we are rightly suspicious of claims that Milton's epic and brief epic constitute a retreat from politics to religion. In *Paradise Regain'd* Jesus points to many damnable political errors, and does so in ways clearly critical of monarchy generally and of its late Stuart instantiation in particular. But his views on positive political order are more difficult to discern. As we determine just what kind of republican Milton's Jesus is, we might look to the tumultuous years between the death of Oliver Cromwell and the Restoration, and not only in Milton's major poems: Margaret Vane prepared a manuscript book of her father's writings in 1677, and it shows signs of circulation in the period. **Keywords:** James Harrington's *Oceana*; William Marshall; Francis Quarles; Henry Stubbe; seventeenth-century republican models of government

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**Abstract** The younger Sir Henry Vane expressed a set of ideas quite unique to England's seventeenth century, those of godly republicanism; Milton held strong affinities to Vane and to this strain of republican thought. In this essay, Feisal G. Mohamed explores *Paradise Regain'd* with reference to Vane's manuscript commentaries on *Job*, which have received scant attention. Further, Milton's literary choices in the 1671 volume are illumined by comparison to Francis Quarles, a poet Milton had many reasons to dislike. The language of godly republicanism lived well into the Restoration, and not only in Milton's major poems: Margaret Vane prepared a manuscript book of her father's writings in 1677, and it shows signs of circulation in the period. **Keywords:** James Harrington's *Oceana*; William Marshall; Francis Quarles; Henry Stubbe; seventeenth-century republican models of government

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1. Harrington's productivity between 1658 and 1660 is remarkable: a new edition of *Oceana* (London, 1658; Wing H810); *The Stumbling-Block of Disobedience* (London, 1658; Wing H822); *Half a Sheet Against Mr. Baxter* (London, 1658; Wing H813A); *Brief Directions Shewing How a Fit and Perfect Model*
edition of *Oceana*, John Streater, was skeptical, and his own proposals at this juncture reflect the prevailing sentiment that Royalists had to be kept away from the polls, and out of Parliament, if the republic was to survive the crisis; he endorsed the army’s resettling of the Rump in his *Continuation of this Session of Parliament, Justified* (1659), though that Parliament was not destined long to continue. Milton clearly agreed: *The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660) was in title and in content opposed to Harrington’s *Wayes and Means Whereby an Equal and Lasting Commonwealth May be Suddenly Introduced and Perfectly Founded* (1660). In the first edition of this tract, Milton essentially proposed ossification of the ruling Rump Parliament, and he tepidly modified the second edition to give more space to election even as he voiced personal objections and declared rotation to have “too much affinitie with the wheel of fortune.”

But Milton is up to more than a practical-minded critique of Harrington. Read alongside his 1659 tracts on the deinstitutionalization of the church, *A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes and Considerations Touching the Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings*, his model of government can be seen as participating in the language of godly republicanism. In the palazzo of republican thought, godly republicanism has an admittedly small gallery—small and, to Whig, Marxist, and revisionist tour guides alike, best passed by. Nonetheless, the Interregnum’s later years yield a set

of Popular Government may be Made, Found, or Understood (London, 1659; Wing H807); *The Art of Law-Giving in III Books* (London, 1659; Wing H806); *Valerius and Publicola* (London, 1659; Wing H814); *Pour Enclouer le Canon* (London, 1659; Wing H819); *A Discourse upon this Saying* (London, 1659; Wing H813); *Aphorisms Political* (London, 1659; Wing H804); *A Parallel of the Spirit of the People* (London, 1659; Wing H817); *Politicaster, or a Comical Discourse, in Answer unto Mr. Wren’s Book, Intituled, Monarchy Asserted* (London, 1659; Wing H818A); *The Use and Manner of the Ballot* (London, 1660; Wing H823); *Political Discourses Tending to the Introduction of a Free and Equal Commonwealth* (London, 1660; Wing H818); *The Rota: or, A Model of a Free-State* (London, 1660; Wing H825). The finest modern edition of Harrington’s writings remains *The Political Works of James Harrington*, ed. J. G. A. Pocock (Cambridge, 1977).

2. John Streater, *The Continuation of this Session of Parliament, Justified; and the Action of the Army touching that Affair Defended* (London, 1659; Wing S5945); Thomason dates this tract May 16, ten days after the Rump Parliament was recalled.


of discernible principles with no direct provenance in classical or Continental thought. These arise in part as a reaction of the Protestant left to the Protectorate’s imperfect dismantling of priestcraft, which took aim at ceremonialism but left the national church largely intact through its reluctance to dispense with tithes. Godly republicanism forcefully urges liberty of conscience for sectarians and demands that the church no longer be enervated by the organs of the state, wishing to end tithes, central organization, and a university-trained ministry. It values republican government as that most likely to practice noninterference in religion—which is why it can sometimes align itself temporarily with non-republicans promising to secure liberty of conscience—in the hope, and here is its distinctive mark, that noninterference will allow the Saints to rise to their rightful reign in God’s time.

These ideas are expressed most programmatically by the man who is the subject of Milton’s most adulatory sonnet, the younger Sir Henry Vane (1613–1662). Vane is a remarkable mix of administrative exactitude and radical spiritualism uncannily present at every major event of the period on both sides of the Atlantic. He became governor of Massachusetts less than a year after his arrival there in October 1635, in which post he secured the purchase of Rhode Island with the assistance of Roger Williams. His sympathy with Massachusetts antinomians would lead him to confrontation with John Winthrop, a confrontation that Vane would lose and that would prompt a return to England in 1637. He sat for Hull in the first year of the Long Parliament and was no idle member: he furnished key evidence against the Earl of Strafford, which was procured by rummaging through his father’s bureau; with Cromwell and Sir Arthur Hesilrige he initiated the bill for “root and branch” elimination of episcopacy; and he led negotiation of the Solemn League and Covenant. After removing himself from Parliament during Pride’s Purge and the trial and execution of Charles I, he resumed his seat in February 1649 to become treasurer of the navy, a post in which he oversaw supply of Cromwell’s Irish and Scottish campaigns, as well as defeat of the Royalist fleet and of the Dutch. Vane, with Algernon Sidney sitting next to him, is supposed to have come into direct confrontation with Cromwell in the 1653 evacuation of Parliament; to Cromwell and his musketeers, according to Ludlow, Vane cried defiantly if also idealistically, “This is not honest, yea it is against morality and common honesty.”

