

## Playwright protégés at St John's College, Oxford

Sandis, Elizabeth

DOI:

[10.1080/0268117X.2019.1611473](https://doi.org/10.1080/0268117X.2019.1611473)

License:

None: All rights reserved

*Document Version*

Peer reviewed version

*Citation for published version (Harvard):*

Sandis, E 2019, 'Playwright protégés at St John's College, Oxford: dramatic approaches to networking under Buckeridge, Laud, and Juxon', *The Seventeenth Century*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0268117X.2019.1611473>

[Link to publication on Research at Birmingham portal](#)

### **Publisher Rights Statement:**

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in *The Seventeenth Century* on 29/05/2019, available online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/0268117X.2019.1611473>

### **General rights**

Unless a licence is specified above, all rights (including copyright and moral rights) in this document are retained by the authors and/or the copyright holders. The express permission of the copyright holder must be obtained for any use of this material other than for purposes permitted by law.

- Users may freely distribute the URL that is used to identify this publication.
- Users may download and/or print one copy of the publication from the University of Birmingham research portal for the purpose of private study or non-commercial research.
- User may use extracts from the document in line with the concept of 'fair dealing' under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (?)
- Users may not further distribute the material nor use it for the purposes of commercial gain.

Where a licence is displayed above, please note the terms and conditions of the licence govern your use of this document.

When citing, please reference the published version.

### **Take down policy**

While the University of Birmingham exercises care and attention in making items available there are rare occasions when an item has been uploaded in error or has been deemed to be commercially or otherwise sensitive.

If you believe that this is the case for this document, please contact [UBIRA@lists.bham.ac.uk](mailto:UBIRA@lists.bham.ac.uk) providing details and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate.

**Playwright protégés at St John's College, Oxford: Dramatic approaches to networking  
under Buckeridge, Laud, and Juxon<sup>1</sup>**

For centuries drama had been used at the universities as a vehicle for channelling high spirits during the vacations and on various festive occasions. Students penned comedies and tragedies in Latin (or, more occasionally, in English) to entertain and impress their peers and their tutors, and the performance of a play was traditionally a closed, college affair. Dining halls were converted into theatrical venues, transforming the daily communal space into the scene of another shared experience, to which only members and their guests were given access.

The collegiate structure of Oxford and Cambridge created individual communities each with their customs and traditions, and this article aims to show the importance of recognising 'college drama' as the bedrock of the larger entity 'university drama' that we might use as an umbrella term. Different institutions within the collegiate system have different histories of drama: while the members of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Christ Church, Oxford, chose to build and maintain a strong tradition of creative theatre in the early modern period, other university communities, such as Merton College, Oxford, did not flourish as centres for drama, focusing instead on their own in-house rituals and hiring of professional musicians on feast days, for example. The individual histories of drama at the Oxford and Cambridge colleges remain to be written, and the history of university drama as a whole is in its infancy, with two monographs making inroads into the topic and a limited range of single-author studies.<sup>2 3</sup>

This article begins the process of viewing the corpus of university plays from a new, college-based perspective, echoing the natural shape of these institutions. Every tutor and student belonged to a college and their experience of university was strongly conditioned by the culture found in their own college community. In this study I show how cultural traditions could be manipulated by members at both ends of the college hierarchy - young students who needed the patronage of senior members, and senior members who saw student protégés as useful tools for furthering their own interests and pet projects.

Every age has its share of political intrigues and individuals striving to make their mark, and in the early decades of the seventeenth century we have a strong example of how, in the hands of ambitious individuals, college drama took on a distinctly strategic edge. Though William Laud is considered one of the most influential figures of the seventeenth century and the church reform movement named after him changed the course of English history, fascinating aspects of Laud's rise to power and the way in which he and his allies grew their network have yet to be explored. This study of drama at St John's College offers new insights into the Laudians' maneuvers at the University of Oxford, showing how college drama contributed to the development of individual alliances and patron-client relationships, by allowing Laud and his allies to target students at a young age and co-opt them through the principle of *do ut des* ('I give so that you may give') - a reciprocal arrangement providing loyal, mutually-convenient support for years to come. Drawing upon the scholarly tradition of Laudian political history, I uncover the role which theatre played in the patronage system of Laud's Oxford college.

When we bring techniques from Classical studies to bear on early modern Latin plays, we are able to recover some of the subtle nuances achieved by seventeenth-century Oxford scholars, who were required to master the Classical canon to create their own compositions in the Latin tongue. Whilst historians, by contrast, are no strangers to Latin, the study of early modern English drama has traditionally focused on English-language plays, leaving out the history of academic Latin plays written by Englishmen at Oxford and Cambridge. In this article I present evidence drawn from four Latin plays written by St John's students between 1606 and 1628, dedicated to three generations of Laudians: Laud's tutor John Buckeridge, Laud himself, and Laud's key follower, William Juxon. Offering close textual analysis of these important but neglected sources, I highlight the personal interests which shaped plays and dedicating practices at St John's, the way in which religious and supplicatory language was used to cement

relationships and loyalties, and the lasting impact which patrons from the Laudian network had on the careers of the students who wrote for them.

My study of the relationship between patronage and drama at Oxford builds on previous studies of patronage at the early modern universities, and provides a fresh point of view. Thus far, scholarly tradition has focused heavily on the interventions of figures such as university chancellors, the monarch, or the members of his/her court, prioritising the perspective of the most powerful so that the university becomes ‘a useful reservoir of royal patronage with which to satisfy courtiers and their clients’.<sup>4</sup> Seldom do we glimpse the student’s perspective, but the corpus of St John’s College drama allows us to see students making their own interventions, using their creative talents to build relationships with the powerful, well-connected figures in their college community. We might say that the plays written at university function as something akin to the students’ own letters of recommendation.

Guy Fitch Lytle’s study of medieval Oxford offers a helpful model for understanding how patronage operated at an institutional level; as he puts it, Oxford colleges in the medieval period acted as ‘patronage brokers’.<sup>5</sup> The intensity of the college environment gave important opportunities for personal and professional relationships to take root, and Laud himself emphasised the special sense of trust he felt in a St John’s man. When recommending Griffin Higgs to Elizabeth Stuart, for example, in a letter dated 27 August 1631, he asserted: ‘I may with the more freedom and assurance give him this testimony, because for some years he was bred in the same College with me, where I could not but see his civility and studiousness.’<sup>6</sup> Laud’s own career trajectory, like that of his collaborators and student protégés, begins at university, and, more specifically, at college: ‘S. John’s in Oxford, where I was bred up’, as he puts it.<sup>7</sup> Student plays from the years during Laud’s rise to power give us unique insights into the way in which protégés and patrons engaged with one another and the important role which the college played as a power base from which these alliances grew.

Other studies have uncovered regional influences as a factor in the culture and composition of university colleges, affecting systems of student recruitment and election to scholarships: Victor Morgan's classic study, 'Cambridge University and "The Country" 1560-1640', demonstrates the importance of understanding the role of localism in systems of patronage, but places more emphasis on analysing where university men come than their onward journeys after university ('for the moment we have omitted consideration of the patronage system in the *careers* of the fellows and tutors.'<sup>8</sup>) Since then, two traditions of scholarship, ecclesiastical history and university history, have grown together to give us a more detailed picture of the routes to preferment in the Church and the role of the universities in career formation. Most recently, Christopher Burlinson has drawn attention to the phenomenon of poet-turned-chaplains at Oxford, adducing the examples of Richard Corbett and William Strode and the poetic circle to which they belonged at Christ Church. Analysing Strode's ecclesiastical progression, Burlinson concludes that Strode's career 'shows once again that chaplaincy and promotion coincided within the poetic circles of Christ Church'.<sup>9</sup> This is a useful joined-up approach which informs my study of university drama in the same period. The young, ambitious playwrights we find at St John's College under Buckeridge, Laud, and Juxon knew that becoming a playwright could lead to becoming something else, if they made a good enough show of dedicating their creative talents to the right people.

