

The Portrayal and Politics of Mince Pies in English Satirical Texts, 1642-1660*

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Abstract

Mince pies, a cherished Christmas tradition in England and Ireland since the twelfth century, have left an indelible mark on English literature, ranging from medieval recipe books to Shakespearean drama and

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modern popular culture. The enduring appeal of mince pies invites inquiries into their intertextual connections, sociocultural roles, and the evolving concept of values. One of the enduring myths surrounding mince pies is the alleged ban imposed by Oliver Cromwell during the mid-seventeenth century, which historical records do not substantiate.

Based on the above context, this paper delves into the complex legacy of this myth by examining the contextual and textual dimensions of mince pies between 1642 and 1660. Two core questions guide this investigation: (1) What lies behind the persistent myth of “Oliver Cromwell’s mince pie ban”? (2) How was the mince pie represented and perceived in the political writings of the period? Drawing from the tradition of verbal satires, pamphlets, and mock sermons that responded to the Long Parliament (1640-1660)’s ban on Christmas celebrations, I sought to analyze the satirical texts addressing mince pies (or “Christmas pyes”) penned by Royalist and Puritan authors, especially the following three works: *The Arraignment, Conviction, and Imprisoning of Christmas* (1646), “The World Is Turned Upside Down” (1646), and *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* (1659). By means of (inter)textual and contextual analysis, this study aspires to contribute to the scholarship of Early Modern English studies by offering in-depth and fresh perspectives on the captivating intersection of culture, literature, and history relating to food in seventeenth-century English political writings.

Key Words: mince pie, satire, Early Modern English literature, Christmas ban, English Civil War

I. Introduction

A mince pie (with variations of names such as “Christmas pye” and “minced pie”) is a traditional Christmas dessert in the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland, featuring a round shortbread crust and mincemeat filling cooked with various spices. John (2005) traces its origin to the twelfth century, when the Crusades led to an inflow of Middle Eastern spices, that contributed to the creation of the mince pie. Over time, the shape and filling of mince pies have continued to evolve, from the meaty, savory-sweet version in the Middle Ages to the meat-free, sweet version in the Victorian period and beyond.

The mince pie became an important cultural icon and food memory in the UK and Ireland, appearing in the literature from medieval recipe books to the twentieth-century *Harry Potter* series. Furthermore, the mince pie is said to bring good luck, corresponding to the old British proverb, “As many mince pies as you taste at Christmas, so many happy months will you have” (Percy Society, 1847: 62). According to the New England Historical Society’s introductory article “When The Puritans Banned Mincemeat Pie,” mince pies in the old days included a trio of spices: nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon. These symbolized the offerings brought by the three Magi to the newborn Jesus. The pie is also available in various shapes. As the article suggests, a particular recipe prescribed that these confections should assume an oblong shape, intended to mimic the form of the manger cradling the infant Jesus. This nomenclature consequently led to their occasional designation as “Crib cakes” (New England Historical Society, 2024). However, food historians such as Day (2013) have challenged this claim (which seemed to have been mentioned and shared by scholars since the early twentieth century), arguing that the manger shape of mince pies was only referenced by seventeenth-century jurist John Smith (1584-1654) in *Table Talk* (1696, published posthumously). Quoting from the original text: “Our Meats and our Sports (much of them) have Relation to Church-works. The Coffin of our Christmass-Pies in

shape [end of p. 30] long, is in Imitation of the Cratch [meaning ‘A movable rack for feeding beasts out of doors,’ according to *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2024a)]” (Seldon, 1696: 30-31). In *The Art of Cookery Refin’d and Augmented*, Joseph Cooper (1654), who claimed to be “chiefe cook to the late king [Charles I]” (Title page), presents a somewhat fancy design in his recipe of “five minced pies” (107), rather than the more common ovary and coffin-like shapes, as shown in Figure 1.

In addition, writers and scholars, including Day (2013), Jensen (2017), and Segan (2003), have mentioned Christmas food and mince pie in their works. For example, in her modern cookbook featuring recipes adapted from those of the Renaissance, Segan discusses meat pies and notes that vendors would sell these snacks to theatre audiences. Jensen compares the Christmas celebrations of modern British Catholics and Protestants, pointing out that mince pies, roasts, and Christmas puddings were traditional Christmas foods.

Noticeably, there have been rumors and hearsay surrounding mince pies. One of the most common myths is that this festive delicacy was banned by Oliver Cromwell between 1642 and 1660. This claim relates to the ruling party and the pro-Puritan Parliament’s suppression of Christmas celebrations during that period, as they regarded such festivities as an extravagant legacy of Catholicism and the old royal family. Durston (1985), for example, pointed out that “[m]ince-pies, mummers, holly and church services all fell victim to a determined Puritan attempt to stamp out the celebration of Christmas under the Commonwealth” (Durston, 1985). Such a prohibition was further reinforced by Parliament’s passing an *Ordinance for Abolishing of Festivals* on June 8, 1647 (Firth & Rait, 1911), which formally proscribed Christmas, Easter, and other church festivals (Hutton, 1994).

This purported “dark period” was frequently imagined and publicized by later authors and media in later ages as an explicit prohibition on the consumption of mince pies by Cromwell and the

Republican government. Clarkson (2009), for example, notes in her book-length study of pies that “Puritans tried hard to ban it (calling it ‘idolatrie in crust’) but did not succeed” (76). In these discourses, mince pies appear as a victim of governmental suppression, leading many readers and writers to believe and disseminate the misinformation. Bilton (2015), however, refutes this allegation, dismissing the assertion that Oliver Cromwell imposed a ban on Christmas festivities (and mince pies), as a fallacy—although some Puritans expressed disapproval of what they deemed “idolatrous” representations of sacred figures and festivity. Hirst’s (2011) article in *The Independent* similarly contends that, despite a popular misconception, Cromwell did not enact any legal prohibition against mince pies, even if they carried a certain stigma in Puritan circles. In “Did Oliver Cromwell ban Christmas?”, historian M. Stoye (2021) denies Cromwell’s involvement in both the ban on Christmas celebrations and the prohibition on mince pies.

In fact, according to Wood (2017), the only time when the consumption of mince pies was technically illegal on Christmas Day occurred in 1644 due to a national fast which fell on December 25. This prohibition was announced in a “[p]ublic notice to be given for observation of Monthly Fast till further order. And on the next day, being Christmas Day” dated December 19, 1644:

The Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled doe order and ordaine that publique notice be given that the Fast appointed to be kept on the last Wednesday in every moneth ought to be observed untill it be otherwise ordered by both Houses of Parliament: And that this day in particular is to be kept with the more solemne humiliation, because it may call to remembrance our sinnes, and the sinnes of our forefathers, who have turned this Feast, pretending the memory of Christ into an extreame forgetfulnesse of him, by giving liberty to carnall and sensuall delights[.] (Firth & Rait, 1911)

While mince pies are now commonly associated with Christmas, in seventeenth-century England they were consumed throughout the year, with contemporary recipes (as mentioned in the Introduction to this article) not specifying that the pies were intended for consumption exclusively during Christmas (Molcher, n.d.). Although I have not yet obtained access to local archival records on the baking, sale, and purchase of mince pies between 1640 and 1660, a 2017 online article for Powell (Paleographer of Early Modern Manuscripts Online, Folger Shakespeare Library) highlights a seventeenth-century manuscript recipe book—attributed to Leticia Cromwell—that includes a recipe for mince pies (see Figure 2).

Here is the transcription of the recipe:

To make minced Pyes

Take a peece of the Butt of beefe &
boile it a little then cut of the outside
of it & waigh the rest & to 10 pounds of
beefe take 13 of suett, mince them smale
together & take 12 apples & mince uery
smale & put to the meate then of cur=
rence take 7 pound of reason 8 pound
of pruens 2 pound 8 Nuttmegs 4 ounces
of dates cloues & mace 1 ounce halfe an
ounce of sin: beaten a little beaten san=
ders a pint of rosewater a little pepper
& salt & beaten ginger & carraway seeds
& 3 orrange peeles minced smale.