Disagreement with Cromwell would lead to Vane’s forced retirement, and brief imprisonment, during the Lord Protector’s reign. But after Cromwell’s death he would rapidly return to prominence, sitting in Richard’s Parliament and playing a large part in the restored Rump. His cooperation with Lambert’s Council of State, through which he introduced measures to secure liberty of conscience, was deemed an unforgivable betrayal when the Rump returned to


power. And the Restoration led to his execution in 1662, much more for his political efficacy and unrepentant anti-Stuart sentiments than for the regicide, in which he did not take part.6

Vane’s writings of the later 1650s provide the spiritual justification, and lay out the constitutional implications, of his longstanding agitation for liberty of conscience. *The Retired Mans Meditations* (1655) describe liberty of conscience as a necessity because the Saints had not yet fully revealed themselves. In such a time the magistrate must be confined to the government of externals only, allowing the elect to follow their divinely appointed path and to begin in God’s time the millennial reign in which they will exercise “Judicial power” in matters civil and spiritual. The jurisdiction of that power spans both heaven and earth, and its final authority to exercise divine will Vane identifies with “the power of the keys” that is granted to Peter in Matthew 16:19 (410)—precisely the power, of course, that the papacy claimed to hold, though for Vane and other Protestant sectarians that spurious claim is a wile of Antichrist used to annoy the true Saints. As we shall see, Vane does not predict the time of the Saints’ reign with the confidence of a Fifth Monarchist, but he does make clear that he believes the defeat of Antichrist to be imminent, a belief to which he attributes his defiance of worldly authority. These ideas undergird the republican model of government that he offers in *A Healing Question* (1656, 1660) and *A Needfull Corrective* (1660); the latter, written in the form of an epistle to Harrington, opposes the principle of rotation in settling for life a senate willing to preserve liberty of conscience.7 Milton’s *Readie and Easie Way* resembles no republican model more closely than it does Vane’s, and Milton’s *Civil Power and Hirelings* share views on the church very close to those of Vane and his confidant Henry Stubbe. Stubbe would also advance Vane’s model republican in *Malice Rebuked* (1659), where he also defends Sir Henry against the attacks of Richard Baxter, and he further justifies a permanent senate in his *Essay in Defence of the Good Old Cause* (1659). *Civil Power* prompted a letter from another member of Vane’s circle, Moses Wall, who hoped that Milton had returned to his “former Light” after a period of Cromwellian darkness (YP 7:510).8 Whatever rift had developed during the Protec-

6. On the 1653 confrontation between Cromwell and Vane, see James K. Hosmer, *The Life of Young Sir Henry Vane* (Boston, 1889), 409; for Vane’s biography, see especially Violet Rowe, *Sir Henry Vane, the Younger* (London, 1970); and the entry in the Oxford DNB, s.v. “Vane, Sir Henry, the younger” (by Ruth E. Mayers). David Parnham explores Vane’s theology in *Sir Henry Vane, Theologian: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Religious and Political Discourse* (Madison, Wisc., 1997).

7. Sir Henry Vane, *A Healing Question* (London, 1656; re-issue London, 1660); *A Needful Corrective or Ballance in Popular Government Expressed in a Letter to James Harrington* ([London,] 1660; Wing V72). The latter tract is most likely Vane’s, but a note in a seventeenth-century hand on the title page of the Bodleian copy leaves some doubt: “This was writt by Sr. Henry Vane or (at least) by his advice, and approbation”; see Worden, *Literature and Politics*, 363n22, and Austin Woolrych, “The Good Old Cause and the Fall of the Protectorate,” Cambridge Historical Journal 13 (1957): 154n12.

8. Henry Stubbe, *Malice Rebuked, or A Character of Mr. Richard Baxters Abilities. And a Vindication of the Honourable Sr. Henry Vane* (London, 1659; Wing S6060); *An Essay in Defence of the Good Old Cause, ... and Vindication of the Honourable Sir Henry Vane from the False Aspersions of Mr. Baxter* (London, [September] 1659; Wing S6045). The title page of the Thomason copy of Stubbe’s
torate, Milton is clearly keeping company with the Vane circle in the critical years of 1659–60. And he seems at the same moment to shift emphasis from the classical republicanism of his Latin Defenses to the godly republicanism of Vane. This latter emphasis, I will suggest, is also pervasive in his major poems.

But in making that suggestion we must be attentive to how Milton's literary choices in the major poems, and particularly Paradise Regain'd, reflect his political and religious commitments. Godly republicanism bars the magistrate from interfering in religious matters so that God's will can direct public life. In this it distinguishes itself from other kinds of republican thought, which tend to endorse some measure of religious conformity or to see the rule of the virtuous as encompassing determination of acceptable modes of worship. A powerful symbol of this emphasis is Milton's turn to Job in Paradise Regain'd, which is interesting not only in and of itself, but also in suggesting a Dissenting counter-narrative to the currency of David among defenders of the restored monarchy and its conformist church. In sermons and poems celebrating the Restoration, as Stella Revard shows, Charles II is frequently described as a David who had suffered persecution before beginning his divinely appointed reign, a comparison “J. W.” makes with particular force in a published 1660 sermon: “as David in his Kingdom, Christ in his Kingdome, so King CHARLES in his Kingdome is a stone, a tried stone.”9 In aspiring to laureateship, John Dryden would take up the comparison, likening Charles to David in “Astraea Redux” and “A Panegyric on His Coronation.”10 But David could be reclaimed by Dissenters pointing to his Job-like endurance of trial. Upon his ejection from the national church in 1662, the former Smectymnuan Edmund Calamy delivered a farewell sermon on 2 Samuel 24:14: “I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.” In his handling, David is a believer preferring divine to human law, a point Calamy emphasizes with citations of the book of Job. When that sermon was published in 1663 alongside those of other ejected ministers, Calamy was far from alone in using this biblical book to describe the plight of the godly party; Job also appears in the sermons of William Bates, Thomas Brooks, Daniel Bull, Thomas Case, George Evank, John Gaspine, Thomas Horton, Thomas Jacombe, Philip Lamb,


Thomas Lye, Matthew Mead, Lazarus Seaman, George Thorne, Ralph Venning, and Thomas Watson.11

In *Paradise Regain’d* it is Satan who is obsessed with reading the messianic progress of history through the lens of David’s earthly kingship. Jesus is equally preoccupied with Job, whose single resistance to temptation neither depends on nor culminates in a publicly ordered religious settlement. We will explore first how Milton’s uses of these Hebrew Bible characters and engagement of literary modes differ from those of his seventeenth-century predecessors. He seems to have in mind Giles Fletcher and Francis Quarles, but unlike them develops a poetics emphasizing an extra-literary, inspired reading of scripture as leading us heavenward. We will then explore Milton’s critique of established religion with reference to Vane’s unpublished works, which include a lengthy commentary on the book of Job. These were gathered by his daughter Margaret in a manuscript book dated July 1677, an artifact that shows signs of circulation, suggesting that the godly republicanism espoused by Milton and Vane had currency well after 1660.

