional, sectarian culture of the movement to which they belonged.

MORTON, ADAM (Oxford)

‘Marking Antichrist – prophetic sight and Protestant visual culture in England’

The study of Antichrist in sixteenth and seventeenth century English thought and culture has a long historiographical tradition – it is acknowledged as a vital part of the ways in which early modern people conceived of the Roman Church, the Turks, the concept of time and mathematics, and is noted for its involvement in inciting and sustaining radical movements and polemical positions. This paper will suggest that it had another role to play which was equally crucial to post-Reformation culture: the concept of sight. The post-revisionist school of historiography aside, the ‘religion of the Word’ is still seen to have begun a processes which prioritised the ear over the eye, a process expressed in the iconoclastic rejection of ‘popish’ visual culture typified by the liturgy (official and unofficial) of the late medieval Church in favour of a plain style of worship centred upon sermons. Using material culture alongside more conventional material, this paper will suggest, however, that iconoclasm itself was a form of seeing and demonstrate that Protestant polemic relied upon recognizing ‘Popish’ idols for what they were: mark of Antichrist. It will be suggested that this form of seeing sat at the nub of Protestant anti-Catholicism and that the concept of Antichrist was consequently vital in ensuring that the Reformation was not the rejection of the sense of sight, but rather the replacement of one way of seeing with another.

The second part of the paper will then suggest that this form of ‘marking’ Antichrist in the world had its origins in Calvin’s concept of manifestation, and was consequently part of the mainstream of Reformed theology, before showing how it influenced the formation of Protestant reading of history and ideas of Providence.

MUNTAN, EMESE (Budapest)

‘The Relationship between the *Theological* and the *Political* in Reformed Funeral Speeches in Mid-Seventeenth Century Principality of Transylvania’

The relationship between the Reformed Church and the state in the Principality of Transylvania provides a unique and controversial manifestation of the confessionalization-paradigm. Although the Reformed Church appeared to be in close alliance with princely power; the formal connections between *Church* and *State* were limited, which in certain cases resulted in the discontent and anxiety among many Reformed clergy. The aim of this paper, which is part of an ongoing research project, is to show how the theological convictions of Transylvanian Reformed preachers shaped their attitude towards state and politics, and how was this reflected in their funeral orations written for rulers and politically relevant noblemen. The death of princes and nobles were interpreted as signs of imminent divine judgment. In different funeral sermons, orators expressed their concerns about this in the form of unraveling prophetic revelations. Because most of the clerics had political concerns and were in many cases in close contact with the rulers, whose death later they preached upon (e.g. Pál Medgyesi, Péter Alvinci), the way they articulated their rhetorical-homiletical discourse seems to have not only theological and religious motivations, but it also entails political repercussions. This paper is meant to analyze the relationship between the Reformed Church and

the Transylvanian state from a new perspective, hoping to shed a new light on the intertwining of the *Theological* and the *Political* in the period of confessionalization.

OBUKOWICZ, NATALIA (Warsaw)

‘Lamentation of Melusine. Polemical use of prophecy during French Wars of Religion (1562-1598)’

The popular story about a fairy–founder and female protector of the land of Poitou recounted in *Roman de Melusine* (1393) was part of the narrative strategy deployed by Jean d'Arras to advance the duke John of Berry's claim to the Lusignan castle during the Hundred Years' War. In 1575, this legendary medieval figure who had passed out of sight in Renaissance France, suddenly appeared in a political pamphlet published during the fifth war of religion, entitled *La Complainte et lamentation ou prophétie de Mélusine à la France* (Jean Richer, Paris, 1575). The region of Poitou had been particularly marked by military encounters between Catholics and Protestants and, subsequently, by the uprising of the “Malcontents”, a seditious movement led by the younger brother of King Henry III. Melusine, an innocent hybrid being with a hideous serpent tale, a *genius loci* of Poitou, emerges in this curious print to announce her prophecy of «an imminent disaster» to French people. In my paper, I would like to examine the reasons for which this creature appears unexpectedly in the middle of religious wars as an advocate of irenicism. What does a late medieval

What is the link between monstrosity and royal clemency? How do 16th century French polemics use the language of prophecy to stay in the paradigm of truth?

PARRY, GLYN (Roehampton)

‘Prophecies and Responses in Elizabethan Politics’

Post-Enlightenment political historians have, until very recently, either ignored or edited out the importance of prophecies in the thinking of early modern elite politicians. This paper will examine some of the ways in which prominent politicians responded to threatening prophecies during the reign of Elizabeth I, how those prophecies related to significant threats to the Elizabethan régime, and how leaders of that régime in turn used the occult beliefs of the period to nullify prophecies and generate counter-arguments against them.

PERSSON, FABIAN (Lund)

‘Opportunity or Threat? Early Modern Political Prophecies’

To early modern politicians prophecies were a political reality. Monarchs such as Gustavus Adolphus or Charles X of Sweden employed court astrologers. When a Swedish ambassador returned home from England he brought with him a prophecy by an English astrologer, which then circulated at the parliament of 1658. The courtier Johan Ekeblad gushed in a letter "it is a wondrous thing how everything he writes has come true, God willing it may continue as he has written". Looking closer at the prophecy Ekeblad's wish for fulfillment is understandable. It is a timetable for future Swedish conquests.