### **College as power base: cultivating and promoting a network of high achievers**

In 1636, Laud returned to his *alma mater* to host one of the most satisfying events of his career: the royal visit to Oxford. When, at the Restoration, Laud's faithful biographer Peter Heylyn looked back upon this spectacle, he recognised it as a high point for alumni of St John's College in particular, noting the conspicuous manner in which they had dominated proceedings. It was not just the fact that the royal party (which included King Charles, Queen Henrietta, and the future Charles II and James II) had spent a considerable proportion of their time at St John's,

where they were entertained in lavish style and shown round the new building projects funded by Laud, but also that St John's men were now conspicuously occupying some of the highest positions in the land, spread across church, state, and university government. As Heylyn put it, it was 'not without great honour *to the Colledge*, that the Lord Archbishop, the Lord Treasurer, the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, and one of the Proctors, should be at that time *of the same foundation*.'<sup>10</sup>

St John's was originally a Marian foundation, established in 1555 by Thomas White with the intention of strengthening the Church by training Roman Catholic priests to support the Counter-Reformation. On the accession of Elizabeth, White adjusted the foundation to the new regime with an amenable sense of practicality, and when Laud began campaigning to promote high church practices, which many argued were popishly orientated, in some ways this move represented a return to the traditional roots of his institution. By 1636, as Heylyn's list of high-ranking positions occupied by St John's men highlights, Laud's grip on power was more than an individual triumph, it was a collective one for his network of allies, whom he had cultivated from his power base in the College.

Heylyn begins his list with 'the Lord Archbishop', William Laud himself (who had become the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633), followed by the Lord High Treasurer of England, his protégé William Juxon, whom Laud had been busy manoeuvring through the ranks in a series of strategic promotions. In fact, so closely aligned were the two men's careers from the time of Juxon's arrival at St John's that Trevor-Roper ventures to simplify Juxon's trajectory as follows: 'William Juxon [...] came to the college in 1602 and, for the rest of Laud's life, may be regarded as his understudy.'<sup>11</sup> Whilst this may not do justice to Juxon in his own right, it is true that he filled Laud's shoes at key moments when Laud left an important office vacant; Juxon's succession to the presidency of St John's on Laud's departure in 1621 was matched by strategic promotions within the Church of England, such as Juxon's consecration as Bishop of London in 1633 when Laud left this post to become Archbishop of

Canterbury.

Laud himself was inclined to emphasise his own part in Juxon's progress, especially when bringing his protégé closer to the King. By the time he had finished his stint as Vice Chancellor of the University in 1628, Juxon had become Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the King, in addition to President of St John's. When he was additionally sworn in on 10 July 1632 as the royal confessor (or 'Clerk of the King's Closet'), a position of confidential intimacy wherein he occupied the clerk's privy closet between the presence chamber and the privy chamber, this placed him as physically close to the King as he could be. Taking the credit for this advancement, Laud claimed: 'at my suit [Juxon was] sworn clerk of his majesty's closet. That I might have one that I might trust near his Majesty if I grow weak or infirm.'<sup>12</sup> Juxon was a reliable choice for Laud, and now also for the King, who was sufficiently impressed with his first-hand experience of Juxon's qualities to entrust him with the job of Lord High Treasurer of England in March 1636. Thus, when the King arrived in Oxford shortly afterwards on 27 August 1636, he was greeted by Juxon in his new role.

Heylyn's survey of high-achieving St John's men in top positions by 1636 next lists the role of Chancellor of the University of Oxford, a post occupied at that time by William Laud. As Archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor of the University simultaneously, he had influence over multiple spheres and institutions, and he took advantage of opportunities to appoint favourites from the St John's community to positions of power within those spheres. The Vice-Chancellor, whom Heylyn mentions next, was nominated by Laud as Chancellor: he chose Richard Baylie, the current President of St John's, who had just celebrated ten years of marriage to Laud's niece, Elizabeth Robinson.

The final member of Heylyn's list of St John's men presiding at the royal visit is referred to as 'one of the Proctors'. John Edwardes, Proctor for the year 1635-6, had recently completed a stint as Headmaster of the Merchant Taylors' School in London, the feeder grammar with which St John's College had a long-standing arrangement: it sourced the

majority of its scholars from the school in an annual election. Congratulating himself on having personally engineered Edwardes' appointment to the headship, Laud emphasised, in a letter to Juxon in 1632, the long-term advantage of having maneuvered this trusted alumnus from his Oxford college into post: 'that whensoever he shall think fit to leave the school, they may be willing to choose another St. John's man in succession'.<sup>13</sup> He adds that this 'will be a great benefit to the College' and 'a good means of unity' between St John's and the Merchant Taylors' Company (the institution which ran the school). Edwardes' career thus provides another example of Laud helping allies into useful positions of leadership and his strategy for recruiting those allies from one power base in particular: his Oxford college. There is evidence that Edwardes wrote and dedicated a play to Laud during his years as an undergraduate at St John's, while Laud was at the helm as President.<sup>14</sup> The play, *Saturnalia*, is not extant, however, and I do not discuss it further here.

### **One dedicatee, many patrons: the practice of pledging and sacrificing one's plays and the group dynamics of the Arminian faction**

The mentoring and strategic positioning of protégés recruited from within the college community was a long-term strategy which did not begin with Laud, for he himself had been groomed as an undergraduate by his College tutor, John Buckeridge. Encouraged to follow Buckeridge's lead moving up the career ladder, Laud went on to play the role of 'understudy' to his patron in much the same way as Juxon did to Laud, and in 1611, when Buckeridge resigned as President of St John's College, it was Laud who succeeded him. As tutor and role model to his student, Buckeridge helped to shape Laud's ideas and ambitions, and he used his own power and contacts to advance him: as Laud's biographers emphasise, Buckeridge was instrumental in building the young trainee's career in the Church, bringing him to the attention of Bishop Neile and engineering a position for him as the Bishop's chaplain in 1608.<sup>15</sup> Twenty years later, when Laud's own power had increased and he had become one of the leading lights



of the state, he returned the favour and became the patron: it was Laud's influence with the King which secured Buckeridge's translation to the bishopric of Ely in 1628.<sup>16</sup> As Guy Fitch Lytle puts it, '[p]atronage, as a social principle, always involves a process of reciprocity', and this is particularly noticeable in the group dynamics of the Arminian faction.<sup>17</sup>

Buckeridge and Neile were both committed to promoting the doctrines of the Arminian wing of the Church of England. Indeed, the Arminian faction later became known as the 'Durham House group' after their custom of congregating at Neile's London home while he was Bishop of Durham (1617-1628).<sup>18</sup> However, despite the religious interests which united them, in aligning himself with Buckeridge and Neile, Laud was taking on as much a strategic political stance as a religious one. As Trevor-Roper puts it, Bishop Neile 'had sound practical instincts' and 'knew well which side his bread was buttered on', while Tyacke notes the importance of Neile's leadership in the construction of 'the system of Arminian patronage and protection'.<sup>19</sup> Laud had learned, both from Neile and from his own first-hand experiences (such as his clash with Henry Airay in October 1606, when William Paddy, another stalwart of the St John's community, had saved Laud from disgrace by soliciting support from the Chancellor on his behalf), how important it was to have and to keep powerful friends. Charles Carlton has argued that 'Arminianism should [...] be viewed, not as a coherent theology, but as a political faction of like-minded men determined to use it to shape their careers as much as their nation's religion',<sup>20</sup> and this pragmatic viewpoint enables us to see how forging personal connections with the leaders of the Arminian movement was a way of making the powerful friends that one needed to succeed.

For the young hopefuls at Laud's college, starting out on their careers and looking to create influential connections, the most powerful friend of all was the head of the college, the President. Buckeridge, Laud, and Juxon held this position in turn, and each received plays from students hoping to make a good impression. Some plays were performed before the president, as discussed below, and carefully-produced presentation copies were offered to

him, prefaced with a personal dedication. In several instances the author portrays his act of dedicating the play as the making of a pledge or sacrifice to his patron, a practice which demonstrates the advantages of the dramatic form, in that it gave students a way of addressing the president directly and expressing subordination and devotion to him. Before I begin discussing the evidence of plays dedicated to Laud (my central case study being Philip Parsons' *Atalanta*) and plays dedicated to Juxon in the 1620s (focusing on the work of the students Henry Bellamy and Joseph Crowther), I present an early example from Buckeridge's presidency which highlights how student playwrights who allied themselves with members of the Arminian faction in College experienced patron-protégé relationships, not just as a personal bond between two men, but a more significant, political connection to a group of patrons.

