The Theology of Violence: Just War, Regicide and the End of Time in the English Revolution

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A Thesis Submitted for the
Degree of Doctorate of Philosophy
in the Faculty of Modern History
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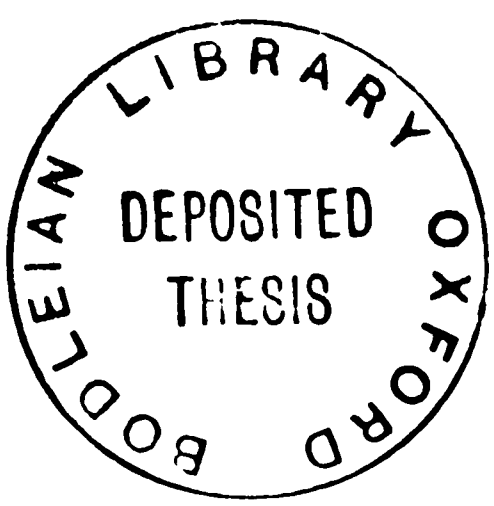

Short Abstract

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This thesis investigates the theology of violence in early modern England. It finds that violence had an important place in the theology of the English Revolution, which is at variance with many twentieth-century perceptions of Christianity. After introducing these ideas in the first chapter, chapter two begins with an outline of the general conceptions of the relationship between the Divine and violence, contrasting the image of a God of peace with a God of war. It also outlines just war theory, which was central to early modern English views of legitimate violence. Additional aspects of contemporaries' conceptions involved ideas of authorisation, violence as punishment, and a hierarchy of legitimate violence. These ideas are further developed in chapter three, first with reference to the Elizabethan Homilies and then in relation to theologians during the civil wars. This discussion of theologies of obedience anticipates chapter four's analysis of the theologies of resistance in relation to the theology of violence. Chapter four addresses a variety of themes concerning the illegitimacy of suicide and the corresponding legitimacy of self defence. The chapter concludes by addressing the idea of direct divine authorisation for violence, which is modelled by the biblical Book of Joshua and developed by examining Calvin's commentaries on the text. Direct authorisation lays the groundwork for chapter five, which addresses the apocalyptic perspective in relation to the theology of violence. The three interrelated themes of anti-Catholicism, anti-idolatry, and a new dispensation are examined. In chapter six, the previous themes are considered in an analysis of the regicide. The discussion of the regicide not only draws on the preceding discussion of the theology of violence but also examines the "scapegoating" dimension of the execution of the king. The final chapter offers reflections on the importance of the theology of violence for the view of the English civil wars as "wars of religion."

Extended Abstract

The Theology of Violence: Just War, Regicide and the End of Time in the English Revolution

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Much has been written on political ideas, resistance theory, and apocalypticism in early modern England, but scholarship has often ignored the central role of the theology of violence in those areas. This thesis seeks to address that imbalance. It does so through a discussion of the early modern theology of violence in relation to a number of major themes in the period. This is done by reconstructing the intellectual background which underpinned early modern ideas and by examining published tracts and sermons which addressed the theology of violence. Throughout, the number of shared assumptions between royalists and parliamentarians is stressed. The result is a more complete picture of the role of ideas about violence during the English Revolution of the 1640s.

Twentieth-century Western efforts to transform the Bible into a handbook for pacifism have obscured perceptions about the theology of violence in previous periods. That much is certainly true in the context of England in the 1640s. The first chapter introduces the thesis and also places it in contrast to present-day preconceptions about the role of violence in religion. Chapter two begins with a discussion of the general theology of violence in the period, comparing images of a God of peace with a God of war. The chapter then moves to a discussion of

violence and just war theory, which was central to early modern ideas about legitimate violence. The chapter concludes by pointing to the paradox of non-combatant ministers who served a warring God. In chapter two the ideas of authorised violence, violence as punishment, and a hierarchy of authorisation for violence are identified. These topics are carried forward into chapter three, which examines the theologies of obedience in the period. In an effort to detail the hierarchical worldview with regard to violence, chapter three begins with a discussion of the Elizabethan Homilies. Within the hierarchy, the authority to kill was viewed as coming from God alone. This hierarchical worldview gave rise to the common assumption that obedience to God and the magistrate was required and that violence was restricted to those authorised by God to use it. A particular prohibition is found to have existed regarding the employment of violence "up the pyramid," against one's superiors in the hierarchy. The discussion then addresses the application of this view to political theory in the period, particularly ideas concerning the institution and function of government.

Chapter three is also concerned with some of the limits inherent in the theology of obedience, particularly with regard to self defence and the nature of the king. Ideas about the formation and function of the state meant that it was broadly accepted that self defence was preserved by the individual in the face of immediate attack. This was not seen as something which contradicted the hierarchy of authorised violence, although many pointed out that the king was to be beyond violence. It was almost universally recognised that the monarch possessed the top position in the hierarchy of authorised violence. The monarch was viewed as a

lynchpin between heavenly and earthly violence. Nevertheless, one view of the king suggested that a division could be made between his person and his authority. The parliamentarians' adaptation of this argument is examined with regard to how it provided for authorised violence. This distinction supplemented the primary parliamentary position, namely, arguments from the legitimacy of defensive force.

Natural law, a discussion of which introduces chapter four, underpinned Parliament's arguments for defensive violence. In particular, parliamentarians believed that there were theological principles which prohibited suicide, and, correspondingly, justified self defence. This was a theological position widely held at the time by most church members. Parliamentarian arguments for self defence were then expanded to arguments for national defence, either by analogy or by appeal to political principles. These ideas are used to contextualise the debate surrounding the Militia Ordinance. Parliamentarian arguments in support of the Militia Ordinance were usually cast in terms of defensive action, a tactic necessitated by shared assumptions about the legitimacy of violence and the importance of obedience. There was, however, another line of argument available to parliamentarians, which was increasingly employed after the king's answer to the Nineteen Propositions in 1642. This was an argument for a joint (or coordinate) authority for violence. The coordinate theory reconfirms the hierarchical view of violence in the period, but rather than seeing the king as alone at the pinnacle, it argued that Parliament and the king shared the top position.

Chapter four concludes by moving beyond arguments based primarily on self defence and coordination to examine the idea of violence which was directly

authorised by God. The possibility for direct authorisation for violence was not unique to the civil wars, or to the seventeenth century in general. Rather, it was an idea deeply rooted in Christian theology. In order to explicate the logic of direct authorisation, Calvin's commentaries on Joshua, and seventeenth-century English applications of the ideas they contain, are discussed. God's direct authorisation was often seen as accompanying the divine presence or command, which contemporaries believed there were several ways of discerning. God's presence could be found by observing providences, looking for close parallels with Israel, and in correlating events with biblical prophecies. As more of these methods coincided, a conviction that God's presence was with Parliament, commanding them to move in the direction of further Reformation, grew. The discussion of the reasons why contemporaries believed they had divine authorisation further reinforces the earlier idea that violence could serve as a form of divine communication.

The idea of direct divine authorisation leads to chapter five's discussion of the apocalyptic perspective in the period. Here three themes are addressed: anti-Catholicism, anti-idolatry and a new dispensation. The prominent place of anti-Catholicism allowed the parliamentarians to see their actions as defensive and thus authorised. The apocalyptic aspects of anti-Catholicism, which demonised the enemy, also helped to generate parliamentary perceptions of the divine presence among them, and thus reinforced ideas of direct authorisation.

The theme of anti-idolatry, which was closely related to anti-Catholicism, had similar influence. "Idolatry" offered a shorthand for a demonised enemy and

also served a motto that demanded action. Idolatry required "cleansing," an idea that provided a way for parliamentarians to conceptualise the violence they were undertaking. Such cleansing was an act of preparation, preparation for the coming of the King of kings, and, as such, the discussion of anti-idolatry leads to the last section of chapter five: the idea of a new dispensation, under which it was possible to see greater direct authorisation for violence. Nevertheless, such ideas were still largely contained within the hierarchical worldview, with it being viewed as the responsibility of public persons to remove idols as well as set up the New Jerusalem. In this sense, the importance of apocalypticism for the theology of violence was the way in which it provided parliamentarians with a source of authorisation in the absence of the king.

The sixth chapter brings many issues previously discussed to bear on an analysis of the regicide. In addition to demonstrating the ways in which the theology of violence influenced the execution of the king, this chapter also draws on the ideas of René Girard in order to emphasise the cathartic effects inherent in the regicide. Such ideas are used to revisit the idea of bloodguilt and to demonstrate how violence was used in an effort to end violence and re-establish the hierarchy of authorised violence which had been dissolved by the wars. Particular attention is given the Windsor Prayer Meeting and Henry Ireton's Army Remonstrance. The chapter concludes with a consideration of Oliver Cromwell's role in the regicide.

The seventh chapter offers reflections on the application of the material to conceptions of the civil wars. In particular, it is maintained that the idea of wars *by* religion must complement current ideas of the conflict as "wars of religion."

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This thesis hopefully marks a beginning as much as an end, but in many ways it seems like the culmination of a large number of debts: intellectual, financial and emotional, which I would like to acknowledge.

My love for the seventeenth century was sparked initially by Professor Paul S. Seaver during my undergraduate years at Stanford. Simultaneously, I had the opportunity to do advanced work with Renè Girard, which resulted in a long-term interest in violence and the sacred. I hope that the child of the marriage of these two pursuits is one that both will find interesting.

Such a project would have been impossible without the use of a number of libraries and the assistance of numerous librarians and staff. In particular, the Bodleian Library and the coordinate libraries of Oxford University. I am also grateful to the staff at the British Library, Dr. Williams's Library, Cambridge University Libraries, Emmanuel College Library, Emory University Libraries, Balliol College Library, and especially Vanderbilt University Libraries, particularly the special collections, interlibrary loan and theology libraries, the help from each was appreciated more than they can know.

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Finally, if theses can be dedicated, then this one would be dedicated to Bianca, for borrowed time.

Note on Dates and Spelling

I have taken the year to start on 1 January, but dates are in Old Style. Spelling, punctuation and capitalisation have been modernised in all quotations when warranted. Original spelling of all titles has been retained. Each citation is given in an extended form the first time it is cited for each chapter, subsequent references are shortened but the author's full name is given for primary sources unless it appears in the corresponding text. Extended citations are also available in the bibliography.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways.

Isaiah 55:8-9

Chapter One

Introduction: Theology and Violence

> Blessed is the man, that thus rewards Babylon, yea, blessed is the man that takes their little ones and dashes them against the stones. What soldier's heart would not start at this, not only when he is in hot blood to cut down armed enemies in the field, but afterwards deliberately to come into a subdued city, and take the little ones upon spears' point, to take them by the heels and beat out their brains against the walls . . . Yet if this work be to revenge God's Church against Babylon, he is a blessed man that takes and dashes the little ones against the stones. -- Stephen Marshall, *Meroz Cursed*

On the 23rd of February, 1642, as the queen sailed off from Dover and King Charles rode along the cliffs to keep her in view as long as possible, Stephen Marshall climbed into the parliamentary pulpit to exhort the Commons. It was a forum he would come to dominate as the most regular fast day preacher at Westminster. On that day, however, Marshall delivered a sermon which would eclipse his subsequent orations. It was the Marshallian moment, and with all his famed energy Marshall delivered his infamous *Meroz Cursed.* His voice rang out with the authority of Scripture as he declared, "Cursed is every one that withholds his hand from the shedding of blood!"[1]

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[1] Marshall, *Meroz Cursed, Or, A Sermon Preached to the Honourable House of Commons . . . Febr. 23. 1641* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1642), p. 10.

Marshall's passion still comes through the page four centuries later; but his sentiments hardly appear to embody Christian love and forgiveness and seem out of place for a godly minister, the so-called "pope of Presbyterianism."[2] But for Marshall and his fellow parliamentarian divines, love and forgiveness were subordinate values to obedience, especially obedience to the will of God.

This thesis began as an in-depth study of the thought and character of Stephen Marshall specifically and still bears much of his imprint. Particularly intriguing was the violent rhetoric Marshall preached and printed, and related allegations that his apocalyptic vision had inspired soldiers to take up arms in Parliament's cause. The investigation of Marshall quickly led to the wider question that underlies this study, namely, what did his contemporaries--popular divines in particular--think about the relationship between God and violence? This general question I have called the theology of violence. The way in which contemporaries used the term "violence" itself indicated a central theme of this thesis: for men such as Marshall, "violence" meant the unauthorised use of force, a definition which demonstrates an ingrained concern for external authorisation with relation to violence. For the purposes of this thesis, the term "violence" will be used in its modern sense to denote the use of force directed toward causing bodily harm irrespective of its legitimacy.

While aware of the "puritan" portrait of an Old Testament God, and not naïve about what an investigation into the theology of violence might yield, my question was fuelled to some extent by a bias particular to the late twentieth century. In light of recent political events, it is one which must be briefly acknowledged. Possibly the

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[2] For the ironic attribution, see Hugh Trevor-Roper, "Scotland and the Puritan Revolution," in *Historical Essays, 1600-1750, Presented to David Ogg*, ed. H. E. Bell and R. L. Ollard (London: A. & C. Black, 1963), p. 91.

largest post-World War II hermeneutical enterprise, after the modern "quest" for the historical Jesus, has been the effort to make Christianity a pacifist religion: to turn the book of the wars of Yahweh into a handbook for peace. This was an innovation spurred in no small part by the advent of nuclear weapons and the possibility of the total annihilation of humanity. Under such circumstances the Christian just war approach to violence seemed inadequate.[3] Many agreed with the sentiment expressed by the theorist René Girard: that weapons of mass destruction had forced humanity to an apparent crossroads between total violence and the total rejection of violence.[4]

Additionally, the protest of the "peace churches" (many of which have their historical origins in the period related to this thesis) in recent years, particularly in the context of the American war in Vietnam, combined with the religiously inspired non-violent protest movements led by Mohandas Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King, Jr. in America, have left the impression that religion in general and Christianity in particular should be pacifist. The result is that a position, previously a heresy held by only a tiny minority of believers, has now become the perceived orthodoxy. It is a perception which clouds not only our judgement of the past, but also our assessment of the present.

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[3] Testament to this proposition can be found by looking into any one of the numerous theologically pacifist works which emerged after the 1950s. See, for example, James Douglass's acclaimed *The Non-Violent Cross* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), which maintains that just war thinking is morally impossible in the nuclear age, cf. *A Just War No Longer Exists: The Teaching and Trial of Don Lorenzo Milani*, ed. and trans. James Tunstead Burtchaell (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).

[4] Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore, Md.: John Hopkins University Press, 1977), p. 240.

While some theologians and even whole Christian denominations have begun to re-examine and in some instances re-embrace the just war paradigm,[5] the pacifist interpretation/perception of Christianity has become so strong that following the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001, many Western commentators questioned how "religious" people could have behaved in such a way. The media discussion expressed the sentiment that religion, or at least "civilised" religion, avoids violence. While this may or may not be the case theologically, it is certainly not the case historically.

This thesis is concerned with the theology of violence in England during the 1640s. This turbulent time--variously referred to as the "Puritan Revolution," the "English Civil War(s)," the "English Revolution," the "British civil wars," the "war of three kingdoms," and most recently, Britain/England's "Wars of Religion"--has certainly found its share of interested scholars.[6] Despite such wide attention, the

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[5] For example, the United Methodist Church, the third largest denomination in the U.S.A., recently abandoned its pacifist stance in favour of a just war position. See Mark Tooley, "United Methodists Move to the Center," *Faith and Freedom* 19, no. 3-4 (2000), p. 6. Lynn Miller maintains that the roots of this renewed interest in just war theory began first among politicians in the 1960s even as academics were dismissing the just war entirely, see, L. Miller, "The Contemporary Significance of the Doctrine of Just War," *World Politics* 16, no. 2 (1964), pp. 254-86. In North American academic circles, the Candler School of Theology at Emory University has led the way in revitalising discussions on the theology of war and reintroducing just war into the debate. The rhetoric of both American President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair following 11 September 2001, and with regard to the war in Afghanistan, has made continual, although unsystematic, use of the concept of just war and associated criteria. This movement towards a reacceptance of the just war theory by mainline Christian denominations has not been seen in the Roman Catholic Church, long considered the protector of just war doctrine. Increasingly, commentators detect pacifist tones in Vatican pronouncements, and the Vatican has recently made a concerted effort to clear Pope John Paul II of the smear of being a pacifist--an impression given particularly as a result of the Church's stand against the Persian Gulf War and the 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia. See, for example, Richard Boudreaux and Teresa Watanabe, "Catholic Church Debates 'Just War'," *Los Angeles Times,* 30 September 2001 (Home Addition, page 1); Nicole Winfield, "Pope Outlines Moral Right to Fight Terrorism," *The Associated Press Newswire*, 11 December 2001, BC cycle; Brian M. Kane, *Just War and the Common Good: Jus ad Bellum Principles in Twentieth-century Papal Thought* (San Francisco: Catholic Scholars Press, 1997).

[6] Works retelling the historiography of the period have become something of their own genre. A further retelling is deemed unnecessary here. For those seeking an extended treatment of the

central role of the theology of violence in the period has often been ignored. "Violence" itself has been given increased attention in a number of fields following the work of René Girard.[7] We are becoming increasingly aware of the role of violence in the formation of culture generally, and in some respects for early modern English culture specifically.[8] This more nuanced attention to violence follows from a previous effort to assess how violent English culture was in the period. Despite the eminence of the scholars involved in the debate, it unfortunately deteriorated into a squabble over numbers rather than an analysis of what violence meant to people and its political implications.[9] Since then greater efforts have been made to investigate the meaning of violence in specific contexts. Interpersonal violence in the early modern period has recently been richly explored, as has the meaning of urban policing and punishment.[10] The complexity of group violence in the period has also been re-

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historiography of the period, see R. C. Richardson, *The Debate on the English Revolution*, 3rd ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998). The idea of a war of religion is revisited in chpt. 7 of this thesis.

[7] Girard's influence has been widely felt in a number of disciplines. Of the many journals dedicated to the discussion of Girard's ideas, two of the most useful are *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture*, and *Anthropoetics: The Journal of Generative Anthropology*. The Colloquium on Religion and Violence, established to promote criticism and development of Girard's ideas, maintains an extensive bibliography of works addressing Girard's theories; see http://theol.uibk.ac.at/cover/. *Anthropoetics* can also be found at http://www.anthropoetics.ucla.edu/anthro.htm (both accessed 4 July 2002).

[8] See, for example, Susan Amussen, "Punishment, Discipline, and Power: The Social Meanings of Violence in Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 34, no. 1 (1995), pp. 1-34.

[9] For some of the major positions, see Lawrence Stone, "Interpersonal Violence in English Society, 1300-1980," *Past and Present* 101 (1983), pp. 22-33; idem, "A Rejoinder," *Past and Present* 108 (1985), pp. 216-24; J. Sharpe, "The History of Violence in England," *Past and Present* 108 (1985), pp. 206-15; J. S. Cockburn, "Patterns of Violence in English Society: Homicide in Kent, 1560-1985," *Past and Present*, 130 (1991), pp. 70-106.

[10] See Alexandra Jane Shepard, "The Meaning of Manhood in Early Modern England, with Special Reference to Cambridge *c.*1560-1640," (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1998); J. M. Beattie, *Policing and Punishment in London, 1660-1750: Urban Crime and the Limits of Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). For an earlier and more expansive effort, see J.S. Cockburn, ed., *Crime in England 1550-1800* (London: Methuen, 1977).

examined.[11] The present work aims to continue such research. Rather than focusing on brawls or riots in particular, however, this work offers an analysis of the theological aids and impediments to mass violence in the form of war generally, and to the British civil wars in particular. It locates the theology of violence as at the heart of many of the debates over sovereignty and authority in the period, while demonstrating the way in which preconceived ideas shaped the discourse on legitimate violence.

This study aims to offer a richer understanding of the theological context of the wars and of the period itself. It demonstrates the way in which theological conceptions of violence impinged on a number of central themes, such as societal and individual involvement in war, the relationship between authority and violence, the legitimacy of resistance, the nature and extent of government, and apocalypticism.[12] Such themes are covered by giving primary attention to printed sources, most often

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[11] See John Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution: The Colchester Plunderers* (Cambridge: Past and Present, 1999).

[12] The historiographies for each of these themes, even solely in their British--let alone European--contexts, are vast. For war and society, see the work of J. R. Hale, particularly *Renaissance War Studies* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983). For resistance theory generally, see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought,* vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), to which this study is methodologically indebted. For the civil wars in particular, see J. W. Allen, *English Political Thought, 1603-1644* (London: Methuen, 1938); Margaret A. Judson, *The Crisis of the Constitution: An Essay in Constitutional and Political Thought in England, 1603-1645* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, *c.*1949); Perez Zagorin, *A History of Political Thought in the English Revolution* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1954); J. H. M. Salmon, *The French Religious Wars in English Political Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959); Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); John Sanderson, *'But The People's Creatures': The Philosophical Basis of the English Civil Wars* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989); Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: an Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603-1642* (London: Macmillan, 1992); J. P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England, 1603-40* (London: Longman, 1986). The historiography on apocalypticism has recently burgeoned as well. For an early effort to demonstrate the broad influence of apocalyptic ideas and their political consequences in a fashion similar to that pursued here, see William M. Lamont, *Godly Rule: Politics and Religion, 1603-1660* (London: Macmillan, 1969). For a more recent effort at the application of this approach to the specific development of a religious movement in the 1640s, see Mark R. Bell, *Apocalypse How?: Baptist Movements in the English Revolution* (Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 2000).

sermons. These tempting but ambiguous sources--frozen as they are between an impression of an oral event and a crafted piece of polemic--are examined to discern not only the thought of the preachers, but also for what they reveal about the assumptions of the audience. With the collapse of censorship in the 1640s the arena for public debate grew exponentially and most of the material discussed below was designed for public consumption and crafted for persuasion.

With Stephen Marshall as our central guide, the fast sermons delivered to Parliament receive the greatest attention. These extraordinary sermons were preached to Parliament on their appointed fast days and later published and widely disturbed. One historian has recently commented that

> the Fast sermons in Parliament itself, perhaps the most remarkable political phenomena of the war, marked the stages of godly triumph and public deliverance, converting the two Houses themselves into a kind of church, the institution of Parliament into the Lord's instrument of salvation . . . and the city of London into New Jerusalem.[13]

Many historians have agreed with this opinion of the significance of the fast sermons to the Long Parliament. Some have seen these sermons as the best way to discern parliamentary policy; others have viewed the series of sermons as a way of explaining the atmosphere which led to civil war; still others have approached them as the most fruitful way to study "puritanism."[14] Common among these different interpretations is

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[13] Robert Zaller, "The Figure of the Tyrant in English Revolutionary Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45 (1993), p. 596.

[14] The two best studies of this series of sermons remain John F. Wilson, *Pulpit in Parliament: Puritanism during the English Civil Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969) and Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Fast Sermons of the Long Parliament" in *Religion, Reformation and Social Change* (London: Macmillan, 1967). For critics of Trevor-Roper's reading of the sermons, see Christopher Hill, "Fast Sermons and Politics, 1640-1660," in *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-century Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1994) and David Morse, *England's Time of Crisis: From Shakespeare to Milton* (London: Macmillan, 1989), esp. p. 119.

the general acceptance of the importance of this body of material.[15] The reason these sermons were selected for examination is not to give further fuel to the Earl of Clarendon's belief that these sermons caused the "strange wild-fire" of sedition to break out among the people.[16] That is to say, these sermons are examined not so much as a cause of the civil wars, but rather in an effort to describe what one student of the sermons has called the "political theology" of the period.[17] Sermons delivered to Parliament appeared to present the perfect intersection between religious ideas and political realities. At the same time, this thesis employs the work of the early Church Fathers, medieval scholastics, Continental reformers, and the Edwardian and Elizabethan homilists in an effort to demonstrate not only the foundations for these views, but also to demonstrate the large degree of continuity within the tradition.

The thesis finds few who could be called "pacifists,"--that is, those who categorically reject violence as evil--particularly before 1660.[18] Generally, few

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[15] There are, of course, exceptions. For example, Elizabeth Skerpan's *The Rhetoric of Politics in the English Revolution, 1642-1660* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, *c.*1992), surprisingly makes no mention of them.

[16] Edward Hyde [Earl of Clarendon], *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England Begun in the year 1641,* ed. W. D. Macray (Oxford: Clarendon, 1888), vol. 2, p. 319. Clarendon's position, however, does seem to be supported by many, see James E. Farnell, "The Social and Intellectual Basis of London's Role in the English Civil Wars," *Journal of Modern History* 49, p. 656; E. W. Kirby, "Sermons before the Commons, 1640-1642," *American Historical Review* 44 no. 3 (1939), p. 547. For a criticism of Kirby's analysis of the sermons, see William M. Lamont, "Episcopacy and a 'Godly Discipline' 1641-6," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 10 (1959), pp. 74-89; idem, *Godly Rule: Politics and Religion, 1603-1660* (London: Macmillan, 1969), chpt. 4.

[17] Stephen Baskerville, *Not Peace but a Sword: The Political Theology of the English Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1993). Unlike Baskerville's work, which follows on from Michael Walzer's view in *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1966) that the fast sermons provide an articulation of a revolutionary ideology (pp. 261-3), this examination does not find a single ideology among the sermons and uses them instead as a useful source for trying to determine contemporaries' views concerning the theology of violence. In so doing, this study finds an unexpected degree of consensus in many areas, but not a revolutionary ideology.

[18] The recent work of Meredith Baldwin Weddle, *Walking in the Way of Peace: Quaker Pacifism in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), has further suggested that even the Quakers were ambiguous about their peace testimony, at least until the eighteenth century. Additionally, those who could be called pacifists frequently did not reject violence solely as such but rather rejected violence as part of a larger rejection of the world.

maintained that God disliked violence or disapproved of wide-scale, state-supported violence in the form of wars. God was indeed a God of war. This conception is the concern of chapter two, which provides much of the background for the subsequent discussion by contrasting the idea of a God of peace with a God of war. The second chapter also focuses on the recurrent theme of "authorisation" and the hierarchy for authorised violence. Rather than seeing God as absent from the battlefield, or holding the modern view that war is a theological difficulty that casts doubt upon the possibility of a benevolent God, soldiers of the seventeenth century, particularly in the New Model Army, but also in the royalist camps, held almost the opposite view. God took an active interest in war, using wars and violence to punish, test, and reward humans. War was a tool of the Divine and a way for God to communicate with His[19] creation. The chapter further suggests that it was possible to see war as a form of participation with the Divine.

Yet, the concept of a Lord of Hosts did not mean that Christians could or should use violence at will. Rather, a long series of rules had developed under the Church's care, usually referred to as the "just war tradition." The just war tradition in its "classic" form dictated both when war was permissible as well as the manner in which war should be waged.[20] Such thinking was often applied to interpersonal violence as well as to larger conflicts. The just war tradition provided a foundation for contemporaries to use in approaching the question of the legitimacy of war in

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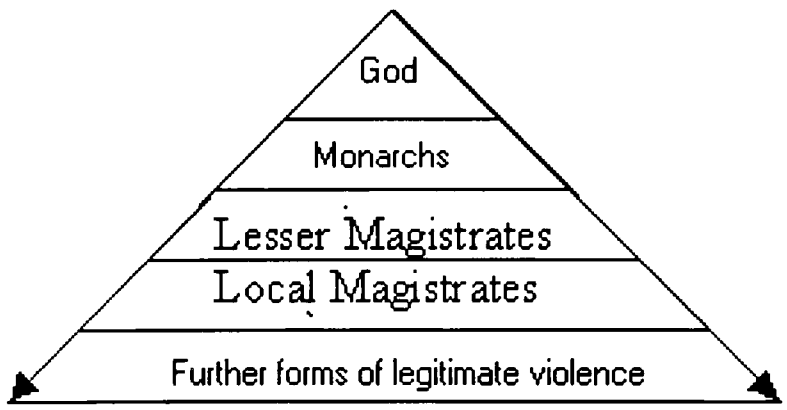
[19] The decision has been made to use masculine gender-specific pronouns throughout this thesis when discussing the Divine, in line with the view of contemporaries in the seventeenth century. The masculine has also been adopted for the unspecified pronoun.

[20] For a detailed historical account of the just war tradition, see James Turner Johnson, *Ideology, Reason, and the Limitation of War: Religious and Secular Concepts, 1200-1740* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975). For a modern application of the idea, see Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

England. It also placed special emphasis on the person of the monarch, and as such reinforced the hierarchical view of how violence was to be authorised.

Following the Reformation the authority to declare war under the just war calculus was placed, politically and theologically, squarely with the monarch or supreme magistrate. Crucial to the theology of violence in the period was a hierarchical theological system which existed in the minds of most contemporaries. On the one hand there was the just war tradition, which, under the *jus ad bellum,* posited that the authority to declare war resided at the top of the earthly hierarchy with the supreme magistrate. Accompanying and supporting this position was a firmly entrenched theology of obedience which also presented a hierarchical picture of the cosmos, commanding the obedience of lower orders towards superiors. Authorisation to use violence flowed down this hierarchy:



These ideas are further addressed in chapter three, which examines the theologies of obedience in the period. It takes the Homilies as representative of the predominant theology of obedience and identifies a number of recurrent themes in these texts before moving on to address their applications (and limitations) in the

seventeenth century. It finds that the authority for violence was a central aspect of contemporaries' worldview that affected their perceptions of government, the king and subjects. In terms of theology, this was true for both royalists and parliamentarians. Additionally, both sides of the divide are found to have held common views on the hierarchical structure of authorised violence.

The theology of obedience was one of the most difficult obstacles for parliamentarians to overcome when it ultimately became necessary for them to take up arms and make war against the king, the fount of authorisation for licit violence. Violence itself was not seen as a sin, but unauthorised violence, or violence up the hierarchy, was perceived as such. Several modern scholars have suggested that the parliamentarians did not share the hierarchical view of authorisation with their royalist counterparts. They argue that "puritans" had abandoned both the theology of obedience and just war theory before the wars and it was this difference in outlook which made the conflict possible.[21] In contrast, this thesis maintains that rather than rejecting the just war calculus and abandoning the theology of obedience, the parliamentarians at almost every turn maintained that they were still using the same traditions, and did so honestly. Additionally, royalists shared the same general theological assumptions with regard to violence and authorisation as their parliamentarian opponents. This is not to say that there were not differences in ideas, but that these differences centred on applications of a common set of beliefs and represent an effort to claim support from this common tradition. "Puritanism,"

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[21] Most notably Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints*; Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961), chpt. 9; idem, "Congregationalism: From the Just War to the Crusade in the Puritan Revolution," *Andover Newton Theological School Bulletin* 35 (1943), pp. 1-20.

however defined, did not present a strikingly different ideology from the accepted norms concerning the theology of violence held by the broader society.

Already in chapter three it can be seen that arguments for self defence, based on commonly held assumptions about natural law, were important. These ideas are continued in chapter four's discussion of the theologies of resistance. After reassessing the theology which supported the right to defensive violence, the discussion addresses the ways in which personal defence was expanded to ideas of national defence. It is in this context that the debate over the Militia Ordinance is placed. Chapter four then moves to a discussion of legitimate violence based on an idea of coordinate sovereignty, with the idea of the Houses of Parliament and the king sharing the top rung of the hierarchy of authorisation. In addition to legal arguments for legitimate violence, chapter four also details the idea of violence which was directly authorised by God and identifies the reasons why contemporaries could believe that they had received such authorisation.

In chapter four, to demonstrate the logic of directly authorised violence, attention is given to Calvin's commentary on Joshua. This is not, however, done to suggest that either "puritanism" or "Calvinism" was inherently revolutionary or subversive, nor is it to suggest that there was an inevitable clash brewing between rival ideologies. One reason that such direct authorisation was seldom called upon prior to the civil wars was that few would have risked the blasphemy of attempting to know the mind of God. Nevertheless, the presence of miracles and other providences made the parliamentarians confident of God's presence with them. They were increasingly able to see themselves as a true new Israel fighting with God under His command.

The discussion of direct authorisation anticipates chapter five's examination of the apocalyptic perspective and its relationship to violence. Here three general themes are explored under the headings of anti-Catholicism, anti-idolatry, and a new dispensation. Anti-Catholicism was a prime force in fomenting the belief that defensive action was necessary. Likewise, anti-idolatry proved an impetus to action and a way of understanding parliamentary efforts. A new dispensation opened the way for direct divine authorisation. The apocalyptic perspective helped to legitimate and interpret violence, but it did not do so by destroying traditional ideas of authorisation. Rather, it demonstrates how fundamental such ideas were, as it allowed the superior of superiors final authority.

Chapter six breaks with the format of the previous chapters to allow the ideas discussed to be brought to bear on the specific event of the regicide. Here Girard's work on the relationship between violence and the sacred is used to highlight the cathartic effect of the regicide. In chapter seven, the thesis concludes with an effort to determine how an expanded view of the theology of violence in the period influences our understanding of the civil wars as "wars of religion." It suggests that when theological ideas concerning violence are taken into account, it becomes necessary to view the conflict as much as wars *by* religion as *for* it.

A weakness emerges from the effort to treat the theology of violence thematically, in that the crucial events and the generative context of the themes can, at times, be lost. Throughout, the aim is to treat these themes as specifically historical and grounded in their context. The world of ideas was never divorced from the political realities which overwhelmed England in the early 1640s. Throughout, the

ideas examined should be seen as intellectual efforts to cope with and address the historical context of a civil war, which was all the more shocking for being unforeseen.

This study does not aim to use the idea of the theology of violence as an answer to the intractable question of the causes of the English civil war. Rather, a discussion of the theology of violence offers insights into the mentality of the characters in this most dramatic series of historical events with particular attention to the nodal point of intersection between ideas about the Divine and violence. What follows is a discussion of how the various discourses concerning power, authority, rights, and religion reflected contemporary assumptions about the nature of authorised force and the role of the Divine in violence.

The thesis also has an additional, more amorphous goal beyond providing a discussion of the theology of violence during England's time of trial. Christopher Hill, commented that "history has to be rewritten in every generation, because although the past does not change the present does; each generation asks new questions of the past, and finds new areas of sympathy . . . ."[22] While what follows falls far short of Hill's great works of reinterpretation, it nevertheless can adopt his maxim in the hope that for a new generation, an analysis of the theology of violence during the civil wars will lead not to the rejection of the Christianity for which the actors contended, but to greater tolerance and understanding for our fellow Abrahamic traditions, and, ultimately, not war, but peace.

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[22] Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1972, repr. 1975), p. 15.

Chapter Two

Theologies of Violence

The ironic remark that God created man in His image, and man returned the favour, has become something of a cliché.[1] It nevertheless reveals an important assumption in modern anthropology, which believes that the nature of a society's God can be correlated to a society's behaviour.[2] But to assume too simply that a society's image of the Divine directly predicts its behaviour can be misleading, particularly if applied to the British civil wars. This chapter and the next aim to illustrate how, to the early modern mind, the idea of a violent God was combined with an emphasis on order, obedience, and authorisation, resulting in a stabilising hierarchy that regulated violence. A violent God was not incompatible with a peaceful society. Yet, a violent God left the way open for a number of forms of violence. To begin exploring these ideas, this chapter addresses the fundamental assumptions in the period concerning first the perceived relationship between the Divine and violence, and second the related idea of the relationship between the Christian and violence.

Contemporary views concerning violence were firmly rooted in the Christian tradition which had preceded them. For this reason, this chapter pays particular attention to how previous theologians, particularly Augustine, Aquinas, Luther and Calvin, addressed some of the fundamental questions concerning the theology of

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[1] The remark is usually first attributed to Voltaire in *Le Sottisier*.
[2] See, for example, Stephen D. Glazer, ed., *Anthropology of Religion* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1997).

violence. By and large, these thinkers set the parameters for seventeenth-century speculation and belief.

Violence and the Divine

There are often as many ideas about God as there are believers, and any effort to generalise broadly about the views of a different people in a different time, should be approached with caution. Nevertheless, in order to begin to build a picture of the theology of violence in the period, this section distinguishes between the discourse of a God of peace on one hand, and a God of war on the other. Such a distinction is made for heuristic purposes, to reveal a spectrum within the theology of the time, although it was a spectrum heavily weighted towards one end. Perhaps "spectrum" itself is even a misnomer, since the structure of the theology allowed the image of a God of peace in many ways to be reconciled with a God of war, and seventeenth-century Englishmen and women frequently held both conceptions simultaneously.

The God of Peace

The theological discourse surrounding war in seventeenth-century England expressed an assumption that peace was the ideal and war a deviation, no matter how regularly it occurred.[3] It is appropriate therefore to begin a discussion of the contemporary conceptions of the relationship between the Divine and war with the position that they were two entirely separate and antithetical things: war and God

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[3] George Clark, *War and Society in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), chpt. 1.

were opposites. God turns His face from violence, unable to have it in His holy, pure, and peaceful presence.[4] Closely related was the idea that war did not come from the Divine but rather emanated from other sources--primarily from the sinfulness of humanity or the depravity of the Devil.

The Stuart pulpits often noted the "blessed" nature of the presence of "peace."[5] This was true even after the start of the wars. In a moving sermon delivered at the beginning of the civil war, Thomas Fuller confessed that it had been known how divine peace was, but this was made all the more apparent by the experience of the misery and the depravity of war.[6] Peace was a blessing and it could indicate God's favour and even God's presence.[7] Numerous sermons in the 1630s pointed out that England, "God's small corner," had been largely spared the turmoil of the Continent's wars. While "all the nations in Christendom have been in grievous perplexities many years round us: we have been hitherto kept as another Land of Goshen."[8] The peace in England indicated God's favour and even presence with the nation.

The language of divines in this vein focussed on the "peace" of Jesus and how the sacrifice of Jesus should make His elect be "at peace." This was partly a peace in the sense of a cessation of violence, but most importantly it was a peace which

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[4] This is close to modern sensibilities, and while some at the time held similar views, it was an idea of God that was not as emphasised as it is today. See David Kingdon, *The Gospel of Violence* (Haywards Heath, Sussex: Carey Publications, 1981); Ronald Sider, *Christ and Violence* (Bristol: J. W. Arrowsmith Ltd., 1980).

[5] The Elizabethan stage did so as well. See Lilly B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's "Histories": Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy* (London: Methuen, 1947), p. 281.

[6] Thomas Fuller, *A Fast Sermon Preached on Innocents Day* (London: L. N. and R. C., 1643), pp. 3-5.

[7] King James VI & I certainly expressed in his pacific rhetoric the idea that God was not present where violence was found, see *The Political Works of James I*, ed. Charles Howard McIlwain (New York: Russell & Russell, 1965) p. 322. In 1642, fearing a Presbyterian revolution, the author of *A Puritan Set Forth in His Lively Colours* (London: N. B., 1642), reminded his readers that the good King James's motto had always been "*Beati Pacifici*, blessed are the peacemakers," (sig. A2).

[8] Stephen Marshall, *A Sermon Preached . . . November 17. 1640* (London: I. Okes, 1641), p. 19. Marshall's point, however, was that in the past God had been satisfied with England and spared them, but if they did not reform quickly, God would punish them by force.

indicated an end to tension and conflict. Christ was a prince of peace because He had made peace between God and humanity. "God is the God of peace, and Christ is the prince of peace, for is He both the peace-maker, and preacher of peace, for He is our peace."[9] This was the rhetoric which most often accompanied the concept of peace. Christ had brought soteriological peace. At the same time, this language could be extended to the broader idea of peace as an absence of violence. While referring to God as the "Lord of Hosts," Edward Marbury could also describe the Divine as characterised by peace. God, for Marbury, was a "God of Peace," and as such would have no truck with warriors:

> God is called the God of peace, and his Gospel is called the Gospel of peace, and his natural Son became *pax nostra*, our peace; and His adopted sons be children of peace. Therefore those sons of thunder, those boisterous and tumultuous natures must needs be abominable to Him whose ways be *via pacis*, the ways of peace; for contraries do expel one the other.[10]

God in this view was a pacific deity whose peace expelled violence. God had sent His son to bring peace to the world, which could be the peace not only of salvation, but also of the cessation of conflict.[11]

Related was an argument for the pacific nature of the Divine based on order. Here, peace indicated an absence of chaos. Order, peace, and the Divine were

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[9] *Seuen VVeapons to Conquer the Deuill* (London: [G. Purslowe], 1628), p. 9 (pages unnumbered).
[10] Marbury, *A Commentarie or Exposition upon the Prophecie of Habakkuk* (London: Samuel Man, 1652), pp. 25, 71. Cf. idem, *Vox Turturis Vel Columba Alba Albionis* (London: T. W., 1647); Edward Burroughs, *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace Contended for, in the Spirit of Meekness* (London: Giles Calvert, 1656); John Faldo, *A Discourse of the Gospel of Peace* (London: Tho. Cockerill, 1687).
[11] Christ had blessed the peacemakers, commanded love, rebuked Peter's sword, and advocated obedience. Many of these elements of the New Testament, which modern day theologians use as the foundation for their pacifism, were also familiar to early modern writers, who occasionally employed them in a parallel fashion. See John Zeller, "Anti-War Sentiment during the English Civil War, 1642 to 1648," (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1974), p. 43. Zeller maintains that in their opposition to the civil wars the "neuters" of the seventeenth century expressed a wide range of proto-pacifist arguments.

intricately intertwined; and to disturb peace and order was a sin against God.[12] God shunned violence because it was contrary to order. Richard Hooker, a great advocate of a peaceful and obedient Church, succinctly summarised this assumption in saying that, "God is the author, not of confusion, but of peace."[13] But the image of God "as the God of order" did not always lead to a pacific disposition. During the civil wars the idea of God as a God of order was not weakened, despite the chaos in the nations.

Just as some saw war as inimical to the Divine, others saw war as so abominable that it was against "nature," by which was meant against the God-given rationality of humanity and the essence of creation. John Zeller has demonstrated how those who wished to remain neutral, the "neuters" of the 1640s, characterised war as something pursued by the insane.[14] Such a destructive activity was in no way "natural" or acceptable. These sentiments can be seen in the language of a petition presented to Parliament when the war was still in its early days. The petitioners expressed the common conclusion that civil wars were particularly unnatural, and claimed that, "the effect of a civil war; as, the destruction of Christians, the unnatural effusion of blood, fathers against sons, brothers by brothers, friends by friends, slain . . . these things weighed and enlarged by your wisdoms . . . will be as strong motives in you to labour, as in us to desire a speedy peace and happy accommodation."[15] Only

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[12] See J. Sears McGee, *The Godly Man in Stuart England: Anglicans, Puritans, and the Two Tables, 1620-1670* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 129, 151.

[13] Hooker, preface to *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, chpt. vi, sect. 3, in *The Works of . . . Richard Hooker*, ed. John Keble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1863), vol. 1, p. 168. Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* did much to lay the foundation for the instinct to obedience detailed below. See Robert K. Faulkner, *Richard Hooker and the Politics of a Christian England* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1981).

[14] See Zeller, "Anti-War Sentiment."

[15] *Lords Journals*, vol. 5, p. 501. For the irrationality and immorality of civil war in particular, see Thomas Morton, *Englands Warning-Piece Shewing the Nature, Danger, and Ill Effects of Civill Warre* (London: T. Favvcet, 1642).

deranged creatures, devoid of Christianity and God-given rationality, would maintain such a bloody and unnatural pursuit.

If violence was against God and against nature, then whence did it come? A frequent answer was that it came from either fallen humanity or Satan, or both. The fallen state of the world in general and humanity in particular was the most frequent theological explanation for the perplexing paradox of the persistence of war combined with a "God of peace." The predatory nature of the world was the result of "Adam in the fall."[16] Just as beasts devoured each other, so humans cruelly pursued wars and killed one and other irrationally. Such earthly predation was the inverse of heaven, which was described as being free from conflict. On earth, however, it was the lusts and sins of humanity which prompted violence. Disobedience to the divine will in the Garden continued to plague creation, which perpetually sinned, killed, and disobeyed. A favourite biblical proof text for this position was found in James 4: "From whence are wars and contentions among you? Are they not hence, even of your pleasures that you fight in your numbers? Ye lust, and have not: ye envy, and desire immoderately, and cannot obtain: ye fight, and ye war, and get nothing."[17] It was the deficiencies of fallen humanity which led them to war.

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[16] George Fox's "Paper to Ffreinds to Keepe out of Warrs and Fightings," quoted in Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-century England* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1992), p. 242. Cf. *A VVarning-peece to VVarre: Wherein is Declared the Originall, Nature, Antiquitie, and Celebritie of a Souldiery* . . . (London: R. Olton and G. Dexter, 1642), p. 1. For the Fall, see William E. Poole, "Frail Originals: Theories of the Fall in the Age of Milton," (D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 2000); Philip C. Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[17] James 4:1-2, Geneva 1602. Quotations from the 1602 Geneva Bible are taken from *The Geneva Bible: The Annotated New Testament 1602 Edition with Introductory Essays*, ed. Gerald T. Sheppard (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1989). For an alternate reading of these verses, see John Mayer, *Praxis Theological, Or, The Epistle of the Apostle St Iames* (London: I. B., 1629). Mayer, whose concern was a systematic exposition of James in its entirety, concluded that these verses should not be taken as addressing killing or war, but contention and hate (pp. 4-5, page numbering restarts for the section addressing chpt. 4). For the opinion counter to Mayer, see Lionel Gatford, *An Exhortation to Peace*

The notion of a peaceful cosmos was alien to those who shared an interest in collective eschatology, or apocalypticism. For the apocalyptically minded, the divine and the earthly plane were both in battle, wherein the forces of God clashed with those of Satan.[18] Nevertheless, apocalyptic ideas also reinforced the peaceful picture of heaven in maintaining that the earthly peace promised in Scripture would be achieved in the eschaton. Philosophers and poets could dream of peace on earth, but it would not come until the end of time. It was widely held that "peace perpetual in this world of contention, is but as . . . Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, a matter of mere contemplation" on earth.[19] Adam had fallen and as a result the world would continue in strife until the end, when at last peace would be allowed to reign on the earth as it did in heaven. It was only in the end that the lamb would lie down with the lion. Archibald Johnston believed that "until King Jesus be set down on His throne, with His sceptre in His hand, I do not expect God's peace, and so no solid peace from men in those kingdoms."[20] There could be no rest until the Satan was defeated in that final battle: "Little quiet I fear is to be expected in Christendom, till the beast his kingdom ruined."[21]

Such quotations demonstrate how easily the blame for violence shifted from fallen humanity to the activities of Satan, despite the orthodox belief in God's agency behind even the work of the Devil. It was tempting to believe that the cosmic

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(London: s.n., 1643), sig. A8; Thomas Manton, *A Practical Commentary, Or an Exposition with Notes on the Epistle of James* (London: John Macock, 1651), pp. 418-20.

[18] This cosmological battle was fiercest when it was fought between God and Satan for control of human souls. See Thomas Johnson, *Stand up to Your Beliefe, Or, A Combat betweene Satan Tempting, and A Christian Triumphing* (London: E. G., 1640); John Downame, *The Christian VVarfare* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1608).

[19] Thomas Digges, *Foure Paradoxes, or Politique Discourses* (London: H. Lownes, 1604), p. 109.

[20] Archibald Johnson, quoted in S. A. Burrell, "The Apocalyptic Vision of the Early Covenanters," *Scottish Historical Review* 43, no. 135 (1964), pp. 20-1.

[21] Stephen Marshall, *A Sermon Preached . . . November 17 1640*, pp. 43-4.

malevolent force (the Devil, the Beast, Satan, etc.) was a lover of blood, and took delight in violence. The Devil's tracks on earth were usually discernible by the trail of blood he left behind him.[22] Just as God was active in the world, so was the Devil, continually seeking to stir up human lusts, to "boil blood" in the hopes of encouraging violence.[23] It was a common practice to refer to murderers as "devils."[24] In both the popular press and the pulpit, the Devil was frequently depicted as one of the causes of humanity's violence. Once the Devil was removed, the tranquillity that the God of peace desired could be established, but until then fallen humanity would continue to suffer the Devil's temptations and give into the conflict provoked by human lusts. Within this vein of thought, however, God was still the Devil's master and even the Devil's violence was ultimately a part of God's plan.

While few in England expressed the heretical view that peace was more than an ideal confined to heaven, this position was not altogether absent from English theology. The Lollards were the most significant minority to express something resembling this opinion in England before the Quakers. The *Twelve Conclusions*, nailed to the door of Parliament in 1395, maintained that war was not compatible with the New Testament. This position encountered an immediate theological problem. Even if it were accepted as true that the New Testament prohibited war, then a pacifist position still required a repetition of the Marcionite heresy--in that it made Christianity a religion exclusively based on the New Testament. The Lollards recognised this criticism and addressed it in their conclusions by saying that killing

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[22] See *The Devils Reign Upon Earth* (London: Iohn Andrews, 1655).
[23] For a testament to the immediacy of the concept of the Devil for many in the period, see Thomas Goodwin, *A Childe of Light Walking in Darknes* (London: M. F., 1636).
[24] As in the case of *A Most Execrable and Barbarous Murder Done by an East-Indian Devil* (London: T. Banks, 1642).

was "contrary to the New Testament unless justified by express revelation."[25] The modifying clause was important, for it permitted violence and wars when commanded directly by God, such as the wars fought by Joshua. It also allowed for judicial violence, since temporal authority was divinely endowed. Thus, the petitioning Lollards could "grant that it is lawful to slay men through judgement and in battles, if those that do it have the authority and permission of God," though they maintained that "few or none are now slain by the authority of God."[26] Such views, nevertheless, were rare, and even a pacific view of God did not necessitate pacifist Christians, as the idea of earthly peace was usually placed at the end of time.

Those advocates of reform in the early modern period who remembered the Lollards fondly looked to their criticisms of the papacy while ignoring their pacifism. The same could not be said, however, for their contemporary Continental radical reformers, the Anabaptists. It could be argued that necessity drove the theological revelation that pacifism was the true form of Christianity proclaimed in the Gospels. Given the ruthlessness with which the Anabaptists were pursued, particularly in the wake of Munster, it was crucial for them to convince their persecutors that they were not violent revolutionaries. Of course, their pacifism also derived from their criticism of what the early Anabaptists saw as Zwingli's subservience to the state and the radicals' insistence that the Church should be totally separate from worldly power. Nevertheless, the fallout from the millennial kingdom of Munster so thoroughly tarnished everything associated with Anabaptism as to make it anathema to

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[25] Jenny Teichman, *Pacifism and the Just War: A Study in Applied Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), pp. 114-5.
[26] See *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, ed. Ann Hudson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 23-4.

Reformers and counter-Reformers alike. The association of pacifism, or proto-pacifism, with the gross heresy of Anabaptism stunted the Reformers' ability to readdress fundamentally the theology of violence.

The desire to avoid repeating the Anabaptists' heresy presented a strong incentive for Reformation theologians not to insist that a God of peace commanded pacifist Christians. Despite the well-known humanist calls for peace found in the works of Erasmus or More, few took the view, based on religious principles, that war was not permissible.[27] One Elizabethan writer described a type of "peacemonger" as those "whose consciences be so pure (as they say themselves) that they can allow of no wars, either to be good or godly, considering what murders, spoils and outrages by them are committed." The author had little time for this position and explained that most "peacemongers" either objected merely to the taxes which wars required, or were simple cowards.[28]

Despite the low number of authentic Anabaptists in England at any point, Stuart divines took particular delight in refuting the "Anabaptist" position, using it as a foil for cataloguing the various biblical warrants for war. Their sustained ridicule demonstrates that despite an image of God with peaceful elements, most early modern English thinkers were far from pacifists. Peace might be the condition of heaven, but fallen humanity was violent. Indeed, most went further, seeing God as violent as well.

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[27] For the paucity of pacifists in the period, see Paul A. Jorgensen, "Theoretical Views of War in Elizabethan England," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13, no. 4 (1952), pp. 469-81. The actual extent of Erasmus's and More's pacifism is also open to question, and most humanist pacifism seems to be based more on preserving the value and dignity of humanity, than on obeying the will of a God who desires peace. See Joycelyne G. Russell, *Peacemaking in the Renaissance* (London: Duckworth, 1986); Robert P. Adams, *The Better Part of Valor: More: Erasmus, Colet, and Vives, on Humanism, War, and Peace, 1496-1535* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962).

[28] Barnabe Rich, *Allarme to England* (London: Henrie Middleton, 1578), sigB3-sigB4.

The God of War

In addition to the God of peace who did not love war, there was an image of a God of war. The idea that God was the author of war, and that "all wars are ordained by God," was a frequent theme. Violence was an integral aspect of the God and part of the divine plan.[29] Stephen Marshall thought violence a suitable topic for his Easter Monday sermon in 1644 and treated the Aldermen of London to a discussion of the topic of God as the author of war. "There is never any sword drawn on earth, till it be first drawn in heaven," Marshall explained. "Never does war come in any country, till God bathes His sword in heaven, draws it out and brandishes it in heaven, and then says, 'Sword, go into such a land'."[30] With the God of war, the emphasis was away from a meek messiah and towards an aggressive Yahweh. In contrast to the rhetoric of turning the other cheek, it was seen as "righteous with God to repay violence with violence."[31] Rather than the blessing of peace, Thomas Scott's subtitle to his report from the Low Countries was that "war was a blessing."[32] The God of war used war for His purposes, caused wars, guided aggression, and participated in humanity's violence, while also using violence to punish His creation.

The idea that God was a God of war was far from unique to mid-seventeenth-century England. The concept had a long development and was seldom absent from the Judeo-Christian tradition.[33] But the idea that all wars came from God and that

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[29] Edward Marbury, *A Commentarie or Exposition upon the Prophecie of Habakkuk*, pp. 23, 59, 63.
[30] Marshall, *A Divine Project to Save a Kingdome . . . A Sermon to . . . the Lord Maior and Court of Aldermen, of the Citie of London* (London: Richard Cotes, 1644), pp. 18-9.
[31] George Hutcheson, *A Brief Exposition of the Prophecies of Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* (London: T. R., 1654), p. 230.
[32] Scott, *The Belgick Sovldier: VVarre VVas a Blessing* (London[?]: s.n., 1624), title page.
[33] It is not uncommon for polytheistic cultures eventually to focus their ritual on the worship of a single deity, often a war god. See, for example, Meredith Filihia, "Rituals of Sacrifice in Early Post-European

God was the author of violence was particularly appropriate for an early modern religious society which saw God in all things: even, or, perhaps particularly, violence. Additionally, the increased biblicism of early modern Christianity led to an emphasis on a warring deity as encountered in the Old Testament.

Yet, the God of peace could be the mirror image of the God of war. God did not want to send the plague of war upon His people, for He was a God slow to anger. But once angered, His wrath was fierce. That God was imagined simultaneously as a God who loved peace and participated in war was not a testament to any "confused," "less developed," or backward "medieval" type of theology.[34] Rather it is evidence of the richness of the Judeo-Christian tradition that such a paradox can be generated and sustained. The janus-faced nature of God was not as difficult for contemporaries to accept as it is for moderns. As the author of *A VVarning-peece to VVarre* (1642) noted, with the start of hostilities in England it was possible to conceptualise "that the God of peace is now become a Man of war, a God of vengeance; bearing arms (as I may so say) against His own creature."[35] As war came to embroil England, the peace of Goshen was lost and the Divine moved along the spectrum from peace to war.

God's changed character also represented a form of communication. The God of war carried a message, for war was a particular kind of providence. It could express anger,

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Contact Tonga and Tahiti," *Journal of Pacific History* 34, no. 1 (1999), pp. 5-22; idem, "Plucking the Reed: Chiefly Death and the Regeneration of Life in the Tongan Ritual Cycle," (Ph.D. diss., La Trobe University, Australia, 2001). I am grateful to Dr. Filihia for providing me with a copy of her dissertation. It is understandable that given the fundamental role of the war god, such a god would be predominant, or rather a predominant aspect of any single god which resulted from an amalgamation of a previous multiplicity of deities.

[34] The writings of some modern theologians, such as John Howard Yoder, would suggest as much. See, for example, Yoder's *The Original Revolution: Essays on Christian Pacifism* (Scottdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1973).

[35] *VVarning-peece to VVarre*, p. 2.

a form of judgement, or a punishment. War could also be either a test of faith, or, a testament to God's presence.

That God used violence to fulfil His plan for the temporal world was seldom debated. In so far as the will of God could be discerned in Scripture, any theologian interested in the relationship between war and the Divine had abundant evidence that God used wars as a method for advancing His plan. The scriptural evidence for this was found primarily in the early books of the Old Testament and in that most Old Testament of New Testament books, Revelation. The Old Testament examples were abundant and familiar. Some of the graphic favourites of early modern preachers included God's drowning of Pharaoh's armies in the Red Sea and actively commanding the battles of Israel in Canaan. Yet, even the violent crucifixion of Jesus was part of the divine plan, necessary so that the prophecies might be fulfilled. Similarly, Revelation demonstrated that God's plan called for future violence as well. The apocalyptic perspective confirmed the idea that God had not only used violence in the past to advance His plan for humanity, but also maintained that those violent elements of prophecy which were as of yet unfulfilled promised and explained future and present strife. Some could thus conclude that Scripture (and history) demonstrated that it was God's plan that His Church on earth should benefit and grow through wars and turmoil.[36]

One of the most common examples of the apocalyptic perspective playing this role was that of the slaying of the two witnesses found in Revelation 11. This assassination was interpreted in a number of ways, most of which involved actual earthly violence, whether in the form of the deaths of two individuals, or the violent

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[36] Scott, *Belgick Souldier*, p. 7 (unmarked pages).

destruction of large portions of Christendom. It was therefore natural for contemporaries during the civil wars to speculate on the possibility that the "present time" could offer a fulfilment of the violent aspects of prophecy. Was it the case that the wars were the foretold slaughter of the saints by the Beast?--a slaughter permitted by God.[37] Just as the slaughter of the saints could be expected, so could the time when "Babylon" the domain of Antichrist, would be "thrown down" with great "violence."[38] The prophetic texts, of course, also foretold of the final and ultimate battle which had to take place before the end of sacred time. Armageddon was to be the last of the battles of a warring God. Divine violence, then, was an accepted and expected part of the divine plan. As Gaspar Hickes, the Cornish divine, explained to the Commons, "the prophecies in the Revelation seem to foreshow that the ruin of Antichrist shall in good part be brought to pass by the sword," for it was foretold that "they that gave their kingdoms to the beast shall recover them by force, they shall hate the whore . . . eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. They that make war with the lamb, shed the blood of the saints and the prophets, they shall have blood given to them," which led Hickes to the conclusion "me thinks the Lord is breeding and apting a generation of men amongst us that shall make the throne of the beast shake."[39]

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[37] Thomas Goodwin, *Zerubbabels Encouragement to Finish the Temple* (London: R. Dawlman, 1642), p. 57; *The Camp of Christ, and the Camp of Antichrist, All Troopers after the Lambe* (s.n., 1642), p. 15. See also Thomas Goodwin's "Exposition of the Revelation," in *The Works of Thomas Goodwin* (London: James Nisbet, 1861-66), vol. 3; and chpt. 3 of Michael Lawrence's doctoral dissertation "Transmission and Transformation: Thomas Goodwin and the Puritan Project, 1600-1704," (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 2002; viva pending). I am grateful to Mr. Lawrence for our discussions of Goodwin.

[38] *A VVarning-peece to VVarre*, p. 5.

[39] Hickes, *The Glory and Beauty of Gods Portion* (London: G. M., 1644), p. 42.