A miraculous victory over Denmark had just happened and added credence to the prophecy. Even more amazing feats were in store according to the English astrologer. In 1659 Poland was to be defeated and in 1660 Lithuania was to "suffer great punishment". The following year Courland would be conquered and in 1661 Swedish arms would take Moscow. Following year the Netherlands would be overrun and England an ally. In 1669 Sweden will break into Italy and take

the most important cities. The Jesuit Order will "succumb to its punishment" and in 1671 King Charles X Gustav will convert Rome to Protestantism. This no holds barred prophecy was very similar to sermons held by "our vicar" according to Ekeblad.

Such extatic support for Sweden could be used by the government. Positive prophecies could help boosting morale. On the other hand there were also prophecies that had no support in government circles. Such prophecies could be viewed as dangerous and incendiary. How did the government handle this latter kind of unwanted prophecies? In a number of instances we can see how the Swedish Council tried to counteract and smother these prophetic outbursts. How did the top political stratum in Sweden use or deflect prophecies?

PIETSCH, ANDREAS (Münster)

‘Using and Debating Prophecy in the Netherlands (c. 1600)’

Using Christian concepts of prophecy can both establish and undermine the authority of prophetic speakers. In the sixteenth century, prophecy remained one of the most important discourses legitimizing religious reforms and individual initiatives towards it. As the Bible also warned about false prophets, however, prophetic authority was always precarious and open to debate.

Prophecy was especially important for authors of the ‘Radical Reformation’, for example the merchant Hendrik Niclaes (1502?-1580?), who presented himself in his writings as the “godded HN”. His works were frequently translated and had a long reception and print history stretching to the British Interregnum and continental pietism.

In its first half, the paper discusses Niclaes’ adaptation and use of older models of prophetic authorship, which appear both complex and conscious of contemporary concerns. While traditional genres and uses of biblical texts were adapted, presentation and images were improved to fit contemporary readers’ expectations. Remarkably, HN managed to use his eschatological arguments for an irenic defense of religious re-conciliation against the religious violence and controversy of his day.

But both his confessional ambiguity and his prophetic status soon became the target of criticisms, which range from strong refutations by reformed theologians and a Roman prohibition to debates within his own circle and adjacent networks. In its second half, the paper will discuss how Niclaes reacted to such criticisms, further adapting his strategies of authorship and, importantly, the material presentation of his texts, which were presented with a high degree of ambiguity and rearranged to please various readerships. As I argue, the concept of prophecy was thus consciously blurred in the polemical debates of the second half of the sixteenth century. As this may have influenced the later readership of the material, it could explain the long literary afterlife of the texts.

PRONK, THEO (Rotterdam)

‘War and Peace in shadow of the Antichrist: the Nuremberg Conference of 1650’

In 1650 the city of Nuremberg hosted a peace-conference in which a number of unresolved matters between the now former belligerents of the Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648) had to be dealt with: a follow-up of the more well-known Westphalian Treaties from 1648. The event elicited a true ‘media-craze’, eliciting a flood of pamphlets covering the conference and celebrating definitive peace. It turns out, strikingly, that the apocalyptic interpretation-scheme well-known from the war-days still features prominently among Lutheran pamphleteers. The peace-treaty is described by them as a victory over war; a condition of which devil and Antichrist are the instigators. Put differently, the peace-treaty is presented as a victory over (original) sin itself: a restoration of divine

order that ushers in final redemption. The peace, thereby, no less marks the fulfilment of the human state as prophesied throughout the Bible. Different from the war-years is that now evil is not linked to specific catholic foes, but to discord in general. The apocalyptic language remains the same, yet the application is adapted to a new political reality.

It has been a long-held belief among historians that the apocalyptic representation of political conflict declined towards the end of the Thirty Years’ War – as it was fought ever less over religion and more over European power-balance – to wither thereafter; increasingly the domain of radicals. The example of 1650 shows that the apocalyptic outlook was not just still very much alive, but also perfectly main-stream. Its application was not determined solely by its polemical potential as it could be used in a reconciling manner also. Such adaptability of the apocalyptic theme may well explain its continued use to represent political events also after the war had ended.

RIEDL, MATTHIAS (Budapest)

‘Thomas Müntzer: The Prophet of Revolution’

In 1521 Thomas Müntzer went to Prague, where he hoped to begin a universal renewal of the Christian church. In his *Prague Manifesto* he evokes an apocalyptic scenario in which Christ and Antichrist are gathering their troops for the imminent final clash. In this battle, Christ works primarily as the inner Logos providing his elect with true and direct revelation, while the Antichrist works through the false preaching of the clergy. Müntzer sees his own role as awakening the elect and making them aware of the “word of the living God.” However, what makes the text truly sensational is Müntzer’s promise to the elect: They will not obtain eternal life in the Beyond, but rather dominion over this world – once the clerical church is defeated. The paper will show that the emergence of revolutionary prophecy in the so-called radical reformation not a deviation from the Wittenberg reformation and – as it has often been presented; it rather draws from a different (and surprisingly complex) set of theological resources, ranging from the prophecies of Isaiah and the historiography of Eusebius of Caesarea to the apocalyptic spiritualism of the Joachites and the late medieval mysticism of the German Dominicans.

RIORDAN, MICHAEL (Cambridge)

‘Lady Abden's 'Last revelation' and quietist prophecy in eighteenth century Scotland’

Hillel Schwartz's 1980 work, *The French prophets*, uncovered the existence of a group of prophets that emerged among the Huguenots of the Cévennes region in the south of France, who held out against the French state following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Among these Camisards, as they were known, many appeared who spoke in tongues and issued warnings to their enemies which they claimed came from the Holy Spirit. Work by Schwartz and more recently by Lionel Laborie has uncovered the existence of a network of their followers which spread throughout Europe. English Philadelphians, German Pietists and Dutch mystics, among many others, became inspired, delivering prophetic warnings across the continent.