(nb. “sin:” likely refers to cinnamon) (Powell, 2017)

Despite these clarifications, myths surrounding the alleged ban on mince pies continue to shape collective memory. This aligns with Brow’s (2015) observation that although mince pies were never explicitly prohibited under Cromwell’s regime, the ascetic lookout on festive merriment adopted by many religious factions of the time transformed minced pies “into something of an emblem of rebellion” (Brow, 2015: para. 4) among those holding less stringent

Puritan beliefs. The evolving myth of a “ban” on mince pies will be elaborated in later sections of this article.

This controversy, coupled with Brow’s observation, aroused my interest in investigating the ways in which mince pie was actually treated during the English Civil Wars and the Interregnum—specifically, how this everyday food appeared and signified in contemporary culture and literature. Hence, my study does more than merely reiterate established historical facts; rather, it probes the complexities and nuances surrounding the Christmas ban, questions assumptions, and delves into the cultural and political factors influencing perceptions of this period. In her groundbreaking monograph *The Queen’s Two Bodies* (1977), Marie Axton investigates “the uses to which the drama was put to criticize the Queen, first by men of the Inns of Court, then by popular playwrights” (Engel, 1979: 249). At that time, she argues, theatre was employed as “a political weapon” to attack Queen Elizabeth I, and it is evident that the Queen recognized this (249). Similar allegorical techniques were deployed in food-related texts: Hartle (2007: 31-45) contends both the Royalists and the Puritans applied extensive references to food in their political propaganda, including during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Just as the King/Queen possessed two bodies, food was not confined to the dining table but was highly politicalized and deployed by satirists to skewer their opponents. Moreover, Jenner’s (2002) examination of political and satirical writings relating to the Rump offers an intriguing glimpse into how Royalist authors of the Commonwealth period used gastronomic metaphors (such as roasted meat) to mock the Rump Parliament. I also find Hartle’s (2007) analysis compelling, especially his argument that “discussions and representations of eating and drinking functioned as cultural fields of engagement during the British Civil War” (45).

In this study, “politics” is understood not merely as governance but as a complex interplay of power, ideology, and cultural identity. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “politics” encompasses

activities associated with the governance of a country, particularly debates or conflicts among individuals or parties vying for power (Oxford University Press, 2024b). In seventeenth-century England, this definition also encompassed rhetorical strategies employed by various factions to legitimize or challenge authority, as well as the symbolic acts—such as the banning of Christmas festivities—that became arenas for deeper ideological disputes.¹ As will be shown, both Royalists and Puritans portrayed themselves as “politically correct” in their verbal confrontations, seeking legitimacy not only through governance but also through cultural and symbolic acts. While Puritans condemned the lavish consumption of festive foods and drinks before the Civil War, and formally prohibited Christmas festivities during the Interregnum, the opposing Royalists followed a comparable line of debate, claiming their own legitimacy by calling for the revival of Christmas festivities and customs, and deploying mince pies as one of the politicized allegories in their propaganda. My findings identified multiple instances in satirical texts, suggesting that mince pies, like other Christmas dishes, became politicized symbols in the protracted clash between Puritans and Royalists over Christmas.

Regarding methodology, I build on approaches established by Jenner and Hartle, especially Hartle’s (2007: 30) cross-disciplinary study exploring material culture to provide a contextual framework for reexamining how literary or other texts interact with tangible objects in the world. I chose to investigate how pamphlets from 1642–1660 depicted mince pies, paying particular attention to political satires. Two reasons prompted this selection: first, there is no substantial academic study focused on mince pies in Early Modern England; second, further exploration is needed to understand the nuanced roles of food in Early Modern English literature. Hence, my study seeks to move beyond the myth of

¹ I am indebted to the anonymous reviewer for reminding me to elaborate on the nuances of the term “politics” in the title of this article and the discussions in the main body.

Cromwell's "ban" on mince pies and venture into the "politics" of mince pies—why did they feature so prominently in pamphlets? How and why were they presented as literary or cultural icons? What were the hidden meanings behind the narratives of consuming and suppressing mince pies? Finally, did these narratives have any broader implications?

Readers familiar with conventional canonical literary scholarship might question the significance of Early Modern pamphlets, given their ephemeral and anonymous nature. However, I underscore their importance—despite their brevity and anonymity—for several reasons. First, their brevity and anonymity emphasized their role as spontaneous, direct responses to political and cultural events. Additionally, in an era of a rapidly evolving print culture, short texts circulated rapidly, influencing public opinion. While lacking dedicatory epistles and author attributes, their anonymity facilitated the discreet dissemination of dissenting views on Christmas celebrations. Thus, despite their limitations, these pamphlets offered snapshots of dissent during a period of political and religious turmoil, and captured the urgency of cultural commentary. They illuminated public disapproval of perceived interference with traditional festivities and thereby challenged dominant political narratives.

With these concerns in mind, this study examines the context and substance of satirical texts referencing mince pies. To decipher the intricate nuances of "mince pie politics," my reading investigates pamphlets and pamphleteering during the English Civil Wars and the Interregnum. Owing to limitations of time and resources at this stage, I direct my focus primarily to satires involving mince pies (or "Christmas pyes") and Christmas bans rather than archival documents relating to the purchase, production, and consumption of mince pies. The research methods entail the contextual and intertextual analyses of the three core texts—particularly the rules, propaganda, and announcements addressing mince pies and Christmas dining between 1640 and 1660. The next section will

summarize the historical background of the long debate on Christmas feasts and fasting between the Royalists and Puritans. Following this, I provide textual analyses of pamphlets addressing mince pies, with a focus on *The Arraignment, Conviction, and Imprisoning, of Christmas* (1646), “The World Is Turned Upside Down” (1646), and *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* (1659).

II. Context: Verbal Battles Between the Puritans and the Royalists on Christmas Feasts and Fasting

The dispute over Christmas festivities among rival political pamphleteers preceded the Civil War. As Hartle (2007) observes, the “ideological battle over feasting” (40) revolved around Christmas—the lengthiest and most opulent of all religious festivals endorsed by the Established Church—with the most extensive and extravagant ceremonies (40). Even in the Elizabethan period, Puritan activists already criticized what they saw as excessive festivities, especially those pertaining to Christmas. Among the most famous of their verbal attacks is *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) by the “vigorous Puritan pamphleteer” (The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024) Philip Stubbs, who laments:

more mischiefe is that time comm••ted than in all the yéere besides? what masking and •umming, wherby robberie, whordome, murther, and what no, tis committed: what dicing & carding, what eating and drinking, what baqueting and feasting is than vsed more than in all the yéere besydes? . . . to the great dishonor of GOD, and impouerishing of the realme. (Stubbs, 1583)

The Puritans’ attacks on Christmas festivities (due to their fear of the monarchy’s and the court’s connections to Catholicism) continued even after Charles I acceded to the throne. They particularly targeted the King’s pastoral and luxurious court culture.

For instance, King James I's Book of Sports in 1618² and Charles I's reissued edition in 1633, led to Puritan satirical tracts and sermons in the 1620s and 1630s condemning both volumes' endorsement of lavish Christmas feasts and festive activities. Between 1630 and 1640, the Puritans' dissatisfaction increased, and they became even more openly opposed to Christmas festivities.

For instance, William Prynne, a Puritan lawyer and political polemicist, published *Histrio-Mastix The Players Scourge, or, Actors Tragædie* (1633) to attack theatre and Christmas celebrations. His extensive condemnation of Christmas drinking and festive activities appear in "ACTVS SECVNDVS":

Why doe men send for Stage-Players to their houses; [end of p. 47] why doe they flocke vnto their Theaters *thicke, and threefold, on Feastiull, and Solemne seasons*, especially in the Christmas time? Is it not out of worldly Pompe, and State? out of a prodigall, and vaine glorious humour? a degenerous, and Vnchristian symbolization with this present World? a voluptuous, and base seruilitie to our filthie carnall lusts? (Prynne, 1633: 47-48)

...