In addition to being an essential part of the way in which God advanced His plan on earth, violence was also regularly seen as a form of divine punishment. It is notable that in the period the concepts of violence and punishment were intricately connected.[40] In general when violence was used (by God, by magistrates, or by fathers/husbands) to *punish,* it was largely seen as legitimate and intelligible since it was necessary and deserved. While God used violence to punish isolated individuals directly,[41] war was most often used by God to punish an entire community.[42] God's enemies, whether in the Old Testament or in the Thirty Years War, received their divinely appropriated punishment on the battlefield. In this context, war was often conceptualised as a divine plague visited upon the enemies of God, just as the various plagues had been visited on Egypt during Israel's captivity. Like the plagues, war was a punishment but also a testament to God's power and presence.[43]

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[40] Following Max Weber (and more recently Robert Cover), legal scholars see the use of punishment by the state, according to laws, as a way of demonstrating and maintaining a monopoly on violence. See Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. R. Henderson and Talcott Parsons; rev. and ed. by Talcott Parsons (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 156; *Narrative, Violence, and the Law: The Essays of Robert Cover*, eds. Martha Minow, Michael Ryan and Austin Sarat (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1992); Austin Sarat, ed., *Law, Violence, and the Possibility of Justice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). Thus the early modern association between violence and legitimate punishment has to some degree been re-established by postmodern legal theorists. For an effort to develop a theory of punishment free from violence, see Unto Tähtinen, *The Theories of Punishment: Studied from the Point of View of Non-violence* (Turku: Turun Yliopisto, 1963).

[41] See Paul S. Seaver, *Wallington's World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-century London* (London: Methuen, 1985) chpt. 3; Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), chpt. 2, *passim.*

[42] See Edward Reynolds, *Israels Petition in Time of Trouble* (London: George Bishop, 1642), *passim.* It is important to note that a community was frequently held accountable for the transgressions of a few. As Samuel Fairclough explained to the Commons there were "many ways a whole nation [may] be guilty of the offence of one," *The Trovblers Trovbled, Or, Achan Condemned and Execvted* (London: R. Cotes, 1641), p. 19. Additionally, see Robert W. Scribner, "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the 'Disenchantment of the World'," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23, no. 3 (1993), p. 486.

[43] Civil war was considered a particularly acute form of divine plague by both sides of the divide in the civil war. See Thomas Fuller, *A Fast Sermon Preached on Innocents Day*, pp. 7-8; Edmund Calamy, *Englands Antidote, against the Plague of Civil VVarre* (London: I. L., 1645); Peter Heylyn, *Lord Have Mercy upon Us* (Oxford: H. Hall, 1643). The idea that war was a plague had a long history in England, as in Christendom generally. For the idea that war was a plague in *Piers Plowman* and the

In accord with the correspondence between violence and punishment, violence was generally considered an appropriate response to sin.[44] It was understood that "God uses war as one of His rods to punish sin."[45] The sins of God's enemies were obvious, but God also used violence as a way of punishing His chosen people when they sinned. This type of violence was seen as the "wars of God with man . . . being the fruit of sin, the punishment of sin."[46] Divines in the seventeenth century were only too well aware of how God would send His plague of war upon sinning nations as a punishment for their disobedience. The prophetic voice and imagery of Jeremiah was frequently heard in this context:

> I will cause a plague to come down upon this people . . . because they have not taken heed unto my words, nor to my law, but cast it off . . . Behold a people come from the North country, and a great nation shall arise from the sides of the earth. With bow and shield shall they be weaponed. They are cruel and will have no compassion: their voice roars like the sea, and they ride upon horses . . .[47]

Here, as in similar passages, God was seen as arming a people with the intention that they punish Israel. English divines of the seventeenth century knew that God's people had a special need to be obedient to God's will. As a chosen people in extraordinary

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accompanying ideas of war as a plague caused by sin and war as a test of the faithful, see Brian Morgan's forthcoming Oxford doctoral dissertation, "Writing, Genre and *Piers Plowman*," particularly chpts. 3 and 4. I am grateful to Mr. Morgan for our discussions of *Piers Plowman.*

[44] That is, the violence of both God and the magistrate. See Ephraim Udall, *The Good of Peace and the Ill of VVarre* (London: T. Badger, 1642), p. 15; William Gouge, *Gods Three Arrovves: Plague, Famine, Svvord, in Three Treatises* (London: George Miller, 1631), pp. 4-5.

[45] Edward Marbury, *A Commentarie or Exposition upon the Prophecie of Habakkuk*, pp. 23, 59, 63. Cf. Henry Scudder, *Gods Warning to England by the Voyce of His Rod. Delivered in a Sermon . . . before the Honourable House of Commons . . . Octob. 30 1644* (London: J. R., 1644).

[46] Richard Bernard, *The Bible-Battells, Or, the Sacred Art Military for the Rightly Wageing of Warre According to Holy Writ* ([London]: Edward Blackmore, 1629), p. 9 and chpt. 2 generally.

[47] Jeremiah 6:19, 22-23, cf. 25:3-12, Geneva 1560. All references to the 1560 Geneva Bible are taken from *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition. With an Introduction*, ed. Lloyd E. Berry (Madison, Wisc.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969). Similarly, see Habakkuk 1:5-10, and John Trapp's corresponding commentary from *A Commentary of Exposition Upon the XII Minor Prophets* (London: R. N., 1654), pp. 417-20.

times, they were especially accountable. God made it clear that He punished deviants with the sword: "If ye consent and obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land. But if ye refuse and be rebellious, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it."[48] God punished Israel by the hands of the Midianites on account of Israel's sinfulness; indeed, in the case of Israel's defeat at Ai, the sin of a single individual alone was enough to bring about a violent punishment.[49] God's relationship with Israel was frequently seen as parallel to His relationship with England. Thus the threat of divine violence as a response to sin was always a looming possibility.

An important further parallel with Israel was the importance of avoiding idolatry. Of all sins which "most provoke[d] God's wrath," idolatry was the most prominent.[50] Divine violence was a legitimate response from God for sin, and the sin which most often provoked such a response was idolatry. According to Sir Francis Seymour, irreligion was to blame for England's military mishaps in the 1620s. By the time of the civil wars, both clergy and laymen could see God's anger for previous idolatry in the violence which engulfed the land, and it had become imperative to remove idols if God's violence was to be stayed.[51]

Violence by God against His people was not exclusively a result of their idolatrous ways. Sometimes violence and the plague of war could be a way of testing

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[48] Isaiah 1:19-20, Geneva 1560. Cf. William Day, *An Exposition of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah* (London: G. D., 1654), pp. 10-1.
[49] Judges 6:1, cf. 13:1; Joshua 7, cf. Fairclough, *The Trovblers Trovbled.*
[50] William Gouge, *Gods Three Arrovves*, p. 74.
[51] For the 1620s, see Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 406-7; Mark Charles Fissel, *English Warfare, 1511-1642* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 269. For the civil wars, see J. H., Souldier, *A Remonstrance to the Kingdome, Or, An Appeale to Conscience* (London: Thomas Watson, 1643), sig. A4. Some even believed that England was still being punished in the 1640s for the sins of previous papist rulers: see Cornelius Burgess, *Two Sermons Preached to the Honourable House of Commons* (London: J. R., 1645), p. 42.

the faith of the elect, a lesson apparent from Job. As mentioned above, violence could also be understood in an apocalyptic sense, even to the point of seeing the turmoil of war as a refining "furnace of His affliction" meant to purify God's chosen people and to prepare the way for the return of Christ.[52] God's violence, however, was always seen as either necessary or deserved and therefore always just.

Since God's judgement was always just, it was also appropriate to see divine violence as delivering a judgement. This idea was invoked both in the sense that war was judgemental, i.e., a punishment, such as when "the Lamb makes war in judgement;" and also in the sense that war was a way of seeking a judgement from God.[53] In this way war was seen as the highest court, a tribunal in which God acted as the supreme judge for cases in which no other could adjudicate. War was "the great court of appeal, whither both sides provoke for judgement, crying out (as it were) with a loud voice when they draw near to the battle, Oh thou Lord of Hosts, give out a righteous judgement this day between us."[54] Just as there was the belief that the Lord would hear prayers, there was also the implication that God would listen to the sword. That God's judgement was delivered on the battlefield was again an idea firmly rooted in the Old Testament, as was the accompanying concept that God could be called upon to judge a conflict through war. The biblical book of Judges reflected the image of God as the judge in the court of battle: "wherefore, I have not offended thee: but thou does me wrong to war against me. The Lord, the Judge, be judge this day

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[52] *Certaine Necessary Resolution of the Most Considerable Scruples* (London: W. M., 1649), p. 2.
[53] *The Camp of Christ, and the Camp of Antichrist, All Troopers after the Lambe*, p. 10.
[54] Thomas Case, *Jeoshaphats Caveat to His Jvdges Delivered in a Sermon* (London: Felix Kingston, 1644), pp. 9-10. Cf. Obadiah Sedgwick, *A Thanksgiving-Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Commons . . . April 9. 1644* (London: Samuel Gellibrand), p. 24.

between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon."[55] Thus, war was "the highest act of vindictive justice" and "the solemn instrument of justice."[56] Calybute Downing, preaching before the civil wars, reiterated that "a war in itself is an appeal to heaven, by a sword, when other ways of justice upon earth . . . are made void."[57] War could be thought of as resembling an ordeal, although the idea was increasingly seen as provoking God, and in King Charles's opinion, "not agreeable to religion."[58] Nevertheless, many still saw war as something parallel to a physical ordeal or even a duel in which God demonstrated the justness of one side through victory.[59]

Victory in war was seen as a judgement of God throughout the Tudor and Stuart period. Indeed, the beginning of the Tudor dynasty was partly founded upon God's just judgement at the Battle of Bosworth. This view became increasingly pronounced during the civil wars, with Cromwell and the New Model Army seeing their victories as a testament by the Divine to the justness of their cause. While common practice, deducing cosmic justice from the results of a battle was necessarily approached with some hesitancy. It was not only foolish for humans to try to comprehend the mind of the Divine, but also dangerous. God often used "evil instruments" to carry out His purpose and allowed His chosen people to be punished through military failure. Defeat did not always mean that the victors were the godly and the vanquished the damned. As one Scottish theologian writing in the mid-1650s

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[55] Judges 11:27, Geneva 1560.
[56] Thomas Manton, *A Practical Commentary . . . on the Epistle of James*, pp. 422-4.
[57] Downing, *A Sermon Preached to the . . . Company of the Artillery. . . Designed to Compose the Present Troubles* (London: s.n., 1641), p. 11.
[58] Charles I, quoted in Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1971), p. 143, cf. pp. 50-1, 146, 259-62; Margaret H. Kerr, Richard D. Forsyeth and Michael J. Plyley, "Cold Water and Hot Iron: Trial by Ordeal in England," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 22, no. 4 (1992), pp. 573-95.
[59] Clark, *War and Society in the Seventeenth Century*, chpt. 2.

explained, "the Lord sees it fit sometime to wink at the sins of evil men and let then have success in their evil cause" when the violence unleashed was in fulfilment of the divine plan.[60]

Warnings that victories and defeats in battle could not always be directly decoded did not, however, mean that the Divine was absent from war. Such admonitions carried the assumption that God was present in battle, but that humans should not jump to conclusions too quickly based on the outcome. In spite of such warnings, contemporaries often gave into the temptation to see God as delivering a direct judgement in the positive for the victor and the negative for the defeated; as a result, defeat often demanded soul-searching while victory called for gratitude that such an unworthy people had been granted divine favour.[61] This perspective was so strong that the royalist Henry Hammond, writing to Fairfax in 1649, denied that the "king by taking up arms made his appeal to heaven," in a futile effort to counter the belief among parliamentarians that "God has borne testimony" to the Army's cause "by the many victories which He has given you." Hammond knew that the idea that God had testified against Charles on the battlefield was an important part of the justification for bringing the king to trial.[62]

Violence was not only a judgement, but more broadly, it was also a form of divine communication. God communicated with His chosen people in a number of

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[60] George Hutcheson, *A Brief Exposition of the Prophecies*, p. 230.
[61] In his massive discussion of *Bible-Battells,* Bernard explained that "religion requires" that after defeat in battle, the defeated "should acknowledge their overthrow to be the very hand of God; as the Scripture teaches, as the Lord's people have acknowledged; as God Himself said He would do . . . they are not to ascribe their loss as the Syrians did to the hills; nor to man's rash attempt or oversight, [etc.] but unto God's hand upon them . . . they must confess it to be a sin, for otherwise, God does not afflict, nor grieve willingly any of the children of men," (p. 269).
[62] Hammond, *To the Right Honourable, the Lord Fairfax, and his Councell of Warre* (London: Richard Royston, 1649), p. 4.

ways. In the case of Israel, God communicated through revealing the scriptures, as well as through His prophets and the manifestation of miracles. Sometimes, however, Israel ignored God's non-violent communications. Seventeenth-century English theologians recognised that when God's peaceful communication with Israel was ignored, then "the Lord will speak in an other language, by His rod."[63] As Edmund Calamy explained to Parliament, in his effort to interpret the violence of the Irish Rebellion, violence was the language with which God delivered His "warning piece to England."[64]

War was not only seen as a tool of the Divine, but also something in which God actually participated; not solely as a judge, but also as a commander or a combatant.[65] The most common articulation of this position was the rhetoric of the "Lord of Hosts."[66] It was recognised that this was the way in which the Bible most frequently described Yahweh.[67] The term meant that God was both a commander-in-chief and a soldier. For William Gouge it was essential to recognise that "God Himself is styled a man of war, and the Lord of Hosts."[68] This compound with the

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[63] George Hutcheson, *A Brief Exposition of the Prophecies*, p. 225.
[64] Calamy, *Englands Looking-Glasse*, p. 16.
[65] In the apocalyptic rhetoric of the period Christ was frequently referred to as a "commander" leading His troops against Antichrist. Oliver Cromwell also saw God as intimately involved in battles, explaining "that which caused your men to storm so courageously, it was the spirit of God, who gave your men courage and took it away again, and gave the enemy courage and took it away again..." *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, ed. William C. Abbott (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937-47), vol. 2, p. 127.
[66] Elmer A. Martens notes that the name "Lord of Hosts" also implied a religious monopoly, making the acknowledgment of any other deity idolatrous, and also that the term underscored God's presence. See Martens, "The Names of God," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1996), s. v.
[67] This name was given to God "in the Old Testament about 240 times" according to Richard Bernard, *Bible-Battells,* p. 11, cf. pp. 1-2.
[68] Gouge, *Gods Three Arrovves*, pp. 209-10. "Lord of Hosts" was allegedly the battle cry of Cromwell's forces at the battle of Worcester, see Abbott, *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, vol. 2, pp. 458-9. Variations on the Lord of Hosts were frequently used as battle cries during the French Wars of Religion, see W. Stanford Reid, "The Battle Hymns of the Lord: Calvinist Psalmody of the Sixteenth Century," *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies* 2 (1971), pp. 36-54.

name Yahweh was encountered most frequently in the prophetic books, but other parts of the Bible equally declared that "the Lord is a man of war, His name is Jehovah."[69] This was not, therefore, an image restricted to the Old Testament. Commentators saw the resurrected Christ riding upon the white horse of Revelation as clearly being in the mould of the warrior when "out of his mouth went a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the heathen, for He shall rule them with a rod of iron, for it is He that treads the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."[70]

Calvin described God as "armed in military attire," and ready personally to "contend with all the forces of His foes."[71] Indeed, it was common to see God as both a fighter and a commander in war.[72] One of the defining aspects of God was His role as leader and commander of His people in battle. He went before them, affecting the enemy and the outcome.[73] War provided God with an opportunity to perform miracles which would strengthen His faithful and drive despair into the hearts of His

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[69] Exodus 15:3, the 1560 Geneva Bible's marginal notes read, "in battle He overcomes ever." Cf. Edward Symmons, *A Militarie Sermon wherein by the Word of God, the Nature and Disposition of a Rebell is Discovered, and the Kings True Souldier Described and Characterized* (Oxford: Henry Hall, 1644), p. 16.

[70] Revelation 19:15, Geneva 1602.

[71] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Last Four Books of Moses*, trans. C. W. Bingham (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1852), vol. 1, p. 257, see commentary on Exodus 15:3. Furthermore, the very term "Lord of Hosts" denoted that God also had the power to overcome any enemy.

[72] Simon Ashe described God as the "Lord General" of the armies of the world in his *Good Courage Discovered, and Encouraged* (London: Iohn Dawson, 1642), p. 2. Richard Bernard explained that "God Himself is with us for our Captain," *Bible-Battells*, p. 172. The rhetoric of God as a warrior exhibits a strong continuity with earlier images of the Divine, see, for example, Graham D. Caie, "Christ as Warrior in Old English Poetry," in *War and Peace in the Middle Ages*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel Publishers, 1987), pp. 13-28.

[73] Indeed, it was well known that the time for concern was when God was *not* leading His people, when God was *not* present, for in the Bible God's absence from the battlefield was a sure sign of impending defeat. See Numbers 14:39-45, Joshua 7:1-8:29, 1 Samuel 28:15-19 and Simon Patrick, *A Commentary upon the Fourth Book of Moses* (London: Ri. Chiswell, 1699), pp. 258-61.

enemies.[74] God won the victories, and as such, war was a testament to God's greatness. Soldiers in the civil wars were told that they should be comforted by the fact that God was going before them to clear the enemy.[75] A common description of the nature and function of the Divine was, "the Lord your God is He that goes before you to fight for you, against your enemies, to save you."[76] Rhapsodising on this theme, one preacher before the Long Parliament explained, "the Lord is a man of war . . . and He makes some of His servants brave warriors; He girds them with strength, teaches them the use of arms . . . gives them undauntedness to encounter and swiftness to pursue their enemies . . . till they have their necks under their feet."[77] Again, this was not a theme invented by the preachers before the Long Parliament. It was often found in sermons preached in war time, such as the sermon delivered by Edward Harris to the gentry militia leaders at Brocket Hall, Hertfordshire, in 1588, where the subject was taken from the first chapter of Deuteronomy: "dread not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord your God which goes before you, He shall fight for you, according to all that He did in Egypt, before your eyes."[78]

In addition to leading His people into battle and fighting on their behalf, God was often described as "arming" His people with both spiritual and earthly weapons

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[74] Bernard explained that sometimes war was used by God "to give His people some glorious victory over their enemies, to let them see His power, mercy, and preservation of them, to stir them up to a more zealous service of Him." Of course the opposite was also seen as a possibility, for God sometimes used war "only to terrify His people, to make them fear before Him to humble themselves," see Bernard, *Bible-Battells,* pp. 16-7.

[75] In his essay "The Iconography of Revolution: England, 1642-1649," Ian Gentles found Romans 8:31--"If God be with us, who can be against us?"--to be the most common Parliamentarian motto; see *Soldiers, Writers and Statesmen of the English Revolution*, ed. Ian Gentles, John Morrill and Blair Worden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 98.

[76] *A VVarning-peece to VVarre,* p. 4, cf. Deuteronomy 20:4.

[77] Gaspar Hickes, *The Glory and Beauty of Gods Portion*, p. 39.

[78] Harris, *A Sermon Preached at Brocket Hall, before the Right VVorshipfull, Sir John Brocket, and Other Gentlemen There Assembled for the Trayning of Souldiers* (London: Thomas Orwin, 1588), sigA3.

in order to ensure their victory. Whenever God armed a people for war "they will not want dispositions and success for attaining His end."[79] When God fought He won. Thus, victory in battle could be seen not only as a judgement from God, but also as a testament to His presence on the field.[80]

If God was present on the battlefield, then participating in war could be a form of participation in the divine, a holy act, a type of worship. Just as in ancient Israel, in seventeenth-century England, there was a belief that participating in war was also participating in the divine.[81] While the rituals accompanying soldiers into battle were not as elaborate as those of ancient Israel, there was still much religious ceremony that surrounded war. There was almost an established ritual which outlined activities for before, after, and during the battle. Before the battle, soldiers should humble themselves and think about the glory of God, accompanied by praying and fasting. Prayer was particularly important since for good Christians, "it brings God into the field to fight the battle for them."[82] The "camp" must also be as pure as possible, and certainly free from idolatry to insure God's presence.[83] During the civil wars, sermons were often preached before the engagements in scenes that must have looked similar to soldiers receiving the priests blessing en masse as they marched to the field.

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[79] Hutcheson, *A Brief Exposition of the Prophecies*, p. 227.

[80] Additionally, it was widely believed God's presence (whether with a nation or on the battlefield) was the key to victory and prosperity. See, for example, Ashe, *Good Courage Discovered and Encouraged*, p. 26; John Owen, *God's Presence with His People, The Spring of Their Prosperity* (London: R. N., 1656). Nor is this line of thinking to be found only in Christianity and Judaism: the Qur'an expresses that it "was not you, but Allah, who slew them. It was not you who smote them: Allah smote them so that He might richly reward the faithful. He hears all and knows all. He will surely thwart the designs of the unbelievers," 8:17-8, from *The Koran*, trans. N. J. Dawood (London: Penguin, 1956).

[81] In general, the New Testament teaches that God can be worshipped anywhere, whereas in the Old Testament, God is to be worshipped in sacred spaces, a central one of which is the battlefield. See Tremper Longman III and Daniel G. Reid, *God is a Warrior* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995).

[82] Stephen Marshall, *Meroz Cursed, Or, A Sermon Preached to the Honourable House of Commons . . . Febr. 23. 1641* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1642), p. 43.

[83] Much of the general ritual followed by soldiers in the civil wars was already common before the battles began, see Richard Bernard, *Bible-Battells,* p. 162 and chpts. 19 and 25 generally.

Soldiers gathered together and were exhorted by a chaplain who would explain the struggle from a religious perspective.[84] Before the battle it was expected that soldiers would pray, as instructed by the Bible. "In the very instant of battle," the soldier should cry unto the Lord.[85] Unlike the Ban in ancient Israel, in which there would be a mass sacrifice of living and material things to God, the post-battle ritual in the civil wars was spiritualised, and it was the "glory" and "honour" from the battle, which had to be completely yielded up to God.[86] The result was to transform the battlefield into an arena of God's presence and activity.

The battlefield also offered the possibility of spiritual transformation. What appeared to be "bloody soldiers" were actually "saints in the purest white, which may be dipped in the blood of others, yet it is not their natural dye."[87] Likewise, those who died on the battlefield could be transformed from earthly saints into heavenly martyrs. The catechism composed by Thomas Swadlin for the royalist forces in the civil war explained that those that died in the king's cause "die martyrs, for they die for the Lord, Matt. 5.10, which is more then to die in the Lord Apocal. 14.13, and are therefore blessed."[88] On the parliamentarian side, the battlefield also aided

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[84] See C. H. Firth, *Cromwell's Army: A History of the English Soldier during the Civil Wars, the Commonwealth and the Protectorate*, 4th ed. (London: Methuen, 1962), pp. 312-3; Barbara Donagan, "Did Ministers Matter?" *Journal of British Studies* 33, no. 2 (Apr. 1994), pp. 119-56; Joshua Sprigg[e], *Anglia Redivia: Englands Recovery, Being the History of the Motions, Actions, and Successes of the Army* (London: R. W., 1647), p. 70.

[85] Edmund Calamy, *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* (London: G. B. and R. W., 1643), pp. 4-6.

[86] Edmund Calamy, *Souldiers Pocket Bible*, p. 15. It is well known that it was always very important to Cromwell that "God may have the glory" of his successes on the battlefield. See Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 2, pp. 142-3.

[87] *The Camp of Christ and the Camp of Antichrist, All Troopers after the Lambe*, p. 13 (mis-numbered 31).

[88] Swadlin, *The Soldiers Catechisme, Composed for the King's Armies* (Oxford: Henry Hall, 1645), p. 9. The concept that by one's actions one could become a martyr was hard to square with Calvinist predestination, but this concept also appears in that most "Calvinist" of "Calvinist" resistance texts, the *Vindiciae*. Additionally, in *Bible-Battells*, Bernard explained that he wrote his text not to make his

sanctification. Oliver Cromwell maintained that God's presence with them and "these outward mercies" allowed for spiritual qualities to be "exercised and perfected, yea, Christ formed, and grows to a perfect man within us."[89] If the soldier would allow God to work within him, then he would develop spiritually as an individual and also serve as an instrument of God.

Finally, it was suggested that the New Model Army itself should be seen as a church. For Hugh Peters it was perhaps the holiest place in England and it was the process of warring which rarefied it and made it holier.[90] For William Dell, God's presence with the Army was so abundant that the Army itself was in some ways the "kingdom in the spirit" prophesied in Scripture.[91] Cromwell's effort to turn his troops into a gathered church demonstrates not only the belief that a soldier could be a proper Christian, but also that God's presence could (and should) be actively sought on the battlefield.[92] The suggestion that participation in the violence of war could be equated with participation in the Divine reveals a theology of violence very different from that presented by the British poets of the First World War. Rather than a place devoid of the Divine, the battlefield was a place where the Divine was forcefully present.

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readers "soldiers of men" but rather to make "good men according to God. And being so, when you die here in battle, you may hereafter live in blessedness" (sigA14-sigA15).

[89] Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 1, p. 646.

[90] See Hugh Peters, *Mr. Peters Message Delivered in Both Houses, to the Lords and Commons in Parliament* (London: Jane Coe, 1646). Likewise, other Independent ministers furthered this view creating the idea that God was amongst the soldiers in a powerful way when they were warring. See, for example, John Saltmarsh, *A Letter from the Army Concerning the Peaceable Temper of the Same* (London: Giles Calvert, 1647).

[91] Dell, *The Works of William Dell* (Nine Partners, NY: Joseph Sharpless, 1816), pp. 81, 95-6, quoted in Peter Iver Kaufman, *Redeeming Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 72.

[92] Robert S. Paul, *The Lord Protector: Religion and Politics in the Life of Oliver Cromwell* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), pp. 66-7.

Violence and the Christian

If the Divine could be found on the battlefield, then it followed that the Christian could, and should, serve in armies and as magistrates who punished with the sword. There were generally few categorical prohibitions on military service in the period. Nevertheless, the just war tradition had developed a number of requirements for lawful wars. Just war thinking in the period retained many of the central aspects of the early tradition. It was a not a tradition that shunned violence, but, regulated it by emphasising authority.

Two points are required before moving on to discuss the just war tradition. First is the fact that there were two basic categories of violent activities which theologians addressed. The first was violence as civil punishment and the second was fighting in wars. As a result, the following discussion focuses largely on the use of violence by magistrates on the one hand and military service on the other. While this focus expedites the discussion of the theology of violence, it also requires a disclaimer. Denunciations of magisterial service or of military service, though seldom heard, did not mean, *per se,* a rejection of violence alone as morally evil. Such a rejection could be a facet of a general rejection of the world, or alternatively of participation in the state. Additionally, recent research persuasively demonstrates that early Christian calls to avoid military service were not necessarily calls against the use of violence: rather they were prohibitions against any participation in an institution that was permeated by idolatry.[93]

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[93] See John Helgeland, Robert J. Daly and J. Patout Burns, *Christians and the Military: The Early Experience* (London: SCM Press, 1985); James Turner Johnson, *The Quest for Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), chpt. 1. While this position is increasingly being accepted by

This point should be made alongside a second, which concerns the anthropological significance of the guilt, or impurity, associated with killing. The social scientist would speak of the nearly universal "taboos" associated with killing other human beings. Killing can be seen as both a positive good and a social evil, sometimes simultaneously; nevertheless, killing seldom elicits indifference. It is "charged," and the evidence suggests to the historian that it also retained some sense of residual guilt in almost every circumstance. It is not surprising then, that killing receives significant attention in the Bible, and that the elements of the Old Testament which placed taboos on killing were to affect the early modern theology of violence alongside the pacific statements of Jesus in the New Testament. Killing was always tainted by two powerful fears. The first was the prospect of a revenge killing. Killing alienated a person from the community and marked the individual out for a retributive homicide. The second threat was alienation from God. As the margins of the Geneva Bible explained, "to kill a man is to deface God's image, and so injury is not only done to man, but to God."[94] As such, killing was an activity which was confined to the Divine and those authorised by God. Within the Judaeo-Christian tradition, killing carried a high level of taboo and certain rituals were prescribed for the channelling and exorcising of the associated guilt. Throughout the Middle Ages, Christians were frequently required to do penance for killings which they had committed even in just

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scholars, it is possible to find it in earlier scholarship before the Second World War, see, for example, Robert C. Stevenson, "The Evolution of Pacifism," *International Journal of Ethics* 44, no. 4 (1934), pp. 437-51.

[94] Genesis 1:26-7, 9:6, Geneva 1560. William Gouge explained that God had "many many" ways of destroying humans and that this was acceptable because "God is a supreme and absolute Lord over all" and can do with humanity what He will, *Gods Three Arrovves*, pp. 120-1. There was a common belief that part of the sin of murder was related to the sin of idolatry, for to kill a person was to kill something which was made in the image of God and thus to hate God and worship the Devil, see, for example, Thomas Cooper, *The Cry and Reuenge of Blood* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1620), p. 18.

wars. Even violence that had been authorised and deemed just still had a sense of guilt or sin associated with it that the Church had to exorcise.[95] The persistent sense of impurity can still be seen during the civil wars in the idea that ministers should not actually participate in the violence of the battlefield.

The Just War Tradition

The just war tradition is the longest established approach to war in the history of Christianity. For the better part of two millennia it has characterised the way that Christians conceptualised violence. Nevertheless, the prevailing trend among many modern theologians is to see this tradition as an aberration of "true" Christianity. By association, it is assumed that those Christians who sought to understand and live by the tenets of just war theology were either deceived, or, intentionally manipulative--using the rhetoric of just war to advance violence which was known to be against God's will. Such a view seeks its legitimacy from Church history. It retells the Church's relation to violence along the following (grossly condensed) lines: Jesus came and preached a message of peace, non-resistance and non-violence. The early Christians and the early Church Fathers rejected violence as a moral evil and were pacifists for centuries. In the words of one proponent of this view, "from Paul onward, the normative position in the first three centuries of Christianity was to

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[95] Fredrick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 31-2, 34-5, 59, 216; H. E. J. Cowdrey, "Bishop Ermenfrid of Sion and the Penitential Ordinance Following the Battle of Hastings," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 20 (1969), pp. 225-42; R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971), pp. 40, 226.

affirm the nonviolence of Jesus."[96] Those who share this perspective see a great change, or even a betrayal, after the conversion of Constantine and the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. In this "Constantinian shift," the true Christian teaching of pacifism was corrupted and obscured as the Church compromised with the state.[97] The true message of Christian pacifism was kept alive by heresies, only later to re-emerge. This modern view, despite sharing the methods of early modern Protestant polemic, would have been largely alien to seventeenth-century England. It is also currently coming under increased academic scrutiny.[98]

While the theology of the earliest Christians is still debated, it is clear that the first significant discussion of theology and war is found in the works of Augustine of Hippo (354-430).[99] Augustine is important to this discussion of the theology of violence for four reasons: first, for his influential articulation of the outline of the just war criteria; second, for his association of violence with punishment in general and

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[96] Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Political Atheism and Radical Faith: The Challenge of Christian Nonviolence in the Third Millennium," in *Subverting Hatred: The Challenge of Nonviolence in Religious Traditions*, ed. Daniel L. Smith-Christopher (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), p. 154. As the noted German Biblical scholar Martin Hengel has written, "the early Church adhered unflinchingly to [Christ's] refusal to use violence," *Victory over Violence: Jesus and the Revolutionists*, trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 58. See also Jean Michel Hornus, *It is Not Lawful for Me to Fight: Early Christian Attitudes toward War, Violence, and the State*, trans. A. Kreider and O. Coburn (Scottdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1980); C. John Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude toward War: A Contribution to the History of Christian Ethics* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1940); David Hunter, "A Decade of Research on Early Christians and Military Service," *Religious Studies Review* 18, no. 2 (1992), pp. 87-94; Walter Wink, "Beyond Just War and Pacifism," in *War and Its Discontents: Pacifism and Quietism in the Abrahamic Traditions*, ed. J. Patout Burns (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1996), p. 110.

[97] John Howard Yoder is the most influential proponent of the "Constantinian shift." See his *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics as Gospel* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1984), especially the essay "The Constantinian Sources of Western Social Ethics." The concept of a "Constantinian shift" is necessary for those who see Christianity as essentially pacifist, see, for example, John Driver, *How Christians Made Peace with War: Early Christian Understandings of War* (Scottdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1988).

[98] See John Helgeland, et. al., *Christians and the Military*.

[99] Ambrose also influenced what would become the just war paradigm, as did classical sources, particularly those found in Cicero. See David J. Bederman, "Reception of the Classical Tradition in International Law: Grotius' *De Jure Belli Ac Pacis*," *Emory International Law Review* 10 (1996), pp. 1, 31-32.

war with the policing power of a state in particular; third for his explanation that Christian love is a matter of intent; and finally because of his emphasis on the idea that only a properly authorised war can be just.

Augustine maintained that a just war required a just cause, proper authority and a just intent. These criteria were to become central to the just war tradition. A just cause, for Augustine, was one which avenged injuries. Just wars could also be waged to defend the nation and if safe passage was not permitted. War should only be waged as a last resort, when there was some prospect of success, and its aim should be the righting of a wrong and the establishment of peace.[100]

Augustine's ideas on war owed much to his association of violence with punishment. War was both a punishment for sins and an extension of the state's power to police itself. He maintained that, just as police in a state could legitimately use force, war could be waged as an extension of the idea of punishment. To deny the legitimacy of war would have been tantamount to arguing that societies could not have police. Augustine explained, "if murder means taking the life of a man, this can sometimes happen without any sin, When a soldier slays the enemy, when a judge . . . executes a criminal, when, by chance, a deadly weapon leaves someone's hand unintentionally, . . . I do not think that these are guilty of sin in killing a man."[101] Carrying out the demands of the law was something which could be done without passion, and as such it did not involve sin. "In the slaying of any enemy, the soldier is

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[100] See Augustine, "Letter to Boniface," letter 189, chpt. 6 in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* eds. Philip Schaff (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), vol. 1, p. 554; idem, *City of God,* bk. 19 chpt. 7, available in Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 2, p. 405.

[101] Augustine, "The Free Choice of Will," bk. 1, chpt. 4, sect. 9, in *Saint Augustine, The Teacher, The Free Choice of the Will, Grace and Free Will*, trans. Robert P. Russell (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1968), p. 79.

an agent of the law and consequently readily discharges his duty apart from any passion."[102]

Augustine also spiritualised the more pacifist elements of the Gospels in a way that allowed for war on earth. He maintained that Jesus's statements about turning the other cheek and loving one's neighbour referred to an inward disposition. Furthermore, just as a parent could discipline a child out of love, so a magistrate could deliver the ultimate punishment out of love.[103] The same was true for the soldier. For Augustine, it was possible to use violence out of love. "It is supposed that God could not enjoin warfare because in after times it was said by the Lord Jesus Christ, 'I say unto you, that ye resist not evil . . .' the answer is, that what is here required is not a bodily action, but an inward disposition."[104] Moses's killings then were actions not of "cruelty, but [of] great love"[105] It was the intent that mattered. Violence undertaken in anger or fear, inflamed by the passions, was unjust, since the passions prevented the presence of love. For this reason, violence in self defence was prohibited for Augustine, since it involved the passions of self interest and hatred rather than a love for the attacker. In such instances of self defence, the defender's "act is not thereby free of the ruling passion of desire, because whosever kills a man out of fear, certainly desires to live free of fear."[106]

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[102] Augustine, "The Free Choice of Will," bk. 1, chpt. 5, sect. 12 (cf. sect. 11), in Russell, *Saint Augustine, The Teacher, The Free Choice of the Will, Grace and Free Will*, p. 81.
[103] Seventeenth-century divines also saw God's use of war as a punishment as done out of God's love, just as the magistrate and the soldier could use violence out of love. See, for example, Gouge, *Gods Three Arrovves*, p. 86.
[104] Augustine, *Reply to Faustus,* bk. 22, chpt. 76, in Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 301.
[105] Augustine, *Reply to Faustus,* bk. 22, chpt. 79, in Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 304.
[106] Augustine, "The Free Choice of Will," bk. 1, chpt. 4, sect. 9, in Russell, *Saint Augustine, The Teacher, The Free Choice of the Will, Grace and Free Will*, p. 78. Cf. *Reply to Faustus*, bk. 22, chpt.

As for war, Augustine questioned, "what is the evil in war?" Was it "the death of some who will soon die in any case, that others may live in peaceful subjection? This is mere cowardly dislike, not any religious feeling. The real evils in war are . . . cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power, and such like" passions.[107] It was only when there were no such passions that a war could be Christian, for it was the lack of passion which allowed for the proper intention that should motivate all Christian actions, namely love. For Augustine, it was entirely possible to love your enemies and also to kill them, just as it was possible to fight for peace.[108]

The final influential element of Augustine's articulation of a theology of war concerned authorisation. War, in order to be just, could not be declared by private persons. It was an affair of the state and had to be initiated by the authority of the ruler or leader, "the monarch should have the power of undertaking war."[109] Indeed, Augustine even went as far as to suggest that since a soldier was not to determine whether a war was legitimate or not--this being the duty of the ruler--then the soldier could participate in even an *unjust* war without committing a sin.[110]

There was, however, an additional form of authorisation for war, present in the tradition even at this early stage. This was the concept of wars commanded directly by the Divine. While Augustine was not systematic in his discussion of such

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74, Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 301; Joseph L. Allen, *War: A Primer for Christians* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1991), p. 31.

[107] Augustine, *Reply to Faustus,* bk. 22, chpt. 74, Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 301.

[108] Augustine, "Letter to Boniface," letter 189, chpt. 6 in Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 1, pp. 552-4.

[109] Augustine, *Reply to Faustus,* bk. 22, chpt. 70, 75, Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, pp. 299, 301.

[110] See Carol Harrison, *Augustine: Christian Truth and Fractured Humanity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 218-9.

wars, the idea is distinctly present in his thought. For example, in commenting on God's command to Joshua to go to war against Ai, Augustine made it clear that every war commanded by God was instantly just.[111] "When war is undertaken in obedience to God . . . it must be allowed to be a righteous war."[112] In the *City of God* this point was reiterated. Augustine maintained that those who killed as a result of divine command were exempt from the prohibition of the sixth commandment.[113]

Augustine's treatment of war cast a long shadow over successive centuries. The elements of his thought identified here would continue to be present through the Reformation period and into the British civil wars. Almost as influential as Augustine's conception was the formulation of the just war found in Aquinas. While Aquinas's views on the subject were largely derived from Augustine, his succinct summation of the tradition and the subsequent influence of his *Summa* on Christian theology generally meant that his articulation of the just war had a profound effect on the tradition. Crucial for the theology of violence in seventeenth-century England, however, was the support Aquinas gave to self defence and his articulation of the double effect.

After dismissing arguments for nonparticipation in war, Aquinas expressed the essence of the just war in three terse criteria. First, the authority of the sovereign was needed for the waging of war. Here again we see in the just war tradition a strong emphasis on the central idea of authorisation as necessary for legitimate violence,

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[111] See Russell, *Just War in the Middle Ages*, pp. 20, 22-3; Peter Partner, *God of Battles: Holy Wars of Christianity and Islam* (London: HarperCollins, 1997), p. 61.
[112] Augustine, *Reply to Faustus,* bk. 22, chpt. 75, Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 301.
[113] Augustine, *City of God*, bk. 1, chpt. 21, "Of the Cases in which We May Put Men to Death Without Incurring the Guilt of Murder," Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 2, p. 15.

"for it is not the business of the individual to declare war." This was the job of the state, and, as in Augustine, this was a power in parallel with a policing power. Aquinas's second criterion was that a "just cause is required, namely that those who are attacked, should be attacked because they deserve it on account of some fault." And finally, "it is necessary that the belligerents should have a rightful intention, so that they intend the advancement of good, or the avoidance of evil." [114]

An important difference between Augustine and Aquinas concerned the idea of killing in self defence. It was a distinction which was accepted by many in the seventeenth century with important ramifications. While the extent to which Augustine actually proscribes killing in self defence is open to some debate, it is evident that Aquinas believed that Augustine had done so and it proved an obstacle which he had to overcome. It was accepted by many writers in the early just war tradition before Aquinas's time that even in the absence of legitimate authority, killing could be licit in instances of immediate attack, an idea which had antecedents in Roman law and was confirmed by natural law. Aquinas was able, to his own satisfaction, to resolve the apparent divergence between these two beliefs by employing a concept of a "double effect." Aquinas's thought built on the noted importance for Augustine of *intent* as the element which made violence sinful. He combined this with the natural law premise that self preservation was licit and his conclusion is important and worth quoting at length.

> Nothing hinders one act from having two effects, only one of which is intended, while the other is beside the intention. Now moral acts take

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[114] *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas* (London: Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 1920, 2nd ed.) The Second Part of the Second Part, Question 40, Article One, hereafter given as 2a2ae.Q.40.A.1. For a detailed treatment of Aquinas, see Joan D. Tooke, *The Just War in Aquinas and Grotius* (London: SPCK, 1965).

> their species according to what is intended, and not according to what is beside the intention, since this is accidental . . . Accordingly the act of self-defence may have two effects, one is the saving of one's life, the other is the slaying of the aggressor. Therefore this act, since one's intention is to save one's own life, is not unlawful, seeing that it is natural to everything to keep itself in "being," as far as possible. And yet, though proceeding from a good intention, an act may be rendered unlawful, if it be out of proportion to the end. Wherefore if a man, in self-defence, uses more than necessary violence, it will be unlawful: whereas if he repel force with moderation his defence will be lawful, because according to the jurists, "it is lawful to repel force by force, provided one does not exceed the limits of a blameless defence." Nor is it necessary for salvation that a man omit the act of moderate self-defence in order to avoid killing the other man, since one is bound to take more care of one's own life than of another's. But as it is unlawful to take a man's life, except for the public authority acting for the common good . . . it is not lawful for a man to intend killing a man in self-defence, except for such as have public authority, who while intending to kill a man in self-defence, refer this to the public good, as in the case of a soldier fighting against the foe, and in the minister of the judge struggling with robbers, although even these sin if they be moved by private animosity.[115]

It is debated whether Aquinas meant that one could knowingly undertake an action which would result in killing (if such killing was not the intended effect), or, (which seems more likely), that one could undertake defensive action (in proportion and without malice), and if the unintended effect was that the attacker died, then the defender was not guilty of murder.[116] In either case, several important distinctions followed and influenced the theology of violence in the seventeenth century. Most important, it was widely agreed that force in self defence was a natural law and as

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[115] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* 2a2ae.Q.64.A.7ob.5.

[116] For the former, traditional interpretation, see J. Boyle, "Toward Understanding the Principle of Double Effect," *Ethics* 90 (1980), pp. 527-38; J. McMahan, "Revising the Doctrine of Double Effect," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 11 (1994), pp. 201-12, although McMahan's conclusion that Aquinas would view firing a "flame-thrower" at an attacker as licit, if done in defence, seems dubious (p. 2). For the latter view, namely, that Aquinas did not prescribe action when an outcome of death seemed inevitable, see Thomas A. Cavanaugh, "Aquinas's Account of Double Effect," *Thomist* 61, no. 1 (1997), pp. 107-21. Professor Cavanaugh's account seems to call for a revision of the view that the just war tradition, at least as it is found in Aquinas, justifies force even when the foreseen result is a killing.

such consistent with divine law. Self defence therefore could not be a sin. The importance of the double effect was also that it differentiated between the *intended* action (preserving one's own life) and the unintended (and perhaps unforeseen?) result of the death of the attacker.

With his continuation of Augustine and the addition of the double effect, Aquinas represents the medieval articulation of the just war and the state of the tradition as it was received in the Reformation. In general, the just war tradition allowed Christians to act as soldiers and kill, and to act as magistrates and use violence as a form of punishment. Most importantly, it also allowed force to be used in individual self defence. While there were still in some instances elements of residual guilt, participation in violence was not commonly seen as a sin if the violence was authorised. Violence could only be authorised by two possible sources: the king, or the King of kings.

The Reformation saw a re-examination and a re-evaluation of many aspects of Christian theology. However, within the magisterial Reformation, the theology of violence was not substantially revised. There are a number of possible explanations, not the least of which was the need for the magisterial Reformers to recognise governments and the fear of being associated with the heretical pacifism of the Anabaptists. Indeed, aside from Hugo Grotius, the major innovations in the medieval just war theory in the early modern period came not from Protestants, but from Catholic theologians such as Francisco de Vitoria and Francisco Suárez.

One impact on the just war tradition resulting from the Reformation, however, concerned the criteria of the proper authorisation to wage war. Before the

Reformation there was debate about whether princes, the emperor and the pope all had the authority to declare just wars. After the Reformation, the authority to declare war was firmly placed with princes. This transformation can be seen in the thought of Martin Luther, who denounced the pope's ability to declare war and maintained that only princes could do so.[117] This perspective became an important feature of just war theory in early modern England. The tradition placed the power to make war firmly with the supreme magistrate. Any other wars could not be just because they lacked proper authority.

Luther's emphasis on the relationship between the Church and the state meant that he addressed the issue of war and military service in several places in his work. Despite the unsystematic nature of his theology of violence, it can be clearly seen as continuing in the Augustinian tradition. Luther maintained that there was no reason that a Christian could not be a soldier any more than a farmer or a merchant. Each was a legitimate calling and none a bar to salvation.[118] Luther's most important contribution concerned the "two swords." There were two swords, one temporal and one spiritual, which were not to interfere with each other. While Christians lived simultaneously in both realms, there were different conditions within each. Within the

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[117] Harvey Buchanan, "Luther and the Turks, 1519-1529," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* Arg. 47, Heft. 1(1956), pp. 145-59; Partner, *God of Battles*, p. 189. Luther's writings concerning war with the Turks were known and debated during the civil wars as exemplary of proper doctrine, particularly because Luther insisted upon obedience, e.g., Henry Hammond, *Of Resisting the Lavvfull Magistrate under Colour of Religion* ([London?]: s.n. 1647), p. 35. Hammond's *Of Resisting* was first published in 1643 and went through several editions. The 1647 edition is used for this dissertation because of the useful tracts appended to it.

[118] Luther addressed these issues most directly in "Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved," in *Luther's Works*, ed. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), vol. 46, pp. 93-137. Despite his ringing conclusion about the rectitude of soldiering, the title of the text (and the fact that Luther was compelled to write it at all) has been pointed to as an indication of Luther's uncertainty about the subject. As Buchanan has demonstrated in "Luther and the Turks," Luther was writing to clarify his position on war in order to prevent confusion that might arise from his earlier denunciation of papal-sponsored wars. Luther objected to *papal* authority over war, not to war itself. Accordingly, Luther placed the right to wage war within just war theory firmly with the magistrate.

temporal realm all authority was placed with the secular ruler. This doctrine of two swords helped to lay the foundation for the idea that the secular magistrate within a given kingdom should have sole authority over military power, despite the continued recognition that such power had a divine origin.

Luther was certainly not a pacifist and he believed that, while war was often accompanied by evil, it was nevertheless necessary to prevent greater evil. With his characteristic boisterousness he dismissed the Erasmian-humanist critique of the evils inherent in war by saying that "when men write about war, then, and say that it is a great plague, that is all true; but they should also see how great a plague it prevents."[119] For Luther the "wrath and severity of the sword is just as necessary to a people as eating and drinking, even as life itself."[120]

War was a way of the world and thus was not to be condemned. The point Luther conveyed when discussing war was similar to the simple statement of Augustine more than a millennium before, "do not think that it is impossible for any one to please God while engaged in active military service."[121] Indeed, for Luther the use of the sword could be particularly pleasing to God, for when wielded by authority, it was no longer man's hand, "but God's; and it is not man, but God, who

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[119] Luther, "Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved," p. 96. Luther's rough-and-ready rhetoric has led some scholars to see him as actually hostile to the ideas of peace. John Bossy has noted that he removed the *pax* from the mass and his ninety-second thesis (of his celebrated ninety-five) declared, "Away, then, with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, 'Peace, peace,' and there is no peace!" Nevertheless, as Cynthia Grant Schoenberger has pointed out, a close reading of "Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved" alongside Luther's other writings on war demonstrates that Luther believed that violence often fails to achieve its intended end and is incredibly costly under any calculation. Thus, while far from a pacifist, Luther could be characterised as preferring the pacific. See John Bossy, *Peace in the Post-Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 57; Cynthia Grant Schoenberger, "Luther and the Justifiability of Resistance to Legitimate Authority," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 40, no. 1 (1979), p. 5; Schultz, *Luther's Works*, vols. 44-7.
[120] Luther, "Open Letter on the Harsh Book against the Peasants," *Luther's Works*, vol. 46, p. 73.
[121] Augustine, "Letter to Boniface," letter 189, chpt. 4, in Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 1, p. 553.

hangs, tortures, beheads, kills, and fights." Again like Augustine, Luther associated violence with punishment and saw war as "the punishment for wrong and evil," continuing the analogy between policing power and war. He also accepted that Christian violence could be enacted out of love. He explained, "slaying and robbing do not seem to be works of love. A simple man therefore does not think that it is a Christian thing to do. In truth, however, even this is a work of love."[122]

Calvin continued this interpretation, seeing violence as a punishment, and emphasising the validity of Christian participation in wars. In particular, he used the wars of the Old Testament as models for the moral principles which should govern wars. Underlying Calvin's thinking on war were two themes: deep animosity towards the Anabaptists (accompanied by a fervent desire to distance his theology from their heresy) and a sustained Augustianism with regard to war and violence.

The question of war was particularly pressing for Calvin during his lifetime given the ever-precarious position that Geneva endured. Calvin maintained that a war that was necessary and properly authorised was lawful, just and "legitimate." Again, war was an extension of the power to police and to punish. If it was argued that such disciplinary powers justifiably existed, then wars were justified as well. Calvin thought it logical that if magistrates could restrain common thieves and criminals, then certainly they should also be allowed to wage wars. As he wrote:

> If they are right to punish criminals by whose misdeeds only a few are harmed, are they to let criminality that afflicts and lays waste an entire region go scot-free? . . . natural justice and their office equally demand that princes must be armed not only to repress private wrong-doing by means of judicial penalties, but also to defend, by means of war, the territories committed in trust to them

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[122] Luther, "Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved," pp. 95-6.

> . . . and wars of this sort the Holy Spirit declares to be legitimate by the testimony of many places in the Scripture.[123]

Not only was it lawful for magistrates to wage wars, it was also lawful for Christians to fight in them. This was not a strictly Jewish idea, Calvin maintained, on two accounts. The first was because tenets of the Old Testament were still valid if not expressly contradicted by the New, and second, far from contradicting the Old Testament, many passages in the New Testament tacitly demonstrated the acceptability of military service. As he explained,

> If someone here objects that there is no proof-text or example in the New Testament which shows that war is permissible for Christians, my reply is this: in the first place, the reasons for waging war which existed formerly, still exist today . . . In any case, Scripture does indeed offer evidence in passing that Christ by His coming changed nothing in this regard. For if Christian teaching (to use Augustine's [words]) condemned all wars, the soldiers who sought advice about salvation would have been told to throw away their weapons.[124]

Christianity was not incompatible with war. As with all aspects of life, war had to be regulated, but God did not object to wars in themselves.

Calvin was not innovating on the just war paradigm. He relied on the Church Fathers and Scripture to articulate a familiar version of the tradition, which continued to be broadly accepted in Elizabethan England. Just war theory was the primary way of thinking about war in early modern England.[125] While there is abundant evidence that contemporary divines were familiar with the tradition outlined above, it is

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[123] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4:20.11, cf. 4:20.12, Höpfl, p. 63. Throughout this thesis, references to book 4, chapter 20 of Calvin's *Institutes* are from Harro Höpfl's translation in *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[124] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4:20.12, Höpfl, pp. 63-4.

[125] In *Bloody Constraint: War and Chivalry in Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), Theodor Meron demonstrates that Shakespeare's use of the just war paradigm would indicate that such ideas were readily recognised by his audience. See chpts. 2 and 4 and idem, "Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth and the Law of War," *American Journal of International Law* 86, no.1 (1992), pp. 1-45, esp. p. 13.

notable that they frequently chose to derive it from the first principles of the Bible. Rather than relying on Augustine, Aquinas, Luther or Calvin, the early modern English theologians preferred to cite biblical examples to buttress their arguments for the criteria by which war was lawful.[126] This was a natural result not only of early modern biblicism, but also of the belief that "the whole Bible is a book of the battles of the Lord," both in an actual military sense and in a spiritual sense.[127]

As with Augustine, war, for early modern English divines had to have a just cause, be proportionally pursued, and waged with proper intent--the idea was still to "slay in love."[128] Most importantly for such divines, violence always had to have proper authorisation, which came from the monarch, a biblically based principle which before the 1640s dovetailed nicely with the Foxeian tradition of obedience to the godly prince.[129] As Thomas Taylor explained, the king's authorisation was a crucial component of a just war, an "ancient order" which was also "most natural" and attested to by the fact that "the first battle that ever we read of" in Genesis 14

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[126] See, for example, Alexander Leighton, *Speculum Belli Sacri* ([Amsterdam]: [Successors of Giles Thorp], 1624); Richard Bernard, *Bible-Battells*. Bernard's text demonstrates that he is familiar with the just war tradition from the Fathers going back to Ambrose, but he is still concerned to derive it from the Bible. Likewise, Andrew Willet presented a terse summation of the just war, with both *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*, yet was certain to back up each point with biblical citations, see his *Hexapla in Exodum, that is, A Sixfold Commentary Upon the Second Booke of Moses Called Exodus* (London: [John Haviland], 1633), p. 329.

[127] Lodowick Lloyd, *The Stratagems of Ierusalem vvith the Martiall Lavves and Militarie Disciplines, as well of the Iewes, as of the Gentiles* (London: Thomas Creede, 1602), p. 1.

[128] Gouge, *Gods Three Arrovves*, p. 296, "slay in love" was how Gouge summarised in his marginal note the meaning of Matthew 5:44, which reads in the 1602 Geneva Bible, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that have you, and pray for them which hurt you, and persecute you." See also Barbara Donagan, "Codes and Conduct in the English Civil War," *Past and Present* no. 118 (1988), pp. 65-95; idem, "Did Ministers Matter?" pp. 131-2.

[129] For which, see William M. Lamont, *Godly Rule: Politics and Religion, 1603-1640* (London: Macmillan, 1969), chpts. 1-2.

"was ordered by the kings." Taylor was quick to follow this point with the common adage that "it belongs not to any private person to m[ake] war." [130]

This emphasis on the monarch also reduced the moral quandary of the soldier, who was obliged only to obey and not required to assess the moral merits of the conflict. Both sides in the civil war suggested that the individual soldier was not responsible for the moral decisions of those in authority. Soldiers should strive for obedience and if the authorities had waged an unjust war, then the sin was theirs and not the soldiers. As the royalist soldier's catechism explained, the king "commands you; his unjust commands herein make himself only guilty, your ready obedience will approve you innocent."[131] Another royalist explained in a sermon to soldiers that "a right commission makes the war itself lawful to the soldier, although it were undertaken by the prince upon unjust grounds: for the subject's duty is to mind his own call rather than the cause."[132]

That the authorisation of war was the sole purview of the highest authorities and far from licit for private individuals was an idea found in sermons across a wide spectrum of theological opinion. The formidable royalist theorists, Dudley Digges, thought it self-evident that "no war shall be made except authorised by the supreme governor."[133] Calybute Downing, allegedly one of the first of the puritan party to preach sedition openly, emphasised the importance of authority in the making of war

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[130] Taylor, *The Valevv of True Valour, or, The Probation and Approbation of a Right Military Man* (London: Aug. Mathewes, 1629), pp. 13-4.
[131] Thomas Swadlin, *Soldiers Catechisme*, p. 13. Robert Ram's catechism for the parliamentary soldiers also emphasised that obedience was the key to a clear conscience, see Robert Ram, *The Souldiers Catechisme Composed for the Parliaments Army* (London: J. Wright, 1644), p. 26; Donagan, "Codes of Conduct," pp. 77-8.
[132] Edward Symmons, *A Militarie Sermon*, p. 17.
[133] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking Up Armes against their Soveraigne in What Case Soever* (Oxford: s.n., 1643), p. 131.

in his infamous *Sermon Preached to the Renowned Company of the Artillery* (1640). Downing, like other divines, sought to define the limits of war out of Scripture, and when discussing the wars of Israel, he explained that such wars exhibited "all the justifiable causes of a legal war. I do not say that it was just or reasonable for a private Israelite upon home bred hatred to prosecute a private Amalekite to the death . . ." but rather when led by the authority "of particular men as David," then war was just.[134] The equally fiery Thomas Manton, Cromwellian trier and "prelate of the Protectorate," outlined the commonly regard criteria for a just war in his commentary on the Letter of James.[135] He delineated the conditions succinctly: "to make a war lawful there must be a concurrence of several things: there must be . . . the merits of the cause; . . . the warrant of authority; . . . the uprightness of intention; and . . . the form of prosecution." War also should "never be undertaken but upon weighty reasons" and its goal should always be a "righteous peace." The Bible was also contemporaries' best source for supporting the *jus in bello*, the conditions by which a just war should be conducted. Manton followed most of his peers in discussing the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy as the prime text for explaining the principles of war: i.e., "before engagement there should be treating . . . In battle you must shed as little of blood as possible," etc.[136]

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[134] Downing, *A Sermon Preached to the . . . Company of the Artillery . . . Designed to Compose the Present Troubles*, p. 10.

[135] The words are those of Anthony Wood, quoted in the *Dictionary of National Biography* s.v. Thomas Manton.

[136] Manton, *A Practical Commentary . . . on the Epistle of James*, pp. 422-4. The work of Barbara Donagan should put to rest the long debate over whether or not the "puritans" prosecuted the war unsparingly, without regard for a conception of *jus in bello*. For some of the main positions in the debate, see Roland H. Bainton, "Congregationalism: From the Just War to the Crusade in the Puritan Revolution," *Andover Newton Theological School Bulletin* vol. 35, no. 3 (1943), pp. 1-20; idem, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960), p. 148; and the strong, sustained criticism of D. Little, "'Holy War' Appeals and Western Christianity: A

The abundance of material in the Bible from which a code of war could be derived meant that divines such as Manton found it ridiculous to suggest that war was prohibited for Christians. Of course unauthorised wars were proscribed, but just wars were necessary and therefore could not be sinful:

> Wars in the Old Testament are approved and commanded by God. In the Apocalypse there is a manifest approvation, if not excitation, of the people of God in their wars against Antichrist. Besides that they are not simply unlawful, it may be pleaded, that John being asked concerning the duty of soldiers, instructs them, but does not deny their calling . . . And again Peter baptises Cornelius without requiring him to give over his military employment . . . Christ commends the centurion, [etc].[137]

For contemporaries the Bible demonstrated the validity of war and the lawfulness of Christian participation in them. The proofs for this position were well known and seldom in contention. The Bible was in harmony with the teachings of the Fathers and the Reformers--a concurrence which only further reinforced the orthodoxy of such views.

The New Testament examples given by Manton of John the Baptist, Cornelius and Jesus, and the Centurion, in order to demonstrate the lawfulness of Christians

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Reconsideration of Bainton's Approach" in *Just War and Jihad*, ed. John Kelsay and James Turner Johnson (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1991), pp. 121-40; James Turner Johnson, *Ideology, Reason, and the Limitations of War: Religious and Secular Concepts, 1200-1740* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 134-7; idem, *The Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), pp. 33-4. Donagan's work demonstrates that both sides recognised *jus in bello*. See Donagan, "Atrocity, War Crime, and Treason in the English Civil War," *American Historical Review* 99, no. 4 (1994), pp. 1137-66; idem, "Codes and Conduct in the English Civil War,"; idem, "Did Ministers Matter?"; idem, "Prisoners in the English Civil War," *History Today* 41, no. 3 (1991), pp. 28-35.

[137] Manton, *A Practical Commentary . . . on the Epistle of James*, p. 422.

participating in wars, were common proof texts in the period.[138] They were invoked countless times against Anabaptists and would-be pacifists to demonstrate that the New Testament was no bar to soldiering. John the Baptist had told soldiers to be content with their wages, not to throw away their weapons. Likewise, Jesus did not rebuke the Centurion for his profession, but rather praised his faith.