This paper examines what happened when the prophets arrived in Scotland in 1709. Thanks to the conversion of a Fife noblewoman, Lady Abden, the Camisards there attracted the interest of two quietist communities at Craighall in central Fife and another further north at Rosehearty in Banffshire. Since the 1690s, the group at Rosehearty had been translating and disseminating the ideas of the Flemish mystic Antoinette Bourignon. In a series of prophecies, Abden propounded the Flemish mystic's divinity as God's 'last revelation' to his people.

In this paper, I argue that Lady Abden's mingling of millenarian prophecy and Bourignonist mysticism led some of the mystics to follow suit and deliver prophecies themselves to audiences throughout Britain. But others, taking seriously the pronouncements against false prophets given by Bourignon and others, were sceptical and turned their backs on their 'inspired' brethren. The doubters, however, did not gain the upper hand, for Abden's mix of mysticism and millenarianism was to have a lasting impact on the Camisards' missions in Britain and throughout Europe.

ROBINSON, SAMUEL (Berkeley)

'Knowledge of Bodies Unseen: Prophecy and Muggletonian Materialism in Seventeenth-century England'

My proposed paper will consider how the writings of John Reeve and Lodowick Muggleton, the self-proclaimed 'Prophets of the Third Commission,' are indicative of a quasi-materialist strand of radical religious thought in the seventeenth century. Historiographical trends have generally considered materialist ideas as part of an effort towards the disenchantment of the world and often employed as a critique upon religious enthusiasm. The Muggletonian prophets, though part of the sectarian milieu of seventeenth-century England, were extremely hostile towards religious ideas that extended elements of God's divinity into the material world. Their ideas, which included the hyper-localization of the divine into the body of Christ, the death of the soul, and a materialist account of reprobation, sit awkwardly within historical narratives that depict materialism as a monolithic intellectual force of secularization.

This paper will ask several questions linking the peculiar materialism of the Muggletonians with the structure of prophetic pronouncement. It will ask why the Muggletonians used their role as prophets to not only critique sectarian rivals, but also to formulate theories about the material world and the nature of religious knowledge. What does it say about prophecy given that the Muggletonians used the idea of prophetic revelation to articulate a cosmology of corporealism? What sort of intellectual work could early modern prophecy do in addition to divination and eschatological interventions into the political sphere? The paper will thus examine what was distinctive about Reeve's and Muggleton's prophecies and, by example, show how prophecy functioned in disparate ways amid the marketplace of ideas that defined religion during and after the English Interregnum.

SHAMIR, AVNER (Copenhagen)

'Predicting Bible Burning in Reformation England: between Reality and Propaganda'

Accusations of Bible burning were common in Protestant polemic literature from 1560 onward. The Roman Church was often accused of burning (vernacular) Bibles in an attempt to prevent the people from reading Scriptures. Contemporary Bible burners were associated with biblical and early church book burners such as Antiochus and Diocletian. But when John Jewel, in a sermon on Psalms 69:9 preached before the Queen around 1561-62, predicted Bible burning as the outcome of the lack of learning among the clergy, he gave the topic a new meaning. Bible burning, an historical event and a polemic commonplace, was turned into a sign of God's impending judgement. It was an admonition, but it could also be (and indeed was) understood as a prophecy, a description of an event in the future. A similar, yet opposite, transformation happened when the Puritan Andrew Willet (in his commentaries on the prophecies of Daniel, 1610) understood the burning of Scriptures under the Antichrist – a prophecy attributed to Daniel 12:1 – to have already been realized in the time of Queen Mary. A prediction of Bible burning was understood as history.

My paper will explore the connections between history, reality, propaganda and prophecy in Jewel's sermon (and in three later publications that recycled his prophecy) and in Willet's exegetical work. My intention is to relate the discussion of Bible burning and prophecy to the broader topic of disenchantment, and I will suggest that a new Protestant focus on the Bible, and more generally God's Word, emerged as a site of Protestant enchantment.

LIMA, LUIS FILIPE SILVERIO (São Paulo)

'Expectations, Experiences and Imperial Prophecies: "the learned Jew", "the famous Jesuit", "a poor despised Remnant", and the millenarian connections in the Seventeenth-Century'

We intend to discuss the Seventeenth-Century circulation of imperial projects based on Fifth Monarchy ideas, i.e., the prophetic-political formulations derived from the interpretations of Book of Daniel's dreams. The main purpose is to trace the debates, relations and connections amongst messianic members of the Portuguese Jewish Community in Amsterdam; English and American millenarians; and Portuguese Fifth Empire believers, divided into 'sebastianists' and 'joanists'. In this millenarian network, the Portuguese Jewish Community emerges as a possible axis which articulated messianic hopes but also colonial interests of different spaces. One example was the trajectory of the short treatise *Esperança de Israel* (*Hope of Israel*). It was written by Menasseh Ben Israel, printed in Spanish and Latin (1650) and short after translated into English and published in London, with great interest, by the Fifth-monarchist Livewell Chapman. Added to its impact in England, several authors indicated a connection between the rabi's text and the letter "Esperanças de Portugal" (1659), by the Luso-brazilian jesuit Antonio Vieira, who met Menasseh when in a diplomatic mission to support the Braganzas and the restored Portuguese Empire. If one assumes the *Esperança de Israel*'s linkages (with Vieira and brigantines and also with protestants millenarians) as a plausible way to understand the diffusion of 17th Century messianic ideas, it is possible to draw a picture approximating Portuguese imperial propositions and English Fifth-Monarchists projects, by understanding aspects of some New-Christians and New-Jews trajectories and their connections in Europe and in the Americas.