In his late teens or early twenties when he was a junior member of the College, Christopher Wren (later father to the famous architect) adapted the story of Achelous and Hercules from *Metamorphoses* IX into a play entitled *Physiponomachia*, 'the battle of wit and labour', in which he recast Ovid's tale of the wrestling match for Deianira's hand as an allegorical contest between the figures of Ponophilus ('Work-lover') and Anchinoeus ('Ingenious').<sup>21</sup> These two characters deliver the prologue and epilogue together, but they also infiltrate the play proper: donning disguises after the prologue, they re-emerge on stage as the two protagonists, Ponophilus playing Hercules and Anchinoeus playing Achelous. *Physiponomachia* opens with Ponophilus identifying himself as *labor* ('hard work') and his counterpart Anchinoeus as *ingenium* ('wit' or 'talent') and he announces that he and Anchinoeus have decided to stage a contest between them. Thus, when these two figures re-emerge to play Hercules and Achelous, the plot is transformed, no longer offering just the mythological tale of the heroes' competition for Deianira but now also a contest between the two main ingredients of poetic composition: industry and native talent. Wren's introduction of *ingenium* and *labor* into the Ovidian narrative keeps the poetic process in the foreground and

focuses audience attention on the figure of the author, signaling that he has attempted to bring both elements, talent and hard work, to the creation of the *Physiponomachia*. The play thus functions as a demonstration of his skills and achievement, and all that he has to offer is placed in the service of Buckeridge, the dedicatee. In addition to addressing Buckeridge directly in the dedication, Wren makes overtures to his patron during the course of the play, through the use of meta-theatrical symbols which convey his poetic talents and resources.

One such symbol is the horn of plenty, or *cornucopia*. The horn begins life as a physical prop on stage, as part of Achelous the river god's costume. Having ripped it from Achelous' head in the wrestling match, Hercules regards it as belonging to him as part of his victory. Achelous, the shape-shifting river god (who, in Wren's adaptation, is played by the allegorical character Anchinoeus, 'Ingenious') constructs a way to regain his dignity by arguing that if Hercules returns the horn to him, he will present the hero with 'a horn of plenty refurnished with everything' ('Omni reffectum copia cornu', 429). This phrase, with its pointed use of *reficio* (*re/facio*, 'remake', 'refashion'), captures the sense of Wren renewing and replenishing Ovid's story by stocking it afresh with his own poetic expressions and ideas. On the college stage, his dramatization of the Roman poem has become something new, to be appreciated in its own right, and the playwright places the term 'copia' into the mouth of Achelous (Anchinoeus) at this moment presumably to signal the hope that the audience recognises Wren's own poetic *copia*, or 'abundance of eloquence', a concept which Renaissance literary theorists inherited from Classical pedagogic treatises such as Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*. Quintilian had emphasised the importance of a student's acquiring verbal 'wealth' or 'capital', 'ei velut opes sint quaedam parandae, quibus uti ubicumque desideratum erit possit' (*Inst. Or.* X.i.5), clarifying his use of this metaphor by adding 'Eae constant copia rerum ac verborum' (X.i.6).<sup>22</sup> This latter phrase was made ubiquitous in the early modern period by Erasmus' quotation of it in the title of his publication *De duplici copia rerum ac verborum commentarii duo* (1512), a work which brought the study of Quintilian into classrooms across Europe. As

used by Erasmus, the term *copia* encompasses the meaning of several English words (variation, abundance, richness, and eloquence); in Wren's *Physiponomachia*, the emblematic *cornucopia* advertises his deep resources of mind and his fluency of expression in Latin. Thus, when Achelous returns to the stage for the final scene of the play carrying not just his original horn but a horn of plenty overflowing with fruit and flowers, we grasp the metapoetic significance of the physical prop in his hands. The verbal bounty offered by Wren is explored as the object is described: Achelous explains its power as a source of instant abundance, able to produce whatever you want as soon as you want it: 'quicquid optari potest / Subito virescit' (*Phys.* 529-30).

In the epilogue which follows this scene, the *cornucopia* is carried from the stage into the audience and conspicuously presented to an audience member. Wren portrays this symbolic act not just as offering a gift, but as offering a sacrifice to a father figure, the 'true father' ('Vere parenti', *Phys.* 593). The presentation is made by Philoponus, whom the audience saw playing the role of Hercules in the main narrative. Wren uses the metatheatrical device of using the same actor to play two roles to make the point that his dedication of the *cornucopia* (i.e. of the play itself) is an offering from a son to a father – and not just any father, but Jove (Jupiter) himself:

Cornu dicauit, victor Alcides, suo Meoque victor, hoc, ego cornu patri: Sumat  
tua manus hoc sacrificium Ioui.

(*Phys.* 598-600)

(Victorious Hercules dedicated the horn to his father, and I, in my victory,  
dedicate this horn to my father: let your hand accept this sacrifice to Jove.)

The use of the phrase 'hoc sacrificium' builds upon the choice of words in the final scene; there, while he was playing the part of Hercules, the same actor had emphasised the sacred and deferential nature of his action:

Accensas ego

Supplex ad aras hoc, sacrificii vice,  
 Dicabo cornu patris in honorem mei.

(*Phys.* 572-4)

(This horn will I dedicate in honour of my father, in the manner of a sacrifice,  
 kneeling in supplication at the smoking altars.)

Now in the epilogue, he performs what he had promised, self-consciously moving the action from the stage to the arena where the spectators are assembled. Singling out a member of the audience sitting watching the play, he asks him to accept the *cornucopia* being offered into his hand ('Sumat tua manus', 'let your hand receive it'). Sutton is surely right to suggest that this audience member is Buckeridge, the President of St John's, to whom the play is dedicated.<sup>23</sup> If so, then Wren is making a deferential gesture to Buckeridge as the 'Jupiter' of St John's, offering the play to him as a sacrifice to Jove (*sacrificium Iovi*) just as Hercules, son of Jupiter, does in the main narrative. Thus his metatheatrical doubling of Philoponus and Hercules is well-planned and developed and increases the engagement he is able to have with the most important member of his audience.

That it was a tradition at St John's to identify the president of the college as the 'Jupiter' of the establishment is reflected in the college's 1602 production of *A Twelfth Night Merriment* (anon.), in which the college porter addresses the president, commenting on their respective roles in the community: 'I am heere the jaylor, the Janus, the janitor; you are the judge, the justice, the Jupiter, to this miserable companye'.<sup>24</sup> In *Physiponomachia*, the connection to Jupiter serves as more than just a compliment; Wren has emphasised his dedicatee as a *pater* (father) in several senses of the word, evoking Buckeridge's pastoral role acting *in loco parentis* for the young men in his care, but also his spiritual role as head of a college founded to educate clergymen for careers in the Church.

As I show further below, later plays by St John's younger members exhibit the same emphasis on sacred language and gestures of supplication; in the prologue to *Iphis*, for

example, Henry Bellamy portrays Laud's successor, Juxon, as 'ornatissime musarum mysta' (most reverend priest of the Muses). Philip Parsons, a contemporary of Wren at St John's, fashioned his play *Atalanta* as a gift to Laud, offering him a handsome written copy specially made for the occasion. The prologue emphasises the play as a physical, tangible object, and the act of presentation as a symbolic, highly visual moment where the student is seen placing himself in a relationship with the dedicatee by entrusting his work to him: '*En manibus Musam, pignora nostra, tuis*' ('Behold, the Muse, my pledge of faith, *in your hands*', Prologue, line 15, my emphasis).<sup>25</sup> Here the muse of the play is the play itself, and its fate lies, both literally and figuratively, in Laud's hands. Like Wren, Parsons went to considerable trouble in preparing a special copy of the script for presentation, commissioning a professional scribe to undertake the work. In addition, Parsons paid for fore-edge decoration. He may well have had the manuscript fastened with ribbons, like the other plays in this series from St John's, but it will not be possible to confirm this as the text was rebound in the nineteenth century when it became part of the Harleian collection: British Museum MS Harleian 6924. Wren's *Physiponomachia*, which survives in a single copy, Bodleian Library MS 30, is bound in vellum, quarto-size, with holes for fastenings but the original ties have been lost. Likewise, Crowther's and Bellamy's plays survive in formal presentation copies, quarto-size, bound in vellum, and these are both decorated with large, colourful silk ribbons.<sup>26</sup> In all cases, a conspicuous level of care has gone into upgrading the scripts of the students' plays, creating attractive keepsakes with their own aesthetic value, and though these four manuscripts are now dispersed amongst different UK libraries (St John's College Library, the Bodleian Library, and the British Library), it is likely that they were once housed under the same college roof.