The just war paradigm had become so deeply entrenched that its basic tenets were also applied to interpersonal violence. Violence between individuals needed to have a just cause, proper restraint and proper authority. This last criterion was almost always lacking in interpersonal conflicts. God took no delight in bloody feuds or other unauthorised violence, particularly that which was undertaken for vainglory and pride.[139] "No the Lord is not like Molech that loves to have blood in the unsavoury sacrifices of cruel private duels."[140] Such interpersonal violence was not only "unnatural" but it was also *unauthorised*. It is in this sense that the literary critic Derek Cohen gets to the heart of the matter in his reading of *Henry IV, Part 2*, noting that the violence of the tavern serves an important function in reminding the audience that "unlawful violence must be contained and subject to lawful violence, which is the instrument of [institutional] authority."[141] Personal conflicts were prime examples of

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[138] Such references frequently followed the order given first by Augustine, see "Letter to Boniface," letter 189, chpt. 4 in Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 1, p. 553.

[139] On this point, see Keith Thomas, "Arms and the Man," in the forthcoming Oxford University Press publication of his 2001 Ford Lectures. I am grateful to Mr. Thomas for our communications concerning his work.

[140] Downing, *A Sermon Preached to the . . . Company of the Artillery . . . Designed to Compose the Present Troubles*, p. 11.

[141] Cohen, *Shakespeare's Culture of Violence* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 30. Despite being unauthorised, pub brawls and the like were an important way of establishing interpersonal order in early modern England. See Alexandra Jane Shepard, "The Meaning of Manhood in Early Modern England, with Special Reference to Cambridge, *c.*1560-1640," (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1998).

unauthorised violence and as such it was expected that such incidents be subjected to the lawful, ordering violence of the magistrate.

For seventeenth-century thinkers there was an important difference between murder and killing. That difference was based on the idea of authority.[142] Henry Ferne, a leading royalist theologian, expressed a long standing consensus by defining an individual "who takes the sword of his own authority," and not by the authority of the king, as one who "commits murder."[143] Not all killing was murder. As Joseph Caryl explained to the House of Commons in 1642, only killing done "privately or without [public] judgement" was murder.[144]

There were then different kinds of killing. The renowned controversialist Andrew Willet clarified the two types of killing: unlawful and lawful. The unlawful and "inexcusable" form of killing was called "murder." This was unauthorised homicide. However, three further types of killing were not illicit. First "there is a lawful killing, or, taking away of life by the magistrate; as either in putting malefactors to death, or in just war where much blood is shed." He noted that this "ordinary" type of killing, present in punishment and in "just battle," was carried out by the magistrate by the "direction of the Word of God, and according to the

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[142] In many of the most popular translations of the Bible the commandment prohibiting murder was often rendered "Thou shalt not kill," although a distinction between bad unauthorised killing and good authorised killing was frequently made. The 1560 Geneva Bible uses "kill" and many Bibles in the sixteenth century followed it, see, for example, Exodus 20:13 in the Parker Bible, *The Holy Byble, Conteynyng the Olde Testament and the Newe* (London: Lucas Harison, 1575), Thomas Cranmer's *The Holy Bible* (London: Christopher Barker, 1585), Bèze Bible, *The Bible, that is, the Holy Scriptures Conteined in the Old and New Testament* (Amsterdam?: s.n.,1599), and the Barker Bible, *The Bible, that is, the Holy Scriptures* (London: Robert Barker, 1606). Often this distinction between murder and killing was implicit, and the terms were occasionally used interchangeably, see, for example, John Knewstubs, *The Lectures of Iohn Knewstub, vpon the Twentieth Chapter of Exodus, and Certeine Other Places of Scripture* (London: Lucas Harrison, 1578), pp. 80-1.

[143] Ferne, *Conscience Satisfied: That There Is No Warrant for the Armes Now Taken up by Subjects* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1643), p. 40.

[144] Caryl, *The Workes of Ephesus Explained in a Sermon Before the Honovrable House of Commons . . . April 27th 1642* (London: Iohn Bartlet and William Bladen, 1642), p. 37.

wholesome laws grounded upon the same." Second, there was a "divine" form of killing, "which is directly and immediately commanded by God." The best example of this type of licit killing was when God told Abraham to kill his son. Such a killing, if it had taken place, would not have been a murder, but rather a pious act. Likewise, "Joshua had commandment from the Lord to destroy the Canaanites." There was an additional type of lawful killing which Willet termed the "heroic." This was when "any being inflamed with the zeal of God's glory, and extraordinarily stirred by His spirit, do take revenge of the Lord's enemies: as . . . Phineas in zeal killed the adulterer and adulteress, and Samuel hewed Agag the King of the Amalek in pieces."[145] Authorisation was the key for determining what was murder. Lawful killing could be authorised by the magistrate or by God, all other killings were unauthorised and thus unlawful.

Willet also addressed the problem of the apparent pacifist example of Jesus. He had little time for the Anabaptists, who argued that it was not "lawful for Christians to bear armour, and to make war." He confronted the assertion that since "there are no precepts in the New Testament, concerning this matter, but only in the Old" that Christ had thus banished violence, by echoing the common position that "it is sufficient that we find it there: for whatsoever is prescribed in the Old Testament, not repugnant to, nor reversed in the New, Christians are to receive and obey." Willet maintained that the reason that there was no discussion of the Christian soldier in the New Testament was because "there was then no Christian magistrate, by whose authority war must" carried out.[146] It was the magistrate's duty to command wars and

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[145] Willet, *Hexapla in Exodum,* pp. 326-7.
[146] Willet, *Hexapla in Exodum,* pp. 328-9.

Christians could participate in them fully. Likewise, magistrates, when acting in their official capacity, could legitimately exercise capital punishment; to Willet's mind, the two went hand in hand.

Willet, like other early modern English theologians, maintained that there was no sufficient scriptural warrant to make Christian participation in war, or in the office of a magistrate, illegal. The sixth commandment did not bar authorised killing; Jesus, John the Baptist and the Apostles associated with various soldiers; Jesus himself had predicted wars (Matthew 24) and would lead His Church in them (Revelation 17:14). With regard to Christ's saying that one should turn the other cheek, it was important to recognise that "Christ here speaks unto private men, not unto magistrates," or those ordered by magistrates into war. Such sentiments were widespread and demonstrate that not long after the Elizabethan settlement, not only had the just war tradition placed the authority to make war firmly with the magistrate, but also the legitimacy of Christian participation in war was certain enough that it could be made an article of faith that "it is lawful for Christian men at the commandment of the Magistrate to wear weapons and serve in the wars."[147]

Military activity was for the early modern mind not simply tolerated by God, but something that could be actively pleasing to the Divine. While it was true that Romans 13 commanded obedience to the monarch and thus an active role in wars, a super-addition was that fighting in wars could also be distinctly favourable to God. It could even be argued that since "God himself is a man of war . . . the Lord of Hosts"

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[147] See the Articles of Faith of the Church of England, in *Documents of the English Reformation*, ed. Gerald Bray (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1994), p. 308 (Article 37 of the 39 Articles).

then, "above all creatures, He loves soldiers."[148] During the early modern period there was a strong vein of thinking, present both in religious literature and in military guides and manuals, which associated the good Christian with the good soldier. "Nothing makes a man so [ready] for the war as true religion."[149] Furthermore, in waging war, the good soldier was not simply an instrument of the magistrate's policy, but a tool of the Divine, a holy agent.[150]

The skills necessary to be a good Christian and those useful for a good soldier were more than complementary, they were interdependent. Additionally, the rhetorics used to describe the Christian life and the life of the soldier were frequently similar, emphasising common metaphors. English writers had long expressed this theme, most often when they imitated the Apostle Paul's military imagery. The best example of this Pauline rhetoric is seen in the sixth chapter of the letter to the Ephesians, which the 1560 Geneva Bible renders:

> Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the assaults of the devil . . . For this cause take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil days . . . Stand therefore, and your loins gird about with verity, and having on the breast plate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith you may quench all the fire darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.[151]

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[148] Thomas Sutton, *The Good Fight of Faith, A Sermon* (London: Samuel Man, 1652). Sutton goes on to say that "above all exercises," God "commends fighting; above all actions, He honours warlike and martial designs," pp. 7-8.

[149] Thomas Taylor, *The Valevv of True Valour,* p. 7.

[150] Again, this was not a "puritan" innovation. It was consistent even with Augustine's *City of God*, see, bk. 1, chpt. 21.

[151] Verses 7-11, which are glossed, "The faithful have not only to strive against men and themselves, but also against Satan the spiritual enemy, who is most dangerous."

While Ephesians provides the best-known example of Paul's employment of military metaphors, it is certainly not the only time he spoke in this way. In fact he reiterated many of the same images in 1 Thessalonians 5:8.

It is often assumed that the theme of spiritual warfare was a particular proclivity of "puritans" in the period.[152] But rather than seeing the use of such language as "puritan" it is entirely possible to see it as simply Pauline.[153] Even if taken as only applicable to the Church, the early modern use of such language demonstrates a position consistent within Christianity, which sees military metaphors and images of violence as not incongruous with the message of the Gospels. Indeed, they were a central way of explicating that message.[154] As such, images of violence in "puritan" sermons do not necessarily demonstrate a greater inherent proclivity towards violence than is found in the majority of other forms of Christianity. This is not to say that such rhetoric is not useful for discerning attitudes towards violence.

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[152] If puritanism is taken as a tendency, then it can be said that part of that tendency was an emphasis on the battle between Satan and Christ for the individual's soul. But this dichotomous view can be found as much in the work of John Bale as it can in William Haller's classic and influential description of the puritan's life as one of constant spiritual battle in his *The Rise of Puritanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), p. 151, *passim*. The point is not to deny that this was a characteristic of "puritans," but rather to say that it was not exclusively theirs, and that it did not predispose them to violent revolution.

[153] While Bunyan is seen as the puritan champion of this genre, Erasmus also presents the Christian life as one of warfare against sin, yet Erasmus can hardly be called a puritan or a militant.

[154] For some of the more interesting examples of the genre, also employing Paul's military metaphors as a model for Christian life, see William Gurnall, *The Christian in Compleat Armour, Or, A Treatise of the Saints War against the Devil* (London: Ralph Smith, 1659); Henry Isaacson, *A Spiritual Dual between a Christian and Satan* (London: W. Wilson, 1645); John Sprint, *The Christian Sword and Buckler* (London: A. M., 1629); *Seuen VVeapons to Conquer the Deuill* (London: F. Coules, 1628); John Downame, *The Christian VVarefare* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1608); William Gouge, *The VVhole-Armor of God or the Spirituall Furniture which God Hath Prouided to Keepe Safe Euery Christian Souldier from All the Assaults of Satan* (London: Iohn Beale, 1616). Military metaphors were also common in the early Church: Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, compared the collectivity of the Church with an army in Epistle 50, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995), vol. 5, p. 326. For an excellent discussion of the use of the metaphor of the Christian soldier in modern society, see Harriet Crabtree, *The Christian Life: Traditional Metaphors and Contemporary Theologies* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1991), chpt. 6.

Rather, it is to emphasis that such rhetoric did not make recourse to violent rebellion inevitable.

It was not, therefore, odd or revolutionary when, in the summer of 1643, Edmund Calamy produced a small *Souldiers Pocket Bible* to "supply the want of the whole Bible, which a soldier cannot conveniently carry about him." The pocket Bible presented the type of standard fare by now familiar. Assuming the lawfulness of the soldier's calling, the pocket Bible began by imploring the soldier to be morally upright, obedient and content with his wages. The soldier should think of holy things when in service and must learn to trust the wisdom of God while discrediting his own judgement. God was also present with the soldier, "the Lord your God goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies and to save you. The Lord shall fight for you."[155] The pocket Bible was concerned not with whether a soldier should fight, but how, as a good Christian, the soldier should prepare for battle. If authority was not wanting, there was little moral question about a Christian soldier's participation in war.

The Clergy and War

If the good Christian was a good soldier, then the model Christians, the clergy, ought to have made the best soldiers. Since the theology of violence of the time allowed Christians to participate in wars--indeed God called upon them to do so--then clerics, the most Christian members of society, should have been that much more justified in going to war and doing battle. This, however, was not the case. In the

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[155] Calamy, *Souldiers Pocket Bible* (London: G. B. and R. W., 1643), pp. 1-3.

seventeenth century the assumption was still that ministers should not take up arms and engage in bloodshed. This apparent double standard illustrates how violence in the period, no matter how justified, was still tainted by impurity and connotations of guilt.

The contradiction concerning the noncombatant status of clergy was recognised by Aquinas. He noted not only the fact that such status made violence itself appear unlawful, but also that incitement to an act is tantamount to participation in it. Thus by supporting military endeavours, the clergy were *de facto* participating in war. He explained:

> It would be lawful for clerics and bishops to fight. For, as stated above, wars are lawful and just in so far as they protect the poor and the entire common weal from suffering at the hands of the foe. Now this seems to be above all the duty of prelates . . . therefore it is lawful for prelates and clerics to fight . . . Further, apparently, it comes to the same whether a man does a thing himself, or consents to its being done by another, according to Romans 1:32 . . . Now those, above all, seem to consent to a thing, who induce others to do it. But it is lawful for bishops and clerics to induce others to fight . . . therefore they also are allowed to fight.[156]

Despite the persuasiveness of such arguments, Aquinas concluded that, while it was lawful for Christians to fight, it was unlawful for the clergy to do so. He gave two justifications for this position, which in various ways were maintained into the early modern period.

Aquinas's first answer to this apparent paradox focussed on Jesus's words to Peter in the Garden at the time of Jesus's arrest. Aquinas averred that when Jesus instructed Peter to put away his sword, Jesus was speaking to Peter as a representative of the clergy in general. This passage was taken to mean that

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[156] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 2a2ae.Q.40.A.2.ob.1, ob.3.

clerics, by the express command of Christ, could not fight. Supporting this argument was Aquinas's second position, which was that the nature of war was such that it inhibited priests from performing their duties. The priest's function in society meant that he should not fight. War prevented the contemplation of divine things, and, more specifically, Aquinas maintained that the ministry of the altar, the consecration of the Eucharist, was incompatible with bloodshed.[157] Aquinas concluded that ministers could accompany soldiers into battle, but could not fight, since they were calling required them to abstain from bloodshed.

The ambiguity about the extent of the clergy's involvement in violence persisted even after Aquinas.[158] It was perhaps more awkward in the Elizabethan and Stuart periods since the Reformation had stripped the clergy of many of their distinguishing characteristics and exemptions. Catholic remnants such as poverty, celibacy, and habits had been either abandoned or significantly diminished. The Reformation had washed away many of the indicators of ministers' status as distinct from that of the laity. They could marry and no longer lived in separate communities.

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[157] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2a2ae.Q.40.A.2. This idea was not unique to Aquinas. It can also be seen as early as Ambrose, who told the clergy that "the thought of warlike matters seems to be foreign to the duty of our office, for we have our thoughts fixed more on the duty of the soul . . . nor is it our business to look to arms, but to the forces of peace," see, *Of the Duties of the Clergy*, bk. 1, chpt. 35, Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 10, p. 30. This is in basic agreement with the thinking pronounced by the Catholic Council of Toledo, for which see John Wesley Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter & His Circle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), vol. 1, p. 178.

[158] In general, cloistered monks and the higher clergy, including bishops, refrained from going into battle (with some important exceptions). Secular lower clergy, on the other hand, often followed soldiers onto the battlefield to minister to their needs, although they were in theory restrained from taking up arms themselves and actually causing bloodshed. See Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, pp. 105-12. Christopher Holdsworth finds that in the twelfth century few priests actually observed the supposed ban on their participation in war, see his "War and Peace in the Twelfth Century," in *War and Peace in the Middle Ages*, ed. Brian Patrick McGuire (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel, 1987), p. 81. There is anecdotal evidence that this was the case even earlier. See, for example, *The Alexiad of the Princess Anna Comnena*, trans. E. Dawes, (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1928), p. 256. In *The Elizabethan Militia, 1558-1638* (London: Routledge, 1967), Lindsay Boynton notes the interesting 1599 case of the Rev. Christopher Holmes, who seems to imply without a sense of contradiction that he himself would be ready to fight if needed (p. 186).

Violence for the medieval Catholic clergy was in some ways like marriage, acceptable for those of lesser spiritual ability, but prohibited for those "who would be perfect."[159] But by the 1640s, in Protestant England, marriage was, at least in theory, no longer regarded as a lesser spiritual state than celibacy.[160] Even with the priesthood of all believers, however, the prohibition on clerical violence remained. Indeed, John Williams refused to be consecrated by Archbishop Abbot, since Williams saw Abbot as a "man of blood" for having accidentally killed a man while hunting.[161]

Such an aversion to blood, however, did not always translate into clerical hesitancy towards war. If active support for an endeavour meant participation in it, then the English clergy were certainly active participants in war, despite their absence from the actual heat of battle. The clergy were required to contribute regularly to the maintenance of the armed forces of the realm. During the late decades of the sixteenth century the clergy were very generous in their contributions for defence against the Armada--much to their later dismay when the government used the precedent to continue to extract high sums of money from the clergy. The clergy were required to provide money and armour, and militia musters were frequently held in churchyards

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[159] There was in the Church a distinction between "counsels," which were seen as recommendations--which it was best to follow--and "precepts" which were absolutely binding, see *Summa Theologica* 2a2ae.Q.25.A.9. In seventeenth-century England this was considered a papist distinction and rejected, e.g., Willet, *Hexapla in Exodum*, pp. 329-30. Where such a distinction was made, it could be assumed that the clergy would have a greater obligation to obey such counsels. On the idea that the noncombatant status of the clergy was on account of their aspirations toward spiritual perfection, see Teichman, *Pacifism and the Just War*, p. 47.

[160] See Helen L. Parish, "Precedent, Policy, and Practice: Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation," (D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1996); and her subsequent book, idem, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation: Precedent, Policy, and Practice* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), chpt. 2. For priestly celibacy in the English context, see Peter Marshall, *The Catholic Priesthood and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), chpt. 5.

[161] See Patricia Crawford, "Charles Stuart, That Man of Blood," *Journal of British Studies* 16, no. 2 (1977), p. 43.

and sometimes, in cases of bad weather, in the church itself--a practice which William Laud sought to stamp out.[162]

The clergy, however, did resist contributing to militias to the full extent that the government desired. When they did so, it was usually justified by the fact that they were a separate estate, which held certain ancient privileges, one of which was that they did not have to participate in the armed forces of the nation.[163] Underlying ideas of separation was the thought that the clergy had a different function. It was still believed that some men prayed while others fought. It was as result of their social function that ministers were not to involve themselves in the bloodshed of war. This separate status was given further articulation by the "two swords" of the Reformation, placing the sword of violence (and secular power) in the hands of the magistrate and the spiritual sword in the hands of the ministers. The fact that the clergy were to use spiritual weapons did not mean that carnal weapons were illicit, but rather that they were unsuitable for the work of the minister.[164]

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[162] When it was necessary for the clergy to contribute to the defence of the realm against Spain in 1589, Archbishop Whitgift appealed to religion as the motivation, imploring the clergy to "appear to the world, how ready they were to spare no expense for the defence of that religion which they professed," *Acts of the Privy Council*, vol. 18, p. 399; J. Strype, *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1822), vol. 1, p. 606, quoted by Boynton in *The Elizabethan Militia*, p. 184. For Laud's distaste for the use of church grounds for militia activity, see ibid, pp. 292-3. Boynton's work also contains further detail on the clergy and the militia, p. 31ff and *passim*. Additionally, see *Select Statues and Other Constitutional Documents . . . Elizabeth and James I* ed. G. W. Prothero (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), pp. cxx-cxxi; pp. 160-2, for the expectation that clergy would organise military activities in their respective locales.

[163] J. J. N. McGurk, "The Clergy and the Militia 1580-1610," *History* 60, no. 199 (1975), pp. 198-210. McGurk maintains that between 1580 and 1610 the clergy were largely successful in their efforts to assert their privileges as a separate estate and to participate to a lesser extent than requested with the mechanics of war. There is, however, a notable difference between seeing the clergy as *exempt* from fighting and considering them to be *banned* from fighting.

[164] Calvin explained in his letters that "it is improper that a minister should become a solider or a captain but it is much worse when he descends from his pulpit to take up arms," quoted in Judy Sproxton, *Violence and Religion: Attitudes towards Militancy in the French Civil Wars and the English Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 19.

That a minister could support wars financially, or by accompanying soldiers onto the battlefield, was an idea supported by reference to biblical examples. It was beyond doubt that the Bible itself testified that ministers could and should follow the soldiers into war, for "the priests of God went out with the Lord's Hosts in former times."[165] Thomas Taylor reassured his military audience on this point and told them not to think "that it is out of our element who are men of peace, to excite you to these honourable exercises of arms" for just as in "the Jewish camps and marchings; the priests were by God Himself appointed to sound the alarm with trumpets. And when they were to go upon a service, one of the priests was selected from the rest; to stir up the hearts of the soldiers by a sermon or hortatory oration, and so encourage them to service." By preaching to the soldiers, Taylor was thus acting in the same role as the ancient and holy priests of Israel.[166] Edmund Calamy also saw himself in this role as he urged unity with the Scots in the godly cause, casting himself as a type of one of the ancient "priests to sound the silver trumpets to proclaim the war." In the same way, Calamy found in the all-important twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy that "when the children of Israel would go out to war, the sons of Levi, one of the priests, was to make a speech to encourage them." Thus Calamy could justify his role in drumming up support for the war effort.[167]

Stephen Marshall was an early modern divine particularly sensitive to the issue of ministers' participation in violence. An episode in which he was involved at

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[165] Richard Bernard, *Bible-Battells*, sig A14.
[166] Taylor, *The Valevv of Trve Valovr*, p. 17.
[167] From Calamy's speech, in Thomas Gardiner, *Foure Speeches Delivered in Guild-Hall on Friday the Sixth of October, 1643* (London: R. Cotes, 1646), p. 21.

the beginning of the civil wars provides useful insight concerning this issue during the 1640s. The affair centred on Marshall's behaviour at the battle of Edgehill. Observers on both sides noted his presence at the battle, and royalists characterised his actions as particularly scandalous and sinful on account of the fact that Marshall was a minister. Not only did Marshall allegedly ride up and down the lines, frantically whipping the soldiers into a frenzied state, but he also supposedly gathered up spent bullets, bringing them to the soldiers to be fired again. This was considered in the eyes of many to be partaking in the bloodshed of the battle. Some even reported that Marshall was actually prepared to join in the fight himself.[168]

Shortly after the battle, Marshall fell seriously ill, which royalists were quick to see as a sign of God's providence. It was a just punishment for Marshall's blasphemous behaviour as well as a divine condemnation of the parliamentarian rebellion which Marshall had done so much to support. By February 1643 it was being reported in the royalist press that Marshall had gone mad with guilt over his actions at Edgehill. It was said that in one of his "raving fits" he cried out that he "was damned and could not be saved, because he was guilty of all the blood which was shed at Edgehill."[169] Following the sensation caused by his illness (and his

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[168] John Vicars, *Jehovah-Jireh God in the Mount, Or, Englands Parliamentarie-Chronicle* (London: T. Paine and M. Simmons, 1644), p. 200; *Godly Man's Legacy to the Saints Upon Earth, Exhibited in the Life of that Great and Able Divine, and Painful Laborer in the Word, Mr. Stephen Marshall, Sometime Minster of the Gospel at Finchingfield in Essex. Written by way of Letter to a Friend* (London: s.n., 1680), p. 13; William Haller, *Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), p. 75; Firth, *Cromwell's Army*, p. 313; Edward Symmons, *Scripture Vindicated from the Mis-Apprehensions, Mis-Interpretation, and Mis-Applications of Mr. Stephen Marshall* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1645), p. 28. Marshall later drew up the report on the battle on behalf of Essex for the House of Commons. Claiming victory, Marshall explained that in winning "there appeared little of man and much of God," *A Most True and Succinct Relation of the Late Battell Neere Kineton in VVarwick-shire, Expressed in a Letter from that Godly and Reverend Divine Master Stephen Marshall*, (London: H. S., 1642), p. 1.

[169] *Mercurius Aulicus. A Diurnall Communicating the Intelligence and Affaires of the Court to the Rest of the Kingdome*, ed. Fredrick John Varley (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948), p. 8, reported on Feb. 17,

conspicuous absence from the action at Westminster), two pamphlets appeared directly attacking Marshall and pointing out that his sickness was a punishment from God. Both texts claimed that Marshall had incurred God's judgment more than the regular combatants for two reasons. First, Marshall's "eminent gifts of preaching" had convinced many "ignorant" men to follow Parliament in upsetting the divinely established order by using violence against the "just power" of the king. Second, Marshall was guilty of a graver sin: his behaviour and involvement in the battle had "transgressed the duty of a minister of the Gospel of Peace."[170]

The allegations the incident provoked demonstrate the strength of the assumption that ministers should not take part in the shedding of blood.[171] These were ideas which appear to have been shared by both sides of the warring divide. Even the Scottish firebrand Samuel Rutherford shared the opinion of Marshall's critics that ministers should not fight.[172] This idea was also echoed in Lionel Gatford's *An Exhortation to Peace* (1643), where he questioned, "what agreement hath the

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1643. See also the Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of the Late Reginald Rawdon Hastings, Esquire of the Manor House, Ashby-de-la-Zouche*, ed. F. Bickley (London: H.M.S.O, 1930) in which Sir Edward Nicholas's letter to Colonel Henry Hastings (dated Feb. 21 1642 [i.e., 1643]) reads that "it is credibly advertised from good hands at London that Mr. Marshall, the great preacher of sedition there, is fallen mad and cries out against the damnable battle at Edgehill against the Lord's anointed, and saith that he shall be damned for exciting men against the king" (p. 93). See also Daniel Neal, *The History of the Puritans* (London: Thomas Tegg, 1754), vol. 2, p. 657; Tom Webster, *Stephen Marshall and Finchingfield* (Chelmsford, Essex: Essex County Record Office, 1994).

[170] *A Letter of Spirituall Advice: Written to Mr. Stephen Marshall in His Sicknesse by One of His Brethren in the Clergy* (London?: s.n., 1643), pp. 1, 4; *A Copy of a Letter Written to Master Stephen Marshall* (London: s.n, 1643), p. 2.

[171] It is always dubious to trust the report of an enemy, particularly when it corresponds to something close to a caricature. Hugh Peters was likewise accused by his detractors of having ridden "from rank to rank with a Bible in one hand and a pistol in the other exhorting the men to do their duty," see Raymond Phineas Stearns, *Strenuous Puritan: Hugh Peter, 1598-1660* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1954), p. 249. While the event may have taken place, it is important to note that such criticism in any case demonstrates that donning military attire and wielding a weapon were seen as inappropriate actions for a minister, and could be deployed in hopes of defaming the person's character.

[172] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex: The Law and the Prince* (London: Iohn Field, 1644), p. 371.

preaching of the Gospel of peace with warring and fighting?"[173] Marshall himself was forced to respond to the allegations made against him. The result was the tersest statement of his political thought.[174] The issue of the clergy in war, however, was neatly skirted as Marshall pursued a strategy aimed at showing that if Parliament's cause and means were just, then he was not guilty of participating in an unjust conflict. Nevertheless, he stressed that he had entered his "office in the army," not "to fight, nor meddle in the council of war, but only to teach" the soldiers "how to behave themselves according to the Word, that God might be with them."[175] Marshall was a militant, but he did not believe in clergy participating in battle, no matter how confident he was in the justness of Parliament's cause. While Marshall did not address the role of the clergy in war in depth, his other works demonstrate that his basis for the non-combat status of clergy was founded on the division of labour represented by the two swords. It was the job of the minister to use the spiritual sword on a different battlefield from the soldier who wields it not in vain in the battle of justice. It was, he claimed, the nature of the office, not the sin of killing, which kept Marshall from fighting in the wars he so actively encouraged.[176] Crucially, Marshall did not believe that being a minister prevented him from defending himself, nor did it mean that he had to discourage others from doing so. War was an activity of the state,

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[173] Gatford, *An Exhortation to Peace*, p. 9. Gatford conceded, however, that God could be "worshipped and severed publicly in some camps" of the army (ibid, p. 9).
[174] Marshall, *A Plea for Defensive Armes* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1643).
[175] Marshall, *Plea*, p. 22, misnumbered as 21. Marshall goes on to say that while he would not doubt the justness of Parliament's cause, he had personally examined all the evidence before taking up his office and concluded that the propriety of his position "was very clear" (p. 23).
[176] Marshall, *Reformation and Desolation . . . Preached to the . . . House of Commons at Their Late Solemne Fast, Decemb. 22, 1641* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1642), p. 38. Donagan, in "Did Ministers Matter?" p. 152, note 116, lists a few exceptional cases of combatant clergy.

which he claimed he would not meddle with, but defence of self was a natural liberty which religion did not curtail.

The example of Stephen Marshall demonstrates an ambiguity that illustrates how the "priesthood of all believers" and the demolition of the barriers between clergy and laity following the Reformation created problems within the theology of violence. It became increasingly difficult to see why a minister such as Marshall should not fight while his parishioners should, particularly given that the clergy were expected to fund wars and minister to soldiers.

Marshall at least was an ordained minister, which marked him out as different from the generality. The situation became even more complicated as sectaries such as the Baptists, inspired and emboldened by the battlefield, began to preach and take on the form and function of ministers while still having a musket in hand. During the war there was little time to analyse such things, but by the 1650s some Baptists began to disown military service, first for their church officers (their closest correspondents to priests) and then for their congregations. It was the idea of a priesthood of all believers taken to its logical conclusion which promoted such moves among the English sectaries, not a connection with their Continental Anabaptist brethren.[177]

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[177] This seems to have been the case only for a minority of General Baptists and the question seems not to have been raised in Particular Baptist circles. See B. R. White, *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1996), pp. 49-50, 53; Mark R. Bell, *Apocalypse How?: Baptist Movements during the English Revolution* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2000), chpt. 7. The most famous pacifists to emerge out of the wars, the Quakers, were closely related to the Baptists. As a congregational movement, they could not mandate clerical pacificism. Widespread acceptance of pacifism among Quakers was the product of complex negotiation, ultimately decided by the Quakers' emphasis on direct communication with the Light, which allowed them to renounce all ways of mediating communication with the Divine, and ultimately, violence. T. L. Underwood's excellent discussion of the Quakers, I believe, makes a similar point by using the concept of primitivism. See his *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War* (Oxford: Oxford

The controversy over Marshall's participation in the battle also demonstrates how, despite the fact that violence was widely accepted as part of God's plan and that wars were suitable for Christians, killing was, nevertheless, still taboo. There was still some level of impurity and guilt associated with killing, which it was best for ministers to avoid.[178] Such guilt affected common combatants as well. In medieval times, penance could be done even for killing undertaken in just wars. Yet for early modern Protestants, the guilt and trauma still needed to be made sacred and exorcised. For Englishmen and women in the seventeenth century, an essential facet for controlling the taboos associated with violence was to see all justified violence as ultimately divine and to see all violence as requiring authorisation. It was within the context of authorisation that contemporaries understood the biblical saying "he that takes the sword shall perish with the sword." Far from being a pacifist statement, intended to "dissuade or dishonour this noble military profession, (as the frantic Anabaptists pretend)" Christ had said these words "to honour and heighten it; as not belonging to private men . . . without the command or concession of supreme power." As the Fathers had commented "whosoever . . . by his own private motion is armed against the life of another, no lawful power . . . commanding him, or giving him

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University Press, 1997). In a similar vein, if Origen can be seen as one of the early fathers who did put forward a pacifist position (a contentious assertion) it is interesting to note that he did so in the context of prohibiting priests from committing murder. Origen argued, from the concept of the priesthood of all believers, that Christians must use spiritual artillery alone, in the same way that some pagan priests were permitted to use only such weapons, see *Against Celsus,* book 8, chpt. 73, in Roberts and Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, pp. 667-8.

[178] It is difficult to dispute that almost any form of killing, in whatever theological context, incurs some form of "guilt," even when not seen as such. In their work on the psychological effects of killing during the Vietnam War, Herbert Hendin and Ann Pollinger Haas demonstrate that guilt perennially results from warfare, see *Wounds of War: The Psychological Aftermath of Combat in Vietnam* (New York: Basic Books, 1984). Modern theologians, mainly those inclined to pacifism, also maintain that violence cannot exist without some "guilt," in this instance arising primarily from the insolvable conflict between Christ's message of peace and human proclivity towards violence. See, for example, Martin Hengel, *Victory over Violence: Jesus and the Revolutionists*, trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), esp. chpt. 10.

leave; he shall perish either by the sword of man, or else by the sword of divine revenge."[179] In such comments we find the essence of the early modern position. It decried the pacifism of the Anabaptists and argued that violence was a divine activity which could only be exercised on earth when authorised. As such it still belonged to God and was thus a sacred act.

Taylor, considered one of the "hotter sort" of Protestants, gave the above reading of the passage: "he that takes the sword," in the 1620s. When civil war arrived, the Earl of Newcastle used a similar reading of the same passage to justify his own violence while at the same time condemning the violence of his northern parliamentarian foes. He offered a qualified rendering of the verse in question saying that his rebellious enemies should know that "they that take the sword (without lawful calling) shall perish by the sword." He then addressed the root of the matter, illuminating central elements of the theology of violence: "And he that sheds man's blood, without a commission from the King of Heaven, who only has original power over the lives of His creatures," would sin, for not even Parliament, or any other group of individuals, could authorise the shedding of blood, except for the king. Since God had created humanity in His image, God alone could destroy it. God's viceroy on earth was the king and Newcastle warned that "those who presume to use the sword, and can derive no power from him, it were meet for them to make their accounts betimes with God, lest they die in the estates of murderers."[180]

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[179] Thomas Taylor, *The Valevv of Trve Valovr*, p. 15.

[180] "A Declaration of his Excellency the Earl of Newcastle," in *Historical Collections of Private Passages of State*, ed. John Rushworth (London: Richard Chiswell, 1692), vol. 6, p. 135, noted as part III of vol. 2.

Stephen Marshall, in his defence of his actions at Edgehill, also offered a reading of this saying of Jesus, that those who live by the sword shall die by it. His interpretation was two fold, on the one hand it was contextually specific to the time: Jesus did not want Peter to pre-empt the divine violence which God would bring on the Jewish people. Marshall perhaps exaggerated the amount of scholarly support he had for this interpretation, and his reading came under serious criticism. The royalist Henry Hammond wrote an entire tract specifically refuting Marshall's position.[181] But Marshall's second interpretation of the passage was actually closer to Hammond's position than the arch-royalist would have conceded. Marshall said that even if it was supposed that his first reading was wrong and that "it was a reproof of Peter's using the sword," then the "plain meaning" of the text was a condemnation of Peter's rashness for using violence without first seeking to know the mind of God, that is, without obtaining authorisation from Christ, who was with him.[182] In this reading, Marshall, like Hammond, grants that it is the unauthorised use of force which is being rebuked, for to use Hammond's words, the disciples had not waited for the sword to be "put in their hands by God or the supreme Magistrate." Thus, for Marshall, Peter's violence was not rebuked because authorised magistrates had come to arrest Jesus. Rather, Jesus Himself was the authority and it was from Him that the power of the sword flowed; therefore, if the true Christian came to "know his Master's mind," and the Master's mind authorised violence, then violence would be permitted. Hammond wrote that he doubted Marshall had "received knowledge of his master's mind."[183]

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[181] See "A Vindication of Christs Reprehending Saint Peter, from the Exceptions of Master Marshall," attached to Hammond's *Of Resisting*, pp. 71-85.
[182] Marshall, *Plea*, p. 16.
[183] Hammond, *Of Resisting*, pp. 71, 83.

Yet the legality of self defence, and the abundant miracles which testified to God's presence, combined and reinforced a sense of divine authorisation for violence among parliamentarians such as Marshall.

Chapter Three

Theologies of Obedience

Both Hammond and Marshall in their debate over the sayings of Jesus in the Garden employed a language of authority and obedience. Obedience was fundamental to both Reformation conceptions about violence and early modern cosmology in general. While there is much to support Christopher Haigh's view that "most of those who lived in Tudor England experienced Reformation as obedience rather than conversion,"[1] by presenting a dichotomy between obedience and conversion, such a view obscures the extent to which the theology of the period in itself was about obedience. Obedience was a central theological tenet, and though it produced fewer sparks than more hotly contested doctrines, it was no less important.

This chapter explores the place of violence within the early modern theological emphasis on obedience. Ideas about violence and obedience sustained a hierarchical worldview, which in turn dictated obedience and regulated violence. Violence was also a principal aspect of the divine nature of the king, or, as we shall see, a central element in non-monarchical governments as well. Yet, this chapter is also concerned with some of the limits on obedience and the hierarchical control of violence. While it was agreed that violence was placed in a hierarchy centred on the king, even strong royalist supporters did not envision a state in which subjects had no recourse to force. Likewise, parliamentarians argued that obedience was due to the

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[1] Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 21.

"king" as an office embodying authority, and as such they believed that their violence was not disrupting the hierarchy, but preserving it.

Theologies of Obedience

The Homilies

Elizabethan Protestantism presented a hierarchical worldview and instilled an instinct towards obedience that complemented the central place of the monarch in the pyramid of authorised violence. The widest spectrum of the English population would have encountered this cosmology through the medium of the royal Homilies, or official sermons, of the period, many of which were issued by Edward VI and restored by Elizabeth upon her accession.[2] For subsequent generations, the Homilies took on a status similar to that held by works of the early Fathers. They were quoted as theological maxims, a sort of English collection of sacred sayings. A brief discussion of these official sermons gives a sense of the hierarchical worldview of the Elizabethan Church, which provided a foundation shared by parliamentarians and royalists in later generations.

Most germane for illustrating the instinct for obedience are those Homilies specifically concerned with the topic, such as the *Exhortation Concerning Good*

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[2] Edward Cardwell, ed. *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England: Being a Collection of Injunctions, Declarations, Orders, Articles of Inquiry, &c. from the Year 1546 to the Year 1716* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1844), vol. 1, pp. 223-24, 231. It is of little doubt that the "Elizabethan Homilies" had a great effect on the people of England in a variety of ways, although it is difficult to quantify exactly how often parishioners would have heard them. Grindal's instructions to the clergy of York only indicated that "You shall every Sunday and holy day, when there is no sermon in your church or chapel, distinctly and plainly read in the pulpit some one of the homilies set forth by the Queen's Majesty's authority, or one part thereof, at the least, in such sort as the same are divided and appointed to be read by the two books of the homilies . . .," William Nicholson, ed., *The Remains of Edmund Grindal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843), pp. 127, 161. This declaration was repeated for Canterbury in 1576. Nevertheless, most evidence indicates that these Homilies would have been heard with great frequency.

Order, and Obedience to Rulers and Magistrates, which begins with a presentation of an Elizabethan form of the pervasive "great chain of being" cosmology, wherein each person has a place in a great chain of interconnectedness that mirrored the heavenly hierarchy. The emphasis was firmly on order, revealing a society in which anarchy was synonymous with sin. Anarchy was so intensely feared in the period that its destructive characteristics did not need description. Order, on the other hand, was synonymous with the Divine, and the maintenance of order depended most of all on obedience. The detailed description of the angels in heaven, the princes and governors on earth and the exact hierarchy of all things in-between demonstrated that "almighty God has created and appointed all things in heaven, earth, and waters, in a most excellent and perfect order."[3] Each being had a particular place within this chain. "Every degree of people in their vocation, calling and office, hath appointed to them their duty and order: some are in high degree, some in low," but all are important, for if any of them did not exist then society itself could not exist. Furthermore, if anyone was out of place, if any link were upset, anarchy would ensue.[4] Knowledge of one's place was crucial and deference and obedience to superiors were the virtues which held the chain together, from monarch down to the meanest subject.

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[3] *Certaine Sermons or Homilies* (London: John Bill, 1623), p. 69. The term "chain of being" is used in the sense of a progression and ordering of all things from the smallest up to the greatest, cf. Mark Grave, "Hobbes and His Audience: The Dynamics of Theorizing," *American Political Science Review* 68, no. 4 (1974), pp. 1542-56; E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1943). For a discussion of the concept of the chain of being and an effort at its modern application, see Arthur Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936).

[4] *Certaine Sermons or Homilies,* p. 69. The idea that all are appointed to their places and to disrupt that order caused disaster can be found in many sermons and theological works in the seventeenth century. Many ministers were in firm agreement with Francis Holyoake when he explained, "take away this order, and the frame of nature would go to ruin, to the former confused chaos, take away this order, and human society cannot be maintained," in his *Sermon of Obedience* (Oxford: Ioseph Barnes, 1613), p. 4.

The importance of the chain of being can also be found in the later Homilies titled *Against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion*. Here the prince is described as the parent and head of the country, much as a father is the parent and head of the household and God the father of heaven.[5] The Homilies made it apparent that each individual needed to recognise his or her place in the hierarchy, and most importantly, recognise that the prince was at the top. Listeners and readers were also urged to avoid the ignorant assumption that they could or should disturb this hierarchy. To disturb the hierarchy threatened everyone in it, including the disturber. Additionally, God had endowed this structure with authority, and therefore to try to alter it was as futile as it was sinful. Refusal to recognise the depravity of rebellion was to make the same mistake as the first rebel: Lucifer. The chain could not be challenged, and those presumptuous enough to attempt to do so threatened their salvation.[6]

The Homilies demonstrated that the analogy of the rebellion of Lucifer was very real: in rebelling against the prince the subject was in effect rebelling against God. Great use was made in the Homilies of the central biblical verses of the New Testament concerning obedience, namely 1 Peter and Romans 13. These verses were of such consequence in the civil wars that a reminder of their content is useful. The text from 1 Peter 2:13-4 in the 1602 Geneva Bible read:

> therefore submit yourselves unto all manner ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be unto the king, as unto the superior, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent of him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

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[5] *The Second Tome of Homilies* (London: Iohn Bill, 1623), p. 293. The idea that the fifth commandment of the Decalogue commanded obedience not just to biological fathers, but also to civil fathers was widely held well into the seventeenth century, and was to be a strong argument on the royalist side. See, for example, Joseph Caryl, *An Exposition with Practicall Observations Continued upon the Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, and Twenty-ninth Chapters of the Book of Job* (London: M. S., 1657), p. 487; Henry Hammond, *A Practical Catechism* (London: J. F., 1655), p. 211.

[6] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 276.

In a similar vein the first six verses of Romans 13 commanded:

> Let[7] every soul be subject unto the higher powers:[8] for there is no power but of God: and the powers that be are ordained by God. Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves condemnation. For magistrates are not to be feared for good works, but for evil. Will thou then be without fear of the power? do well: so shall thou have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God for thy wealth, but if thou do evil, fear: for he bears not the sword for nought: for he is the minister of God to take vengeance on him that does evil. Wherefore you must be subject not because of wrath only, but also for conscience sake.[9]

The Homilies were unambiguous in their use of these verses. They clearly expressed that "such subjects, as are disobedient or rebellious against their princes, disobey God, and procure their own damnation."[10] Likewise, from the Old Testament, the book of Exodus demonstrated that even thoughts, let alone actions, against the prince were "not against their prince only, being a mortal creature, but against God Himself also."[11] To rebel brought damnation because it was a sin against the God who had established the hierarchy and endowed it with authority. It was the possession of the divine authority that made superiors in the hierarchy God's vice-regents.

Disobedience, therefore, was a multitude of sins combined into one. While the Homilies reinforced the idea that to disobey the magistrate was to sin against God, they also demonstrated that it brought great suffering to others and thus was a sin

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[7] The 1602 Geneva gloss reads: "Now he shows severally what subjects owe to their magistrates, to wit, obedience: from which he shows that no man is free: and in such sort, that it is not only due to the highest magistrate himself, but also even to the basest, which hath any office under him."
[8] The gloss reads: "Another argument of great force: Because God is author of this order: so that such as are rebels, ought to know, that they make war with God himself: wherefore they cannot but purchase to themselves great misery and calamity."
[9] Here the 1560 Geneva Bible glosses, "For no private man can condemn that government which God has appointed without the breach of his conscience and here he speaks of evil magistrates: so that Antichrist and his cannot [wrest] this place to establish their tyranny over the conscience."
[10] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 277.
[11] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 299, cf. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4:20.23.

against the community. Rebellion called down such a plague of anarchy that it was safe to conclude that the worst prince was far preferable to disobedience.[12] This was an argument partially based on practicality. If the great chain of being was accepted, then it followed that even the worst tyrant was preferable to no ruler at all. The Homilies urged the parishioner to realise that any disobedience was a sin against both God and humanity, and should not even be contemplated:

> Let all good subjects, considering how horrible a sin against God, their prince, their country, and countrymen, against all God's and man's laws rebellion is, being indeed not one . . . sin, but all sins against God and man heaped together . . . and above all things considering the eternal damnation that is prepared for all impenitent rebels in hell with Satan the first founder of rebellion, and grand captain of all rebels, let all good subjects I say . . . embrace due obedience to God and our prince, as the greatest of all virtues.[13]

Obedience was the greatest virtue and the risk to the individual's soul and the community present in disobedience was so great that for many there was an innate inclination to defer to superiors in general, and the monarch in particular.

In the Garden of Eden God had ruled over humanity directly, but, in perhaps the most potent example of the evil of human disobedience, Adam and Eve disobeyed their Master, introducing evil and suffering into the world. As one homily explained:

> Thus doe you see, that neither heaven nor paradise could suffer any rebellion in them . . . Thus became rebellion, as you see, both the first and the greatest, and the very foot of all other sins, and the first and principal cause, both of all worldly and bodily miseries, sorrows, diseases, sicknesses, and deaths, and which is infinitely worse then all these, as is said, the very cause of death and damnation eternal also. After this breach of obedience . . . all . . . miseries breaking in therewith, and overflowing the world, lest all things should come unto confusion and utter ruin, God forthwith by laws given unto mankind, repaired again the rule and order of obedience thus by rebellion overthrown, and besides the obedience

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[12] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 279.
[13] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 304.

> due unto His Majesty, He not only ordained that in families and households, the wife should be obedient unto her husband, the children unto their parents, the servants unto their masters . . .

The disobedience of the Garden had brought forth all levels of misery. In the postlapsarian world God re-established order by endowing offices with authority and placing people in their proper place: the master over the servant, the husband over the wife, and in monarchies the prince above all subjects. Failure to recognise this hierarchical structure, or rebellion against it, was tantamount to re-enacting the original sin of the Garden. It toppled the postlapsarian re-establishment of order and returned humanity to anarchy. Just as disobedience was the source of all suffering, so obedience was the "principal virtue of all virtues." [14]

In the Garden, humanity had been ruled directly by God, but now God's power on earth was given to the prince, who as a result was the legitimate source of power on earth.[15] A cosmology was thus presented in which legitimate authority was derived from God and centred on the prince, to whom obedience was commanded. Importantly, this was the case whether the ruler was wicked or benevolent. The Homilies explained, "kings and princes, as well the evil as the good, do reign by God's ordinance, and that subjects are bound to obey them."[16]

It was generally accepted that God had re-established order by investing offices with authority. What is often ignored is what this *authority* meant. The Homilies did not avoid specifying that this authority was the power to use violence.

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[14] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, pp. 275-6.
[15] *Certaine Sermons or Homilies*, p. 70.
[16] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 277.

The Homilies directly addressed the role of violence in the earthly hierarchy.[17] The authority to kill came from God and was vested in the prince, who was to be the executor of judgement and justice on earth. Violence was permitted, but only by those whom God had chosen, namely, His magistrates, according to their rank and office. This was their "authority." To make this clear the Homilies explained that "the places of Scripture which seem to remove from" all Christians the ability to judge or kill "ought to be understood" as saying that no private individual "of his own private authority" could judge or kill. Only those with proper authority were able to kill, and when they did so they acted with a power given to them by God and on God's behalf. For "we must refer all judgement to God, to kings, and rulers . . . which be God's officers to execute justice."[18] Killing was acceptable, but never when it was carried out by an unauthorised individual, such an action in itself would be disobedient and sinful since it usurped the authority God placed with the magistrate, and thus usurped the very power of God Himself.

Judgement and justice were possible on earth, but, again, were not to be sought among private persons. This was not an argument from ability, but rather from authority, and it placed all such authority in the hands of the magistrates. However, every magistrate had to submit to his or her superior in the hierarchy. For Protestant nations after the Reformation the top of this earthly chain was the prince, who was not to be resisted, not even by inferior magistrates, as the Homilies made clear: "And

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[17] It should be noted that, while there are some suggestions in the Homilies that violence itself was un-Christian (see, for example, *The Second Tome of Homilies,* p. 287: "David, who had learned the lesson that our Saviour afterward plainly taught, that we should do no hurt to our fellow subjects, though they hate us, and be our enemies"), the Homilies on disobedience display an ingrained acceptance of just wars and the just use of violence (i.e., *The Second Tome of Homilies,* p. 300, "though God does often times prosper just and lawful enemies" in war).

[18] *Certaine Sermons or Homilies,* p. 71.

here (good people) let us all mark diligently, that it is not lawful for inferiors and subjects, in any case to resist and stand against the superior powers."[19]

Neither inferior magistrates nor the generality were to assume that they had the capacity to pass judgement upon the prince; that was the job of God alone. Often an evil prince was sent as a punishment for the transgressions of the people: "God (say the holy scriptures) makes a wicked man to reign for the sins of the people." God's apparent cruelty was just, and His violence a punishment for sin. Thus it was best for parishioners to follow the example of Christ and not disturb the government. To do otherwise--to disobey the prince and become an armed rebel--was incompatible with being a Christian. The Homilies made the point dramatically, posing the rebel as the diametric opposite of a Christian:

> Whereby it follows unavoidably, that such as do disobey or rebel against their own natural gracious sovereigns, howsoever they call themselves, or be named of others, yet are they indeed no true Christians, but worse than Jews, worse than Heathens, and such as shall never enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven, which Christ by his obedience purchased for true Christians, being obedient to Him the King of all kings, and to their prince whom He hath placed over them.[20]

For each true Christian the proper mode of behaviour was plain to see. Just as even the mighty David was aware of the fact that he could not harm the Lord's anointed, so the good Christian should likewise refrain from any inclination to disobedience and should obey God's prince.

There was, however, a crucial caveat. The command to obey earthly powers in Romans 13 had to yield to the duty to obey the superior of superior powers found in Acts 5:29: "then Peter and the Apostles answered, and said, 'we ought rather to obey

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[19] *Certaine Sermons or Homilies,* p. 72.
[20] *The Second Tome of Homilies,* pp. 280, 289-90. See also *Certaine Sermons or Homilies,* p. 72.

God than men'."[21] From this the Homilies concluded "we may not obey kings, magistrates, or any other, (though they be our own fathers) if they would command us to do anything contrary to God's commandments. In such a case we ought to say with the Apostle, 'we must rather obey God than man'." While this stipulation would be central in the British civil wars, the Homilies were not offering a justification for resistance, but only for passive noncompliance. Violence was not acceptable against superiors, since only superiors were authorised to use force; thus Christians had to choose either to suffer or flee. "Nevertheless in that case we may not in any [way] withstand violently, or rebel against rulers, or make any insurrection sedition, or tumults, either by force of arms (or otherwise) against the anointed of the Lord." Instead, good Christians must "in such case patiently suffer all wrongs, and injuries, referring the judgement of our cause only to God. Let us fear the terrible punishment of Almighty God against traitors and rebellious persons." [22]

The Homilies expressed some of the foundational tenets of the hierarchical worldview which characterised seventeenth-century theology. The sermons reveal a hierarchical perspective and reinforced the concept of a pyramid of violence. An instinct to obedience accompanied and reaffirmed this hierarchical worldview, which had the monarch at its pinnacle. The monarch, like other earthly magistrates, had been established by God to bring order to a postlapsarian world, but unlike other magistrates the monarch could not be judged or punished, since judgement and punishment entailed violence, which God had ordained as the sole purview of the

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[21] The 1602 Geneva Bible glosses this verse, "We ought to obey no man, but so far as obeying him we may obey God."

[22] *Certaine Sermons or Homilies,* pp. 74-5 (page 75 numbered as 69). The Homilies here appear to concede that defensive force is legitimate so long as it is not directed against the Lord's anointed.

prince. Judged only by God, the monarch was also a judgement from God, a good monarch a blessing and an evil one a curse to be endured. Contemporaries could conclude along with the Homilies that "let us either deserve to have a good prince, or let us patiently suffer and obey such as we deserve."[23]

The Nature of the King

The hierarchical view of society, with the king at its top, was common to most in early modern England. It was particularly so for those familiar with the works of Calvin, with his strong emphasis on the divine qualities of the magistrate. Calvin focussed on biblical passages, such as Exodus 22:8, and Psalm 82:1,6, and was particularly concerned with the use of the word *elohim*-- a term that could be translated not only as "gods," but also as "judges" or "magistrates." Thus, for Calvin, "all those who hold the office of magistrate are called gods." He continued, "this title is not to be reckoned as having little importance, for it shows that they have a commission from God, that they are endowed with divine authority," and "they in fact represent His person, acting in a certain sense in His place." Kings do not derive their power from the "perversity of men," but rather have it "by the providence and sacred ordinance of God, whose pleasure it is to have mankind governed in this manner . . . for He is present with them, and indeed presides over them, when they make laws and pronounce equitable judgements." Scripture demonstrated that "all power exists by divine ordinance and . . . there is none which is not established by

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[23] *The Second Tome of Homilies,* p. 280.

God."[24] For Calvin, as for his seventeenth-century followers, the most important aspect of the power of the magistrate was the power over life and death. When addressing the idea that Christians are forbidden to kill, Calvin explained, "the Law of God prohibits killing. But . . . the Lawgiver Himself puts the sword into the hands of His ministers . . . in punishing, nothing is done by human presumptuousness but by God's command and authority." The law of God prohibited killing, but the Lawgiver could change the laws and in the case of the magistrate provided an exception. This was not a power which could come from the people, but from God alone.[25]

The magistrate's power over life, which infused governments and gave them authority, came from God and was immutable. The form of government, however, was malleable, for while Calvin believed that some type of aristocracy was the form of government which "greatly excels all others," he granted that monarchy, aristocracy or democracy where all valid types of government. In each "power exists by divine ordinance." In each government, the magistrate's authority was deputed by God, and as such, it was "impossible to resist the magistrate without also resisting God." Conversely, "in obeying . . . superiors they are obeying God Himself, since [the power of superiors] is from God." Calvin believed that God had willed, and "divine providence" provided, that in different places there were different types of government. This was God's prerogative and it was not for "private men" to "decide how any commonwealth whatever is to be ordered, to debate what would be the best

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[24] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4:20.4, Höpfl, pp. 51-2. Cf. Calvin's commentaries on 1 Peter 2:13 and Matthew 26:52, where the emphasis again is that it is not by chance, but rather by God's design, that kings are kings. See Calvin, *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second Epistles of St Peter*, trans. William B. Johnson (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1963), pp. 269-71; idem, *A Harmony of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1972), vol. 3, pp. 158-9.

[25] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4:20.10, Höpfl, pp. 60-1.

state of the commonwealth in the place where they live." [26] Of course by the time of the civil wars many "private men" took to debating the best form of government, and while, like Calvin, they agreed that no single form of government had the monopoly of divine favour, many also argued that the people should actively decide on the shape of the government. But even among those who argued in the early 1640s that the people shaped the government, there was still wide agreement that the power over violence within that government existed by divine ordinance.

Those who followed Calvin agreed that God's providence in giving authority to magistrates was something which was not only divinely ordained, but also confirmed by nature and practical necessity. Obedience to superiors was necessary because it "upholds and continues all those estates, degrees, and orders, whereby the society, or fellowship of man, is as it were, by certain joints and sinews, joined and knit together, and without which it would by a certain pernicious confusion, be clean dissolved, and utterly perish."[27] The "hotter sort" of Protestants in England also stressed the importance of obedience to the monarch, since after the break with Rome, such obedience was viewed as a strong defence against Catholicism.[28]

Subsequent generations agreed with Calvin that the authority of magistrates came from God and that the king was to be obeyed, given that any resistance offered to the magistrate's authority was a sin against God. Most important for this

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[26] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4:20.8, 22-3, Höpfl, pp. 56-7, 74-5, cf. 4:20.7.
[27] Robert Pricke, *The Doctrine of Subiection to God and the King* (London: T. Downes and E. Dawson, 1616), sig Bii-sigBiii.
[28] Many of the sermons and theological tracts that dealt with the theology of obedience were also written to support the royal supremacy against Catholic claims that English Christians should submit to the power of Rome. See, for example, John Dunster, *Caesars Penny* (Oxford: Ioseph Barnes, 1610). For an example of how arguments aimed against Catholics were against resistance to the monarch, see John Preston, *Rogeri VViddringtoni Catholici Angli Responsio Apologetica ad Libellum Cuiusdam Doctoris Theologi* (London: Richard Field, 1612).

discussion, the king was viewed as the lynchpin in the post-reformation theology of violence. He connected the earthly hierarchy with the divine one and was the legitimate source of violence in his kingdom. When parliamentarians during the civil wars began to put forward arguments justifying their violence--violence that was apparently against the king--royalists were stunned. This looked like violence against superiors, or violence-up-the-pyramid. For royalists this was an impossibility. For such men the same hierarchy presented in the Homilies persisted, as it had done from time out of mind, wherein the king was the pinnacle of the pyramid and as a result of devolving his authority to lesser magistrates, he could not himself be judged by those whom he had vested with his God-given authority.

Violence was associated with the propriety to judge, and since the king was without a superior to judge him, violence could not be offered to him. This position, articulated in the Homilies, was supported by royalists with a number of biblical proof texts. A favourite was the example of David and Saul, in which David refused to harm Saul because he was the Lord's anointed leader. One royalist banner during the wars displayed the simple biblical quotation "Touch not mine anointed," succinctly summarising the impropriety of Parliament's efforts to use violence against the king.[29] Parliamentarians instead should remember the traditional view that "to offer violence to the Lord's anointed" source of authority was "utterly unlawful."[30] An equally pithy royalist banner had only "Romans XIII," since this was all, in their

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[29] See Ian Gentles, "The Iconography of Revolution: England, 1642-1649," in *Soldiers, Writers and Statesmen of the English Revolution*, ed. Ian Gentles, John Morrill and Blair Worden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 98.

[30] Robert Sanderson, *Sermons by the Right Reverend Father in God, Robert Sanderson* (London: Thomas Arnold, 1841), vol. 2, p. 272. Sanderson's sermon was delivered at Hampton Court in the summer of 1640.

view, which needed to be said.[31] The plain words of Romans made violent rebellion an inconceivable sin. As a result royalists had little time for those who maintained that God's words in Scripture commanded obedience only to the just commands of good magistrates, promptly retorting that Romans was written under the worst times of tyranny. "Were not the persons against whom resistance was thus strictly forbidden [in Romans], Caligula, or Claudius, or Nero's person, that abhorred, and as far as the whole power of mankind could prevail, endeavoured to destroy Christianity itself?" If such obvious heathens and tyrants could not be resisted, then it was laughable to suggest that Charles was not to be endured.[32] Even tyrants had to be obeyed, since it was to be remembered that such scourges were sent by God on account of the people's sins, and as such were just punishments.[33] Thus there were a number of reasons to obey the monarch. Such obedience not only provided a stumbling block to papists and a safe guard against anarchy, but was also divinely ordained in the sense that God had both established the hierarchy and that the king alone was endowed with the power over life and death.

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[31] Gentles, "The Iconography of Revolution," p. 98.

[32] *A Letter of Spirituall Advice* (n.p., 1643), p. 7. The anonymous author makes the familiar point that such verses were written "at a time when the world was governed by such prodigious tyrants" that it was "as if God intended thereby to cut off all imaginable pretences of disobedience forever" (p. 6). Cf. John Maxwell, *Sacro-Sancta Regum Majestas, Or, The Sacred and Royall Prerogative of Christian Kings* (Oxford: s.n., 1644), p. 32.