But let all who have any sparkes of sobriety, temperance or grace within them, abominate these unchristian Christmas extravagancies; *passing all the time of their sojour / ning here in feare*, concluding with that speech of holy *Peter; The time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, and to have walked in lasciviousnesse, lusts, excesse of wine and riot, revellings, banquettings, abominable idolatries*; bacchanalian Christ | mas pastime• and disorders[.] (Prynne, 1633: 782)

² Book of Sports was an order issued by James I "for use in Lancashire to resolve a conflict, on the subject of Sunday recreations, between the Puritans and the gentry, many of whom were Roman Catholics" (according to The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, 2022). The King's command for all the English clergy to read the Book at the pulpit caused strong opposition from the Puritans, which resulted in the King's withdrawal of the command.

According to T. Gulevich's (2003) *Encyclopedia of Christmas & New Year's Celebrations*, such attacks often included a condemnation of mince pies and those who indulged in them at Christmas. Again, in Robert Fletcher's translation of a satirical verse entitled "Christmas Day; Or the Shutle of an Inspired Weaver Bolted Against the Order of the Church for Its Solemnity," the mince pie is associated with negative Popish images (such as "Idolatrie in crust," "Nunnes with patches in a *Monastrie*," and "coffins to unholy men") and, in particular, the Whore of Babylon:

CHrist-mass? give me my beads: The word implies
A plot, by its ingredients Beef and Pyes.
A feast Apocryphal, a popish rite
Kneaded in dough (beloved) in the night.
The night (beloved) that's as much to say
(By late translations) not in the day.

An annual dark-lanthorn *Jubile*,
Catesby and *Uaulx* baked in conspiracie,
The Hierarchie of Rome, *the Triple Crown*
Confess'd in *Triangles*, then swallow'd down,
With spanish [sic] Sack? The eighty eight *Armado*
Newly presented in an *Ovenado*.
O *Calvin!* now my *Cause* upon thee fixes,
Were ere such dregs mix'd with *Genevae* sixes?
The cloyster'd steaks with salt and pepper lye
Like *Nunnes* with patches in a *Monastrie*.
Prophaneness in a *Conclave?* nay much more
Idolatrie in crust! *Babylon's Whore*
Raked from the grave, and baked by han | ches, then
Serv'd up in coffins to unholy men
Defiled with superstition, like the *Gentiles*
Of old, that worship'd *Onions▪ Roots* and *Len / tiles!*
Did ever *John of Leyden* prophecy
Of such an *Antichrist* as pudding-pye?
Beloved tis a thing when it appears
Enough to set the *Saints* all by the ears
In solving of the text, a doubtfull sin

Reformed Churches nere consented in. (Martial, 1656/n.d.: 154-155)

This might explain why Parliament announced restrictions and prohibitions on Christmas celebrations soon after the First English Civil War and resorted to active oppression thereof. Their argument held that a “wanton” approach to Christmas celebrations was contrary to the genuine spirit of Christianity, though a more practical consideration might have been to prevent their Royalist political opponents from taking advantage of Christmas observances to assemble and even riot, as described in the data provided by the blog of The History of Parliament project. A decree issued jointly by both Houses of Parliament on December 19, 1644, epitomizes the Puritan stance against Christmas: it asserts that the religious significance of the festival had been debased, with a proper focus on the contemplation of sin and the teachings of Jesus Christ having been replaced by worldly indulgence in pleasure-seeking and sensual delight (Roberts, 2013).

In 1644, the Parliament of England approved the Directory for Publique Worship of God to replace “the much-maligned Book of Common Prayer, with its shreds and stains of ‘popery’” (Marshall, 2022: 62). This speaks to government efforts to purge objects and activities relating to Christmas, not only to suppress traditional, “Popish” festive celebrations, but also to root out the values and traditions of Charles I’s court.

Parliament’s measures to eliminate monarchical and Catholic political and religious influences did not bring peace and joy to the people in England. Even before the announcement of a formal Christmas ban, there were violent protests by apprentices against shopkeepers opening on Christmas Day, as in London in 1643, and Bury St. Edmunds in 1646. Parliament’s 1647 declaration making Christmas observance a punishable offense, (which resulted in the cancelation of all Christmas Day celebrations and observances) led to further unrest, notably in Bury, Norwich, Ipswich, and in Canterbury where protesters seized control of the city (Roberts,

2013). In 1647, Christmas riots initiated a series of pro-Royalist demonstrations that persisted for several months and included the “Plum Pudding Riot.” In London, the Lord Mayor personally intervened to quell the disturbances on December 22. On December 27, pro-Royalist rioters in Canterbury forced the expulsion of the mayor, magistrates, and clergy from the city, resulting in a violent conflict (Ashton, 1894/2006). At this time, we saw a series of Royalists pamphlets and tracks denounce restrictions on Christmas celebrations, arguing the Puritanical suppression of Christmas festivities and worship were at odds with English traditions and sentiments.

To understand the hidden agenda of verbal battles featuring mince pies, it is necessary to begin with the broader context of pamphleteering in England between 1642 and 1660. Jason Peacey’s (2004) robust study and provocative arguments in his monograph, *Politicians and Pamphleteers*, highlight several important issues. He criticizes literary scholars for their “inadequate understanding of the political contexts” (5), suggesting this might explain the dearth of research on the politics of mince pies. Peacey also highlights the part pamphlets played in influencing decision-making and provoking frustration among various authorities, including the King, the House of Lords, the House of Commons, and the Protector (95). This observation aligns with Smith’s (1994) reading of political texts between 1640 and 1660 as “genre-mixtures within single discourses” (9), with “metaphorical inventiveness” (9), combining the parliamentary speech, printed sermons, and published controversies. Later studies focused on the functions of pamphlets and their impact on public opinion. As Zaret (2000) points out, both Royalists and Parliamentarians of the time recognized the need to “communicate with the people” (59) to explicate their policies and cultivate their enduring allegiance. He cautions readers that factual accuracy often took a back seat to the fabrication of narratives likely to sway public opinion, noting that political pamphlets employed

literary strategies from a number of genres (53).³ These studies show that pamphlets functioned as both a medium for political “persuasion and communication” (Verhoest, 2019: 48) and as marketable, potentially profitable, media commodities (48).

This echoes Pimlott’s (1960) observation that some Puritans enthusiastically agitated for the eradication of Christmas, whereas Royalists nostalgically associated Christmas observances with the monarchy and Catholicism. Brow (2015) confirms that pamphlets and ballads critical of Quaker beliefs and practices often invoked mince pies to ridicule the Quakers’ rejection of conventional social customs and norms. Moreover, Brow cites lines from two satirical texts by Quaker and pro-Royalist authors opposing and defending mince pies; my research on EEBO reveals that the former is John Cleveland’s (1613-1658) “The Publick Faith,” published posthumously in 1687. In particular, the following lines attack the consumption of “minc’d Pye” (Cleveland, 1687/n.d.: 337) and other festive foods containing “wanton Swines Flesh” (337) as Devil’s temptation:

Hadst thou sweetned thy Gumbs
With Pottage of Plumbs,
Or profane minc’d Pye hadst swallow’d:
Roll’d up in wanton Swines Flesh,
The Fiend might have crept into thee,
Then Fulness of Gut
Might have made thee Rut,
And the Devil so have rid through thee. (337)

To further explore satirical texts published between 1640 and 1660 addressing mince pies eaten on Christmas holidays (especially “Christmas pyes,” a term occurring in several pamphlets and tracts at that time), three texts are read as case studies: *The Arraignment, Conviction, and Imprisoning, of Christmas* (1646), “The World Is

³ For the historical context of pamphleteering, see also Peacey (2004), Raymond (2003), and Verhoest (2019).

Turned Upside Down” (1646), and *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* (1659). The forthcoming sections offer a close reading of these texts alongside a broader cultural analysis of the ways in which mince pies are deployed as politicized metaphors. In the process, I hope to revisit propagandistic representations of mince pies and to elaborate on behind the scenes nuances. Ultimately, these findings are likely to contribute to the scholarship on Early Modern literature (especially political writing and pamphlet literature), culture (especially food and politics), and history (especially political history).

