



Detail from 'The Country Dance', *The Analysis of Beauty* Plate 2, etching and engraving, 1753

HOGARTH

LIFE IN PROGRESS

JACQUELINE RIDING



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PROLOGUE

*‘Wond’ring Muse’**

From deep within the infinite realm, tentative light beams pulse and flicker, hinting at unnumbered stars, of untold planets. Close by, the dense black yields to the sun’s glorious warmth and burning colour, illumining our fragile globe and her pale moon. Then, from the region of this world, a pointed flame appears. It passes quickly over and on, weaving through the universe, dipping here and there, skimming across the surface of those distant spheres, observing all fresh wonders. In the heightened imaginings of the poet, stirred by discoveries too incredible to be the product of mere human thought, this comet is the soul of nature’s philosopher, mankind’s wondering muse, great Newton on his daily orbit of divine creation. Through him the innermost recesses of the conquered heavens are thrown open, the archives of hidden truth unlocked.

Now turning towards that shining orb, we pass down through the regions of the sky, the winds and cloud, and then, further still to mortality’s low province, the mass of earth and water. Lordly Nineveh and Babylon are no more; noble Palmyra’s exposed ruins the sentinels of empire long lost. Next, across the middle sea to Eternal Rome where we behold the extremes of fate. For among the emblems of her modern boasted state, Rome’s temples are open to the sky, her columns dreadful in decay, her ancient greatness sunk. Onward, passing lofty mountains, valleys, forests and low plains, over the figs and vines of proud King Louis’s fertile dominions towards the island cluster on Europe’s western edge. As the sun sinks below the horizon, its last rays glister the curling form

*John Hughes, *The Ecstasy*, London, 1720

of a mighty river, on whose banks now sprawls, so the inhabitants claim, a new Rome: the metropolis of London.

This is our destination, or rather, to be exact, the upper floor of the Bedford Arms tavern in the district called Covent Garden. We are here because on Friday 26 May 1732, in the fifth year of King George II's reign, the tavern's club members have gathered to drink, to eat and to engage in conversation of a bluff and convivial nature. Only five of the original party are now present.

These are the dwindling hours of a glorious late spring day: a day that signals summer's imminent approach, with all the hope and promise this might bring. On such an occasion an Englishman, whether a Londoner by birth or circumstance, who rarely has time or need to leave his beloved city, and while gazing absently from an upper window into the familiar, hectic streets below, might feel the sudden impulse to go far away: to succumb, however briefly, to the lure of simple pastoral pleasures and yearn, then, to follow the ancestral siren-call of the ploughman, the cockle-seller, the peasant bard. To venture, like the pilgrim, beyond the confines of the city, through the verdant land, to the estuary of a great river and to glimpse the vast terrains and oceans beyond.

One of the company is indeed gazing from the tavern's open window at the last of the sunset already described. What happened next has never been explained fully. Perhaps a wayward spark from that disciple of Phoebus, Sir Isaac's happy lighted spirit, dropped to earth, setting aflame these desires in its unsuspecting host. Or, as likely, it was nothing more than an ardent wish that the night's revelries should not, must not end so soon: the remaining club stalwarts neither too sleepy nor boozed enough to need the immediate comfort of bed and bolster. Whatever its path hither, an inspiration came, took root, the resulting idea voiced to those gathered, the company responded in accord and so, after scrawled notes to nearby wives and family were exchanged for fresh shirts and coin, these five friends ventured into the night on their own journey of discovery, along that same river, the Thames and his sister the Medway, as far as the Kentish Isle of Sheppey off England's south-eastern coast, with no particular idea or expectation of what would happen next.

Now you may be thinking that countless such journeys have occurred over the centuries, some, frankly, far more noteworthy than this appears to be and, in fairness, you would be right. Excepting that such workaday travels are rarely recorded in any detail and are, therefore, an aspect of our forebears' lives that is all but lost to us. And, more important still, a member of this particular group of travellers will be described justifiably, indeed within his own lifetime, as one of the most significant individuals to have been born in these islands: supplying posterity with a ready shorthand, not just for a style of graphic satire or comic grotesque, but a type of character or behaviour and even, rightly or wrongly, an entire era of British history.