Buckeridge and Laud are given their presidential titles by Wren and Parsons, enabling us to narrow down the dates of composition for the *Physiponomachia* and *Atalanta*. Wren wrote and dedicated his play to Buckeridge sometime between 1606, when Buckeridge began in his role, and the end of his presidency in 1611; *Physiponomachia* is therefore certainly the product

of his early student years, when he was in his late teens or early twenties. He was admitted to St John's College as Merchant Taylors' Scholar in 1605, matriculated aged seventeen on 14 Oct 1608, and proceeded to BA on 26 June 1609, indicating that he had already been enrolled in undergraduate studies at his College for some time before the University authorities ratified his arrival (a usual practice reflecting the fact that College authorities had a greater role in the life of the student than the University).<sup>27</sup> I therefore suggest keeping the parameters for the play wider than the 1609-11 timeframe which H-J. Weckermann adopts in the introduction to his facsimile of the *Physiponomachia* manuscript, given that he is assuming Wren could not have begun a play before going through the official University ceremony.<sup>28</sup> Parsons was admitted to St John's College as Merchant Taylors' Scholar in the summer of 1610, matriculating on 26 June, aged sixteen.<sup>29</sup> He dedicated his *Atalanta* to Laud sometime during the latter's presidential decade (1611 to 1621), and the few scholars who have made reference to the play have dated it to before his graduation on 6 June 1614.<sup>30</sup> Like Wren's *Physiponomachia*, it is a short play, less than half the length of a typical academic play, and was most likely penned while Parsons was an undergraduate, but it may also have been completed while he was working towards his MA, awarded on 9 May 1618.

These two student playwrights, Wren and Parsons, went on to have successful careers in the Church and medicine respectively, combining their chosen professions with further academic advancement. Parsons' rise through the ranks of university administration at Oxford is discussed further below, whilst Wren also enjoyed forays into Cambridge, proceeding to DD in 1630 from Peterhouse, the College run by his brother Matthew. Matthew Wren is another important figure in the Laudian network, together with John Cosin who succeeded him as Master of Peterhouse. The brothers Wren formed an important link between Bishop Lancelot Andrewes of Winchester (whom they had both served as domestic chaplain) and Laud.<sup>31</sup> The timing of Wren's overtures to Buckeridge in his *Physiponomachia*, undertaken sometime between 1606 and 1611, shows us a young university man at a strategically important stage

early on in his life and career, when he has the least agency and influence and the greatest need for career guidance and patronage.

Moreover, these are the years when Buckeridge was steering his favourite, Laud, into the path of Bishop Neile to advance him in the Church, thus demonstrating in a very practical sense the value of such an alignment in terms of one's career. The personal and political closeness of Buckeridge and Laud offered the chance for Wren to cultivate the patronage of both using his existing connection to Buckeridge. Wren was soon an avid supporter of Laud, winning his favour in return. In 1611, Wren voted for Laud to become the next President of St John's College after Buckeridge moved on to a bishopric, and it was Laud who engineered Wren's preferment to the lucrative court position of Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the King.

It has been argued that the attainment of the post of Chaplain-in-Ordinary was *the* key promotion at the juncture of Church and court, signaling not only current success but also greater promise in the future: Kenneth Fincham highlights the strategic importance of gaining a royal chaplaincy as the route to higher preferment in the Church, noting that '[a]most all of the Caroline episcopate was recruited from the more select band of chaplains in ordinary'.<sup>32</sup> I would add to this picture the significant role which student productions such as *Physiponomachia* were playing at this time; analyzing such works as these offers insights into the early activities pursued by ambitious students like Wren, whose undergraduate days proved crucial for gathering allies for the future. College was a major hunting ground for patrons and protégés alike, and, as we have seen, the protégé of one patron might become a useful tool for another.

### **The case of Philip Parsons' *Atalanta***

As an adaptation of material taken from Book X of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (the story of Hippomenes winning Atalanta's hand in marriage in a running contest), Parsons' *Atalanta* may



not seem especially significant at first glance. However, close textual analysis reveals suggestive references to altar prostrations, the burning of incense, and the positioning of the communion-table, which are easily overlooked since they are veiled in classicising constructions taken from the Ovidian model. Given the active recruitment of members of the Durham House group from St John's College at this time and the group's particular interest in the promotion of high church practices, these references in a St John's play deserve closer attention. For, as discussed above, Parsons dedicated his *Atalanta* to Laud during the latter's rise to power, and the play is announced as a pledge of its author's faith and loyalty ('pignora nostra', Prologue, line 15). Personal, political interests are at work here; Parsons' play illustrates how a young student could be encouraged to get involved in the Laudian cause at an early stage in his career, using the dramatic form to show alignment with the values and leaders of that cause.

Since this opens the way for a larger study, only a few selected examples can be offered for consideration here. Parsons' presentation of the hero of the story, Hippomenes, as *cultor fidelis* (the faithful worshipper) in V.i provides a rich starting point. The scene opens with Hippomenes approaching the altar of Venus and expressing pleasure at the use of incense: 'En thura sacris nostra iam fumant focus', ('Behold, our incense smokes on the sacred hearth', 579). Parsons now includes a stage direction instructing the actor playing Hippomenes to kneel before the altar, 'Genua flectit'. The importance of this gesture is reinforced by making Hippomenes describe his action in words as he performs it: bending down he says 'advolvor tuas / Supplex ad aras', ('I prostrate myself as a suppliant at your altar', 587-8). At first glance, the fact that Hippomenes' prostrations are made before a pagan altar does not immediately invite us to discover a connection with Laud and his theological programme. However, Parsons is working with the apparatus he has inherited from his literary model, and once the classicizing frame is taken into account, we can see how his choice of a mythological tale and his adoption of Roman theology gives him freer rein to explore the possibilities of interpretation. Parsons'

staging of V.i, with its emphasis upon Hippomenes prostrating himself at the altar may be a deliberate nod to Laud and his supporters' belief in the importance of bodily gestures in worship.<sup>33</sup>

Parsons' play dates to the years of Laud's presidency (1611 to 1621, but most likely to a date earlier than May 1618<sup>34</sup>), a period during which Laud's religious preferences were not only known but also causing a stir. For Laud was quick to impose his own views wherever he was given the power to do so. When he became Dean of Gloucester in 1616, he straightaway came up against the Bishop of Gloucester, Miles Smith, who 'was outraged when the new dean signalised [sic] his arrival by having the communion-table removed from its place in the body of the church and fixed altarwise in the chancel, and by ordering those who entered the church to bow to it.'<sup>35</sup> Laud wrote to Bishop Neile (whose importance in the Durham House network of patrons is discussed above) for his support against Bishop Smith, and Neile used his influence with the King to secure Laud a role in the royal visit to Scotland the following month, so that Laud, acting as Neile's personal chaplain, was seen touring the country with powerful friends.<sup>36</sup> Bearing in mind Laud's controversial opinion on the positioning of the communion-table, we may be surprised at Parsons' choice of words in V.i: Hippomenes, whilst he is prostrating himself at the altar, exclaims 'Revulsa mensa sedibus crepuit suis; / Horresco quid portentat.' (lines 595-6, 'The altar, ripped away from its seat, made a groan; I shudder to think what it means.') Parsons' choice of *mensa* as the word for altar here (in place of *ara*, which he uses elsewhere) seems significant, since the most common meaning of *mensa* is 'table' not 'altar', allowing him to hint at one of the crucial battle grounds fought over by the factions in the Church of England.<sup>37</sup>

Hippomenes' delight in seeing and smelling incense burning is repeated a second time, when he makes a promise that the altar will never be without it. This is a speech which deserves more detailed analysis than can be offered here, but several elements in the following lines may be aimed at garnering Laud's attention:

te penes tota est sita  
 Coepti laboris palma. cultorem tuum  
 Serva fidelem (Diva); sic victor nova  
 Tibi templa condam; tibi feram cultus novos:  
 Et ara stabit thure perpetuo calens.

(Parsons, *Atalanta*, 588-92)

(In your power lies all of the victory for the labour I have undertaken. Goddess, preserve your faithful worshipper. And so, if I am victorious, I shall build a new temple in your honour; to you I shall bring new adornments. And the altar will stand, hot with perpetual incense.)

Attention to the material aesthetics of worship formed a major part of the Arminians' brand of church reform and was one of the ways in which it defined itself against Calvinist Protestantism. Laud was committed to implementing this programme of reforms from the earliest days of his priesthood.<sup>38</sup> Is Parsons' interest in dramatizing the use of incense significant? The context of the play makes it so, for it is written specifically for Laud's attention, by a member of his own college with a personal interest in currying Laud's favour.