The tradition of poetic paraphrase arose as one means of reformed adherence to the Bible. If that tradition survived in the Restoration, it did so in Lucy Hutchinson’s *Order and Disorder* much more than in *Paradise Lost, Paradise Regain’d*, and *Samson Agonistes*. Milton was clearly familiar with the work of Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas and Giles Fletcher. Equally clearly, his approach is fundamentally different from these predecessors and assertively rejects the Spenserian allegory and romance that Fletcher embraces. In turning away from these modes, Milton engages, much more than the paraphrasers do, in a poetics locating saving truth in scripture and grace. We will see just how he does so by comparison to Francis Quarles, a poet whose dissimilar literary and politico-religious sensibilities are revealed in his handling of the Hebrew Bible figures central to Milton’s 1671 volume, Job and Samson. Put simply, Quarles’s reading of Job through the lens of Stoicism and his reading of Samson through romance convention both rhyme well with his defenses of the king and national church at the outbreak of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms.

Milton’s relationship to Quarles is not so much literary rivalry as it is literary antipathy. The young Milton is likely to have been conscious of the reputation of his predecessor at Christ’s College, Cambridge. Early in his career he may have been as

11. Edmund Calamy et al., *A Compleat Collection of Farewel Sermons* (London, 1663; Wing C5638), sigs. Br, B4r, D2r [unpaginated until p. 649]. Other references to Job in this collection are in the sermons of William Bates (sigs. Q4r–v), Thomas Brooks (sigs. L1r–v, L1v), Daniel Bull (sig. Bb4r), Thomas Case (sig. F3r), George Evank (sigs. Uuu1r, Uuu2v–Uuu3r, Xxx2v), John Gaspine (sig. Sss2r), Thomas Horton (sigs. Oo4v, Pp2v), Thomas Jacombe (sig. O4v), Philip Lamb (sigs. Hh1v, Hh2v, Ii1v, Ii4v, Kk1v, Kk3v, Ll1r), Thomas Lye (sigs. Z1r, T1r, T1v, Uu4v, Xx2r), Matthew Mead (sig. Cc2r), Lazarus Seaman (sig. Ff4v), George Thorne (sigs. Mmm4r; p. 653, 655 [misnumbered 650]), Ralph Venning (sigs. Hh2r–v), and Thomas Watson (sigs. V2r, X2r).
receptive as he ever would be to Quarles’s work: *Areopagitica* in particular might have
in mind some of Quarles’s language in a way that has been undetected. In the apology
to his *Feast for Worms* (1642), Quarles describes his muse as “unbreath’d, unlikely to
attain / An easie honour” and in the first meditation he describes how God “daily sends
the Doctors of his Spouse, / (With such like oyl as from the Widows Cruse / Did issue
forth).” Did Milton borrow these turns of phrase in reproving a “fugitive and clois-
ter’d virtue, unexercis’d & unbreath’d,” and in worrying that the “cruse of truth must
run no more oyle” (YP 2: 515, 541)?

The physical resemblance between the two poets may have invited comparisons
that the younger man would deem an affront to his literary ambitions. We are not cer-
tain whether the portrait held by Christ’s College is of Milton or Quarles, and the
resemblance might also have haunted Milton’s entry into literary life. William Mar-
shall’s engravings gave the two poets a single face in 1645, a visage appearing on the
frontispiece to Quarles’s *Solomons Recantation*, released May 15, and on the fron-
tispiece to Milton’s *Poems*, released in the final months of that year (see figures 1 and 2).
If, as is frequently suggested, the young Milton is given the bagged eyes and double
chin of a man in his fifties, it is perhaps because the engraving largely duplicates one of
Quarles at the age of fifty-two—this may also explain why it is the only extant portrait
of Milton with facial hair, though only in faint beginnings that seem to have been aban-
doned over the course of engraving.

How supremely annoyed Milton must have been not only that Marshall pro-
duced a poor likeness, but also that a collection of poems so carefully crafted to assert
its place in the highest echelon of Renaissance culture would be fronted by an image
resembling that of the populist Quarles. Milton’s pugnacious epigram on the engraving
may generate the distance that Marshall’s hand erased: with it he signals his very differ-
ent sense of fit audience by opting for untranslated Greek in the place of the Latin-
with-English-translation on the frontispiece to *Solomons Recantation*. The annoyance
may not have declined over time, for reasons political and literary. Quarles’s tracts
defending Charles I continued to be published after the former’s death in 1644. And
Humphrey Moseley, the publisher of *Poems* 1645, issued a number of releases of
Quarles’s *Argalus and Parthenia* and *Enchiridion* over the 1650s, while Milton’s collec-
tion lay fallow. Perhaps one indication of Milton’s disdain for the emblematist is the

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14. Francis Quarles, *Solomons Recantation* (London, 1645; Wing Q116). The same engraving of
Quarles is used as a frontispiece to the 1664 edition of *Enchiridion*, published by A. Moseley (Wing
Q91). Both include the caption “Aetatis Suae 52.” The resemblance between the Quarles and Milton
portraits is not typical of Marshall’s engravings.
15. The number of bibliographical entries for Quarles’s works reflects wide and sustained interest,
with Humphrey Moseley acquiring *Argalus and Parthenia* and *Enchiridion* in the 1650s and passing
the profitable venture on to his posterity after his death in 1661—the “A. Moseley” of the 1664 printings
of Quarles is his widow, Anne; see *Oxford DNB*, s.v. “Moseley, Humphrey” (by Robert Wilcher). After
seven entries published by John Marriott from 1629–47, Moseley issued *Argalus and Parthenia* in 1654
(Q41), thrice in 1656 (Wing Q41A, Q42, and Q42A), and again in 1659 (Q43); A. Moseley published the
Figure 1. William Marshall, engraver, frontispiece to Francis Quarles’s Solomons Recantation (1645).
Figure 2. William Marshall, engraver, frontispiece to Milton’s Poems (1645). Huntington Library RB 106465.
uncharacteristically disparaging entry in the *Theatrum Poetarum* (1675), the catalog of poets ancient and modern by his nephew and pupil Edward Phillips: “Francis Quarles, the darling of our Plebeian Judgments, that is such as have ingenuity enough to delight in Poetry, but are not sufficiently instructed to make a right choice and distinction . . . his Feast of Worms, or History of Jonas, and other Divine Poems have been ever, and still, are in wonderful Veneration among the Vulgar, and no less his Argalus and Parthenia.”16