The fact that we know anything at all about this modest adventure rests on the survival of a manuscript, written just after the event and rejoicing in the ponderous title, 'An account of what Seem'd most Remarkable in the Five Days Peregrination of the Five Following persons Viz^t. Messieurs Tothall, Scott, Hogarth, Thornhill & Forrest' with the accompanying exhortation, 'Abi tu et fac Similiter' ('Go and do the same').¹ The text was later transformed into a doggerel poem by the Reverend William Gostling, a resident of Kent and friend to the participants.² The manuscript, in a neat hand using a quill pen and brown ink (typical of the period), plots the towns and villages they passed through and the inns they stayed at, the various repasts enjoyed with expenditure itemised, the modes of transport used, the characters they encountered and the incidents that occurred. This chronicle is further enlivened by the presence of several picaresque drawings and a map. In this way it is both the record of a journey and the means to relive it, whether alone or in company, as part of the deliberations at the Bedford Arms tavern club for example, in the imagination or in person. The claim that the account concerns a peregrination or pilgrimage, coupled with the promise to recount what was 'most remarkable' during the five days, encourages the expectation of philosophical depth or, at the very least, events of some importance. Yet, to be clear from the outset, *The Peregrination* (as it shall be known) is not, in any traditional sense, a pilgrimage. And it is debatable whether anything remarkable, as we might define it, happens at all.

Of the five individuals, our focus here is, of course, Mr William Hogarth, now in his thirty-fourth year, a painter and engraver known to his close friends as Billy.³ His progress, from birth in 1697 to this moment, will be charted in due course but, for now, it should be observed that the year 1732 signalled a transformation in the fortunes of this gentleman: indeed his recent publishing of a set of engravings following the decline and fall of a young naïve woman turned prostitute may have been the stimulus for the gathering – a celebration of sorts – and the impromptu five-day journey a respite from a business that had increased dramatically, almost overnight.

Hogarth's companions are Ebenezer Forrest, lawyer, playwright and scribe of *The Peregrination*, William Tothall, former merchant seaman now draper and appointed treasurer for the duration, and fellow artists John Thornhill and Samuel Scott, who, with Hogarth, supplied the drawings. These men are not well known; they are not of the status of his other collaborators and friends, such as the author, playwright and magistrate Henry Fielding or the actor-manager David Garrick. Yet they represent Hogarth's friendships from the years before he was firmly established as an artist and when his fame, specifically as a commentator on modern life, had not yet fully taken hold: a circumstance which, counter-intuitively perhaps, became something of a burden to his artistic ambition in later years.

Surprisingly, given his subsequent renown, very little information exists with which to construct entirely Billy Hogarth's life up to 1732, the mid point of his allotted span, beyond those engravings and paintings that survive. Tantalising glimpses can be found in the core sources for his life as a whole, some of which are in Hogarth's own hand, notably his unpublished drafts for *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753) and the somewhat random, at times incoherent notes for an uncompleted autobiography.

But we have a very good idea of his appearance in that crucial year. Hogarth was not, as a rule, a vain man, and like most he was neither handsome nor ugly but somewhere in between. The earliest surviving self-portrait, created around the time of the trip to Sheppey and considered by Mrs Jane Hogarth and others to be

very like, is testament to his ambitions and his hard-won success to date (Col. Fig. 1). It is painted with vigour and an infectious sense of expectation: the thick curls of his shoulder-length wig and the linen neck stock are both brilliantly dashed off using touches of grey, highlighted with thick smudges of bright white. This frames a face alert with intelligence and intensity – an expression, to an extent, encouraged by the method of self-portraiture, that is glancing back and forth between canvas and looking glass and hence immortalising, along with everything else, an enquiring air. The head is tipped back just a little, adding to that mood of deep concentration, his blue eyes under lightly arched eyebrows are neither arrogant nor proud, just direct, his nose a little stubby, and with thin lips parted. The dense brown of the background and coat directs all attention towards the person and personality, a trick learned from the seventeenth-century Dutchman Rembrandt van Rijn and the Flemish masters Sir Peter Paul Rubens and Sir Anthony van Dyck, artist ancestors much favoured by British painters of Hogarth's generation. The portrait remained unfinished, in comparison, that is, to the more polished state of his other endeavours in that line. But the image, as it is, may have served its purpose – a record of the artist, addressed in the first instance to and for himself, at the moment of public recognition, at the very cusp of enduring fame.

