

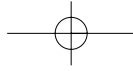
Sectarian Spaces: The Politics of Place and Gender in Seventeenth-Century Prophetic Writing

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Like seventeenth-century studies more generally, critical work on sectarian writing over the last ten years or so has increasingly attended to the body. In this case, the focus of attention is the prophetic body, and its capacity to be read as a sign alongside – or, rather, as a dimension of – the prophetic voice that emanated from it. Consequently, the prophetic utterance has come to be seen to comprise both the words of the prophet and the semiotics of the body, and this, in turn, has been one of the principal ways in which the gendering of the prophetic utterance has been examined and elucidated. The body, seen as one of the key markers of gender, has been shown to condense and elaborate the complex range of meanings inscribed in the figure of the woman prophet.

This emphasis on the prophetic subject as an embodied one has focused on the meaning of the prophetic body *in extremis*. Indeed, the prophetic body might be said to be definable as such precisely by its manifestations of extreme bodily conditions, whether it is on its death-bed, in sickness, in trances, fasting, exhibiting stigmata.¹ Important too has been the work on ways that the spiritual significance of the naked body was appropriated and reworked by Quaker prophets in their practice of ‘going naked as a sign’.² What is made clear through these studies is that a twenty-first-century insistence on the embodiment of subjectivity cannot simply be imposed upon this earlier sectarian moment, for these writings suggest neither the disembodied Cartesian ‘individual’, nor the re-embodied ‘subject’ of recent cultural theory. Instead, the sectarian discursive project turns on the establishment of an *unselved body* – a body commandeered by God, emptied of subjectivity





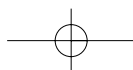
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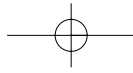
and thus of social meaning, and marked out instead for its capacity to signify spiritually.³ What is striking, however, in these readings of the prophetic body, in this insistence on the ‘thickness’ of the signifying capacity of the body for those who inhabited it and those who witnessed it, is the continuing assumption of a kind of transparency to the location of that body – the sense that this was little more than a backdrop or a setting for the prophesying body itself. Surely, in the intensely providentialist environment of mid-seventeenth-century society, a society which habitually, particularly at the moment at which the sectarian prophets flourished, eschewed the notion of chance, and discerned divine meanings in what to more secular eyes would seem to be the haphazard encounters and events that constituted everyday life, attention needs to be paid to the ways in which the prophetic body was represented through the production of spatial meanings?⁴ In this article, I seek to take this insistence on the embodiedness of the prophet in a different direction, and to consider the textual construction of the *location* in which that prophetic body utters its words. In what ways is God’s providential plan conceptualised spatially? How is the prophet produced as a figure in a landscape? Moreover, how might location be seen to figure in the prophecy already understood as a composite sign comprising words and body, and what are the implications of this for the cultural status of the prophecy?

My aim is to return this overflowing body to the places in which it performed its spiritual signification by considering two kinds of spatial trope at work in accounts of sectarian prophecy, and investigating their implications for the politics of their articulation and reception. First, in the short text by Dorothy Waugh, an account of her prophesying in Carlisle market place, I shall investigate the ways in which locations figure not only as *sites* of contest, but are themselves constructed as *objects* of contest, between Waugh and her civic opponent, the Mayor of Carlisle. Second, in relation to Anna Trapnel’s prophecy *The Cry of a Stone* (1654), I shall consider the ways in which location becomes not only an object of contest, but a dimension of the prophetic utterance itself.

Dorothy Waugh and the Emblematics of Place

Dorothy Waugh, a Quaker servant woman from Westmorland, prophesied in Carlisle market place on Michaelmas Day 1655.⁵ The timing, as well as the location, of this event ensured that her audience was likely to be extensive. Michaelmas Day, 29 September, was one of the four annual quarter days, the times at which rents were paid, tenancies were begun and ended, and interest payments were due. In 1655, Michaelmas Day was, as Waugh tells us, a ‘seventh day’, a Saturday (Carlisle’s markets were held on Wednesdays and Saturdays). Carlisle market would have been even busier than usual on such a day, as, in addition to the usual market-day business, there was the opportunity for people to congregate there as they conducted their quarter-day



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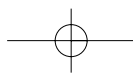
business. It was not unusual, of course, for the Lord to call Quakers and other prophets to prophesy at a time and place coincident with optimum circumstances. The year before, as I discuss below, Anna Trapnel had fallen into a trance and begun to prophesy at Whitehall, where a large crowd had gathered to hear the trial of her fellow Baptist/Fifth Monarchist Vavasor Powell; and Quaker historians such as Richard Bauman have noted that the market place was the most usual location for Quaker attempts to evangelise.⁶ Despite Waugh's designation of the year, 1655, as signifying only in 'the world's account' – that is, as a carnal shorthand of no relevance in relation to spiritual time, a history demarcated on a quite different scale – the timing and placing of her prophecy nonetheless suggest that such carnal issues actually, and not surprisingly, were of no small importance.

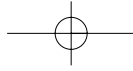
Before turning to Waugh's account of her prophecy, it is worth pausing to consider the cultural associations of the seventeenth-century market-place, in order to clarify the ways in which these inform Waugh's text. Markets were, of course, first and foremost places of commerce, of the buying and selling of goods, but they were also an urban focal point for the community, including the more dispersed rural agricultural community. Importantly, they were manifestly the domain of women as well as men. Farmers' wives came to market to buy and to sell, as a part of their usual range of responsibilities, and poorer town women, too, used the markets regularly.⁷ The market was a place not only of commercial exchange, but also for the exchange of news. In her early pioneering study of the working lives of seventeenth-century women, Alice Clark offers a speculative account of the importance of this aspect of the market place for the women who attended it:

Market was doubtless the occasion of much gossip, but it may also have been the opportunity for a wide interchange of views and opinions on subjects important to the well-being of the community. While market was frequented by all the women in the neighbourhood it must certainly have favoured the formation of a feminine public opinion on current public events, which prevented individual women from relying exclusively upon their husbands for information and advice.⁸

The market place was an avowedly public space in which the active and autonomous presence of women conducting commercial transactions was quite usual. Moreover, Clark suggests that it also provided a forum in which the formation of women's opinions, through the exchange of words, could have taken place free from the oversight of their husbands. Other historians' work concurs with this view. Bernard Capp notes the instance in 1623 of Elizabeth Wilson, a market-woman, who

told a court how she would bring the family's produce to sell in the city; when business was done for the day in question, she and her gossips had repaired to the King's Head near Leadenhall to drink a pint or two of wine





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before setting off for home. Female work thus brought women together in their own social networks, and created what was to some extent a separate, female domain.⁹

The market place thus positioned women within the community as both economic and discursive subjects. In this it is distinct from that other, related, public and communal space, the church (often, as in Carlisle, adjacent to the market place¹⁰). Here, women were structurally positioned by religious discourse as inferior to the men they sat alongside, and by whom the word of God was mediated to them, although, as Capp notes, this discursive inequality might have been countered in some ways by the fact that women and men were usually required to sit apart in church.¹¹

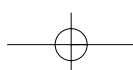
There is a risk, however, of overstating this reading of the possibilities offered by the market place. Despite these undoubtedly important aspects of its structure, composition and function, it was not simply an example of a Bakhtinian pre-industrial feminine and egalitarian utopian open space, characterised by an unfettered exchange of goods and words:¹²

In provincial towns, stalls in the market place were leased to tradesmen by the Corporation, the rents forming a valuable revenue for the town; infringements of the monopoly were summarily dealt with and often the privilege was reserved for 'free' men and women . . . It was a special favour that leave was given to a poor woman to sell shoes in Carlisle market.¹³

Markets were thus highly regulated spaces. Stalls were leased, and if they were leased only to 'free' men and women, access to this commercial arena was clearly linked to pre-existing structures of privilege within the community. The management and control of the market place was the responsibility of the mayor, who, like other town officers, was usually selected on the basis of his wealth.¹⁴ He was an agent of the crown, one of 'the monarch's officers, bound by royal law', and his powers were varied and considerable:

He [the mayor] was normally a JP and clerk of the market, which gave him authority to set prices unless the royal court was in the vicinity when the markets fell within the 'verge' and control of the markets passed to the king's clerk of the market . . . Responsibility for maintaining order was the mayor's but inhabitants were expected to come at his summons to help put down affrays and help maintain the king's peace.¹⁵

The 'openness' noted by Clark, then, was circumscribed, dependent on municipal regulation, oversight and, where deemed necessary, sanction. It was nonetheless a system that was underpinned by the need for a degree, at least, of popular consent and co-operation. Jack suggests that this ambiguous combination of open transaction and surveillance rendered the market place 'a double-edged symbol':

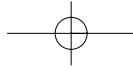


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[Markets] represented voluntary exchange, or peaceful activities, but in as much as they were regulated [they] also denoted acceptance of government authority . . . These open places notionally belonged to all, but were increasingly regulated in the interest of a particular idea of social control. At the same time the irregularities of back lanes, stairs and alleys gave opportunities for frequent, unstructured social intercourse.¹⁶

Dorothy Waugh's account of prophesying in Carlisle market place clearly articulates precisely this 'double edge', condensing both the openness and the regulation to which Jack refers. Waugh went to the market place not to buy or sell, nor to engage in the kind of economic business that would have characterised the Michaelmas quarter day, but 'to speak against all deceit and ungodly practices'. She inhabited the market as a place where women spoke freely, perhaps even as a place, as Clark suggests, of feminine address, favouring 'the formation of a feminine public opinion on current public events'.¹⁷ She addressed her audience – an audience not of sympathisers, but of, at best, potential converts, but also no doubt including the indifferent and the openly hostile – in terms that were likely to have both warned them to amend their ways and to have promised them the blessings of God's grace if they did so. Whilst there is no record of the words that Waugh spoke there – this is an account of the circumstances and aftermath of a prophecy, rather than of the prophecy itself – we have countless other Quaker testimonies which suggest that it is likely that Waugh used as a starting point the specificities of her location, appropriating and interpreting these in such a way as to provide a ground on which to build the rhetoric of the prophecy. The Quaker prophet Hester Biddle, for example, spoke against the ungodliness of carnal learning in the cities of Oxford and Cambridge, while in London she sought to draw attention to the plight of the poor.¹⁸ George Fox, speaking in Carlisle market place two years previously, had spoken in precisely such located term, declaring 'that the day of the Lord was coming upon all their deceitful ways and doings, and deceitful merchandize; and that they should put away all cozening and cheating'.¹⁹ If university towns were the site in which to protest the corruption of carnal learning, and church services (the other key site for Quaker attempts to sow the seed of God's word) an apt environment in which false religion and hireling priests might be confronted, so the market place provided a platform for a challenge to the worldliness of carnal exchange, whether of goods or of idle words.

Such an action constituted a refusal on Waugh's part to produce herself or her words in a way conformable to the cultural associations of her location. She neither bought nor sold commodities, nor exchanged news with neighbours or acquaintances. Instead, her words turned an avowedly secular public space into a spiritual one. It was not so much that her evangelising brought God to the market place, as that it brought – or sought to bring – the market place to God. Just as Quakers refused to recognise distinctions of

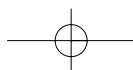
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social degree, and just as their model of the passage of time refused the chronological distinction of 'past' from 'present', deploying instead tropes of circularity and repetition, so Waugh's insistence on speaking God's truth in the market place demonstrated a refusal of the topographical distinction of social and sacred space. If God's light burned within all, as Quakers argued was the case, then it burned steadily and without differentiation, and it burned in the market place as well as in the meeting house. Waugh's prophetic words collapse a series of socially produced and maintained spatial boundaries, both physical and symbolic.

As a result of these words, Waugh is quickly 'haled . . . off the cross'. The reference here is, of course, to the market cross; however, the omission of the word 'market', leaving the 'cross' to stand alone, makes explicit the characteristic prophetic strategy whereby the experiences of the prophet are compared with, or conflated with, those of Christ. At the instigation of the mayor, Waugh is taken from one public space, the market, in which she had spoken freely, and placed in another, the prison, in which she is rendered silent. Her insistent appropriation of a public space already inscribed with a range of quite precise and delimited social meanings is hereby countered by the mayor's equally insistent relocation and reworking of the meanings of the prophetic utterance (words, body, place). Waugh's attempt to rewrite the meanings of the market place is met by the mayor's rewriting of her within the context of the prison, in order, he says, to 'make me an example to all that should ever come in that name' – 'that name', presumably, being the name of 'prophet'.

The mayor's response was clearly within his range of responsibilities, and by no means unusual; countless Quakers found themselves imprisoned for speaking out in ways and places unacceptable to the civic authorities. Discernible, though, in the structure and terms of this almost commonplace account of Quaker prophecy and persecution, social transgression and civic punishment is the dynamic of the representational politics at work in such events. Conflicting interpretations of spatialised meanings underpin, first, the struggle for the symbolisation of the event itself, and, second, its later textualisation within the published account.

The scene in the market place and the subsequent one in the prison comprise a kind of diptych: a linked pair of explicitly symbolic or emblematic scenes that relate to each other sequentially. Here, this pairing is effected through the mayor's refusal of the terms of the spectacle that Waugh was making of herself, and his refiguring of her as a spectacle of his own making, in the gaol. The prison was not a prohibited or exclusive space, hidden from those not enclosed within its walls. Instead, typical of early modern prisons, Carlisle gaol was itself something of a 'public' space.²⁰ Accommodation in anything other than the dungeon had to be paid for; families and friends visited prisoners frequently, bringing food and bedding. When George Fox had been imprisoned in Carlisle gaol in 1653, food was handed in to him by

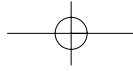


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friends through bars at the window, and priests had come to the grates in the wall to ‘dispute’, and ‘great ladies also (as they were called) came to see the man that they said was to die’.²¹ Waugh’s imprisonment in such an institution was clearly intended not to remove her from the eyes of those who had witnessed her prophecy, but rather to produce her *differently* before those same eyes. She was to be made an ‘example’ for those who saw her in the market place, and if she was to function as an example she had to remain visible (though manifestly *not* audible) to them. The example was to be made, therefore, through the forcible relocating and reworking of Waugh as ‘spectacle’. People were now allowed, or invited – or, more accurately, required – to see the *new* spectacle, produced by the mayor, within the prison walls, and urged to read this spectacle by means of a comparative evaluation of it on the basis of Waugh’s prior appearance in the market place.

However, enclosure within prison was only one dimension of this new spectacle; the other component was the imposition of the scold’s bridle. The bridle was in itself, of course, a harsh and manifestly unpleasant punishment: the experience of standing for three hours with a stone weight (fourteen pounds, six-and-a-half kilos) of iron pressing down on the head and, in particular, by means of the bit in the mouth, on the lower jaw, should not be underestimated. Moreover, the bridle was a symbolic and a gendered punishment, reserved by and large for women of low social rank seen as verbally unbounded or unconstrained, and thus challenging the cultural ideal of the silent, modest and deferential wife.²² Like the skimmington ride, the scold’s bridle worked by drawing attention to the transgressor’s inversion of the proper socially sanctioned hierarchy by staging an event that, simultaneously, symbolically reproduces the transgression as it punishes it.²³ The wrongdoer is literally and symbolically ‘put in her place’.

As important as the impact of the bridle on Waugh herself, however, was the effect that its imposition would have on those that *saw* her in it. The final detail in this emblematic prison scene was the charge of twopence imposed on those coming to see Waugh in prison, wearing the bridle. This charge brings about a final transformation in the signifying potential of the incarcerated prophet. Waugh’s production of herself freely in the market place is replaced by the commodification of her person in the gaol. She is forced into a position whereby she enters a relationship with the worldly business of commercial transaction in a way that she had refused when she spoke in that locus of commercial exchange, the market place. The mayor’s placing of Waugh in prison, silencing her with the bridle, and charging twopence to people to come in to see her, repositions her within the carnal frame that her prophecy had explicitly eschewed. Her enfranchised speaking body is forcibly reworked as a constrained, silent and commodified one. The mayor premises the composition of the second tableau on the basis of his interpretation of the first, and therefore seeks to secure a reading of the latter as not only *replacing* the former, but explicitly as the *consequence* of it. He works

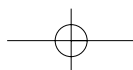


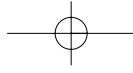
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to produce the living diptych as a didactic and composite emblem of a gendered misdemeanour and a gendered retribution.