SIMONS, OLAF (Gotha)

'The Marquis de Langallerie and his plans as Generalissimus of the Apocalypse'

Historians who specialize on Europe and the early 18th century are not immediately likely to discuss here a period of religious turmoil and millenarianism. The three Christian confessions were involved in established debates and Pietists and their European confederates were adding to these debates. Yet the era of the great religious wars was otherwise past. The ongoing wars were fought over dynastic successions and the balance of power among Europe's leading nations. Spheres of influence, globalization, was the new topic with claims of colonial power negotiated at the ensuing peace conferences. Fashions – as that of "gallantry" – were set on secular terms.

The Marquis de Langallerie is an unlikely agent on this stage: a general who defects France, who becomes (for a short time in Saxon-Polish services) the military governor of Lithuania, a man of celebrated gallantry, fit for a novel that celebrated a cynic (and that appeared in 1706 and began to bear his name two years later on the English market) – he was the man who metamorphosed into a self-acclaimed religious leader, prophet and would-be-revolutionary.

The case is spectacular both in its dimensions and its internal documentation. Together with two companions Langallerie founded the “Universal Theocracy” and planned to attack the Holy See in Rome – supposedly the step into the apocalypse that would end all present injustice. The plan leaked months after the Theocracy had won the Ottoman Empire as its secret sponsor. Langallerie was imprisoned and died in custody in Vienna in 1717. He left us, however, the convolute of his personal diaries and the “journal” he intended to publish in the course of the coup. In daily entries we can observe how he adopted and internalized circulating prophecies. We can follow him as an author who addressed a dissatisfied clientele, a clientele that gave its dissatisfaction a religious dimension. Contemporaries observed a case of religious frenzy. We can at the same moment observe here a case of strategic utilization of markets of dissent. We might have problems to come to terms with the specific rationalities of these markets though.

SMYTH, JONATHAN (Birkbeck)

‘Prophetesses, Parousia and Politics in Early Revolutionary France’

One of the main areas of political discord during the early period of the French Revolution was the disestablishment of the Catholic Church and the attempt to replace it by a new and purified Constitutional Church. Among the keenest advocates of the new state religion were two self-styled Prophetesses: Suzette Labrousse and Catherine Théot. Their curious selection of supporters included active politicians of the Revolution, bishops of the new church, such as Pontard, and Dom Gerle, an ex-Carthusian with close ties to the Jacobins. Further support came from a disparate selection of Millenarians, believers in the imminent Second Coming and even a Princess of the Blood interested in occultism. Driven by the prophecies of the two women, this disparate group sought to influence the political morality of the Revolutionaries, particularly the Jacobins.

This paper will discuss their attempts to influence the politics and morality of the early years of the Revolution, particularly in the run-up to Robespierre’s proclamation of a form of Deism as the new Republican morality in the Festival of the Supreme Being in June 1794. Robespierre’s enemies used his apparent relationship with Théot to vilify him in the events leading up to his fall and that of the Jacobins in July 1794. Despite several attempts to interest the new rulers of France, the Directoire, with the death of Catherine Théot later in 1794 and with Labrousse in Rome condemned to imprisonment in Sant’Angelo ‘in perpetuity’, the interest in their prophecies died away. Millenarianism itself never completely disappeared, and was briefly reinvigorated during the Empire by other revolutionaries, including another Constitutional Bishop, Henri Grégoire.

SPAANS, JO (Utrecht)

‘Taming Prophecy in the Early Eighteenth-Century Netherlands’

In the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic prophecy was well-known — and feared for its disruptive qualities. After a short overview of prophecies that caught a more than passing interest among theologians and the general public, especially in the seventeenth century, I will focus on developments in the first half of the eighteenth century. These were twofold. Coccejian theologians shied away from their traditional interpretations of current affairs in the light of biblical prophecies. I will discuss the case of Johannes d’Outrein, a prominent Reformed minister and author, who developed an emblematic theology that enabled him to preserve the prophetic character of Scripture, while deflecting the thrust of the prophecies away from world history. At the same time his exegesis allowed for the inclusion of the findings of advanced biblical and antiquarian

scholarship and the emerging natural sciences in his theology. It also lent itself for application in a coordinated program of catechetical instruction for lay audiences of a variety of intellectual levels that was gaining force in the Reformed Church. At the same time, lay church members of much humbler background claimed the authority to prophesy. Their claims were not based on visions or mystical experiences, but derived from the notion of the priesthood of all believers, underpinned by an often solid grounding in, and idiosyncratic interpretation of, Scripture. Ecclesiastical authorities were ambivalent towards this phenomenon, as it undermined the authority of the ordained ministry. At the same time, synods had to admit that these lay prophets were usually fully orthodox and, moreover, the product of the new catechetical approach. I will argue that the interpretations of prophecy among theologians and lay prophets contributed to a new, ‘enlightened’ religious culture, bringing together the intellectual and the popular.