The internal college politics attached to the piece differentiate it from, for example, references to incense occurring in commercial plays on the London stage. David Robertson's discussion of olfaction in Shakespeare's *King Lear* provides an illuminating example: the statement made by Lear to his daughter, 'Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia, / The gods themselves throw incense' (5.iii.22-3), is not, Robertson concludes, politically charged, arguing that 'Before Lancelot Andrewes and then William Laud attempted to reintroduce the use of incense in Anglican worship, writers could refer to incense neutrally, without being read as taking part in controversy over the liturgy, church government, or anything else.'<sup>39</sup> But this is not the case for Oxford college drama, and especially not for Parsons, writing as a member of St John's under the regime of Laud's presidency. On the one hand, Parsons' choice of phrase

signals his engagement with Ovid by evoking the programmatic concept from the prologue to the *Metamorphoses*, ‘perpetuum ... carmen’ (*Met.* I.4), ‘the continual poem’ which forever evolves to outlive and immortalise its maker. On the other, Parsons’ dramatization of the details of worship is conspicuously vivid, and his description of the altar ‘hot with perpetual incense’ (‘thure perpetuo calens’), spreading its everlasting perfume, is an attempt to excite our senses. It suggests an author with a keen interest in evoking the aesthetic experience of worship as practised in Laud’s preferred manner.<sup>40</sup> Parsons has the pagan cover in his play, which protects signs of his Laudianism from being too outspoken, and we would be missing an important aspect to the play if we did note these resonances.

With this in mind, the *do ut des* formula of Hippomenes’ speech (‘I give so that you may give’) can be read as a personal message to the dedicatee of his play: the *labor* Parsons has undertaken (line 589), i.e. the task of writing the play for Laud, expects a reward in return. Laud should offer him his protection and fostering care: ‘cultorem tuum / Serva fidelem’ (‘preserve your faithful worshipper’). Parsons’ use of the phrase ‘te penes’ (‘in your power’, 588) to express Laud’s influence over whether or not he succeeds or fails, is the same formula used by Bellamy when he dedicates his *Iphis* to President Juxon: ‘Eruere de tenebris penes / te est’ (11-12) (‘It is within your power to lift [me] out from the shadows’).<sup>41</sup> Through the figure of his protagonist and hero Hippomenes, who is about to compete in the decisive race to win Atalanta, Parsons presents himself as the young, eager competitor looking to achieve success in his future career. He offers himself to Laud as a faithful follower, ‘fidelem’, if Laud will protect his protégé and groom him for victory. He follows up these hints in the epilogue, where Hippomenes’ fate is announced and celebrated: ‘He successfully completed his course and attained his prayer with the help of a divine nod in his favour’ (‘Foeliciter peregit is cursum suum, / et ope secundi numinis votum attigit;’ Epilogue, 719-20). Like the prologue, the epilogue functions as a bridge between the stage and the audience, breaking through the theatrical construct, and Parsons’ use of the terms *cursus* and *numen* in this context allows the

authorial voice to be heard. As R.E. Latham has shown, the word *cursus* had been used to mean ‘a course of lectures’ in England since the fourteenth century.<sup>42</sup> The academic application of the term suggests a parallel between the success of Hippomenes completing his course (in the running contest for Atalanta’s hand) and Parsons’ own hopes for success in his university career. Thus, when he states that the hero reached his goal and had his prayers answered ‘with the aid of a favouring divinity’ (‘ope secundi numinis’), the playwright may be thinking not only of the Classical gods in the plot but also of the real-world figures of power and patronage whose favour could make a difference to him personally. President Laud, enjoying a godlike authority as the head of Parsons’ college, and as the dedicatee of Parsons’ play, cannot be absent from our thoughts in the epilogue. Laud’s interest in Parsons’ career was long-term, and his favour and connections were highly valuable. Having graduated BA and MA, Parsons then qualified as a Doctor of Medicine and became physician to Laud’s half-brother William Robinson, the Prebendary of Westminster. In addition, Parsons rose through the ranks in academic administration at the University of Oxford to enjoy prominent and lasting success: on the nomination of Laud he became Principal of Hart Hall (now subsumed into Hertford College) in 1633 and remained the head of the college until his death in 1653.

### **Dramatising deference to Laud’s successor: St John’s students submit themselves and their work to Juxon’s test**

Juxon took over the college presidency from Laud in 1621 and by the time he had left post in 1633 he had, with Laud’s help, accrued various roles of strategic importance within Church and university administration.<sup>43</sup> This section considers two plays which were written for and dedicated to Juxon by students in his care: Joseph Crowther’s *Cephalus et Procris* and Henry Bellamy’s *Iphis*.<sup>44</sup> Like Wren’s play for Buckeridge and Parsons’ play for Laud, these two works for Juxon adapt short episodes from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and are memorialised in

handsome presentation copies: St John's College Library MS 217 (Crowther's *Cephalus et Procris*) and Bodleian Library MS Lat. Misc. e.17 (Bellamy's *Iphis*). Not only have the students paid for professional scribes, they have added eye-catching features which transform the playscripts into attractive gifts to handle and display. Crowther has added gold-embossed decoration to the binding, and both he and Bellamy have decorated their manuscripts with large, colourful ribbons: dark blue silk for *Cephalus et Procris*, bright green silk for *Iphis*.

Crowther's dedicatory address portrays Juxon's commission as not so much an honour as a burden imposed on him: 'impositum mihi esse non tam honorem quam supplicium' (dedication, lines 13-14).<sup>45</sup> *supplicium* has the double meaning of something oppressive akin to a punishment and a prostration or entreaty made before a greater power, showing on the one hand, playfully, that he resents being given the task, and on the other, that he intends to play the part of the humble suppliant in deference to Juxon's authority. Addressing his dedicatee as his most reverend patron, 'Colendissimi Patroni' (dedication, 8), he accuses Juxon of having given him a platform too soon, 'Praematuram hanc occasionem' ('this premature moment', dedication, line 6). Nor is this a show of mock modesty, for Crowther could only have been seventeen or eighteen at the time. He had matriculated from St John's College on 20 Oct 1626, aged sixteen, and his dedication of the play to Juxon as 'the right worthy Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford' ('Almæque Academiæ Oxoniensis / Procancellario dignissimo') enables us to date the piece to within Juxon's term of office, 22 July 1626 to 24 July 1628. Crowther received his BA degree on 30 April 1629, nine months after Juxon ended his term as Vice Chancellor, and it is therefore certain that *Cephalus et Procris* is a piece of undergraduate work by a teenager. Crowther himself emphasises that he is in the very early stages of his academic career ('meam / Academicam infantiam', dedication, 11-12), using this fact both to excuse any inadequacies and celebrate his rather precocious achievement.

Crowther may complain about the difficulty of the challenge imposed upon him, 'impositum mihi', but he also knows that Juxon has given him a significant opportunity by

singling him out for such a commission. Being tested is in some way a compliment, then, a principle which Crowther has his protagonist, Cephalus, make a great show of announcing in I.iv, when he performs a virtuoso soliloquy based around assiduous repetition of the verb *probare* (to test):

Eccho *Probasse pœnitent nullos*<sup>46</sup> sonat. Sed quid probarem scilicet? notam  
fidem?

[...]

Ratum est. probabo. ut aurum uti verum levi Probatione niteat, igneque prodeat

Fulgens metallum nobile, et si non minus

Dubitanda, saltem notior sit castitas.

Stat rem probare; falsa suspicio, tua

Obstruere constat ora dum de te geret

Examinata grandius spolium Fides.

(*Cephalus et Procris*, lines 184-5 & 193-99)

(Echo repeats [the goddess Aurora] that “None regret to have put it to the test”.

But *what* indeed am I to test? Her well-known loyalty? [...] I have decided, I will test [her]. Just as gold shines even at a surface test, and shows itself a noble metal when it gleams in the fire, so even if her chastity is not to be doubted any the less [by being tested] it will at least be the more well-known. I have decided to test [her]. Spurious Doubt, it is agreed that your mouth will be shut, so long as Loyalty, having been put to the test, carries the higher prize off of you.)