Apart from its handling, the other hint that this is an unfinished portrait is the faint presence of a feature that Hogarth was particularly proud of: a distinctive, deep and long scar above his right eye, the result, as described by an early biographer, John Ireland, of a mysterious 'accident' in his youth. Decades on, 'the mark remained ; and he frequently wore his hat so as to display it'.⁴ From this it seems that Hogarth placed his black tricorne hat, the correct headwear for gentlemen in public spaces, tipped back, to expose fully his forehead, or tilted at a jaunty angle to his left, drawing attention to this scar and lending him the air of a raffish veteran of the battlefield. As Henry Fielding observed of Captain John Blifil in the 1749 novel *The History of Tom Jones*, 'He had a Scar on his Forehead, which did not so much injure his Beauty, as it denoted his Valour.'⁵ Whatever had caused the wound, an inch

or two lower and a promising career in fine art would have been seriously imperilled.

The other key aspect of Hogarth's appearance, which the portrait cannot even suggest, concerns his physical stature. John Thomas Smith in *Nollekens and his Times* recalled, referring to David Garrick, 'Whenever Garrick's name was mentioned, it was generally accompanied with the appellation of *little* ; but I have often heard my father observe, that he never knew any one who spake of *little* Hogarth, though he was half a head shorter.'⁶ Davy Garrick was known for his extreme affability, not something readily said of Hogarth, and so was far less inclined to take offence. Our artist was many things – loyal, kind, jovial company – but also chippy and, at times, easily affronted. Perhaps no one dared allude to Hogarth's build. Still, stature, whether physical, social or professional, was fundamental to his sense of worth, and although presence is so much more than mere height, nonetheless it is useful to imagine Hogarth, both figuratively and physically, expanded to his full elevation and breadth, chest out, chin lifted, legs slightly akimbo, hands clenched on hips, like a wee 'Bluff King Hal'. In a letter to 'T. H.', Hogarth stressed the need for proportion relative to height and used the slim, handsome Garrick, whether diminutive or no, as the exemplar of good proportion, and his fellow actor and friend, James Quin, thickset, large of limb and head, as the very opposite.⁷ Proportion, Hogarth insists, is (almost) everything.

So, in sum, was the be-scarred, compact Billy Hogarth, a man of honour and action, or, perhaps, a common street bruiser, perpetually on his guard against insult? Or else, simply, a one-time accident-prone youngster. No doubt he enjoyed and encouraged such speculation, and shedding light on this maddening, delightful, contrary individual is the very purpose of our journey over the following pages.

Hogarth was, instinctively, a great storyteller. But as we shall see, he yearned to be recognised as much more than a satirist. The single-word motto for his one foray into art theory, 'Variety', was as much an appeal for a fair, unbiased judgement from his contemporaries and, he would hope, posterity, as it was a statement of fact in regard to his astonishing inventiveness and range. The



1. *The Proportions of Garrick and Quin*, 21 Oct 1746, detail from a letter to 'T.H.', pen with brown ink, over pencil on paper. The recipient has not been identified, but the ideas expressed, with the date, connect the letter to *The Analysis of Beauty*, Hogarth's main contribution to art theory.

caricature, or cliché, of William Hogarth as, on the one hand, an unrefined urban chronicler and, on the other, a fiercely nationalistic John Bull figure, does not allow for the ambitious history painter, the grand-manner portraitist, his extensive knowledge of western European art and deep admiration for European as well as

British artists, ancient and modern, and his breadth of reading, all of which he funnelled into his work, whether painting or engraving or theory. Hogarth aimed to rival, through art, the great literature of his day – the learned elegance of an Alexander Pope, as well as the satirical heft and bite of a Jonathan Swift. A central aim of this biography is to seek out the less familiar – portraiture, history and religious painting, art theory – that our subject pursued with a relentless focus.

In quest of this more rounded Billy Hogarth, no little detail, no matter how apparently inconsequential, will be left unexplored. As Henry Fielding sagely points out: ‘In reality, there are many little Circumstances too often omitted by injudicious Historians, from which Events of the utmost Importance arise. The World may indeed be considered as a vast Machine, in which the great Wheels are originally set in Motion by those which are very minute, and almost imperceptible to any but the strongest Eyes.’⁸ *The Peregrination* is just such a sequence of little circumstances which, uniquely, provides a precious glimpse into Hogarth’s activities as separate from, as well as inherent to that of a professional artist and, in his fellow travellers and their interactions during the five days, even into his character. For *The Peregrination*, in its undramatic, gentle way, sees this Londoner, born and bred, out of his sphere of comfort and influence, while serving as a tiny window on to an England far away (in distance and mentality) from the metropolis. And weaving through this landscape is the very reason London exists at all: the river Thames. This is a part of England, echoing Fielding’s incisive comment, that speaks brilliantly of national and even global events, past, present and future, due to its geography, topography and history, with references to trade and the Royal Navy, Good Queen Bess and the Spanish Armada, the devastating mid seventeenth-century Dutch raid on the Medway, and the ongoing threat of invasion and war at home and abroad.