We would expect Milton strongly to distinguish himself from Quarles in his handling of Job and Samson in the 1671 volume. The meditations of Quarles’s *Job Militant* often refer to Stoic principles. To a pious statement on vitiated human nature—“No Flesh and Blood / Deserves the stile of Absolutely Good”—he adds a marginal reference to Horace’s ode 2.16: “nihil est ex omni parte beatum” (“Nothing is happy altogether”).17 Horace reappears in Quarles’s eighth meditation, in a marginal note on accepting the life appointed by God.18 The point is reinforced with reference to Epictetus’s *Enchiridion*.19 Job’s speech on his grief in chapter 9 of the biblical book is interpreted as the pangs of conscience, on which subject he turns to Juvenal: “occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum” (the mind is a torturer wielding an invisible lash).20 In the same meditation a single marginal note cites both Horace and Luke 16:22 as glosses on the statement, "The secret disposition / Of sacred Providence is lockt and seal’d / From mans Conceit" (italics in original).21 In addition to further references to Horace, Quarles cites Martial and Seneca, as well as Lipsius.22

work in 1664 (Q43A), and there were three additional entries for the work in Milton’s lifetime. After four entries for *Enchiridion* from 1640 to 1649 (STC 2053, Wing Q86, Q87, and Q117A [printed with Solomons Recantation]), Humphrey Moseley printed the work in 1654 (Wing Q89), and twice in 1658 (Wing Q90 and Q90A); A. Moseley printed the work in 1664 (Wing Q91) and 1667 (Wing Q92); and there is an additional entry in Milton’s lifetime (Q93).


18. The ode here cited points to the inevitable end of our turbulent lives: “omnium / versatur urna / morel / serious urb / sors exitura et nos in aeternum / exsilium impositur cumbae” (The lot of every one of us is tossing about in the urn, destined sooner, later, to come forth and place us in Charon’s skiff for everlasting exile); *Odes* 2.3.25–28.

19. The marginal note to Epictetus refers to a non-existent chapter 77; it is likely chapter 7 that is intended: “As on a voyage when the vessel has reached a port, if you go out to get water it is an amusement by the way to pick up a shellfish or some bulb, but your thoughts ought to be directed to the ship, and you ought to be constantly watching if the captain should call . . . So in life also, if there be given to you instead of a little bulb and a shell a wife and child, there will be nothing to prevent (you from taking them). But if the captain should call, run to the ship and leave all those things without regard to them”; Epictetus, *Enchiridion*, in *Enchiridion and Selections from the Discourses of Epictetus*, trans. George Long (Waiheki Island, New Zealand, 2009), 8–9, available at books.google.com.


22. See Quarles, *Job Militant*, sigs. L1r, L3v, M2v (Horace), sigs. H4v–H1r (Martial and Seneca), and sig. L3r (Lipsius).
The effect of these references is to turn Job into a model Stoic who learns not to place too much emphasis on worldly tribulations and rewards. The joys of the world are fleeting and suffering is inevitable, so the judicious soul will remain indifferent to things of this world and focus on the realm of eternals. Consistent with this ethos are the moments of *Job Militant* casting political and religious tumults as inherently satanic. The temptation of Job is part of Satan's larger project of breeding strife:

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I have been plotting, how to prompt the death
Of Christian Princes [...] 
[I] come from planting strife, and stern debate,
Twixt private man and man, 'twixt State and State,
Subverting Truth with all the power I can,
Accusing Man to God, and God to Man:
I daily sow fresh Schismes among thy Saints;
I buffet them and laugh, at their complaints[.]\(^{23}\)
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Comparisons of Quarles’s *Historie of Samson* and *Samson Agonistes* note that Milton is more sophisticated in his handling of Delilah: where Quarles presents a “naively-drawn portrait,” observes Merritt Hughes, Milton is a more complex poet who offers a more complex character.\(^{24}\) True enough, but the tables turn if we consider representations of the woman of Timnath (Judges 14). Here it is Quarles who offers the more dynamic interpretation of the biblical story, providing a Samson who loves truly and must confront his skeptical parents, a Manoa and wife who approve the marriage with mixed parental joy and anxiety, and a woman of Timnath torn between real love of Samson and self-preservation in the face of Philistine threats.\(^{25}\) If, as Judges 14:4 tells us, this marriage is “of the Lord,” Quarles interprets that statement in the spirit of Renaissance Neoplatonism, where romantic love leads us upward on the *scala* toward divine love: “Love is a noble passion of the heart / [...] Fill’d with celestiall fier” (40; italics in original).

The collapse of this marriage is thus a story of the human frailty that too often leads us away from such heavenly ascent, and God remains a majestic, largely absent, figure in Quarles’s divine economy.\(^{26}\) In thus presenting the story, Quarles creates a literary structure like that of romance, in which, to paraphrase Spenser, it is fierce wars

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\(^{23}\) Ibid., sig. C3v, italics in original.


\(^{26}\) See ibid., 72.

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Great God! If thou wilt please but to refine
Our hearts, and reconforme our wills, to thine,
Thou’lt take a pleasure in us [...] 
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and faithful loves that moralize the song. And romance is a mode surrounding an 
existing order of power with the mystique of heavenly virtue—Northrop Frye sees this 
clearly in his comments on the mythical structure of romance, in which love of the 
king and the courtly love mistress “is an educating and informing power which brings 
one into unity with the spiritual and divine worlds.”27 The advice to magistrates that 
Quarles draws from the Samson story is revealing in this respect. Samson’s revenge 
upon the Timnites is read as God’s plague upon a land where negligent magistrates had 
allowed sin to take root: “Know leaden Magistrates, and know again, / Your Sword was 
given to draw, and to be dyde / In guilty blood; not to be laid aside” (97, italics in original). 
In dealing with Samson’s final triumph, Quarles’s sense of the divinity of monarchy 
grows slightly conflicted. On the one hand, the plucking out of Samson’s eyes is just 
punishment for their tendency to light upon unlawful objects of desire: “The Philistines 
did act [God’s] part; No doubt, / His eyes offended, and they pluck’ d them out: / Heaven 
will be just” (134). On the other, Samson’s final destruction of Dagon’s temple “Redeem’ d 
heavens glory, and his Kingdom’s good” (140). The conflict is between debased and justi-

died worldly authority, on which the symbolic order of romance is often conflicted. 