STOAKES, CORAL (Cambridge)

‘Catholic Apocalypticism in Post Reformation England, 1558 – 1606’

Early modern Protestant apocalypticism has attracted wide scholarly interest; however, there is a notable omission in historiography surrounding the topic of Catholic apocalypticism. My paper intends to address this silence with special attention to Catholic martyrdom, persecution and their effects on Catholic apocalypticism. The existence of an apocalyptic world-view in post-Reformation England has long been established yet the idea that this was an outlook shared by both Protestants and Catholics requires further investigation. Within historiography there has been a substantial focus on Foxe and Bale while investigating early modern English eschatological fervour. Works such as those by Bryan Ball and Katherine Firth have emphasised the importance of this apocalypticism but have overlooked Catholic interactions with these ideas. Meanwhile Denis Crouzet’s recent study of French Catholic apocalyptic belief and its role in the French Wars of Religion has brought to light the importance of understanding this mentality. Examining English Catholic apocalypticism allows us to re-assess the discourse of religious violence in early modern England and tease out a new aspect of early modern Catholic self-perception. Apocalypticism provides a lens to examine the impact of the Jesuits as well as the transfer of ideas between England and the Continent. This project, by closely re-examining printed martyr tracts, unpublished documents, and artwork in the English College Rome sheds new light on the neglected issue of how Biblical apocalyptic prophecies affected English Catholic understanding of the Reformation and their subsequent interaction with the state.

STRATTON, KATHERINE (Dalhousie)

‘The Prophetic Magic of the Three Wise Men in Guillaume Postel’s Restitution of All Things’

One of Guillaume Postel’s (1510-1581) many obsessions was his millenarian vision of the “Restitution of All Things”, an apocalyptic event in which all people and religions would be reunited under one State and one Church (“une foy, une loy, un roy”). Many of the texts in which he exposed that vision are prophetic in nature. Of particular interest is his *Trésor des propheties de l’univers*, a collection of 52 prophetic stories gathered from various sources between 1543 and 1566, which he systematically interprets as evidence that the King of France will lead Christianity to the Restitution of All Things. An intriguing chapter of this collection concerns the Biblical Magi (or Three Wise Men), figures which reappear in several subsequent postellian texts, along with theories surrounding their identity, origin and specific kind of prophetic magic. Such was his interest in their abilities that he would later dedicate an entire manuscript to this prophecy alone.

For Postel, the Magi were not only the traditional astrologers and magicians they are often seen as, but are bestowed with a divine science that would provide the King with the key to the spiritual reunification of the World.

In this paper I will examine Postel's interest in the prophetic magic of the Magi, with particular attention paid to the aforementioned manuscript, *La prognostication de sus Paris (ou de ce quy en doit advenir) extraicte des secretz de la sainte magie et vraye astrologie des Troys Roys Mages qui adorent nostre Seigneur*, written in 1568 during his confinement in the priory of Saint-Martin-des-Champs. I will analyse several of the instances in which Postel relies on this prophecy and contextualise his own representations of the Magi with other representations, both popular and theological, of the 16th century.

TEMPLE, LIAM (Northumbria)

"A neerer, a more familiar, and beyond all expression comfortable conversation with God":
Attitudes towards Mystical Theology and 'Mystics' in late seventeenth-century England'

After the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660 the Episcopalian national Church of England was resurrected, the Prayer Book reintroduced, and those that had remained loyal to episcopalianism throughout the Civil Wars and Interregnum were elevated to new positions of power. In this post-Restoration religious climate church authority and legitimacy became key concerns. Anglican writers not only had to defend their church against the threat of non-conformity, but also against the perceived threat of Catholicism and papal authority.

It is within this context that mystical theology emerged as the subject of polemical debate between Catholic and Anglican writers. The conversion of Serenus Cressy, once of the Great Tew Circle, to Catholicism and his joining of the Benedictine order disgruntled his former Anglican allies. Even more provocative was Cressy's publication of Augustine Baker's *Sancta Sophia* (1657) and Julian of Norwich's *XVI Revelations of Divine Love* (1670) in English to cure the 'distemper of this Age'. Both were representative of a growing interest in mystical theology in England.

This paper addresses some of the conflicting attitudes towards mystical theology in late seventeenth-century England. It will explore the semantic evolution of the word 'Mystic' to mean both contemporary and historical writers that wrote about mystical theology, and the consequences of identifying with such a canon of writers in a period of ongoing polemical debate about enthusiasm and Catholicism.

TOUBER, JETZE (Utrecht)

'Melchizedek: Prophecy, Biblical Interpretation and Pastoral Concerns
in the Dutch Republic around 1700'

This paper discusses a prophetic current within the Dutch Reformed church of the Early Enlightenment that flourished, but which modern historiography tends to misrepresent severely: Cocceianism. This current is significant since it embraced an eschatological, speculative theology, without dissociating itself from the Dutch Public Church. It is thus an important example of a trend signalled by Jue in his study of early modern millenarianism, of apocalyptic thought exercised within publicly recognized churches. Cocceian ministers explained the Bible in a prophetic key, reconstructing the periodical recurrence of events within a salvation history which evolved in cyclical stages. To this end they engaged with intensive historical, biblical scholarship.

The rise of Cocceian theology coincided chronologically with the hermeneutical debates involving the radical biblical criticism of Lodewijk Meyer and Spinoza in the 1660s and 1670s.

This correlation has caused both seventeenth-century observers and modern historians to conflate the novelty of Cocceianism with Cartesianism and Spinozism. Yet, even some Cocceians did absorb novel elements of rationalist and historicist hermeneutics, generally speaking they had their proper sets of interests, pastoral, scholarly and speculative.

The prime responsibility of ministers was to preach and instruct. In pastoral literature, dogmatic and philosophical hermeneutics may seem far away. Yet as hermeneutical positions were tested both by antagonism within the clergy and by the radical criticism of outsiders, we may assume pastoral instruction to have undergone the influence of scholarly and philosophical discussions. This paper seeks to determine in what ways hermeneutical debate and pastoral concerns of prophetically inclined theologians interacted.