III. *The Arraignment, Conviction, and Imprisoning of Christmas*⁴

The Arraignment, Conviction, and Imprisoning of Christmas (hereafter referred to as *The Arraignment*) is a satirical pamphlet published on January 12, 1646 (though a correction on the title page suggests 1645). The title well summarizes the text. Situated in the seventeenth century, the text reflects tensions surrounding Christmas celebrations amid the era’s religious conflict and socio-political upheaval. The Protestant Reformation had engendered debate over the appropriateness of festive traditions, which some criticized as indulgent or superstitious. Even modern critics diverge sharply in their interpretations of this text. Garrett (2022) claims that *The Arraignment* is a Republican satire attacking Pro-Royalist John Taylor’s defense of Christmas by blending Taylor’s identity with the emblematic figure of “old Christmas Day” (para. 14), a role Taylor had adopted in his own pamphlets. Winick (2018) observes that the author of *The Arraignment* “didn’t seem to approve of Christmas” (l. 123), despite the accounts of Father Christmas’

⁴ A number of references showed minor changes to the title in various editions. My choice of the title wording is based upon the cover page of the pamphlet I consulted from EEBO (“The Arraignment,” 1646).

popularity. Aware of the various voices contesting this text, my reading focuses on the metaphorical and symbolic narratives addressing mince pies. Such narratives, I argue, illuminate to a significant extent the nuances of the pamphlet war over the Christmas ban.

Significantly, the title page of *The Arraignment*—stating “Printed by Simon Minc’d Pye, for Cissely Plum-porridge” (“The Arraignment,” 1646: Title page)—exemplifies the period’s penchant for wry pseudonyms and playful and satirical language. Such pseudonyms might have functioned as an indirect means to censure or lampoon political figures without directly identifying their targets. Additionally, they could have operated as a form of cultural critique, engaging with prevalent stereotypes or cultural emblems of the epoch, or offering nuanced reflections on societal conventions and conduct. This is reminiscent of one of allegorical characters in seventeenth-century court masques, such as Jonson’s *Masque of Christmas* and *Love’s Welcome at Welbeck*. Reading these, Baskervill (1998) argues for the intertextuality between the two masques and *The Arraignment*; the fictional and allegorical names such as “Simon Minc’d Pye,” “Cissely Plum-Porridge,” and “Pack of Cards” are reminiscent of Jonson’s characterization in *The Masque of Christmas*, while “Plum-porridge occurs again as a character in Middleton’s *Inner-Temple Masque*” (262), particularly among the names of family members listed in Kersmas’ will.

The main purpose of using a pseudonym might be to signal to readers the humorous content within. Such witticisms with names were frequently employed by printers or publishers. In this particular context, it is probable that “Simon Minc’d Pye” and “Cissely Plum-porridge” represent fictional appellations or pseudonyms, devised by the author or publisher with the intention of delighting readers and contributing to the overall mordant and light-hearted ambiance. Such imaginative designations enhance the pamphlet’s playful characterization and are consistent with its satirical objectives, potentially conforming to the established literary conventions in seventeenth-century England.

Additionally, the main body of the text presents a whimsical allegory in which Christmas personified is humorously depicted as being arraigned, convicted, and imprisoned on St. Thomas Day (December 21). Notably, there was an extensive array of texts and images by the Royalist pamphleteers involving Father Christmas: an icon representing and advocating for a nostalgic past (Roud, 2006). This fictional persona is portrayed in a satirical excerpt published in London in 1645 as an elderly, gray-bearded nobleman jovially engaging in a wanton celebration involving feasting, imbibing, and gambling, among other pursuits (Dean, 2015). Similar images appeared in several later pamphlets, including John Taylor's *Christmas In & Out* in 1652⁵ and Josiah King's *The Examination and Tryall of Old Father Christmas* (1658), to name just a few. My attention is particularly drawn to the frontispiece of *The Examination and Tryall of Old Father Christmas*. As Figure 3 shows, Father Christmas is illustrated with festive food and drinks, including a large Christmas pie at the bottom-right corner.

Against this backdrop, the text appears to operate with multiple layers of metaphors and implications. The main body is based on a dialogue between a Malignant Lady (supposedly a Royalist) in London and a London city crier (the "Cryer") about the whereabouts of Father Christmas, who has escaped from custody. The Cryer declares that "in every house roast Breve and Mutton, Pies and Plumporridge, and all manner of delicate round about him, and every one saluting merry Christmas" ("The Arraignment," 1646: 3). As Parish (2016) points out, such a declaration highlights the void left in December owing to the absence of Christmas. The text also contains implicit exchanges between other characters, described as "divers other Witty Passages" ("The Arraignment," 1646: 2) on the title page, including a letter from Mr. Woodcock, a fellow in Oxford

⁵ Please refer to *Christmas In & Out: Or, Our Lord & Saviour Christs Birth-Day to the Reader*, by J. Taylor, printed in 1652, at the charge of the author. <https://name.umdl.umich.edu/A64160.0001.001>

and an old friend of the Cryer, to the Malignant Lady. These interactions reveal the wit and banter surrounding the Father Christmas's apprehension, imprisonment, escape, and subsequent pursuit. Its anonymous author initially presents Father Christmas in a negative light, concentrating on his allegedly Popish attributes:

For age, this hoarie headed man was of great yeares, and as white as snow; he entred the Romish Kallender time out of mind; [he] is old ... he was full and fat as any dumb Docter of them all. He looked under the consecrated Laune sleeves as big as Bul-beefe ... but, since the catholike liquor is taken from him, he is much wasted, so that he hath looked very thin and ill of late.... He got Prentises, Servants, and Schollars many play dayes, and therefore was well beloved by them also, and made all merry with Bagpipes, Fiddles, and other musicks, Giggs, Dances, and Mummings. ("The Arraignment," 1646: 3)

Given the convention of images and texts addressing Father Christmas, the allegorical narrative in *The Arraignment* builds upon such a cultural icon and revolves around the theme of suppressed Christmas celebrations during a period of significant political and religious turmoil in England. The text functions as a medium for conveying social critique and satire, effectively utilizing humor and fantasy to address the curtailment of customary holiday observances. These festivities, often viewed as frivolous or impious by the Puritan authorities and their supporters, become the primary focus of the allegory.

This is particularly significant in the passages addressing mince pies. For instance, the Cryer makes a lengthy proclamation that Christmas may hide in many festivities, including mince pies:

All you, therefore, that by your diligent inquirie, can tell me anie tidings of this ould man called Christmas, and tell me where he may be met withall; whether in any of your streets, or elsewhere, though in never so straitned a place; in an Applewoman's staul or Grocer's Curren Tub, in a Cooke's Oven or the Maide's Porridge pot, or crept into

some corner of a Translator's shop, where the Cobler was wont so merrily to chant his Carolls; whosoever can tel what is become of him, or where he may be found, let them bring him back againe into England, to the Crier, and they shall have a Benediction from the Pope, an hundred oaths from the Cavaliers, 40 kisses from the Wanton Wenches, and be made Pursevant to the next Arch Bishop. Malignants will send him a piece of Braune, and everie Prentice boy will give him his point (? pint of wine) next holie Thursday, the good Wives will keepe him in some corners of their *mince pies*, and the new Nuncio Ireland will returne him to be canonized the next Reformation of the Calender. ("The Arraignment," 1646: 3)

The passage adeptly employs vivid and evocative imagery to metaphorically elucidate the quest for Christmas—a central figure within the text. Such imagery showcases the broader societal attitudes and controversies surrounding the celebration of Christmas during the Early Modern period.

I shall start with the reference to "the good Wives will keepe him in some corners of their mince pies" ("The Arraignment," 1646: 3), which encapsulates a multifaceted commentary, underlining the symbolic import of mince pies. By suggesting that Christmas may be hidden within mince pies, the text plays on the idea of concealing or preserving the holiday spirit within familiar customs. The emphasis on "the good Wives" underscores the pivotal role of women in nurturing and perpetuating Christmas traditions. Traditionally, women were responsible for culinary preparations, including the crafting of mince pies, highlighting the gendered dynamics intertwined with Christmas festivities. This implies that women have played an essential role in the upholding of festive customs.