Waugh's text, however, refuses the mayor's emblematic strategy, and offers evidence of alternative readings that exemplify, in different ways, its failure. First, witnesses of the imprisoned prophet refuse to read the spectacle in the way the mayor intended – people are, Waugh tells us, 'broken into tears' by the violent abuse that they see.²⁴ The mayor's recognition of the failure of his own representational strategy is evinced by his next act: the removal of her physically containable but symbolically uncontainable body from his jurisdiction. Since he can't control how people read her constrained and silenced body, he first seeks to confirm Waugh as a civic threat, suggesting that people's sympathy will have undesirable consequences for the urban community ('For foolish pity, one may spoil a whole city'), and then has her whipped out of town, again wearing the bridle. Once it has become clear that the mayor cannot control the reading of the spectacle he has produced, it is swiftly dismantled, in the hope, presumably, that out of sight will prove to be out of mind.

Waugh's narrative suggests that the mayor's attempt to harness an emblematic reading of the event has failed, and is written in such a way as to suggest that her own reading is held in common between herself and 'the people'. The next stage in the reappropriation of the terms of the spectacle of Waugh's body in these two contrasting locations, serving to confirm the 'pity' that witnesses are said to have felt, and to confirm a counter-reading to the mayor's, comes after the close of Waugh's first-person narrative, in an appended paragraph, where the volume's editor offers his own gloss on the significance of the events she has recounted. His words – an instruction to readers on how to interpret the foregoing account – can be read as constituting a further refusal of the mayor's emblematic composition concerning the prophet's passage from market to prison, from speech to silence. This gloss works to retrieve the diptych from the interpretative constraints to which such a symbolic pairing might be subject. The key interpretative injunction is signalled by the words 'it is enough that his servants be as their Lord': correspondences between the lives of Waugh and of Christ are to provide the framework through which the foregoing account is to be understood. As Christ was abused, so Waugh, as his servant, is abused, in each instance the suffering of the body serving as a marker of a more generalised notion of suffering. It is precisely these correspondences – the lack of boundaries between Christ and his servant – that identify her *as* his servant, and help to set her apart from 'this generation of men that live in their lusts'. The mayor's interpretative repositioning of Waugh within the frame of the prison is thus superseded, within the text, by the new frame offered by this editorial gloss. The social or civic interpretation of Waugh's actions – an unruly woman speaks out of turn in the market place, is silenced by the bridle in prison, and made a warning to others by exhibiting her as such – is made to give way to a spiritual reading of those same events.

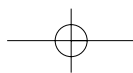


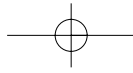
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The co-ordinates of this text, therefore, comprise more than Waugh's prophetic words, more than her uncontainable body. At stake here too are the representations and interpretations of the spaces in which that prophesying body is speaking, and through which it is produced. The mayor seeks to secure the meanings of the prophesying body in the market place and in the prison as two-dimensional symbolic tableaux, offering up tightly circumscribed and incontrovertible meanings of social transgression and containment. He insists on the events themselves (the woman speaking in the market place, the woman silenced in prison) being read as *exemplary*, as condensing a set of social meanings in metaphorical relation to the events themselves: meanings of female transgression, of unruly speech, of civic and social disorder. These metaphors are indicative and affirming of the social regulations that describe and monitor the boundaries within and around the social spaces of the market place and the prison.

Waugh, however, is engaged in a contest with the mayor over whose symbolic reading of the events will prevail, as she too seeks to harness the power of metaphor within her account of them. Metaphor was of particular importance within Quaker rhetorical strategy, because of its suppression of the distinction between tenor and vehicle – metaphor's structural insistence that X *is* actually, or literally, Y, rather than that X is merely *like* Y. Metaphor as a trope works by suppressing syntactical evidence of the comparative relationship it is positing, and instead strategically asserts an identification between two distinct entities. The polemical force of metaphor results from the substitution, or 'standing in', of one thing for another, for that 'standing in', in itself, *makes an argument* about the thing for which it is substituting. It is a recognition of areas of similarity (the 'grounds' of the metaphor) which allows for the denial of just this relation of similarity, and the assertion, instead, of a self-sameness.

Quaker rhetorical strategy comprises, in part, an attempt to harness this aspect of the metaphorical relation. Metaphor's substitution of a relation of identity in the place of one of similarity or analogy was particularly resonant for the Quaker project, for Quakers, like metaphor itself, sought to dissolve the boundaries customarily taken to exist between apparently distinct categories, and to assert instead a relation of identity between them (between social hierarchy and spiritual equality; or between Christ and the believer, between the church and the market place, as here). In Waugh's text, the clearest instance of this can be seen in her exchange with the mayor in prison. Here, Waugh refuses to recognise the distinction between symbolic and socio-geographic space, and insists on speaking her locational origins in terms of the Bible, rather than in the socio-geographic terms in which the mayor is interested, answering his question about where she came from with the words, 'out of Egypt where thou lodgest'. It is these words, she writes, that make him 'violent and full of passion', and cause him to have the scold's bridle put on her. Just as the Quaker refusal of hat honour enacted the principled rejection of



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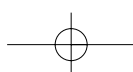
any recognition of social distinction as incompatible with a recognition of spiritual equality, and just as going naked as a sign asserted a relation between spiritual and bodily nakedness, so Waugh's identification of her origins as 'out of Egypt where thou lodgest' relies on this metaphor to dissolve the boundaries between social and sacred space in the same way that her initial act of speaking in the market place had done. Waugh's rhetorical resort to metaphor enacts the erasure of the social demarcations and boundaries that her spiritual project also sought to bring about – and these, in turn, were precisely the boundaries on which the mayor's reading of Waugh's actions had relied, and which he had sought to reinforce.

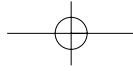
Further, such a tendency to a strategic exploitation of the power of metaphor might be said to be a crucial aspect of what constituted the Quakers in the 1650s – in their early days, before the fundamental centralising realignments that were imposed in the 1660s to ensure their survival – as a radical threat. In a wide-ranging discussion of the spatial dimensions of narrative structures, Michel de Certeau comments on this tendency thus:

Social delinquency consists in taking the story literally, in making it the principle of physical existence where a society no longer offers to subjects or groups symbolic outlets and expectations of spaces, where there is no longer any alternative to disciplinary falling-into-line or illegal drifting away, that is, one form or another of prison and wandering outside the pale.²⁵

Quakers habitually took the story literally: that is, they strategically denied the metaphoricity of metaphor, at the same time exploiting the rhetorical and polemical potential of a trope which denied a line of demarcation between the two elements it was invoking. Quakers deployed the naked body as a sign of the nakedness of the believer before God, asserting that the common 'ground' of nakedness overrode the distinctions between the soul and the body. Similarly, in speaking in the market place, Waugh made literal the rejection of demarcations between sacred and social space, a belief which was also behind the Quaker refusal to designate churches as uniquely spiritual places, and the non-consecration of their meeting houses. In seeking to regulate and circumscribe the kinds of words spoken in the market place, the mayor sought to ensure that Waugh's 'expectations of space' were thwarted. The challenge that Waugh and other Quakers represented was precisely that their doctrine and practice was premised not only on the claiming of such spaces, but the claiming of all spaces; nothing was 'outside the pale' of godly spatial boundaries. Speaking in the market place was not simply a judicious appropriation of a public space that would offer a sizeable audience for a Quaker prophet seeking converts, it was also an act indicative of Quaker spatial and spiritual ambitions more generally.