Meandering and random, yet with a clear purpose, *The Peregrination* acts as one model for our journey through Hogarth’s life and world. As such it will interweave, as a sequence of interludes through the coming chapters, assisting us in pursuit of that life and world. First, and whimsically, as an intermittent parade of palate

refreshers offered up, continuing the analogy, to offset the richer flavours served in the chapters, of succulent roast beef and claret, of hearty puddings and frothing beer, or, in contrast, the necessary often bitter correctives for overindulgence, venality, disease and corruption, all of which make up the expected Hogarthian fare. Second, as an invaluable and unusual opportunity to spend time with our subject over an entire five-day period as he goes about his life, while offering an opportunity to travel through eighteenth-century London and the surrounding area, seeing along the way the sights and sounds that made up Hogarth's world at a crucial point in his career, when all lay before him.

By way of example, two humorous ink and watercolour drawings, which, as it happens, open and close *The Peregrination*, go some way to encapsulating Hogarth's personal philosophy for life and thus his art. The first depicts 'Some body' who, as the name asserts, is a legless and headless figure armed with a walking staff and wearing a curious coat, half buff, half blue, one side back to front. The suggestion is that this somebody might have trouble finding his arse, even when both hands are freely deployed. He is accompanied by the ruins of a castle and a classical column, and so on one level must be a parody of those peculiar tribes, the antiquarians and connoisseurs: the former (some might say) revel in tedious detail that few others care much about and the latter, Hogarth would argue, see nothing yet profess to know everything and impose their opinions on everyone else.

The second drawing is of 'no body', a curious assemblage of maniacally smiling head – in appearance, strangely akin to Hogarth himself – with hat and wig, a pipe, knife, fork and spoon hanging from the latter, supported by a pair of splayed legs and two oars, from which dangle an onion-shaped wine bottle and a large rummer or drinking glass.

Somebody, by long-standing tradition, is a futile creature who pompously thinks himself worthy of notice, 'a somebody'. Often characterised as a villain or hypocrite, but in practice he or she could be anyone with pretensions and a false sense of their importance in the world. Hogarth might list a few aristocrats, merchants and even fellow artists who would fall into this category.

The nobody, as the name suggests, is an unassuming 'every-man' with simple appetites and expectations – symbolised here by laughter, pipe-smoking, food and wine – just trying to make his way in a difficult, often uncaring world and, through the lack of pretension, a common hero. Characters as variable as John Bunyan's Christian from *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Swift's Lemuel Gulliver and Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders take on this role. And, given the resemblance, so too could Billy Hogarth. This idea, rooted in European folklore and popular philosophy, is utilised, adapted and updated by Hogarth throughout his career, with the inspired influence of, in particular, Bunyan, Swift, Defoe and the like, in the common man and woman villains and heroes in his own work: sometimes adding greater realism to the archetypes, as these authors do in turn, by blurring the line between the two opposites.

Hogarth developed this idea in a 'no Dedication' to his proposed but abandoned history of the fine arts, in which he declared that no prince, no man of quality, no learned body, that is a somebody (as was the norm), not even a particular friend would be named in connection with the publication and therefore, by extension or default, his book was dedicated to 'nobody'. 'But,' he continues in a riddling manner, 'if for once we may suppose Nobody to be every body, as Every body is often said to be nobody, then is this work Dedicated to every body.'⁹ Taken as a whole, Hogarth's art is evidence of a life dedicated to everybody and nobody. His subject may be the nobility as a whole, or a particular aristocrat; the criminal underclass or a lone lawbreaker; the love of mankind or a single abandoned infant, but his overarching theme is human nature and experience. Like another hero and exemplar, his namesake William Shakespeare, whom, Hogarth declared, 'had the deepest penetration into nature', Hogarth's art, as he himself defined it, 'was my Stage and men and women my actors.' Like Shakespeare, his art might be rooted in the everyday or the specific, while, at the same time, it is high-minded and universal. And, again like Shakespeare, humour and high art are not mutually exclusive, nor is comedy an end in itself.