Cephalus’ decision to make trial of his wife’s fidelity is a central part of the story, in Crowther’s play as in Ovid’s poem, so we would expect something to be made of this moment. However, with the repetition of *probare* strongly dominating this soliloquy addressed to the audience, our attention is drawn just as much to his rhetorical style as the development in plot. The pointed insertion of Echo at the beginning of the speech also directs us to a meta-poetic

interpretation, since we are reminded that Cephalus' words are an echo (a direct quotation, in fact) of Crowther's previous scene,<sup>47</sup> which, in turn, is an echo of Crowther's main poetic model, the *Metamorphoses*. Ovid's 'resonabilis Echo' ('reverberating Echo', *Metamorphoses* III.358) functions as more than just a character; she is a by-word for the poetics of allusion.<sup>48</sup> Yet Crowther stamps his own mark on the tradition, for the equivalent speech in Ovid's poem (*Metamorphoses* VII.714-722, where Cephalus tells his listener, Phocus, son of Aeacus, how he decided to test his wife) contains nothing of the enthusiastic repetition of *probare* that is such a marked feature of Crowther's work.

Crowther's engagement with Ovid stops short of killing off Procris; in Crowther's play, Cephalus does not accidentally slay his wife, and the play ends happily with everyone reconciled and alive. Yet the memory of the impending tragedy lives on, as Crowther uses word-play to simultaneously evoke and dismiss Ovid's version. When the goddess Diana presents Procris with two gifts in V.ii, a hunting hound and a javelin, we are on familiar Ovidian ground, expecting that one of these will be the fateful weapon with which Procris is accidentally killed by her husband. However, Crowther uses the dramatization of Diana's presentation of the spear to Procris to surprise us: it is not the fate of Crowther's Procris to die, but to be tested and survive intact. The author, hoping his play will fare likewise, engages metatheatrically with the audience by using the by now familiar verb *probare* in a speech of the goddess Diana: 'hodiernus iocus / Quanta ista, Procri, munera probabit tibi.' (1127-8, 'Today's sport will prove to you, Procris, how great these gifts are.')

To the trained ear, this evocation of Ovid's version comes as a doom-laden announcement of Procris' impending death, but Crowther transforms the story, giving it a happy ending. The phrase 'hodiernus iocus' ('today's sport') thus takes on a new meaning with reference to the here and now of Crowther's presentation, which he hopes has been an entertaining success. If he has not proved himself in this trial set by Juxon, at the very least he has averted a tragedy.

The play is thus conceived of as the arena in which young students were invited to



prove themselves and to offer up their work to Juxon as the means to win his favour. Crowther, afraid of underperforming under such scrutiny, uses a colourful metaphor to express the difficulties of the challenge he has been set: he protests that he is playing the part of the cook who has barely put the ingredients in his store cupboard before he is asked to bring out the meal, ‘qui vix ad recondendum paratus est, nedum ad promendum’. Having already noted the shortness of time given him to complete the exercise (‘temporis angustiam’, line 12), Crowther gives his complaint a comic flavour, claiming he has had barely more time to cook the food than to get it set on the table (‘brevius fere apparandi tempus quam apponendi’, lines 20-1). Here the distinction drawn between the act of composing a dish from its ingredients, ‘apparandi’, and the act of setting it out for the diners to feed upon, ‘apponendi’, may suggest that both composition and performance of a piece were required by Juxon.

Henry Bellamy’s dedication of the written presentation copy of *Iphis* (Bodleian Library MS Lat. Misc. e.17) to Juxon points to the same conclusion, for the author makes the point of inviting his patron to look upon (*inspicere*), a play which he has already listened to (*audire*):

Accipias benigno fronte,  
et quem non dedignatus fuisti audire, inspicere quæso ali-  
quantulum digneris.

(*Iphis* dedication, lines 7-9)

(May you receive him with a countenance well-disposed, and may you, I pray,  
for a little while deign to look upon one you have already thought it worthy to  
hear.)<sup>49</sup>

We may infer from this there has already been an aural performance of the piece and that the President has now been handed his own copy of the script to look over and keep. As discussed above, Bodleian Library MS Lat. Misc. e.17, is conspicuously ornate, and points to a student eager to impress, going above and beyond to make sure Juxon remembers him and his work.

The use of 'quem' ('whom') here rather than 'quod' ('what') is significant, for it keeps the boundary between the play *Iphis* and the protagonist Iphis neatly blurred: 'Iphis' is only brave enough to offer himself up to Juxon now that 'Iphis' has become a man:

Fæmineum metum cum sexu suo noster Iphis deposuit,  
 et hoc novae sibi assumpsit audaciæ, quod tibi (ornatissime  
 musarum mysta) se audeat offerre.

(*Iphis* dedication, lines 4-6)

('My Iphis has set aside his womanly fear along with his sex, and has adopted enough new boldness that he dares to offer himself to you, most reverend priest of the Muses'.)

This evidently looks ahead to the ending of the play where the male actor playing the character Iphis removes his wig and other accoutrements to reveal his true identity. Bellamy's choice of language is suggestive, presenting both the author and his play as the interchangeable subjects of Juxon's examination, and giving a religious, sacred edge to Juxon's authority over him and his work.

Bellamy ends the dedication by focusing on the importance of having Juxon's favour and the difference which it could make. He uses traditional imagery of light and shadow to emphasise his point: 'Eruere de tenebris penes / te est, dum ideò facis foeliciorem, quòd tibi placet.' (11-12), 'It is within your power to lift out from the shadows – when you are pleased, you make the future brighter'. The absence of a direct object in the first clause presents a possible double meaning: Juxon might raise either Bellamy or his play into the light, or rather both (one via the other), whilst the use of 'foeliciorem' in the second clause, the masculine of the comparative, pins down the author as the one who profits, raised up and made the more successful by Juxon's favour. The metaphor of bringing someone out from the shadows expresses simply and effectively how the young student feels he has been singled out and brought into the spotlight by Juxon's attentions.

Like many others, Bellamy was following the typical path of a university man set for a church living, moving through the degrees of BA, MA, and BD, to become one of the well-educated clergyman that Thomas White, the Founder of St John's, had intended his college to produce. While not amongst the most conspicuous of the high-flyers, Bellamy went on to enjoy a very comfortable, secure situation after graduation and continued to move in the same circles he had cultivated while at university. With the support of Juxon, he was ordained deacon by 23 May 1630 and priest by 18 September of the same year.<sup>50</sup> He stayed on as Fellow of St John's College and was awarded the living of vicar of the parish of St Giles' (adjacent to the college), a position which he held from 1635 until his death in 1641. Gaining degrees was not sufficient for appointment to a church living; gathering supportive patrons who could engineer the appointment of one candidate over another, was essential. One's time at university was therefore as much about cultivating a network of patrons willing to support one's progress as it was about obtaining degree qualifications, and we should interpret student plays such as those of Bellamy and Crowther within this context of patronage and preferment.

Like Bellamy, Crowther benefited hugely from networking with the Laudians at St John's College, accruing patrons alongside his BA, MA, and BD degrees. He also became a clergyman, ordained deacon by 2 March 1634 and priest by 18 December 1636,<sup>51</sup> but, unlike Bellamy, he lived through the Civil War, and witnessed the fall and re-emergence of the regime with which he had aligned himself from his earliest days at university. The Restoration thus brought with it a flurry of rewards for his long-term loyalty to the Laudian and royalist cause: not only was his fellowship of St John's restored to him by the decree of the Royal Visitors on 7 August 1660, but in the same month he was made Vice President and awarded the prestigious degree of Doctor of Divinity. Moreover, Laud had promised him that he would one day be granted another of the University's highest honours, the Regius Professorship of Greek, and he had arranged the matter with King Charles, under whose jurisdiction the Regius Professorship fell, as the title suggests. Having been granted reversion of this office in 1638,<sup>52</sup> Crowther was

finally able to take it up at the Restoration, along with another leading role in the University: the headship of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford (now Oriel College). Here he repeats the successful journey made by another of the playwright protégés at St John's College, Philip Parsons, whose cultivation of favour and patronage during his student days brought him Laud's nomination to the headship of Hart Hall (now Hertford College). On reaching these positions, both Parsons and Crowther remained head of these Oxford halls for the rest of their lives.

Patronage, as we have seen, was a long-term game, which students began playing early on in their university careers, regarding it as a personal investment in their future. My study has highlighted the extent to which the worlds of patronage and drama were intertwined, with young protégés being tested and groomed for preferment using the dramatic form. The canon of college drama, though currently neglected, provides a rich body of evidence for university culture and traditions. Taking a college-based approach with case studies such as this one builds an important foundation for understanding university drama as a whole.