The paper focuses on the case of Melchizedek, the king-priest of Kanaan of Genesis 14:18-20. This enigmatic figure was one of the biblical types that Spinoza seized upon to argue that religious rites had been a common feature of the ancient Near East, rather than an exclusive element of Judaism. In response to Spinoza, the traditional interpretation of Melchizedek as a proleptic reference to Christ was forcefully reaffirmed. Yet a quarter of a century later the significance of Melchizedek became contested, with radical naturalism, moderate historicism and prophetic eschatology vying for dominance. The case of Melchizedek allows the modern historian to trace not only the continuing impact of hermeneutical challenges, but also the interplay of these challenges with pastoral literature.

TUTTLE, LESLIE (Kansas)

'Apocalyptic Prophecy in the Huguenot Diaspora'

Scholars of French Protestantism acknowledge the resurgence of prophecy across southeastern France in the aftermath of the 1685 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Prophecy sustained Protestant resistance, contributing to the Camisard uprising and the controversy over the "French prophets" in early eighteenth-century London. Less recognized is the fact that apocalyptic prophecy was not born solely from French rural communities deprived of trained clergy; it also drew in educated, cosmopolitan Protestant elites living in exile.

The paper I propose for the 2014 conference would focus on a central figure in this transnational movement: the French physician Jacques Massard. Massard's short but intense career as a collector and interpreter of apocalyptic dreams illuminates the importance of thinking of prophecy in the late seventeenth century not as an atavism, but rather as a transnational European phenomenon nourished within the broader "Republic of Letters." It suggests that intense political crises rendered apocalypticism a useful, albeit controversial common language for French, English and Dutch Protestants trying to make sense of their present and near-term future.

Jacques Massard fled Grenoble for Amsterdam where he launched (at first anonymously) a publishing career as an interpreter of prophecies and dreams. His *L'Harmonie des prophéties anciennes avec les modernes* sought to reinterpret Revelations in light of more recently delivered prophetic "evidence"—including Comenius' collection *Lux e Tenebris* and the works of Nostradamus. Then, at precisely the same time that published accounts of Cevenol prophecies were spreading throughout the Protestant diaspora, Massard abandoned his focus on previously published sources and began to collect, interpret and publish dreams experienced by French Protestant exiles. His works catalogue dozens seemingly spontaneous dream-prophecies mailed to him by men and (especially) women living in the Hague, Berlin, and Amsterdam. Massard's career illustrates the utility of reaching beyond national historiographies, restoring prophecy to the list of intellectual resources available to educated Europeans, and complicating accounts of "disenchantment" during this pivotal era.

URBÁNEK, VLADIMÍR (Prague)

‘Making of a Prophet: Mikuláš Drabík, Jan Amos Comenius and the Re-contextualization of Prophetic Texts’

Two volumes of prophetic revelations of Christopher Kotter, Christina Poniatowska, and Mikuláš Drabík published by the famous educational reformer and pansophic thinker Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670) under the titles *Lux in Tenebris* (1657) and *Lux e Tenebris* (1665) belong without any doubt among the most notorious of early modern collections of prophecies. Comenius invested a lot of his scholarly prestige to legitimize these apocalyptic visions and used them both as politico-religious propaganda and as an important element of his broader schemes of universal reform. Until recently surprisingly little attention has been devoted to such questions as how did the original manuscript records of the prophetic visions originate, who were their readers, and how did they circulate. This paper will focus on prophetic visions of the most controversial figure among the three prophets, former Comenius’s classmate, an exile from Moravia to the Upper Hungary, Mikuláš Drabík (1588-1671). Using an extant autograph of Drabík’s prophecies, I will first analyze their main themes and the way Drabík recorded them. Secondly, I will show how Comenius edited the texts and created a new literary context for them. Thirdly, I will attempt to reconstruct the circle of readers, supporters and patrons of Drabík and to specify their expectations as recipients of prophecies. Finally, I will draw attention to later use of Drabík’s prophecies by such authors as a Silesian Quirinus Kuhlmann and an Englishman Ezerel Tonge. My principal aim is to show how a local prophet from a small town in Upper Hungary became an internationally well-known figure and how his prophetic and visionary texts were re-worked, re-contextualized and re-used.

VAN DER HAVEN, ALEXANDER (Haifa)

‘Prophecy, Conversion and ‘Religion’ in the Letters of Benedictus Sebastian Sperling’

The two letters that Benedictus Sebastian Sperling wrote from Amsterdam to his mother in 1682, which can be found in the archives of the *Geistesministerium* of Sperling’s native Hamburg, reveal a subculture in which the intersection of religious conversion and prophecies of the end of time offer an early instance of the modern notion of ‘religion’ as a general category rather than a taxonomy demarcating solely particular religious traditions. In the letters to his mother, Sperling revealed to her that he had converted from the Lutheran faith to Judaism and argued that his conversion should not negatively affect their warm filial relations because both Judaism and Lutheranism had a specific, positive, role to play in the unfolding scenario of the end of time. In this scenario, Sperling claimed, Lutheranism and Calvinism served as the heralds of the end of days as well as the two forces that would facilitate the main condition for the messianic era to begin, the return of the Jews to their ancestral homeland. My lecture will explore how Sperling understood the relationship between his conversion and his eschatological expectations, and how these were fundamental to the genesis of a general notion of ‘religion’ as a cross-denominational phenomenon. I will also place Sperling’s views in the context of Jean Bodin’s influential notion of a universal religion as well as more contemporary eschatological views popular in Hamburg and Amsterdam, such as that of the Danish self-proclaimed messiah Oliger Paulli.