Hogarth recalled the pleasure that came from watching a

country dance, with many and varied participants, during which he alighted on one elegant dancer in particular. He describes pursuing her eagerly with his eyes as she moved among, around and through her companions. He imagined a ray of light marking her graceful windings, which 'was bewitching to the sight, as the imaginary ray ... was dancing with her all the time'. The effect, in Hogarth's own beautiful phrase, was 'to lead the eye a wanton kind of chace'.

So, in line with Hogarth's own inclinations and in the spirit of these and other journeys, great and small, whether physical or imagined, of the body or the mind, contemporaneous or historical, and with *The Peregrination*, like the Thames, curling through the familiar and unfamiliar landscape, we will move through Hogarth's life: sometimes in a straight line, sometimes not, stopping off at unexpected or shocking locations en route, but always with a clear purpose, to illuminate the life and work of our subject while revealing the humanity and inhumanity of this so-called Age of Hogarth. Our guides and companions will come from high to low life (often interchangeable, as Hogarth's work reminds us) and everywhere in between – the somebodies and the nobodies. Alongside Messrs Bunyan, Fielding, Swift and Defoe, we will be accompanied by the exiled prince, the philanthropic shipwright and patriot, the condemned thief on his final journey from Newgate to Tyburn, the characters and settings of Hogarth's life and art. We will witness great collective triumphs and agonies, alongside individual examples of everyday kindness and cruelty.

Let Hogarth and his world, in these pages, lead you a wanton kind of chase – not so much the progress of a life step by step, structured and logical, cradle to grave, but life, as it invariably is, a rambling work in progress. To that end we will continue as we have begun, that is, in the middle of Hogarth's life, and follow the five friends on their very modern pilgrimage, commencing, as it should, in the heart of London.

INTERLUDE ONE

EARLY SATURDAY 27 MAY, AT AROUND HALF PAST MIDNIGHT. The five friends set off from the Bedford Arms tavern, with spare linen shirts stuffed into their coat pockets and carrying, between them, enough money to cover the necessary expenditure for a trip to and from the Isle of Sheppey. This may have been the first time that three of the party have ventured so far down river, to the estuary meeting place of the Thames and the Medway. John Thornhill had journeyed to Flanders via Gravesend six years before, while Will Tothall had only recently exchanged a career at sea for shop work, so of all the pilgrims, he was by far the most seasoned traveler and an experienced sailor into the bargain. If you are wondering at the logistics of their baggage arrangement, or lack thereof, the answer lies in the early Georgian gentleman's coat pocket, which was of a style and scale similar to a medium-sized saddle bag, so a folded spare shift could be carried very neatly in this manner.¹ Besides, the journey would be achieved in days, not weeks, and the services of a local laundress could be called upon if required.

As an introduction to Hogarth's metropolitan world, it is fortunate that *The Peregrination* began where it did, in London's cultural and artistic heart, Covent Garden, although it is no coincidence that Hogarth and his friends set off from this place and this tavern. In 1732, all five were resident within a few streets of each other and naturally they had chosen a watering hole at 1 Tavistock Row, a short walk from their respective homes. In this particular acreage of London it would be difficult not to bump into, accidentally or otherwise, fellow artists, authors and playwrights.

The Bedford Arms had been converted from a private dwelling into a public house by February 1731, only a year or so before this

great adventure occurred. The change of purpose hints at the flourishing environment for new places and spaces for such like-minded gentlemen to gather.² The said 'Bedford' was the ground landlord (also commemorated in 'Russell' Street) of Covent Garden, which was itself named from the medieval convent vegetable garden of nearby Westminster Abbey, the land granted to Bedford's ancestor by King Edward VI. The third earl's building plans for this part of his extensive estate was an early sign of London's developing 'West End', which had been made more urgent by the devastation of the City to the east during the Great Fire of 1666. Both the fire and the plague that had preceded it were within living memory, and the new city was still rising from the ashes, with Sir Christopher Wren's masterpiece, St Paul's Cathedral as the most prominent and symbolic of the new buildings.

Covent Garden sits between St Martin's Lane and Leicester Fields to the west, the latter where Hogarth was to establish his practice; Long Acre and Great Queen Street to the north, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Temple and the Inns of Court to the east and, running along the southern edge, the Strand, the main thoroughfare between the City and the West End. At its most westerly point lies Charing Cross, the new church of St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Royal Mews (where the National Gallery now stands) and the entrance to Whitehall. To the south of the entire length of the Strand is the river Thames. This residential and commercial area of central London will be home to Hogarth for much of his adult life. And at its heart is the commodious public space, the Great Piazza, planned from the 1630s, which, among other things, hosted a fruit and vegetable market from the late 1650s.