The world of college drama cemented relationships between younger members and their seniors, bringing the shared interests of all parties into sharper focus. As I have shown, the dedications of these student plays, in which the patron is the sacred judge whose godlike nod can confer success or failure on his young suppliant, were more than dramatic conceits or exaggerated shows of respect. They were reflections of the strategic power wielded by patrons such as Buckeridge, Laud, and Juxon, who were able, if they chose, to launch the careers of their chosen candidates and continue to prefer them throughout their lifetimes. In making the connection between college drama and Laudian centres of power, this study has increased our understanding of the political and strategic value of academic drama at the universities in the early modern period.

---

<sup>1</sup> I am very grateful to Tiffany Stern and Nick Hardy for reading and commenting upon earlier versions of this article; and to William Poole and Jonathan Bate for many fruitful discussions on and around this topic. Warm thanks also to Prof Dana Sutton for his generous sharing of thoughts and ideas and his encouragement to press on with all things neo-Latin.

<sup>2</sup> F.S. Boas' remarkable *University Drama in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914) is over one hundred years old but still regularly cited and hugely relevant. Christopher Marlow's *Performing Masculinity in English University Drama, 1598-1636* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013) restricts itself to analysis of a small group of English-language texts, neatly sidestepping the much larger, and culturally dominant, corpus of Latin plays at Oxford and Cambridge. It is, nevertheless, a welcome contribution to a sparsely-populated field. Jessica Winston's landmark work on the Inns of Court (often considered 'the third university' in early modern England), *Lawyers at play: literature, law, and politics at the early modern Inns of Court, 1558-1581*, recently published by Oxford University Press in 2016, demonstrates that institutional drama is an exciting growth area with much untapped potential. I am currently working on a companion volume to F.S. Boas' work on the Tudor age, as the history of university drama under the Stuarts still remains to be written.

<sup>3</sup> Single author studies have proved an awkward barrier to wider understanding, as the disproportionate interest in William Gager has shown: Howard Norland's *Neoclassical Tragedy in Elizabethan England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2009) analysed the universities' contribution to the tradition in two chapters: 'Neo-Latin tragedy at Cambridge' and 'Gager's neo-Latin tragedy at Oxford'. Gager's personal brand of Senecan tragedy at Christ Church, whilst engaging and significant, provides a more convenient than accurate representation of Oxford tragedy during this era. For a general overview in relation to Oxford, John R. Elliott's essay "Drama" in Volume IV of *The History of the University of Oxford* edited by Nicholas Tyacke, provides a useful starting point.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth Fincham, "Oxford and the Early Stuart Polity", 180.

<sup>5</sup> Guy Fitch Lytle, "Patronage Patterns and Oxford Colleges c.1300-c.1530", 121.

<sup>6</sup> Laud, *Works*, vol. 7, 41.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, vol. 3, 253.

<sup>8</sup> Victor Morgan, "Cambridge University and 'The Country' 1560-1640", 243, my italics.

<sup>9</sup> Christopher Burlinson, "Chaplaincy and Verse in Early Seventeenth-Century Oxford", 153.

<sup>10</sup> Heylyn, *History of William Laud*, 318 (my emphasis).

<sup>11</sup> Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645*, 39.

<sup>12</sup> Laud, *Works*, vol. 3, 316.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, vol. 7, 45-6.

<sup>14</sup> See Laud, *Works*, vol. 7, 45-6 and Hegarty, *Biographical Register of St. John's*, 48.

<sup>15</sup> Costin, *History of St John's College*, 27; Carlton, *Archbishop William Laud*, 14.

---

<sup>16</sup> Costin, *History of St John's College*, 27.

<sup>17</sup> Guy Fitch Lytle, 'Patronage Patterns and Oxford Colleges c.1300-c.1530', 119.

<sup>18</sup> See Foster, "Durham House group" and Tyacke, *English Arminianism c.1590-1640*, Chapter 3: Bishop Neile and the Durham House group.

<sup>19</sup> Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645*, 39; Tyacke, *English Arminianism c.1590-1640*, 106.

<sup>20</sup> Carlton, *Archbishop William Laud*, 13. Writing in the same year as Carlton, Tyacke provides a more nuanced, in-depth study of Arminianism and its political impact on Oxford, showing how religious and political division fed one another at key points of change such as the death of a college president (on 'the theological alignment of the two groups' who divided Corpus Christi in the wake of President Rainold's death, see 64-67 (65)) or the appointment of a new one (on the '[r]eligious differences' which may have affected the election of Laud to the presidency of St John's College, see 68-9). Tyacke demonstrates how difficult it is to pin the label 'Arminian' definitively on anyone during this period and makes a careful study of the evidence for Laud being thus identified (Appendix II, 266-270).

<sup>21</sup> All quotations from Wren's *Physiponomachia* follow the text of Bodleian Library MS 30 and the line numbers given are those assigned to the 1981 facsimile of the manuscript: Weckermann (ed.), *Christopher Wren / Physiponomachia*. Hereafter in quotations *Physiponomachia* is abbreviated to *Phys*. All translations are my own.

<sup>22</sup> 'some capital, as it were, should be made in readiness, on which he can draw whenever it is required'. 'This means a stock of ideas and of words.' Quotations from the Latin text are taken from this edition: Russell (ed.), Quintilian, *The orator's education*.

<sup>23</sup> Sutton (ed.), "Introduction", *Christopher Wren, Sr.*, *Physiponomachia*.

<sup>24</sup> Lee (ed.), *A Twelfth Night Merriment*, 33. Perhaps Wren was also influenced by Ovid's other version of the *cornucopia* story, which appears in the *Fasti* in the entry for the Kalends of May (V.111ff.). Here Ovid follows the tradition that the horn came from a goat and that her owner, the nymph Amalthea, transformed it into a *cornucopia* and presented it to Jove: 'sustulit hoc nympe cinxitque recentibus herbis, / et plenum pomis ad Iovis ora tulit' (*Fasti* V.123-4, 'The nymph picked it up, wrapped it in fresh herbs, and carried it, full of fruit, to the lips of Jove'). The Latin quotation is taken from this edition: Alton, Wormell, and Courtney (eds.), *Fastorum libri sex*.

<sup>25</sup> My quotations from Parsons' *Atalanta* follow the text and line numbering of this edition: Mahaney and Sherwin (eds.), *Two University Latin Plays*.

<sup>26</sup> We may compare the tradition of the Westminster School Latin play, which included the custom of presenting Queen Elizabeth with a manuscript copy of the Latin text on the occasions when she attended the event. Carleton argues that the motivation behind this was more to do with strategies of etiquette than practicality: 'Queen Elizabeth I [...] was an accomplished scholar, and the copy of the *Miles Gloriosus* with which she was presented in 1564 must have been intended rather as a compliment than as an actual aid in following the Latin.' (*Westminster School: A History*, 151).

---

<sup>27</sup> Hegarty, *Biographical Register of St. John's*, 171.

<sup>28</sup> Weckermann (ed.), *Christopher Wren / Physiponomachia*, 6.

<sup>29</sup> Hegarty, *Biographical Register of St. John's*, 113.

<sup>30</sup> Harbage definitively lists *Atalanta* as having been acted in 1612 in *Annals of English Drama*, whilst the editors of *REED: Oxford* posit 1611-13. Weckermann, in the introduction to his facsimile of the *Atalanta* manuscript, comments with reference to 1612, 'in the absence of any demonstrable evidence this date must remain a perhaps plausible but by no means incontrovertible assumption' (10-11).

<sup>31</sup> Hegarty, *Biographical Register of St. John's*, 172.

<sup>32</sup> Fincham, "Laud and Caroline Ecclesiastical Patronage", 71. Also see the excellent article by Nicholas W.S. Cranfield, which provides detailed analysis of patterns of ecclesiastical patronage together with useful appendices: 'Chaplains in Ordinary at the Early Stuart Court: The Purple Road', in Claire Cross (ed.), *Patronage and Recruitment in the Tudor and Early Stuart Church* (York: University of York, Borthwick Institute, 1996), 120-147.

<sup>33</sup> Peter Smart, an outspoken critic of Laudianism, mocked these bodily rites, addressing one of the leading supporters of the movement, John Cosin, and ridiculing his gestures: 'your frequent and profound duckings and prostrations before your most sumptuous Altar'. Quoted in Guibbory, "Conflict over Ceremony", 233.

<sup>34</sup> As discussed above, page 14.

<sup>35</sup> Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645*, 45.

<sup>36</sup> Neile was himself convinced of the importance of placing of the communion table altarwise: see Andrew Foster, 'Archbishop Richard Neile Revisited', in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560-1669* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), 163.