[33] The striking persistence of the idea that those in power must be obeyed irrespective of their propriety is testified to by the number of parliamentarians who used this very argument to advocate obedience to the regimes which followed the civil wars. For example, Francis Rous, in his *The Lavvfulness of Obeying the Present Government* (London: John Wright, 1649), used Romans 13 to argue that "though the change of a government were believed not to be lawful, yet it may be lawfully obeyed" (sigA2). Rous intentionally argued against the "two bodies" idea that the person and not the office can be resisted, saying that "so that he [Paul, in Romans] speaks of persons ruling, as well as of the power by which they rule" (p. 2). Rous also pointed out, as his royalist predecessors had done, that Romans "was written in the time of Claudius Caesar, or Nero," both of whom came to power through dubious means and were tyrants, yet nevertheless were to be obeyed (p. 2ff). Such texts demonstrate the currency of theological arguments for obedience stemming from Romans.

At the time of the civil wars even staunch royalists conceded that the power to kill came from God. One of Stephen Marshall's critics in the controversy surrounding his behaviour at Edgehill demonstrated the logic that the power possessed by the king was the authority to use violence.[34] He asked Marshall to consider the divine aspects of the king's authority referred to by St. Paul's words, that is, those aspects of magisterial authority which were conferred by God. He knew that no one in seventeenth-century England denied either that magistrates had a right to put criminals to death, or that the power over life was something which no individual innately possessed. He explained that the king, as God's vice-regent, had the authority "to exercise some acts, which not the consent of all men in the world have the right to invest him with. For he bears the sword, that is, the power over life and death." The anonymous author asked rhetorically if any one had "power over his own life, to relinquish at his pleasure?" The answer, the inquirer knew, was certainly negative, since a positive response would mean that suicide would be licit. No individual possessed the right to suicide and as such could not give that right to the king, so the king had to receive the authority for violence from God. The anonymous author continued, "and it being sure he hath not, can he communicate to another the disposition of his own life (over which no man but God only, or they to whom God

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[34] Writers such as Henry Hammond, another of Marshall's outspoken critics, explained that the power over life and death was the single unique power which God had to bestow on government. Hammond knew (and believed that all "rational person[s]" concurred) that there was never "any man . . . by God or nature invested with power of his own life; I mean with power to take away his own life, or to kill himself . . . In every thing else man may be believed to have a power over himself, over his body, to cut or lance it . . . and particularly over that freedom which naturally belongs to him . . . But for power over a man's own life, no man can be believed to be born with it, for if he were, he might then as lawfully kill himself (and if he might do it lawfully, there are many cases which might make it prudent for him to do it at some times)," *To the Right Honourable, the Lord Fairfax, and His Councell of Warre* (London: Richard Royston, 1649), p. 9, cf. p. 10. For Hammond's belief that few contemporaries in the period doubted that the magistrate could kill and that this power came from God, see also *Of Resisting the Lavvfull Magistrate under Colour of Religion* (London: s.n., 1647), pp. 36, 40.

delegates His power have authority?)." Again, the answer could only be negative, particularly since there was not "any example of capital punishment in the world exercised by any, till God gave that power" in Genesis 9:5-6. Before that time, violence was not a legitimate form of punishment. For that reason Cain could not be killed, though he deserved it. So, even while the people might choose the person of the king, or their form of government--as Israel did against better judgement--it was God who gave the superior the power to kill.[35] The critic accused Marshall of being a poor minister on two accounts. Not only was it inappropriate for him to participate in the battle of Edgehill, but Marshall's theology was deficient as well, since he failed to understand fully the implications of the divine nature of the power over life and death which God had given to the king.[36]

From the other side of the border the Scottish Bishop John Maxwell held a similar view of the divine power of the magistrate. For Maxwell, violence was the heart of the matter of authority. He explained that at least one aspect of the sovereign power had to be bestowed by God, and that was the power over life and death, "which cannot flow or issue from man, for no man has it." Such sovereignty was established in Genesis chapter 9, where in verse 6 "it is added, *who so sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed again: for in the image of God made He man.* Here is the institution of sovereignty, and there the sovereign is invested as God's deputy to punish the slayer of man by death." The king's divine authority was the authority to use violence. No private individual, Maxwell maintained,

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[35] The example of the Israelites choosing a king, and God then giving him power, was widely used, and even expressed in a similar form by James VI & I, see *The Political Works of James I*, ed. C. H. McIlwain (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1918), p. 59.
[36] *A Letter of Spirituall Advice*, p. 6, cf. John Jones (?), *Christus Dei, the Lords Annoynted, Or, A Theologicall Discourse* (Oxford: printed by His Maiesties command, 1643), p. 9.

> is invested with this power . . . God only has the power of man's life. No man has power over his own life. Who so takes away the life of man, in God's justice and ordinance, his life is to be taken away again. This principally and properly belongs to God . . . but God has given this to some deputies . . . if this power over life be from God, why not all sovereign power?, seeing it is homogeneous . . . a thing indivisible in its nature.[37]

While Maxwell wrote on behalf of the king's cause, the view that the power over life and death was given by God did not make one a royalist. Indeed, it did not even necessarily make one a monarchist, since in any form of government the authority for violence had to come from the divine. Parliamentarians expressed this view as regularly as royalists. Strong supporters of Parliament, such as Stephen Marshall, concurred in believing that God was the Lord of "life and death," and also that "among the divers kinds of lawful governments, *Monarchy, Aristocracy,* and *Democracy*, no one of them is so appointed of God as to exclude the others from being in a lawful government."[38] Here he was in agreement with Calvin, who would

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[37] Maxwell, *Sacro-Sancta*, pp. 49-52. The verse from Genesis 9:6 ("whoso sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed"), often seen by historians in association with Charles's bloodguilt, was in fact considered by many contemporaries as a proof text that provided power to kings and allowed for the establishment of civil government, not only in the period (e.g., *Christus Dei,* p. 9; *Letter of Spirituall Advice,* p. 6; Ferne, *Conscience Satisfied: That There Is No Warrant for the Armes Now Taken up by Subjects* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1643), p. 8; the Maxwell quoted here, etc.) but also among the Continental Reformers. See, for example, Luther's "Lectures on Genesis," in *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), vol. 2, p. 140. For Maxwell and others who argued in this way, see John Sanderson, *'But the People's Creatures': The Philosophical Basis of the English Civil War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), chpts. 2 and 3; idem, "Who Could Kill in 1642?" Strathclyde Papers on Government and Politics no. 9 (Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 1983).

[38] Marshall, *A Plea for Defensive Armes* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1643), pp. 3, 8, 28; cf. idem, *Reformation and Desolation Reformation and Desolation . . . Preached to the . . . House of Commons at Their Late Solemne Fast, Decemb. 22. 1641* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1642), p. 38; cf. Charles Herle, *A Fuller Ansvvwer to a Treatise VVritten by Doctor Ferne* (London: Iohn Bartlet, 1642), pp. 4-5 (throughout the "29 Decemb" version of this text is cited, which has slightly different pagination from a version that appeared a week later); Henry Parker, *Jus Populi, Or, A Discourse Wherein Clear Satisfaction is Given, As Well Concerning the Right of Subjects As the Right of Princes* (London: Robert Bostock, 1644), p. 5. The acceptance by Marshall, and others of his "puritan" brethren, of the Aristotelian idea of a variety of legitimate forms of government gives the lie to the assumption that "puritans," in their rigidity, envisioned only one divinely prescribed form of

perhaps object only to Marshall's presumptuousness in debating the topic; not the conclusions he drew. Many royalists agreed that there was not a single type of lawful government,[39] although many, nevertheless believed that monarchy was most preferable--particularly since it closely mirrored the government of heaven.[40] The power over life and death was seen as a divine endowment upon governments irrespective of both the form of government (i.e., if it was a monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy) and the origination of the government (i.e., if it came about through election, conquest, or inheritance). This was the divine aspect which was constant across all forms of government, whether an elected aristocracy or a monarchy by conquest.[41]

Richard Tuck has noted the importance of the view that God alone held the power over life and death among the members of the group of philosophers associated with Lord Falkland, known as the Tew Circle.[42] But as both Marshall and

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legitimate government, for which see John S. Marshall, *Hooker and the Anglican Tradition* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1963), chpt. 12.

[39] A group of royalist writers responding to Henry Parker's *Observations* in 1642 noted that the divine power enabled aristocratic as well as democratic governments to exist, and, if not, then "their execution of judgement would be sin, and while they punish, they would commit murder," *An Answer to a Printed Booke, Intituled, Observations upon Some of His Maiesties Late Answers and Expresses* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1642), p. 3.

[40] While Ferne accepted other forms of government, monarchy was clearly superior, since it was the first form of government and directly from God. Aristocracy and democracy, on the other hand, were of human invention and just sort of deviant forms, see *Conscience Satisfied,* pp. 8-9.

[41] If the line of argument being developed here is correct, it would confirm the position of scholars who maintain that talk of monarchy holding divine power was far from new by the mid-seventeenth century in England, but the idea that violence was the central right which could only come to the magistrate from God would suggest the necessity of a revision of the assumption that the widespread acceptance of the divine qualities of authority indicated nothing specific. J. W. Allen has argued that belief in the divine qualities of the king "implied no particular belief as to the extent of the king's rights in England or elsewhere," *English Political Thought, 1603-1660* (London: Methuen, 1938), p. 97. Conrad Russell has followed Allen in this position in "Divine Rights in the Early Seventeenth Century," in *Public Duty and Private Conscience in Seventeenth-century England*, ed. John Morrill, Paul Slack, D. R. Woolf and G. E. Aylmer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 101-20.

[42] Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), chpt. 5. For a critique of Tuck's discussion of Tew, see Perez Zagorin, "Clarendon and Hobbes," *Journal of Modern History* 57, no. 4 (1985), pp. 593-616.

his anonymous critic demonstrate, this idea was widely accepted beyond the rarefied quadrangles of Oxford, although it can be argued that it was expressed there with greater eloquence and consistency.[43] Perhaps the best known of the Oxford theologians during the crisis of the civil wars was Henry Ferne, who echoed in a more rarefied way the comments of Marshall's impassioned critic. Whether a government was formed by election or not, it did not alter the fact that the authority over life and death came from God. Ferne explained that even if the debatable contention that the people in the first instance elected their monarch was granted, it still did not follow that the king's power to use violence came from the people, since they could not confer upon the monarch in election a power which they did not possess. Ferne wondered how the "people hav[ing] not of themselves, out of government, the main power, the power of life and death, how can they give it either for government, or reserve it for resistance?"[44]

Henry Hammond concurred, explaining, "though the regal power were confest to be first given by the people, yet the power of the sword, wherewith regality is endowed, would be a superaddition of God's."[45] In the late 1640s, Hammond revisited this idea, and pointed out that whether the people created the government or

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[43] J. P. Sommerville notes that "a common place idea in medieval and early modern Europe was that the life of a man is not his own to do with as he sees fit," *Thomas Hobbes: Political Ideas in Historical Context* (London: Macmillan, 1992), p. 33. Sommerville supports his comment with reference to Clarendon's position in his refutation of Hobbes in 1676. A generation earlier, Hyde had expressed the same view, maintaining that all people (indeed even angels)--even in the state of nature or heaven--are "under the commandment, *thou shall not kill* . . . And they cannot by any authority of their own, warrant any man to take away another's life . . . Only God . . . can authorise in these cases: and he gives authority to kings and other supreme magistrates," in Edward Hyde, *Transcendent and Multiplied Rebellion and Treason* (Oxford: s.n., 1645), sigA2.

[44] Ferne, *A Reply unto Severall Treatises Pleading for the Armes Now Taken up by Subjects in the Pretended Defence of Religion and Liberty* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1643), pp. 41-2; idem, *Conscience Satisfied*, p. 65. For a concise analysis of some of the relevant ideas of Ferne, see John M. Wallace, *Destiny His Choice: The Loyalism of Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), chpt. 1.

[45] Hammond, *Of Resisting*, p. 36.

God did it directly, the authority of the government over life and death *had* to come from God. Hammond explained that the origin "of government in any particular place cannot be imagined to be by any more than two ways" established; "either God's designment, or the people's act . . . in either of those two cases 'tis God only, and not the people, that gives the power of the sword, the power of life, to the governor." In the first case it was clear that it was God who gave the governor the authority, and in the second "when the community of people . . . choose one of themselves, or more to rule over them; 'tis clear, they do not invest him with more power than themselves had," but this power comes from God.[46]

Dudley Digges might have proved one of the most important royalist thinkers had he not succumbed to the plague in Oxford in 1643. He agreed with men such as Marshall in seeing the form of government as malleable. Furthermore, he argued that consent was actually required for the establishment of governments before authorised violence could exist. In other words, the people had to come together and consent to a type of government, and then God endowed it with the power over life and death directly.[47] For John Bramhall, an English bishop in Ireland, it was also the consent of the people that shaped the government, but God gave it power. "God is the principal agent, man the instrumental . . . the essence of power is always from God."[48]

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[46] Hammond, *To the Right Honourable, the Lord Fairfax, and His Councell of Warre*, p. 10.
[47] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes against Their Soveraigne in What Case Soever* (Oxford: s.n., 1643), pp. 29, 33-4, 62-3. For a sustained treatment of Digges, see J. W. Allen, *English Political Thought,* pt. 7; John Sanderson, *'But the People's Creatures,'* chpt. 3. While the present analysis comes to different conclusions, it will be evident that it is deeply indebted to both. Additionally, see Margaret A. Judson, *The Crisis of the Constitution: An Essay in Constitutional and Political Thought in England, 1603-1645* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1949).
[48] This particularly was the case in terms of government because "the people could not give what they never had, that is, power of life and death," *Serpent-Salve* in *The Works of. . . John Bramhall*, ed. J. Vesey (Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1842-5), vol. 3, p. 318, cf. pp. 319-20. For Bramhall, see J. W. Daly,

Similarly, Hammond maintained that it was only with regard to life and death that God was needed to intervene in this way and provide for a want of authority.[49]

Digges saw such intervention in other events as well. Marriage for example provided such an instance and also could serve as a model for the way in which governments were made. Just as the origination of a government could involve choice, so too could a marriage, but when the two parties came together to make vows to each other there was also a third party involved, the Divine, which provided the ordinance and authority: "Consent therefore joined man and wife, king and people, but divine ordinance continues this union," wrote Digges. Both marriages and governments were empowered or "ratified" by God in heaven.[50] Governments, like marriages, could be derived from consent, and in both cases, such consent opened the way for "a larger commission from God" than would be possible if the union was formed only by an exchange of individual rights.[51]

Samuel Rutherford provides another example of this line of thought. Rutherford held similar views of government, at least in terms of the theology of violence, as Marshall and Digges. Rutherford based his idea of the origin of government on Scripture, which was supported and supplemented by reason. As in the Homilies and Calvin, it was the sinfulness of humanity that necessitated

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"John Bramhall and the Theoretical Problems of Royalist Moderation," *Journal of British Studies* 11, no. 1 (1971), pp. 26-44.

[49] Hammond, *To the Right Honourable, the Lord Fairfax, and His Councell of Warre*, p. 11.

[50] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, pp. 112-3, cf. p. 17. John Maxwell compared the bestowal to baptism as well as to ordination: "or as in sacred orders, the designation of the person is from men and a human act; but the endowment with supernatural power . . . is immediately from God and Christ," *Sacro-Sancta*, p. 22.

[51] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, p. 77. Stephen Marshall likewise picked up the analogy of marriage, but argued that just as a wife could defend her life from the violence of her husband, so too could a people defend their lives from a king, see his *Plea*, p. 17. Likewise, Henry Parker acknowledged that "in matrimony there is something divine," but was insistent that "the divine institution" did not mean that there was "no human consent," *Jus Populi*, p. 4.

government, something which God recognised and provided for.[52] For while people came together and by consent created the type of government (from the usual three choices of aristocracy, monarchy and democracy), and designed the person or persons who would assume the offices, Rutherford was insistent that the power and authority came from God--a fact for which he found evidence, like Digges, in Romans 13. Rutherford even began his famous *Lex, Rex* with this point and it can be seen as his first principle. Fundamentally, the "power of government in general must be from God," as evidenced in the royalists' banner verses from Romans. Rutherford pointed out that both human and divine agents were required to create a government. God's power could not be devolved on a government until the people had formed it. While "all civil power is immediately from God in its root," Rutherford maintained "this or that definite power is mediately from God, proceeding from God by mediation of the consent of the community, which resigns their power to one or more rulers."[53] For Rutherford, as for his royalist opponents, God was not absent from government, even elected ones, for God was required to provide the authority for violence. "God ordained the power."[54]

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[52] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex: The Law and the Prince* (London: Iohn Field, 1644), pp. 8, 142. The most comprehensive account of the thought of Rutherford is to be found in John Coffey, *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). For Coffey's discussion of Rutherford's theory of government, see pp. 158-63. I am grateful to Dr. Coffey for our communications.

[53] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, pp. 1-2, 5, 146, *passim*. This view was expressed by a number of parliamentarian theorists, see, for example, *Maximes Unfolded viz.1. The Election and Succession of the Kings of England Are with the Consent of the People* . . . (London: s.n., 1643), p. 11.

[54] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, p. 9. On most of these points Rutherford was not as far from Maxwell (to whom he wrote in response) as he would have liked--see Maxwell's *Sacro-Sancta*, pp. 22-3--excepting that Rutherford saw this power as "mediated" while Maxwell described it as "immediate." While this distinction had undeniable political ramifications, it was not necessarily as significant a difference as assumed. Furthermore, it is interesting to note the unforeseen irony in some of Rutherford's criticisms of Maxwell's royalist theory of politics. Rutherford accused Maxwell of being heretical, for Maxwell had kings directly and divinely appointed rather than established through human channels. Ironically, by the end of the decade the faction aligned against the king would claim to know the mind of God

The Limits of Obedience

The State of Nature

Despite the wide agreement concerning the divine nature of violence and the prevalence in the period of a hierarchical worldview, there were limits to obedience and the restrictions placed on violence. It is easy to see in the arguments detailed above an idea that the individual in society completely relinquishes his or her ability to use violence. But this would be a misunderstanding. The most important form of force the individual retained was the ability to defend him or herself. A brief examination of royalist ideas concerning the state of nature and self defence will demonstrate that this was an opinion held even by those theologians who supported the king's cause.

Royalists such as Digges and parliamentarians, such as Marshall, frustrate modern systematic philosophers in their refusal to derive positions from a single source of first principles, often jumbling together (with equal weight) arguments from Scripture, law, experience, and reason. Such authors can perhaps be forgiven when it is remembered that their works were not written for the sake of future generations, but rather for immediate polemical purposes and were often concerned with

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from direct manifestations. Likewise, Rutherford believed that Maxwell's Arminianism blinded him to the way in which God was the ultimate initiator of all things (yet working through secondary causes), while as early as 1642 royalists were employing rigid predestinarian proofs in defence of the person of the king. The clearest expression of this position can be found in an anonymous tract titled *Reasons Why This Kingdom . . . and Especially Such as Hould Predestination Ought to Adhere to Their Kings, whether Good or Bad* (York: Stephen Bulkley, 1642). The author combined both New and Old Testament writings to prove the divine and predestined nature of the king, not just in office, but also in his actual person. Nevertheless, for Rutherford, like Stephen Marshall before him, it was important that "no man comes out of the womb with a diadem on his head," *Lex, Rex,* p. 10. See also Marshall, *Plea,* p. 8; *The Unlimited Prerogative of Kings Subverted, Or, A Short Treatise Grounded upon Scripture and Reason, to Prove That Kings Ought As Well As Others to Bee Accountable for Their Actions* (London: s.n., 1642), p. 15; Coffey, *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions*, pp. 59, 162-3.

responding to the specifics in their opponents' texts. If Digges did have a starting point, however, it was in Scripture, but he believed that Scripture was supported by reason and natural law. Starting from Scripture, it was clear a divine law order that *thou shall not kill*, but like the other Commandments, this was also a natural law. Thus, when he turned to arguments about the origins of government based on reason, the right to kill was absent from Digges's state of nature. Therefore, it would be a misreading of Digges, and those of similar ilk, to say that for such writers the problem in the state of nature was that humans had a *right* to violence. For Digges the state of nature was plagued by a multiplicity of rightful wills and desires, not rightful violence. Essentially, people could obey whomever they wanted and block the liberty of anyone they chose. While related to force, this ability to block the liberty of others was not equivalent to or dependent on force. Even the strongest person still had anxiety that through craft, less powerful persons could deprive them of their liberty.[55]

If any person was *able* in the state of nature to prevent another's enjoyment of his or her liberties, then there was no impediment to doing so. But this did not mean that because people had the *ability* in the state of nature to kill each other (or themselves) that they had a *right* to do so. Digges never denied that in nature, or under government, people had the ability to kill each other or themselves, but the laws of nature still applied and to do so was a violation of them. That people killed was not an empirical proof of a right; rather, it was a testament to the fallen state of humanity. Indeed, few argued that because humans did kill they thus had a right to do so (either in a theoretical state of nature or under any form of government, even a

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[55] Digges, *The Vnlawfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, pp. 2-3, 47.

non-Christian government).[56] Thomas Hobbes, in this instance, was a notable exception. He agreed with men like Digges that the power to kill was not something given to the sovereign by the people, but he differed from Digges in saying that the sovereign (like all people) already had this right in the state of nature as part of the right to seek all that tended towards self preservation.[57]

Yet, if the creation of government was seen as occurring contractually, and most royalists agreed that individuals did not have the authority to use violence in the state of nature (and thus could not contract it away), what right was it that was being given up in order to bring order out of chaos? At first it would be easy to assume that the right which was being given up was self defence. But even Thomas Hobbes, the most draconian of contractual theorists, did not argue that the individual surrender absolutely the right to self defence. As noted, for Digges, the problem of a state of nature was that of a plurality of wills, and since there was no natural way to maintain such liberty (and diversity) and at the same time cure the ills it evoked, the result was to form one will, that is, one rule. In other words, what was given up was the right to act as one's own judge and instead to give obedience to those who were established in power.[58]

The right of self defence was not abandoned absolutely in order to create governments. Rather, it was a narrow form of force, namely, the specific act of using

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[56]As a result, those who see Digges as positing an unlimited freedom in the state of nature (e.g., Sanderson, Sommerville, Tuck, etc.) are conflating the idea of unlimited ability with unlimited right.
[57] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985), chpt. 14, p. 191. Hobbes is seen as having an amoral state of nature in which all is permitted that provides for the perseverance of life. By looking at Hobbes's thought concerning violence it is possible to provide a simplified explanation for his divergence from men along the spectrum of Digges to Rutherford. It is also easier to see how both sides of the spectrum could accuse him of atheism! Cf. Norberto Bobbio, *Thomas Hobbes and the Natural Law Tradition*, trans. Daniela Gobetti (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1993), chpt. 4.
[58] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, p. 4, *passim*.

force against authorised superiors, or what this thesis has referred to as "violence up-the-pyramid." The power over life and death, which was never possessed, could not be alienated, and the use of force was only abandoned with regard to those in authority. To clarify this point a distinction can be made between the violence of the judge and the violence of a thief in the night. Once society was established, according to Digges, one had the duty not to resist the former, but as in the state of nature the duty to resist the latter remained. Digges granted that humans were constituted in a way that meant they had to defend themselves from immediate attack. He acknowledged that if mistakenly attacked, or set upon by a lunatic, "I am no more bound naturally to give up my life to madness or error, then to the ravenous fury of wolves or lions." But an attack out of madness was different from the authority for violence found in superiors within the established hierarchy. Digges averred, essentially, that in forming society the individual agreed to no longer be his own judge. The creation of government meant that violence was now to be regulated by the hierarchy and could not be used by inferiors against superiors. Digges was not arguing that individuals had to submit to the "ravenous fury of wolves," but rather to superiors. He explained this in a way which crystallised the hierarchical view found in the Homilies by arguing that it was impossible that the king could be judged or punished by his inferiors:

> it is not lawful for any that are under them to make resistance; as a private man may not oppose a constable, nor a constable a justice of peace, nor he a judge. So common soldiers cannot punish a Lieutenant, except by virtue of a commission from the General . . . nor he a Colonel, nor a Colonel the General, they being but private men in reference to one above them; and so kings in monarchies . . . are not judicially accountable to any, because they are highest. Thus

> much Scripture evinces, the civil law confirms, reason suggests, and the practice of all states has embraced it.[59]

Henry Hammond highlighted the distinction being made, he explained, "the right of repelling force by force," (which differed from the right over life and death, not least because "God and nature has given" it to "the single man in community of nature") under "submission to the governor" is "parted with," but only in "*so far as it refers to the governor.*"[60] The right to use force against the thief was retained, for "we conclude not from any or all of this, that it should be always unlawful for Christians to use the sword in their just defence" for "private men might defend themselves from private invaders . . . But the resisting of the magistrate by the subject is the thing which Christ's words to Peter we undertake to show unlawful and not any other resistance . . . our case is only of resisting magistrates" and not defensive force generally.[61]

The ramifications of this position were clear and the eminent Henry Ferne was not afraid to make them explicit. For Ferne granted that if the king, in his person, suddenly attacked a citizen, then, as a thief in the night, the king could be forcefully resisted. The person being attacked could use force to preserve his or her own life, but the person could not intend to harm the king, bringing us again back to the double effect distinction of Aquinas noted in chapter two, whereby the effect intended must be to defend one's self and not to harm or kill the other.

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[59] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, pp. 4, 6, 8, 47, 63, 120, *passim.*
[60] Hammond, *A Vindication of Dr. Hammonds Addresse &c. from the Exceptions of Eutactus Philodemius, in Two Particulars. Concerning: The Power Supposed in the Jew, over His Own Freedom. The No-power over a Mans Own Life* (London: R. Royston, 1649), p. 20, emphasis added.
[61] Hammond, *Of Resisting,* pp. 79, 84.

As Ferne explained with regard to the case of Saul and David, it was not the case that David could not defend himself with force, but rather that he could not aim to use violence (i.e., the power over life and death) against the very person whom God had endowed with such authority. What was seen in the instance of Saul and David "was a mere defence without all violence offered to Saul; therefore he still gave place as Saul pursued." Ferne did not even think it worth debating the obvious and accepted maxim that "it be natural to defend a man's self" and that "personal defence is lawful . . . against sudden and illegal assaults." This was the case even if such assaults were brought by agents of the sovereign, which was to say if a judge came to arrest a person, the person must yield, but if a judge were illegally to break into a person's home and like a thief in the night try to take away the person's life, then forcible defence would be legitimate. Indeed, even the sovereign "prince himself" could be defended against, but only "thus far: to ward [off] his blows, to hold his hands, and the like." Force could be used to repel force, even against the king, in instances of "sudden and illegal assaults," but aggressive force, punishing force, could not be offered. Force in defence could be brought against the king, his hands could be held or his blows deflected.[62]

Thus, the thief in the night--with the important qualification that there was no way of calling upon the aid and authority of a constable or a judge--could always be resisted, since in the first instance to do so was not to exercise the power over life and death (again using the logic of double effect) and in the second instance *not* to do so

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[62] Ferne, *The Resolving of Conscience, upon This Question, Whether upon Such a Supposition or Case, As Is Now Usually Made . . . Subjects May Take Arms and Resist?* (Cambridge: Edward Freeman and Thomas Dunster, 1642), pp. 6-7. Ferne was insistent that in all cases "the warrant of self defence . . . tells us we must not do it by murdering others," see *Conscience Satisfied*, p. 40; cf. idem, *Reply*, p. 94; Henry Hammond's appendix critiquing Marshall, added to *Of Resisting the Lawfull Magistrate*, p. 75.

would in fact be to exercise the power over life and death, by in effect choosing to die. The prohibition on suicide went hand in hand with the idea that individuals did not have the power over life and death in the state of nature. In many ways the prohibition against suicide was the starting point for many of the arguments detailed above. Hammond was perhaps the most emphatic on this point, repeating throughout his writings that suicide was prohibited even before government was established, for "even in nature there is *Felonia de se*."[63]

The royalists' emphasis on a prohibition on suicide seemed to conflict with their argument that individuals had to yield to the judge. For in the instance of a wrongful verdict, thinkers like Digges maintained that the individual was still obligated to endure the punishment. Thus, if wrongfully accused and convicted of a capital crime, a person still could not resist the punishment, which looks like a suicidal agreement. The point here, as Tuck has taught us, is such writers maintained that in all rational probability this would not be the case, and given the odds, the risk of wrongful harm was far smaller than that of remaining without government.[64] Entering into government and constituting authority was not suicidal. What was suicidal was to stay in the state of nature, or, more urgently, to return to anarchy by violently challenging superior authority, as the parliamentarians, according to Digges, were doing.[65]

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[63] Hammond, *Of Resisting*, p. 36, cf. idem, *To the Right Honourable, the Lord Fairfax, and His Councell of Warre*; idem, *A Vindication of Dr. Hammonds Addresse*.
[64] Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories*, chpt. 3, cf. Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, pp. 6, 12, 28, 73-4, 119. Parliamentary absolutists adopted similar arguments from probability, see Judson, *The Crisis of the Constitution*, p. 432.
[65] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, pp. 6-7.

Many parliamentarian supporters echoed this line of thinking. One anonymous writer was explicit, stating "if a Court of Justice should unjustly condemn a man, he is patiently to undergo it, but if a judge or the king himself should violently set upon him to kill him, he may defend himself; for the Ordinance of God and man both is affixed to the office, and not unto the person, to the authority and not unto the will."[66] The concise words from this anonymous tract express two important ideas. First, an unjust judgement must be endured while a thief in the night could be defended against. Chapter five will discuss why parliamentarians thought they actually were confronted with a thief in the night, and thus why defensive force was permitted. What is central here is the recognition that many parliamentarians agreed that they could not challenge the divine authority of the magistrate, and actively claimed that they were not doing so. In addition to the distinction between the judge and the thief in the night, the second point made by the anonymous author was a distinction between the *person* and *authority* of the magistrate's office. This distinction facilitated parliamentarians' argument that they were not resisting authority and demonstrates the broad consensus that the authority of the king's office, in terms of the use of violence, was divine.

The King's Two Bodies

"King" could have two meanings in early modern England. One meaning was the royal person, the king in his *body*, the king himself. The second meaning was the

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[66] *Touching the Fundamentall Lawes or Politique Constitution of This Kingdome . . . To Which is Annexed the Priviledge and Power of the Parliament Touching the Militia* (London: Thomas Underhill, 1643), p. 13, of the "annexed" text, which restarts at p. 10.

office of the king, or rather the authority of the king.[67] As Edmund Plowden, the Elizabethan lawyer, recorded, lawyers maintained, "the king has in him two bodies, viz. a body natural, and a body politic. His body natural (if it be considered in itself) is a body mortal . . . But his body politic is a body that cannot be seen or handled, consisting of policy and government."[68] While the one could suffer bodily ailments and die, the king, as an office endured. The God given authority remained even when the person of the king had died. This was why it could be proclaimed, "the king is dead, long live the king!"[69]

This distinction had many applications, but one of the most important was that it enabled parliamentarians to believe that in resisting the person of the king (as Charles), they were not resisting the authority of the king (i.e., his office). Jeremiah Burroughs explained, the parliamentarians "distinguish between the man that hath the power and the power of that man."[70] The king's authority was contained in his laws, adjudicated on his behalf by his judges. If the person of the king should take actions which threatened to ruin the office of the king, then, parliamentarians argued, loyal subjects should defend the office of the king, for that was where the authority was vested and where obedience was due. Parliament explained "the sooner his majesty's good subjects understand what is . . . meant by his majesty's authority signified by both Houses . . . and by his other courts . . . the sooner they will understand how little

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[67] The classic work on which is Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).
[68] Edmund Plowden, *Commentaries or Reports* (London, 1612), p. 212a, quoted in Jerah Johnson, "The Concept of the 'King's Two Bodies' in Hamlet," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 18, no. 4. (1967), pp. 430-4. Johnson points out that this understanding of the king's two bodies renders intelligible Hamlet's otherwise obtuse utterance "the body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing--" (*Hamlet* IV.2). Johnson further points out that this insight sheds light on Hamlet's own thoughts of regicide (p. 434), which reveal the tension over regicide, even with just cause.
[69] See Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, pp. 411-3.
[70] Burroughs, *A Briefe Answer to Doctor Fernes Booke* (London: s.n., 1643), p. 3.

is meant by his majesty's own authority, signified privately under his hand . . . when . . . contrary to law and common right."[71]

If the king attacked, he could be resisted with force, as a thief in the night, and as such this could be done not only in accordance with the hierarchy of authorised violence, but also in defence of the hierarchy.[72] Such actions were done not to usurp the king's power, but rather to preserve it.[73] Parliament insisted that they were not waging war against the king's authority, explaining, "the levying of forces against the personal commands of the king (though accompanied with his presence) and not against his laws and authority, but in the maintenance therefore, is not levying war against the king, but the levying of war against his laws and authority, though not against his person, is levying war against the king."[74]

Parliamentarians aimed to defend themselves from those carrying out Charles's commands; yet, they had no intention of harming either Charles or the office of monarchy. The ultimate statement of this logic was found in the Solemn League and Covenant, subscribed by members of the House of Commons in September 1643. The stated aim of the covenant was to defend not only the authority of the king, but also the king's person, as noted in the phrase "and to preserve and defend the King's Majesty's person and authority." The idea was not only that Parliament was preserving the kingdom by resisting illegal assaults, but also that the

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[71] *A Remonstrance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament, Or, The Reply of Both Houses, to a Printed Booke under His Majesties Name* (London: R. B. and R. L., 1642), sig. D3.
[72] J. H., Souldier, *A Remonstrance to the Kingdome, Or, An Appeale to Conscience, As Thou Wilt Answer It at the Dreadful Day of Judgement, Whether It Be Lawfull to Take up Arms? &c.* (London: Thomas Watson, 1643), pp. 1-5.
[73] Peter Bland, *Resolved upon the Question: Or a Question Resolved Concerning the Right Which the King Hath to Hull or Any Other Fort or Place of Strength for the Defence of the Kingdome* (London: Matthew Walbancke, 1642), p. 7.
[74] *A Remonstrance of the Lords and Commons Assembled*, sig. D4-sig. D5.

king was captured and in need of rescue.[75] These were exceptional conditions: the kingdom was on the point of dissolving; the person of the king had been seduced into taking illegal actions; a clear and present threat of force had been verified; and the king had refused to address the petitions and pleas of subjects. Parliament was thus allowed to take extraordinary actions in the face of an immediate crisis.

As the Solemn League and Covenant demonstrates, while relying on the two bodies distinction, most parliamentarians did not go so far as to argue at the start of the conflict that Charles was intentionally seeking to destroy the office of the king (and by extension, the kingdom itself). That realisation would not come until later. In the opening stages it was believed that the king had been surrounded by evil councillors, malicious papists, who had deluded and then finally abducted him. Force was needed to rescue the king, not punish him. Yet force was also needed to defend individual lives, since the king's evil counsellors had been able to advance their devilish plan so far that individuals' personal safety was at risk.

Parliamentarians were convinced that they faced a clear and present danger of attack. The attempt on the five members was the climax of a process of trying to destroy the government and people of England, which was the intent of the king's malignant counsellors. Indeed, Parliament declared that the king's evil counsellors had been responsible for launching an "offensive war" against the Scots in the Bishops' Wars, and as a result, the Scottish self defence was declared no rebellion.[76]

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[75] *The Stuart Constitution, 1603-1688: Documents and Commentary*, ed. J. P. Kenyon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 264.

[76] From the "Articles of Impeachment against Strafford, 28 January 1641" in Kenyon, *Stuart Constitution*, p. 208. For an example of the paranoia, the rhetoric of a defensive war, and evil counsellors deluding and abducting the king, see Herbert Palmer, *The Necessity and Encouragement, of Utmost Venturing for the Churches Help* (London: John Bellamie, 1643), pp. 10-2.

Arguments for defensive force, a division between the king and his authority and the idea of evil councillors all overlapped, yet each seemed to reinforce the other while independently offering authorisation for violence.

Royalists were critical of such arguments. They largely rejected the two bodies distinction and found little to support allegations of wicked councillors or a deluded king. Indeed, they sensed plots within the Houses of Parliament rather than at Court. Arguments for defensive force, while accepted by royalists, had in their view been misapplied by parliamentarians. Henry Ferne, who had explained when the king's hands could be held, went into to print to defend his statements against their misappropriation. He claimed he was not an absolutist, since he believed that the king was limited by laws (as to how far subjects should obey) and in conscience (as to how he should conduct the affairs of the kingdom). Yet, Ferne was insistent that the king was above judgement. The king was at the top of the pyramid and as such aggressive force, punishing force, could not be used against him. Ferne explained: "It was never my intent (nor was, I suppose, of other divines) to plead for absoluteness of power in the king, if by absoluteness of power be meant (as it should be) a power of arbitrary command." Yet, Ferne continued, "if by absoluteness of power [is meant] a power not to be resisted or constrained by force of arms raised by subjects, such a power we plead for, and do say, that as those places . . . of Scripture did forbid resistance then, and show, no warrant for it can be had either by precept of example out of Gods word, so do they condemn resistance in this government, though limited."[77]

Ferne went on to address specifically the argument put forward in *A Treatise of Monarchie*. He explained that Philip Hunton, like other parliamentarians, had

[77] Ferne, *Reply*, p. 12.

confused the legal limits which constrained the extent to which the king could compel his subjects, and the power over life and death, which the subjects could not use to compel the king. In Ferne's opinion, Hunton's description of a limited monarchy was one drawn not from considerations of "force or resistance, but of law to set bounds to the monarch's will . . . so that the restraint of a limited monarch is legal and moral, not forcible and military."[78]

Stephen Marshall agreed with Ferne that the law determined the limit of the subject's obligation. But he also believed, like Ferne, that when attacked, the subject could defend him or herself. Defence was Parliament's aim, and parliamentarians were persistent in their efforts to explain that they had no intention of harming the king or damaging the institution of monarchy. "No man pleads that any David should kill the Lord's anointed," Marshall argued in exasperation. Rather, like David, the parliamentarians aimed to use force only in defence. For Marshall the parliamentarians were the true royalists, since they aimed to preserve monarchy and rescue the king. Who could deny, Marshall wondered, that force was permitted to wrest the sword from the hand of a deranged father or prince, who in his confusion was about to commit suicide? Marshall's point was that force was allowed in the first instance because the actions were defensive. Second, they were not a challenge to the king's authority or position, but rather, an effort to save the king and the kingdom.[79]

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[78] Ferne, *Reply*, p. 93. Hunton's classic text was published as *A Treatise of Monarchie, Containing Two Parts . . . by an Earnest Desirer of His Countries Peace* (London: John Bellamy and Ralph Smith, 1643). Throughout this discussion, the version of the text reissued during the Glorious Revolution, *A Treatise of Monarchy Containing Two Parts* (London: Richard Baldwin, 1689), which has similar pagination to the earlier edition, is cited.

[79] Marshall, *Plea*, pp. 4, 9, 13. Similarly, Rutherford explained, "let not the royalist infer, that I am . . . pleading for the killing of kings, for lawful resistance is one thing, and killing of kings is another: the one defensive and lawful, the other offensive and unlawful," *Lex, Rex*, p. 273.

Just as Ferne's rejection of the two bodies distinction did not make him an absolutist, so too Marshall's use of the distinction did not make him any more or less of a revolutionary. If anything, Marshall's arguments demonstrate that he was more a pragmatic Bilson-ist than a proponent of a radical resistance theory. The influential bishop Thomas Bilson had died well before the wars, but many in the 1640s looked to his *The True Difference Betweene Christian Subjection and Unchristian Rebellion* (1585) for guidance amidst the turmoil.[80] Bilson, like Marshall and his colleagues, was a strong advocate for obedience, as he shared the hierarchical worldview detailed above. While Bilson emphasised in detail the duty of obedience, he explained that if a monarch was about to surrender a kingdom to foreigners--as many in the 1640s feared Charles, with his Arminian bishops, French Catholic queen and Irish rebels was prepared to do--then force was permitted. As the modern re-coverer of Bilson-ism has explained, "this was not a theory of resistance, but common sense."[81]

Marshall acknowledged that "since the Reformation, England was never put to it" as its Protestant brethren in Europe had, but there were still authoritative English sources (even bishops) who had taught the legitimacy of defensive force, "that religion binds [Protestants] not to give their throats to be cut," and that "the inferior magistrates might at some time resist the superior," for which he cited Bilson

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[80] Those snippets of this work that were most important to parliamentarians (predictably, from the third section of *Christian Subjection*) were republished in *A Discourse upon Questions . . . between the King and Parliament. With Certaine Observations Collected out of a Treatise Called, The Difference between Christian Subjection, and Unchristian Rebellion* (London: s.n., 1643), crucially, the pamphlet quoted Bilson's comment that it is when monarchs use violence ("force") against their subjects, in contradiction to the law, that resistance was possible by public persons (pp. 15-6), cf. Marshall, *Plea*, p. 11. This is not, of course, to draw a contrast between Bilson and Calvinism. Indeed, Herbert Foster viewed Bilson as a crucial conduit of "Calvinist resistance" in his article "International Calvinism through Locke and the Revolution of 1688," *The American Historical Review* 32, no. 3 (1927), p. 478.

[81] William M. Lamont, *Richard Baxter and the Millennium: Protestant Imperialism and the English Revolution* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), p. 94, for Bilson-ism, see chpt. 2 particularly. See also idem, "The Rise and Fall of Bishop Bilson," *Journal of British Studies* 5, no. 2 (1966), pp. 22-32.

as support. If the kingdom and its people were on the edge of ruin, it was the responsibility of Parliament to make provisions for defence and maintenance.[82]

Marshall's colleague, Francis Cheynell was more direct, asking: "To what end should we waste time about a discourse of Hull and the Militia? Come, speak to the point. If a king of Protestant profession should give his strength and power to his Queen, a papist, and she give it to the Jesuits, to the Beast, it is neither rebellion nor treason to fight for the king, to recover his power out of the hand of the Beast." For Cheynell, the king had been taken away by bloodthirsty papists bent on the destruction of the kingdom. There was little time, nor was there the need to debate about whether defensive force was needed.[83]

While versions of the two bodies distinction could be found in sections of Bilson, similar arguments were not necessarily based on the distinction, but nevertheless relied on the double effect idea that force was not necessarily the power over life and death. Henry Parker, the infamous advocate of parliamentarian sovereignty, illustrates this position. While he saw the power over life and death as divine, he maintained the way in which royalists used this doctrine implied monarchy was the only legitimate form of government. Parker's misinterpretation of the position of royalists such as Digges led him to argue that in the absence of government, in an "interregnum," people would still have the authority to bring criminals to trial and punish them.[84] Despite this difference, Parker argued, like

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[82] Marshall, *Plea*, p. 11. The argument for inferior magistrates, a central aspect of Calvinist resistance theory, was perhaps best employed by Rutherford, who maintained specifically that God gave the power over life and death to inferior magistrates as well as the superior, see *Lex, Rex*, pp. 30-1, 49, 372, *passim*.

[83] Cheynell, *Sions Memento, and Gods Alarum* (London: Samuel Gellilbrand, 1643), p. 10.

[84] Parker, *Jus Populi*, pp. 10-1. Parker weakly tried to claim the example of Cain in support of this position. Henry Hammond, for example, argued that at the dissolution of government the power of the

Digges and Rutherford, that a government could be formed by the consent of the people and then God subsequently "confirm[ed]" or "establishe[d]" it.[85] It was consent which shaped the offices which would have coercive power. God then ratified such governments.[86]

In monarchies, Parker attributed to the king a special status, seeing him, personally, as certainly above religious judgement and it "is the same in matters of law; the king is not questionable, or responsible, for personal crimes." The king was not unlimited: he could be judged, by Parliament or by prelates, but not personally punished.[87] This was a point to which Parker returned in his discussion of the contested example of David and Saul, where he adopted an argument very similar to Ferne's. While it was true that the intent to kill Saul was prohibited, Saul's presence

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sword would revert back to God, see *To the Right Honourable, the Lord Fairfax, and His Councell of Warre*, p. 12. Much has been made of Parker's difference from contemporaries on this point. Richard Tuck has explained that "Parker's simple case was that the power to force deviants to obey . . . was not a power which the magistrate as an individual possessed: it merely represented the consent of the rest of the population to exercise such coercive force," *Historical Journal* 17, no. 1 (1974), p. 50, for which Tuck cites Parker's *True Grounds of Ecclesiasticall Regiment* (London: Robert Bostock, 1641), pp. 24-5, where Parker says that "the supreme civil magistrate has this power grounded upon the common consent of mankind." Too much can be made of this and Parker's writings do not appear to support all of Tuck's summary. Parker believed government was created by the people, "grounded upon the common consent," but in the same discussion Parker noted that it was "God" who had "invested His true lieutenants on earth" with this "binding power" (p. 24), so for Parker, the power over violence was still from the top down, but required the consent of the commonality. Cf. Michael Mendle, *Henry Parker and the English Civil War: The Political Thought of the Public's "Privado"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 66, which appears to follow Tuck.

[85] Parker, *Observations upon Some of His Majesties Late Answers and Expresses* (London: s.n., 1642), pp. 1-2. It is difficult to ascertain Parker's thought with regard to the question of suicide. He certainly believed that there was a natural right to self preservation, but his argument that people could try criminals even in an "interregnum" makes this ambiguous. For example, Parker explained in the *Observations* that "every man has an absolute power over himself;" yet this is a point Parker makes only to set up an analogy, and he adds, "But because no man can hate himself, this power is not dangerous" (p. 34).

[86] Parker emphasised that "we do not deny God's ordinary interposition, we only deny, that the peoples' freedom of choice, or consent is at all drowned thereby," and again, "we do not deny God's hand in the crowning of princes, we know the Scripture is express in it, and we know there is a necessity of it," *Jus Populi*, pp. 6, 12. Thus Parker, like Rutherford, maintained that kings do not derive their power directly from God, but they are not devoid of divinity. Furthermore, Parker declared that it was not necessary for kings to be absolute monarchs in order for their powers to be from God (ibid, p. 9).

[87] Parker, *A Discourse Concerning Puritans* (London: Robert Bostock, 1641), pp. 31-2, cf. p. 35.

on one side of the dispute did not automatically make the cause of the other side illicit. Using the double effect idea of defensive force, Parker explained that David was right in making preparations for defence, and if Saul "had fallen by rushing oftentime, upon defensive weapons, could that horrid guilt of his death have been imputed to any but" Saul himself? The parliamentarians' aim was to defend themselves. It was the royalists who were putting the king in harm's way, and if he were killed as a result, it was "these miscreants" surrounding the king who were to blame rather than the Parliament. Like David, Parliament's intention was to defend itself; not to harm Saul.[88]

Royalists devoted a great deal of ink to refuting Parker, as well as those who argued more directly from the two bodies distinction.[89] Royalists rejected the parliamentarian efforts to employ the two bodies distinction on two counts. In the first instance they denied that the distinction between the person and the office was tenable.[90] They recognised the dangerous and potentially anarchic ramifications of the parliamentarian position, and also detected a hypocrisy which they believed masked an *intent* to harm the king rather than to help him. In the explosive atmosphere of the

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[88] Parker, *The Contra-replicant, His Complaint to His Maiestie* (London: s.n., 1643), p. 27. Despite his reputation as one of the great resistance theorists of the time, the reading of Parker presented here is consistent with Michael Mendle's assessment that Parker "steered as far from resistance as possible; while he considered the prospect of disobedience to kings, in *Observations* Parker did not countenance the use of force against them . . . Parker's case . . . was about Parliament's independent claim to power," *Henry Parker and the English Civil War*, p. 101. While Parker might diverge somewhat from other thinkers discussed here, he began with the proposition that Parliament was under attack and also that "Antichrist does fight for the king" and "it seems very probably that Christ fights" for Parliament, Parker, *The Oath of Pacification, Or, A Forme of Religious Accomodation* (London: Robert Bostock, 1643), p. 28. For Parker, see Mendle, *Henry Parker and the English Civil War* and W. K. Jordan, *Men of Substance: A Study of the Thought of Two English Revolutionaries, Henry Parker and Henry Robinson* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1942).

[89] John Bramhall, a particularly dedicated critic of Parker, had little time for the two bodies distinction. He was confident that such semantic casuistry could not hold up to an honest examination of conscience; see *Serpent-Salve* in *Works*, vol. 3, p. 327.

[90] The distinction did not hold up to the scrutiny of Scripture according to some royalists, e.g., Maxwell, *Sacro-Sancta*, p. 32.

summer of 1642, when control over the authorised use of force was being hotly contested in the wake of the Militia Ordinance and a week after the Commission of Array, *His Majesties Answer to . . . A New Declaration of the Lords and Commons in Parliament* strongly objected to Parliament's effort to "take up arms against our person, under colour of being loving subjects to our office, and to destroy us, that they may preserve the king."[91] Conrad Russell has attributed the authorship of this proclamation to Chief Justice Bankes, who elsewhere demonstrated the logical fallacy of such a position with reference to the king by explaining "these persons have gone about subtly to distinguish between our person and our authority, as if, because our authority may be where our person is not, that therefore our person may be where our authority is not."[92] Such parliamentary efforts at sophistry had deceived many innocent people into following the Houses in the sin of rebellion.

The second important difference between the parliamentarians and the royalists on this issue distinguished between defensive and offensive force. Holding the hands of an attacker was clearly different from raising troops and organising for war. The latter was not self defence against immediate violence, but rather (at best) aggressive force offered against perceived possible oppression. If subjects had a right to wage war against the king each time they perceived themselves to be oppressed, or potentially oppressed, there would be endless anarchy and misery.[93] This was true on a number of levels. As noted in the previous chapter, within the just war tradition, the

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[91] *His Majesties Answer to a Printed Paper* (York: Robert Barker, 1642), sigA2i.
[92] *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, ed. J. F. Larkin and P. L. Hughes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), vol. 2, p. 773, quoted in Russell, *Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 158. For Russell's discussion of "two bodies" see ibid, pp. 157-60; and idem, *The Fall of the British Monarchies, 1637-1642* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), pp. 505-8, which emphasises the legal underpinnings and ramifications of this doctrine. See also, Sanderson, *'But the People's Creatures,'* chpt. 2.
[93] Henry Ferne, *Reply*, pp. 90, 94.

gathering of soldiers for war was the prerogative of the king.[94] As Dudley Digges explained, "you are not obliged to yield obedience, either contrary to divine precept, or the known laws of the realm, yet by making use of arms, you transgress that law, which disables subjects to make war without the prince's authority."[95]

Likewise, once the organisation of soldiers began, this was not defensive but offensive: "Again: personal defence may be without all offence, and does not strike at the order and power that is over us, as general resistance by arms does, which cannot be without many unjust violences, and does immediately strike at that order which is the life of a Commonwealth," Ferne explained. Preparations for war were more than deflecting blows or holding the king's fists. While immediate defence in the absence of the magistrate (or in some imaginable--but unlikely--circumstances, against the magistrate himself) was permitted, what Parliament was doing was not offering defence but attempting to wage war. But since they did not have the authority to do so, their actions were rebellious. Personal immediate self defence, according to Ferne, did not threaten the social order in the way armed resistance did. Moreover, he maintained, if parliamentarians were honest in seeking defence, then they should do it as all good subjects, by seeking redress through the established hierarchy, especially since the king had declared that he had no intent to harm Parliament or the people.[96] The right to defence was granted. Two things were denied: first, that aggressive force

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[94] The legal status of who could raise troops and under what conditions, as well as who could declare war, was, at best, muddled, see F. M. Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century, 1216-1307* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 588-9; Tuck, "'The Ancient Law of Freedom': John Selden and the Civil War," in *Reactions to the English Civil War, 1642-1649*, ed. John Morrill (London: Macmillan, 1982), *passim*. For a discussion and bibliography of some modern theories on this point, see David G. Adler, "Constitution and Presidential Warmaking," *Political Science Quarterly* 103, no. 1 (1988), pp. 1-36.

[95] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, pp. 10, 98,128; cf. Hammond, *Of Resisting*, p. 18.

[96] Ferne, *The Resolving of Conscience*, p. 8; idem, *Reply*, pp. 93-5.

(the intent to kill or punish) could be used against the authority or the person of the king; and second, that Parliament's military actions were anything like defence.[97] In the period, defence was distinguished, even by royalists, from resistance, with the latter signifying offensive violence and the former meaning only defensive force. One sought to punish or judge and the other to preserve.[98]

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[97] See Dudley Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, p. 154.
[98] E.g., Henry Hammond, *Of Resisting*, p. 1.

Chapter Four

Theologies of Resistance

Limitations in the theology of obedience could easily open the way for the construction of theologies of resistance. Parliamentarian arguments for authorised force were, however, constructed from the background detailed in the previous chapters. This background shaped the way in which they approached the question of legitimate violence. This chapter is concerned with the nature of some of these theologies of resistance and explores them through a three-fold division, looking at natural law, positive law, and divine law. Central to each was the theology of violence.

Natural Law

Self Defence

The previous chapter demonstrated how parliamentarians believed that they were not offering violence (but only defence) and not against the king (at least, not the office of the king, or the institution of monarchy). Classic resistance theory was absent because in many ways it was considered unnecessary. Defence and preservation were the goals, not "regime change" or revolution. In order to understand how parliamentarians believed defensive force was legitimately authorised, it is important to recognise the foundations upon which a right (if not a

duty) to act in defence were grounded. The above discussion indicated that many royalist theologians who speculated about a state of nature before the establishment of government posited that even in such a condition there was a negative law against suicide, that is, "even in nature there is *Felonia de se*,"[1] and a corresponding positive law providing for self preservation. Such positions depended on a reliance on natural law, or *lex naturae*, or *jus naturale*, the idea that prescriptive laws existed independent of customary laws. Natural law was confirmed by many sources, such as revelation and observation, but it was derived primarily from reason. As a result, scholars tend to presume that Calvin (and, by extension, Calvinists) were disinclined towards natural law theories, since they held a dim view of humanity, and thus of human capacity to reason.[2] But the concept of natural law was vital to even some of the most Calvinist of Calvinists in the seventeenth century and should not be seen as theologically incompatible.[3] Early and mid-seventeenth-century Calvinists in the British Isles wrote about the natural law in a number of ways. As a result of the belief that the natural law was confirmed by a number of sources, their applications of the concept can go unnoticed.

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[1] Henry Hammond, *Of Resisting the Lavvfull Magistrate under Colour of Religion* (London: s.n., 1647), p. 36.

[2] For an example, see Carl J. Friedrich, *Transcendent Justice: The Religious Dimension of Constitutionalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1964) chpt. 3. For Calvin on the relation between the moral law and the law of nature, see *Institutes* 2:8.1 in *Institutes of the Christian Religion* trans., Henry Beveridge (London: James Clarke & Co., 1953), vol. 1, pp. 316-7. For Calvin's fluid use of such concepts, see I. John Hesselink, *Calvin's Concept of the Law* (Allison Park, Penn.: Pickwick Publications, 1992).

[3] John Coffey's analysis of the importance of natural law for Rutherford does much to break down the false dichotomy between scholastic and humanistic Calvinism, see his *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 74, 154, *passim*. See also J. P. Donnelly, "Calvinist Thomism," *Viator* 7 (1976), pp. 441-51; J. P. Sommerville, "John Selden, the Law of Nature, and the Origins of Government," *Historical Journal* 27, no. 2 (1984), p. 441.

The law of nature was also referred to as the moral law, and natural law was considered an aspect of the divine law. Rather than a separate system of law, natural law was the subset of divine law known by reason. It was assumed that "God dictated certain divine precepts and principles unto man, and imprinted them with his very creation upon his natural reasons (for which cause they are called divine natural laws written in every mans heart)."[4] Since the law of nature was written on each person's heart, and was equally knowable through reason, each person was equally obligated to obey these natural laws. While knowable by reason, the law of nature was confirmed by Scripture, with which natural law could not be in disagreement. "What is warranted by the direction of nature's light, is warranted by the law of nature, and consequently by a divine law; for who can deny the law of nature to be a divine law?"[5] The Ten Commandments were widely viewed as an essential summation of the moral law, and thus of the natural law.

While the Bible confirmed natural law, the natural law was not knowable only to Christians. Since all humans had reason, each person was capable of determining the principles of natural law. The result was that there were certain practices common to nations, even non-Christian ones, and these principles, generally, were considered

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[4] John Jones (?), *Christus Dei, the Lords Annoynted, Or, A Theologicall Discourse* (Oxford: printed by His Maiesties command, 1643), p. 3.

[5] Samuel Rutherford, *Lex, Rex: The Law and the Prince* (London: Iohn Field, 1644), p. 1. Natural law did not conflict with divine law, as Henry Hammond explained: "For the Law of Nature being the Law of God . . . and God in all His Laws being constant to Himself, so far as never to prohibit, and permit the same thing at the same time to the same man, it is most certain that what God permits, nature permits also, i.e., leaves it lawful to be done, or possible, without sin," *A Vindication of Dr. Hammonds Addresse &c from the Exceptions of Eutactus Philodemius in Two Particulars. Concerning: The Power Supposed in the Jew, over His Own Freedom. The No-power over a Mans Own Life* (London: R. Royston, 1649), p. 4.

to reflect natural law.[6] When in the 1640s parliamentarians argued that the "law of nations" justified their defensive actions, they were making a religious claim, as they were saying that the law of nature, and thus of God, supported their defence.[7]

Self defence was also seen as part of natural law because it could be observed in nature. It was assumed that animals were also subject to natural law--the difference being that animals, unlike humans, could not disobey natural law. Theologians saw a hierarchy among animals, which confirmed the ordered nature of the universe and hierarchy among persons. By observing that animals when attacked offered defence, it was argued that the natural world further confirmed that self defence was part of the law of nature.[8]

Such ideas were far from new to the seventeenth century. It has already been seen that the idea from Roman law that force could be used to repel force was blended with Christian theology by natural law thinkers such as Aquinas, who maintained that since self preservation was part of the natural law, it was possible--according to the double effect--to use force in self defence (with the intent to preserve life) without sin on the part of the defender.

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[6] While Thomas Hobbes believed that the natural law was divine law and was confirmed by the Bible (a topic to which he devoted the fourth chapter of *De Cive* to explaining), he doubted whether the law of nations was consistent with natural law, see *De Cive*, chpt. 2. The discovery of native peoples in the Americas and near the North Pole led Hobbes to doubt that all governments shared a common set of rational principles which corresponded with the natural laws. See Hobbes, *De Cive: The Latin Version*, ed. Howard Warrender (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); idem, *The Elements of Law*, ed. Ferdinand Tönnies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928), p. 57; Robert P. Kraynak, "Hobbes on Barbarism and Civilization," *Journal of Politics* 45, no. 1 (1983), pp. 86-109; J. P. Sommerville, *Thomas Hobbes: Political Ideas in Historical Context* (London: Macmillan, 1992), chpt. 2. Likewise, Calvin rejected a correlation between natural law and the law of nations; see *Institutes* 4:20.15, Höpfl, p. 67.

[7] The distinction between the *jus gentium*, or the law of nations, and natural law, which was blurred by Aristotle but refined by Roman lawyers, was not clearly made by either side in the civil wars. Likewise, while many individual thinkers discussed here were familiar with the writings of Grotius, they did not follow him in seeing the natural law as determinative above divine law. In this sense, contemporaries were closer to the Catholic thinker Vitoria.

[8] See Samuel Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, pp. 326, 344.

Suicide

The natural law position that banned suicide was central for both royalists and parliamentarians. For parliamentarians, it was from this prohibition on suicide that a natural right to self defence was derived. The strength of arguments grounded on this position was theological. Early in 1642 Parliament could rhetorically question "whether it be not high time for us to stand upon our defence, which nature teaches every man to provide for?"[9] When Stephen Marshall explained to the House of Lords in the mid-1640s that "we have learned that by the law of nature and nations, men may defend themselves against unjust violence," he was certainly preaching to the choir.[10] Parliament's arguments for taking up arms, particularly before the king's answer to the Nineteen Propositions, were based on the concept of defence, which was founded in natural law and enabled by the two bodies distinction. As the statements from Marshall and Parliament illustrate, such ideas were grounded in the individual's right to defend his own life. The assumption was that violence in self defence was always justified.[11]

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[9] *A Remonstrance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament. Or, The Reply of Both Houses, to a Printed Booke under His Majesties Name* (London: R. B. and R. L., 1642), sigD6-sigD7, cf. sigD1.