The juxtaposition of "mince pies" with the surrounding controversies of Christmas also draws a clear distinction between secular and religious facets of the holiday. While mince pies symbolize the festive spirit, they also represent indulgence and excess—qualities criticized by Puritans of the era. As the Puritan-dominated Parliament aimed to "rectify" the religious practices of

King Charles I's reign, the portrayal of Christmas undergoing trial resonates with the Puritan and Republican critique of perceived excesses linked to religious observances. The depiction of a holiday figure facing conviction also serves as an implicit critique of religious customs deviating from a perceived "pure" doctrine.

Moreover, the notion of Christmas concealed within mince pies conveys a sense of hidden significance and subversion. This aligns with the overarching theme of the text, wherein Christmas is metaphorically "imprisoned" due to societal scrutiny. The reference to "corners" implies that Christmas may be marginalized or obscured by dominant religious and cultural norms, particularly Puritan values.

Ultimately, the idea of "the good Wives" safeguarding Christmas in the corners of their mince pies suggests, notwithstanding societal pressures, there exists a popular inclination to uphold traditional celebrations. This could signify a longing to rekindle the joyful and celebratory spirit of Christmas, even within the constraints imposed by evolving cultural expectations. As mentioned earlier in this paper, such a desire was often voiced by pro-Royalist pamphleteers to attack Cromwell's parliamentary suppression of traditional Christmas values and to justify the restoration of the monarch. This might also have been related to the notion of the divine rights of kings prior to the execution of Charles I.

In the text, the Lady unfolds that Christmas attempts to escape confinement during the holidays, only to leave behind "the hair of his good, grave old head and beard" ("The Arraignment," 1646: 6). As she enquires about "one lock whereof will serve Mr. Woodcock for a token; But what is the event of his departure?" (6), the Cryer responds:

The poor are sory for it, for they go to every door a begging as they were wont to do (Good Mrs. somewhat against this good Time) but Time was transformed, Away be gone, here is not for you; and so they instead of going to the Ale-bouse

to be drunk, were fain to work all the Holidayes. The Schollers came into the Hall, where their hungry stomachs had thought to have found good Brawn and *Christmas Pies*, Roast bief and Plum porridge, but no such matter[.] (“The Arraignment,” 1646: 6)

The speaker appears to imply that, in the past, during what they considered a better time, the poor were received with more generosity and charity. This may allude to a perceived shift in societal values, or perhaps a change in policy that has negatively impacted the poor.

The juxtaposition between the past and present becomes conspicuous as the speaker delineates a marked contrast. In days of yore, the destitute were harshly dismissed with the injunction, “Away be gone, here is not for you” (“The Arraignment,” 1646: 6). By contrast, the contemporary era compels them to toil during the holiday season instead of seeking solace in the alehouse for merriment. This transition may connote a moral or political agenda directed at mitigating indolence and advancing industriousness, possibly reflecting the values or policies of a particular political fraction or leadership.

The passage then introduces scholars who enter a hall with the expectation of enjoying traditional festive foods like “Brawn and Christmas Pies, Roast bief and Plum porridge” (“The Arraignment,” 1646: 6). However, they are denied these indulgences with the stern admonition that such foods are “superstitious meats” (6), and instead, their “stomack must be fed with wholesome doctrine” (6). The transition from a disposition of self-indulgence to one characterized by ascetic erudition might allude to changing social values leaning toward a more puritanical or austere ethos. The passage highlights that in the contemporary era, established Christmas fare and traditions are met with rejection, deemed as “superstitious meats.” This designation implies that these practices are out of favor, or perhaps proscribed, and displaced by a “wholesome doctrine” consistent with the Parliamentary stance

prevalent during the English Civil War. The above lamentation aligns with Royalist sentiments, as they were often more sympathetic with traditional Anglican Church practices, including the celebration of Christmas.

In the end, the Lady, probably representing the Royalist voice, declares that despite the suppression of traditional festivities, people will still welcome Father Christmas secretly, against the government's censorship. The final statement, "I will my self give him his diet for one year, to try his fortune, this time twelve month it may prove better" ("The Arraignment," 1646: 6) may also suggest that the Royalists and troupes supporting the monarch are gathering their force to overthrow the existing "hegemony" of Cromwell's parliament and reinstate traditions (including the monarchy) in the near future.

In summary, *The Arraignment* is a satirical portrayal of a holiday-facing trial, evoking themes of religious tension, cultural critique, and gendered implications. The text's satirical devices and socio-cultural context illuminate the nuanced relationship between Christmas celebrations and the socio-religious milieu of the Early Modern era. By parodying the trial, the author engages in multifaceted debates surrounding traditions during a transformative period of British history.

The imagery of mince pies in this passage encapsulates the intricate interplay among tradition, politics, gender roles, cultural critique, and religious debates surrounding the celebration of Christmas. The metaphorical hiding of Christmas within mince pies illustrates the tension between preserving festive customs and adhering to evolving societal norms, contributing to the text's broader commentary on the politicized complexities of Christmas celebrations in mid-seventeenth-century England. These issues were addressed not only in dialogic prose texts like *The Arraignment* but also in other forms of political writing, to which I now turn.

IV. “The World Is Turned Upside Down”

Published contemporaneously with *The Arraignment*, “The World Is Turned Upside Down. To the Tune of, *When the King Enjoys His Own Again*” (referred to as “The World Is Turned Upside Down” in this paper) is a British broadside ballad published around 1645 and 1646, during which *The Arraignment* was also published. First issued on a broadside around the Civil War period in the 1640s, it is now categorized in the first volume of the Thomason Tracts [669. f. 10 (47), dated April 8, 1646] (Fortescue, 1908/1977: 431).

The title is probably attributable to the *Book of Acts* in *The New Testament*.

[5] But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

[6] And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that *have turned the world upside down* are come hither also;⁶

[7] Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. (*King James Bible*, 1611/1997, Acts 17:5)

The background of the above-quoted text is that the Jews were forming a mob and rioting in the city. The ballad quotes a biblical reference to insinuate that political leaders and parliamentarians who banned Christmas festivities are similar to the Jewish mob in the Bible, who made the world (including the Kingdom of England) chaotic.

⁶ The italics are mine.

In the first stanza, the narrator begins by explicitly criticizing the new government for the Christmas ban, which violated ancient traditions that completely uprooted festivals and rituals.

Listen to me and you shall hear,
 News hath not been this thousand year:
 Since Herod, Caesar, and many more,
 You never heard the like before.
 Holy-dayes are despis'd,
 New fashions are devis'd.
 Old Christmas is kickt out of Town.
 Yet let's be content, and the times lament,
 You see the world turn'd upside down. ("The World Is
 Turned Upside Down," 1646: st. 1)

Here the mention of "Herod, Caesar, and many more" refers to ancient civilizations and traditions. Although one may ask if the Greeko-Romanic year-end festivities were pagan rather than Christian, the old "fashions" in the above passage are likely to stand in for lost traditional English Christmas celebrations (dismissed as not properly Christian, but Popish, by the Puritans). Additionally, the statement "Old Christmas is kickt out of Town" refers to Father Christmas, a common icon justified or ridiculed by various pamphleteers (as elaborated in the second section of this paper) and goes further by amplifying the "crisis" of the real Christian spirit (here attributed to Christmas) being suppressed by the Puritan and Republican government.