<sup>37</sup> See Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*.

<sup>38</sup> For Laud's promotion of the material aesthetics of worship and his campaign to refurbish English churches according to these values, see Parry, *Arts of Anglican Counter-Reformation*. Laud was ordained in 1601 by Bishop Young, the same bishop who tutored Lancelot Andrewes, another stalwart of the high church reformist set (see page 14).

<sup>39</sup> Robertson, "Olfaction in Shakespeare", 59.

<sup>40</sup> Laud's enthusiasm for incense formed part of his belief in 'the beauty of holiness', a phrase which he took from the Book of Psalms 96.9: 'O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.' (King James Version). Those whom Laud had helped into leadership positions within Oxford and Cambridge colleges made aesthetic changes in their own college chapels, furthering the cause by introducing their students to the sense-rich mode of worship. Carlton notes how Laud helped John Cosin in his election to become Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and how, as Master, Cosin then had every chapel stall decorated with a cross and made the conspicuous purchase of a very expensive silver incense holder for use in

---

his college (*Archbishop William Laud*, 139). For an overview of this policy, see Lake, “Beauty of Holiness”.

<sup>41</sup> Bellamy’s *Iphis* is discussed below, pages 24-25.

<sup>42</sup> Latham gives a start date of c.1340 in *Medieval Latin Word-list*, 127. Later, in the 1630s, another term developed from *curro* came into use for an academic course of studies: *curriculum* (the Oxford English Dictionary records its first use in 1633; Latham concurs, 126).

<sup>43</sup> See pages 5-6. For the strategic importance of the Chaplain-in-Ordinary role in particular, see page 15.

<sup>44</sup> Crowther’s play is untitled, but since 1916 it has generally been referred to as *Cephalus et Procris*, following Boas’ suggestion in his article “Recently Recovered Manuscripts”.

<sup>45</sup> All quotations from Crowther’s play follow the text of St John’s College Library MS 217, and the line numbers given are those assigned in the 1982 facsimile of the manuscript: Nugel (ed.), Crowther / *Cephalus et Procris*.

<sup>46</sup> This phrase constitutes a quote from the previous scene, where it is spoken by Aurora to Cephalus (see note 47).

<sup>47</sup> I.iii.176: the goddess Aurora leaves the stage declaring ‘Probasse nullos pænitet’ (‘None regret to have put it to the test’).

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, Hollander, *The Figure of Echo*.

<sup>49</sup> All quotations from Bellamy’s *Iphis* follow the text of Bodleian Library MS Lat. Misc. e.17, and the line numbers given are those assigned in the 1982 facsimile of the manuscript: Nugel (ed.), Henry Bellamy / *Iphis*.

<sup>50</sup> Hegarty, *Biographical Register of St. John’s*, 14.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, 41-42.

<sup>52</sup> Fincham, *The Further Correspondence of William Laud*, 184.



---

## Bibliography

### Primary sources

#### Manuscripts

Bodleian Library MS 30

Bodleian Library MS Lat. Misc. e.17

British Museum MS Harleian 6924

St John's College Library MS 217

#### Printed editions

Alton, E.H., Wormell, D.E.W., and Courtney, E. eds. *P. Ovidi Nasonis Fastorum libri sex*. Berlin: B.G. Teubner, 1997.

Elliott, J.R., Johnston, A.F., Nelson, A.H., and Wyatt, D., eds. *Records of Early English Drama: Oxford*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004, 2 vols.

Fincham, Kenneth. *The Further Correspondence of William Laud*. Martlesham: The Boydell Press, 2018.

Heylyn, Peter. *Cyprianus Anglicus or the history of the life and death ... of William Laud*. London, 1668.

Lee, Margaret. ed. *Narcissus: a Twelfth Night merriment / played by youths of the parish at the College of S. John the Baptist in Oxford, A.D. 1602; now first edited from a Bodleian MS*. London: D. Nutt, 1893.

Mahaney, W.E. and Sherwin, W.K. ed. *Two University Latin Plays: Philip Parsons' Atalanta and Thomas Atkinson's Homo*. Salzburg: University of Salzburg, 1973.

Nugel, Bernfried, ed. *Henry Bellamy / Iphis; Joseph Crowther / Cephalus et Procris*.

---

Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1982.

Russell, Donald A. ed. Quintilian, *The orator's education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Scott, W. and Bliss, J., eds. *The Works of William Laud*. Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1847-60, 7 vols.

Sutton, D.F. ed. *Christopher Wren, Sr., Physiponomachia (ca.1610)* (pubd online July 2001) <<http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/wren/>> accessed 10 February 2018.

Weckermann, H-J. ed. *Christopher Wren / Physiponomachia; Philip Parsons / Atalanta; Thomas Atkinson / Homo*. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1981.

### **Secondary sources**

Boas, F.S. *University Drama in the Tudor Age*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914.

---- "Recently Recovered Manuscripts at St John's College, Oxford." *Modern Language Review* 11 (1916): 298-301.

Burlinson, Christopher. "Richard Corbett and William Strode: Chaplaincy and Verse in Early Seventeenth-Century Oxford". In *The Cultural Agency of Early Modern Chaplains*, edited by Hugh Adlington, Tom Lockwood and Gillian Wright, 141-159. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.

Carleton, John D. *Westminster School: A History*. Revised edition. London: R. Hart-Davis, 1965.

Carlton, Charles. *Archbishop William Laud*. London: Routledge, Kegan & Paul, 1987.

Costin, W.C. *The History of St John's College, Oxford, 1598–1860*. Oxford: Oxford Historical Society, 1958.

Cranfield, Nicholas W.S. "Chaplains in Ordinary at the Early Stuart Court: The Purple Road". In *Patronage and Recruitment in the Tudor and Early Stuart Church*, edited by Claire Cross, 120-147. York: University of York, Borthwick Institute, 1996.

---

Elliott, John R., Jr. "Drama." In *The History of the University of Oxford*, Volume IV: *Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, edited by Nicholas Tyacke, 641-58. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1997.

Fincham, Kenneth. "Oxford and the Early Stuart Polity." In *The History of the University of Oxford*, Volume IV: *Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, edited by Nicholas Tyacke, 179-210. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1997.

---- "William Laud and the Exercise of Caroline Ecclesiastical Patronage." *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 51 (2000): 69-93.

Fincham, Kenneth, and Nicholas Tyacke. *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547-c.1700*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Foster, Andrew. "Archbishop Richard Neile Revisited." In *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560-1669*, edited by Peter Lake and Michael Questier, 159-178. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000.

---- "Durham House group (act. 1617–1630)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Guibbory, Achsah. "'A rationall of old Rites': Sir Thomas Browne's 'Urn Buriall' and the Conflict over Ceremony." *Yearbook of English Studies* 21 (1991): 229-241.

Harbage, Alfred. *The Annals of English Drama 975-1700*. 2nd edition, revised by S. Schoenbaum. London: Methuen, 1964.

Hegarty, Andrew. *A Biographical Register of St. John's College, Oxford, 1555-1660*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011.

Hollander, John. *The Figure of Echo: a Mode of Allusion in Milton and After*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

Lake, Peter. "The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630s." In *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642*, edited by Kenneth Fincham, 161-185. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993.

- 
- Latham, R.E. *Revised Medieval Latin Word-list From British and Irish Sources*. London: Published for the British Academy by the Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Lytle, Guy Fitch. "Patronage Patterns and Oxford Colleges c.1300-c.1530". In *The University in Society*, 2 vols, edited by Lawrence Stone, vol. 1, 111-149. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974.
- Marlow, Christopher. *Performing Masculinity in English University Drama, 1598-1636*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.
- Morgan, Victor. "Cambridge University and 'The Country' 1560-1640". In *The University in Society*, 2 vols, edited by Lawrence Stone, vol. 1, 183-245. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974.
- Norland, Howard. *Neoclassical Tragedy in Elizabethan England*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2009.
- Parry, Graham. *The Arts of the Anglican Counter-Reformation: Glory, Laud and Honour*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006.
- Robertson, David. "Olfaction in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tragedy of King Lear*." In *Authority of Expression in Early Modern England*, edited by Nely Keinänen and Maria Saleniu, 44-62. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2009.
- Trevor-Roper, Hugh. *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: Macmillan, 1962.
- Tyacke, Nicholas. *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c.1590-1640*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Winston, Jessica. *Lawyers at play: literature, law, and politics at the early modern Inns of Court, 1558-1581*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.