In addition to the market, the Piazza is dominated on its western side by the Anglican parish church of St Paul, designed by Inigo Jones, the most prominent and influential English architect working in the early Stuart period.³ Jones was also the designer of the Banqueting House on nearby Whitehall and the Queen's House in Greenwich, Kent (roughly six miles down river), both buildings that Hogarth knew well – the latter, the companions would pass on their way to Gravesend. According to legend, the Earl of Bedford had asked Jones to design an inexpensive chapel

for the well-to-do he was actively encouraging to move to the area, declaring, in short, that the building should be no better than a barn. 'Well, then,' cried the nation's greatest living architect, 'you shall have the handsomest barn in England.'⁴ Inigo's barn is an austere, imposing presence still, with its doughty Doric columns topped by a bold, simple pediment and, both externally and internally, unhindered by overt flamboyance and embellishment.

In the last years of the seventeenth century, the author Edward 'Ned' Ward (1667–1731) championed a style of publication, the satirical account of a journey, most famously through his metropolitan journal (published from November 1698 to May 1700). *The London Spy* is written in the moment, with Ned and an unnamed friend passing through the city like a modern-day Dante and Virgil, the latter acting as the explanatory guide to his cheerfully unworldly companion. Only what is described is not some imaginary Heaven and Hell, and this Divine Comedy is at times (as will become abundantly clear) resolutely earthbound, intentionally extreme and determinedly comic: Hogarth's urban visions in word form. It could be seen as the wayward parent of *The Peregrination*, alongside popular one-off tracts such as *The Merry Travellers: or, A Trip upon Ten-Toes from Moorfields to Bromley* of 1712.⁵

In the preface, Ward declares that he seeks to scourge the villainies, vanities and vices of London's citizenry '*without levelling Characters at any Person in particular*'. Giles Jacob, in his *Poetical Register* of 1719, described Ned Ward as 'A very voluminous Poet ... Of late Years he has kept a publick House in the City (but in a genteel way) and with his Wit, Humour, and good Liquor has afforded his Guests a pleasurable Entertainment.'⁶ This description should signal the style and content of Ward's famous creations, and Hogarth would repeat *The London Spy*'s stated philosophy in his wholly Ned-Wardian engraving, *A Midnight Modern Conversation* of March 1733 – '*Think not to find one meant Resemblance there, we lash the Vices but the Persons spare.*'

Ned Ward and his anonymous friend wander from Whitehall along the Strand, observing young men and women who seem, to the author, unusually keen to attend church service. As Ned recalls, 'we over-took [an] abundance of Religious Lady-birds, Arm'd



2. *A Midnight Modern Conversation*, etching and engraving, 1733
 Individuals within this assembly of carousing men will inspire future characters, notably (foreground) Tom Rakewell. The scene also foreshadows the mayhem of *An Election Entertainment*.

against the Assaults of *Satan* with *Bible* or *Common Prayer-Book*, marching with all Good speed to *Covent-Garden-Church* ... These, says my Friend, are a Pious sort of Creatures that are much given to go to Church, and may be seen there every Day at Prayers, as Constantly as the Bell rings.' The reason for such feminine enthusiasm is equally clear to the keen observer, for 'if you were to walk the other way, you might meet as many Young-Ge[n]tlemen from the *Temple* and *Grays-Inn*', the Inns of Court to the east, 'going to Joyn with them [in] their Devotions.'⁷ The habit, of some locals, of using the church and daily service as an opportunity to observe each other at close quarters and even to flirt with members of the opposite sex – in other words, acting as any social gathering, such as a ball or assembly – would be of interest to the recorder, visual and literary, of the social foibles of their fellow Londoners. Hogarth put such circumstances to good satirical use in his painting and



3. *The Four Times of the Day Plate 1: Morning*, etching and engraving, 1738
 The Great Piazza, with St Paul's church top right and, beneath, "Tom King's" Coffee House. This 'Religious Lady-Bird' (centre) ignores her young servant's discomfort as she ogles Widow King's clientele.

print 'Morning', from *The Four Times of the Day*, the print, *The Sleeping Congregation* (Fig. 38 p. 259), and later, with no critical purpose intended, as one venue in the virtuous courtship of the Industrious Apprentice, Francis Goodchild, and his lady.

By 1732, besides the everyday Covent Garden folk at prayer, or