VAN DER LINDEN, DAVID (Leiden)

‘To Believe, or not to Believe: Debating Prophecies and Miracles in the Dutch Refuge’

For a long time, historians maintained that the Enlightenment eroded belief in prophecies, yet recent scholarship has shown that millenarianism continued to attract followers well into the eighteenth century. Although broadly speaking this emphasis on religious continuity is valid, a closer look at the impact of prophecies suggests that by the end of the seventeenth century something was nonetheless changing: popular support for prophecies could rapidly evaporate once the political situation changed, while ministers began to debate the validity of prophecies if they lacked solid evidence. This paper will examine these developments through the lens of Huguenot prophecies in the Dutch Republic between 1685 and 1700.

As I shall argue, prophecies and miracles initially gained widespread support from Huguenot audiences, because refugee ministers used them to promise the restoration of their churches in France. According to Pierre Jurieu, miraculous stories about Catholic churches crashing down and angelic psalm-singing proved that God had not abandoned Protestants in France. He also used the Book of Revelation as a guidebook to the political future, arguing that William III would defeat France, impose Protestantism, and allow the refugees to return home. Contemporary accounts reveal that such messages fell on fertile ground, yet when in 1697 the Peace of Rijswijk failed to deliver any concessions to French Protestants, refugees quickly lost faith in such prophecies and even returned to France. Huguenot ministers themselves also debated the validity of millenarian claims. Although none of them went as far as Pierre Bayle, who openly ridiculed belief in prophecies, ministers did stress the need for solid evidence if they were to accept prophecies and miracles as true. Jurieu, for instance, went to great lengths to stress the veracity of the miracles he reported, while Elie Benoist refused to incorporate them in his *Histoire de l’Edit de Nantes* because he could not verify if they had actually happened. Benoist also felt that prophecies often did not more harm than good: ministers had used them to promise the restoration of Protestantism in France, but once these claims proved unfounded their flock lost faith in their leaders as well as in the necessity of exile.

VANDEN BROECKE, STEVEN (Ghent)

‘The status and nature of “astrology” in the European Enlightenment. A few observations from the tradition of astrological criticism’

The claim that astrology ceased to be a credible scientific pursuit in the European Enlightenment is rife with methodological problems for the historian. It assumes that there is a supra-historical social realm of ‘science’ where astrological beliefs and practices are encountered, or not. It uncritically borrows and continues claims about astrology’s gradual disappearance from European elite culture which were first voiced in the late 17th century. It is remarkably unspecific about what is meant by ‘astrology’. It fails to account for important local differences in astrology’s presence in 18th-century print culture. It fails to take into account the relation between socio-cultural power and print culture in early modern Europe.

By revisiting a number of astrological critiques from the late 17th and 18th centuries (mostly written by French authors), I will try to point up a number of underacknowledged aspects of the way in which astrology and its challenges were interpreted in the European Enlightenment. As we shall see, approaching astrological criticism as the expression of an intellectual position ‘against’ astrology, strongly impoverishes our understanding of astrology’s fate in the Enlightenment. Instead of focusing on the social geographies of astrological belief and practice, we may learn more by

focusing on (1) the specific way in which astrology was criticised, as well as (2) the specific presuppositions and concerns which were voiced in the act of criticizing astrology.

VENTURA, RICARDO (Lisbon)

‘Rewriting and drawing prophecy in the end of the XVIIth century: Félix da Costa’s *Liber Vnicus*’

One very manifest feature of the prophetic literature is its usual ability to recreate and adapt narratives, topics and figures of tradition to the historical circumstances of its time, often disputing the meanings of old prophecies with political opponents.

Throughout the seventeenth century, many Portuguese writers – for instance, João de Castro, Sebastião de Paiva, António Bocarro and António Vieira – have composed influent books of prophecy in which this dispute is raised to levels of speculation, creativity and heresy that are not much expectable in the context of Iberian Catholic and post-Tridentine culture.

Félix da Costa, painter, evidently benefited from the heritage of his predecessors while writing and drawing *Liber Vnicus* (Library of the Congress, Washington, 148 P-7) in the end of the century. Presenting a commentary to *Ezra IV*, that intends to make evidence that the long gone King Sebastian would be returning very soon, to destroy the Ottoman Empire and restore Catholic unity, Costa eruditely calls elements from anti-Turkish literature and prophetic tradition, combining them with the national prophetic tradition of Sebastianism, which was already by itself composed from a very rich and heterogeneous corpus of Iberian and non-Iberian texts, thus creating an admirable “museum of prophecies”.

Considering that Costa wrote his treatise not only after the Battle of Vienna (1683), in which the Portuguese troops didn’t participate, but also around 110 years after the disappearance of King Sebastian in the battle of Ksar el Kebir (1578), this “museum of prophecies” was written and drawn not as an objective military and political proposal to the King, but in the social and cultural context of minority groups that favored prophetic interpretation as an erudite avocation, or, more usually, as a devotional and spiritual practice.

VINCE, MÁTÉ (Warwick)

“‘Either be vanity or infallibleness’”: Prophecy and Uncertainty in Sir Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia*’

Sidney’s *Arcadia* is a many-layered political allegory that explores through an almost boundless variety of instructive stories the questions of governance, the good, the bad and the absentee ruler, the duty of the subject, obedience and disobedience. But *Arcadia* also examines the questions of identity, faith, and the limits and weaknesses of human understanding, and the ways in which these can be exploited. Prophecy promises an opportunity to gain more than human knowledge, but because comprehending it falls beyond the limits of human understanding, attempts at doing so are likely to fail eventually.