The 'social delinquency' that Waugh manifestly represented to the mayor was in part a consequence of the words that she spoke. It was also in part to





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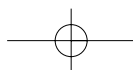
do with his response to the gender of the body speaking these words. But, further, it was a consequence of Waugh's refusal to respect the social delineations and circumscriptions of the spatial, as enacted by her appropriation of the market place to her own ends. What follows from this act, first in the subsequent events, initiated by the mayor, and then in their textualisation in Waugh and her editor's accounts, is a struggle over these spatialised meanings. Will the mayor's emblematic reading of Waugh's circumstances succeed in re-imposing the social boundaries he takes to be under threat? Or will Waugh's counter-insistence on the power of metaphor to dissolve distinction – in particular in her text's assertion of a literal continuity between Christ and his servants – prevail? In 1655, so soon after the 'valiant sixty' had marched south with the Quaker Word, there remains a confidence in the unboundedness evinced, in miniature, in this account.

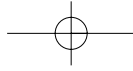
Waugh's text offers an opportunity to consider the struggle for interpretative determination over two different kinds of public place, textualised as a pair of linked emblematic tableaux. What happens, though, when, rather than enacting a struggle over the meanings of the representations and interpretations of place, a text deploys a spatialised prophetic rhetoric premised on movement rather than on stasis? What if the prophet is produced not as a figure within the static frames of two contrasting public places, but as a roving and dynamic figure who, textually speaking, actively moves between places rather than being framed within them? Anna Trapnel's text, *The Cry of a Stone* (1654), enables a consideration of the politics of the representation of sectarian movement through this account of the prophet's journeys through the already highly symbolic space of the capital city.

Anna Trapnel's Walking in Times Past: The Dynamics of Sectarian Space

What this walking exile produces is precisely the body of legends that is currently lacking in one's own vicinity; it is a fiction, which moreover has a double characteristic, like dreams or pedestrian rhetoric, of being the effect of displacements and condensations. As a corollary, one can measure the importance of these signifying practices (to tell oneself legends) as practices that invent spaces.²⁶

Anna Trapnel's prophetic writings might be said to be characterised by both the recounting of legends and the invention of spaces. The 'legends' concern her miraculous trances, visions and prophecies. The spaces she 'invents' in *The Cry of a Stone* and in her *Report and Plea* are both social and spiritual ones: her travels through London and its environs, down to Cornwall and back to the capital chart spiritual as well as geographical itineraries. It is not simply that the former are mapped onto the latter. It is more that by means of her travels, on foot, by carriage, or by ship, she delineates the social dimension of the spiritual and the spiritual dimension of the social, and the geographical and topographical dimensions of each.





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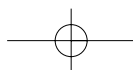
The Cry of a Stone is the transcription of the prophecy spoken in a trance by the Baptist/Fifth Monarchist Anna Trapnel in Whitehall in January 1654, together with a brief first-person account of her earlier life, ‘taken from her own mouth’, and some anonymously authored paragraphs (written by the ‘relator’ who transcribed her prophecy) which set out the circumstances of the prophecy and link together the sections that Trapnel uttered on subsequent days.

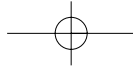
Trapnel was a source of anxiety to her contemporaries, both those sympathetic to her and those unsympathetic. Her words, increasingly condemnatory of Cromwell and the Protectorate, were directly politically confrontational, and seen as subversive: after prophesying during her travels in Cornwall later in 1654, she was arrested and charged with ‘aspersing the government’. It was not only Trapnel’s words that caused anxiety; the status and significance of her body, in its prophesying state, also concerned those who witnessed its condition. Seven years earlier, in 1647, following a fast of nine days, she had had a prophetic vision, following which she was judged by friends (probably Henry Jessey and John Spencer),

to be under a temptation for not eating. I took that scripture, ‘Neglect not the body’, and went to the Lord and enquired whether I had been so, or had any self-end in it to be singular beyond what was meet. It was answered me, ‘No, for thou shalt every way be supplied in body and spirit’, and I found a continual fullness in my stomach, and the taste of divers sweetmeats and delicious food therein, which satisfied me, that I waited to see the issue, which was exceedingly to be admired; I remaining ever since in much health.²⁷

Trapnel’s persistent reiteration in her prophecy that ‘there is no self in this thing’ is a clear assertion of the divine origin of her words, a claim made through recourse to the model of the ‘unserved body’ discussed earlier.²⁸ Trapnel’s exchange with Spencer and Jessey makes clear that the condition of the prophetic body was a fundamental touchstone for the meanings ascribed to, or claimed for, the words of the speaking subject. The body’s consumption or non-consumption of food, its weakness or strength, sickness or health, constituted a series of interlocking indexes on a continuum with the words emanating from it. For Trapnel, as for Jessey and Spencer, the body figures large in the semiotics of godliness and salvation, its meanings opaque and to be contested as part of the wider struggle to determine the bounds and limits of the domain of the elect.

Trapnel’s trance lasted eleven days. For the first five days she neither ate nor drank; after that, she took ‘only a little toast in small beer once in twenty-four hours for the rest of the time’.²⁹ During her trance, ‘her weakness of body was such, that after she had kept her bed the first two days and nights, being raised up while her bed was made, she was not able to go, but as she





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was carried in a chair to the fire, and was ready to faint in the place'.³⁰ If friends such as Jessey and Spencer had doubted the origins of her prophetic state, and read it as indicative of divine punishment for self-interestedness, it is not surprising that Trapnel anticipated that such bodily states would be an occasion for the condemnation of her prophecies by her opponents:

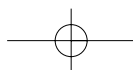
They say these are convulsion-fits, and sickness, and diseases that make thy handmaid to be in weakness. But oh they know not the pouring forth of thy spirit, for that makes the body to crumble, and weakens nature . . . [T]hey say, We will not own it to be from God, but from some evil spirit, some witchcraft, some design or hiring of men.³¹

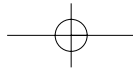
Nonetheless, despite the extended fasting and the weakness she experienced during the trance, once it had ended, 'she rose up in the morning, and the same day travelled on foot from Whitehall to Hackney, and back to Mark Lane in London, in health and strength'.³² If the *bona fide* prophetic body was weak and unable, the body falling away, its very weakness confirming the credentials of the prophetic voice emanating from within it, the post-prophetic body was characterised by its immediate restoration to 'health and strength', without the aid of human or material intervention. Trapnel rose from the bed in which she had lain for eleven days and twelve nights and walked from Whitehall to Hackney to Mark Lane – a distance of some twelve miles. This bodily restoration represents the fulfilment of the prediction made by Trapnel whilst still in her trance:

Father, when thou withdrawest thy glory from thy handmaid, thou shalt leave so much heat as shall refresh the body, and her health shall return again from thee to her, thou wilt give her strength to persevere to the end.³³

On one level, this represents the familiar correspondences that are routinely drawn in prophetic writings between the experiences of the prophet and of Christ, such as that already discussed in relation to Waugh's short account. Just as Christ performed miracles whereby the sick and the dead rose up and walked, as a sign of God's direct intervention in human lives, and just as Christ himself rose up and walked after three days in the tomb, so the capacity of Trapnel's body to recover from the vicissitudes of sickness and weakness is written and read in this text as a sign of direct godly intervention.

More than this, though, the healthy and strong post-prophetic body is situated, explicitly and repeatedly, within a social and topographical domain: here, Whitehall, Hackney, Mark Lane; earlier, in the autobiographical section of the text, in Poplar, the Minories, Dowgate, Blackheath, Southwark. What does it mean for Trapnel to place her body so explicitly within the topography of the capital city in this way, in relation to her prophetic trances? In what ways does this work to secure the meanings of the female fasting prophetic body claimed by Trapnel and her supporters? There are

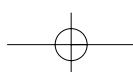


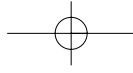
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two elements to be considered in addressing these questions: first, the associations of the places invoked by Trapnel and her 'relator', and second, the chains of meaning *between* these, brought into being by the trajectory of Trapnel's walk through London on Wednesday 18 January 1654, and the textual account of this trajectory in *The Cry of a Stone*.