[10] Marshall, *A Tvvo-Edged Sword out of the Mouth of Babes, to Execute Vengeance upon the Enemy and Avenger . . . Octob. 28. 1646* (London: R. Cotes, 1646), p. 27.

[11] Indeed, the religious ideas concerning legitimate defensive violence have now been enshrined in international law to the extent that the United Nations Charter has effectively made self defence the prime, if not only, justification for war. See the United Nations Charter, Article 51 (this charter can be viewed at http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html [accessed 6 January 2000]). This formation has led to the exclusion of one specific kind of violence, namely the first use of violence, while legitimating subsequent violence. An analysis of some of the failings of this construction was put forward by Henri Meyrowitz in *Le Principle de l'egalite des belligerents devant le droit de la guerre* (Paris: A. Pedone, 1970), and his work has received considerable discussion since. This emphasis on a defensive legitimation of violence is also found in many mainline Protestant denominations and in the writings of modern theologians, i.e., Loraine Boettner explains, "We hold that there is such a thing as a just war--just on the part of those who defend their lives and their homes against unprovoked

Samuel Rutherford is illustrative of the early parliamentary polemic which based the justification for the use of force on ideas from natural law and the right to self defence derived from a prohibition on suicide. When Rutherford discussed the topic of resistance, his natural law thinking led him to address the topic under the heading of "defensive wars."[12] Even this phrase was somewhat problematic, for while individuals were permitted "defence," it was the supreme magistrate who could declare "war." Rutherford maintained that lesser magistrates could also claim the power of the sword, but when he addressed the issue directly, he maintained "the question is not so much concerning the authoritative act of war, as concerning the power of natural defence." He acknowledged that there was a crucial difference between waging war against the king and seeking "innocent defence. For the former is an act offensive, and of punishing, the latter an act of defence" and thus authorised.[13]

Fundamental for Rutherford was the natural law premise that "God has implanted in every creature natural inclinations and motions to preserve itself."[14] As a result, "that we defend ourselves from violence by violence, is a consequence of unbroken and sinless nature."[15] Following Aquinas, who had explained that it was not

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aggression, but sinful on the part of those who made the attack," *The Christian Attitude toward War* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1985), p. 2.

[12] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, questions 28-37.

[13] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex,* pp. 257-8. Later Rutherford explained, "I grant to offend or kill is not of the nature of defensive war, but accidental thereunto" (ibid, p. 322). Rutherford conceded that outwardly an offensive and a defensive war looked the same, the difference he maintained was in the *intent*, "they differ only in the event and the intention of the heart," (ibid, p. 338).

[14] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, p. 332. This instilled in them an inclination to defend themselves both as individuals and in forming communities. Indeed, it was the instinct to self preservation which led to the formation of governments. Cf. *Touching the Fundamentall Lawes or Politique Constitution of This Kingdome . . . To Which is Annexed the Priviledge and Power of the Parliament Touching the Militia* (London: Thomas Underhill, 1643), p. 10 (second set of pages); James Howell, *An Inquisition After Blood* (London: s.n., 1649), pp. 8-9.

[15] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, p. 2.

sinful to preserve one's own life over that of another,[16] Rutherford went on to derive a principle of self defence not only from the Decalogue's prohibition on murder, but also from the greatest Commandment (and thus also the New Testament): love thy neighbour as thyself. Since "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self, " then it was apparent that "the love of our self is the measure of the love of our neighbour," and we therefore should value ourselves over our neighbours. Rutherford cited Ephesians 5:28 in support of this idea and claimed that if two people were drowning, the laws of God do not require that the one die to save the other, but rather that each save himself despite the fact that the other might die. "I am to love my own temporal life more than the life of any other, and therefore I am rather to kill, than to be killed, the exigency of necessity so requiring." The self-love commanded by Scripture confirmed the lesson found in sinless nature: self-preservation was not against God's law, but rather in obedience to it. Since God ordained the end, He must also have provided the means, which in the last resort (after petitions and attempted flight) Rutherford maintained was the use of force to repel force.[17]

To argue otherwise and to claim that individuals could not, in the final instance, defend themselves--as Rutherford believed the royalists were doing with their interpretation of Romans 13--was not only to prescribe that an individual die,

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[16] *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas* (London: Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 1920, 2nd ed.), 2a2ae.Q.64.A.7.ob.5.

[17] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, pp. 332-3. The text that Rutherford cites reads in the 1602 Geneva Bible: "So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies: he that loves his wife, loves himself." While Rutherford's use of this verse may appear something of a stretch, it was similar to that of other commentators of the time, who saw in this command at the very least an acknowledgement of the naturalness of self love. See, for example, Paul Baynes, *An Entire Commentary vpon the Whole Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians* (London: M. Flesher, 1647), p. 659; Joseph Caryl, *The Works of Ephesus Explained in a Sermon Before the Honovrable House of Commons . . . April 27th 1642* (London: John Bartlet and William Bladen, 1642), p. 44. Likewise, the Geneva Bible glosses Ephesians 5:28: "Another argument: every man loves himself, even of nature: therefore he strives against nature who loves not his wife."

but that he do so of his own volition, which was as bad as by his own hand! For Rutherford, to fail to use the right of defence given by nature when attacked was to "be guilty of self-murder."[18] The accusation of suicide was a serious one, for it was a by-word for what not only a logical impossibility, but also a sin of such seriousness that it revealed the utter depravity of those who suggested it.

Stephen Marshall made this point when he asked if it was possible to argue from reason that people under government could be deprived of that which they had "by the law of nature," which was the ability to "defend themselves." Marshall concluded that it would be "self-murder in suffering such a thing" as to deprive people "of their defence allowed them by the law of nature."[19] This argument was employed most frequently directly against Romans 13, and, it was argued, that to imply that those verses of Scripture meant people could not use self defence made suicide an ordinance of God.[20]

The seriousness with which contemporaries took the subject of suicide can be seen in the work of John Sym. Half a decade before the start of open conflict in

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[18] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, p. 322. Rutherford maintained that even if it could be argued that a person had contracted away all right to force, this contract would not be binding, since it contravened the Sixth Commandment and thus had no moral force. He explained, "yet that being an oath against the sixth Commandment, which enjoins self-preservation, it should not oblige the conscience, for it should be intrinsically sinful; and its all one to swear to non-self-preservation, as to swear to self-murder" (ibid, p. 151).

[19] Marshall, *A Plea for Defensive Armes* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1643), pp. 7-8.

[20] The political reflection of this argument was also to say that the royalists were trying to make *tyranny* an ordinance of God. Francis Cheynell maintained that "it is impossible that any man should ever prove that tyranny is not to be resisted upon this ground, because we must not resist God's ordinance, unless they could prove, that which is blasphemy to mention, viz. that tyranny is God's ordinance," *Chillingvvorthi Novissima. Or, The Sicknesse, Heresy, Death, and Buriall of William Chillingworth* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1644?), sigC6- sigD. Likewise, John Milton retorted, "On your second conclusion, I spit, and wish that blasphemous mouth of yours might be closed up, as you are asserting that God is the greatest tyrant," *Political Writings*, ed., Martin Dzelzainis, trans. Claire Gruzelier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 99. Cf. Robert Derham, *A Manuell, Or, Briefe Treatise of Some Particular Rights and Priuiledges Belonging to the High Court of Parliament* (London: Mathew Walbancke, 1647), p. 100; H. Palmer, *Scripture and Reason Pleaded for Defensive Armes, Or, The Whole Controversie about Subjects Taking up Armes* (London: Iohn Bellamy and Ralph Smith, 1643), p. 4; Marshall, *Plea*, p. 11.

England, Sym wrote an extensive treatment of the topic. He explained that suicide was undoubtedly murder and therefore the sin of murder was also the sin of suicide. Yet suicide was in fact an even greater sin, for it was an extremely heinous form of violence since it went against the natural law of self preservation. But Sym went on to explain that such self-murder was also explicitly against Scripture and even directly against God Himself, who made man in His image. Indeed, to commit self-murder denied the providence of God, and thus made one a rebel against God.[21] Throughout, Sym's language parallels that of the Homilies on obedience. Of course, at the time he did not know that the godly would have to make a choice between risking the sin of rebellion, or risking the sin of suicide.[22]

Andrew Willet, writing before Sym, also concluded, on the authority of Augustine, that suicide was the same as murder, and thus expressly forbidden by God in Scripture as well as by the law of nature. But the law of nature could not contradict Scripture and Scripture could not contradict itself, which meant that Willet had to confront the biblical story of Samson, in whom many found an example of wilful self-murder. Samson, it will be remembered, had intentionally caused the temple to collapse in order to kill the Philistines, but he had done so with the knowledge that he would die as well. At first sight this would appear problematic for early modern divines who wanted to condemn suicide, since Samson receives praise rather than condemnation. Willet's response, however, was similar to the way many addressed

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[21] Sym, *Lifes Preservative against Self-killing. Or, An Useful Treatise Concerning Life and Self-murder* (London: M. Flesher, 1637), pp. 6, 11, 47-9, 53, 267-9, *passim*. With reference to Romans 1-2 Sym expressed his belief in the essential harmony between the law of nature and the law of God (pp. 267-70). Sym's text was not just concerned with the self-murder of the temporal body, but also with the self-murder of the individual's soul.

[22] For the powerful medieval inheritance concerning the taboo on suicide, see Alexander Murray, *The Curse of Self-Murder* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 596, *passim*; idem, *The Violent against Themselves* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

this apparent conundrum. He explained that Samson acted not so much as a private individual, but as an instrument of God and thus had proper authorisation--that is, *direct* authorisation from God. For Samson was moved "by the instinct of God's spirit: so he did it . . . by God's authority." Samson's action was therefore no sin, for it was an authorised killing not only of the Philistines but also of himself.[23]

Composed well before the civil wars, Willet's analysis of Samson's suicide reveals two of the important strands of theological thought which would allow for parliamentarians to claim divine authorisation for taking up arms. One strand was a natural law theory of a right to defence, which was paired with an obligation to avoid suicide. Another was the idea of a direct divine authorisation for violence. Both of these ideas can also be teased out of the idea of self defence itself, as there were two logics at work which were often blurred. Underlying both was the idea that the laws of a government must be in harmony with the law of nature, which permitted the use of force to repel force. One aspect of this argument was that the person who repelled the thief in the night was acting by the authority of the magistrate, but in the absence of the magistrate. Since there was no possibility of seeking the justice of the magistrate when one was under direct and immediate attack, the authority of the magistrate was not challenged by the person repelling the thief, but rather temporarily suspended. This was violence not in opposition to the hierarchy, but in absence of it,

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[23] Willet, *Hexapla in Exodum, That Is, A Sixfold Commentary upon the Second Booke of Moses Called Exodus* (London: [John Haviland], 1633), p. 324. Willet can make this claim despite the ambiguous statement in the text that before this event "the Lord had left him," see Judges 16:20. The unforeseen radical conclusions to which the example and logic of Samson would lend themselves were best embodied by Milton, who after the regicide, in arguing that "we have justly punished Charles," took Samson as a parallel, seeing him as having "made war alone on his masters . . . and he made prayers beforehand to God to help him. So it didn't seem impious but pious to Samson to kill his masters, the tyrants of his country, when the majority of the citizens did not decline to be slaves," *Political Writings*, p. 131.

or, in the case of parliamentary arguments based on the two bodies, it was violence in defence of the hierarchy.

But it was also possible to perceive that the law of nature, in providing for self defence, directly authorised such defensive action independent of the hierarchy, since it did so in any form of government, indeed, even in the absence of government. This was not the power over life and death, but only the right to use force to repel force. Nevertheless, there were some close similarities with the direct authorisation of the *jus zelotarum*, a term which came from the private zeal of Phinehas, a priest of the Israelites, who speared an adulterous couple, as described in Numbers 25:7. While Phinehas's actions were hard to see as defensive, except in that they halted the plague, such an inference could still be drawn, which was the beginning of a slippery slope. From the simple principle of self defence, the broader possibility of direct authorisation from the Divine was opened, even for the private individual. It was an authorisation not necessarily contradictory to the earthly hierarchy, but independent, and equally important, it was a line of argument that still posited authority for violence from the Divine.

Thomas Hobbes, writing after the wars, recognised how this principle could lead to anarchy and so chose to conclude his *Leviathan* by expressly denying that Phinehas had had an authorisation independent of the hierarchy. In Hobbes's reading, Phinehas's authority to spear the adulterous couple still came from the hierarchy. How it did so was a bit more confused. Hobbes maintained that Phinehas was both the "heir apparent to the sovereignty," and was confident that his act would receive a "subsequent ratification by Moses," which can seem like the action taken in the

temporary absence of authority. What was clear for Hobbes, the absolutist champion of self defence, was that there was no room for appeals to private zeal--a direct authorisation from God--within a stable commonwealth.[24]

Hobbes, however, wrote with the benefit of having seen where such arguments had led. At the start of the wars the ideas of natural law and a duty to avoid suicide comprised an important component of the early parliamentary position that demonstrated how much common theological ground they shared with their opponents. Arguments from defence, based on shared assumptions about natural law, and undertaken in the name of the hierarchy of authorisation, also reveal the degree to which the instinct of obedience and the inherited theology of violence influenced the arguments which parliamentarians could employ. It is difficult to tell to what extent they *believed* these arguments, but it is enough to observe that they thought that such arguments would be convincing.

Evidence suggests, however, that parliamentarians sincerely believed that they were under direct attack and that they needed to take defensive action. As one parliamentary preacher declared, expressing a common sentiment, the royalists "fight to destroy your persons."[25] Under such circumstances, defence was needed, for both individuals and the kingdom. As Rutherford asked rhetorically, "if it is natural to one man to defend himself against the personal invasion of a prince, then is it natural and warrantable to ten thousand, and to a whole kingdom; and what reason to defraud a

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[24] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985), "A Review and Conclusion," pp. 722-4. Cf. Henry Hammond, "Of the Zelots among the Jewes, and the Liberty Taken by Them" appended to *Of Resisting*, where Hammond maintains that the law of zealots applied only to the Jews because "God immediately presided" with them. Jesus had plainly put an end to this dispensation and now the only access to the divine will was through Scripture (pp. 47-57).
[25] Francis Cheynell, *Sions Memento, and Gods Alarum* (London: Samuel Gellilbrand, 1643), sigAi.

kingdom of the benefit of self defence, more than one man?"[26] Rutherford's comments illustrate a further implication of the present argument, for rather than seeing the idea of national defence having developed first and then moved towards what is seen as the more radical position, namely, that individuals have a right to defend themselves, it is necessary to recognise that the theological strictures of the period led parliamentarians first to the idea of personal defence and then, by analogy, to the idea of the defence of the nation as a whole.

The Body Politic

Suicide, it was agreed, was not acceptable. From this conclusion, royalists maintained that individuals never had the right over life and death, and thus had never given it to the king and likewise could not reclaim it. It followed that the king could be limited, but not punished. Starting from the same idea that suicide was not allowed, the parliamentarians reached a different conclusion. They maintained that the individual had to have the ability, permitted by the deity, to use force in self defence. Usually it was accepted that individual self defence was only permitted when the attack was immediate and unavoidable. The conditions of the civil war were prolonged and as a result there was a need for some form of institutional authority from the hierarchy to complement the individual's right to self defence. While parliamentarians believed that they actually were individually under attack by

[26] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, p. 324, cf. 323.

antichristian forces, they also reasoned, by way of analogy, that if people could defend themselves individually, then a nation could defend itself collectively.[27]

Henry Ferne summarised this position in order to refute it. He explained it was reckoned "if the body natural" had a right to defence, which Ferne acknowledged, "then the body politic may defend itself, if a private person much more the whole state may; and they do but shut the way up against the king that comes to destroy his Parliament and take away their heads." Ferne's response was that the analogy was applicable only to an extent. For, just as a person could defend against outward attack, so a nation could defend itself against invasion. But just as a person could not commit suicide by using the sword against himself, so a nation could not commit suicide by using the sword against itself.[28]

One parliamentarian response to Ferne's arguments tried to continue the analogy of the individual. It pointed out that an internal sickness or disease could be treated with medicines. At the same time, the authors objected that Ferne had refuted only the analogy and not the principle of defence from which they were arguing. Drawing on that principle, the authors asked why the sudden and immediate blows of the king could be deflected, but not the deliberate, intended and foreseen blows? In such instances, it was reasonable to assume that Parliament could act as a block against the king's attacks on his people. These authors expressed their agreement with Ferne that the king's blows could only be deflected and no more, that is to say, force with the intent to harm could not be used against the king. Throughout, they

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[27] Which was an idea particularly important for the maintenance of order, see Gregory Thims, *The Protestant Informer, Or, Information to All Protestants* (London: s.n., 1643), p. 18.
[28] Ferne, *The Resolving of Conscience, upon This Question, Whether upon Such a Supposition or Case, As Is Now Usually Made . . . Subjects May Take Arms and Resist?* (Cambridge: Edward Freeman and Thomas Dunster, 1642), p. 8.

employed defensive images such as individuals shutting themselves indoors to escape the blows of the king. But what, these casuists asked, if the king should try and rape a helpless virgin who had not the strength to hold his hands? Finally, it was argued that the use (and intended use) of foreigners to fight on the royalists' behalf (in particular the use of the bloodthirsty antichristian Irish) meant that an *outside* force was in fact attacking the body politic, and thus defensive force was being used against an outside force. In each instance, Parliament provided the institutional authorisation necessary for the defence of the kingdom.[29]

On Ferne's point that to resist the king would be suicide for the state, the writers had to grant that to some extent this was correct, and in most every situation such circumstances should be avoided, but when the actions of the deluded prince seemed to show an intention to kill the state itself, then how could it be argued that the dissolution of the state into anarchy was a reason for inaction? For these writers it was the very reason that action had to be taken, when in other circumstances it was certainly to be avoided. "When a prince is bent to subvert religion, laws, and liberties: what dissolution of the whole can be feared by defence and resistance against such intentions . . .?" What could be meant by state-suicide if not allowing the destruction of religion, laws and liberties, these authors wondered. Just war theory maintained that violence could only be used after all other means had been tried; throughout the parliamentarian polemic there is a constant reminder that all petitions and means for accommodation had been exhausted. Force was a last resort, but unfortunately this last resort had been provoked by the aggression of the king's evil counsellors. As a result, it was argued that the only way to prevent the death of the state (as well as the

[29] H. Palmer, *Scripture and Reason Pleaded*, pp. 14-5.

individuals in it) was to take defensive action. Again, as for the individual, so for the state, to yield was to commit suicide.[30]

Arguments for national self defence were also based on arguments from reason which paralleled the arguments for individual self defence. It was argued that it was irrational to presume that a polity would be formed which lacked sufficient measures to insure that it would not be destroyed. There had to be some form of defence open to a kingdom as there was to the individuals who collectively composed it. Thus men like Richard Baxter could conclude that "a kingdom has yet the right of self-defence."[31] Of course royalists used the same logic to reach the opposite conclusion, maintaining that it was illogical to presume that a state would be so constructed as to open the way to ruin by allowing for two sources of military authority.[32]

Central to the idea that a state must have a means of preserving itself was the idea that in England the proper agent for that defence was Parliament, which, it was argued, represented and embodied the people of the kingdom. As the representative of the kingdom, Parliament knew best when the people and the government were in danger.[33] Furthermore, Parliament was the highest of the king's courts and thus

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[30] H. Palmer, *Scripture and Reason Pleaded*, pp. 14-5, *passim*. Cf. Philip Hunton, *A Treatise of Monarchie Containing Two Parts . . . by an Earnest Desirer of His Countries Peace* (London: Richard Baldwin, 1689, first published 1643), p. 55. Parliament spoke of the "dissolving of the whole frame and constitution of the . . . government . . . into the original law of nature," in *A Remonstrance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament. Or, The Reply of Both Houses, to a Printed Booke under His Majesties Name*, sigA2.

[31] From the *Baxter Treatises* in Dr. Williams's Library, London, vol. 5, f.291-3, quoted in William M. Lamont, *Richard Baxter and the Millennium Protestant Imperialism and the English Revolution* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), p. 117. Cf. William Bridge, *Wounded Conscience Cured, the VVeak One Strengthened, and the Doubting Satisfied* (London: Benjamin Allen, 1643), p. 2.

[32] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes against Their Soveraigne in What Case Soever* (Oxford: s.n., 1643), p. 8.

[33] *A Remonstrance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament. Or, The Reply of Both Houses, to a Printed Booke under His Majesties Name*, sigB-sigBi.

should be entrusted to judge the danger to the kingdom, as well as the legal procedures available for defence.[34] Parliament was also a public institution, and as such it was part of the hierarchy of authorisation. Despite the fact that the king could call and dismiss the Houses at his pleasure and retained a veto over their actions, Parliament (as the Houses) was seen as the body which could best hold the hands of the king as he tried to beat the state to death. Indeed, on account of Parliament's relatively uncertain status before the constitutional revolution of the early 1640s many saw the calling of Parliament as providential. Parliament was for the people and the kingdom "the only means of their own preservation."[35] It seemed to be no coincidence that Parliament was assembled just in time to perform the task of saving the kingdom. God had sent the Parliament.[36] And, in accordance with the apocalyptic prophecies of the Bible, God had so ordered "things, that the papists shall by their malice be put upon such plots . . . that they shall make themselves liable to the justice of the law."[37] The calling of the Long Parliament was the foundational providence, and, along with subsequent miracles, demonstrated God's favour, and, ultimately His authorisation for parliamentarian violence.[38]

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[34] Charles Herle, *A Fuller Ansvvwer to a Treatise VVritten by Doctor Ferne* (London: Iohn Bartlet, 1642), p. 1.

[35] *A Remonstrance or Declaration of the State of the Kingdome Agreed on by the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament the 19th of May* (London: R. O. and G. D., 1642), p. 2. This declaration also provides an excellent example of the sentiment that the Long Parliament was called and sustained by a miraculous and providential force.

[36] J. H., Souldier, *A Remonstrance to the Kingdome, Or, An Appeale to Conscience, as Thou Wilt Answer It at the Dreadfull Day of Judgement: Whether It Be Lawfull to Take up Arms?* (London: Thomas Watson, 1643), p. 2.

[37] Jeremiah Burroughs, *A Briefe Answer to Doctor Fernes Booke* (London, s.n. 1643), p. 14. Others could claim "God called this Parliament for His Church's sake; and for His Church's sake it is that He has so established and continued it," Herbert Palmer, *The Necessity and Encouragement, of Utmost Venturing for the Churches Help* (London: John Bellamie, 1643), p. 9.

[38] The tendency to describe Parliament's powers as divinely bestowed increased as the debate over authority continued in the 1640s. In his sermon to the Commons in 1645, Peter Sterry asked, "Honourable fathers of your countries, I humbly move to know, by what title you sit there and rule

The Militia Ordinance

The debate over violence came to a head in early spring 1642, when Parliament's efforts to provide for its defence culminated in the Militia Ordinance of March 1642.[39] By that time Parliament had determined that control of the militia--the king's traditional source of land forces--should be placed with those who it could trust. Although the king was invited to concur with them, the Houses asserted their authority to act alone on the matter.[40] Thus the fundamental legal question was also a theological one. The Houses were not only passing an act without the king, but, perhaps more shocking, in doing so they were attempting to wrest from the king not his property or his succession, rather the very power of the sword, the essence of what it meant to be God's vice-regent. Charles had long resisted efforts to reform legislation concerning the militia, since he believed it was unnecessary. To his mind, it was obvious that the king controlled the sword. Charles recognised that to take the sword away from the king was not only to challenge an immemorial right, but also to strip him of the essence of what it was to be king. He memorably noted that if the sword was removed, "the kingly power is but a shadow." As a result, Charles was

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over us. Is it not as powers on earth? But, all power on earth as well as in heaven, is given to Jesus Christ. You are substitutes and vice-regents to the Lord Jesus. Look then to Jesus, the beginning and end of your authority," *The Spirits Conviction of Sinne* (London: Matth. Simmons, 1645), sigA2.

[39] For Parliament's earlier efforts to secure its own defence and the Militia Ordinance generally, see Lois G. Schwoerer, "'The Fittest Subject for a King's Quarrel': An Essay on the Militia Controversy 1641-1642," *Journal of British Studies* 11, no. 1 (1971), pp. 45-76; idem, *'No Standing Armies!' The Antiarmy Ideology in Seventeenth-century England* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), chpt. 3.

[40] *A Remonstrance or Declaration of the State of the Kingdome*, p. 4. The revolutionary significance of this move was cried down by royalists, see, for example, John Spelman, *A View of a Printed Book Intituled Observations upon His Majesties Late Answers and Expresses* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1643), sig. F2.

determined never to surrender "that sword which God has given unto my hands."[41] Along with the centrality of bishops, Charles understood that it was also true, no soldiers, no king.[42]

The Militia Ordinance was passed and executed before the Houses produced the Nineteen Propositions, and, more importantly, before the king's answer to the Propositions. It is notable, therefore, that the issue of defence played such a large part in the debate surrounding this act.[43] It is possible to see a coordinate claim for the authority of the sword (i.e., both the king and Parliament have a claim to use violence legitimately) in advance of the Nineteen Propositions. Often it was posed in terms of inferior magistrates having authority over violence. Such arguments were, however, limited, for in just war theory it was impossible for inferiors to wage war--a point royalists were quick to make.[44] As a result, before the king's answer to the Nineteen Propositions, the predominant language of justification used was the one of defence shaped by the theology of violence. It appears that the Ordinance won support because it was seen as a temporary measure, justified in the name of defence in the face of imminent danger.[45]

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[41] *The Kings Cabinet Opened, Or, Certain Packets of Secret Letters & Papers, Written with the Kings Own Hand, and Taken in His Cabinet at Nasby-Field* (London: Robert Bostock, 1645), pp. 1, 26.
[42] For many contemporaries, the issue of military control was the breaking point that caused them to rescind their former allegiance to Parliament. One of the MPs who joined the king at York certainly emphasised this point in *Three Letters the First from an Officer in His Majesties Army . . . The Second from a Grave Gentleman Once a Member of the House of Commons to His Friend . . . Remaining a Member of the Same House . . .* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1643), p. 17, cf. Henry Ferne, *Conscience Satisfied: That there is no Warrant for the Armes Now Taken up by Subjects* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield), pp. 21, 51.
[43] Like Parliament's statements concerning the Militia Ordinance, the king's statements against it, and in the issuing of the Commission of Array, also made much of the language of defence, e.g., *An Exact Collection of All Remonstrances . . . Untill March the 21, 1642* (London: Husbands, 1643), pp. 399-402.
[44] Dudley Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, pp. 35, 66, 87, 114, 129, 158.
[45] See Philip Hunton, *Treatise*, p. 62. Phrases such as "saving only for the necessary preservation of the kingdom while that necessity lasts and such consent [of the king to acts of Parliament] cannot be

The language of the Ordinance indicated that it was a defensive cause necessitated by a clear and present threat: "Whereas there has been of late a most dangerous and desperate design upon the House of Commons, which we have just cause to believe to be an effect of the bloody councils of papists, and other ill affected persons, who have already raised a rebellion in the kingdom of Ireland." The Ordinance continued to explain that as a result "of many discoveries, we cannot but fear they will proceed" to attack. It was a time of "imminent danger." Action was needed to provide "for the safety and defence of the kingdom." The Ordinance placed the control of the militias in the hands of sound men, under the approval of Parliament, in order to secure "the safety . . . of his majesty's person, the Parliament and kingdom."[46]

Parliament was acting defensively with the Militia Ordinance in a number of ways. Just as a person did not have to wait for an enemy's sword to be thrust into him, so a state did not have to wait to be destroyed before taking defensive actions. Stephen Marshall pointed out that it was well known legally that preparations for war "are the beginning of a war," and the king had prepared first. Parliament did not have to wait until his papist forces had destroyed the kingdom before taking measures to

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obtained," with reference to the power of Parliament to act without the king's consent were recurrent, see *A Remonstrance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament. Or, The Reply of Both Houses, to a Printed Booke under His Majesties Name*, sigB1; Charles Herle, *A Fuller Ansvvwer*, pp. 8-9; *A Discourse upon the Questions in Debate between the King and Parliament* (London: s.n., 1642), p. 15; Michael Mendle, "The Great Council of Parliament and the First Ordinances: The Constitutional Theory of the Civil War," *Journal of British Studies* 31, no. 2 (1992), pp. 133-62; Richard Tuck, "'The Ancient Law of Freedom': John Selden and the Civil War," in *Reactions to the English Civil War, 1642-1649*, ed. John Morrill (London: Macmillan, 1982), *passim*.

[46] *An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons in Parliament for the Safety and Defence of the Kingdom of England, and the Dominion of Wales . . . 5th of this present March* (London: Ioseph Hunscott, 1642), pp. 3-4.

prevent such an occurrence.[47] The royalist Peter Heylyn detected in such arguments a change of tack from arguing for a purely defensive war to a partly "preventive" war, fearing "the king might right himself upon them when he was of power, they thought it best to strike the first blow . . . in hope to make such sure work of it, that he should never strike the second." Heylyn knew that even this argument was a lie on Parliament's part. Parliament's aggressive war, to his mind, was neither defensive nor preventative, but the result of a long plot on the part of the rebels.[48]

Parliament, nevertheless, was persistent in employing the rhetoric of a defensive justification for taking up arms. To the parliamentarian mind, it was not sufficient that Charles had violated laws, taken property and promoted popery. What was crucial in the opening years of the war was that he was the first to attack, and thus Parliament was using force in defence. As Thomas Case explained to Parliament, Christian subjects could use force in defence, but "it is not till our enemies force us to it, when we must either kill, or be killed."[49] Likewise, the Genevan bull could conclude his *Plea for Defensive Armes* with a clarion call to avoid personal suicide: "Oh, let us labour to prevent their swords thrusting into our bodies . . . let our God do with us what he will, let us do what we should."[50] It was defensive action taken to protect individual lives, to defend Parliament and the institutions of government, and by extension to preserve the king himself. Since the kingdom itself was threatened with death, it was appropriate for Parliament to defend it. The Militia Ordinance was

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[47] Marshall, *Plea*, p. 24. The idea that the king had waged war first was a cornerstone for parliamentarians. A long litany of events was invoked to prove this proposition, cf. Gregory Thims, *The Protestant Informer*, p. 7.
[48] Peter Heylyn, *The Rebells Catechism* (Oxford?: s.n., 1643), pp. 24-5.
[49] Case, *God's Rising . . . in a Sermon Before the Honourable House of Commons . . . 26 Octon. 1642* (London: Luke Fawne, 1644), p. 5.
[50] Stephen Marshall, *Plea*, pp. 24, 28.

a measure on the part of Parliament to provide for that defence, and, by it, Parliament declared, "we murder none," but rather aim to protect all.[51]

Positive Law

The King's Answer to the Nineteen Propositions

While the idea of defence was central to Marshall's justification for taking up arms, he also made much of the king's answer to the Nineteen Propositions. Parliament presented the Nineteen Propositions at the beginning of June 1642. It represented a collection and culmination of their demands on the king, including acceptance of the Militia Ordinance. While the propositions are crucially important on their own, perhaps more important was the king's answer, which came after just over a fortnight. Written by Culpepper and Falkland, it presented what has come to be seen as a concise and classic statement of the ancient constitution.[52]

The importance of the king's *Answer* was immediately recognised and seized upon by parliamentarians such as Marshall, who made much of two of its points. The first was the idea found in the *Answer* "that the prince may not make use of this high

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[51] *A Remonstrance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament. Or, The Reply of Both Houses, to a Printed Booke under His Majesties Name*, sigB4.

[52] For the Nineteen Propositions and the king's *Answer*, see Michael Mendle, *Dangerous Positions: Mixed Government, the Estates of the Realm, and the Making of the Answer to the XIX Propositions* (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1985); Corrine Comstock Weston, "The Theory of Mixed Monarchy under Charles I and After," *English Historical Review* 75 (1960), pp. 426-43; idem, *English Constitutional Theory and the House of Lords* (London: Routledge, 1965); idem and Janelle Renfrow Greenberg, *Subjects and Sovereigns: The Grand Controversy over Legal Sovereignty in Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). For selections from the texts, see *The Stuart Constitution, 1603-1688: Documents and Commentary*, ed. J. P. Kenyon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), pp. 21-3, 244-7.

and perpetual power to the hurt of those for whose good he has it."[53] From this parliamentarians could conclude that harmful laws had not the force of the king's authority, a view which they had been developing in their interpretation of Romans 13 by arguing that the verses implied that governors were to use their divine powers for good and not for the abuse of the innocent.[54] Second, and essential for Marshall, was the statement from the *Answer* that "since therefore the power, legally placed in both Houses, is more than sufficient to prevent and restrain the power of tyranny, and without the power which is now asked from us, we shall not be able to discharge that trust which is the end of monarchy . . . ."[55] The intention of the passage had been to call for a halt to further encroachments on the king's powers. The power inherent in Parliament, recently augmented by further concessions from the throne, meant that tyranny was impossible and additional concessions were not needed to safeguard against it. To make any further concessions would be to alter the ancient constitution and risk undoing the balance among the three estates, here described as the Lords, the Commons and the king.

While this clause made good sense politically, theologically it was a mistake. Marshall was not alone in recognising that the power to prevent tyranny might in some instances include the use of force. Indeed, the king's answer granted that the Parliament (in the Lords, as judges) had "the power of punishing (which is already in your hands according to law)." The *Answer* was, nevertheless, clear in stating that the king alone had the power to make war and preparations for war.[56] Despite the

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[53] Kenyon, *Stuart Constitution*, p. 21.
[54] See Charles Herle, *A Fuller Answvwer*, pp. 22-3.
[55] Kenyon, *Stuart Constitution*, p. 22.
[56] Kenyon, *Stuart Constitution*, pp. 21-2.

Answer's insistence that the king alone should be allowed to control the military, the response was a godsend for parliamentarians such as Marshall, who referred to it more often than any other source, save Scripture. Relying primarily on the need for a defence against papist attackers, Marshall combined the idea that Parliament shared in "God's ordinance as well as kings," with "his majesty confess[ion that] there is legally placed" in Parliament "sufficient power to prevent tyranny."[57]

This confirmed Marshall's view that Parliament was the appropriate institution to defend the kingdom. For the preservation of the kingdom and the people, Parliament was authorised to undertake defensive actions, because it was granted that it had sufficient power to prevent tyranny and it shared in the divine authorisation for violence. The king-in-Parliament was the supreme power, to which no further appeal could be made legally and to which Romans 13 commanded obedience. "In plain English," Romans 13 could be rendered: "let every soul in England be subject to king and Parliament, for they are the higher powers ordained unto you of God, whosoever resists king and Parliament, resist the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."[58]

Coordinate Authorisation

Marshall's version of Romans 13 demonstrates the way the king's *Answer* provided a foundation for the parliamentarian argument for a "coordinate" mixture of

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[57] Marshall, *Plea*, pp. 9, 22. This phrase from the king's answer was a constant refrain for parliamentarians who wanted to argue that Parliament had a right to the necessary power to restrain the king, cf. Charles Herle, *An Answer to Doctor Fernes Reply: Entitled Conscience Satisfied* (London: Tho. Brudenell, 1643), p. 22; Philip Hunton, *Treatise*, p. 40.
[58] Marshall, *Plea*, p. 14.

government, in which Parliament and the king were equal partners. The top level of authorised violence was shared. Charles Herle explained that all governments were more or less mixed in their lower offices, but England was mixed even at the top: "This mixture, or coordination is in the very supremacy of power itself."[59] The theological application of this argument was to suggest that the king and Parliament (or rather, the king-in-Parliament) shared the top rung of the hierarchy. Each could use force, but only the king-in-Parliament was beyond appeal. Herle used the king's *Answer* to argue that the power to resist tyranny, which all now agreed Parliament possessed, had to be more than merely a legislative function, as royalists suggested. What was crucial was that it also had to have "a *power of punishing according to law*" which was "a power of putting laws in execution against the prince's personal command." In other words, Parliament, as coordinate sovereign with the recognised right to prevent tyranny, could do so "by arms" when necessary. Parliament had the right to prevent tyranny by using force against the personal commands of the king when such commands threatened to destroy the state and its people. Herle was thus able to rectify parliamentary force with the theology of violence.[60]

Despite the idea of a shared claim to authorised violence, the parliamentarians (in the early 1640s) continued to treat the king's person as at least semi-sacred and

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[59] Herle, *A Fuller Ansvvwer*, pp. 3-4. Cf. Hunton, *Treatise,* p. 40; Herle, *An Answer to Doctor Fernes Reply*, where Herle argues that this mixture had existed from the foundations of the English polity and was the result of consent reached between the three estates (p. 28).

[60] Furthermore, Herle maintained that a demonstration of this shared authority for violence could be seen historically. Contrary to the king's answer, Parliament had long held the power to declare war and make peace in combination with that of the king. Was it not the case that in "1242 [Parliament] flatly told the then king Henry the third, that he should make no war with France" and "in the second year of Edward the second it was enacted by Parliament that the king should begin no war without common consent in Parliament"? Such examples demonstrated that it was no new doctrine to say that Parliament had an equal claim to the power of the sword, see Herle, *An Answer to Doctor Fernes Reply*, pp. 22-3, 35, emphasis original.

continued to recognise a prohibition on intending him personal harm. As the authors of *Scripture and Reason Pleaded* explained, according to the king's answer to the Nineteen Propositions, Parliament has "such power by law to punish even the king's followers and favourites, as more than sufficient to prevent, or restrain them." And such punishment could in extremity be carried out "by arms, which therefore it may lawfully take up."[61] It is noteworthy that the power claimed was only that to punish the king's counsellors, not actually to judge and punish the king himself. As late as 1647, Robert Derham could still calmly acknowledge that "there is no force or violence offered, or intended . . . against the person of the king; we conceive his person only free from the sword."[62] This idea persisted even after the idea of coordinate authority had become central to Parliament's justification for armed force.

Francis Cheynell told Parliament that "even Dr. Ferne himself is satisfied . . . that the two Houses of Parliament are, in a sort, coordinate with his Majesty . . . [in] exercising supreme power."[63] But from Ferne's point of view this was a poor trick on Parliament's part. While he conceded that England was a mixed polity, and that Parliament had an important function, he denied that it shared the divine authorisation for violence or that Parliament could respect the king's authority while waging war against his servants. Mixed monarchy meant more than simply "yielding his [royal] person to be above the violence of resistance." It also entailed recognising that by resisting his commands Parliament was in fact resisting the king, regardless of

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[61] H. Palmer, *Scripture and Reason Pleaded*, p. 47.
[62] Derham, *A Manuell, Or, Briefe Treatise of Some Particular Rights and Priuiledges*, p. 100.
[63] Cheynell, *Sions Memento, and Gods Alarum* (London: Samuel Gellilbrand, 1643), sigA.

arguments about two bodies or mixed government. England might be a mixed polity, but the king was still the head.[64]

Even royalists who accepted that England had a "mixed" government, rejected the idea of "coordinate" sovereignty, particularly in terms of control of the military.[65] They saw Parliament's claims for equal sovereignty as creating a "serpent with two heads, who make two supremes without subordination one to another."[66] The problem of dual sovereignty was a serious one and it opened up the possibility of mutually ostensible justice: i.e., each side could make an honest claim to be fighting a just war. Many thinkers in the period believed that sovereignty could not be divided. There had to be, it was argued, some source which was above all resistance and above appeal. The institution or office which was above punishment was the sovereign and it had to be singular. The difficulty was that England's polity had evolved without clearly defining this issue and absolute sovereignty had never resided in a single facet of government, although that was not the result of a deliberate effort to achieve a checks-and-balances form of government. While some royalists at first objected to the king's answer to the Nineteen Propositions, it was not long before they began to

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[64] Ferne also quickly dismissed arguments from "necessity," saying that if it were necessary it would have been provided for by God, which resistance was not. Ferne, *A Reply*, p. 84; idem, *Conscience Satisfied,* pp. 6, 12, 15, 20. Ferne maintained that Parliament's function was limited only to its role in making laws.

[65] Many also thought that the king's answer to the Nineteen Propositions was misguided, most notable among them was Clarendon, see Edward Hyde [Earl of Clarendon], *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England Begun in the year 1641,* ed. W. D. Macray (Oxford: Clarendon, 1888), vol. 2, pp. 171-6; Perez Zagorin, "Clarendon and Hobbes," *Journal of Modern History* 57, no. 4 (1985), pp. 608-9.

[66] John Bramhall, *Serpent-Salve* in *The Works of. . . John Bramhall*, ed. J. Vesey (Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1842-5), vol. 3, p. 297.

embrace the rhetoric of mixed government and even coordinate sovereignty to ward off the increasing absolutism of parliamentarian theorists.[67]

Religion and Positive Law

The coordinate claim for the right to use violence was a political solution to a religious question. It argued that the nature of the English constitution was such that the divine power to use violence was jointly shared by the king and Parliament. As such, it was the king-in-Parliament which was above punishment and to which obedience was due. It was also the king-in-Parliament which could authorise the use of force and make wars. Before concluding this section on positive law, it is useful to attempt to clarify some aspects of the relationship between positive law and religion in the early stages of the civil war, particularly as they apply to the theology of violence.

One way of doing this is to look at a recent article by the historian Glenn Burgess, which, while drawing on a number of the same sources and addressing the same historiography as this thesis, comes to some different conclusions. In his article, Burgess comments on the hesitancy among parliamentarians to embrace Continental-style resistance theories. He notes instead their reliance on legal arguments, which appears to make for an odd sort of "war of religion." Burgess, however, is eager to

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[67] In particular, Henry Parker, who argued that Parliament was sovereign and that it essentially could do no wrong because it embodied and represented the people. See Parker, *Some Few Observations upon His Majesties Late Answer to the Declaration* (London: s.n., 1642) and Michael Mendle, *Henry Parker and the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); idem, "The Ship Money Case, The Case of Shipmony, and the Development of Henry Parker's Parliamentary Absolutism," *Historical Journal* 32, no. 3 (1989), pp. 513-36. Furthermore, Parker maintained in 1643 that it was justifiable to resist not only a present and existing tyrant, but also in order to *prevent* tyranny from occurring, *A Political Catechism* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1643), p. 12.

retain the concept of a war of religion as a description of the British civil wars. In his effort to do so, he argues that the parliamentary faction really wanted to advance their religion, but could not do so openly since it was accepted that wars could not be fought for religion. Thus they used legal arguments to mask their religious agenda. The result was that a war with religious objectives was justified in legal terms.[68]

The argument of this thesis maintains that religion was a crucial factor in the breakdown of government and the subsequent war on two counts: First, in the way that it shaped the arguments which were used by both sides; and second, in the way religious beliefs coloured the perceptions of the participants. Anti-Calvinists viewed their "puritan" opponents as inherently contentious and rebellious. Once the parliamentarian and puritan causes were conflated (not without reason), it was natural for anti-Calvinists to interpret their opponents' actions as rebellion. At the same time, the ingrained anti-Catholicism of the godly caused them to see their enemies as part of mystical Antichrist, bent on enslaving the kingdom and thrusting their swords "into our bodies, and their swords into our souls."[69]

Parliamentarians were certainly concerned that true religion was under attack, but more important was the insight which true religion gave to the gravity (and immediacy) of the assault. Religion allowed the parliamentarians to see that defensive action was necessary. Defensive action, in turn, was justified by divine ordinance. Religious perceptions allowed both sides to see their actions as authorised. Legal arguments about the nature of the government also had important theological underpinnings, for the structure of government which the people had

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[68] Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion? The Evidence of Political Propaganda," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2000), pp. 173-201.
[69] Stephen Marshall, *Plea*, p. 29.

formed, and the laws with which they had originated it, were the very structures which God had endowed with the authority to use violence. For parliamentarians, the crucial role played by the law was in distinguishing the thief in the night from the judge. If a person was guilty of a crime, it was agreed that he should submit to the punishment. Judges were commissioned with the king's authority (to the extent of the law) to carry out such punishments. Both parliamentarians and royalists saw judicial, or state, violence as necessary and agreed that a convict should not resist the executioner.[70]

One biblical example over which both sides fought for rhetorical control was that of Jesus before Pilate. Jesus was innocent, but he acknowledged that Pilate's authority came from above and so yielded. "Thou could have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."[71] For royalists no better example could be given of an obedient and meek citizen obeying a wrongful sentence even to the point of death.[72] Parliamentarians, on the other hand, could claim from this example that Pilate, who was but an inferior magistrate, still had the power over life and death, and thus inferior magistrates could authorise violence.[73] Others simply claimed that Jesus's patient suffering was a unique aspect of His divine person and that such self-sacrifice in the face of injustice was not required for ordinary Christians.[74] Among the various interpretations of Jesus before Pilate,

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[70] Again, here Hobbes is a notable exception.
[71] John 19:11, Geneva 1602.
[72] Dudley Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, pp. 133, 135, 138; Henry Ferne, *Conscience Satisfied*, pp. 58-9; Henry Hammond, *Of Resisting*, p. 9.
[73] Stephen Marshall, *Plea*, p. 13.
[74] For Samuel Rutherford, "Christ's passive obedience" was due to the fact that He was both human and divine and under "a special commandment imposed on Him by His Father;" if "royalists prove anything against the lawfulness of resisting kings . . . from this . . . extraordinary and rare example of Christ, the like whereof was never in the world, they may from the same example prove it unlawful to

there was agreement that it was wrong to kill Jesus, but few claimed that it had been *illegal* to do so.

This brings us back to the intersection of law, religion, and violence. Burgess makes much of the parliamentarian response to the example of the early Christians, and, particularly, to the evidence of Tertullian that the earliest Christians had the might to resist but chose not to do so for religious reasons. A number of insightful quotations are mustered to support the position that parliamentarians got around this stumbling block by arguing that they were not resisting for religious reasons but rather for "secular" ones. This seems to confuse the relationship between the Divine, the law and the use of violence. What parliamentarians made clear when discussing Tertullian and the early Church was that according to Romans 13 Christians had no right to defend themselves. By being Christians they broke the law and therefore had to either flee or yield to the judges and accept their punishment. Just because they were pious did not give them the authority to use violence.[75] As examples of piety, the early Christians were to be praised. But this did not change the fact that they were criminals. "They had the laws . . . against them" and as such should have submitted to the ordained powers, either fleeing or facing their sentences.[76] As Christians, they deserved praise: as criminals, punishment.[77]

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flee; for Christ would not flee," *Lex, Rex,* p. 315, cf. p. 312 (misnumbered as ?80), where Rutherford maintains that Pilate was also obligated to believe in Christ. Rutherford also employed the rhetoric of not having to yield to unjust judges, but he does so in the sense of when they come as a thief in the night against a law abiding citizen, rather than in the context of a legally tried and wrongfully convicted person, see ibid, p. 326, *passim.*

[75] Although, as the example of Samson demonstrates above, it was accepted as possible for God to give some pious individuals a direct authorisation for force in exceptional circumstances.

[76] H. Palmer, *Scripture and Reason Pleaded*, p. 47, also quoted by Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion?" p. 183. The author(s) of *Scripture and Reason Pleaded* acknowledged that

The case in England was manifestly different than when "their religion was . . . condemned by the laws of the Empire."[78] British Christians were far from being criminals, as their religion was established by law. And, in the situation of the civil wars, they had not broken any other standing laws. There was thus no obligation to yield to the judge.[79] This position was taken by parliamentarians to counter royalists who argued on the one hand that the Gospels limited the natural right to self defence,[80] as well as those who maintained that violence without a commission was illicit. Edward Symmons explained in his discussion of just wars that "the war on [Parliament's] side is utterly unlawful, for want of a right commission," by which he meant that the parliamentarians should be authorised "by the king." Since they were not, parliamentarians were "rank murderers of all

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most parliamentarians granted that if they were not acting within the bounds of the law then they should not use force. The author(s) could not go along with this position. On one hand it was illogical to argue that God gave power to kings and that they could use that power against God, and therefore ungodly laws were not binding (ibid, p. 49). On the other hand, the author(s) argued that self defence would override the obligation to obey an unjust law: "though I know even those that defend the resistance now used lawful; affirm it were not lawful if the law were against us . . . But how human laws made without against God's authority can hinder me from the liberty granted me by the law of nature, to defend myself from outrageous violence, being altogether innocent, I cannot see" (ibid, p. 51).

[77] In 1641 Henry Parker explained the difference succinctly in relation to St. Peter and Nero. St. Peter preached the word of God and if Nero had asked him to stop, he would have been right to have disregarded Nero and continued his missionary activities, since the law of God was higher than the law of man. "But if Nero use the sword hereupon against Peter, this sword is irresistible, because though in this it be injurious . . . it is still sacred," *True Grounds of Ecclesiasticall Regiment* (London: Robert Bostock, 1641), p. 23. Although what Nero did was (apparently) against God's wishes, the authority upon which he acted was still God's and thus Peter would have had to yield to his violence.

[78] Calybute Downing, *A Sermon Preached to the . . . Company of the Artillery, I September, 1640 . . . Designed to Compose the Present Troubles . . .* (London: s.n., 1641), pp. 38-9 (misnumbered as pp. 32, 29).

[79] See Philip Hunton, *Treatise*, pp. 54, 62.

[80] See for example, Dudley Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, p. 122; Henry Hammond, *Of Resisting*, p. 29. While the royalists might have had the bulk of the tradition in support of their position, the anti-Anabaptist rhetoric of the early reformations provided strong support for parliamentarians on this point. As Richard Bernard explained, "We must know that the Gospel takes not away the law of nature to defend ourselves by forcible means against violent enemies: yea, with a good conscience may we take up arms when there is no safety but in arms," *The Bible-Battells, Or, the Sacred Art Military for the Rightly Wageing of Warre According to Holy Writ* ([London]: Edward Blackmore, 1629), p. 29, cf. Gregory Thims, *The Protestant Informer*, p. 14 for an almost verbatim presentation of the same argument only applied to the context of the civil wars.

those they kill and destroy, and all the blood shed by them, is no other then innocent blood." Symmons explained that even if the people killed by Parliament *deserved* to be killed, the fact that Parliament did not have a commission to punish them meant that the parliamentarians had sinned heinously. For Symmons that commission for force came from God via the king. For parliamentarians, it came by God and was knowable through the law.[81] The law indicated who had the divine authority to punish and under what circumstances. Even from the quotations selected by Burgess, this reading is apparent. Furthermore, what such quotations show is not a group of religious zealots searching for an intellectual justification for attack, but a group of committed Protestants who genuinely believed themselves already to be under attack. Indeed, they were under attack much as the early Christians had been. But unlike the early Christians, the parliamentarians were not guilty of any crime and so undeserving of punishment.

The law remained the key with which to discern between the judge and the thief in the night. Again, this was no great innovation on the part of the parliamentarians. Calvin had made such a position clear in his commentaries on the all important saying of Christ's concerning living and dying by the sword. In his comments can be seen the positions of both Digges and Marshall. "A private man was not permitted to rise against those invested with public authority . . . We must therefore beware not to repel our enemies by force of arms even when they provoke us unjustly, except so far as the laws and public rights permit."[82] Digges emphasised the first half of the quotation, Marshall the latter. That was the essential feature of

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[81] Symmons, *A Militarie Sermon* (Oxford: Henry Hall, 1644), p. 18.
[82] Calvin, *The Gospel According to St. John 11-21*, trans. T. H. L. Parker (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1961), p. 157, John 18:11.

Marshall's "secular" Calvinist resistance theory. "The subject need not yield up his right but by law."[83] If a law had not been broken, when faced with violence, the prohibition against suicide transformed the God-given right to self defence into a duty.

In light of the theology of violence, the British civil wars appear to be not so much a war *for* religion as a war *by* and *because* of religion. An evangelical war, a war for the propagation of the faith, appears to be the form of war for religion discussed by Burgess, particularly in his consideration of Hammond.[84] In the early 1640s it was agreed that a war for the spread of religion, a crusade, was illicit for a number of reasons, not least of which was its strong association with popery. Yet Hammond's attempts to turn the accusation of popery aimed at royalists back towards parliamentarians does not necessarily provide an accurate reflection of Parliament's aims. It is certainly true that it was a war provoked by a number of religious issues and the religious perspectives of what emerged as two sides. Additionally, the use of force was something which ultimately had to be addressed on a theological level, thus justifications for violence were necessarily religious. It is undoubtedly an important and understudied aspect of the period that English citizens could consider religion a "civil right,"[85] but this was not the explosive power of religion in the period.

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[83] Marshall, *Plea*, p. 5.

[84] Hammond explained, "Arms may lawfully be used in some cases, and religion be maintained by all lawful means; yet arms are not a lawful means for this end, and so may not be used in this case, that is by subjects against the lawful magistrate in case of religion, *at least when some other religion is by law established in that kingdom*," *Of Resisting*, p. 4, emphasis added. What Hammond discredited was an evangelical war, or a crusade, rather than what Marshall and others argued, which was that religion did not bind them to give their throats to be cut and did not require them merely passively to disobey when innocent before the law and under attack.

[85] Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion?" p. 200; cf. Barbara Donagan, "Casuistry and Allegiance in the English Civil War," in *Writing and Political Engagement in Seventeenth-century England*, eds. Derek Hirst and Richard Strier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 101.

The argument that Parliament's justification for violence based on natural law and self defence was religious, could be criticised by Burgess as a further example of the "postrevisionist" "lazy argument that everything in the seventeenth century was religious." But it is hoped that the preceding argument has demonstrated that it is not possible to view parliamentarians as putting forward "a purely secular-legal argument," which was "unmistakably secular."[86] Burgess sees in men like Stephen Marshall a dichotomous split between their preaching, which should be seen as concerned only with the Church (despite being delivered on the floor of Parliament), and an "entirely different" discourse found in Marshall's political tract, which was "entirely legalistic."[87]

Yet, even in his "entirely legalistic" tract Marshall noted that his first concern was if "Scripture did warrant them (Parliament) to take up defensive arms," the answer to which was a "question of divinity." Marshall's point was not that the establishment of religion opened the way for the use of aggressive force, but rather that "religion binds [Protestants] not to give their throats to be cut . . . contrary to their own laws." With an "army of papists" approaching, Marshall thought it evident that defensive action was needed and justified by the evident laws of God. He summarised his position in saying that "the cause is a right cause, the cause of God," and then ended in saying he would "rather thousand times see the glory of England in the dust, then the pride of Rome. And though a civil war be miserable, yet no such misery as the peace which they beteem us, a Sicilian vesper or a Parisian massacre, from which

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[86] Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion?" pp. 180-1, 184, 198, 201.
[87] Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion?" p. 177. Barbara Donagan is of a similar opinion, describing Marshall as relying on "purely secular criteria" for resistance, "Casuistry and Allegiance in the English Civil War," p. 99.

good Lord deliver us."[88] This appears an odd form of secularism, regardless of how it is defined.

Divine Law

Direct Authorisation

The liberty of the saints was not necessarily extralegal. Rather, God allowed for the defence which He demanded, within the law. God providentially allowed the saints to defend themselves in this circumstance by giving them legal protection. But there was another way of knowing God's law: by understanding His providences. In this was something like a direct authorisation for violence, an authorisation from the top of the pyramid. Importantly, this was not so much a deviation from the just war tradition, but rather a testament to the strength of the hierarchy of authorisation. This hierarchy allowed Acts 5 to triumph over Romans 13. Ultimately, God was higher than any earthly authority. This was not an idea that necessarily immediately opened itself up to licence. Like the idea of defence, it was still tightly restricted. While this idea can be seen in sermons and tracts before the war and in the earliest stages of the war, it became more pronounced as the conflict continued as a result of a number of factors, most important of which were the manifest miracles of God--the proven providences of the battlefield--where His presence was discerned. God's presence reinforced a direct authorisation, so that Parliament could wage not just a defensive war under the law, but also an offensive war to punish under God.

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[88] Marshall, *Plea*, pp. 3, 11, 23, 26, 30.

The possibility of a direct divine command for violence was clear in Augustine.[89] In the twenty-first chapter of the first book of the *City of God*, Augustine explained, "there are some exceptions made by the divine authority to its own law, that men may not be put to death. These exceptions are of two kinds, being justified either by a general law, or by a special commission granted for a time to some individual." The first were magistrates, the second were inspired warriors like Joshua, or men such as Abraham, or "Samson . . . who drew down the house on himself and his foes together," and was "justified only on this ground, that the Spirit who wrought wonders by him had given him secret instructions to do this."[90] If God authorised violence, whether through positive law or directly, then it did not involve sin. In all other circumstances, killing was murder. This idea was widely subscribed to from the Middle Ages through to the Reformation.[91] It can be clearly seen in the writings of Calvin, which serve as a model for this line of thought.[92]

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[89] For one of the best modern efforts of deriving ethics from divine command, see Philip L. Quinn "The Primacy of God's Will in Christian Ethics," *Philosophical Perspectives* 6 (1992), pp. 493-513. For the best critique of this position (though not a response to Quinn), see Kai Nielsen, "God and the Basis of Morality," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 10, no. 2 (1982), pp. 335-50, cf. Richard J. Mouw, *The God Who Commands* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990).

[90] Augustine, *City of God*, bk. 19, chpt. 21, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* ed. Philip Schaff, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994), vol. 2, p. 15; cf. idem, *Reply to Faustus,* bk. 22 chpt. 74, Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 301.

[91] For the Middle Ages, see Frederick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 72, 90, 215, 225, 252-3, *passim.*

[92] That this section addresses the concept of a direct authorisation for violence with reference to the works of Calvin and the thinking of Calvinists should not be taken as an argument for the inherently revolutionary nature of Calvinism or of any kind of inevitability for the conflict. In any religion with a deity active in the world, it is possible for that deity to authorise violence directly, whether it is Krishna urging Arjuna to fight or Yahweh commanding Abraham to kill his son.

When Calvin encountered biblical passages apparently difficult to reconcile with his systematic ethics, he usually adopted a two-fold approach. The first was to offer a possible reading, couched in qualified language, which allowed for the passage to be squared with his general hermeneutic. Yet that hermeneutic also had something of a "get-out clause" built into it. The inscrutability of God was Calvin's second approach and his answer to Job. God's ways were beyond knowing and some things had to be taken on faith alone. This was particularly true with Calvin's approach to war. An early example can be seen in his exegesis of the passages from Genesis which retell Abraham's rescue of Lot, which was apparently problematic because Abraham seems to initiate a war, despite being a private person. Calvin offers up the explanation that Abraham, as king of the region (albeit it in the future), was entitled to wage war. But Calvin also maintained that Abraham had a hidden command, a direct authorisation from God, which justified the act. It was a war "under the special direction of the Spirit," lawful on account of the "secret judgement" of God, which humans should not question, but rather, obey.[93]

Calvin's reliance on this approach in his ethics of war is apparent in his commentary on Joshua.[94] The Book of Joshua retells the story of the Israelites after

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[93] Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses, Called Genesis*, trans. John King (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1847), vol. 1, pp. 383-5, Genesis 14:13. Some scholars maintain that Calvin was hesitant to invoke this form of justification. John L. Thompson is of this view. See his "The Immoralities of the Patriarchs in the History of Exegesis: A Reappraisal of Calvin's Position," *Calvin Theological Journal* 26 (1991), pp. 17-8; idem, "Patriarchs, Polygamy, and Private Resistance: John Calvin and Others on Breaking God's Rules," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 25, no. 1 (1994), pp. 16-7. But as Thompson's own work demonstrates, Calvin was only relatively hesitant in view of how frequently other Reformation theologians were willing to use this concept. Thompson's work also supports the position developed below that the presence (and direct authorisation of God) could be verified by miracles, ibid, p. 22, cf. R. Bainton, "The Immoralities of the Patriarchs According to the Exegesis of the Late Middle Ages and of the Reformation," *Harvard Theological Review* 23 (1930), pp. 39-49.