In the second stanza, the narrator reminisces about biblical references and the meaning of Christmas and argues that the festival is for people to remember and learn from their ancestors' virtues, but as the new law inhibits this confusion reigns. In the third stanza, out of frustration, the narrator notes that since the policy and regulation have already been promulgated, people have no choice but to follow them and forget about the old Christmas celebrations. The narrator then shifts position, satirizing the destruction of beliefs, which people are to graciously accept:

Command is given, we must obey,
 And quite forget old Christmas day:
 Kill a thousand men, or a Town regain,
 We will give thanks and praise amain.
 The wine pot shall clinke,
 We will feast and drinke.
 And then strange motions will abound. ("The World Is
 Turned Upside Down," 1646: st. 3)

Here the phrase "Kill a thousand men" employs an ironic allusion to the Bible, indicating that the suppression and killing done by Cromwell's troupe contradicts the moral imperative, "Thou shalt not kill" given in the Ten Commandments (*King James Bible*, 1611/1997, Deuteronomy 5:17, Exodus 20:13).

The fourth stanza criticizes social superiors for following suit, abandoning ancient traditions, and neglecting charity during the Christmas season.

Our Lords and Knights, and Gentry too,
 Doe mean old fashions to forgoe:
 They set a porter at the gate,
 That none must enter in thereat.
 They count it a sin,
 When poor people come in.
 Hospitality it selfe is drown'd. ("The World Is Turned
 Upside Down," 1646: st. 4)

Juxtaposed with restrictions set by the "new" fashions (specifically the ban on Christmas festivities), the monarch and the Royalists—representatives of "old fashions" (chivalry, joy, hospitality)—are the real inheritor of Christianity.

In the fifth stanza, the narrator shifts focus to the middle and lower classes, especially those working in the restaurant and service industry.

The serving men doe sit and whine,
 And thinke it long ere dinner time:

The Butler's still out of the way,
 Or else my Lady keeps the key,
 The poor old cook,
 In the larder doth look,
 Where is no goodnesse to be found, ("The World Is Turned
 Upside Down," 1646: st. 5)

The above scene in which "my Lady keeps the key" suggests at least two hidden meanings. First, the ruling class has a firm hold on the resources and power in society and is depriving the lower classes of access. Second, the Lady's seeming lack of mercy and generosity mirrors the immorality of the rulers (i.e., Cromwell and Parliament) and their betrayal of the traditional Christmas spirit.

In the sixth and final stanza, the narrator adopts a heavy tone, criticizing the unfortunate end of Christmas traditions set in motion when the Parliament's New Model Army defeated the Royalist army in the Battle of Naseby in 1645. The narrator laments the death of "my friend" Jack Tell troth (believed to be a fictional character rather than a real person, symbolizing the dissidents) in the war along with Christmas. Thus, Jack Tell troth can no longer enjoy Christmas delicacies, including "shred pie":

To conclude, I'll tell you news that's right,
 Christmas was kil'd at Naseby fight:
 Charity was slain at that same time,
 Jack Tell troth too, a friend of mine,
 Likewise then did die,
 Rost beef and shred pie,
 Pig, Goose and Capon no quarter found. ("The World Is
 Turned Upside Down," 1646: st. 6)

Similar to the imagery of Christmas pies and plum-porridge in *The Arraignment*, the list of festive food in the above passage is meant to lament the deprivation of old-time joy (also indicating the old values and customs prior to the Civil War) by the "new fashions" imposed by Cromwell's parliament. Meanwhile, the ruling class is portrayed as immoral and tyrannical, leading to the accusation of

their being “bad Christians” for abandoning the Christmas traditions.

A close reading of “The World Is Turned Upside Down” shows that even though the Cromwell government did not explicitly ban the supply or sale of mince pies, it is conceivable that the production and sale of Christmas-specific food were impacted due to the suppression of festivities. More importantly, such a scenario is likely to be emphasized, if not exaggerated, by Royalist pamphleteers, which were arguments in favor of the restoration of traditional Christian rituals and values, and extended to the divine right of kings.

V. *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye*

While laments over the suppression of tradition and loss of good will are heard in the ballad of “The World Is Turned Upside Down,” *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* (1659) by P. C. (real name unknown) challenges the Christmas ban via a mock sermon. Early in the 1960s, scholars such as Thomas (1969) already proclaimed the importance of mock sermons, marking *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* as a typical example “to discredit Puritan antipathy towards religious festivals” (202) by “burlesquing the Nonconformist preacher” (202). Jones (1997) describes this tract as “[a] particularly fine thoroughgoing example of the genre [i.e. mock sermons]” (99). Peacey (2004: 5) also calls for more scholarly attention to sermons during the Civil War and Interregnum. More recent studies reveal an emerging interest of research on mock sermons. In an archival article, for example, the author brownj [sic] (2021) affirms that one can uncover several noteworthy passages within *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye*, particularly when the author draws a parallel between the creation of Christmas plum pies and the significance attributed to “Guns and Printing” (l. 79). Parsons and Jongenelen (2010) contribute to the decoding of the text with rich contextual analysis and brief notes on the tract; they mark Christmas as a potential topic for mock sermons offering

opportunities to exercise traditional practices. Their study establishes a cross-cultural connection between Dutch mock sermons, their English equivalents, and the *sermons joyeux* of Renaissance France (Oxford University Press, n.d.). This echoes Thomas' (1969) reading of *The Exaltation of Christmas Pyes* as an important example of English mock sermons relating to winter festivities.

Against this backdrop, I read *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* as a mock sermon incorporating elements of humor and absurdity, written in a satirical and grotesque style. The narrator suggests that this text addresses "abundance of matter" such as tempting food and lavish dinner (probably in celebration of Christmas) that "makes my teeth water to think on't" (P. C., 1659/n.d.: 3). Most importantly, statements containing phrases addressing plum-pie eating and "rejoyced/rejoyce exceedingly" (3, 10, 11) occur repeatedly throughout the text, almost like a refrain or a chorus of a song.

After a few playful and discursive discourses about "*Conjunction Copulative*" (echoing wanton, sexually-charged interactions between men and women) and Henry VIII's dispute with Luther (concerning drinking, which apparently this did not occur in reality), the preceding passages then delve into an extravagant exploration of the act of eating, particularly focusing on the consumption of various types of Christmas pies:

For you must know, my beloved, that there are more then one sort of plum pyes in the world: I my self have seen plums put into an apple pye, and it hath tasted exceeding savoury. There is you neats foot pye, there is your calves chaldron pye, there is your Lamb pye, there is your veal pye, and all these pyes have plums in um; but there is your Christmas pye and that hath plums in abundance, that is your Metropolitan plum pye, tis the cream of all plum pyes, and in brief there is no plum pye like it. Truly my beloved, I wonder at the little wit of our brethren, that persecuted these pyes so furiously in their pulpits: for can they undergo a worse persecution then to be eaten? take away Christmas I say, if you take away our pyes, especially our plum pies ...

but doubtless the invention of plum pye doth far exceed it.
 He that discovered the new Star in Cassiopea the other day,
 deserves not half so much to be remembred, as he that first
 married minced meat and Raisins together. (P. C.,
 1659/n.d.: 6)

In the passage above, the narrator discusses the different types of plum-pies, their ingredients, and significance. Historical anecdotes, myths, and contradictory claims are interwoven to create a humorous and nonsensical narrative. As Brow (2015) comments, such a lengthy sermon “hailed the consumption of all manner of forms of plum pie as exceedingly good for the soul” (para. 4, ll. 15-16), while simultaneously critiquing the severe denouncement of indulgence advocated by numerous radical religious factions in England during the mid-seventeenth century.

Based on the narrative conventions of mock sermons and pamphlets, I contend that the above account of Christmas pies is a satire of the Christmas ban. The repeated references to “And their Plum-pies, and rejoiced exceedingly” (P. C., 1659/n.d.: 3, 10, 11) in this mock sermon highlight the sentiments associated with Christmas festivities, and the extravagant indulgence in feasting, and plum pies in particular, during that era. This aligns with the notion of festive culture and celebration of physical appetites, as mentioned earlier. This also corresponds with notions of the carnival and grotesque in Bakhtin’s (1965/1984) *Rabelais and His World*, in particular festive practices and traditional customs marked by indulgence, parody, and an emphasis on earthly human experiences such as eating and defecation, as pointed out by Jenner (2002).