In his work on the spatial dimensions of historical narrative, de Certeau suggests that 'stories of journeys and actions are marked out by the "citation" of places that result from or authorize them'.³⁴ If this is the case, what might be said to be authorised, or legitimated, by the citation of Whitehall, Hackney, Mark Lane; further, what kind of story results from this process of citation? Clearly the three places invoked at the end of Trapnel's text have very different associations. Whitehall, situated in Westminster, to the west of London, was one of the largest palaces in Europe. Since the reign of Henry VIII, it had been the monarch's main residence, and much money had been lavished on it, particularly on the Banqueting House, in the reigns of James I and Charles I. It had also, of course, been the site of Charles I's execution five years earlier, and had continued to be the centre of government during the ensuing Commonwealth, recently becoming one of chief residences of Cromwell. Trapnel had gone to Whitehall in order to attend the trial of her fellow Fifth Monarchist, Vavasor Powell, before the Council of State. Hackney, in contrast, was still a small rural village at this time, a recreation ground for Londoners wanting to get out of the city (Pepys records that he went there to 'eat cream and good cherries' and to drink milk), but it was also one of the growing satellite villages where wealthy merchants were buying houses.³⁵ Hackney was probably Trapnel's home at the time of the Whitehall prophecy; she was certainly living there, with her kinsman, Mr Wythe, in December 1653, less than a month earlier.³⁶ While living there, she had had her most fully recounted series of prophetic visions, all of them highly critical of Cromwell and in particular of his assumption of the position of Lord Protector in December 1653, when he became a direct threat to the 'precious saints that stood in the way of him'.³⁷ These Hackney visions, then, in their direct engagement with issues and structures of government, are on a continuum with the Whitehall prophecy recorded in *The Cry of a Stone*. Finally, Mark Lane, the end point of Trapnel's post-prophetic journey, was a small street within the city of London, just east of Tower Hill and not far from Thames Street, where her congregation met at Allhallows the Great. This was the site of an earlier vision, in 1652, when she had kept to her bed for seven days and eight nights at the house of 'Widow Smith, glazier', during which time 'I ate nothing but two broiled herrings, and drunk water and small beer'.³⁸ Her vision at this time had concerned the sea-battles then taking place in the Anglo-Dutch war.

What story might be said to be 'authorised' by these citations? One reading might discern a narrative that coheres through a kind of 'public' political logic, whereby the implications of the visions of government experienced by



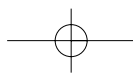
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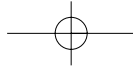
Trapnel in Hackney have been made material in and by the location of the present one in Whitehall, the seat of government itself. By this account, Mark Lane, like Whitehall and Hackney, was a significant location for the history of Trapnel's political prophesying, all places where her prophetic utterances engaged quite directly with political events of the day.

More than this, though, the story that appears through this invocation of starting point, mid point and end point of Trapnel's walk is an account of her visionary progress, compressing her own spiritual and prophetic history and transposing it from a temporal to a spatial plane. At the close of what was to prove to be her highest profile and longest lasting visionary trance, in Whitehall, she revisits Hackney and Mark Lane, sites of her earlier visions. The new Whitehall prophecy, still in the balance, is underwritten through a return to the earlier ones, prophecies which had been equally overtly political (concerned with the Anglo-Dutch war, the government, with Parliament, with the impending Protectorate of Cromwell) and whose accuracy had already been demonstrated. Revisiting the *sites* of those prophecies might also bring into focus once more their accuracy: just as those had proved accurate, so will this. In the context of the preceding accounts, then, Trapnel's journey from Whitehall to Hackney to Mark Lane is structured through a series of symbolic landmarks, reminders of the spiritual and prophetic distance travelled to this point by Trapnel. In an all-too-apt metaphor at the beginning of the autobiographical section of the prophecy, Trapnel invites doubting readers to refer to prominent sectarian figures who know her, and who could 'give testimony of me, and of my walking in times past'.³⁹ More than this, though, the text itself precisely revives that authorising 'walking in times past' through the invocation of place outlined here.

These three place-names, however, omit as much as they include. They are predicated on what de Certeau called a process of 'asyndeton', a grammatical term for the suppression of linking words such as conjunctions and adverbs, but used here to analyse what he calls 'pedestrian rhetoric' or a rhetoric of walking. In this context, the term is used to suggest the gaps that are created in the spatial continuum by the fragmentation of the space traversed by the walking subject, and the subsequent retention, in its narrativised form, of only selected parts of the pedestrian trajectory.⁴⁰

If the citation of these place-names serves to focus the history of Trapnel's prophetic progress, what links, what 'conjunctions', are 'suppressed' in the account of her walk 'in health and strength', and what part does this suppression play in the production of this narrative of prophetic progress? One element that remains invisible within this account is the kind of detail that would confirm this claim to a healthy post-prophetic body: that is, a more detailed itinerary laying down the route she walked, offering a clearer sense of the distance covered, and thereby confirming the 'wonder' of the instantaneous recovery of the depleted prophetic body. Readers within the capital might be relied on to discern this from the simple iteration of the place names



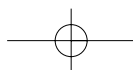


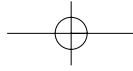
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of Whitehall, Hackney and Mark Lane, but this would certainly not have been obvious to anyone further afield. As evidence of the recovery of the post-prophetic body, then, this citation of names seems strangely brief and incomplete, particularly when compared with the extended lists of names and places that figure in earlier authorising citational lists within the text.

What might have featured in this itinerary, had it been offered? Trapnel is likely to have followed one of two routes on the first part of her walk, up to Hackney. She may have walked through the city of London: up Whitehall to Charing Cross, along the Strand and Fleet Street to St Paul's, then cutting north-east along Cheapside, past the Royal Exchange, on to Broad Street, through the city wall at Bishopsgate, north up to Shoreditch, and then north-east on the road to Hackney. Alternatively, she might have avoided the city itself by leaving the Strand almost immediately, and walking up St Martin's Lane to St Giles's Fields, then east along Holborn, up to St John's Priory and Charterhouse, past the Barbican, along Beech Lane, Chiswell Street and Hog Lane, hereby arriving at Shoreditch and then taking the road north-east to Hackney. Either of these routes would have enabled the drawing of general precepts from the particularities offered by the location; after all, in the prophecy just spoken in Whitehall, Trapnel used the location on more than one occasion to make a prophetic point.⁴¹ Similarly, a judicious roll-call referring to the palaces along the Strand, the New Exchange, the military grounds at Bunhill and the Artillery Yard, or the fort at Shoreditch would have offered ample opportunity for the drawing of Fifth Monarchist precepts on the perils of worldly immorality or on Cromwell's betrayal of the military victories of the earlier 1650s, whether by the author of these paragraphs, or by the reader finding them invoked at this stage of the text. However, no such mention is made; the London Trapnel is traversing is clearly other than the London that would have been produced by reference to these topographical features. Instead, Trapnel's walk rewrites London as her own. Her bodily passage through its streets and fields marks it out as her territory. The condensing of the route to comprise no more than the three points that marked the limits of the triangle described by her journey recapitulates the key locations that figured in her spiritual trajectory, as set out in the preceding pages. Trapnel's walk constitutes an act of topographical appropriation through the re-ascription of these locations within her own sectarian 'topographic imaginary'.⁴² The London her journey pulls into focus is the New Jerusalem as delineated in the words of her prophecies, past and present.