[94] This discussion of Calvin's commentaries on Joshua relies on Henry Beveridge, trans., *Commentaries on the Book of Joshua* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1854), reproduced

their time in the desert. As they moved into Canaan they fought a number of brutal wars with the inhabitants. The book retells how God directly authorised violence, fought alongside Israel (and in some instances fought in their place), allowed for deceit to be used in war and demanded that entire towns and innocents be slaughtered. The first twelve chapters are filled with reports that "not one was spared."[95]

Calvin was undeterred. In some instances he maintained that the standard ethics of war could still be found. He explained that God had opened the way for this apparent cruelty on the part of the Israelites by causing their enemies to be hostile and to refuse peace. The Israelites

> were met in a hostile manner, in order that the war might be just. And it was wonderfully arranged by the secret providence of God, that, being doomed to destruction, they should voluntarily offer themselves to it and by provoking the Israelites, be the cause of their own ruin. The Lord, therefore, besides ordering that pardon should be denied them, also incited them to blind fury, that no room might be left for mercy . . . And He in His incomprehensible wisdom provided that when the time for action arrived, His people should not be impeded in their course by any obstacle . . . In the same way, also, the citizens of Jericho, by having shut their gates, were the first to declare war. The case is the same with the others, who, by their obstinacy, furnished the Israelites with a ground for prosecuting the war.[96]

For Calvin it was no stretch of credulity to maintain that Jericho, by closing its gates, had declared war on the Israelites. But even in this explanation the "secret providence of God" was at work, opening the way for Israel's actions.

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verbatim in the American Eerdmans edition of 1949. For ease of reference, references to relevant sections of Joshua will be substituted for page numbers.

[95] Indeed, in one instance when Achan failed to comply with the divine command to destroy everything, he had to be killed himself, along with his entire family. For some seventeenth-century applications of this story, see Blair Worden, "Oliver Cromwell and the Sin of Achan," in *History, Society and the Churches: Essays in Honour of Owen Chadwick,* eds. Derek Beales and Geoffrey Best, pp. 125-45.

[96] Joshua 11:19, cf. 22:11.

Throughout the commentary, Calvin relied on the premise that the divine authorisation for violence justified such violence, even it if it might not appear justified to human eyes. Calvin acknowledged that such carnage "might seem an inhuman massacre, had it not been executed by the command of God. But as He, in whose hands are life and death, had justly doomed those nations to destruction, this puts an end to all discussion." There was no need for further exegesis, as Calvin could conclude, "they perished justly." When such actions were undertaken at the command of God they were just. Direct authorisation was sufficient. Without it, Joshua and the Israelites would have committed murder. "It would have been barbarous and atrocious cruelty had the Israelites gratified their own lust and rage, in slaughtering mothers and their children, but they are justly praised for their active piety and holy zeal, in executing the command of God, who was pleased in this way to purge the land of Canaan of the foul and loathsome defilements by which it had long been polluted." There were rules for war, but God, as the author of those rules, was also able to suspend them when necessary for the fulfilment of His will.[97]

Obedience to the divine will was essential, and it was on this account that Joshua received praise rather than criticism. Despite his ruthlessness, he was a humble instrument of God, who certainly would have sought peace and mercy had God not ordered him otherwise. When God's command was encountered it had to be obeyed. As Calvin again explained, "the divine command must always be kept in view . . . It would therefore have been contrary to the feelings of humanity to exult in their ignominy, had not God so ordered it. But as such was His pleasure, it behoves us

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[97] Joshua 6:20, cf. 9:3.

to acquiesce in His decision, without presuming to inquire why He was so severe."[98] Calvin's sense is that the divine command must not be questioned. When God called on His creatures to do exceptional things, they sinned not in doing them, but only if they refused to heed the divine call. Such reasoning was surely as true for the parliamentarians as it was for the Patriarchs.[99]

A final selection from Calvin's commentary on Joshua brings together many of his ideas about the direct authorisation of the Divine for the use of violence. Commenting on Joshua 10:40, Calvin explained that the authority of God was the key to understanding this divine violence:

> Here the divine authority is again interposed in order completely to acquit Joshua of any charge of cruelty. Had he proceeded of his own accord to commit an indiscriminate massacre of women and children, no excuse could have exculpated him from the quilt of detestable cruelty, cruelty surpassing anything of which we read . . . But that at which all would otherwise be justly horrified, it becomes them to embrace with reverence, as proceeding from God . . . But as God had destined the swords of His people for the slaughter of the Amorites, Joshua could do nothing else than obey His command . . . By this fact, then, not only are all mouths stopped, but all minds also are restrained from presuming to pass censure. When any one hears it said that Joshua slew all who came in his way without distinction, although they threw down their arms and suppliantly begged for mercy, the calmest minds are aroused by the bare and simple statement, but when it is added, that so God had commanded, there is no more ground for obloquy against him, than there is against those who pronounce sentence on criminals . . .

Here again is a return to the idea of the propriety of authorised violence and the analogy between war and the power to punish criminals within a state. The overriding

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[98] Joshua 10:18, Calvin continued, "it was the will of God that all should be destroyed, and He had imposed the execution of this sentence on His people. Had He not stimulated them strongly to the performance of it, they might have found spacious pretexts for giving pardon. But a mercy which impairs the authority of God at the will of man, is detestable," (ibid).

[99] As usual, Calvin does make some references to how such examples were to be applied. With reference to Joshua, he explained, "It is just as if he had placed his hands at the disposal of God, when he destroyed those nations according to his command. And so ought we to hold that, though the whole world should condemn us, it is sufficient to free us from all blame, that we have the authority of God," Joshua 11:12.

message of Calvin's commentaries on Joshua, echoed in his other works, was that God could directly authorise war, even in contrast to other laws regulating violence.

The concept of a direct command from God was central to Calvin's exegesis of Joshua and to his hermeneutic generally. While an important tool for reading the Bible, it also had practical ramifications, for while Calvin maintained that the time of biblical revelation had ended, he did not believe that God was no longer active in the world. He shunned those of such persuasion in numerous places, including in his commentary of Joshua. For Calvin, it was blasphemous to resign God to heaven. Any "who imagine that God only looks down from heaven to see what men will be pleased to do, and who cannot bear to think that the hearts of men are curbed by His secret agency, what else do they display than their own presumption?" Such people "only allow God a permissive power, and in this way make His counsel dependent on the pleasure of men." This was not the case, argued Calvin, for God still worked in the world, and could still harden men's hearts to allow for their destruction or provide direct authorisation to their destroyers.[100]

The New Wars of Joshua

There were many who believed that Parliament had the presence of God with them, just as Joshua had, and the sermons delivered to Parliament during the war

[100] Joshua 11:19, cf. idem, *Institutes*, 1:16.1-5, in *Institutes of the Christian Religion* trans., Henry Beveridge, vol. 1, pp. 171-7.

years demonstrated a strong interest in Joshua.[101] In the 1650s one supporter of the new regime recognised that "providence has ordered all actions, counsels and things, . . . [and] . . . Now Oliver by the providence of God is set up, . . . God has . . . owned him as our Joshua."[102] This was more than just flattery, for in such a claim can be seen an argument for legitimacy. A direct divine authorisation bypassed the central role of the king and provided authorisation for violence. If Cromwell was a new Joshua, who could doubt he had the authority to wage wars? Whether or not such ideas came specifically from Calvin, parliamentarians expressed a view of God's ability to command violence directly which was similar to that outlined from Calvin's commentary on Joshua. While never universal, such ideas were nevertheless highly influential.

Royalists did not deny the basic logic of direct authorisation. While Digges denied that such examples could support general rules, he granted that things were "extraordinarily allowed by God, who may dispense with His own law."[103] Few denied that God *could* directly authorise violence and that He *had* done so in the past, but it was argued the time of miracles was ended.[104] Furthermore, if the inscrutability of God were taken seriously, a major epistemological wall blocked a direct divine authorisation. Despite the orthodoxy of such views on miracles, a strong

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[101] See Gregory Thims, *The Protestant Informer*, p. 21, title-page; Matthew Newcomen, *A Sermon, Tending to Set Forth the Right Vse of the Disasters That Befall Our Armies* (London: George Miller, 1644); Edmund Calamy, *The Noble-Mans Patterne of True and Reall Thankfulnesse* (London: G. M, 1643).

[102] George Smith, *Gods Unchangeableness: Or Gods Continued Providence* (London: Tho. Underhill, 1655), p. 41.

[103] Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes*, p. 105. It is perhaps ironic that when the logic of direct authorisation led to the execution of the king, the London Presbyterians--who did much to promote the idea in the mid-1640s--denounced it, e.g., Thomas Gataker, *A Serious and Faithfull Representation of the Judgements of Ministers of the Gospell within the Province of London* (London: M. B., 1649), p. 13.

[104] See Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 226-32.

providentialist streak tended to wear away at warnings not to presume to know God's mind. As Alexandra Walsham concluded in her recent work on providence in the period, "God was no idle, inactive spectator upon the mechanical workings of the created world, but an assiduous, energetic deity who constantly intervened in human affairs" and "before 1640 the idea of an interventionist deity was very much a part of the intellectual and cultural mainstream." Providence did the most to open a door for God to come back into the world.[105]

Given that Calvin himself proposed various distinctions between God's "general" and "special" providence, it is no wonder that his seventeenth-century heirs were not altogether consistent in their definition of the concepts. In one sense, God's general providence could indicate the ordering of the universe, while special providence concerned humanity. In another, general providence applied to all people and special providence was the purview of the Church specifically. The terms could also be used to distinguish between the actions of God which were mediate and occurred through second causes, which was general providence, and those actions which were immediately from God: miracles, or special providence.[106]

While God's special providences could serve as a form of communication, the idea of providence was not a particularly revolutionary or destabilising concept. If anything, the idea, when combined with that of the inscrutability of God, was conservative in its fatalism. God at times would bring tyrants to rule apparently

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[105] Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, pp. 2, 110. For Calvin on providence, see Horton Davies, *The Vigilant God: Providence in the Thought of Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, and Barth* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), chpt. 4.

[106] Davies, *The Vigilant God*, p. 98; Blair Worden, "Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England," *Past and Present* no. 109 (1985), pp. 60-1; Dena Goldberg, "Whose God's on First? Special Providence in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe," *English Literary History* 60, no. 3 (1993), pp. 569-87.

without reason. Individuals should not question the divine will, rather they should accept such providences. This was not only because God's will was sufficient, but also because God's mind was unknowable.

Ways of Knowing

Nevertheless, it was hard to resist efforts to read God's will from providences, especially in such turbulent times, when everything appeared exceptional. As a result, the preachers to Parliament repeatedly called for providences to be investigated so that the mind of God could be known. There emerge from the fast sermons several ways for knowing God's mind, realising the divine presence and ultimately receiving from it authorisation. The first was to look into providences and be aware of God's presence. God's presence was also detected when events closely paralleled biblical stories, particularly those concerned with the history of Israel. The third way of knowing God's presence was when prophecies appeared to be being fulfilled. Fourth was the presence of miracles. Finally, all of these readings of providence combined and reinforced the concept of a call, whereby God raised up weak and unworthy instruments and called them to do some great work.

Providences were the starting point for understanding God's presence. By examining providences, humans could know God's mind and clarify the direction to be taken. As John Rowe explained to Parliament in 1656, it was necessary to "look into these providences of His, to find out those wills or meanings of God, and when

we have found them . . . we must labour to comply with them."[107] But this was a process which required patience. It was undoubtedly a mistake to rush into judgement concerning providences, and it was usually necessary for there to be more than one extraordinary event before a decision about God's direction could be made. It was not for men to snatch away God's meaning in rashness, but equally they should not ignore clear manifestations of it.

Patience was an important aspect of parliamentary providentialism. Most agreed on the principle that it was dangerous to pretend to see the divine hand in earthly events, but the clarity of God's presence on some occasions left little room for doubt. It was for this reason that there was such a persistent insistence among the fast sermon preachers that the abundance and clarity of providences meant that God's presence (and will) could be known. The Army required less persuasion than Parliament on this account, and Oliver Cromwell frequently saw God's will manifest in earthly providences. As a recent historian of the New Model Army has commented, "there was never any doubt in Cromwell's mind that he understood perfectly the mind and the plans of God."[108] If there had been doubt about God's plan, if the providences had not been so clear, then actions would have had to have been delayed or altered. Providences had to be tried and tested to discern the divine presence from "an evil spirit."[109] Yet, once providences had been patiently tested, they could reveal God's presence, His will, and, ultimately, His authorisation. After

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[107] Rowe, *Mans Duty in Magnifying Gods Work. Discovered in a Sermon . . . Preached before the Parliament, Octob. 8. 1656* (London: Robert White, 1656), p. 13.
[108] Ian Gentles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland, 1645-1653* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992) p. 93. For Cromwell's providentialism, see Robert S. Paul, *The Lord Protector: Religion and Politics in the Life of Oliver Cromwell* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), esp. chpts. 15, 20; Worden, "Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England," *passim.*
[109] Simeon Ashe, *Good Courage Discovered and Encovraged* (London: Iohn Dawson: 1642), p. 7, cf. p. 26 for the way in which God used physical phenomena to reveal His will and presence.

the war began the providences were so frequent and so abundant that it was as if God was actively guiding the Parliament, as He had done with ancient Israel.

Parallels with Israel were also important for knowing God's will on two counts. The Bible provided the best source for understanding God's will. God's recorded dealings with Israel were seen as clear statements of what God demanded. When England was in a situation directly parallel to Israel's, then there could be little doubt about how it should act. Secondly, Israel was for a time ruled and guided directly by God and a close parallel between Israel and England could imply that England too was experiencing the direct presence and guidance of the Divine. Looking back, Henry Stubbe explained that "our case has been parallel" to the experience of Israel, and by examining the Bible and recognising God's presence "we may therein read the grounds of our confidence, that thorough a resemblance of events the same providence operates now in us, which did of old, and we expect the same issue."[110] Like Israel, England should act to ensure that "God's special presence" remained and guided the nation.[111] To this end the parliamentarian preachers were particularly concerned to detail "what Israel had to do" to please God.[112] The apocalyptic implications of the intense parallels with Israel will be addressed below, but it is easy to understand how the belief that God's presence was

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[110] Stubbe, *Malice Rebuked, Or, A Character of Mr. Richard Baxters Abilities* (London: s.n., 1659), p. 4, quoted in Worden, "Providence and Politics," p. 89.
[111] Simeon Ashe, *Religious Covenanting Directed and Covenant-keeping Perswaded* (London: G. M., 1646), p. 2. Ashe was here advocating covenanting as a way of keeping God's presence. For the issue of the covenant, God's presence, and parallels with Israel, see Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 79-81, cf. Melvin B. Endy, "Just War, Holy War, and Millennialism in Revolutionary America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd. ser., 42, no. 1 (1985), p. 14.
[112] Stephen Marshall, *The Right Understanding of the Times . . . Preached . . . December 30, 1646* (London: Richard Cotes, 1647), p. 3.

pouring forth again, in parallel with the days of Israel, could lead to the idea that violence was authorised directly by the Divine, as it had been in the time of Joshua.

The fulfilment of biblical prophecies was closely related to providential parallels with Israel. Many shared the sentiment that time was moving forward faster. It was widely agreed that "there be signs whereby we may know the approaching of that day" when God would bring an end to His creation.[113] Foxe had taught good Protestants to seek to correlate events with prophecy. As events unfolded it became increasingly easy to see the wars as a central feature of the conflict between Christ and Antichrist. Marshall, who in many ways cast himself as a new Foxe, was keen to chronicle the way in which God's presence was breaking forth with increased clarity into the temporal world, driving His plan towards its consummation.[114] Likewise, other ministers believed that it was possible that the time was now at hand, and that God's mercy and spirit was being experienced "as in former ages . . . we are sure that Antichrist shall fall, and it is probably that this is the time, and war" which was ordained to cut off one of the heads of the Beast.[115] This eschatological optimism caused Rutherford to preface his *Lex, Rex* by saying, "I hope this war shall be Christ's triumph, Babylon's ruin."[116] As victories began to mount and providences coalesced, such a hope appeared to be turning into a positive possibility. If God was with the parliamentarians, actually present with them as they fought in His cause and fulfilled His prophecies, then divine authorisation could be presumed.

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[113] Stephen Marshall, *Reformation and Desolation . . . Preached to the . . . House of Commons at Their Late Solemne Fast, Decemb. 22. 1641* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1642), p. 28.
[114] See Stephen Marshall, *The Song of Moses . . . and the Song of the Lambe* (London: Sam: Man, 1643), pp. 21-2, 25-9; idem, *A Sacred Record to be Made of Gods Mercies to Zion* (London: Rich. Cotes, 1645), p. 36; *A Peace-Offering to God* (London: T. P. and M. S., 1641), p. 45.
[115] Gregory Thims, *The Protestant Informer*, pp. 17-8.
[116] Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, sig. A4.

Miracles also indicated God's presence, and, frequently, His favour.[117] There were political miracles, embodied primarily in the constitutional reforms of the early 1640s.[118] The reformation of the English Church was another miracle. Both political and ecclesiastical reforms were particularly miraculous given the disasters that threatened these institutions before the Long Parliament. But the greatest miracles of all were those on the battlefield along with those which preserved the life of the parliamentarians from the pernicious plots of their enemies. Echoing many of the parliamentary preachers, Ashe asked the London city council, "Who can recount God's many marvellous works for our safety and comfort? Have not our deliverances been wonderful and many of our victories little less than miraculous?"[119] To see God's hand in miraculous victories and deliverances was natural. Calvin himself explained, "though the events of all wars depend on God, yet He is said to be seen when there is a remarkable victory, which cannot be accounted for" in any other way expect by the presence of God.[120] For many parliamentarians, their victories could be little less than a sign of divine favour and presence.[121]

After the wars a group of sectaries wrote to Cromwell, reminding him of "what God did for you and for us at Marston Moor, Naseby, Pembroke, Preston,

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[117] Accompanying these miracles were also numerous monstrosities, reported in the pulpit and the press, concerning deformed births and the like which testified to the depravity of either the parliamentarian or royalist side, see Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p. 220; Christopher Durston, "Signs and Wonders and the English Civil War," *History Today* 37, no. 10 (1987), pp. 22-8.

[118] Stephen Marshall, *A Peace-offering to God . . . Preached to the Honourable House of Commons . . . September 7. 1641* (London: T. P. and M. S., 1641), p. 45; idem, *A Sacred Record to be Made of Gods Mercies to Zion . . . Preached to the Two Houses of Parliament . . . June 19. 1645* (London: Rich. Cotes, 1645), pp. 27, 35.

[119] Ashe, *Religious Covenanting*, p. 5.

[120] Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, trans. John Owen (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1849), vol. 5, p. 267, Zechariah, 9:14, cf. idem, *Commentaries on Joshua*, 6:1.

[121] See Worden, "Providence and Politics," pp. 68, 81, *passim*.

Tredah, Dunbar and Worcester."[122] For such soldiers the parliamentary victories were still cherished as miraculous judgements from God. The "volume" that would be required to record all of the miracles done for Parliament would attest to the way in which "God so powerfully demonstrates and effects his own will."[123] And here was the important point: God had an aim and a direction and He used miracles to guide His people forward toward the final end.

All these miracles, divine deliverances, and providences demonstrated God's presence. The final aspect of this presence was the divine call to action. Once the will of God was seen from His providences, it had to be obeyed. If one was called to be an agent of God's work, even if the task transgressed normal or expected rules, such work had to be done. It was "nothing but obedience to the call of God" which designated His true followers.[124] Edward Corbet explained in his sermon on providence that when God opened a way, "we must go along with providence, and serve occasion and opportunities, and be exactly careful of all means." For this Corbet looked to Joshua as the best example.[125] In Thomas Goodwin's opinion, it appeared that Parliament was "called by God, for such a time as this."[126]

Stephen Marshall was desperate for Parliament to recognise their divine calling, testified to by abundant providence: "God calls you now to this work, and

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[122] "Addresse of the Anabaptist Ministers in London, to the Lord Protector," in John Nickolls, ed., *Original Letters and Papers of State, Addressed to Oliver Cromwell* (London: William Boyer, 1743), pp. 142-3.
[123] *Certaine Necessary Resolutions of the Most Considerable Scruples Now Possessing the Mindes of the Major Part of this Kingdome* (London: W. M., 1649), pp. 2, 4.
[124] Francis Cheynell, *Sions Memento,* p. 5.
[125] Corbet, *Gods Providence, a Sermon Preached Before the Honourable House of Commons* (London: Tho. Badger, 1642), p. 28.
[126] Goodwin, *Zerubbabels Encouragement to Finish the Temple* (London: R. Dawlman, 1642), p. 52.

will be with you while you set your hearts and hands to do it; and do it speedily." "God hath raised you up to attempt glorious things."[127] First and foremost, recognising the call of God meant a willingness to serve as a humble instrument of the divine plan. This entailed a dying to one's self and letting go of selfish desires to ensure that only divine goals were pursued. To be an instrument of God meant being prepared for anything, including violence and death. As Marshall told Parliament: it "may be that some of you may be called, as soldiers, to spend your blood in the Church's cause. If you knew the honour and the reward that belongs to such a service, you would say, . . . Had every hair on your head a life, you would venture them all in the Church's cause . . . embrace it readily . . . Behold your Saviour coming."[128] Such rhetoric, which always blurred the thin line of metaphor, had important ramifications as it open up the idea of war directly authorised by God.

Simon Ashe demonstrated this tendency in a sermon drawing on Joshua. Ashe blended the idea that God was present alongside the saints with the idea that God directly authorised wars. Interpreting Joshua 1 specifically, Ashe explained that humans were ultimately helpless before God, and if "the Lord please to beat up the drum," that is, if God "bid them arm . . . His call is sufficient." No further warrant was required. And "God calls either by His precept, or by His providence." Or, in the case of Parliament's defensive war against those papists who would destroy the kingdom, God commissioned by both precept and providence.[129]

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[127] Marshall, *Song of Moses*, p. 8; idem, *Reformation and Desolation*, pp. 7, 52.
[128] Marshall, *Meroz Cursed, Or, A Sermon Preached to the Honourable House of Commons . . . Febr. 23. 1641* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1642), pp. 52-4.
[129] Ashe, *Good Courage Discovered and Encovraged*, pp. 6-7.

This theology, however, was squared with just war theory. As Andrew Willet noted years before the civil wars, there were a number of "causes of just war." They included recovering property, delivering the oppressed, etc. But as Willet's criteria were biblically grounded, the top of the list was "when as any battle is enterprised by the special commandment of God." God, as the head of the hierarchy could authorise violence and conduct just wars.[130] This idea was not invented by parliamentarians, but as a conjunction of factors made God's direct authorisation increasingly clear, it was one which was taken up by them.

[130] Willet, *Hexapla in Exodum*, p. 329.

Chapter Five

The Apocalyptic Perspective*

Ideas--religious, legal, historical, and political--played two roles in the conflict of the civil wars. On the one hand they were employed, adapted, and developed to support action. On the other, ideas caused people to believe that such actions needed to be taken. These actions in turn had to be supported by further (often related, but not always identical) ideas. The previous chapters have demonstrated how the theology of violence permitted defensive--or even aggressive--violence on the part of Parliament during the civil wars. But the belief that violence was necessary was itself a conviction which arose from viewing events through certain ideological lenses. Some of the religious aspects of these ideologies are grouped together and presently explored under the umbrella term of "apocalypticism." The prominent ideas addressed are anti-Catholicism, anti-idolatry and a new dispensation.

An apocalyptic perspective both generated and justified violence. While such violence was most often contained with in the traditional hierarchy, apocalypticism nevertheless produced a discourse suffused with a sense of urgency and a need for immediate action. But the language of the Apocalypse was not necessarily adopted for these reasons. Rather, the strong appeal of such rhetoric appears to have been its

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explanatory power. As Parliament's prophet, Stephen Marshall recognised that "in these calamitous times, every man's thoughts run . . . with desire to know what should come to pass hereafter . . . How long it shall be to the end of these troubles, and all complain, that there is no prophet to tell us how long." Where, amidst such chaos, was one to look for answers? How could the fight of brother against brother be understood? Marshall maintained that the Apocalypse provided an answer. Revelation "gives (I say) a satisfactory answer, to this difficult question, and I undertake . . . to tell you what will be the issue and event of all the troubles."[1] Marshall was in good company, as many divines in the period looked to biblical prophecy as a key for interpreting present events and finding assurance about the future.[2]

Apocalypticism effectively rendered intelligible what was otherwise unbelievable. The first strand of this outlook was the idea of a demonised enemy, which caused the conflict to be seen as a defensive one. The parliamentarians could also see their persecution and tribulation as a sign of their election, or at the very least as an indication that they were fighting on God's side. As God's faithful soldiers, they were required to cleanse the nation of the idols which prevented the fullness of God's presence. The belief that there was a cosmic battle between good and evil, which stretched back through time, also allowed the parliamentarians to understand their own battle in similar terms. Even if they were not actual combatants in that cosmic war, their violence could be seen in parallel with and in imitation of it. This explanatory power, coupled with a Protestant providentialism, allowed the

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[1] Marshall, *The Song of Moses . . . and the Song of the Lambe* (London: Sam. Man, 1643), p. 44. For Marshall's apocalypticism generally, see Mark R. Bell, "Preaching in the Last Days: The Apocalyptic Thought of Stephen Marshall," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 78, no. 4 (2000), pp. 251-62.
[2] For one of the most systematic studies of eschatology in the period, see Bryan W. Ball, *A Great Expectation: Eschatological Thought in English Protestantism to 1660* (Leiden: Brill, 1975).

parliamentarians to see themselves as instruments of the divine will, which in turn opened a the way for direct divine authorisation for violence. In this way, the apocalyptic outlook provided a crucial link between the ideas of violence in a just war and the right to defence provided by natural law.

Defensive Dualism and Palpable Popery

By the time of the civil wars, anti-Catholic sentiment had a long history in England. The image of the Catholic had become an archetype of an evil individual, slavish to the corrupt doctrine of the papacy and subversive to the state. It was an image which had a visceral effect when employed. The papist was the bogeyman of seventeenth-century England, capable of superhuman feats of malice and guile. This view of Catholics was founded on government propaganda from the previous century, which had been cultivated for theological and political reasons. Theologically, the discrediting of Catholicism was necessary to justify the break with Rome. Thus the Catholic Church was portrayed as profoundly iniquitous. Politically, the Church's claim to authority in England also had to be countered. At the same time, the countless Catholic plots and polemics aimed at toppling English government gave credence to the belief that Catholics threatened the safety of the state. Papists were fanatical in their desire to overturn the English regime and return Albion to the thraldom of Rome's idolatry.

Anti-Catholic rhetoric quickly adopted the association between the institution of the papacy and the image of Antichrist from the Book of Revelation. While this was a fluid association and Antichrist could embody far more than simply the papacy,

by the seventeenth century the view of the Catholic Church as synonymous with Antichrist had become a theological commonplace few dared to dispute.[3] The pope was Antichrist and Catholics were his minions, seeking to do the bidding of the Devil in his battle against the forces of Christ. Christ's forces, and Antichrist's greatest enemy, was Protestant England.[4] There was a long list of theological impurities which Catholicism had introduced over the centuries in its efforts to hide the true light of Christ in Antichristian darkness. In addition to the corrupt theology of the papcy, history itself testified to the danger of Catholics. The litany of events confirming that Catholics were ruthless, bloodthirsty murderers intent on nothing less than the subjugation of England and the enslavement of its people to idol worship, was well known. This was of fundamental importance, for the belief that Catholics were creatures bent only on killing English Protestants was central to the perception among parliamentarians that they were under direct attack, even before the fighting started. The belief in the inherent aggressive violence of Catholics validated the defensive nature of their struggle.

The English Protestant culture that emerged under Elizabeth came to enshrine its anti-Catholicism in annual national celebrations. The calendar itself reflected the nation's anti-Catholicism, remembered most particularly on the red-letter

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[3] See Peter Lake, "The Significance of the Elizabethan Identification of the Pope as Antichrist," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31, no. 2 (1980), pp. 161-78; Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971). The criticism and controversy surrounding Richard Baxter's "apostasy" in this regard demonstrates how firmly established the association of the papacy with Antichrist was in the period, see William M. Lamont, *Richard Baxter and the Millennium: Protestant Imperialism and the English Revolution* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), chpt. 1.

[4] William Haller's *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963) demonstrates the influence of Foxe's work, which provided early modern Englishmen with an apocalyptic understanding of their Protestant past and a hope for the future. On the last point, see also, William M. Lamont, *Puritanism and Historical Controversy* (London: University College London, 1996), chpt. 8.

anniversaries of the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the Gunpowder Plot. Such efforts at toppling the English polity were proof of the demonic nature of Catholic conspirators. They also testified to God's protection of Protestant England. Anti-Catholic anniversaries served as reminders that England was Protestant and that with God's protection would prevail over all papist enemies.[5]

It was no coincidence that the rhetoric of anti-Catholicism became particularly heated near the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot each year. John Pym's opening speech to the Commons of 7 November 1640, with its fierce anti-Catholic language and his detection of a "design to alter the kingdom both in religion and government," should be seen in its proximity to this anniversary. Pym was not alone in his view that papists had crept into every corner of the kingdom and that plans were underway for more to join them in their aims of committing "the highest of treason." There were papists in the Church, in the government, in the courts, and in almost all other sectors. Most frightening were the "military steps" being taken, which included papists gaining control of the armed forces and the bringing in of soldiers from overseas. This interpretation of events was reasonable considering the assumed aggression of papists, and under such dire circumstances, immediate defensive action was needed.[6]

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[5] For a detailed study of how events became imbedded in the national consciousness and created a calendar of their own, see David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989); idem, "The Protestant Calendar and the Vocabulary of Celebration in Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 29, no. 1 (1990), pp. 41-7.

[6] *The Stuart Constitution, 1603-1688: Documents and Commentary*, ed. J. P. Kenyon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), pp. 203-5. For the wide perception of a popish plot (and the reasons why it was not irrational), see Caroline M. Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1983); idem, "Early Stuart Catholicism: Revisions and Re-revisions," *Journal of Modern History* 52, no. 1 (1980), pp. 1-34. Keith Lindley has pointed out that the number of Catholics in the king's army was never as significant as parliamentarian propaganda would have suggested, and furthermore, that most Catholics (like most Englishmen) tried to remain neutral, see Lindley, "The Part Played by the Catholics" in *Politics, Religion and the English Civil War*, ed. Brian Manning (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), pp. 127-79. Yet Joyce L. Malcolm has

Numerous other plots, when discovered, gave further credence to the perception of a Catholic penchant for blood. Each plot was an image of the Gunpowder Plot and a continuation of the relentless Catholic effort to capture England. But now the old enemy had grown bolder and was preparing for a full and final attack, pursued by both overt and covert means. A year after Pym's speech, again, around the time of the Gunpowder anniversary, another Catholic plot was discovered, thanks to the humble Thomas Beale. Predictably, the papists were intent on blood and had hoped to "murder divers of the nobility and many others of the Honourable House of Commons." Fortunately, "the providence of almighty God miraculously prevented the bloody designs of those cruel and merciless papists." Parliament immediately sought its defence by ordering that all priests and Jesuits be rounded up.[7] The anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot was closely followed by the anniversary of Elizabeth's accession, which provided the parliamentary preachers with an opportunity for an extended discussion of the necessity of purging the nation of popery. Accession Day marked the height of the yearly fortnight of anti-Catholic sentiment.[8]

The Gunpowder Plot had solidified English Protestant belief that Rome was bent on the destruction of England and had demonstrated, like the burning of martyrs under Mary, the bloodthirsty and ruthless nature of Catholics. By Charles I's reign

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pointed out that Catholics were disproportionately represented among the king's ranks in "A King in Search of Soldiers: Charles I in 1642," *Historical Journal* 21, no. 2 (1978), p. 271. The important point here is that the clear Catholic presence in the king's army did much to heighten the *perception* that the kingdom was under attack by a papist force.

[7] Henry Somerset, *A Discovery of a Horrible and Bloody Treason and Conspiracie against the Protestants of this Kingdome* (London: Iohn Thomas, 1641), pp. 1-6 (unnumbered pages); Keith Lindley, "The Lay Catholics of England in the Reign of Charles I," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 22, no. 3 (1971), p. 215.

[8] See Stephen Marshall, *A Sermon Preached . . . November 17. 1640* (London: J. Okes, 1641).

English Protestants knew to be on their guard against Catholics on account of their deviousness, devilishness, and violence.[9] The fervent anti-Catholicism of the Long Parliament, despite being one of the most important justifications for defensive action, was also one of the least innovative.[10] It was, perhaps, the most intelligible argument to the widest range of people.[11]

John Goodwin's impassioned *Anti-Cavalierisme* (1642) provides a powerful example of the logic of anti-Catholicism and the besieged mentality that ideas of a popish plot engendered among the godly. Goodwin was firm in his belief that the opponents of Parliament, those who had surrounded and deceived the king, were "legions of devils . . . Jesuits and papists, and atheists," the very soldiers of Antichrist, with clear intentions to "devour" the kingdom. He hoped to demonstrate the "imminent danger that hangs over your heads, and threatens you every hour." This was no normal enemy that the English were now called upon to fight, but the very "sons of Belial that are risen up against you." Faced with this antichristian horde, the question, to Goodwin's mind, was "whether it be lawful for you to stand upon

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[9] J. P. Kenyon identified another important aspect demonstrated by the Gunpowder Plot which played an important role in the popish plot conspiracy theories of the 1640s and the 1670s, namely, that the Armada had instilled in the English "a robust faith in their ability to beat off direct attacks from abroad" and thus it "was obvious to them that their Protestant citadel could only be captured by a conspiracy from within," *The Popish Plot* (London: Heinemann, 1972), p. 3.

[10] For the prevalence of the fear of popery, see R. Clifton, "The Fear of Catholics in England, 1637 to 1645: Principally from Central Sources," (D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1967); idem, "Fear of Popery," in *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. Conrad Russell (London: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 144-76.

[11] Compounding the Catholics' thirst for innocent blood was their corresponding proclivity for political tyranny. Again, this perception was not a rhetorical device, but an honest conviction that Catholicism entailed not only idolatry in worship, but also subjection to political tyranny. In the 1620s, Parliament expressed its concern over the close association between political tyranny and popery. The association worked reciprocally, in that corrupt government could lead to irreligion just as quickly as irreligion could corrupt government. It was widely accepted that the Catholic faith, both in England and on the Continent, was the enemy of civil liberty. See Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 379-80; Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*, chpt. 1.

your guard . . . and to seek the preservation of your lives and of those that belong unto you, wives, and little ones, etc., and if there be no other likely means for your safety, to destroy the lives of those that seek to destroy yours." Goodwin knew that the posing of the question demonstrated the just nature of Parliament's cause. Given the desperate situation, who would deny that for the sake of self preservation, violence could be used to defend against the antichristian forces which aimed to destroy all true Protestants?[12]

Even before Goodwin penned his text, English Protestants were already deeply concerned by the advance of the Catholic cause on the Continent, the increasingly open practice of Catholicism at the king's court, and the seemingly popish changes which had taken place in their parish churches. A full attack could be seen on all fronts. The institutions of power and religion had been infiltrated and sapped of their ability to resist, while arms were being prepared abroad. Yet it was the explosion of Ireland into open revolt which was for many the final proof that Catholics wanted nothing but Protestant blood and were presently plotting the conquest of England. Defence was now unquestionably needed. The London turner Nehemiah Wallington understood the adage that "he that will England win, Must first with Ireland begin," and saw in the rebellion nothing but popery and its ruthless effort to re-conquer England. "All these plots in Ireland are but one plot against England" with the aim of bringing "their damnable superstition and idolatry amongst us," leading Wallington to see "how Antichrist, even those bloody-hearted papists, do plot

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[12] Goodwin, *Anti-Cavalierisme, Or, Truth Pleading As Well the Necessity As the Lawfulnesse of This Present Warre for the Suppressing of That Butcherly Brood of Caveliering Incendiaries Who Are Now Hammering England to Make an Ireland of It* (London: G. B. and R. W., 1642), pp. 1-2, 8-9.

against the poor Church of God."[13] If the revolt was not disturbing enough, more frightening still was the Irish Catholics' claim to have authorisation from the king. While such reports remained in the realms of rumour, the king had few who were willing to give him the benefit of the doubt, particularly when all the circumstances seemed to support the perception of an imminent Catholic attack. It was an attack against which the king was either ineffective and unable to rebuff, or, worse still, actually complicit.[14]

The Laudians were the Catholics within and the revolt in Ireland forced many to contemplate the precarious situation England faced. As Richard Baxter recalled, "when we saw the odious Irish Rebellion broke forth, and so many thousands barbarously murdered . . . If you say, 'What was all this to England?' I answer, we knew how great a progress the same party had made in England . . . the fire was too near us to be neglected; and our safety too much threatened."[15] Baxter was restrained in his estimation of the numbers massacred. The exaggerated stories of countless Protestants being murdered in the most inhumane manner could not help but put Protestants on the defensive and inspire distrust towards those whom they perceived as sympathetic to Catholics. Henry Ferne acknowledged that "the distress of Ireland by the help of wicked pamphlets has been used as a great engine to weaken the king's

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[13] Quoted from Paul S. Seaver, *Wallington's World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-century London* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1985), p. 166.

[14] It appears that there were good reasons for such suspicions, see Jane H. Ohlmeyer, *Civil War and Restoration in the Three Stuart Kingdoms: The Career of Randal MacDonnell, Marquis of Antrim, 1609-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[15] Baxter, *A Holy Commonwealth, or Political Aphorisms* (London: Thomas Underhill, 1659), pp. 473. Cf. Lamont, *Richard Baxter and the Millennium*, p. 88; idem, *Puritanism and the Origins of the English Civil War* (London: Dr. Williams's Trust, 2000), p. 7.

reputation with his people."[16] It was hard for Englishmen *not* to see themselves as already under attack and in need of defence.

The anti-Catholic interpretive framework that saw in the Irish rebellion the hand of Antichrist and his papist tools could also render intelligible the rise of Laudianism and the subsequent persecution of the godly. It could explain Charles's otherwise inexplicable behaviour and provided a central principle around which other events could be arranged and understood. It is little wonder that such a powerful paradigm was so readily taken up by parliamentary preachers. When Cornelius Burgess preached to the Commons on 5 November 1641, he blended all of these themes. The revolt in Ireland was the product of the papists' unlimited rage against Protestants, a rage which was as plain to see in the Gunpowder Plot as it was in the Irish rebellion. This Catholic rage was innate; it would continue to burn until the papists themselves were extinguished.[17]

The defensive nature of the struggle was intensified by the Irish rebellion since now England was truly "surrounded" by popery on its borders as well as infested with it within. This defensive mentality not only explained events, but demanded action. In the view of one of the many anti-Catholic parliamentary broadsheets published during the conflict, the threat was so great that the whole "people of the land as one man," must rise and take defensive action "against those

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[16] Ferne, *The Resolving of Conscience, upon This Question, Whether upon Such a Supposition or Case, As Is Now Usually Made . . . Subjects May Take Arms and Resist?* (Cambridge: Edward Freeman and Thomas Dunster, 1642), p. 45.

[17] Burgess, *Another Sermon Preached to the Honorable House of Commons . . . November the fifth, 1641 . . . Wherein, among Other Things, Are Shewed a List of Some of the Popish Traytors in England* (London: R. B., 1641).

popish-blood-thirsty forces raised, to enslave, and destroy us, and our posterity."[18] The rise of Arminianism meant that even before the Irish rebellion Parliament's predicament was analogous to that of "the Jews when they dwelt in their own land of Canaan [and] were thus compassed" on all sides by enemies, "all alike maliciously bent against them." But in this case the people of God were ultimately victorious since they acted as God commanded and had faith in their deliverance.[19] The rebellion only intensified this situation, making it necessary to fight against both internal and external enemies. Francis Cheynell expressed the theme graphically, explaining, "there are some sons and daughters of Babylon too here in England: Sion is now surrounded by them, and your Honourable House is most eminently opposed by them." He wanted Parliament to know that there were "many . . . who plot against you, all the Antichristian politicians in the Christian world are beating their brains how to destroy you," yet their plans were constantly uncovered by the "watchful providence of an omniscient God."[20]

The division of the realm into the good defensive English Protestants and the evil offensive papists resulted in two theological conventions. The first was the obvious need for defence. Second, the need for defence against evil was also a testament to the godliness of the defenders. If one's attackers were evil, then, by definition, one had to be good. Likewise, Scripture made it plain that the true Church was to be a beleaguered and persecuted Church until the Final Days. Thus, the besieging enemies against whom defence was justified also provided evidence that

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[18] *All Sorts of Well-Affected Persons, Who Desire a Speedy End of This Destructive Warre . . .* (London?: s.n., 1643), broadsheet.
[19] Stephen Marshall, *A Peace-offering to God . . . Preached . . . September 7. 1641* (London: T. P. and M. S., 1641), pp. 6-7.
[20] Cheynell, *Sions Memento, and Gods Alarum* (London: Samuel Gellilbrand, 1643), sigA.

Parliament was fighting on God's side, for the "Church of Christ" was both historically and presently "hated and persecuted [by] all men."[21] Such an aggressive and unanimous enemy also helped provide solidarity among the godly brotherhood as they girded their loins for battle.

Apocalypticism divides the world into the two forces of good and evil. There can be no in-between and everything can be placed into one or the other of these categories.[22] This was no less the case in early modern England, where, in addition to further enforcing the justification of defence against Catholics, apocalypticism also forced a dualistic "he-who-is-not-for-us-is-against-us" mentality: "Now the Lord hath cast the whole world into a two-fold squadron, the side or seed of the woman, and the side or seed of the Serpent, the side of Michael and the dragons, the devils and the gods, Christ's and Antichrist's side."[23] If Parliament was Israel, the chosen people of God, then the enemies of Parliament, from an apocalyptic perspective, had to be opponents of God. Apocalyptic logic, therefore, not only conveyed the necessity of defensive action, but by dividing the world into black-and-white, it also had the effect of dehumanising the enemy.

Such dehumanising rhetoric made it easier to pursue a war against one's own countrymen. The rhetoric of spies and infiltrators cast doubt on the loyalty of royalists to England. For this reason the foreignness of Charles's queen also became a focal

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[21] Stephen Marshall, *Peace-offering*, pp. 6-7.

[22] This form of dualism is an inherent feature of Judaeo-Christian collective eschatology generally and can easily be seen in the earliest major apocalyptic works of the Reformation. See Mark R. Bell, *Apocalypse How?: Baptist Movements during the English Revolution* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2000), chpts. 1-2; Katherine R. Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), chpt. 2; Paul Christanson, *Reformers and Babylon: English Apocalyptic Visions from the Reformation to the Eve of the Civil War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), chpt. 1.

[23] *A VVarning-peece to VVarre: Wherein is Declared the Originall, Nature, Antiquitie, and Celebritie of a Souldiery . . .* (London: R. Olton and G. Dexter, 1642), p. 2.

point for parliamentary opposition. The suggestion was that it was not against fellow Englishmen (who could not be Catholic) that the war was being fought, but rather against European Catholics and their Irish co-religionists. The dualistic perspective of the parliamentarian *Souldiers Catechisme* makes this frequently reiterated point. Given the circumstances, "we are not now to look at our enemies as countrymen, or kinsmen, or fellow-Protestants, but as enemies of God and our religion, and siders with Antichrist: and so our eye is not to pity them, nor our sword to spare them."[24] In support, the Catechism referred to Jeremiah 48:10: "Cursed be he that does the work of the Lord negligently, and cursed be he that keeps back his sword from blood."[25] Similar dehumanising rhetoric was also prevalent in the sermons to Parliament, as William Sedgwick declared, "your adversaries are Antichristian . . . such are bloody enemies as thirst for the blood of the saints."[26] Thus the anti-Catholic perspective not only identified the enemy as bloodthirsty, and by nature perpetually attacking, but also cast him as antichristian, foreign, and wholly other.

This dualistic perspective increased the intensity of conflict by forcing separation between the two sides. In many cases it eliminated the necessary language of compromise. There could be no hope for reforming such diabolical enemies or making them see reason.[27] Given the divine schema, it was a zero-sum game. "All the world . . . is divided into two kingdoms," with no middle-ground, "all . . . that are not in the kingdom of Christ, they must needs be shoaled under the other kingdom of

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[24] Robert Ram, *The Souldiers Catechisme, Composed for the Parliaments Army* (London: J. Wright, 1644), pp. 14-5.
[25] Geneva, 1560.
[26] Sedgwick, *Zions Deliverance . . . or The Grounds of Expecting, and Meanes of Procuring Jerusalems Restauration* (London: John Bellamy, 1642), p. 35.
[27] Joseph Caryl warned the Commons to be wary of evil-doers who were "incurable and hate to be reformed," see *The Workes of Ephesus Explained* (London: John Bartlet and William Bladen, 1642), p. 33.

Satan."[28] One preacher before Parliament bemoaned the darkness of the times and asked the Commons to "witness the treachery, witness the apostasy, witness the neutrality of men in our days," thus demonstrating the belief that even neutrality was tantamount to treachery.[29] The enemies of Parliament were utterly depraved, and all who would be neutral were little better than covert opponents. The *Souldiers Catechisme* dismissed the very possibility of honest neutrality, suggesting that those who stood neutral "in God's account all such are enemies; they that are not with Him are against Him."[30]

Stephen Marshall's notorious sermon *Meroz Cursed*, first preached before the outbreak of open violence, best expressed the sentiment that none could be neutral in God's battles. At the very first of the regular monthly fasts before Parliament in 1642, Marshall chose for his text the twenty-third verse of Judges 5: "Curse ye Meroz (said the Angel of the Lord) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants therof, because they came not to help the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." He preached the sermon over fifty times in the 1640s and it was certainly his most famous oration. The main doctrine propounded by Marshall from his text was that "all people are cursed or blessed according as they do or do not join their strength and give their best assistance to the Lord's people against their enemies." The men Marshall directly addressed in his sermon were those "who stand as neuters, who stand aloof . . . showing themselves neither open enemies nor true friends." Such neuters must chose, Marshall insisted, for to remain neuter, to do nothing, was to receive the curse of

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[28] Stephen Marshall, *A Sermon of the Baptizing of Infants* (London: Richard Cotes, 1645), p. 32.
[29] Thomas Brooks, *Gods Delight in the Progresse of the Upright . . . in a Sermon before the Honorable House of Commons . . . December 16, 1648* (London: M. S., 1649), p. 14. Cf. Gaspar Hickes, *The Glory and Beauty of Gods Portion* (London: G. M., 1644), pp. 18-9.
[30] Robert Ram, *The Souldiers Catechisme*, p. 7.

Meroz: "The Lord acknowledges no neuters. This text curses all them who come not out to help Him, as well as those who came to fight against Him." This was not only the voice of the Old Testament, for "it is Christ's rule, 'he that is not with me, is against me'." The curse of Meroz meant that all who were not allies of Parliament and reformation were papists. All those who wished to avoid being cursed had no choice but to join the side of God. It was in this respect that Marshall's language reached a new height of militancy. He declared, "cursed is everyone that withholds from shedding of blood." For "he is a cursed man that withholds his hand from this, or that shall do it fraudulently, that is, if he do it as Saul did against the Amalekites, kill some and save some, if he go not through with the work: he is a cursed man." Marshall explained that God's will had declared:

> Blessed is the man, that thus rewards Babylon, yea, blessed is the man that takes their little ones and dashes them against the stones. What soldier's heart would not start at this, not only when he is in hot blood to cut down armed enemies in the field, but afterwards deliberately to come into a subdued city, and take the little ones upon spears' point, to take them by the heels and beat out their brains against the walls . . . Yet if this work be to revenge God's Church against Babylon, he is a blessed man that takes and dashes the little ones against the stones.

Such militant language was meant to force Marshall's auditors to make the choice for God and, perhaps most crucially, to "conclude with Esther 'if I perish, I perish'."[31] This final concept--the idea that the believer should resign him or herself to whatever fate comes and be content merely to be an instrument in God's hand, was prominent in Marshall's preaching. It is analogous to the self-destruction, the self-annihilation in favour of God's voice, that Leo Solt found in the fervent Independent chaplains of the

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[31] Marshall, *Meroz Cursed, Or, A Sermon Preached to the Honourable House of Commons . . . Febr. 23. 1641* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1642), pp. 1, 9-12, 21-3, 36.

New Model Army and which modern sociologists find in violent millennial movements.[32]

Idolatry, Cleansing, and Violence

Related to popular fear and hatred of Catholicism was a deep revulsion against "idolatry." The term idolatry by the seventeenth century covered a multitude of sins and served as a rallying cry for reform. By conflating the royalist cause with the sin of idolatry, parliamentarians opened up a number of important associations which went back to the beginnings of the Reformation. Idolatry conjured up not only images of popish depravity,[33] but also the idea of the wrath of an angry God destroying altars and scattering bones before them. Idolatry was a danger to the community since it brought down God's anger while driving away His presence. It thus had to be found and destroyed.

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[32] See Leo Solt, "Army of Saints: The Religious and Political Ideas of the Chaplains of the New Model Army, 1645-1648," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1955); idem, *Saints in Arms: Puritanism and Democracy in Cromwell's Army* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1959); Michael Barkun, ed., *Millennialism and Violence* (London: Frank Cass, 1996); David Bromley and J. Gordon Melton, eds., *Cults, Religion, and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[33] Idolatry was closely associated with Catholicism in seventeenth-century Britain. Catholics were seen as having tried to obscure the commandment against idolatry to promote their idolatrous agenda, see Margaret Aston, *England's Iconoclasts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 385-8. The Mass was the greatest example of Catholic idolatry, with images, prayers for the dead, and relics, all further confirming their blasphemous ways. John Knox famously insisted that he would rather die a thousand deaths than be forced to suffer the idolatry of the Mass, see Knox, *A Godly Letter Sent Too the Fayethfull in London, Newcastell, Barwyke . . .* (Imprinted in Rome? [i.e., Wesel?: By J. Lambrecht?], 1554), sigCiii-sigCiiii. As Cornelius Burgess made clear in his first fast sermon before Parliament, a pressing issue for the kingdom was that there were so many "people going to, and coming from the Mass in great multitudes," for the act of Mass was "the most abominable idolatry that ever the sun beheld in the Christian world." It was the job of Parliament to destroy this great act of idolatry and all other similar idols; see Burgess, *The First Sermon Preached to the Honourable House of Commons Now Assembled in Parliament at Their Publique Fast. Novemb. 17. 1640.* (London: I. L., 1641), pp. 68-9.

From its beginning the Continental Reformation was concerned with uprooting idolatry, defined not only as the worship of idols, but wrong worship generally. Idolatry could even denote a lack of respect for God, or a hubristic faith in one's own ability.[34] Correcting and purifying worship was one of the major objectives of reformers, so it was only natural that they were intensely concerned with idolatry. But this concern was never academic, for idolatry was an issue which many believed to be beyond compromise. This unyielding attitude towards idolatry, which characterised aspects of various European reformations, was largely drawn from a literalist interpretation of the theological dictates found in the Old Testament.[35] But as a result of a zero-tolerance approach to idolatry, the line between wrong worship and the worship of false gods was blurred. Misguided worship was little different from deliberate apostasy.[36]

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[34] Luther mocked those who found the sin in the image itself rather than in the process of worshipping the image, writing that it was not the idol, but the act of worshipping the idol that constituted idolatry. He recognised the folly in iconoclasts' belief that it was "just as if they thereby were rid of created things in the heart, in that they madly destroy images," in "Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments" (1525), in *Luther's Works*, ed. C. Bergendoff (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), vol. 40, p. 101.

[35] In this context the work of the biblical scholar Philip Stern is informative. Stern maintains that the *herem*, or biblical "Ban," in which the God of Israel demands that all the vanquished be slaughtered (as in the story of Joshua), is intricately connected to concern with idolatry. In other words, for Stern, the uncompromising violence demanded in the Ban is intelligible in light of Yahweh's condemnation of idolatry. See his *The Biblical Herem. A Window on Israel's Religious Experience* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1991), p. 104, and the dissertation upon which it is based, "A Window on Ancient Israel's Religious Experience: The Herem Re-investigated and Re-interpreted," (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1989), p. 156.

[36] An early example of the type of militancy that would continue to be associated with Protestants who rejected all forms of idolatry can be seen in the works of Andreas Karlstadt. Karlstadt was an early supporter of Luther and in 1524 he published his tract on "Whether One Ought to Behave Peacefully and Spare the Feelings of the Simple." Here Karlstadt made plain the logic that there could be no tarrying in the abandonment of idolatry and that those who delayed in purifying the Church were guilty of sin. See Carlos M. N. Eire, *War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), especially chpt. 3. The attitude of Karlstadt illustrates the difficulty of compromise on the issue of idolatry, which, as Eire demonstrates, "provided a solid ideological foundation for much of the social and political unrest that accompanied the spread of Calvinism" (p. 3). See also Karlstadt's earlier "On the Removal of Images" in *A Reformation Debate: Karlstadt, Emser, and Eck on Sacred Images*, trans. Bryan D. Mangrum and Giuseppe Scaizzi

Despite the ambiguity which always surrounded the commandment prohibiting idols, the Tudor Homilies followed the Reformation tradition by emphasising the immediacy of this injunction against idolatry. The Homilies' treatment of idolatry illustrates three themes which would remain central to its discussion in the seventeenth century. First, the Homilies associated idolatry with Satan. Second, idolatry was not just to be avoided, but was to be destroyed. Finally, the Homilies expressed an urgent need for proper authority to undo idolatry; in so doing, these official sermons further reinforced the hierarchy of authorised violence at the same time that they associated the maintenance of idolatry with tyranny and the cleansing of idols with godly rule.

The first part of the *Homilie Against Perill of Idolatrie* explained that while worshippers might believe they were pleasing God in their idolatry, they were in fact moving themselves away from God and towards Satan.[37] The Devil was the force behind idolatry and it was by the "worshipping of images, contrary to the Scriptures" that Englishmen and women were "pluck[ing] Satan" to themselves. Therefore, auditors were urged to recognise and repel "Satan's suggestion to idolatry." Idolatry was not only a sin which caused God to cast the offender out of His sight, it also simultaneously entailed allying oneself directly against God by giving authority to God's enemy: "Satan, God's enemy, desiring to rob God of His honour, desires exceedingly that such honour might be given unto him. Wherefore those which give the honour due to the Creator, to any creature, do service acceptable to no saints, who

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(Ottawa: Dovehouse, 1991). Cf. Ronald J. Sider, *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt: The Development of His Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1974).

[37] Unlike murder, which was strongly associated with intent, idolatry was treated as an evil whether intended or accidental.

be the friends of God, but unto Satan, [who is] God and man's mortal and sworn enemy." Idolatry served as a dichotomising force, separating the soldiers of Christ from the minions of Satan and reinforcing the dualism discussed above. All idolaters were apostates aligned with Satan, who enlisted idolaters in his army as quickly as God banished them from His presence. Despite God's love for His creatures, He had no choice but to turn idolaters away, for the Divine could not tolerate the presence of idolatry.[38]

If the Homilies made the connection between idols and Satan unmistakable, they also pronounced what response idolatry required. Idolatry was not merely to be avoided, but destroyed. The language of this undoing emphasised the immediacy of the task: "Therefore God by His word, as He forbids any idols or images to be made or set up: so does He command such as we find made and set up to be pulled down, broken and destroyed." The process of removing idols necessitated that the obedient subjects of God "overturn their altars, and break them to pieces, cut down their groves, burn their images: for thou art a holy people unto the Lord."[39]

The removal of idols was a divinely commanded task in which God often played a central part. The Homilies pointed out that in the Old Testament, God promised to "come Himself and pull" down idols. The sermon quoted from the language of Ezekiel 6, where God vowed to "cast down your altars, and break down your images . . . and the dead carcasses of the children of Israel will I cast before their idols, your bones will I strew around about your altars and dwelling places."

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[38] *The Second Tome of Homilies* (London: Iohn Bill, 1623), pp. 20, 50, 62-3.
[39] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 17.

Idolatry was such a sin that in the words of Ezekiel, "they that be near, shall perish with the sword, [and] they that be far off, with the pestilence."[40]

Pulling down idols was, however, the work of the magistrate, not the charge of the masses. The command was from God, but the responsibility resided with those in authority: "The redress of such public enormities pertains to the magistrates, and such as be in authority only, and not to private persons." For that reason, "the good Kings of Juda, Asa, Ezechias, Josaphat, and Josiah" were "highly commended for the breaking down and destroying of the altars, idols, and images."[41] It was the duty of a good magistrate to destroy altars and idols. This idea was reinforced time and again in Edwardian England. As Thomas Cranmer told the boy king on his coronation, "Your Majesty is God's vice-regent and Christ's vicar within your own dominions, and to see, with your predecessor Josiah, God truly worshipped, and idolatry destroyed, the tyranny of the Bishops of Rome banished from your subjects, and images removed."[42] The job of the good prince was to establish right worship and to remove idols. Conversely, it was the sign of a tyrant to compel idolatry. The first homily against idolatry pointed out how the Book of Wisdom illustrated "how tyrants compel men to worship" idols.[43]

A further association attached to idolatry was the belief that violence was a legitimate response to idol worship. The medieval Church had long viewed capital

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[40] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 18.
[41] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 18. William Dowsing, the infamous puritan purifier and iconoclast, cited the Homilies in his debates about removing images at Cambridge. While Dowsing could cite the Homilies as intellectual support, it is also important to recognise the central importance of his parliamentary commission, which gave him his authority, see Aston, *England's Iconoclasts*, pp. 74-84; *The Journal of William Dowsing*, ed. Trevor Cooper (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 2001).
[42] Cranmer's address to king Edward VI at his coronation, 20 February 1547, quoted in Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 349.
[43] *The Second Tome of Homilies*, p. 15; see also Thomas Ford, *Reformation Sure and Stedfast, Or, A Seasonable Sermon for the Present Times* (London: J. D. 1641), *passim*.

punishment as a proper method for addressing heresy. Aquinas explained that since heresy was the worst of all sins, the heretic should "not only . . . be separated from the Church by excommunication, but also . . . be severed from the world by death."[44] The Geneva Bible gave further support to the idea that "enticers to idolatry must be slain," with its marginal notes and commentary.[45] The difficulty of addressing heresy without accepting toleration meant that physical force, if not necessarily capital punishment, continued to be applied to heretics in England after the Reformation.[46] Of course, in Britain, John Knox had made known his belief that by God's command idolaters deserved nothing short of death and that even monarchs were not exempt from that decree.[47] This was a position which could easily be derived from scriptural models, with Moses's slaying of the idolaters being a particular favourite of the parliamentary preachers.[48]

The same biblical literalism which led to an uncompromising stance on the issue of idolatry, also led to the further interpretation that idolatry was itself a legitimate issue over which a just war could be fought. Again, if the wars of Israel were taken as the template, it was necessary to see Joshua's wars as just, and thus when Joshua prepared to make war on the Jewish tribes for their erection of an altar,

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[44] *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas* (London: Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 1920, 2nd ed.) 2ae2a.Q.11.A.3.

[45] Geneva Bible, 1560, Deuteronomy 13:5-6, cf. 17:2.

[46] See, for example, R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987); John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow: Longman, 2000). Coffey points out that it was during the reign of Mary that Protestants, for good reason, became critical of the use of the death penalty against heretics (ibid, p. 24).

[47] See Richard L. Greaves, "John Knox, the Reformed Tradition, and the Development of Resistance Theory," *Journal of Modern History* 48, no. 3 (1976), pp. 13, 17, 21.