These approaches to the Job and Samson stories are consistent with Quarles’s 
defenses of the king and the national church at the outbreak of the Wars of the Three 
Kingdoms. The exordium to the first of these tracts, The Loyall Convert (1643), feigns 
internal division between the claims of Parliament and the king, a conflict resolved 
neither by reason nor policy, but by scripture, the “Great Oracle,” which Quarles opens 
in his confusion, happening upon Proverbs 20:2: “The feare of a King is as the roaring of 
a Lyon, and who so provoketh him to Anger, sinneth against his own soule” (italics in 
original).28 As he sets out the standard biblical passages supporting the divine right 
of kings—Romans 13:1 makes its inevitable appearance, “Let every soule be subject to 
the higher Powers, for there is no Power but of God” (4)—he also points to Shadrach, 
Meshach, and Abednego as models of righteous resistance:

The King, a known Pagan, commands a gross Idolatry; Did these men 
conspire? Or (being Rulers of the Province of Babel) did they invite the 
Jewes into a Rebellion? … No, being called by their Prince, they came, and 
being commanded to give actual obedience to his unlawful Commands, 
observe the modesty of their first answer, We are not carefull to answer thee 
in this matter [Dan. 3:16], and being urged, mark their pious resolution in 
the second, Be it knowne, O King, we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship 
the golden Image thou has set up [Dan. 3:18]. (5, italics in original)

Till then, expect for nothing that is good: 
Remember, Lord, we are but Flesh and Blood.

28. Quarles, The Loyall Convert (London, 1643; Wing Q104), 3. References are given in the text.
Though conscience can justly lead one to reject the false worship demanded by Nebuchadnezzar, that rejection is a private matter and such non-obedience must not extend to fomenting resistance to monarchical authority.

Milton’s literary challenges are thus not only to develop a complex work, but also to develop an imaginative structure rejecting conformist public religion in a way that paraphrase had not done. *Paradise Regain’d* flies above the seven hills of Rome, rejecting Stoic philosophy and its attitudes on political authority. This is done explicitly in Jesus’s refutations, which present the “Stoic” as a figure of “Philosophic pride, [. . . ] his vertuous man, / Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing / Equal to God” (4.300–303). It is the supposed self-containment of the virtuous soul to which Jesus chiefly objects, in its ignorance of “how the world began, and how man fell / Degraded by himself, on grace depending” (311–12). Without keen awareness of the irruption of divine presence into the created order, creatures arrogate “glory” to themselves and “accuse” God “under usual names, / Fortune and Fate” (4.315–17).

In the way of categorical dismissals, Jesus’s refutation does not address the subtleties of Stoic philosophy or engage in dialogue with those thinkers who had aligned its principles with Christian ontology. He is making a case for true “conviction” (4.308), with the priority it places on direction by divine light. The term in this usage has two mutually reinforcing meanings: it is both a convincing in the truth and, as Revard and John Leonard note, “consciousness of sin.” Augustine criticizes Stoicism’s overconfidence in the ability of human reason to overcome the passions and its view of such overcoming is an end in itself; “Scripture,” by contrast, “subjects the mind to God for his direction and assistance. . . . In fact, in our discipline, the question is not whether the devout soul is angry, but why. . . . not whether it is afraid, but what is the object of its fear” (emphasis in original). In the same spirit Milton dismisses in *De doctrina Christiana* “the apathy of the Stoics; for sensibility to pain, and complaints or lamentations, are not inconsistent with true patience, as may be seen from the example of Job” (YP 6:740). The passions leading the believer toward God are more upright in this formulation than human reason striving to be in itself complete.

We should expect Milton to register this objection in *Paradise Regain’d*. Here the kenosis by which the incarnated Son emptied of divinity plays a vital role in the literary unity of the work: it creates an internal drama of being refilled by divinity in a way that condenses the human story into the span of Jesus’s life. The incompleteness of the “thoughts following thoughts” and contingency of the journey into the desert create a space for revealed truth to appear. And, in a way unlike Quarles’s majestic divinity,
appear it does. The life of Jesus in Milton's brief epic emphasizes moments of divine presence: the virgin birth of which Mary gives him an account, the baptism reported repeatedly, and the final triumph over Satan and over the Temple. We are also aware that such events are, to use Michael's phrase in *Paradise Lost*, "not but by the Sprit understood" (12.514). Satan, of course, witnesses the baptism and remains unable or unwilling to read it aright. Even such believing souls as Mary, Andrew, and Simon can hearken toward divine truth and be slightly baffled in their attempts to ascertain the ways of the Word made flesh, showing that its full significance is revealed in God's time and according to the light planted within. Milton makes a stronger case for such reformed principles as *sola scriptura* and *sola gratia* than does the paraphrase tradition: where paraphrase of the Bible for a poet like Quarles is the point from which meditation departs, Milton offers grace and the Word as meditation's rightful ends. The task of contemplation is to align human passion and thought to divine will as it presents itself in the created order.

His handling of Samson's marriage to the Woman of Timnath thus interprets Judges 14:4 in a way unlike Quarles: that the marriage is "of the Lord" is taken to be a sign of the "intimate impulse" of divine illumination. Many of the concerns that Quarles develops in presenting Samson's first marriage arise in Milton's poem with the entry of Delilah, who in *Samson Agonistes* claims the divided loyalties of nation and marriage. The burden of that internal conflict is more attenuated than it is for Quarles's Woman of Timnath. Delilah's life is not threatened in Milton's version, leaving her open to the charge that she follows her compatriots' demands for the sake of money and fame. Her constant equivocation renders her sincerity dubious at best, so that we learn just how base and hollow human motivation can be. Reinforcing the point are Samson's own hollow human motivations in this episode, ranging from self-justification on the legality of marrying Delilah to the violent hostility of an emasculated and betrayed lover. Read alongside the later exchange with Harapha, we see in the dramatic poem a dismissal of the "long and tedious havoc" (*Paradise Lost* 9.30) of romance love and war.

Piercing through such confusion is the irruption of divine will into the human realm with which Milton punctuates the 1671 volume, first with Jesus standing on the Temple top and next with the return of Samson's strength. Where Quarles uses biblical paraphrase as an impetus to tentative mystical flight toward a largely majestic God, Milton's volume is structured around the upright soul's attunement to moments of divine presence in the natural world.

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The younger Sir Henry Vane's commentaries on Job appear in a manuscript book prepared by his daughter Margaret that also contains his final sermon before being sent to the Tower, various other biblical commentaries, and a letter to Henry Cary. The last...

32. Sir Henry Vane, the younger, [Sermons, Expositions on Job, etc.], National Art Library (London), Forster MS 606 (48.D.41). References are given in the text.
of these jars with our image of Cary as a hardliner against the regicides, and suggests that he may have inherited some of the intellectual and religious inquisitiveness of his father, Lucius Cary. We shall return to that letter in a moment. Vane's final sermon is on Jeremiah 45:2–5 and emphasizes Baruch's confusion as to why God allows oppression of his faithful servants. Identifying himself with Baruch, he laments the faithful witness that has been given to a rebellious people while also declaring that the Saints are exposed to the world as just punishment for their sins (4, 7–8).