After a series of trivial references to how mince pies are consumed, and several seemingly random anecdotes, the narrator concludes with a declaration of *carpe diem* (“seize the day”):

Is it so then that every Man who Eats *Plum pye ought to rejoyce exceedingly*. Then let us Eat Christmas or Plum pye and rejoyce, Drink, Eat, and be Merry, Play at Cards and win Money, for that the dayes of the Year, are now like the

dayes of Man, short and soon Vanishing. (P. C., 1659/n.d.: 11)

This may contain subtle references to the Bible, with the phrase “eat, drink, and be merry” (*King James Bible*, 1611/1997, 1 Corinthians 15:32, Luke 12:19) often linked to the concept *carpe diem*, which reoccurs pervasively in such seventeenth-century love poems such as John Donne’s “The Flea” (1633),⁷ Robert Herrick’s “To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time” (1648),⁸ and Andrew Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress” (ca. 1650-1659, possibly written during 1650s; published posthumously in 1681).⁹ Apparently, the motif, along with joy and pleasure, is a cultural value favored by Royalist elites and literati in the seventeenth century. By appropriating the above verses from the Holy Scripture, the narrator in *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* criticizes the restriction of festivities and pleasure based on the rigid Puritan interpretation of the Bible. Consequently, the text amalgamates cleverness, irony, and preposterousness to craft a jovial and comical composition that emulates a Protestant sermon, while providing a comedic impact. It utilizes hyperbolic assertions, playful dictions, and digressions to entertain and amuse readers.

Mentions of “Christmas Pye” and “plum pye” in this mock sermon remind one of a similar type of politicized mockery in the case of the “Rump.” Drawing on Adams’ (1990) study of the symbolism of meat and the sexual politics involved, Jenner (2002) regards the Rump as “a text of meat” (106), “roasted, carved and

⁷ Please refer to *Poems, by J. D. With Elegies on the Authors Death* by J. Donne (1633), published by M[iles] F[lesher] for Iohn Marriot. <http://name.umd.umich.edu/A69225.0001.001>

⁸ Please refer to *Hesperides, or, the Works Both Humane & Divine of Robert Herrick, esq.* (2011), published by John Williams and Francis Eglesfield. The poem was originally published in 1648. <http://name.umd.umich.edu/A43441.0001.001>

⁹ Please refer to *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (9th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 1796-1797), edited by S. Greenblatt and published by W. W. Norton. The poem was originally published in ca. 1650-1659.

eaten” (106). Such a rhetorical device could likewise be extended to food items such as mince pies. As Jenner (2002) adeptly observes, the outward manifestation of carnivorous delight and celebration symbolized a victory over the Puritans’ Lenten regulations and their proscription of Christmas festivities. This perspective aligns with the Royalist rhetoric of “festive culture” (106) and the “conspicuous eating and drinking” (106), which are characteristic of traditional Christmas celebrations. In so doing, it forms a significant contrast with “reformed, usually urban puritan culture” (Smith, 1994: 250). Like excessive drinking, “a form of symbolic defiance on the part of the Royalists” (Jenner, 2002: 106), I regard that the recurring actions of “[e]at[ing] Christmas or Plum pye and rejoyc[ing exceedingly]” (P. C., 1659/n.d.: 3, 10, 11) reiterated in *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* as a reinforcement of Royalist values, reminding the reader of the good and glorious past of Christmas and monarchy before the Civil Wars, while simultaneously attacking Cromwell, Puritans, and the Republicans for the suppression of joy, freedom, and traditional Christianity.

The Exaltation of Christmas Pye stands as a political satire that artfully employs humor, hyperbole, and absurdity to protest the policies of Cromwell and Parliament, with a focus on the prohibition of Christmas celebrations. It extols the jubilation and festivity traditionally accompanying the holiday season, while potentially engaging in a gentle mockery of the somber demeanor and stern religious convictions upheld by the Puritan authorities during the Interregnum. Similar to *The Arraignment* and “The World Is Turned Upside Down,” the discursive discourses in *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye* can be seen as an extension from the Royalist pamphleteers’ common practice of rhetoric wordplay based upon the conflict between the Royalist values (tradition, festivity, and pleasure) and the Republican/Puritan ones (reformation, ascetic piety, and discipline). The text differs from the other two tracts by further developing the lavish and grotesque features of Christmas celebrations, particularly the excessive consumption of mince pies and other festive food and drinks. This echoes Bakhtin’s sense of

“Rabelaisian excesses” (Jenner, 2002: 107), thereby showing that the Royalist pamphleteers are “capable of deploying the ‘carnavalesque’ body” (Smith, 1994: 305) in the debates before the Restoration.

VI. Conclusion

Inspired by the myth of Cromwell’s ban on mince pies, this article explores both the context and the texts between 1642 and 1660, focusing on satires addressing mince pies and the Christmas ban, in particular *The Arraignment, Conviction, and Imprisoning, of Christmas*, “The World Is Turned Upside Down”, and *The Exaltation of Christmas Pye*. Despite the fact that mince pies were not banned during the English Civil War and the Interregnum (even the stipulated Christmas bans were not strictly enforced at that time), the findings revealed that these works utilized mince pie and related food experiences and culture as materials for criticizing Cromwell and his Parliament’s suppression of Christmas celebrations. On the surface, they appeared to bewail the loss of the joy of seasonal food and feasting, while in reality, they protested the ban on Christmas festivities, denouncing it as untraditional and anti-Christian. They were not only a controversial food, along with the prohibited celebrations, but also an icon of political satire.

In line with studies of pamphlets and mock sermons during and after the English Civil Wars, my readings of tracks and pamphlets on mince pies further explore food imagery in political writings, including that of mince pies. Such imagery was intentionally and skillfully deployed in the political writings between 1642 and 1660 by writers with different political stances. The discussions also prove that food such as mince pies have had a specific presence not just in domestic recipes, but, perhaps to the surprise of modern readers, in public and political debate. Brow (2015) presents a compelling argument that the mince pie represented more than a delectable Yuletide indulgence for those who opposed the austere Puritan customs prevailing during the Interregnum period in England,

serving as a symbol of what they considered innocuous merriment, thus offering a veiled means of critiquing the policies enacted by the Interregnum government. Such a phenomenon aligns with Peacey's (2004) view that Early Modern print media enabled the expansion of public debate and the emergence of a contested sphere that occasionally attained a degree of autonomy. Apart from the most famous example of the Rump Parliament, the findings of my study prove that mince pies and their role as a traditional Christmas delicacy also made them an important device for debates between authors of various political positions.

It is also important to acknowledge the allegorical image and political underpinning of Christmas food (including mince pies) in these writings, as they were largely ignored as minor texts in most previous studies. Subsequently, my findings suggest that even though there was no real ban on mince pies, both the Puritans and Royalists deployed food politics to attack each other, with the Puritans criticizing the wantonness and Popish act of Christmas festivities, while the Royalists lamented and condemned the Puritans for abandoning the great tradition of the Christian spirit. Both criticized each other for not obeying real Christianity. The personification and imagery of food items in the satirical texts by the Puritans and Royalists are significant in presenting the contemporary metaphorical writing style and hyperbole in prose satires.

Finally, my study of the context and text of satirical texts on mince pies, particularly the three pamphlets or tracts discussed earlier, contributes to the scholarship of Early Modern literary and cultural studies by attracting more attention to the iconic presentations of food and drinks in political writings. As shown in the discussions above, the complexity of mince pies in political writings may serve as a convincing example of Zaret's (2000) observation: "The boundaries between literary forms, on the one hand, and political writing and journalism, on the other, remained permeable throughout the 17th century" (53). Owing to limited time and resources, this study focuses on political pamphlets and

satirical texts instead of tracking down the historical evidence of the baking, sales, and consumption of mince pies between 1642 and 1660. Further investigation into these aspects will help in developing a more comprehensive context for narratives concerning mince pies. Future research may also encompass an investigation of contemporary readers' feedback on mince-pie-based satires. These will likely provide a more comprehensive exploration of the issue from the opponents' standpoint and offer a deeper analysis of the concealed intricacies surrounding "Christmas Pyes."