[48] See, for example, William Bridge, *A Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at Their Publique Fast, Novemb. 29. 1643* (London: R. Dawlman, 1643), who when preaching on this example noted how "great change and Reformation is ushered in and brought about, not without some kind of holy violence" (ibid, p. 18). For the association of idolatry with capital punishment, see Aston, *England's Iconoclasts,* pp. 466-79.

it was apparent that wars against idolatry (when properly led) were just.[49] Likewise, Israel's war with the Midianites was further proof that wars could be waged to root out idols.[50] As a result, English commentators on just war believed that it was lawful "to avenge the Lord upon idolaters . . . This is warranted by the Lord."[51]

While violence was an appropriate response to idolatry, such violence was still subject to the hierarchy of authorisation. Idolatry was terribly evil and idols should be destroyed at once, yet, this was not the job of the individual, but rather the figure imbued with authority from the hierarchy. Joseph Caryl emphasised the importance of authority in the discussion of executing idolaters he presented to the Commons, explaining that idolaters should not be killed "privately or without judgement," since "that were to commit murder in punishing idolatry." God had decreed that there be "order [in] killing such, after public judgement, not the killing of them without order and judgement."[52] Thus it was the individual's responsibility to avoid idolatry while it was the magistrates' responsibility to remove it. Those who went beyond this position argued that it was the responsibility of individuals to separate themselves from idolatry, but not that individuals should take it upon themselves independently to remove idols, for to do so would be to usurp the hierarchy of authorised violence. As the fiery John Knox questioned rhetorically in 1554, "but now, shall some demand, what then: shall we go too and kill all idolaters?" The answer was no, because "that were the office and duty of every magistrate within

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[49] See Joshua 22:10-12.
[50] See Numbers 31.
[51] Richard Bernard, *The Bible-Battells, Or, the Sacred Art Military for the Rightly Wageing of Warre According to Holy Writ* ([London]: Edward Blackmore, 1629), p. 42.
[52] Caryl, *The Works of Ephesus*, p. 37.

his realm and jurisdiction. But of you is required only to avoid participation and company of that abomination."[53]

Already in Knox's work the conflation between the idea of idolatry and the general cause of Antichrist can be seen. By the time of William Laud's trial in the 1640s, the accusation of intending to draw the kingdom into "idolatry," which was levelled against him, pertained not merely to his effort to erect altars and images, but also to his general collusion with antichristian forces and political tyrants.[54] Idolatry then was something intangible; it was a disposition, or rather an allegiance.[55] Idolaters, like Catholics, were part of a secret empire, a dark covenant with Satan. By the 1640s there was a fusion of apocalyptic dualism, anti-Catholicism, and anti-idolatry into a powerful worldview that drew on history and theology and presented an ideology with an intelligible logic. By the 1640s the term "idolatry" can be seen as a by-word for this system of thought. It embodied a struggle for magisterially led reform of the Church, the nation and individuals. It also sought to stay God's plague by removing the idols which called down divine anger. The frequent denunciations of idolatry became a cry for immediate action, while the term also helped contemporaries to clarify and crystallise the struggle they were undertaking. As a

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[53] Knox, *A Godly Letter Sent Too the Fayethfull*, sigBv6-sigBv7.

[54] William Prynne, *Hidden Workes of Darkness Brought to Publike Light, Or, A Necessary Introdvction to the History of the Archbishop of Canterbvrie's Triall* (London: Thomas Brundenell, 1645), p. 1, *passim*. For Prynne's obsession with the popish plot in relation to Laud's trial, see William M. Lamont, *Marginal Prynne, 1600-1669* (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1963), chpt. 6.

[55] While the term 'idolatry' was used in a variety of ways in the period, official parliamentary pronouncements usually used the restricted meaning of worshipping idols. The 1643 parliamentary ordinance against idolatry, for example, is a declaration against *things*: "all altars and tables of stone . . . also communion tables . . . all rails whatsoever . . . all tapers, candlesticks . . . all crucifixes, crosses, and all images and pictures . . . or superstitious inscriptions" were to be removed, *An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons . . . for the Utter Demolishing, Removing and Taking Away of all Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry* . . . (London: Husbands, 1643), pp. 3-5.

result of its interpretative power, parliamentarian scorn for idolatry became almost unlimited.[56]

Labelling their opponents as idolaters had distinct rhetorical advantages and important psychological implications. "Idolater" served as a powerful shorthand for an otherwise amorphous enemy. Just as the twentieth-century American Senator Joseph McCarthy could vow to fight against the vague yet evocative concept of "communism" so the parliamentary divines could denounce "idolaters" as the enemy for seventeenth-century England. The valenced language provided its own logic.

It was a logic incapable of compromise. Idolatry was not something which could be avoided, but something which had to be uprooted. As the Westminster Assembly declared it was a sin to *tolerate* idolatry. The Larger Catechism maintained that it was a Christian's duty to keep worship pure and that it was a sin knowingly to endure a "false religion," let alone to practise it.[57] Idolatry could not be tolerated, for "though it be no error to take away some corruptions, yet it is an error not to take away all."[58]

Just as God could not stand the presence of idolatry, the Christian should also refuse to tolerate it. The rhetoric of Revelation, of coming out of Babylon and not partaking of her sins, frequently occurred in this context.[59] As Francis Cheynell commented while preaching on this text, the sin of Babylon out of which the godly

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[56] This was particularly true for Milton. See John N. King, *Milton and Religious Controversy: Satire and Polemic in Paradise Lost* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), chpt. 8; Achsah Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton: Literature, Religion, and Cultural Conflict in Seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), which demonstrates that much of Milton's work was propelled by an "obsession with idolatry" (p. 147). This was certainly an obsession shared by many.

[57] See Larger Catechism, questions 108 and 109, contained in *The Westminster Confession of Faith* (Glasgow: Free Presbyterian Publications, 1994), pp. 191-6.

[58] Thomas Ford, *Reformation Sure and Stedfast*, p. 19.

[59] Revelation 18:4.

should come was "the sin of idolatry . . . such an unreasonable sin that a sober and rational man would be ashamed to be overtaken with it."[60] Coming out of idolatry was demanded, even if it proved difficult. The Protestant informer, Gregory Thims, who wrote to alert the nation to the Jesuits' hand in the unjust war, explained that it was mandatory for idolatry to be undone:

> But you will say, You desire peace. *Answ*. So do all good men . . . But to desire peace, or to accept a peace without truth, will prove a cursed bondage, a remedy worse than the disease: Although war be a great punishment, and the effects miserable, yet a just war is better than an unjust peace; a just war will establish a true peace, but an unjust peace will prove a more destructive war: our peace with idolaters has caused this war; but to have a peace with their idols too, will be our present ruin. Can we expect any good and happy peace so long as the whoredoms of Jezebel are so many: when Israel chose new Gods, then war was in the gates: when Israel followed the gods of the nations, and worshipped Baalim, God brought upon them the sword of the nations . . . England has followed the idols of the papists . . . therefore God has brought upon England the sword of the papists.

This condition would not improve until idolatry was uprooted.[61]

While royalists denied the association of their cause with idolatry, and agreed with their parliamentary enemies that idolatry was an evil to be eradicated, they refused to see it as a justification for rebellion. Many agreed that idolatry was to be condemned and that the laws of God were to be obeyed before the laws of any man, but royalists maintained that flight was the most extreme response and excluded the possibility of violence in instances of idolatry. The large number of polemicists who addressed themselves to this issue either demonstrates how easy royalists felt the parliamentarian position was to counter, or that royalists recognised just how important the use of the concept had become. Griffith Williams was one such

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[60] Cheynell, *Sions Memento*, p. 20.
[61] Thims, *The Protestant Informer, Or, Information to All Protestants* (London: s.n., 1643), p. 19.

polemicist who responded to the parliamentarian use of arguments from idolatry. Williams devoted the fourth chapter of his *Vindiciae Regum, Or, The Grand Rebellion* (1643) to this question. For Williams, while idolatry was certainly an evil, it could never serve as the grounds for violence against the king. His position is by now familiar: "if our governor be evil, he is so for our transgression, and we should receive our punishment with patience; and therefore no resistance: but either obey the good willingly or endure the evil patiently." The Bible, according to Williams, in no way indicated that rebellion should arise in reaction to the establishment of idolatry. Furthermore, Jesus lived under idolatrous emperors and did nothing to foment rebellion. This fact was important for Williams, for he maintained that "if we may not rebel when we are compelled to idolatry, much less may we do it for any other injury."[62]

While royalists could dismiss accusations of idolatry, or claim that such accusations, even if true, did not justify violence, many contemporaries remained unconvinced by such arguments. In the providential cosmology of seventeenth-century England, idolatry was another key to understanding the times. How had the troubles plaguing England come about? Why was God punishing the nation? Many divines answered that the Reformation was not yet complete. Not only had they failed to expel idolatry completely, but also in their laxity they had allowed further idols to creep into the Church. It was well known that the Lord visited plagues on idolatrous peoples. Idolatry was thus the cause of their suffering and its removal would provide the cure. Stephen Marshall implored Parliament, "Let it be, I beseech you, your speedy care to cast out of this . . . Church all those relics, which are the oil and fuel

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[62] Williams, *Vindiciae Regum, Or, The Grand Rebellion* (Oxford: Henry Hall, 1643), pp. 20-1, 23.

that feed the flame which burns amongst us," for idolatry was like a lightning rod for God's anger and it could bring down violence from heaven if it was not expelled.[63]

Idolatry was both a lightning rod and a disease. It was a sickness which rapidly spread as it festered and wasted away the nation and the individual's soul. Edmund Calamy saw the idolatrous practices which plagued England as so many pollutants which had to be swept away before God's punishment could be turned into a blessing.[64] Idolatry was so infectious that it threatened to pollute the sacred itself. Rather than merely a simple sin, idolatry was a "Church-wasting" sin; it destroyed the Church and drove God away: "As idols come in, God goes out."[65] As a result it threatened the very core of the society. As one divine explained, "every idol is that great Image of Jealousy, which the Lord can by no means endure, and which will certainly be the destruction of the king and people."[66] There was no greater danger than such pollution. Such a great contaminant required cleansing.

Cleansing the land of idols, purging the Church of disease, and clearing the temple of images--all these were ways in which the preachers before Parliament encouraged MPs to conceptualise both the reformation of the Church and, later, their war with the royalists. As Stephen Marshall declared to Parliament, "in your great Counsel, be yee purgers and preservers of our religion. Look thoroughly what is

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[63] Marshall, *Song of Moses*, p. 8. Cornelius Burgess described the potential for idolatry to "draw down a curse" from God in *The First Sermon*, p. 70. After the Restoration, Abraham Wright summed up the logic of sin and God's punishment with regard to spiritual pollution in saying, "Great sins do greatly pollute, and therefore God does greatly punish them," *A Practical Commentary of Exposition upon the Pentateuch* (London: G. Dawson, 1662), p. 178.

[64] See Edmund Calamy, *Englands Looking-Glasse, Presented in a Sermon, Preached before the Honorable House of Commons, at Their Late Solemne Fast, December 22. 1641* (London: I. Raworth, 1642).

[65] Stephen Marshall, *Reformation and Desolation . . . Preached to the Honourable House of Commons . . . Fast, Decemb. 22. 1641* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1642), p. 33, cf. idem, *A Sermon Preached . . . November 17. 1640*, pp. 13, 19, *passim*.

[66] Burgess, *The First Sermon*, p. 68.

amiss, and pluck up every plant that God has not planted."[67] Likewise, William Carter told MPs of their mandate: "God has called you to the purging of the land."[68] Cornelius Burgess employed similar language, imploring Parliament to "purge and cast away . . . all idols and idolatry," for nothing was so abominable to the Lord as idolatry. Parliament was frequently reminded of its duty to "cleanse the land of these spiritual whoredoms."[69]

Throughout the early 1640s the preacher-prophets before Parliament made manifest their belief that this was the way in which Parliament was to interpret its actions. Taking Revelation 17:1-2 and 19:20 as his texts for explaining the needed preparations for the battle of Armageddon, Cheynell told the Commons in 1643, "you are physicians to the state, and these are purging times."[70] Purging was a violent activity and not something limited simply to spiritual warfare. It required obedience to God and a willingness to die for the cause. Like Christ, the parliamentarians must "purge and reform the Temple, though you die for it, in the doing of it."[71]

This discourse of cleansing and purging also had an apocalyptic element. It was necessary to remove idols to prevent God's violent punishment, but the preachers also called out for a cleansing of preparation for the return of Christ. Cleansing was a

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[67] Marshall, *A Sermon Preached . . . November 17. 1640*, p. 40, cf. idem, *Reformation and Desolation*, p. 7.
[68] William Carter, *Israels Peace with God, Beniamines Overthrow* (London: Giles Calvert, 1642), p. 23.
[69] Burgess, *The First Sermon*, pp. 67-8, 70.
[70] Cheynell, *Sions Memento*, pp. 9, 19.
[71] Thomas Goodwin, *Zerubbabels Encouragement to Finish the Temple* (London: R. Dawlman, 1642), p. 58.

ritual of preparation and purification for the true Church and the coming of the day of the Lord.[72]

At the same time an apocalyptic perspective helped to explain how idolatry had been allowed into the land and the significance of its final removal. Many ministers expressed disbelief at the ways in which idolatry had overtaken the English Church in recent times. The Church's condition had become more depraved than it had been before the Reformation.[73] Such a decline into idolatry could be reconciled with England's chosen status when it was seen as a part of the predicted rise of Antichrist which would shortly precede the evil one's ultimate destruction. "Satan knows his time is short, he stirs up all his instruments, as if one spirit possessed them all."[74] God had allowed idolatry to grow up and for Satan to prosper for a time, but recognition of the idolatry indicated that the time to pull it down had come. In the past, Christ had allowed the wheat to grow with the tares, but the day had come for uprooting. In "these winnowing-times" all vestiges of the false church had to be purged at once so that Antichrist could be defeated and Christ made king.[75] "Now begin the times of Christ and the Church's manifest conquest: hitherto they have carried it, but not so visibly," Marshall explained. Now "we expect the days to be at hand, wherein the saints shall take the kingdom, and all the kingdoms of the world

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[72] Christopher Burdon, in his study of nineteenth-century England, concurs that the nature of English apocalypticism gave it a special concern for issues of "purity," *The Apocalypse in England: Revelation Unravelling, 1700-1834* (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), p. 60.
[73] Thomas Ford explained that "new idolaters after a reformation are more dangerous than the former," for through stealth their satanic ways can be concealed, *Reformation Sure and Stedfast*, p. 20.
[74] Stephen Marshall, *A Sermon Preached . . . November 17. 1640*, p. 43.
[75] Francis Cheynell, *Sions Memento*, p. 24.

shall be the Lord Christ's, and He shall reign over them," he declared, imploring MPs to focus their energy on the destruction of idolaters.[76]

Furthermore, if parliamentarians were to be a new Israel, then it was crucial to learn the lessons laid out in the Old Testament, the greatest of which was to avoid that vice which had dogged Israel, namely, idolatry. Biblical stories detailed how, if the people of Israel turned to idolatry, the Lord would unleash His anger upon them, uprooting them from the land which He had given them and allowing their enemies to destroy them.[77] Thus, there could be no tolerance of idolaters, for it was evident to seventeenth-century divines that the tragedies of Israel resulted from their failure to combat the forces of idolatry.[78] Just as the Lord punished idolaters, if a nation failed to rid itself of idolaters, then God would not spare that nation, but rather would punish it with plagues and devastation.

Good magistrates needed to punish idolaters. The well-known heroes of the Old Testament were not only leaders in the battles of war, but also in the battle against idols: Jacob insisted on the destruction of idols and purification; Gideon, whose very name came from an act of iconoclasm; and David, who would have no truck with the idols of the Philistines.[79] Countless other noble worthy Israelites did their service to God and removed idols: Asa, Hezekiah, Jehoiada, Jehoshaphat,

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[76] Marshall, *A Tvvo-Edged Sword out of the Mouth of Babes, to Execute Vengeance upon the Enemy and Avenger . . . Octob. 28. 1646* (London: R. Cotes, 1646), p. 13.
[77] E.g., 1 Kings 9.
[78] As with Israel, it was idolatry, in Stephen Marshall's mind, which held England back from moving towards a full Reformation. He was ashamed that "the thankfulness and fruitfulness that some people would have attained to in so long a time! But that we should grow worse and worse in point of God's worship, that we should hanker after idolatry, and superstition, and fall away worse than any of our neighbours," *A Sermon Preached . . . November 17 1640*, p. 35.
[79] See Genesis 35:2-4; Judges 6:32; 2 Samuel 5:21; 1 Chronicles 14:12.

Josiah, and Jehu, to name only those most regularly discussed at the time. Such men were not simple reformers, but violent purifiers.

George Gillespie, in his controversial sermon *Wholesome Severity* (1645), made a point of reminding his auditors of the examples of Josiah relentlessly executing the idolatrous priests of Samaria and of Elijah slaying the false prophets just as Moses righteously killed idolaters. Gillespie also employed the language of Deuteronomy 13, which showed that purgers must also kill idolaters, saying that the false prophet must "be slain" and so "shall thou take the evil away" from the midst of the community. Even if a relative were to tempt one to idolatry, he could not be spared, but rather "you shall even kill him" and "thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death . . . and thou shall stone him with stones, that he die." The message was frighteningly powerful in its simplicity. No one, not even the most sacred of relatives, could be spared from death if guilty of idolatry.[80]

Cleansing the land of idolatry was not, then, a rhetorical device drawn from Scripture. Rather, it was the same process of religious cleansing recorded in the biblical sources. For seventeenth-century England, such work was a pressing concern. For parliamentary fast sermon preachers, who saw themselves as humble prophets for the new Israel, this was one of the most urgent topics. Just as the righteous prophets of old had warned Israel of the perils of idolatry and the importance of driving out idolaters, so the new prophets had to advocate similar militant measures if the nation was to be spared the wrath of God and His new kingdom established. Parliament was frequently reminded that "God hath raised you up to attempt glorious things," such as

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[80] Gillespie, *Wholesome Severity Reconciled with Christian Liberty* (London: Christopher Meredith, 1645), pp. 5-6, 9, and Exodus 13, Geneva 1560. Gillespie's argument was that crimes in the Old Testament which required capital punishment continued to do so in the present.

"the purging of His house," and the breaking of "all the images and relics of idolatry," leaving "nothing which is contrary to God's word." Such exhortations always contained a sharp element of vengeance in the form of a call for the execution of justice: "Let not the men escape whom God appoints out to punishment," for it was God's desire and commission that Parliament find and destroy all of God's enemies. Parliament's duty was to cleanse the land of idolatry and prepare it for the Lord.[81]

The discourses of cleansing, anti-idolatry, anti-Catholicism, and aggressive apocalypticism were frequently in flux. It was not difficult for denunciations of idolatry to shift into open hostility towards idolaters. Cleansing could mean removing people as well as removing images. The immediacy of the rhetoric could also apparently authorise individuals as well as public men. *The Souldiers Catechisme* explained with reference to the iconoclastic activities of parliamentary soldiers, such as those witnessed at Winchester and Chichester Cathedrals, that "it is not amiss that they should cancel and demolish those monuments of superstition and idolatry."[82] It is not difficult to see how violence against images could be translated into violence against people, particularly when combined with the anti-Catholicism noted above. A foretaste of what was to come could already be seen in the Bishops' Wars, when the violent energy of the iconoclastic soldiers spread from the destruction of altar rails to the killing of allegedly papist officers.[83] Such activities were rare, even in the civil wars, and the iconoclastic energy which was channelled into the effort to purge the

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[81] Stephen Marshall, *Reformation and Desolation*, pp. 7, 52.
[82] Robert Ram, *The Souldiers Catechisme*, p. 21.
[83] Mark Charles Fissel, *The Bishops' Wars: Charles I's Campaigns against Scotland, 1638-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), chpt. 7. For a further discussion of how people could be living icons in need of removal, see Ann Kibbey, *The Interpretation of Material Shapes in Puritanism: A Study of Rhetoric, Prejudice, and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

nation of idolaters was still largely regulated by the hierarchy of authorised violence.[84]

New Dispensation and New Authorisation

The idea that God had allowed the idolatrous tares to grow amongst the godly wheat as part of His divine plan, but that now was the time for the uprooting, was related to a broader idea of a new dispensation, which some believed was dawning in England. The new dispensation not only posited a reformed world which the parliamentarians should aspire towards establishing, but also suggested that there was a new and direct authorisation for their actions, which resolved the problematic absence of the king.

Already in September 1641, Jeremiah Burroughs explained to Parliament that they were in a different time. A reversal of power had taken place and now it was no

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[84] John Walter's recent re-examination of the Colchester plunderers confirms many of the ideas discussed here despite the fact that Walter is addressing an example of violence which appears to be unauthorised, or, outside of the hierarchy. Notably, Walter's detailed study demonstrates that the individuals involved believed that they had parliamentary authorisation for their actions, which is consistent with the view that violence in the period required authorisation. Additionally, Walter demonstrates that for those involved in these riots, the framework within which they understood their violence was one of anti-popery and idolatrous purging. Walter concludes that "the level of destruction in the attacks of 1642 which excited contemporary comment . . . may also be read as an attempt to remove the polluting presence of popery which providentialist preaching and Parliamentary politics had identified as the cause of the counties' woes." Walter's re-examination demonstrates that the local people had a number of grievances on a variety of levels. Yet it took an ideology to turn those grievances into violence; that ideology is what we have been calling anti-idolatry and cleansing. See John Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution*: *The Colchester Plunderers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 347, cf. p. 284. Like my own analysis, Walter draws on the insight of Natalie Z. Davis, who, in her discussion of the "rites of violence" in sixteenth-century France, identified that "a more frequent goal of these riots . . . is that of ridding the community of a dreaded pollution," *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1995, first printed in 1975), p. 157. Mark Charles Fissel, a military historian, came to a similar conclusion in his study of the Bishops' Wars. In *The Bishops' Wars*, chpt. 7, Fissel shows that, while the soldiers had a number of legitimate grievances, it was the religious aspect of their thinking--their hatred of popery and desire for cleansing--which precipitated violence against both images and officers.

longer Antichrist who had the upper hand: "You have the advantage of the time, for this is the time for God to do great things for His Church." The Church had never been without its defenders, but in the past, "God stirred up His servants to stand against the ways of Antichrist, only to give testimony to His truth . . . but He let Antichrist prevail, because then God's time to pull him down was not come." In those days Antichrist "was to prosper yet further, to grow up higher." That was then, "but *now* God calls you to appear against him, and his ways," not merely for the sake of testimony. Rather, Burroughs claimed, "at this time God intends to ruin [Antichrist]. You come at the time of his downfall . . . in God's very day of recompensing vengeance for all the blood he has shed." The parliamentarians had been born in a new age, an age when Antichrist would no longer be allowed to prosper as he had in the past. Rather, he would be made to pay with blood for the blood he had shed. And what of those who were joined with Antichrist? They had been "born out of due time" for "now they come at the most miserable disadvantage that can be."[85]

Such was Burroughs's opinion in 1641. Preaching in May of 1642, Burroughs dared his audience to think of "what vengeance then does hang over that Antichrist, for all the blood of the saints that has been spilt by him! the scarlet whore has dyed herself with this blood, yea and vengeance will come for that blood that has been shed of our brethrens in Ireland . . . Certainly the righteous God will not suffer that wicked

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[85] Burroughs, *Sions Joy. A Sermon Preached to the Honourable House of Commons . . . September 7. 1641* (London: T. P. and M. S., 1641), p. 60. Burroughs believed that this militant tone was appropriate for a sermon of thanksgiving on the occasion of the "peace concluded between England and Scotland." Such divisive language at a critical time led Dr. Kirby to conclude that the preachers before Parliament were truly unaware of how close civil war actually was, see E. W. Kirby, "Sermons Before the Commons, 1640-1642," *American Historical Review* 44, no. 3 (1939), p. 541.

and horrid work to go unavenged, even here upon the earth."[86] Burroughs chose to publish this sermon in 1643, for once actual bloodshed had begun, he did not have to change his view or amend his sermons. Instead his predictions had been affirmed and now it was clear that God's work of vengeance was literally being carried out as described in Scripture.

Burroughs and others expressed a sentiment that has become difficult for modern commentators to describe, since much of the discourse is concerned with the application of largely anachronistic labels concerning the millennium and the concepts of "pre" and "post." Additionally, there has been a tendency to dismiss "millenarian" ideas as irrational, which leads to a view of the violence which they can generate as random.[87] Perhaps a better way of describing this theological milieu is to see it in terms of a hope for or a belief in a new dispensation, the entering into a new and as-yet underdetermined relationship with the Divine in which the elect would be guided by the "new light" of a "new dawn."[88] Such rhetoric was vague, but its ambiguity was partly responsible for its utility. Its imprecision did not render it ineffective.

The term "dispensation" has a number of meanings in various theological contexts. In its general theological usage dispensation means the scheme or plan by which the Divine relates to humanity.[89] This is similar to a dispensation as an

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[86] Burroughs, *An Exposition of the Prophesie of Hosea* (London: W. E. and J. G., 1643), p. 36.
[87] A position soundly put to rest by William M. Lamont in *Godly Rule: Politics and Religion, 1603-1660* (London: Macmillan, 1969).
[88] It has been argued elsewhere that this "new light" hermeneutic was central to the religious development of many of the Separatists and radical sects in the seventeenth century. See B. R. White, *The English Separatist Tradition: From the Marian Martyrs to the Pilgrim Fathers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 123; Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, chpt. 3.
[89] The modern theological connotation of the term arises from association with dispensationalism, which was given its premillennial, systematic form by men such as Jonathan Edwards and Pierre

"economy,"[90] or a system created by God which orders God's relation with humanity, but which is subject to a progression dictated by human, not divine, needs. During the seventeenth century, dispensation also frequently implied a specific manifestation of the Divine, or an action allowed by the Divine--such as a plague or a miracle. Thus a dispensation could be a sign of God's anger, or a miraculous providence. The Great Fire of London, for example, was often referred to as a "dispensation."[91]

Most important for the present discussion is the implication of a new period in God's relationship with His chosen people. Usually this was only the dispensation of the Spirit, classically derived from Acts and seen as having begun at Pentecost. The concept could have more radical connotations when used to suggest that a new period had begun. In this sense, Stephen Marshall called upon Parliament to recognise the new chapter of history about to be opened, "the glory of this last piece of His work, this new edition of the Church which He is now about to set forth."[92] Marshall's statement reveals a further facet of a new dispensation: the belief that this "new edition of the Church" would be the last and that its dawning represented the final chapter of God's relation with humanity before the book was closed.[93] This idea could also be expressed as rediscovering ancient truths, or the uncovering of divine

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Poiret. This form of thinking, with its focus on biblical literalism, was popularised by John N. Darby and entered firmly into American Protestantism through the work of Cyrus Scofield and the "Scofield Bible," which is seen by many as the most important premillennial dispensational work.

[90] See Henry Hammond, *A Practical Catechisme* (London: J. F, 1655), p. 221.

[91] See William Thomas, *The Countries Sense of Londons Sufferings in the Last Most Lamentable Fire* (London: John Sims, 1667); Thomas Brooks, *London's Lamentation* (London: John Hancock and Nathaniel Ponder, 1670).

[92] Marshall, *Gods Master-piece . . . Preached to the Right Honourable the House of Peers . . . March 26. 1645* (London: Stephen Bowtell, 1645), p. 36.

[93] The dispensational scheme laid out by Joachim of Fiore, in which there was the Age of the Law (the Father), the Age of Gospel (or the Son), and a third and final age, that of the Spirit (the Holy Ghost) was adopted by some in the seventeenth century, see, for example, John Saltmarsh, *Sparkles of Glory, Or, Some Beams of the Morning-Star* (London: Giles Calvert, 1647), p. 68; William Erbery, *The Testimony of William Erbery, Left upon Record for the Saints of Succeeding Ages* (London: Giles Calvert, 1658), p. 243, although many held a simpler expectation for a new time.

truth from under the veil of Antichrist that was part of the end times, or possibly suggesting new laws. This line of thinking was supported by Daniel 12:4: "Daniel shut up the words, and sealed the book until the end of time."[94] A new dispensation then, literal or figurative, implied a new chapter, a new allowance, a new relationship and the hope for a New Jerusalem.

In the context of anti-Catholicism, we have seen how John Goodwin's *Anti-Cavalerisme* put forward an argument for authorised violence based on the idea of defence against aggressive bloodthirsty papists. In writing this strongly apocalyptic text, Goodwin also used the rhetoric of anti-idolatry and claimed that those royalists who believed that Romans 13 compelled passivity in the face of imminent danger were not good Christians at all, but rather were idolaters who had made the king into an idol who they worshipped above God. Goodwin's work also contained a further argument for violence and presented one of the most controversial applications of the idea of a new dispensation.[95]

In addition to the necessity of avoiding idolatry, Goodwin reminded his readers that there was a further reason not to make "idols of kings and princes," since "there is a time coming, when Christ will put down all rule, and all authority, and power." Goodwin could see that a new age was at hand. "There hath no such thing been done or seen in the land, since first God caused men to live on the face of it." It was in this context of an imminent end, a time when the King of kings would be at hand to put down all earthly power, that Goodwin put forward his infamous argument

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[94] Geneva 1560. This edition glossed the text saying "Until the time that God has appointed for the full revelation of these things, and then many shall run to and fro to search the knowledge of these mysteries, which things they obtain now by the light of the Gospel."
[95] Goodwin, *Anti-Cavalierisme*, pp. 6, 16, 19.

concerning the nature of Christian pacifism and the commands that seemingly compel only non-violent disobedience.[96]

Goodwin began his discussion of the perceived pacifism of the early Christians by suggesting it was a result of their awareness of the futility of violence. At that time there were probably not enough Christians to have been any use in fighting their heathen oppressors. Additionally, he argued, the conditions for the successful use of violence were absent. Of course, the obstacle Goodwin had to overcome was the wide agreement that Tertullian had expressly denied this position. Even if Tertullian had not been mistaken in his assessment of Christian might, Goodwin explained that the earliest Christians might not have been made aware of the fact that they were allowed to resist. God had intentionally hid "this liberty we speak of from their eyes; that they should not see it to make use of it." Why? Goodwin's answer was consistent with his general apocalyptic scheme: God had hidden this truth from Christians until the present because it was necessary for Antichrist to come into the world, which might not have been possible had Christians like Tertullian been aware of the legitimacy of violently resisting: "Now this is a general rule . . . necessary to be shut up and concealed from the Churches of Christ, that Antichrist might pass by and get up into his throne, the discovery and letting out of the same into the world, are necessary for his pulling down."[97]

This older dispensation no longer applied to the English situation. Antichrist had been given his time to come into the world and become great and mighty. But now was the time of Antichrist's defeat. So to understand Tertullian, it was necessary

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[96] Goodwin, *Anti-Cavalierisme*, pp. 1, 6, 16.
[97] Goodwin, *Anti-Cavalierisme*, pp. 1, 20.

to understand that God dealt with His people in different ways at different times. Previously, Christians had to be unaware of their full liberty, for "Antichrist was then to come into the world." But "as now we know that he is about to be destroyed and cast out of the world" the situation had changed: violence was now required and, thus, authorised.

> Whereas, now on the contrary, that time of God's preordination and purpose, for the downfall of Antichrist, drawing near, there is a kind of necessity, that those truths, which have slept for many years, should now be awakened: and particularly that God should reveal and discover unto His faithful Ministers, and other His servants the just bounds and limits of authority, and power, and consequently the just and full extent of the lawful liberties of those that live in subjection.[98]

Goodwin had blended what was otherwise the standard parliamentarian argument for defensive force with the idea of a new dispensation to produce a doctrine not only of defence against papist attackers, but offensive violence against heathen oppressors. His bold declaration of the new dispensation attracted wide attention from both parliamentarians and royalists. Dudley Digges noted that he found Goodwin's words "so strange . . . sober men might doubt" they had been written.[99] Another royalist commented that the only way in which such an analysis justified resistance was if "the lawful king be the Antichrist," a position which he found preposterous and claimed that Goodwin was as deceived as he was deceptive.[100] Yet, Goodwin was exceptional only in how explicit he was in revealing the logic of a new

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[98] Goodwin, *Anti-Cavalierisme,* pp. 21-2.

[99] Digges also predicted, somewhat prophetically, that when the conflict was resolved, the parliamentarians would only be able to say, "We were mistaken in those places of Daniel and the Revelation. The time it seems is not yet come. The saints must still expect, and God's holy ones must wait and pray for a more happy opportunity to perfect the great work by Rebellion," Digges, *The Vnlavvfulnesse of Subjects Taking up Armes Against their Soveraigne in What Case Soever* (Oxford: s.n., 1643), pp. 108, 111.

[100] Henry Hammond, *Of Resisting the Lavvfull Magistrate under Colour of Religion* (London: s.n., 1647), p. 28.

dispensation. But even in this he was not alone, for many others were almost equally bold. Other parliamentarians agreed that "the time is (we hope) at hand for the pulling down of Antichrist . . . the right knowledge of these liberties God has given people will much help forward the great things God has to do in this latter age."[101] Likewise, another preacher to Parliament assured the MPs of their authorisation by noting that "this is the time. God's time is the present time . . . God is doing good, take therefore the opportunity" for the new edition of time meant that it was "now that set time of God . . . for the fall of Babel, and the reformation and deliverances and enlargement of the Churches of Christ . . . the time of . . . deliverance is not far off. But Rome must fall before that. Therefore, I conclude, that this is a hopeful season."[102]

As with many of his colleagues, Goodwin's apocalyptic perspective did not develop in response to the events of the early 1640s; rather, it was confirmed by these events. The rhetoric and imagery of the apocalypse was not employed to mask a wider parliamentary agenda. It was a reflex that provided a sensible worldview, which was increasingly confirmed by events. Thus, apocalypticism and its related concepts of anti-Catholicism and anti-idolatry, were not generated by the crisis of the early 1640s, but rather were entrenched by the events.

Well before the calling of the Long Parliament many fervent Protestants were beginning to see signs of a new dispensation. Another Goodwin, Thomas, could see that further light was spreading. A great change, a new dispensation, could be seen breaking, for "we live now in the extremity of times, when motions and alterations, being so near the centre, become quickest . . . and we are at the verge . . . within the

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[101] Jeremiah Burroughs, *A Briefe Answer to Doctor Fernes Booke* (London: s.n. 1643), p. 14.
[102] Joseph Symonds, *A Sermon Lately Preached . . . before Sundry of the Honourable House of Commons* (London: Luke Fawn, 1641), sigE1-sigE2.

whirl of that great mystery of Christ's kingdom, which will, as a gulf, swallow up all time; and so, the nearer we are unto it, the greater and more sudden changes will Christ make, now hastening to make a full end of all."[103] It was entirely possible that previously unknown liberties could be revealed.

This idea of a new dispensation also drew on the idea of a progressive revelation, as demonstrated partly in Thomas Goodwin's words. Recently, one scholar has termed the perspective an "eschatological epistemology," in which more could be known as sacred time progressed. Eschatology shaped the possibilities of knowledge.[104] Along these lines, Goodwin again explained, "the nearer the time comes, the more clearly these things shall be revealed. And because they begin to be revealed so much as they do now, we have cause to hope the time is at hand." He asked rhetorically, "does God begin to open this book? Know that the time is at hand."[105] Thomas Goodwin's adventist expectations in this sermon are well known, but they also illustrate the idea that in the new dispensation the godly will be directly under the command of God. In the new chapter of history, the "the presence of Christ shall be there, and supply all kind of ordinances."[106] This new dispensation might possible free men from the obligations of Scripture itself.[107]

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[103] Thomas Goodwin, "An Exposition of the Revelation," sect. 9 in *The Works of Thomas Goodwin* (London: James Nisbet, 1861-66), vol. 3, p. 204.
[104] Crawford Gribben, *The Puritan Millennium: Literature and Theology, 1550-1682* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000). Gribben develops this idea with regard to Milton and writes that Milton's "eschatological epistemology emphasized that truth was continually being clarified, and that our seeing 'through a glass darkly' would soon be replaced by our seeing immediately at the return of Christ" (ibid, p. 134, cf. p. 136).
[105] [Thomas Goodwin?], *A Glimpse of Sions Glory, Or, The Churches Beautie Specified* (London: William Larnar, 1641), p. 31. There is some debate over the authorship of this fascinating text, which was likely composed sometime before 1640. For the debate and the attribution to Goodwin, see Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, pp. 69-70.
[106] [Thomas Goodwin?], *Glimpse*, p. 27.
[107] In one of the most provocative recent studies of Revelation, Robert M. Royalty points out that the author of Revelation nowhere specifically cites Scripture. The result of this, Royalty maintains, is that

The conviction that a new dawn was coming can be seen in the writings of a number of important theological thinkers across the middle decades of the seventeenth century. Some hoped that the civil war would be the "last war" predicted in Revelation.[108] Milton believed that God aimed to bring about "some new and great period in His Church."[109] The less poetic Nehemiah Wallington made it clear in his diaries that the simple London turner expected that some great event or new dawn was just around the corner.[110] Similarly, David Underdown's study of Dorchester led him to conclude that his subjects believed that they were living at "one of the great turning-points, perhaps the greatest turning-point, of history: at the final stage of the eternal conflict between light and darkness, between good and evil, between Christ and Antichrist."[111] Underdown's language here is insightful, for this description accurately captures what this discussion refers to as the idea of a new dispensation. Many historians are quick to label this perspective as "millennial." While this sentiment can at times be millennial, it is always something more. It is the sense that

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Scripture itself is surpassed as a form of authority in favour of the direct voice of God (or Christ)--which is in effect the prophetic voice of the author. See Royalty, *The Streets of Heaven: The Ideology of Wealth in the Apocalypse of John* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1998). The close study of this text in the seventeenth century could have helped to influence similar liberties among the puritan prophets who addressed the Parliament and asserted that their authority and message came from God. Stephen Marshall, for example, claimed that his authorisation came from God and that it was his duty to explain to Parliament what God expected of them, see Marshall, *Peace-offering*, pp. 37-8; idem, *A Sermon Preached . . . Januar. 26 1647* (London: Richard Cotes, 1648), p. 30. Despite the possibility of a similar literary move by parliamentary divines, being good puritans, they continued to use biblical sources to ground their message.

[108] *The Camp of Christ, and the Camp of Antichrist, All Troopers after the Lambe* (s.n., 1642), p. 15.

[109] Milton, "Areopagitica; A Speech of Mr. John Milton," in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1959), vol. 2, p. 553. Additionally, the Seekers (perhaps more a milieu than a movement) help to demonstrate the kind of thinking which searched for a new dispensation. Believing that apostolic succession had been tainted and that the primitive Church was lost to earth, the seekers looked for apostles who would inaugurate a new apostolic dispensation. See Champlin Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), vol. 1, p. 367; Rufus Matthew Jones, *Mysticism and Democracy in the English Commonwealth* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1932), p. 67.

[110] See Seaver, *Wallington's World*, chpt. 6.

[111] Underdown, *Fire from Heaven: Life in an English Town in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 53.

God is bringing about great changes and these changes are part of the divine plan. Despite the persistent hope that the dawning dispensation will be the final stage of history, expectant contemporaries recognized that even if the final stage had been reached the true end could still be a long time coming. While the *end* was certainly a significant aspect of this perspective, the concept of great change, and in particular a change in the way that heaven and earth relate, was of equal if not greater importance.

Generally, the idea of a new dispensation provided the parliamentarians and the Army with a source of authorisation and a way to understand their war in terms beyond simple defence. As Joseph Caryl explained to the House of Commons in the fall of 1643, like Joshua, "we have Jericho's to reduce, and kingdoms to subdue, under the sceptre and government of Jesus Christ, we have justice to execute, and the mouths of lions to stop, we have a violent fire to quench, a sharp-edged sword to escape, popish alien-armies to fight with."[112] When such ideas of anti-Catholicism, anti-idolatry and a new dispensation were combined with the concept of defensive force, a larger mandate could be seen which authorised war in the absence of the king. The lynchpin of the theology of violence was no longer needed.

The establishment of a New Jerusalem required zeal. Yet such zeal contained elements which could undermine the hierarchy of authorisation as well. A view of oneself as an instrument of God's violent justice could provide an independent and immediate authorisation for killing. As the New Jerusalem dawned it was easier to believe in the legitimacy of more Phinehas-es. Francis Wortley, the royalist poet who had accompanied the king to Hull, pointed out how many thought that this "new

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[112] Caryl, *The Nature, Solemnity, Grounds, Prosperity, and Benefits, of a Sacred Covenant* (London: E. G., 1643), p. 37.

edition" freed men from previous constraints. He mocked those who talked "much of a new began Kingdom of Christ, set up in the hearts and souls of the saints, which discharges him of all secular duty."[113]

Yet such rhetoric was still predominantly contained within the hierarchy of violence and ideas of a new Joshua and the rhetoric of a new dispensation were seldom used to subvert the hierarchy. It was the leaders, the godly magistrates, who were expected to guide England into the new dispensation. Oliver Cromwell, the new Joshua, reportedly commented, in relation to the atrocities in Ireland, that, as was the case with God's instruments in the Old Testament, so it could be in the new dispensation that "there are great occasions in which some men are called to great service in the doing of which they are excused from the common rule of morality."[114] Even if such comments were made by Cromwell, who clearly believed he was living in an unprecedented time of great providences and "such things amongst us as have not been known in the world these thousand years," this was no licence for private persons.[115] It was for leaders, men in positions of authority, like Cromwell, to take the drastic steps required in opening up to the Lord and becoming an instrument of His will as He brought about His great work on earth.[116]

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[113] Wortley, *Characters and Elegies* (London: s.n., 1646), p 15.
[114] Quoted in Robert S. Paul, *The Lord Protector: Religion and Politics in the Life of Oliver Cromwell* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), p. 217.
[115] *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, ed. William C. Abbott (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937-47), vol. 3, p. 592.
[116] In many ways, this type of thinking finds its modern parallels in acts of religious warfare and elements of modern existential thought, which posit that common morality and ethics can be transgressed (or suspended) in the pursuit of the divine will. See, for example, Mark Jeurgensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 2000). Additionally, see the work of Søren Kierkegaard, in particular *Fear and Trembling*, trans. H. Hong and E. Hong in volume 6 of his works (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983); Zachary Price, "On Young Lukacs on Kierkegaard" *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 25, no. 6 (1999), pp. 67-82.

Cromwell's famous words at Drogheda demonstrate that he also interpreted the Irish massacres within the acceptable conventions of Christian just war. Cromwell wrote:

> I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgement of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood; and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood in the future, which are the satisfactory grounds to such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret.

In this statement, which is often taken to represent the height of excessive religious enthusiasm and bloodthirstiness on Cromwell's part, can be seen many of the classical elements of just war thinking. Violence was undertaken as an act of judging the guilty and in order to prevent future violence. It was violence undertaken to insure peace, i.e., "good" violence. As Cromwell knew, these "are the satisfactory grounds to such actions."[117] That the judgement was from God is also consistent with the idea that the magistrate was to enact the judgements of God on earth, for the punishment of the evil and the praise of the good. Cromwell was acting as a good magistrate should, but in the absence of the king, his mandate was seen as heavenly.

A final example of how the idea of a new dispensation and apocalypticism could bypass the instinct of obedience towards the person of the monarch in favour of a direct appeal to the Divine can be seen in a sermon Stephen Marshall delivered in January 1644, titled *A Sacred Panegyrick.* This fascinating text was preached to both Houses, the Lord Major, the Earl of Essex, various commanders of the parliamentarian forces, the Court of Aldermen along with the Common Council of London, the Assembly of Divines and the Scottish Commissioners. Looking out from his pulpit Marshall could "behold in one view" an army of angels. Only the greatest

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[117] Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 2, p. 127.

gathering of God's chosen people could provide an approximate parallel for that day. Marshall told this august congregation that they were like the gathering of all of Israel found in 1 Chronicles 12. He developed this parallel in great detail, but then declared, "but it may be you will say, 'We want a David, to make the parallel full; we want a David to be with us, a king who might concur with us and we with him in the same business': I confess indeed, that in the literal sense God hath not yet made you so blessed, the Sons of Belial have stolen away both his majesty's person, and affection from us." While all will be done to bring him back "that he shall come home, and make this parallel full . . . But in the mean time, we do not want a David to suit this David in the text, we have here the true David, of whom that David was in this very thing a type, that is the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we are endeavouring to set upon His throne, that He might be Lord and King in His Israel, Over His Church, amongst us."[118]

Marshall's claim was not for individual violence, but rather that parliamentarian institutions had an increased authority, one which could be seen as coming directly from the Divine. Apocalypticism allowed the hierarchical theology of violence to continue to operate despite the absence of the king. The theology of obedience was still present, the reflex to obey the king was still to be observed, only the idea could now be shifted to the King of kings. Likewise a parallel could be made in terms of the theology of violence: God could now directly authorise, whereas before it had required the earthly king.

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[118] Marshall, *A Sacred Panegyrick, Or, A Sermon of Thanks-giving, Preached to the Two Houses of Parliament . . . Ianuary 18. 1643* (London: Stephen Bowtell, 1644), pp. 1-6, 8, 13-4.

Chapter Six

Violence and Regicide

Bring forth the King, chop off his head
We ne'er our wish shall gain
Till we upon his trunk do tread.
His blood must wash our stain.
--The Levellers Levell'd [1]

We have discovered, at the heart of every religion, the same single central event that generates its mythical significance and its ritual acts: the action of a crowd as it turns on someone it adored yesterday, and may adore again tomorrow, and transforms him into a scapegoat in order to secure by his death a period of peace for the community. --René Girard [2]

The concepts of just war and a hierarchy of authorised violence remained throughout the civil wars. Yet the turmoil did much to muddle which institutions could authorise violence. Competing claims, rival theories, and the actual ravishes of war had distorted what was previously an uncomplicated view of who could use violence and when. This chapter explores the way in which the effort to re-establish this hierarchy of authorised violence centred upon the act of killing the man who was formerly at its pinnacle.

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[1] Marchamont Nedham, *The Levellers Levell'd, Or, The Independents Conspiracie to Root Out Monarchie* (London: s.n., 1647), frontispiece.
[2] Girard, *Job: The Victim of His People*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1987), p. 160.

This apparently paradoxical conclusion is illuminated by the work of the theorist René Girard.[3] Most important for this discussion are Girard's insights concerning the scapegoating mechanism and the way in which violence is used to control violence.[4] In the first instance, the cathartic effects of the regicide, as an event intended to channel spiritual pollution and violence out of the community, are highlighted. In the latter, it can be seen how the regicide was an act which aimed to re-establish a stable hierarchy of authorised violence.[5]

The Man of Blood and the Scapegoat

Patricia Crawford's influential article on regicide and the concept of bloodguilt did much to demonstrate the centrality of this concept for early modern thinkers in general and its eventual association with Charles in particular.[6] Much of what Crawford wrote a generation ago is still applicable to this discussion of scapegoating, for the "blood" which Charles was guilty of shedding symbolised the violence which had plagued the British isles during the civil wars. Within the context

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[3] The best introduction to work of Girard can be found in *The Girard Reader*, ed. James G. Williams (New York: Crossroad, 1996).

[4] For a brief introduction to Girard's ideas concerning the scapegoating mechanism, see Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly, *The Gospel and the Sacred: Poetics of Violence in Mark* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), pp. 129-52.

[5] The structure in which events and themes are discussed in this chapter is guided by the Girardian hypothesis. While this hypothesis is suggestive, this present effort to apply it directly to a historical event demonstrates that it is in need of several revisions, many of which have recently been suggested by Simon Simonse in *Kings of Disaster: Dualism, Centralism, and the Scapegoat King in Southeastern Sudan* (Leiden: Brill, 1992). In particular, Simonse points out that regicide does not always succeed in reunifying a community, and rather than the scapegoat always being innocent, regicide is frequently "the tragic *dénouement* of a protracted confrontation [between the people and the] king" (p. 372).

[6] Patricia Crawford, "Charles Stuart, that Man of Blood," *Journal of British Studies* 16, no. 2 (1977), pp. 41-61. Christopher Hill continues Crawford's argument and adds his usual flair and insight to the discussion in "The Man of Blood," in *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-century Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1991), chpt. 15.

of the theology of violence, however, the concept of bloodguilt needs to be expanded on two counts. The first is in terms of the significance and meaning of blood and the second is with regard to the importance of guilt.

Blood

At his trial, Charles was charged with the crime of violence. From the early 1640s, parliamentarian ministers had been expounding on the necessity of making an "inquisition for blood," and by the end of the decade what was left of Parliament erected a court to do so.[7] While the "Charge of the Commons of England" against the king opened with the rhetoric of tyranny, the first offences mentioned were not constitutional, but rather the attempt by the king to seize the munitions at Hull, the raising of his standard at Nottingham, and the battle of Edgehill, the point when the tension between crown and Parliament turned to open violence. The charges also focussed on violence in the form of civil war battles. Similarly, the court proceedings at the king's trial were also centred on the issue of violence. It was by the "cruel and unnatural wars" which Charles had "levied, continued and renewed" that the nation had come to wallow in so "much innocent blood."[8] The misuse of force was Charles's crime.

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[7] Thomas Case, *Jeoshaphats Caveat to His Jvdges Delivered in a Sermon* (London: Felix Kingston, 1644), p. 10, cf. Cornelius Burgess, *Two Sermons Preached to the Honourable House of Commons* (London: J. R., 1645), pp. 39-44.

[8] David Lagomarsino and Charles T. Wood, eds., *The Trial of Charles I: A Documentary History* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1989), pp. 61-3 (all references to this work are from the NetLibrary Online Edition, http://www.netlibrary.com/).

Blood is most obviously a signifier of the essence of life, but when spilt it is also a symbol of death and of violence.[9] When Charles is called a "man of blood" this is equivalent to being labelled a "man of violence"-- violence in the sense of illicit or unjustified force. It was for this reason that there was such a persistent emphasis on the *innocence* of the blood which had been spilt. By identifying the blood as *innocent* contemporaries accused Charles of the guilt of unauthorised force. The preceding discussion demonstrates the enormity of this claim. The epithet "man of blood" signified that the supreme magistrate had himself used force unjustly--a dramatic inversion of the assumptions concerning the king's divine right and place in the hierarchy of authorisation.[10] Before this lynchpin in the theology of violence could be broken, Charles had to be demonised. The shedding of so much innocent blood had disturbed the very fabric of nature and had provoked the anger of God. If the king had used force illegitimately, then it was ultimately divine justice that would have to provide his punishment. It was accepted that only God could punish a king, and usually only in the afterlife. Thus it was wondrous that God was showing His heavenly justice on earth by bringing the king to trial.

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[9] For blood as containing the essence of life, see Leviticus 17 and William Blissett, "The Secret'st Man of Blood: A Study of Dramatic Irony in Macbeth," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (1959), pp. 397-408. This belief is also found in many non-scientific societies. See, for example, Charles Piot, "Symbolic Dualism and Historical Process among the Kabre of Togo," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 1, no. 3 (1995), p. 615.

[10] From the start of the wars parliamentarians had condemned the royalist effort as an "unjust war," but in the beginning such accusations were combined with the idea that the king was not personally responsible for the war, he had been "over-awed by bloody papists and so is forced to command a barbarous and unjust war," see Samuel Rutherford, *Lex, Rex: The Law and the Prince* (London: lohn Field, 1644), p. 259. Once the idea of the king's evil councillors had diminished, the discourse demanded that he be personally responsible for an unjust war.

The "vocal" character of Charles's violence, in that it cried to heaven for rectification--like the sin of Cain, was due to the *innocence* of his victims.[11] Charles was certainly allowed to shed blood, but he was supposed to shed the blood of guilty criminals, not the blood of innocent saints.[12] It was for this reason that the rhetoric of *innocence* and *innocent blood* recurs so frequently in the language surrounding the trial. Crawford implies that the calculus of bloodguilt worked in such a way that spilt blood had to be accounted for. But not *all* blood had to be avenged, since, as we shall see, that would have rendered Parliament as guilty as the king. Rather, only the shedding of innocent blood angered God and required vengeance. [13]

Within the early modern hierarchical cosmology, violence was a positive element used to punish and impose order. But its improper and unauthorised use threatened the entire structure of society. Improper violence was a contagious pollutant. It threatened to spread rapidly, destroying the structures of authority and bringing society to anarchy. Looking back on the civil wars, Thomas Hobbes explained the corrosive effects of such a contagion of unauthorised violence, which "destroying all laws, both divine, and humane, reduce[s] all order, government, and society, to the first chaos of violence and civil war."[14] To prevent such a downward

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[11] John Cook, *King Charls His Case* (London: Peter Cole, 1649), p. 36. For some examples of the vocal nature of innocent blood in Elizabethan literature, see Shakespeare's *Macbeth* III.4: 146-52 and *Richard II* I.1, *passim.*

[12] The idea that God had put the sword into the king's hand for the punishment of the wicked *only* led several parliamentarians to claim that it was thus "out of all question" that God had intended that the monarch use it to "kill the innocent," see H. Palmer, *Scripture and Reason Pleaded for Defensive Armes, Or, The Whole Controversie about Subjects Taking up Armes* (London: Iohn Bellamy, 1643), p. 37.

[13] Similarly, in the Hebrew Bible it is most often innocent blood that pollutes, whereas other blood can purify (see note 19 below).

[14] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1968), p. 469.

spiral, ordering violence had to be used to halt chaos causing violence. In the context of the civil wars, a killing was required to stop the killing.

Like the equally contagious sin of idolatry, murder called out for cleansing--it had to be purged from society.[15] Like idolatry, improper violence was a sin which invoked God's angered and demanded action. Those who saw Charles as a "man of blood" believed that God's laws had to be obeyed regardless of legal or political difficulties and that a failure to do so would invoke God's wrath. As a pamphlet presented to Parliament in late summer 1648 explained, the Divine had to be obeyed, for was "God not to be feared more than the people? Doth not the cry of blood, Irish-blood, Scottish-blood, and English-blood make a noise in your ears? Will not God make inquisition for blood? Was there ever so much blood spilt and so little inquisition made for blood as there hath been since this Parliament began?"[16] Rather than seeking a treaty with the king, Parliament should search for the person responsible for the wars so that rectification could be made.

Just as the shedding of innocent blood was associated with the pollutant of idolatry, it was also associated with apocalypticism.[17] Biblical references to "innocent blood" frequently implied the innocent blood of the saints, which was most often shed by their diabolical enemies. Oliver Cromwell invoked this association during his

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[15] See, Cornelius Burgess, *Two Sermons*, pp. 39-44. For the association between idolatry and killing, see chpt. 2, note 94.

[16] *The Peoples Eccho to the Parliaments Declarations, Concerning a Personall Treaty with the King* (London: Matthew Simmons, 1648), pp. 1, 5-6.

[17] Crawford recognised that there was "some evidence to suggest that a sympathy with millenarian ideas may have made an individual sensitive to the sin of bloodguilt" since "many of those who discussed bloodguilt appear in [Bernard] Capp's list of Fifth Monarchists," Crawford, "Charles Stuart, That Man of Blood," p. 51. The idea that the effusion of innocent blood was related to the signs of the end can help to explain this association.

campaigns in Ireland when he declared that the Irish clergy, "are part of Antichrist, whose kingdom the Scripture so expressly speaks should be laid in blood; yea in the blood of the saints."[18] The presence of innocent blood indicated the propinquity of both the saints and the soldiers of Antichrist: the one being slain and the other slaying. Innocent blood provided a trail to the demonic and ungodly at the same time that it offered a reassurance of God's ultimate justice.[19]

As Cromwell's comments demonstrate, associations between the shedding of innocent blood and Antichrist were not taken solely from the bloodguilt proof texts of the Old Testament. Revelation was another favourite source, with its images of a filthy Babylon defiled by blood. Many of the telltale signs of the Apocalypse involved innocent blood. Just as Babylon was covered and defiled by the blood of the saints, so the Whore of Babylon was drunk with innocent blood.[20] Additionally, the slaying of the two witnesses was often interpreted as the shedding of the blood of the saints and was a much-anticipated sign that the end time was near.[21]

The strong association between blood-lust and Catholicism made Catholics' antichristian desire to shed the blood of the saints into a defining characteristic of papists in the seventeenth century. Charging Charles with the crime of having

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[18] From his "Declaration of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, for the undeceiving of deluded and seduced People" in *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, ed. William C. Abbott (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1937-47), vol. 2, p. 199; cf. Thomas Wilson, *Jerichoes Dovvn-Fall . . . Preached . . . Septemb. 28. 1642* (London: John Bartlet, 1643), p. 40.

[19] See 2 Kings 9, 21; Judges 9; Proverbs 29:10; Hosea 6:8; and Revelation 2:14. It is important to note that unjustly shed blood, innocent blood and the blood of the saints all signified a place of defilement. At the same time, properly sanctified blood was a symbol of God's presence, as in the Passover, or the blood sprinkled on the altar. See Exodus 12, 24, 29; Leviticus 1, 3-5, 7, 17; 2 Chronicles 29; Isaiah 34:6.

[20] Revelation 18.

[21] See Rodney Petersen, *Preaching in the Last Days: The Theme of the "Two Witnesses" in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Mark R. Bell, *Apocalypse How?: Baptist Movements during the English Revolution* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2000), chpt. 11.

drenched the British Isles in innocent blood thus also associated him with Antichrist and further reinforced the insinuation of popery. John Cook, the chief prosecutor at the king's trial, noted that Charles had surpassed the papists, for he was exceptional in having caused more godly blood to be spilt than "Rome, Heathen or Antichristian."[22] The language of tyranny also furthered the association of Charles with Antichrist, since the archetypical tyrant was Antichrist. As Robert Zaller reminds us, "the Man of Blood was brother or at least a limb to the Man of Sin, Antichrist himself."[23]

The logic of bloodguilt also shared the sense of ultimate justice found in apocalypticism: the wicked might be allowed to prosper for a time and carry out their cruelties, but in the end they would not escape the justice of God's vengeance.[24] The saints might be slaughtered but their innocent blood would cry to God for justice until their persecutors meet an even worse fate. The apocalyptic elements of bloodguilt reinforce the dualism of scapegoating. Just as there are only two sides in the apocalyptic battle, those of Christ and Antichrist, so there are only two types with the scapegoat, the guilty and the innocent. The totality of guilt is shifted to the shoulders of the scapegoat while, at the same time, washing the innocent free of the polluting effects of violence.

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[22] Cook, *King Charls His Case*, p. 4.
[23] Zaller, "The Figure of the Tyrant in English Revolutionary Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 54, no. 4 (1993), p. 600. As with all apocalyptic language, the line between metaphor and literalism is difficult to determine. Nevertheless, the association of Charles with blood and tyranny at his trial carried a significant apocalyptic connotation.
[24] See, for example, Psalm 9:12, 58:10.

Guilt

It was natural for there to be guilt arising from the war, particularly on the parliamentarian side. Not only had there been atrocities,[25] and the residual guilt which accompanies killing, particularly that of one's countrymen, but there had always been the dubious nature of the sanction for the parliamentary cause, which in the soul-searching days of late 1648 led many to debate why and under what authority the battles had been fought. While the cause was holy and justified, the battlefields and camps ritualised and kept pure, the killing had nevertheless defiled. The fast sermon preachers amplified any residual war guilt by continually reminding the godly of their sinful state. In December 1648, Thomas Brooks, military chaplain and parliamentary preacher, reminded the Commons of the depth of their guilt, saying, "O, right honourable, have you not sins enough of your own to awaken you, to startle you, to trouble you, to amaze, you, to afflict you, and to humble you?" Did they not run the risk of having God intensify His plague of violence? "Have you not sins enough of your own to provoke God against you to strike you?"[26]

Throughout the wars, preachers before the Long Parliament had harangued the Houses concerning their sins, particularly when defeat or lack of progress indicated God's displeasure. But preachers like Brooks were concerned specifically with the sin of blood. Brooks reminded his auditors of the adage ringing in every ear in the days before the king's trial, "Blood defiles the land, and the land cannot be cleaned of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." For Brooks it was

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[25] Though within a broader European prospective the number of atrocities appear to have been relatively few, see Barbara Donagan, "Atrocity, War Crimes and Treason in the English Civil War," *American Historical Review* 99, no. 4 (1994), pp. 1137-66.