A commentary on Romans 6:3–7 dated “1658” emphasizes how the profane are justly damned for choosing evil when offered enlightenment (57), perhaps reflecting Vane's resentment of the Cromwellian rule that had forced him into retirement and brief arrest, and anticipating his prominence in the final throes of the English republic. Though undated, the commentaries on Job, like the final sermon, focus on the suffering of the faithful, strongly suggesting that they were composed between the Restoration and Vane's execution in 1662. Vane is concerned especially with how God's faithful servant can be visited with great affliction, a point, he says, on which Job “stumbles” (118). The chapters discussed at greatest length are those in which Job's friend Elihu defends God's punishment of the righteous (Job 35–36); such affliction has the double benefit of seasoning the just for their return to the Creator and of ripening the wicked for Judgment. And Vane refers explicitly to the wicked of his own nation who will be judged (135, 142). The day “wherin we live,” he claims, offers temptation to judge the chosen and side with the wicked, but even “if the whole world give a wrong Judgment of God & the whole stream run yt way,” the righteous “yet chuse affliction rather then sin” (186). We must recall that God “sits in heaven & laughs at ye day yt is coming upon ye wicked in wch they will be overtaken in a moment” (159). As is typical of his religious writings, the commentary describes Christ as the Mediator from the beginning of time, so that it is not anachronistic to say that Elihu shows the benefit of being a holy man whose sins are folded in Christ (130–31).

Perhaps most suggestive in their anticipation of Paradise Regain'd are the claims Vane makes on the inward turn of the chosen as they wander in the wilderness. In Milton's brief epic, God the Father turns to Gabriel and tells us that he means to “exercise” the Son “in the Wilderness” (1.155–56). Vane similarly tells us that the afflictions suffered by the righteous are intended for their spiritual benefit: “when God finds the faith of his people weak & wanting he is moved to bring on ym sharp & sore afflictions but intending them no hurt by ym but desiring therby their spiritual good .  .  . if they be not exercised in a life of faith their best professions will turn into a life of vanity therfore God chastens them as sons not as bastards” (150–51). Commenting immediately thereafter on Job 35:13—“Surely God wil not hear vanity, neither will the almighty regard it”—Vane tells us that it “teaches gods people what their duty is in ys day, tis to be looking more inward, entering into a more secret fellowship with God, till his indignation be overpast” (150–51). The righteous man may suffer afflictions of sense, but “injoys feasting between god, & his own soul” (120); that feast is figured as a “refreshing” song “in the dark night,” making the suffering of the world “light” when compared to the
weight of sin (128). In Paradise Regain’d we find Jesus pursuing his “holy Meditations” into the wilderness (1.195). A rare bardic interjection—“ill wast thou shrouded then, O patient Son of God” (4.419–20)—emphasizes the stormy night that Jesus endures in the fourth book, only to have its afflictions quickly evaporate in lovely lines on the tuneful birds of morning who

After a night of storm so ruinous,
Clear’d up their choicest notes in bush and spray
To gratulate the sweet return of morn[.]

(4.436–38)

As in Calamy’s farewell sermon, David appears in Vane’s commentaries not in his kingship, but as a “righteous man” to whom “the lord gives a reward even in his affliction,” quite like the “Shepherd lad” to whom Milton’s Jesus refers (2.439). “The Lord deprives us of the life & comfort of sense,” Vane continues, “& gives us a better Good the keen eye of faith” (120). For Vane’s Elihu consolation does not arise from “the wisdom of the Creature,” but rather depends on “Gods wisdome” (153); only divine consolation can quiet the “fretting thoughts” that “lye close in a good man” (125). It is through this wisdom that “christ ministers to his people” that we become “wiser then the beasts of ye feild [sic], wiser then our enemies nay wiser then the angells & in Gods light we are made to see light,” as seen in the manna of Deuteronomy 8, which “trained” the fathers up in God’s wisdom (140). “[H]e who receives / Light from above,” Milton’s Jesus “sagely” tells us, “No other doctrine needs” (4.288–89, 285, 290), a reliance on God that he also figures with reference to Deuteronomy 8.33

Vane’s commentaries also suggest the ways in which the theodicy of Paradise Regain’d is in harmony with that of Samson Agonistes. All of these works, Vane’s and Milton’s, focus on worldly trials as exercises leading to fuller spiritual awakening. “It sho[ul]d exceedingly stir up the excersise of our faith whenever we are brought to straights & tryalls,” Vane tells us, “then let our spiritualle sense be awakned” (170). “There is a weak side,” Vane declares in his final sermon, “in the best of gods Saints, wch will be sure to shew it self in the day of tryall” (4). Even “the choicest saints of god . . . canot forbear making provision for the flesh & if the lord would suffer it they would never give over gratifying their fleshly lusts” (13). We see beyond such fleshly concern only with “heavenly eye salve,” rather than through a human “judiciall blindness” that Vane likens to the Church of Laodicea, which “did not know the very light she had was blindness” (157). God’s wisdom is “above the reach of our naturall understandings . . . therfore will the Lord pour out ys anointing on us; without it ‘tis no wonder if we judg God, his ways, & people since we want ys wisdome wch is from above” (155). The trials of the suffering saint should thus be borne with “chearfullness,” “the hatred & malice of men for righteousness sake . . . for the Lord will return & will have mercy for Zion” (149); the Lord tries the faithful by exposing them to worldly powers “then he comes

33. Vane cites Deuteronomy 8:16; Jesus paraphrases Deuteronomy 8:3.
forth & avenges their wrong” (248). Where the Saints had come to rely on their outward strength rather than inner light, Vane’s final sermon states that now God “sweeps all those confidences off the stage” (5). These are precisely the lessons of Milton’s brief tragedy, which shows us one of God’s chosen falling prey to fleshly lusts, straying from his divinely appointed path, resisting the limited reasoning of his agonists, and finally following heavenly light.

As Milton does in *Samson Agonistes*, Vane makes us keenly aware that God’s return will be no picnic for the wicked: God may “suffer” the trampling of His people “for a while but he has a time to right them & yt nation yt wrongs them God will judg” (166 [misnumbered 165]); by granting prosperity to the wicked, the Lord “expose[s] ym & lay[s] ym open to a day of slaughter” (163); the righteous must not forget in their moment of trial that God shall “crush [the wicked] to powder & hide them in the dust” (230). In a way that might remind us of Manoa or the Danite chorus in *Samson Agonistes*, Job’s three friends sometimes play a part in the hero’s self-discovery, though they do not directly enjoy the benefit of God’s favor: “these 3 men understood not Jobs case, but condemned him of hypocrisy, ignorant they were of the end the lord had in Jobs sufferings & of the true christian Gospell frame of spirit yt God had to bring forth in him” (245). We see this especially in Milton’s introduction during Samson’s imprisonment of Manoa, who serves as a relic of the old law whose logic is surmounted by the inner refreshing and faith in things not seen that will ultimately mark Samson as a hero of faith under a “Gospell frame of spirit.”