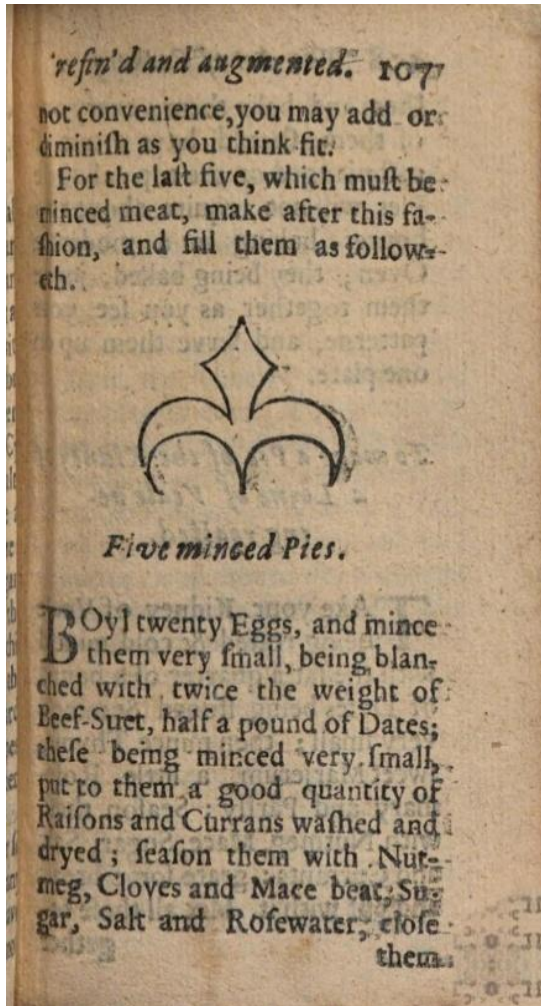


Image Credit: Courtesy of the British Library,
digitized by the Google Books project.
Source: Cooper (1654: 107).

Figure 1 Image of Mince Pie Crust Design

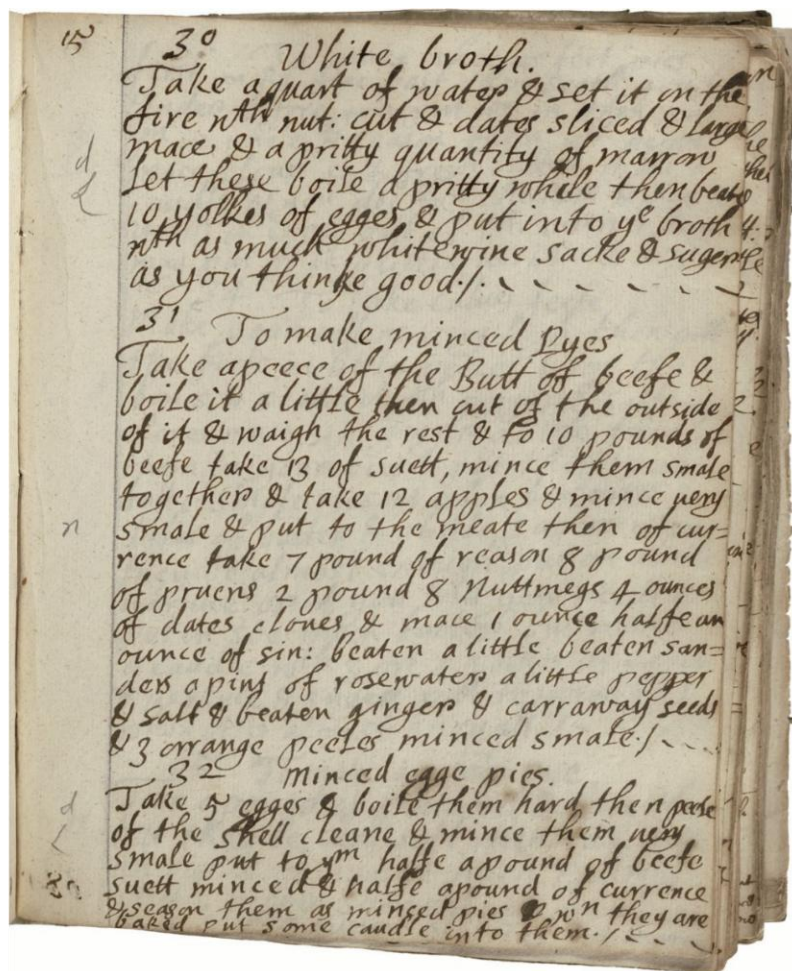


Image Credit: Call #: MS ADD 102, V.a.8., p.15, Image #: 122152.

Folger Shakespeare Library.

Note: For information about the cookbook's publication, see Manuscript
Cookbooks Survey (n.d.).

Source: Cromwell (n.d.).

Figure 2 A Page Containing a Mince Pie Recipe

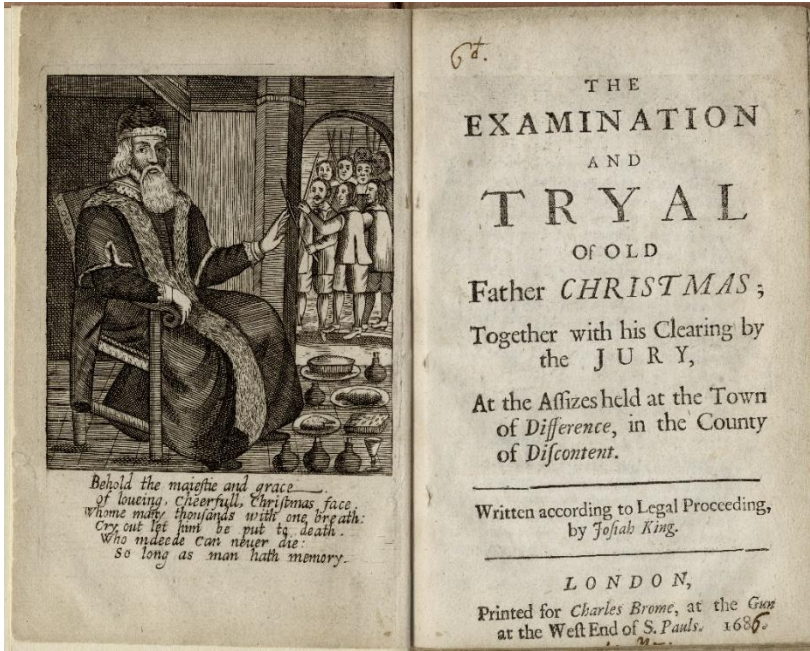


Image Credit: Call #: K511A, Title page and frontispiece, Image #: 6792.
Folger Shakespeare Library.

Source: Josiah King (1658/1686).

Figure 3 Title Page and Frontispiece of Josiah King,
The Examination and Tryal of Old Father Christmas (1686)

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聖誕餡餅於英國內戰及共和時期 (1642-1660) 諷刺文本當中之呈現與政治議題

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摘 要

聖誕餡餅為英格蘭和愛爾蘭重要的聖誕傳統之一，從中世紀食譜書、莎劇到現代大眾文學，於英國文學文化留下不可磨滅的足跡。然而克倫威爾於十七世紀中期禁止聖誕餡餅的傳言，儘管歷史未曾證實，卻成為大眾長久的迷思。本文聚焦於1642年至1660年的文本及背景脈絡，探討兩個核心問題：(1)「克倫威爾禁止聖誕餡餅」傳言的意涵；(2) 當時政治文獻如何呈現聖誕餡餅、賦予其政治象徵意義？本研究分析當時保皇黨和清教徒涉及聖誕餡餅的諷刺文本，特別是以下三部作品：《聖誕之父的審判、定罪與監禁》(1646)、〈天翻地覆〉(1646) 和《聖誕餡餅禮讚》(1659)，探討十七世紀政治文本中的食物與文學文化和歷史之交會連結，為前現代英國研究學界提供深入新穎之解讀觀點。

關鍵詞：聖誕餡餅、諷刺文學、早期現代（近現代）英國文學、
聖誕禁令、英國內戰