Earlier in the text, in the autobiographical account that precedes the transcription of the prophecy, Trapnel quotes Acts 9.6: 'Go into the city, and see what is done there'.⁴³ What she sees, she sees in visions that merge the temporal, the spatial, the social and the spiritual. When she experiences her first vision, on the occasion of the army marching into London in August 1647, she writes of it as 'a glorious vision of the New Jerusalem, which melted me into rivers of tears':





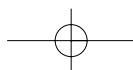
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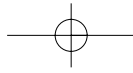
I shrunk down in the room; and cried out in my heart, 'Lord, what is this?'
It was answered me, 'A discovery of the glorious state of whole Sion, in the
reign of the Lord Jesus, in the midst of them, and of it thou shalt have more
visions hereafter.'⁴⁴

The terms in which the visions are explained to her are themselves spatial; she is being shown Sion, the holy land, with Lord Jesus in 'the midst of them'. This is not a merely notional New Jerusalem, but a three-dimensional one, and one that relies on a similar refusal of socio-geographical and spiritual boundaries as we saw in Waugh's condemnation of the mayor as living in Egypt. For Trapnel, the hill at Blackheath is indistinguishable from the hills that fall down in front of Hermon Hill; a flag at the end of her street is commensurate with the one of the army led by the 'King of Salem'.⁴⁵

Trapnel's textual reliance on the New Jerusalem as a figure for the coming kingdom of God and return of King Jesus is a Fifth Monarchist commonplace; however, her merging of the topographical and the spiritual is effected in a way revealingly different from that enacted in another Fifth Monarchist prophecy, by Mary Cary. Published in 1651, and entitled 'A new and more exact Mappe or Description of New *Ierusalem*s Glory when Jesus Christ and his Saints with him shall reign on earth a Thousand years, and possess all Kingdoms . . .', the text seems to promise a similar bringing together of the spatial and the spiritual to that to be found in *The Cry of a Stone*. But instead, this 'map' deploys the topographical only at the level of metaphor, as the *OED* suggests was common in the seventeenth century, when *map* commonly meant a 'detailed representation in epitome; a circumstantial account of a state of things'. What comprises Cary's new and more exact 'map' is an extended prophetic reading of *Daniel 7.27*, unlocated in anything we might think of as a literal, social or topographical base. Trapnel's writing, in contrast, reads her prophecies from the text of the capital, and then writes them through the recitation and reinvocation of the godly signs that have, as it were, risen, materially, before her eyes. Her literal capacity to see – consciously to register material data through one of the five senses whose existence and persistence confirm her as a sentient and bodily being – is here merged with her spiritual capacity to see (in the sense of 'understand'). Her visions elide with her vision.

For Trapnel to heed the call to 'Go into the city, and see what is done there' – to occupy the city's spaces, and to occupy them as subject, as someone who sees, rather than object, as one who is seen – was not an uncontentious or risk-free act, for these spaces were already inscribed with a range of gendered meanings which rendered such acts vulnerable to a range of oppositional readings at odds with Trapnel's own account of her motivation. Peter Stallybrass has argued that gender – and in particular femininity – was itself a category produced through the processes of a spatialised imaginary: the signs that identify the discursive category 'Woman' are, he suggests, 'the





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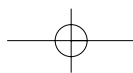
enclosed body, the closed mouth, the locked house'; 'she is the fenced-in enclosure of the landlord, her father, or husband'.⁴⁶ Conversely, but relatedly, the forms and spaces of the city itself, its buildings, streets and open places, inhered within a gendered imaginary. London was, variously, heroic matron, loyal wife, and deceptive harlot.⁴⁷ Examples of this process are particularly apparent within the work of Ben Jonson; in *The Devil is an Ass*, for example, Iniquity invites the devil, Pug, to accompany him 'Down Petticoat Lane, and up the Smock-alleys' (I.i.60) – streets both known for their prostitutes, and both metonymically named to suggest as much. In Jonson's *Epicene*, these associations are taken one stage further, and femininity is identified as the product of the city, as it is said of Mistress Otter that 'All her teeth were made i' the Blackfriars, both her eyebrows i' the Strand, and her hair in Silver Street. Every part of the town owns a piece of her' (IV.ii.84–6).⁴⁸ In effect, therefore, the capital city was a palimpsest on which subsequent generations wrote and rewrote the meanings of both gender and civic life, each through reference to the other. And, as Laura Gowing suggests, 'these figurings of the city and femininity surely worked both ways: civic culture was inflected by gender ideologies, but imagining the city as a fickle wanton had its own impact on ways of thinking about women and sexuality in the metropolis'.⁴⁹ Thus, Gowing concludes:

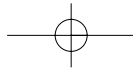
Women's use of the streets, fields and civic spaces of early modern London was neither simple nor free. The rhetoric of enclosure and the identification of female mobility with sexual and economic disorder shaped female identities and women's use of space.⁵⁰

Trapnel's occupation of the city and its streets was, in no sense of the word, insignificant. For a woman to walk the streets, then as now, was indicative of unboundedness, and specifically a sexual unboundedness, but Trapnel's post-prophetic walk refuses these long-established meanings.⁵¹ As she walks from Whitehall to Hackney to Mark Lane, producing a topographical history of, and aide-memoire to, her progress towards the Whitehall prophecies, she rewrites the gendered meanings of these streets, reinterpreting them as signifying within the ungendered domain of the spiritual, thereby adding yet another layer to the residue already coalesced there.

The fields surrounding London were no more clearly designated neutral public spaces than the streets; they were marked for women as places of work, Gowing tells us, but they also signified more notoriously on the 'axis of pleasure and labour', as places of illicit sex and specifically prostitution.⁵² For Trapnel, too, her sorties into the fields near Hackney testified to a moral danger, but one of a rather different order,

being forced by Satan to walk up and down the fields, attempting to throw myself into a well, saying, 'God shall not be dishonoured.' . . . And I was forced to lie in ditches frequently, till it was dark night, that some found me,





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and led me home. And again frequently I took knives to bed with me, to destroy myself and still they were snatched out of my hand, I know not how, not by any creature. I durst not eat nor drink for four days together, because it was said to me, 'If thou dost, thou worshippest the devil. For in everything give thanks, whether thou eatest or drinkest, do it all to the glory of God'.⁵³

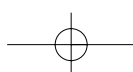
The fields and ditches are a site of danger to the female passenger; they constitute a recognisable landscape in which a story of temptation and resistance can be acted out. But Trapnel rewrites the nature of this danger, transforming it from one of sexual incontinence to one of spiritual temptation, the latter met and vanquished by her own valiant fortitude in resistance, as she wrestles with the devil. Her account draws on the location's pre-existing associations, but, as was the case with the city streets, relocates their capacity to signify danger within the ungendered domain of the spiritual.

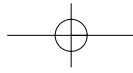
Strikingly, too, in this passage Trapnel moves without pause from the Satanic danger inscribed in the fields and ditches, to that represented by knives, and by eating and drinking. The most commonplace and everyday acts of social life – walking in the fields, using a knife, eating and drinking – are invested with an excessive capacity to signify beyond the limits of their common associations. Just as the prophetic body is defined through its subsistence *in extremis*, so these acts and objects are divested of their everyday values and reinvested with extreme symbolic values. The first of these already had a symbolic value in the popular imagination – there was no such thing, for a woman, as simply 'walking in the fields'. The final item in the list, the consumption or non-consumption of food and drink, already figured symbolically in the spiritual imagination and in prophetic practices. This complexity and extremity of association is then extended to the second item on the list, the knife, as it too is requisitioned as a prop in Trapnel's spiritual drama. The Satanic appropriation of the everyday as aids in his incitement to self-destruction is countered by Trapnel's redeployment of these same props in the service of her own counter-narrative.

There is, however, a double edge to Trapnel's rewriting of spatial meanings. Gowing indicates succinctly the problem with such spatial redesignations:

For at least some women the 1640s were to suggest another shift in the uses of social space, their political and religious commitments opening up new ways of acting in public and new ways of being seen. However, the tensions of femininity in public space were reworked, rather than erased. Gendered uses of space were dynamic, but they worked on some persistent understandings of the relationship between disorder, sexuality and femininity.⁵⁴

Gowing's account of the limits to the reworking of the meanings of space, because of what she calls the 'persistent understandings of the relationship between disorder, sexuality and femininity', suggests an important new dimension to the account offered by Phyllis Mack of the partiality of the



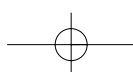


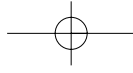
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rewriting of the meanings of the figure of the female prophet herself in this period. The greater cultural receptivity to this figure in the 1640s and 1650s, Mack suggests, was not the result of any previously unnoticed qualities of leadership or spiritual authority, but, on the contrary, rested on the continuation of traditional beliefs about women's greater receptivity to the prophetic or spiritual message because of their irrationality or passivity. While these beliefs might for a time have been reinterpreted, thereby licensing a greater acceptance of women's prophecy, they could just as easily, in the 1660s, be used once again to justify the silencing of women prophets.⁵⁵ Similarly, Trapnel here might be said to be constructing her prophetic *bildungsroman* through recourse to a series of familiar, and already gendered, cultural reference points. Her progress towards Whitehall is marked out through reference to a series of symbolic threats to femininity: the sexual incontinence evoked by the fields and ditches, the appetite (the open mouth) associated with the consumption of food and drink. Trapnel's deployment of these within the domain of spiritual signification assumes as a starting point, and depends upon, their associations with the social meanings she is refusing. Just as the woman prophet herself could be silenced through reference to the self-same attributes that were argued to license her speech, so the contours of the socio-geographic landscape never lost their accretion of gendered meanings in Trapnel's account, but were made subject to their transposition and re-interpretation. Consequently, Trapnel's prophetic narratives continued to be vulnerable to the interpretations of her opponents, for hers is a counter-narrative, an appropriation and re-working of the familiar, rather than an entirely new story.