Through this manuscript we might add to our understanding of the proximity of Milton’s and Vane’s ideas. They agreed, of course, in the early 1640s on the Root and Branch elimination of episcopacy. Milton’s nineteenth-century biographer David Masson hazarded that Vane was the acquaintance mentioned in Cyriack Skinner’s biography as approaching Milton with the offer of becoming the republic’s Secretary of Foreign Tongues; though that speculation has fallen out of favor, we do know that Vane was among the twenty-one members present in the council meeting at which Milton’s appointment was approved. Their mutual involvement in foreign relations would have put them in close contact in the republic’s first years. Milton’s sonnet was likely composed as a response to Vane’s sagacity in handling naval confrontation with the Dutch in 1652 and to Vane’s anonymous pamphlet of the same year, *Zeal Examined*, which urged greater liberty of conscience than more conservative Independents like Ireton and Cromwell were willing to allow—Thomason’s date for the pamphlet is June 15, and Sikes claims that the sonnet was sent to Vane on July 3.
This may explain why Milton’s sonnet to Vane praises his knowledge of “spirituall powre & civill, what each meanes” (10), while the sonnet to Cromwell is more hortative: “Helpe us to save free Conscience from the paw / Of hireling wolves whose Gospell is their maw” (13–14). Though Milton served in the Cromwellian regime to which Vane objected, Sir Henry would return to public life in the Parliament of Richard Cromwell, when Milton mounted a return of his own to vernacular controversy with ideas, as we have seen, very close to those of Vane and Henry Stubbe. There is every evidence to suggest that Milton, with Algernon Sidney, lamented the execution of Vane as the loss of England’s “greatest ornament.”

In a sense this perspective shared by Milton and Vane confirms what we already know: that Milton expresses in the 1671 volume concerns common among Non-conformists, who perceived themselves to be a righteous few exposed by God to worldly iniquity. This particular manuscript, I think, makes more explicit, perhaps in a way that printed works in the Restoration could not, the Nonconformist belief that the prospering wicked were being fattened in their sin for God’s impending Judgment.

More broadly, I also wish to argue for a richer picture of the ways in which these ideas circulated, one encompassing both manuscript and print and availing itself especially of the reputation of martyrs of the Good Old Cause. In her recent edition of Milton’s Paradise Regain’d and Samson Agonistes, Laura Knoppers draws our attention to this kind of circulation in the Restoration activities of the printer John Starkey, which included bringing to press as many republican writings as the times allowed and circulating manuscript newsletters providing a radical spin on Parliamentary proceedings. All of this made him a fitting choice as publisher of Milton’s 1671 volume. But we might also recall that Milton is consistently skeptical of the Machiavellian republicanism that we associate with Starkey, whether in its original or Harringtonean iterations, and look as we develop this picture for the persistence in the Restoration of the language of godly republicanism of which the Vane manuscript provides one example.

In thinking of that kind of circulation, we might pay attention to a figure about whom I have thus far said very little: Vane’s daughter Margaret, who writes on the fly-
leaf that she “began” this “book” in “July 1677.” Though one assumes that the commentaries on Job are Vane’s work—which seems a safe assumption—maximum skepticism requires us to admit the possibility that Margaret Vane is more than a passive copyist. Indeed, the table of contents might lead us to wonder if some works are copied more faithfully than others, with some entries attributed directly to Sir Henry and some not. In the brief treatise “Concerning the True Heire” we find repeated many of the phrases common in Vane’s printed religious writings; the letter to Cary twice cancels immediately repeated words and phrases, suggesting that a copyist is working closely from an original. The commentaries on Job show neither of these traits. In this respect it is tantalizing that so much attention is paid to Elihu’s instruction, which, in a way that might parallel Margaret Vane’s, receives little acknowledgment thanks to the long shadow of a widely acknowledged saint.

The manuscript’s date of July 1677 places it in a moment when Vane’s republican and anti-episcopal sentiments might seem especially timely—it is the moment when Marvell was completing his Account of the Growth of Popery. The Bishops’ Bill introduced by the Lords in February of that year shows the persistence of many of the constitutional issues at play in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms: it is an attempt by the upper house to manage through the bishops the education of a Catholic successor’s household. That summer also brought frequent adjournments of Parliament and rising concerns over an impending war with France—Parliament was adjourned from May 28 to July 16, at which point it met only to adjourn until December 3. Many might have felt nostalgic for the Good Old Cause, particularly if its memory could be revived with the martyred image of a patriot and proven military administrator—a man quite unlike Algernon Sidney, who had sought to restore the republic through negotiations with foreign enemies.

Margaret Vane may have had an insider’s view of these developments from her brother Christopher, who was returned to Parliament for Durham, first sitting in 1675. If Margaret was the preserver of Sir Henry’s high-mindedness, Christopher’s patrimony was political acumen and endurance: he sat for the Whigs but was knighted by Charles II, and he served on the privy councils of both James II and William III, the latter of whom made him Lord Barnard in 1699.

The letter to Cary that we find in this manuscript book suggestively points to the manuscript circulation of the ideals of godly republicanism. It is remarkable in the first

40. The treatise describes the heirs of salvation as having a “double portion” of spirit (253), as opposed to the “naturall spirit” (254) and Abraham’s “earthly seed” (255). For examples of cancellations in the letter to Cary, see 264 (“Judged by you Judged by you mercy in the evidence”), 265 (“reconciling demonstration demonstration in”).

41. Marvell’s uncharacteristically lengthy speech upon its second reading in the Commons presents it as an encroachment by the Lords upon the Royal Prerogative, though it also expresses hope that Charles II’s successor will not be Catholic and seems reluctant to place power in the hands of the bishops. See An Account of the Growth of Popery, ed. Nicholas von Maltzahn, vol. 2 in The Prose Works of Andrew Marvell, ed. Annabel Patterson et al. (New Haven, Conn., 2003), 190–91.

instance to see Vane, the soon-to-be executed republican, greet Cary, a hardliner against the regicides in the Convention Parliament, with the salutation “My Dear Friend.” That Vane’s expectations might have been informed by the memory of Lucius Cary’s conversion to anti-episcopal sentiment is suggested by the publication in 1660 of three speeches against the bishops originally delivered in 1641, by Lucius Cary, Nathaniel Fiennes, and Vane.43 After this surprisingly warm greeting, Vane graciously papers over the two correspondents’ differences of opinion with reference to Acts 1:7—“It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in his own power.” Adding incongruity to incongruity, Vane tells us that he received Cary’s letter the morning after he had gone to bed reading quite an assured account of the Father’s seasons, the Fifth Monarchist John Tillinghast’s “sermons on the signes of the times” (265). That reference lends this undated letter a terminus a quo of 1655, when Tillinghast’s Eight Last Sermons were first published, though it seems likely that this letter was written around the time of the sermons’ third edition, released by Vane’s own indefatigable printer Livewell Chapman in 1659, when Vane might agree with Cary, as he seems to do in this letter, that the constitutional measures adopted under the Protectorate were unprecedented novelties (306).44