A prophecy sets the whole series of events into motion and prophecies keep it going, while providing the reader with a reassurance of the providential framework of the plot. It is often argued that in *Arcadia* Sidney aims to dissuade his readers from asking for and relying on prophecies, in accordance with contemporary protestant disbelief in them. As I will attempt to show, Sidney’s approach to prophecies is, in fact, more ambivalent. Prophecies, although deceptively ambiguous, ultimately turn out to be true, and the keen attentiveness to the process of mistaken interpretation, contrasted with the fulfilment of the oracles, draws attention to the role preconceptions in understanding, and the ethical obligations of the interpreter.

In this paper, I will attempt to place Sidney’s *Arcadia* in the context of protestant rationalising disbelief in prophecies, and the contemporary theological-political discussions of the intentional usage of ambiguous language. I hope to be able to demonstrate that prophecy, beyond itself, becomes a means through which questions of governance, human understanding, and the ethics of communication are discussed.

VON TIPPELSKIRSCH, XENIA (Berlin)

“‘The shepherd’s bag’”. Separatists in the western part of the Holy Roman Empire and their prophecies’

Anna vom Buchel and Elias Eller founded in the 1720s-1730s a rapidly growing religious community in Ronsdorf (a spin-off of the reformed evangelical Elberfeld in the Duchy of Berg-Jülich). In the footsteps of Jane Leade and the Philadelphian society the couple claimed to reform religious life. While Elias Eller as Prussian resident of “all protestants” obtained that city rights were given to the new foundation, Anna acted as a prophetess. Her prophecies as mother Zion (Zionsmutter) were recorded in a manuscript, the so-called “shepherd’s bag”. This manuscript was polemically attacked by contemporaries, kept for a long time hidden, finally edited by local scholars. The proposed paper will deal with the particular character of her prophecies, with their sociocultural context as well as with the (gender)specific role that was attributed to the mother Zion.

WEEKS, ANDREW (Illinois State)

‘Quirinus Kuhlmann (1651-1689): Poetry and Prophecy’

The Silesian poet Quirinus Kuhlmann was remarkable in blending his poetic and prophetic roles. This paper will trace the origins and trajectory of his poetic prophecy by exploring influences, describing the historical context, examining his poetry, and considering more general implications for the understanding of prophecy.

WIRTS, KRISTINE (Edinburg, Texas)

‘The Story of Jacques Massard: An Alpine Physician makes sense of a Maiden’s Miracle’

In 1688 French authorities arrested and imprisoned a teenage shepherdess in the Tower of Crest. Isabeau Vincent had been prophesizing a kind of apocalyptic message that called on her listeners to reject the Roman Catholic mass. Despite her imprisonment, Vincent’s prophetic warnings did not go unheeded. Published and then circulated, they inspired the movement of the Minor Prophets and the later Rebellion of Camisards (1702 – 1715). Close analysis of the religious writings and accounts surrounding Vincent’s prophesizing sheds light on the intellectual splits that influenced certain political alignments within the Huguenot Movement. This paper examines how popular and elite belief influenced and framed public perceptions of Vincent’s charismatic experience. Young women prophesizing or succumbing to possession had been a common theme in early modern European history. From the days of Joan of Arc, young women of obscure background often figured as visionaries or vessels of possession. In modeling former female visionaries, Vincent was believable to rural audiences, many of whom still harbored a magical view of the world. Correspondingly, whereas some Huguenot elites were skeptical of Vincent’s supernaturalism, others were not. Among Vincent’s supporters was Jacques Massard, an expert on astrology and Grenoble doctor of medicine,

whose works on prophesy the Parlement of Rouen had condemned. This paper examines Massard's works on prophesy, in conjunction with popular belief, to speculate on how such views influenced public perceptions of Vincent and possibly inspired Alpine prophetic movements of the not-so-distant future.

ZUBER, MIKE (Amsterdam)

“‘God’s Extraordinary Messengers’”. Comets, New Prophets and Johann Jacob Zimmermann’s Millenarianism’

A Lutheran pastor by necessity and an astronomer at heart, Johann Jacob Zimmermann (1642–93) turned doomsday prophet due to the significance he attached to the comets of the early 1680s. In his more scientific publications, *Cometoscopia* (1681, 2 pts.) and *Neuer Comet-Stern* (1682), Zimmermann charted the trajectories of these comets across the starry skies and provided ‘astro-theological’ interpretations of their meaning. These reflected his increasingly radical Pietist convictions and subtly criticized the confessional churches throughout Europe. But in the pseudonymous *Muthmaßliche Zeit-Bestimmung* (1684), he cast away any remaining diplomatic restraint: amid outspoken condemnations of even the Lutheran church as part of the ‘spiritual Babylon’, Zimmermann announced that the next stage of God’s divine plan was soon to unfold and would consist in great unrest and calamity befalling Europe in or around 1693, preceding the imminent millennium. Significantly, Zimmermann moved from the arena of natural philosophy to the higher ground of theology and claimed to have arrived at his conclusion through the double testimony of God’s two books as well as the pronouncements of recent prophets. Tellingly, he understood both comets and the new prophets—including particularly Jacob Boehme—as ‘God’s extraordinary messengers’: the former because of their preternatural status, the latter in contrast to ordained ministers. In this paper close attention will be paid to the ways in which Zimmermann drew on nature, scripture and recent prophecies together in order to back his radical conclusions and dire forecasts. In doing so, the interaction of prophecy and (cometary) astrology are explored to show that seemingly unrelated forms of knowing the future could be harnessed towards a shared purpose and therefore ought to be considered jointly.