The Politics of Sectarian Spatial Relations

What claims might be made for the significance of the spatial for sectarian political and textual practices? First, if nothing else, such readings remind us that political struggle takes place as much over a body of land as over a body of ideas. The famous march south by the Quaker 'valiant sixty' in 1654 was not simply a journey made in order to arrive at another location, it was a journey undertaken to rewrite the land over which the sixty travelled, to leave swathes of 'convincement' in its wake. Similarly, Waugh's occupation of the market place in Carlisle constituted not only the astute identification of a large ready-made audience, but also the appropriation and re-ascription to her own spiritual ends of a space that already carried a freight of social and gendered meanings. Trapnel's relationship to the streets of London and its outlying suburbs and villages similarly indicates a refusal of the spatial meanings they had accreted, and their redefinition within her own spiritual and prophetic drama. Later the same year, her journey to Cornwall, a westerly margin shortly also to be reached by the Quaker prophets on their ministerial journey from north to south that began in the summer of 1654, provoked

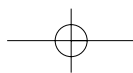
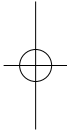
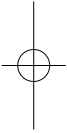


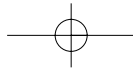
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similar levels of unease and hostility, and resulted in her arrest, trial, and enforced return to London and Bridewell. To travel, as a prophet, and more specifically as a woman prophet, was in itself construed as an act subversive of the status quo, as those travels were across landscapes and through towns and villages already marked by acts of revolutionary appropriation, for one side or the other, through the course of the civil wars of the 1640s, as well as by earlier struggles over the land in relation to enclosure. Journeying through such terrain was no more likely to be construed as a neutral act than was walking the London streets, wrestling with Satan in the fields around Hackney, or prophesying in Carlisle market place. If, as Doreen Massey's telling phrase has it, 'the spatial is social relations "stretched out"', then the history and pre-existing meanings of the area over which those social relations are stretched out are important, as well as the way in which those relations shape and re-interpret the spaces over which they extend.⁵⁶

Secondly, despite the fact that the texts of Waugh and Trapnel both turn on the appropriation of public space, the textualisations of those spaces, and the figure of the prophet within them, exhibit some significant differences. Waugh and the mayor are in conflict over the interpretation of spaces that condense their meanings within a condition of stasis. At issue in her text is the interpretation of spaces separated out from the rest of the town's topography, market place and prison placed within a frame that at once designates them as emblematic and freezes them as static and metaphorical icons of other static and symbolic relations – whether these be the social relations that the mayor is endorsing, or the spiritual relations with which Waugh is countering him. The frozen or iconic character of these two framed spaces is suggestive of the non-negotiability of the relations thereby emblematised; the 'truths' the two disputants are asserting are, within the accounts of each, fixed, established and thus themselves static. In contrast, Trapnel's account, turning on the central figure of the peripatetic prophet, produces a space that is dynamic, in process – a narrative space, produced explicitly on the axes of time and place, as distinct from Waugh's iconic spaces, contesting truths taken to be beyond the reach of time or the demarcation of place. Perhaps this distinction offers a perspective on what seems like the disproportionate stir caused by Trapnel's activities in 1654, for her relationship to space is premised on the possibility of its dynamic appropriation – just the kind of dynamic appropriation that it was feared Fifth Monarchist ambitions were working towards more generally.

Finally, the polemics of both prophets have recourse to the power of metaphor to figure the transformations at the heart of their revolutionary sectarian agendas. Both Waugh and Trapnel seek to establish between ostensibly discrete entities – market place and sacred space, the hill at Blackheath, Hermon Hill in Palestine – a relation of identity rather than one of similarity or analogy. In each case, the metaphorical structure of the assertion figures the desired transformation through erasing the boundaries between

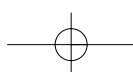


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these spatial categories. The effect is the assertion of the godly dimension of social space, not so that it ceases to be social, but so that the social, as inscribed in the topographical, is revealed more clearly as a dimension of the godly. The conventional meanings of Carlisle market place and gaol, and London's topographical contours, its buildings, streets and fields, are appropriated and rewritten in such a way as to insist on their capacity to be read within a radical socio-spiritual agenda. For Waugh, the continuity between this rhetorical move and the more general Quaker erasure of socio-spiritual boundaries seems to invest the text with a confidence in the coherence of its doctrinal programme. For Trapnel, however, the implications seem to point in a rather different direction. The delineation of the erasure of socio-spiritual boundaries through a rereading of the topography of the capital left intact the accretions of alternative, and opposed, interpretations. Just as the female prophet was resiled in the 1660s, as her irrationality and receptivity were once again read as sources of weakness rather than as conduits of prophetic power, so the spatial appropriations enacted by Trapnel in this text could be reinterpreted as signs of carnal delusions or demonic deception. The boldness of the Fifth Monarchist political programme, focused through Trapnel's pedestrian rhetoric, remained, ultimately, vulnerable to the refusal of the narrative so produced.

Appendix: 'A Relation Concerning Dorothy Waugh's Cruel Usage by the Mayor of Carlisle' from *The Lambs Defence Against Lyes* (1656)

Upon the 7th day about the time called Michaelmas in the year of the world's account 1655, I was moved of the Lord to go into the market of Carlisle, to speak against all deceit and ungodly practices, and the mayor's officer came and violently haled me off the cross, and put me in prison, not having anything to lay to my charge, and presently the mayor came up where I was, and asked me from whence I came; and I said out of Egypt where thou lodgest. But after these words, he was so violent and full of passion he scarce asked me any more questions, but called to one of his followers to bring the bridle, as he called it, to put upon me, and was to be on three hours, and that which they called so was like a steel cap and my hat being violently plucked off which was pinned to my head, whereby they tare my clothes to put on their bridle as they called it, which was a stone weight of iron by the relation of their own generation, and three bars of iron to come over my face, and a piece of it was put in my mouth, which was so unreasonable big a thing for that place as cannot be well related, which was locked to my head, and so I stood their time with my hands bound behind me with the stone weight of iron upon my head, and the bit in my mouth to keep me from speaking. And the mayor said he would make me an example to all that should ever come in that name. And the people to see me so violently abused were broken into tears, but he cried out on them and said, 'For foolish pity, one may spoil a whole city.' And the man that kept the prison-door demanded twopence of every one that came to see me while their bridle remained upon me. Afterwards it was taken off and they kept me in prison for a little season, and after a while the mayor came up again and caused it to be put on again, and sent me out of



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the city with it on, and gave me very vile and unsavoury words, which were not fit to proceed out of any man's mouth, and charged the officer to whip me out of the town, from constable to constable to send me, till I came to my own home, when as they had not anything to lay to my charge.

D.W.

And all these things are but a taste of the whole, inflicted upon the body of Christ in this nation, whom he hath made conformable to himself to undergo the envy of the wicked till death, and after their death they are not satisfied, neither was they upon him, who gave large money to raise lies upon him, when their envy could reach no further, and it is enough that his servants be as their Lord; for which of all the members of Christ have not suffered by this generation of men that live in their lusts? Yet herein we rejoice that his peace is with us, and that we are justified in his sight not to suffer as evil doers, though in the sight of men we be so accounted.

FINIS.