Despite his consistent skepticism of Fifth Monarchist overconfidence in predicting the divine calendar—1701 was Tillinghast’s prognostication for the start of the millennium—we might find in the sermons to which Vane draws our attention several statements close to those of his own writings. One of the central premises of the sermons is the necessity of entering into a spiritual reading of the world’s events, rather than a temporal one—Tillinghast’s text is Matthew 16:3, “O yee hypocrites, yee can discern the face of the skie, but can yee not discern the Signes of the Times?”45 As in Vane’s writings, the chief obstacle to that spiritual sight is self-interest, the “love” of which, Tillinghast tells us, “hinders men” from seeing “the signs of the Times” (51, italics in original). Tillinghast avers that the Second Coming will bear closer resemblance to the monarchy of Solomon than to that of David: “Davids Kingdom was an eminent Type of the Kingdom of Stone,” where “plowshares are to be beaten into swords” and the Saints “pluck down all” to prepare the way for Christ’s return; “Solomons Kingdom, was a Type of the Kingdom of the Mountain,” where “swords are beaten into plowshares,” anticipating Christ’s Kingdom itself, where peace will reign (60–61). That historical progress cannot be effected by “Nations as Nations, but rather must be performed by “Saints as Saints,” otherwise there is no more in it than “in the work of Cyrus destroying Babylon, or in Alexanders destroying the Medes and Persians Monarchy, or in the Romans destroying the Grecian Monarchy” (67, 68, 71, italics in original). Though Tillinghast laments that “we had a Parliament, An Army, A General that went along with

43. Lucius Cary, [Nathaniel Fiennes], and [Sir Henry Vane], A Landskip: Or a Brief Prospective of English Episcopacy ([London], 1660; Wing L324).
44. In the letter Vane voices assent with Cary’s objection to newfangled settlements in church and state, urging the elimination of “Anti-Christ root & branch wch witnes from yt root of Magistracy then aimed at by some, as wel as from ye right root of ministry as it is spirituall hath not yet been born” (306).
45. John Tillinghast, Mr. Tillinghast’s Eight Last Sermons (London, 1659; Wing T1171A), 43–44. References are given in the text.
us till of late, but now Gods people are wholly destitute;” he avers that the greatest successes of the godly were achieved at those moments when they most “kept to All-hallows meeting and Black fryars-meeting”: “What a spirit of prayer was there up in the Bishops time? and what was the effect of it? it brought their ruine: Afterward, when Presbytery was like to tread us down, as did the Bishops their Predecessors, a great spirit of prayer was in many, by this they are ruined” (88–89).

Vane certainly would have agreed with the view that the Protectorate had strayed from godly ideals. Though he does not appoint a date for Messiah’s return, we find Vane in this letter prophecying of impending Judgment in more abstract terms: “you shall see ys Mysticall babylon burnt as Jerusalem was of old by the hand of the Caldeans, & ys spirituall Egypt dealt with as Isa 19 & be given over into the hand of a Cruell lord & fierce yt shall reigne over ym whilst the witnesses of the spirituall ministry & church shall lye as dead in the street of the great city wher our Lord alsoe was crusified” (302). Vane’s moment of prophecying is made fully prophetic by a marginal note in a seventeenth-century hand that is discernibly not Margaret Vane’s, which reads “facet fire in London 1666” and highlights with a line in the margin the next several pages of the letter under this rubric.

That remarkable annotation suggests circulation of this manuscript book after its composition in 1677, by which time the prophecy of Vane’s pre-Restoration letter had become authenticated by history. Much as he and Milton were reluctant to set God’s agenda, their readers may have been eager to read worldly events as legitimizing the thought of these saints of the Good Old Cause. Perhaps one indication of Vane’s continued reputation is the ire reserved for him in William Baron’s attack on those regicides praised by Ludlow. Baron places a comparably long attack on Vane last in his catalog of regicides, and brands him a fanatic expressing “whatever came uppermost in his freakish head, [so] that the common Appellation men gave him was, Sir Humerous Vanity.” During his retirement under Cromwell, the temperamental and self-interested Vane “Tyranniz’d over his Tenants and Neighbours, obliging the former to take new Leases.”46 All this to quash Ludlow’s suggestion that Vane’s successful management of the navy was a mark of the kind of even-tempered and public-spirited individual who rose to the fore under the Commonwealth.

The stubborn reputation of godly republicans suggests also the persistence of their strain of Interregnum republican thought. In exploring that persistence we might more carefully distinguish between the influence of Milton and Vane and that of their contemporary English republican Algernon Sidney. Sidney’s Court Maxims reside in that tradition of republican thought endorsing some measure of religious conformity and locates authority over political and religious affairs in virtuous rulers. We might think immediately of Continental examples of this republican tendency—Machiavelli or Paolo Sarpi’s Erastianism, both of which Milton considered closely in his greener years—or of such English thinkers as Harrington. Sidney objects strongly to Restoration episcopacy, but he does not go so far as to reject religious conformity as an idea: in

46. William Baron, The Regicides, No Saints nor Martyrs Freely Expostulated with the Publishers of Ludlow’s Third Volume (London, 1700; Wing B898), 95, 100.
his view the bishops in their greed and corruption cannot reflect a civil order founded in virtue. His guiding principle arises from Aristotle’s *Politics*, that the “end of civil societies . . . [is] that men may in them enjoy *vita beata secundum virtutem* [a happy and honorable life] (Aristotle, *Politics*, bk III).”

For all of their sympathy with Sidney’s republican spirit, Milton and Vane lend the rule of the virtuous a more cosmic dimension than he does and are more strenuous in claiming that the magistrate must rule over externals alone. And in the case of Milton, those ideas find expression in a poetics privileging the divine scripting of terrestrial events, inscrutable as that script may be to agents of worldly iniquity. It is the error of Satan in *Paradise Regained* to assume that a lack of “date prefixt” in “the Starry Rubric” makes Messiah’s terrestrial reign uncertain: “eternal sure, without end, / Without beginning” (4.391–93). Whatever storms Satan and his late-Stuart servants are able to produce, such fleeting discomforts are easily brushed aside as “false portents” that make no less inevitable the monarchy “that shall to pieces dash / All Monarchies” (4.491, 149–50).

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