Notes

1 On the significance of the puritan death bed see R. Houlbrooke, 'The puritan death-bed, c.1560–c.1660' in Durston and Eales (eds), *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700* (Basingstoke, 1996); on illness, Barbara Ritter Dailey, 'The visitation of Sarah Wight: Holy Carnival and the Revolution of the Saints in Civil War London', *Studies in Church History* 55 (1986), 438–55; on fasting, Diane Purkiss, 'Producing the voice, consuming the body: Women prophets of the seventeenth century' in Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman (eds), *Women, Writing, History 1640–1740* (London, 1992); on stigmata, L. Gallagher, 'The place of stigmata in Christological poetics' in Claire McEachern and Debora Shuger (eds), *Religion and Culture in Renaissance England* (Cambridge, 1997); on readings of the body *in extremis* as in the grip of demonic possession see J. A. Sharpe, 'Disruption in the well-ordered household: Age, authority and possessed young people' in Griffiths, Fox and Hindle (eds), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1996).

2 On the significance of nakedness as trope in religious discourse, Quaker and more generally, see R. Bauman, *Let Your Words Be Few: Symbolism of Speaking and Silence among Seventeenth-Century Quakers* (Cambridge, 1983); K. L. Carroll, 'Early Quakers and Going Naked as a Sign', *Quaker History* 67 (1978), 69–87; J. Kronenfeld, *King Lear and the Naked Truth: Re-thinking the Language of Religion and Resistance* (Durham, NC, 1998); Kristen Poole, *Radical Religion from Shakespeare to Milton: Figures of Nonconformity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000).

3 I discuss the implication of the 'unserved body' in relation to another of Trapnel's texts in 'Anna Trapnel's Report and Plea', in Anita Pacheco (ed.), *A Companion to Early-Modern Women's Writing* (Oxford, 2002).

4 For a discussion of the meanings and implications of the notion of 'providence' in the mid-seventeenth century see B. Worden, 'Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England', *Past and Present* 109 (1985), 55–99.

5 The full text of Waugh's account is included in the Appendix to this article.

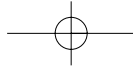
6 Bauman, *op. cit.*, pp. 68–70.

7 Alice Clark, *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1919), pp. 51, 135.

8 *Ibid*, p. 51.

9 B. Capp, 'Separate domains: women and authority in early modern England' in Griffiths, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

10 Sybil M. Jack notes that 'it was quite common and again symbolic for the mar-

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ket place to adjoin the church, the second pillar of the realm and justifier of rule and obedience. Indeed the churchyard might sometimes be an adjunct or substitute for the open space especially in Wales and the smaller Scottish towns'. (*Towns in Tudor and Stuart Britain* (Basingstoke, 1996), p. 8.)

11 Capp, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

12 On Bakhtin's theorising of such carnivalised spaces, see M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Bloomington, IN, 1965, 1984).

13 Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 202–3.

14 Jack, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

15 *Ibid*, p. 79.

16 *Ibid*, p. 8.

17 Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

18 Hester Biddle, *Wo to thee town of Cambridge* (1655), *Wo to thee city of Oxford* (1655), and *A Warning from the Lord* (1660).

19 G. Fox, *A Journal of the Life, Travels, Sufferings, Christian Experiences and Labour of Love of George Fox* (2 vols, London, 1852), I, p. 158.

20 There were, in fact, two prisons in Carlisle at this time. The County Gaol was in West Walls and the gaol for the city was over the Scotch gate. There was also another prison-like fourteenth-century house in King's Arms Lane. Most historians think Fox was held in the County Gaol. (G. Topping, *Memories of Old Carlisle* (Carlisle, n.d.), pp. 126, 127; J. W. Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross: Old Stories Re-told* (Carlisle, 1926), pp. 68, 71). Such gaols were used mostly not for those serving sentences, but for debtors and for those awaiting trial. Offenders who were sentenced by courts to be detained for chastisement or correction were held in prisons known at this time as 'bridewells' or 'houses of correction'. See P. Spierenburg, 'The Body and the State: early modern Europe' in N. Morris and D. J. Rotham (eds), *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society* (Oxford, 1998).

21 Topping, *op. cit.*, p. 126; Fox, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

22 The scold's bridle was a punishment used only in the north of England, and even there not uniformly; there are no records of the bridle being used in Lancaster, for example, only some sixty-five miles from Carlisle. A scold's bridle from Carlisle, however, can now be seen in Lancaster Castle. For a discussion of the gendering of the scold's bridle and the symbolism of the bridle more generally, see D. Underdown, 'The Taming of the Scold: The enforcement of patriarchal authority in early modern England' in A. J. Fletcher and J. Stevenson (eds), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1985).

23 On the skimmington ride and popular punishments see Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Women on Top' in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (London, 1975) and B. Reay (ed.), *Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (London, 1985).

24 Compare the moment in Anna Trapnel's *Report and Plea* (1654) in which people are moved by Trapnel's court-room appearance and self-vindication in much the same manner. See Trapnel in E. Graham *et al.*, *Her Own Life: Autobiographical Writings by Seventeenth-Century Englishwomen* (London, 1989), p. 84.

25 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Randall (Berkeley, CA, 1984), p. 130.

26 *Ibid*, p. 107

27 Anna Trapnel, *The Cry of a Stone* (1654) ed. Hilary Hinds, in *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 220 (Tempe, AZ, 2000), p. 8.

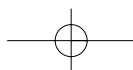
28 *Ibid*, p. 45.

29 *Ibid*, p. 79.

30 *Ibid*, p. 78.

31 *Ibid*, pp. 29, 73.

32 *Ibid*, p. 79.



- 33 *Ibid*, p. 54.
- 34 de Certeau, *op.cit.*, p. 120.
- 35 Margaret Pelling, 'Skirting the city? Disease, social change and divided households in the seventeenth century' in Paul Griffiths and Mark S. R. Jenner (eds) *Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 158, 162.
- 36 Trapnel, *op.cit.*, p. 10.
- 37 *Ibid*, p. 15.
- 38 *Ibid*, p. 10.
- 39 *Ibid*, p. 6.
- 40 de Certeau, *op.cit.*, p. 101.
- 41 'I have brought my word into thy place, thy very palace, and it shall enter the very walls and hangings thereof against thee . . . The Lord would have your protestations, vows, covenants and narrations brought into your palace against you, this shall be bitterness in your dishes. You shall have plenty and fullness, but without comfort'. (Trapnel, *op.cit.*, pp. 73–4).
- 42 Karen Newman, 'Toward a Topographic Imaginary: Early Modern Paris' in Carla Mazzio and Douglas Trevor (eds), *Historicism, Psychoanalysis and Early Modern Culture* (London, 2000).
- 43 Trapnel, *op.cit.*, p. 7.
- 44 *Ibid*, p. 7.
- 45 *Ibid*, p. 7.
- 46 P. Stallybrass, 'Patriarchal Territories: the body enclosed' in Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers (eds), *Rewriting the Renaissance. The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago, 1986), p. 127.
- 47 Laura Gowing, "'The freedom of the streets": Women and social space, 1560–1640', in Griffiths and Jenner, *op. cit.*, p. 131.
- 48 For further discussion of this point see Gail Kern Paster, *The Idea of the City in the Age of Shakespeare* (Athens, GA, 1985); L. Manley, 'From Matron to Monster: Tudor-Stuart London and the languages of urban description' in Heather Dubrow and R. Strier (eds), *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture* (Chicago, 1988) and Gowing, *op.cit.*
- 49 Gowing, *op.cit.*, p. 132.
- 50 *Ibid*, p. 145.
- 51 The OED's earliest instance of the use of 'street-walker' to signify 'prostitute' is 1592. It is worth noting, however, that Trapnel waits until the morning to undertake her walk; perhaps walking the streets at night presented too much of a challenge even for her. On the feminisation of the offence of 'nightwalking' in seventeenth-century London, and its increased association with the sexual immorality of women, see Griffiths, *op.cit.*
- 52 Gowing, *op. cit.*, p. 144.
- 53 Trapnel, *op.cit.*, pp. 10–11.
- 54 Gowing, *op.cit.*, p. 147.
- 55 Phyllis Mack, 'Women as Prophets During the English Civil War', *Feminist Studies* 8.1 (1982), 19–45; p. 25.
- 56 Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 2.

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