[26] Brooks, *Gods Delight in the Progresse of the Upright . . . Presented in a Sermon Before the Honourable House of Commons . . . December 16, 1648* (London: M. S., 1649), p. 17.

telling that Numbers 35:33 specified that the blood which covered the land could only be cleansed by the killing of *him* that had shed it, for Brooks knew which single individual could carry the sins out of the land. "Consider this," Brooks demanded, "that your execution of justice and judgement will free you from the guilt of other men's sins." Failure to do so would mean that all the sins fell upon Parliament and that God would strike them down in judgement.[27]

Rather than take the guilt upon themselves, Parliament and the Army could transfer the sins of the war onto the scapegoat and, by destroying him, rid themselves of the pollution in their midst. In this sense, the cathartic effect of the regicide must be emphasised. In bold print and generous italics, the authors of the *Peoples Eccho to Parliaments* (1648), declared that to fail to bring the king to justice would be to "bring upon us all the blood that hath been shed in this war." The tract began with a denunciation of efforts to negotiate with the king, maintaining that "if we proceed upon such principles . . . we must needs draw the whole guilt upon our own selves." There was no ambiguity in the situation; failure to bring the king to justice would place "the whole guilt upon ourselves . . . And let the day be darkest wherein, even this Parliament, shall draw the whole guilt of the blood (shed in these wars) upon themselves." The pamphlet's tone (and typography) conveyed the urgency of the issue as the sins of the land cried out for judgement.[28]

In the months before the regicide several important changes in the language used against the king enabled him to be viewed as a sufficient scapegoat to carry all

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[27] Brooks, *Gods Delight*, p. 17. In 1644 Edmund Calamy made this logic apparent (although not necessarily in reference to the king), explaining that "all the guilty blood that God requires you in justice to shed . . . God will require the blood at your hands," *Englands Antidote Against the Plague of Civil VVarre* (London: I. L., 1645), p. 27.
[28] *The Peoples Eccho*, pp. 1, 5.

the sins out of the land. The most important shift was the abandonment of the rhetoric of the early 1640s which had maintained that Charles was duped by evil counsellors and taken hostage by an antichristian faction, who had tricked him into making war against his own loyal Parliament and good people. While Presbyterian ministers in London sought to remind those in control of the king that the aim of the war had been to free the king from evil counsellors, and not to bring him to trial, their efforts were in vain.[29] Within the ranks of the Army it had become clear that Charles alone personally bore *all* the guilt of the wars. By the time of the trial, the rhetoric of evil counsellors was largely abandoned.[30]

The belief that *all* guilt should be shouldered by Charles alone was also consistent with just war theology. In early modern England the person (or persons) at the top of the pyramid was solely responsible for waging war. If the supreme power called an inferior to take up arms, then the justness of the cause was not something which the soldier had to consider. The soldier's moral responsibility was to obey the call of the supreme magistrate. Thus in theory, depending on where sovereignty was seen to reside, within the early modern just war calculus, responsibility for the war either had to be the king's or Parliament's.

Intent was another central aspect of the theology of violence that played an important role in the regicide. Intent allowed Augustine to maintain that the Christian could kill and led William Gouge to advocate slaying in love. While the London

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[29] In *A Vindication of the Ministers of the Gospel in, and about London* (London: A. M., 1649), which George Thomason dated the same day that the High Court issued its condemnation of Charles, Cornelius Burgess reminded people that the goal of the war had once been only "to remove the wicked before" the king (p. 3). For more on the London Presbyterians in the run-up to the regicide, see Elliot Vernon, "The Quarrel of the Covenant: The London Presbyterians and the Regicide," in *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I*, ed. Jason Peacey (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 202-24.
[30] See John Cook, *King Charls His Case*, p. 13.

Presbyterian ministers were concerned with the intent behind Parliament's original call to arms, the Independents focussed on Charles's intent in waging the wars. The second civil war had made it clear that Charles was not deluded, but diabolical. He had actually intended the destruction and ruin that he had brought to the three kingdoms. The recounting of the battles at the king's trial demonstrated the deliberateness with which the king had sought the destruction of his people. The Ordinance charged the king with "a wicked design totally to subvert the ancient and fundamental laws and liberties of this nation" and to replace them with "an arbitrary and tyrannical government." Charles's wilful intent, according to rhetoric of the trial, was nothing less than "the enslaving or destroying of the English Nation."[31] Such intent was an essential component of the totality of his guilt and of his deserving of punishment. Yet, since he also intended to continue fighting, all action against him could still be cast as defensive. Intent meant that Charles was fully responsible for the bloodshed of the 1640s, and, further, that he would continue to destroy those on whom he could lay hands in the future.

The language of intentional destruction and bloodshed illustrates the way in which Charles's duplicity was inflated before his execution. To enable violence to be used against him, and so that he could take on all the guilt of the wars, he was made into a monster.[32] By the time of the trial, he was guilty of "infinite" atrocities of such

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[31] Lagomarsino and Wood, *The Trial of Charles I*, pp. 25-6; Graham Edwards, *The Last Days of Charles I* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton, 1999), p. 100.

[32] The association of Charles with Nero demonstrates the way in which he was inflated into a monster corresponding to the classical model of a demented tyrant. As early as 1647 John Bradshaw allegedly publicly decried Charles I as a tyrant "worse than Nero," see, Edwards, *The Last Days of Charles I*, p. 109. For Milton, Charles could be compared to Nero, but was far worse, for while "Nero killed many thousands of Christians; Charles [killed] many more," see, *Political Writings*, ed. Martin Dzelzainis, trans. Claire Gruzelier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 5, 176, 240. Other contemporaries also made this association, see, for example, Balthazar Gerbier, *The None-Such*

a multitude that time did not permit their cataloguing.[33] The king by then was seen as "guilty of more transcendent treasons, and enormous crimes, than all the kings in this part of the world have ever been." His myriad offences were more "than the best arithmetician can well enumerate."[34]

All violence was laid at the feet of the "grand delinquent."[35] He was guilty of "all the bloody murders that have been committed."[36] The logic of much of the rhetoric, both in the courtroom and outside, was that if Charles could be seen as guilty of *everything* then his accusers were guilty of *nothing*. Such was the case that the "the king is wholly elapsed in his splendour . . . and stands guilty of all the precious blood, rapines, and ruins of millions of people in these three kingdoms." Charles was declared "guilty of all the blood shed in the first and second war."[37] All the guilt was Charles's, unless there were a failure of justice, in which case all the guilt would become Parliament's. By making Charles into a monster, the task of placing the guilt on his shoulders was simplified. With each additional accusation Charles was transformed into a greater magnet for impurities--all sins could be attributed to him and all could (hopefully) be united in seeing his culpability. The totality of his past guilt testified to his future crimes as well. His previous intentional crimes

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Charles His Character (London: R. I., 1651), p. 187. The transformation of Charles into a monster is consistent with a Girardian view of scapegoating. Girard maintains the scapegoat is "expected to confess officially to a certain number of oedipal crimes: the murder of a father or close relative, or some well-concocted incestuous relations with a mother or sister," see, *Job*, p. 88. This aspect of the scapegoat might help to explain why it was alleged by many, including Milton, that Charles had tried to poison his father, see, *Political Writings,* p. 176.

[33] Lagomarsino and Wood, *The Trial of Charles I*, p. 25.

[34] John Cook, *King Charls His Case*, pp. 5, 39.

[35] Lagomarsino and Wood, *The Trial of Charles I*, p. 48.

[36] C. W., *King Charls His Tryal, Or, A Perfect Narrative of the Whole Proceedings of the High Court of Iustice in the Tryal* (London: Peter Cole, 1649), p. 41.

[37] John Redingston, *Plain English to the Parliament and Army, and to the Rest of the People* (London: Benry Hills, 1649), p. 2; *The Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow*, ed. C. H. Firth (Oxford, 1894), quoted in Crawford, "Charles Stuart, That Man of Blood," p. 59.

demonstrated his guilty character and proved beyond doubt that such a monster would persist in doing evil if set free.

Therefore, Charles's death was required for three reasons. First and most important was the Divine will, which called out for justice. God demanded restitution for the blood which had been shed. Pursuing anyone other than the king was, in the opinion of Colonel Hewson's petition to Fairfax, "to little purpose, as being not an acceptable sacrifice to the justice of God."[38] Ultimately, God demanded a suitable sacrifice to atone for the sins of the nation. Second, if action was not taken then the sins of the war fell upon those who had failed to perform this required sacrifice. Parliament would become guilty of the past wars if it did not execute speedy judgement against the "grand author" of all the troubles. Finally, there could be no doubt that if Parliament failed to bring the king to justice then they would be responsible for his future violence. Brooks explained this point with a poignant anecdote, saying that "it was an ingenious acknowledgement of an Emperor, who when one had committed a murder, and he was importuned to spare his life, and he did it; suddenly after the same person committed wilful murder again: Then there was a complaint made to the Emperor, that he had committed murder twice: No (says the Emperor) he is guilty of the former only, I am guilty of the latter." The point hardly needed further explication, but Brooks added, "And therefore as you would not have

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[38] The petition went on to explain that to exempt Charles from punishment was to idolise him by placing him above the commands of God. See *Two Petitions Presented to His Excellency the Lord Fairfax* (London: John Partridge, 1648), p. 4, 8.

the guilt of other men's sins be upon you, hold on in the way of well-doing, let justice and judgement run down as a mighty stream."[39]

This last point was a forceful one and convincing for many of the judges at the trial, according to Lucy Hutchinson, wife of the regicide John Hutchinson. She explained that

> the gentlemen . . . judges . . . saw in him a disposition so bent on the ruin of all that opposed him, and of all the righteous and just things they had contended for, that it was upon consciences of many of them, that if they did not execute justice upon him, God would require at their hands all the blood and desolation which should ensue by their suffering him to escape, when God had brought him into their hands.[40]

Accompanying the metaphysical mandate was the pragmatic proof that Charles caused unjust violence. Even when under house arrest he had still managed to stir up war. In the past he had made war on Parliament, and he was bent on continuing to do so in the future. The execution of the king would in part cleanse the land of the bloodguilt from the previous wars, and it would also prevent the king's "evil practices" of raising "new commotions, rebellions and invasions" in the future.[41] In order to rid the land of guilt--past, present, and future--Charles had to be killed.

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[39] Brooks, *Gods Delight*, p. 18. The idea of guilt by omission was a familiar one and Stephen Marshall employed the same story of the guilty Emperor as Brooks, see his *A Sermon Preached . . . November 17. 1640* (London: J. Okes, 1641), p. 47.
[40] Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson* (London: Everyman, 1908), p. 266.
[41] Lagomarsino and Wood, *The Trial of Charles I*, p. 26. For the importance of fears of future designs of the king to wage war, particularly in the context of Ireland, see John Adamson, "The Frighted Junto: Perceptions of Ireland, and the Last Attempts at Settlement with Charles I," in *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I*, ed. Jason Peacey, (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 36-70.

Violence To End Violence

The inflation of Charles's guilt to almost apocalyptic proportions meant that in the weeks prior to the trial he came to be seen increasingly as a thing accursed. He was a lightning rod for God's anger--and as Brooks warned, the godly must avoid the "thunderbolts of divine displeasure."[42] Once elements of the Army had become convinced that Charles was the source of the unjust violence--a conviction that might have come for many as early as the Windsor prayer meeting in 1648--then this conviction became a reality for them. Once convinced of Charles's polluted nature the belief made it true that the pollution would not leave until Charles was destroyed. The king was a source of plague, a contaminant, which only once removed would banish violence from the community. The king would have to be killed for the plague to be stayed.[43]

Charles's death would rid the community of violence and act as a sufficient sacrifice to divine justice. Killing Charles would also bring a halt to violence for another reason, in that he would be "exemplary," he could act as a symbol and a surrogate for the guilty party. If Charles was sacrificed then it would not be necessary for the triumphant party to slaughter all who had fought for the defeated. In this sense, scapegoating protects a community from its own violence.[44] Charles could act

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[42] Brooks, *Gods Delight*, p. 8.

[43] The king was later seen as having called down "curses" from heaven; he was "the source of so many evils," Balthazar Gerbier, *The None-Such Charles*, sig. A2, pp. 2, 168.

[44] A straightforward reading of bloodguilt without the concept of scapegoating makes it difficult to understand why all royalists should not have been put to the sword. Even under parliamentary law this seems that it should have been the case. See *Several Votes of the Lords & Commons Assembled in Parliament, Concerning Such as Take up Arms against the Parliament of England, or Assist in Such War. Wherein is Declared, That All Such Persons are Traytors by the Fundamental Laws of This*

as a scapegoat whose annihilation would end the cycle of revenge killings and drive ungodly violence out of the community.[45]

"From divine and human considerations": From Windsor to Whitehall

Events leading up to the trial illustrate how the idea of Charles as a "man of blood" is complemented by seeing him as a scapegoat, with both ideas demanding his death despite his position at the top of the hierarchy of authorised violence. The first significant event was the Prayer Meeting at Windsor, which occurred in the months after Charles had signed the Engagement with the Scots. The emotional atmosphere that pervaded the prayer meeting contrasts sharply with the coolheaded text of Henry Ireton's *Remonstrance*, produced in November 1648, which provides much of the logic which led to regicide.

The Windsor Prayer Meeting and the Single Victim

The scapegoat provides unity amidst discord by providing a single simple solution to the problems that plague a community. The prayer meeting at Windsor demonstrated this effect and testified to the ways in which the evil image of the scapegoat could be magnified once the group agreed on his duplicity. Furthermore, the prayer meeting at Windsor showed how the charismatic unity experienced by a group agreeing upon a common enemy is attributed to divine guidance and how this

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Kingdom, and Ought to Suffer Accordingly. 20 Junii, 1648 (London: Edward Husband, 1647). Crawford acknowledges that some did believe that, on account of bloodguilt, all royalists should be brought to the sword, "Charles Stuart, That Man of Blood," p. 60.

[45] In the end this did not happen and the subsequent treatment of the regicides demonstrates the kind of revenge violence which scapegoating is supposed to prevent.

experience can endow scapegoating efforts with a divine mandate. Finally, the unity achieved at Windsor meant that the soldiers present were not only intent on bringing Charles to justice, but also that they were resolved to fight.

The Windsor prayer meeting took place in late April 1648. It brought together members of the New Model Army, as confusion and division troubled the ranks. The reality of a much-feared resumption of war was bearing down upon them and there was disunity within the Army. It was in this context that the officers met for prayer and fasting at Windsor. This infamous prayer meeting is most often recounted as the first time that the label of a "man of blood" was affixed to Charles before a large audience.[46] The Particular Baptist William Allen provided the primary version of the event, which was not published until over a decade later. As a result, there has been some speculation about the reliability of Allen's account.[47]

While Allen's is the most exhaustive account of the prayer meeting, it is not the only one. In early 1651, Balthazar Gerbier, a close observer of the royal Court, published his lengthy catalogue of Charles's many failings.[48] The text also contained a description of the Windsor prayer meeting. Gerbier's intention in retelling the episode was to provide encouragement to the saints and to demonstrate the ways in which God was leading them. While Gerbier's description of the Windsor meeting is far shorter than Allen's, the two pages Gerbier provides offer strong support for Allen's description. The 1651 text shares the 1659 description of general confusion at

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[46] Thomas Harrison is usually given the honour of having used the term first, but it is an honour which he should share with the eventual Quaker George Bishop. See C. H. Firth, ed. *The Clarke Papers* (London: Camden Society, 1901), vol. 1, pp. 383, 417; Ian Gentles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland, 1645-1653* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 216, 301.

[47] See, for example, Austin Woolrych, *Soldiers and Statesmen: The General Council of the Army and its Debates, 1647-1648* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 332-5.

[48] Gerbier maintained that Charles was doomed from birth, if not before, with even Nostradamus having foretold his downfall, *The None-Such Charles*, p. 9.

the start of the meeting and even verifies the scriptural passage invoked amidst the praying masses.[49] While the veracity of Allen's account is not beyond doubt, there appears to be sufficient corroboration to use it as an illustration of the scapegoating mechanism at work with regard to the decision to bring Charles to trial.

Eleven years after the meeting, Allen chose to call his recounting *A Faithful Memorial of that Remarkable Meeting of Many Officers of the Army in England, at Windsor Castle, in the year 1648*. Its point, however, was not to serve as historical record of the event, but to remind soldiers of the unity of purpose experienced. The disunity that characterised the start of the meeting and the state of the Army in general that spring is apparent from Allen's text. The prayer meeting took place in a highly emotional setting, with "very great distress round about." Not only did the men lack direction, but they were also in a condition of rivalry with one and other which bordered on open violence. Allen recalled the "spirit of great jealousy and divisions amongst ourselves . . . we were now fit for little but to tear and rend one another."[50]

This sense of chaos continued until the soldiers set themselves firmly on turning their minds towards God. The military men then focussed their thoughts on seeking out their own sins and recognising their own transgressions, cultivating an

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[49] Gerbier, *The None-Such Charles*, pp. 173-4. While it does not seem likely, it is not impossible that Allen referred to Gerbier's text when writing his own. While there are not sufficient internal consistencies to confirm such a position, there are also insufficient contradictions to rule it out. Allen noted that the prayer meeting was "famous amongst us," so it is likely that the events were well known. See William Allen, *A Faithful Memorial of That Remarkable Meeting of Many Officers of the Army in England, at Windsor Castle, in the Year 1648* (London: Livewel Chapman, 1659), p. 1. Beyond Gerbier's confirmation, Sarah Barber has found among the Clarke Papers a report written at the time of the meeting that confirms further details, such as the great length of time the participants spent in prayer, as well as the great unity they enjoyed after having decided their course of action. See Sarah Barber, *Regicide and Republicanism: Politics and Ethics in the English Revolution 1646-1659* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), pp. 99-100. Additional supporters of the trustworthiness of Allen's account include Gentles, *New Model Army*, pp. 510-1.

[50] Allen, *A Faithful Memorial*, pp. 1-2. Allen's depiction is similar to the description of the revivalist style prayer meetings that accompanied Baptist Association meetings in the period. For one such meeting at which Allen was in attendance, see Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, pp. 196-7.

atmosphere in which each officer recognised his own shortcomings. Amidst this meditation on sin a new and startling unity suddenly emerged. Their course became clear and simple as their resolution to bring the king to account crystallised. The real sin was found to reside with Charles, "that man of blood," and the soldiers were guilty only in-so-far as they had tried to negotiate with this pariah. Allen recounts that, while soul-searching, the soldiers were led "by a gracious hand of the Lord . . . to find out the very steps (as we were then all jointly convinced) by which we had departed from the Lord and provoked Him to depart from us; which we found to be those cursed carnal conferences . . . with the king and his party."[51]

The element that allowed the meeting to come to such a dramatic conclusion was a willingness to surrender and be led by the Divine. This was prompted by Major Goff who reminded the group of Proverbs 1:23: "turn you are my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words to you." This call to submit to the guidance of God's illumination overwhelmed the officers and as a result "the Lord led us not only to see out sin, but also our duty; and this so unanimously set with weight upon each heart, that none was able hardly to speak . . . ."[52] God allowed the soldiers "to come to a very clear and joint resolution . . . that it was our duty, if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call *Charles Stuart*, that man of blood, to an account, for that blood he had shed and mischief he had done, to his

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[51] Allen, *A Faithful Memorial*, pp. 4-5.

[52] Allen, *A Faithful Memorial*, p. 4. Allen's comment that due to weeping and overwhelming emotion the large group fell silent has strong parallels with the description of the scapegoating mechanism given by Girard: "the collective rage gathers strength and tends to focus on the first available or most visible object . . . the violent impulse becomes so intense that it silences all other considerations, and the mad logic we see here takes over, the logos of human groups in a state of disarray," from "Generative Scapegoating," in *Violent Origins: Walter Burkert, Rene Girard, and Jonathan Z. Smith on Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation*, ed. R. G. Hamerton-Kelly (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1987), p. 85.

utmost against the Lord's cause and people in these poor nations."[53] It was God who had shown the men their true enemy and pointed the way forward.

One of the most striking aspects of Allen's recounting of the story is the impression of unity among participants. This has led Sarah Barber to comment that "it was unlikely to have been quite as unanimous as Allen remembered."[54] While it is true that the account might express more unity than was actually displayed, it is necessary to bear in mind why Allen chose to retell it. It was not his goal to document when the phrase "man of blood" was used among a wide group of soldiers. Rather, Allen wanted to demonstrate the unity of purpose that had at one time existed among the saints. Confronted with the discord at the end of the 1650s, Allen wanted to provide a reminder of the unity that had previously been achieved. As a result he picked the story which he had remembered as a moment of the greatest unity. Other stories could have been selected if Windsor had not actually produced such a tremendous sense of accord that Allen hoped a simple reminder of the event would be enough to re-instil the old emotions. Allen aimed to rekindle the sense of "over-ruling Providence" which had cut through chaos and bound the men together.[55]

The scene at Windsor demonstrates how the identification of a single victim can produce unity amidst discord. The soldiers' hostility towards each other was redirected to the man whom God had led them to identify while they sought out sin. A sense of peace and joy and a new clarity of purpose prevailed after the discovery

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[53] Allen, *A Faithful Memorial*, p. 5.
[54] Barber, *Regicide and Republicanism*, p. 99. Barber herself goes on to produce evidence that supports the unity described by Allen and it is notable that this sense of unity is independently verified.
[55] Allen, *A Faithful Memorial*, p. 5. In many ways Allen's retelling is an effort at re-enacting this moment of unity. He hoped that the event would "never be forgotten," and that his retelling of it would bring "us together again . . . with admiration; each ones heart as it were filled with wonders held, and occasion given to all to say to each other, Lo, what has God wrought!" (ibid, p. 5).

that their sin was in their continued tolerance of the "man of blood." Underlying it all was a profound sense of God guiding the meeting and bringing them to each new revelation. It was God who showed them the true enemy.

The Army Remonstrance and New Order

The charged atmosphere of the Windsor prayer meeting was absent from the Council of Officers meeting in St. Albans at the beginning of November 1648. There was still a prayer meeting with sermons, but the most important work that early November took place not in the abbey church, but in the Bull-head Tavern, where the Army officers accepted a remonstrance to be sent to the Parliament for their immediate attention concerning the king and kingdom. A month earlier, Cromwell had entered Edinburgh and the Army was increasingly confident of victory in the second phase of the wars. The officers near London turned their attention to the petitions and concerns of the Army. Specifically, they aimed to address the frustrations provoked by Parliament's persistent efforts to reach a personal treaty with the man of blood, despite the divine judgement against Charles delivered in the form of defeat in two wars. The result of their efforts was *A Remonstrance of his Excellency Thomas Lord Fairfax . . . and of the Generall Councell of Officers*, presented to Parliament on 20 November 1648. Henry Ireton was the chief architect of the *Remonstrance*, but it was approved by the general council after the officers' revision and input. While the atmosphere and energy that produced the *Remonstrance* were different from those experienced at the Windsor Prayer Meeting, the logic was the same. The *Remonstrance* declared that Charles

was guilty of *all* the bloodshed in the civil wars and that he should be brought to trial. But this was not a democratic document on behalf of "ascenders," despite the insistence that Parliament consider the Leveller petition of 11 September.[56] Rather, it was above all a text infused with a sense of a divine providence which demanded that the king be brought to justice.

While the *Remonstrance* began by discussing the maxim that the safety of the people was the highest law, in the same paragraph the central theme of divine providence, which underpinned the text, was already pronounced. "God bearing testimony, and giving judgement" was the driving force behind the logic of the *Remonstrance*. God had declared His presence, showing "His arm" by the providences of Parliament's glorious successes over the king. In so doing, God had not only "appeared as a severe avenger" but had also delivered a judgement which none should ignore. From such a foreboding start, the *Remonstrance* went on to explain what the Army officers saw as the present situation facing the kingdom and the steps necessary to resolve the crisis.[57]

The *Remonstrance* proposed that the frequently and equitably elected "supreme council or parliament," which should replace the current, defunct institutions, should have undisputed authority over violence. Not only had the wars effectively dissolved the hierarchy of violence, but they had also demonstrated the

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[56] *A Remonstrance of His Excellency Thomas Lord Fairfax . . . and of the Generall Councell of Officers* (London: John Partridge, 1648), p. 69. The Leveller Petition of 11 September was titled *To the Right Honourable the Commons of England, in Parliament Assembled: The Humble Petition of Thousands Wel-Affected Persons Inhabiting the City of London* (London: s.n., 1648).

[57] *Remonstrance*, pp. 4-5. The themes of God's presence and God's judgement are found throughout the text. For some of the most prominent examples, see pp. 4-6, 8, 10, 12, 17-8, 24, 27, 47, 69.

problems inherent in a system open to competing claims for legitimate violence.[58] Thus, the new institution which the *Remonstrance* proposed needed to have the "power to punish" and to protect. Specifically, the "supreme council or parliament" should have the "power of final judgement concerning war or peace . . . without further appeal to any created standing power." Central to the establishment of a single source of legitimate violence was the *Remonstrance*'s aim of bringing Charles to trial, thus destroying the source of the chaotic violence that had engulfed the kingdom. Alongside the call for a single source of legitimate violence was the king-killing clause, which would empower the new institution to "call such offenders to account and distribute punishments to them, either according to the law," or, in instances where there was no written law, "according to their own judgement," in cases when it was found that a crime had been committed "against the general law of reason or nations," to provide "vindication of public interest." The *Remonstrance* maintained that in such instances "no person whatsoever may be exempt from such account or punishment." It was assumed that such judgements could also be issued retroactively. Thus, despite internal protests, the clause was kept in the hope that it might provide a justification for punishing the king and establishing a new monopoly on violence.[59]

Even with the king captive and new royalists defeated, such claims for authority were highly controversial. They meant not only a change in the structure of power, but they also provided the means for the king's execution. Yet the

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[58] An example of the ambiguous status of authority following the second civil war can be seen in the dilemma of how to treat royalist prisoners of war. Some parliamentarians maintained that they should be charged with treason rather than as "lawful enemies" under the rules of war, while royalists claimed they had a legitimate authorisation from the king, via his son. See Barbara Donagan, "Atrocity, War Crime, and Treason," p. 1155.

[59] *Remonstrance*, pp. 14-6.

Remonstrance aimed to demonstrate to Parliament that this was what providence had provided for and what God demanded. Repeatedly the text stressed the "divine testimony . . . as if God would thereby declare His designing of that person to justice."[60] While God had put the king into Parliament's hands in order for it to execute judgement, it foolishly continued to seek a treaty which would not only divert the divine plan but would also have disastrous consequences for the kingdom. The *Remonstrance* also explained that, from a practical point of view, Charles was an implacable enemy. If the king, while a prisoner, would still make war against Parliament, then he would certainly do so again once he was free--or, even worse, he could infiltrate Parliament with sycophants, while waging a propaganda campaign which would make a war-weary nation passive to his tyrannical violence.

Crucial to the text, however, was the call for Parliament to avoid Charles's mistake of ignoring God's providence. Parliament's victories and accompanying miracles, when placed alongside the king's miseries, demonstrated the extent of God's testimony. The officers explained that they did not take such accusations lightly, but that they believed the king's defeat in the second civil war was a seal on his judgement. More abundant signs could not be asked for since the Lord himself "from heaven judged" the royalists "and born a clear testimony against them in defeating, with a small handful, the numerous parties they had thus engaged within

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[60] *Remonstrance*, p. 19. Likewise, the *Declaration of the Commons of England . . . Expressing Their Reasons for the Adnulling and Vacating of These Ensuing Votes* (London: Husband, 1649) explained that in setting up his standard the king had turned the "regal power," i.e., the power of life and death, against the people. After Charles had begun to wage war against his kingdom, Parliament was forced to despair of the possibility of "any good return of justice from the king," and to appeal instead to "the great God of heaven and earth for the same, who after four years of wars, did give a clear and apparent sentence on our side" (ibid, p. 6).

the kingdom."[61] Even before such a defeat, God had time and again handed down a judgement to Charles. But, the *Remonstrance* explained with an echo of Pharaoh, Charles had hardened his heart and refused to accept God's judgement by even so much as showing remorse for actions against which the Divine had manifestly declared. Punishment against Charles was thus further justified because his heart remained hardened. Not even the strong hand of God could bring him to repentance. He was barely human, unable to be reformed and undeserving of mercy. For such a monster to be blind to God's providence was one thing, but, the *Remonstrance* warned the parliamentarians, "who must one day be accountable for your judgements here on earth," not to make the same mistake.[62]

The *Remonstrance* projected a picture of a hard-hearted Charles, totally depraved and personally responsible for all the tragedies and transgressions of the war. There was no longer the illusion of Charles being deluded and abducted by evil counsellors. He was "the author of that unjust war" and as such guilty of "the highest treason" and "therein guilty of all the innocent blood spilt thereby, and of all the evils consequent or concomitant thereunto." His manifest crimes against the "public interest of the kingdom" were so great and so apparent that there was no need to detail what "he has done against God." Charles's maliciousness was inflated. He was not just a misled king, but the very opposite of that which was good--"God has once so separated" between such "contraries" as "light with darkness, of good with evil." The dualism discussed in the previous chapter was manifest here in force; there was no grey, no neuters, and no room for negotiations

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[61] *Remonstrance*, pp. 10-1. God had in fact delivered a "double judgement against him in the cause" (ibid, p. 24).
[62] *Remonstrance*, p. 24.

of any sort with the king. There was no option but to "conclude that he has been the author and continuer of a most unjust war and is consequently guilty of all the treason it contains and all the innocent blood."[63]

Considering such overwhelming evidence against him, and on account of his crimes before God and against humanity, the call to bring Charles to trial was a euphemism for bringing him to the block. The outcome was undisputed; he was guilty as charged. The first action step proposed by the *Remonstrance* was "that that capital and grand author of our troubles, the person of the king . . . may be speedily brought to justice for the treason, blood and mischief, he is therein guilty of." A trial was not needed to determine guilt or innocence. Rather, it was Charles's undisputed guilt, testified to by the law of man and the hand of God, which made a trial possible, and ultimately compulsory.[64]

A trial would have two functions. It would rectify the violence which plagued that land. This involved first the removal of the scapegoat, who would take away the sins of the community. Additionally, in killing the king, the new rulers would establish their authority over violence at the same time that they created a new regime. The assertion of the power to punish was the foundation of the new regime, a regime based on a murder. [65] The king had to die for the nation to live. Indeed, with his death the nation was reborn as the Commonwealth.[66] When the trial did come, the

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[63] *Remonstrance*, pp. 23-4, 26. The concept of "light" was also important to the *Remonstrance* (e.g. ibid, pp. 13, 70, *passim*), and there are some hints of further light/new dispensation in passages such as that on p. 52: "it has pleased God to let us see beyond what we did before."

[64] *Remonstrance*, p. 62.

[65] It is in this sense that Girard maintains that a scapegoating murder lays at the foundation of cultures. See *The Girard Reader*, p. 11.

[66] For a striking parallel with the French regicide in this regard, see Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly, "The King and the Crowd: Divine Right and Popular Sovereignty in the French Revolution," *Contagion* 3 (1996), pp. 67-83; Susan Dunn, *The Deaths of Louis XVI: Regicide and the French Political*

attention given to the actual staging of the event demonstrated that the actors involved recognised it as an effort to establish a new order. In contrast to the chaotic violence that Charles had spread throughout the three kingdoms, the violence that the high court was to dispense was legitimate ordering violence.[67]

Before the actual trial, the *Remonstrance* made it clear that anything less than a trial would "not be just before God, nor man." This point was repeated in the *Remonstrance*, which explained that "the wrath of God" could not be "appeased without judgement executed against" the king, since "God has given him so clearly into your power to do justice." The resolve of the officers was visible: there could be no justice "before God, or men" without a trial.[68]

No person of any status, rank or pedigree, should be exempt from the possibility of punishment. The *Remonstrance* declared that "the power of punishment" must be in "the most trusty hands, and no particular persons to be exempt from their justice." The implications for the theology of violence were clear: the *Remonstrance* advocated using violence against the king, who was at least *a* seat of legitimate violence if not *the* fount of it. But the context in which the *Remonstrance* placed this call for punishment was illustrative. Parliament was told that the king should be tried by "you, the supreme judiciary of the kingdom, when he

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Imagination (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 15-37. I am grateful to Dr. Hamerton-Kelly for providing me with a copy of his article.

[67] Most revealing was the decision right before the start of the trial to have a sword-bearer carry a sword of state during the proceedings. This nascent regime's effort to legitimate its authority over violence by appropriating this symbol could not have been lost on those present. Conceiving of the trial as an effort to use ordering violence to overcome ungodly violence supports Sean Kelsey's recent reading of the trial. Kelsey argues that rather than seeing the trial as the last act in the king's great tragedy, it should instead also be seen as "the first scene in another, far less highly-regarded drama--the story of the English Commonwealth," Sean Kelsey, "The Trial of Charles I: A New Perspective," *History Today* 49, no. 1 (1999), p. 34; idem, "Staging the Trial of Charles I" in *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I*, ed. Jason Peacey (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 71-93.

[68] *Remonstrance*, pp. 24, 51.

is through the just hand of God in your power to do justice upon." It was a mixed mandate, stemming partly from Parliament's authority as the nation's supreme court, and partially from the providence of God. It was a decision based "both from divine and human considerations." If Parliament did not act under such extreme circumstances, then it would set the precedent forever that the monarch was beyond the reach of any justice.[69]

The authority was there and the precedent that should be set was not one of license but of punishment. As such, the *Remonstrance* called not only for the grand author of the wars to be brought to justice, but also that some representative royalist leaders be executed as well, explaining "that for the further satisfaction to public justice, capital punishment may be speedily executed upon a competent number of [Charles's] chief instruments also, both in the former and the latter war" so that any pardon of other combatants "may not be a mockery of justice in the face of God and men."[70] Here the scapegoating logic is clear. In addition to the king, some must be randomly selected and destroyed that the others might live. An arbitrary selection from the guilty party to carry the sins of the community was a common procedure for the New Model Army, and is likely to be the explanation for this suggestion. An example of this form of selective justice can be seen at Ware, when a large Leveller gathering threatened Army discipline. When the officers seized control of the situation, it was ordered that the chief organisers be rounded up. Using the instruments of providence, the accused first drew lots, which left three losers. The

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[69] *Remonstrance*, pp. 6, 47-8. Additionally, Parliament should see that any claim to supreme authority which the king might have, as in the important example of conquest, now "God has given you [the Parliament] the same against him [the king], and more righteous" (ibid, p. 48).
[70] *Remonstrance,* p. 63, cf. p. 42.

three unfortunates then rolled dice to determine that private Richard Arnold should be shot in the head by the other two. Arnold's summary execution, seen as "the just hand of God," quelled the Leveller demonstration and Cromwell and Fairfax were back in charge.[71] It is likely that the authors of the *Remonstrance* envisioned a similar procedure for selecting from those already "in your [Parliament's] hands or reach" to be singled our as "fittest examples of justice."[72]

The execution of such scapegoats would demonstrate that the new council or parliament had the authority to punish all persons without exception, and thus the legitimate use of violence would reside with it. Furthermore, such "exemplary justice being done in capital punishment upon the principal author and some prime instruments of our late wars" would allow, "thereby the blood thereof [to be] expiated." While the language was somewhat convoluted, the logic was clear: the blood of the wars could be "expiated" by "capital punishment" upon the king and "some prime instruments."[73]

The *Remonstrance* thus threw down the gauntlet before Parliament, demanding that it bring the king to justice. Everything pointed to the necessity of a trial, which would establish authority and remove the blood from the land. According

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[71] R. L. [Richard Lawrence?], *The Justice of the Army against Evill-Doers Vindicated Being a Brief Narration of the Court-Martials Proceedings against Arnold, Tomson, and Lockyer, with the Causes and Grounds Therof* (London: Thomas Paine, 1649), p. 6; *Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer* no. 235, 16-23 Nov. 1647. For a similar casting of lots at Dunstable to determine who should be executed, see *Perfect Occurrences,* no. 46, 12-19 Nov. 1647, cf. Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 2, p. 127. For Ware, see Samuel R. Gardiner, *The History of the Great Civil War* (London: Longmans, 1893), vol. 4, pp. 22-3; Antonia Fraser, *Cromwell: Our Chief of* Men, reprinted ed. (London: Arrow, 1997), p. 224; Mark A. Kishlansky, in "What Happened at Ware?" *Historical Journal* 25, no. 4 (1982), pp. 827-39, amasses evidence to demonstrate that Ware was not the mutiny it is usually seen as and that it was not the turning point for the Levellers.

[72] *Remonstrance*, pp. 61, 63.

[73] *Remonstrance*, p. 64.

to the *Remonstrance*, trying the king offered the simultaneous possibilities of purifying the land of violence and re-establishing order and authority.

God's Will Be Done

The "extraordinary" tribunal that tried the king attempted to put on the trappings of a common law court. While it was in the name of the Commons and the people of England that the king was tried, the real authority present was that which was superior to the king and could pass judgement on him, namely God. As the language of the *Remonstrance* demonstrated, Ireton and the officers were convinced by abundant providences that God's judgement had already been passed. It was now necessary to execute divine justice on earth and establish a new regime in England. As John Cook would have explained at the king's trial, had it gone forward as planned, the king "was long since condemned to die by God's law . . . and that this High Court was but to pronounce the sentence and judgment written against him."[74]

To conclude this examination of the logic of scapegoating and the execution of the king, it is necessary to look at the role of Oliver Cromwell with regard to the trial. Cromwell is seen by many as having intimidated and forced the other jurors into condemning the king. However, such conclusions, often based on Restoration testimonies by the regicides, are dubious. The picture that emerges is rather one of Cromwell accepting the path that God opened before him. Throughout he was guided by God. For Cromwell, his actions would have been impossible if he had not been convinced that it was the will of God that they should be done. This conclusion alone enabled him to see the "lawfulness, nay . . . the duty" of such a terrible act . . . but if

[74] Cook, *King His Case*, p. 38.

such be the work of God against His enemies, blessed is the man that executes justice.[75] Reluctantly, Cromwell came to the same conclusion as Caiaphas at the head of the Sanhedrin, it was God's will that one must die so that the rest could live.[76]

Cromwell and Caiaphas[77]

Near the end of 1648, when momentum was building for a trial, Cromwell was away in the North rooting out royalist remnants. To open a window illustrative of his thinking at this time, it is instructive to look at two letters Cromwell wrote to Colonel Robert Hammond in the crucial month of November 1648. The letters demonstrate the importance for Cromwell of a synchronisation between external dispensations and internal revelations; between providence and faith.

Hammond, in seeking to avoid the weariness of war had asked to be moved to the Isle of Wight, only to find himself suddenly the king's jailor, a role he was not happy to play. It was in this context that Cromwell wrote to Hammond on 6 November 1648.[78] Cromwell was camped at Knottingley, directing the siege of Pontefract. The first striking part of this letter, which possibly refers to the king, was Cromwell's denunciation of those who had meddled "with an accursed thing." The

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[75] Abbott, *Writings and Speeches,* vol. 1, p. 698.
[76] See John 11 and 18:14.
[77] The description of Cromwell's thoughts and actions in the weeks leading up to the regicide given here seems to be in agreement with the reconstruction recently put forward by John Morrill and Philip Baker in "Oliver Cromwell, the Regicide and the Sons of Zeruiah," in *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I*, ed. Jason Peacey (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 14-35. The primary difference would be that this account sees Cromwell as continually open to change if sufficient providence were provided. Additionally, the argument that political realities kept Cromwell from moving earlier would seem hard to substantiate as royalist feeling was on the rise after Putney, not in decline. Thus the Sons of Zeruiah were more powerful when Charles was brought to the block than they had been before.
[78] The letter can be found in Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 1, pp. 676-8 and all subsequent excerpts from this letter are taken from these pages.

"accursed thing" was a reference from the book of Joshua to the sin of Achan, a sin of disobedience to God, for which God held the entire nation of Israel responsible. God would not bless that nation again until Achan had been stoned to death.[79] While the reference to Achan was clear, it was uncertain whether Charles or the Newport Treaty was the accursed thing. The latter seems less likely given Cromwell's later comments that he had wished to see the treaty move forward. In any case, even if Charles was not the accursed thing, Cromwell expressed in other parts of his letter to Hammond, in language similar to that which Ireton was simultaneously using in drafting the *Remonstrance*, that the king was a man "against whom God hath so witnessed."

Cromwell's reference to "an accursed thing," was not, however, a call to action. Directly following this phrase he added lines which reflect the spirit which guided him:

> Peace is only good when we receive it out of our Father's hand, it's dangerous to snatch it, most dangerous to go against the will of God to attain it. War is good when led by our Father, most evil when it comes from the lusts that are in our members. We wait upon the Lord, who will teach us and lead us whether to doing or suffering.

Here was an articulation of the principle of divine authorisation for just war. War is good when led by God, and evil when it is motivated by passions. These are familiar themes, but if they are accepted as genuine, then they represent a further aspect of Cromwell's comments that needs emphasis. Cromwell's religious beliefs certainly gave him the courage to be a fiery and imposing man. But the image of him in anger clearing the baubles before him must be tempered with the image of the commander on his knees in prayer, for the second edge to the sword of providentialism was the

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[79] Joshua 7; Blair Worden, "Oliver Cromwell and the Sin of Achan," in *History, Society and the Churches: Essays in Honour of Owen Chadwick,* eds. Derek Beales and Geoffrey Best (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 125-45.

patience of the saint. Oliver Cromwell was trying to convey to Hammond the patience and endurance that arose from true faith: "Innocency and integrity loses nothing by a patient waiting upon the Lord . . . Listen to God, and He shall increase it upon thee, and make thee valiant for the truth."

There are three points in the letter relevant to this discussion. The first is that God had witnessed against Charles, a position which was not new for Cromwell, but which he was increasingly willing to express. Second, God's "presence" was with the Army. "God has justified us" through victory in battle and other abundant providences. Finally, in light of all that God had done for the cause in the past, it was imperative not to lose faith now and either abandon the cause or try to "snatch it" from God before the time was right. As Cromwell oversaw the siege at Pontefract, it was natural that his mind should be on the importance of patience. In the end, God's work would be done. Those who were called to be His instruments should do their duty in gratitude and those who were not so called should be satisfied with God's ways. Patience was the watchword.

Events transpired rapidly in the nineteen days between Cromwell's letter to Hammond on the 6th and a subsequent one on the 25th. Most important was the appearance of the *Remonstrance,* which was given to Parliament on the 20th. The crisis was growing and Hammond represents in a single person the tensions that threatened chaos. Sympathetic to the king, philosophically committed to Parliament and desiring to obey any military duties with which he was entrusted, Hammond

wrote to Cromwell requesting that he be allowed to resign from his role as the king's captor.[80]

Much has been made of Cromwell's attempt at political theorising in the latter section of his late November letter. What is most striking, however, is the picture it provides of Cromwell's providentialist approach to the problem and his understanding of a heavenly mandate. None could doubt the "the remarkable providences, and appearances of the Lord" which the Army had witnessed. Indeed, the providences were *appearances* of God proving that "His presence has been amongst us, and by the light of His countenance we have prevailed." Such overwhelming manifestations of God's presence allowed Cromwell to say with certainty that "we are sure, the good will of Him who dwelt in the bush has shined on us." There was a parallel theophany. The God who spoke to His chosen people through the burning bush in the desert had spoken again to His new chosen people, guiding them through adversity as He had before. Cromwell could see a "chain of providence," meaning that the providences were not discrete incidents, but instead contained a meaning and pointed to an end. He urged Hammond to "look into providences; surely they mean somewhat. They hang so together; have been so constant, so clear and unclouded." Cromwell was certain that all of these providences had a meaning which could be discerned if "fleshly reasoning" were laid aside. Did God appear in the burning bush to lead His people back into slavery or forward to freedom? There was a divine end to all the troubles and calamities the godly were experiencing--but could that end possibly be the triumph of evil? For Cromwell this

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[80] This letter to Hammond of 25 November 1648 is found in Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 1, pp. 696-9 and all quotations come from those pages.

was an impossibility. "I dare be positive to say, it is not that the wicked should be exalted, that God should so appear as indeed He has done."

Trust in God's guidance was also crucial for the Army, and Cromwell articulated his belief in the divine nature of the Army's mandate. For Cromwell "this poor Army" was the place "wherein the great God has vouchsafed to appear." Cromwell asked Hammond to consider if it was not the case that "this Army be a lawful power" because it had been "called by God to oppose and fight against the king." The Army had faced "swoln malice against God's people, now called saints" which was aimed at rooting "out their name; and yet they, by providence, having arms, and therein blessed with defence and more." One can only speculate on how Cromwell would have further developed the idea contained in the last two words of this statement; his enigmatic style suggests as it conceals. What was clear was that it had been proven beyond doubt that God was with the Army and guiding them. Although Cromwell cautioned against those who through "fleshly reasoning" sought safety, what was important was not solely zealous action but patience.

Cromwell had long been convinced of God's judgement against Charles, "this man, against whom the Lord has witnessed," but even as the axe was falling on the anointed's neck, he remained open to providence. The appearance of the *Remonstrance* was accepted as a providence of God and "seeing it is come out, we trust to rejoice in the will of the Lord, waiting His further pleasure." This was neither a masked call to regicide or a stalling tactic. This was a sound strategy which had served Cromwell well in the past and would continue to serve him in the future. He had learnt by experience that God opened the way for him to walk and he was willing

to be patient and see what developed rather than "acting presumptuously in carnal confidence." It appears that while Cromwell might have seen and accepted the direction in which events were going after the appearance of the *Remonstrance*, his main ambitions were to "fear our great God" and to "do nothing against His will." Cromwell was willing to act and willing to wait. Events dragged him forward to the tribunal, yet he was ever ready to change course if called to by the God of the burning bush.

As with Achan, there could be no peace until Charles was removed. But given the enormity of such an action, Cromwell seems to have been willing to explore a variety of alternative avenues that would allow for the removal of the king without his death. As the signs became clearer that a trial was the only solution, Cromwell resigned himself to it. When it was first moved in the Commons to proceed with a capital trial against the king, Cromwell rose to speak, saying,

> Mr. Speaker, if any man whatsoever had carried on this design of deposing the king and disinheriting his posterity, or if any man had yet such a design, he should be the greatest traitor and rebel in the world. But since the Providence of God has cast this upon us, I cannot but submit to Providence.[81]

There are few firm reasons, despite subsequent royalist polemic, to distrust Cromwell, if these were indeed his words. He maintained that any who had had the intent to take the crown off the king's head were traitors and rebels. With a "but" like that in Calvin's commentaries on Joshua's wars, Cromwell declared that if God demanded such action, then none could deny it. Even the great Oliver Cromwell had to submit to providence.

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[81] Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 1, p. 719.

Nevertheless, in order for Charles to be a sufficient sacrifice, an effective scapegoat, it was necessary that all the guilt be put on his shoulders and that his hard-hearted, evil nature be apparent and agreed upon by as many as possible. In this way the idea of the scapegoat helps to explain some of Cromwell's behaviour in the days before the execution. He was concerned with constructing a watertight case against the king and getting something which would serve as a confession. Seeking a confession from the victim is an essential part of the scapegoating process, since it allows for the concentration of guilt on the individual. A freely given confession, corresponding to the prescribed standards of the day, would have been ideal.[82]

In the absence of a confession from the king's hand, Cromwell sought the same end through other means. One avenue Cromwell advocated was to bring other offenders to trial before Charles, with the idea being that such trials would demonstrate that the guilt ultimately lay with the king.[83] Cromwell also sought to get further evidence of Charles's guilt by way of a confession on the part of the Duke of Hamilton to the effect that Charles had asked him to invade England, but Hamilton refused to incriminate the king in such fashion.[84] Many believed that Charles had already sufficiently conceded his guilt when on 25 September 1648 he provisionally

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[82] Girard explains that the scapegoating "system consists of whitening the community by blackening the scapegoat; to consolidate it, the belief in this mythic blackness must be strengthened. The most effective means, obviously, is the victim's confession, in due and proper form," see, *Job*, p. 112. For the prescribed ritual of scaffold confession in the period, see J. A. Sharpe, "'Last Dying Speeches': Religion, Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-century England," *Past and Present* no. 107 (1985), pp. 144-67, which confirms many of the earlier insights of Ronald A. Bosco, "Lectures at the Pillory: The Early American Execution Sermon," *American Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1978), pp. 156-76. Nicholas Terpstra also notes how one of the functions of the lay *conforteria* in early modern Bologna was to elicit a confession from those they accompanied to execution in his "Piety and Punishment: The Lay *Conforteria* and Civic Justice in Sixteenth-century Bologna," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 22, no. 4 (1991), pp. 679-94.

[83] Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 1, p. 717.

[84] John Rushworth, ed., *Historical Collections of Private Passages of State, Weighty Matters in Law, Remarkable Proceedings in Five Parliaments* (London: 1659-1701), vol. 7, p. 1363; Gentles, *New Model Army*, p. 298.

withheld objection to the preamble of the treaty at Newport, which maintained that Parliament had been forced to "undertake a war in their just and lawful defence."[85] Ireton's *Remonstrance* certainly saw the treaty as an "implicit confession" on the king's part.[86] It is likely that it was for this reason that Cromwell wished that the treaty had moved forward before the *Remonstrance* appeared.[87]

In the end, the king did not play the role of the scapegoat as well as that of the martyr, for he did not give the scaffold confession of guilt his persecutors desired to confirm the propriety of their actions. J. A. Sharpe, in his study of scaffold speeches in the period, has noted that sometimes the convicted person would refuse to confess his or her guilt for the accused crime, but would instead confess some other crime or some form of general guilt in order to present his or her execution as a just form of divine judgement.[88] This form of confession Charles granted, for in his scaffold speech he confessed his guilt for allowing his innocent and trustworthy servant, Strafford, to be killed.[89] Charles acknowledged that it was the guilt of murder which brought him to his death and that such a death was a punishment from God. He conceded that God worked through providence and that this working had brought him his just punishment for permitting the death of Strafford. While he would not accept

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[85] James Howell, for example, in his *An Inquisition after Blood* (London: s.n., 1649), noted that some royalists thought "the king had taken the guilt of all this blood upon himself" during the Newport Treaty negotiations (ibid, sig. A2). See also Milton, *Political Writings*, p. 31, note 133, and C. V. Wedgwood, *The Trial of Charles I* (London: Collins, 1964), p. 21. Charles later wrote to his son that this concession was forced from him under duress, see Wedgwood, *The Trial of Charles I*, p. 19.

[86] *Remonstrance*, p. 24, cf. p. 25.

[87] Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 1, p. 698.

[88] Sharpe, "'Last Dying Speeches'," p. 156.

[89] Charles had long been convinced "that Strafford's innocent blood has been one of the great causes of God's just judgements upon this nation by a furious civil war, both sides hitherto being almost equally punished as being in a manner equally guilty." This was the opinion he expressed not on the public scaffold, but in his private letter of 14 January 1645, almost four years exactly before his scaffold confession. See *The Kings Cabinet Opened, Or, Certain Packets of Secret Letters & Papers, Written with the Kings Own Hand, and Taken in His Cabinet at Nasby-Field* (London: Robert Bostock, 1645), p. 24.

responsibility for the wars (claiming instead that the "chief cause of all this bloodshed" was neither his fault nor the fault of the Parliament, but rather the result of some "ill instruments"), Charles did grant that "God's judgments are just upon me: Many times He does pay justice by an unjust sentence, that is ordinary: I will say only this, that an unjust sentence that I suffered for to take effect, is punished now by an unjust sentence upon me."[90] Divine violence in the period was viewed as always justified, though at times incomprehensible. Charles denied his guilt for the wars, but conceded that he was guilty of killing Strafford, and for that he was probably guilty enough. Thus, his execution was an appropriate judgement from God.

As the axe was falling, or so one story goes, Cromwell, far from polishing the mace, was on his knees in prayer. Cromwell had supposedly called a meeting of his officers in the eleventh hour to see if there was a way that the king's life might be spared. To such end they sought to know the mind of God, but prayed so long that they received the message that the king had already been executed while still conferring.[91] If such a rumour can be believed, it would further confirm the image of Cromwell as a man open to God's providence until the final hour.[92] Even if the story is dismissed, it is likely that had there been sufficient providence, some "clear" and undisputed miracle of nature, which indicated to Cromwell that the execution should not go forward, then he would likely have done all that was within his power to stop it. But that day, the God who had carried Parliament's cause through so much

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[90] *King Charls His Tryal at the High Court of Justice* (London: J. M., 1649), p. 77.
[91] James Heath, *Flagellum, Or, The Life and Death, Birth and Burial of Oliver Cromwell, the Late Usurper Faithfully Described* (London: Randall Taylor, 1663), pp. 69-70.
[92] Robert S. Paul believes that there is some evidence to corroborate this rumour. See Paul, *The Lord Protector: Religion and Politics in the Life of Oliver Cromwell* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), p. 189.

adversity for nearly a decade was silent: a silence interrupted only by the massive groan which arose from the crowd outside Whitehall as Charles's head was severed from his body.

To Kill a King

It was well known that there were sparse legal grounds for the trial.[93] Limits on the king's authority could be found, but the provisions for bringing him to trial were few. But the king did have a superior in God.[94] As the spokesman at the trial, John Bradshaw, explained to the king "we are satisfied with our authority, and it is upon God's authority and the authority of the kingdom's."[95] Likewise, given "all the bloody murders that have been committed . . . if any man will ask us what punishment is due to a murder, let God's law speak, let man's law speak." Rather than citing statute, a sermon on Numbers followed.[96]

The king's January jury was meta-legal. It was intended to represent both the law of England and, more importantly, the law of God. As John Cook, the prosecutor, explained, "the High Court was a resemblance and representation of the Great Day of Judgment, when the saints shall judge all worldly powers, and where this judgment will be confirmed and admired" as good both in procedure as well as in sentence. The

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[93] See James Howell, *An Inquisition after Blood*, p. 12.
[94] Lagomarsino and Wood, *The Trial of Charles I*, p. 120; John Cook, *King Charls His Case*, p. 25.
[95] Lagomarsino and Wood, *The Trial of Charles I*, p. 66.
[96] C. W., *King Charls His Tryal, Or, A Perfect Narrative*, p. 41.

"High Court" had consulted "with heaven for wisdom and direction" and was thus in parallel with the final and dreadful judgment of God in the eschaton.[97]

What kind of God provided such an authorisation? This too was explained at the trial:

> Sir, you said well to us the other day, you wished us to have God before our eyes. Truly, sir, I hope all of us have so. That God that we know is a King of kings and Lord of lords, that God with whom there is no respect of persons, that God that is the avenger of innocent blood—we have that God before us, that God that does bestow a curse upon them that withhold their hands from shedding of blood, which is in the case of guilty malefactors and those that do deserve death. That God we have before our eyes, and were it not that the conscience of our duty hath called us unto this place and this employment, sir, you should have had no appearance of a court here. But, sir, we must prefer the discharge of our duty unto God and unto the kingdom before any other respect whatsoever.[98]

It was the God of war, whose presence and authorisation permitted the unimaginable, indeed, demanded the unimaginable--but if it be God's will, blessed is the one who executes it. The logic of direct authorisation, which allowed parliamentarians to wage war in the absence of their king (and not merely in his defence), also allowed the regicides to execute him. Violence belonged to God. The regicide demonstrated that it was still sacred.

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[97] Cook, *King Charls His Case*, p. 40.
[98] Lagomarsino and Wood, *The Trial of Charles I*, p. 127.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion: A War of Religion?

"To dis-obey God in a little, is no little dis-obedience."[1]

The regicide, paradoxically, marked a triumph for the idea of a hierarchy of authorised violence at the same time that it usurped it. Rather than a democratic act of revolution, it was a theocratic act of catharsis, undertaken not so much against kings as in the service of the King of kings. It was also an action predicated on the idea of a God who used, participated in, and at times, demanded violence.

The first chapter of this thesis showed how this idea varies from more pacifist modern conceptions of the role of the Divine in human affairs. This difference, however, should not obscure the logic of the contemporary ideas discussed in this thesis. Indeed, this thesis has aimed to demonstrate the central place of religious conceptions of violence not only in relation to how God was envisioned, but also to the understanding of the king, governments, and subjects. The theology of violence was elemental to the debates over obedience, resistance, and eschatology in the period, as well as to notions of how the wars should be conceptualised. This thesis

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[1] Edmund Calamy, *Englands Looking-Glasse* (London: I. Raworth, 1642), p. 28.

has stressed the strong interconnection between authority and violence and has shown how the central place of the king in the hierarchy of authorised violence was a stumbling block which parliamentarians addressed and ultimately destroyed.

How does this view of the central place of the theology of violence affect the historiographic trend which sees the period as "England's wars of religion"? The idea of "wars of religion" in some form has been present since Clarendon's interpretation soon after the wars. More recently it has received further emphasis, and if the role of religion had ever been fully diminished, it was forcefully re-established by the work of Anthony Fletcher in the early 1980s.[2] The wars of religion position draws support from the work of Nicholas Tyacke and Conrad Russell,[3] but has been given its most powerful formulation by John Morrill, who has famously claimed that the "English civil war was not the first European revolution: it was the last of the Wars of Religion."[4]

A war of religion has several meanings in this context. As Morrill points out, it is partially an effort to say what the civil wars were *not*, i.e., they were not the first modern revolution, that is, an event which lends itself to fruitful comparison with the

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[2] Anthony Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War* (London: Arnold, 1981). In many ways the recent "wars of religion" historiography can be traced back to William M. Lamont, *Richard Baxter and the Millennium: Protestant Imperialism and the English Revolution* (London: Croom Helm, 1979). For Lamont's recent contribution to the debate, see "The Puritan Revolution: A Historiographical Essay," in *The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500-1800*, eds. J. G. A. Pocock, et. al., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 119-45.

[3] See Nicholas Tyacke, "Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution," in *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. Conrad Russell (London: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 119-43; idem, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990). For some efforts to problematise the "rise of Arminianism," which some see as merely replacing the "rise of the gentry," see Peter White, "The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered," *Past and Present*, no. 101 (1983), pp. 34-54 , as well as William M. Lamont's criticism in "The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered," *Past and Present* no. 107 (1985), pp. 227-31.

[4] John Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution: Essays by John Morrill* (London: Longman, 1993), p. 68. See, generally, section one, "England's Wars of Religion," pp. 31-176.

French or Russian revolutions, or one which set England on its course towards modernity.[5] Rather, the civil wars should be compared with the earlier wars of religion on the Continent. The "wars of religion" thesis also maintains that it was religion which ultimately destabilised the three kingdoms and finally caused the outbreak of war, in that it energised dedicated minorities to force reluctant majorities into war. Furthermore, when war did come, religion was the best indicator of which side an individual would take.[6]

Provided it does not become as reductionist as the interpretations it seeks to supplant (a problem created more by its critics than its advocates), this view of the wars has much to recommend it.[7] But there are certainly problems with too neatly substituting religious disputes for constitutional conflicts.[8] There is also a further limitation in the literature on the idea of the English civil war as a war of religion, resulting more from a lack of emphasis than from neglect. Underlying the discussion of the "wars of religion" is the idea that the wars were fought to advance religion, whether in the form of "further Reformation," or to preserve religion, as some form of an idealised Church of past memory. This is something like the idea of an evangelical war, a war *for* religion. This study of the theology of violence has tried to show the

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[5] Morrill nevertheless recognises the oddity (irony?) of including such a claim in a collection of works entitled *The Nature of the English Revolution*, see, ibid, p. 35.

[6] See Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution*, *passim*. For a critical engagement with this vein of civil war historiography, see Ian M. Green, "'England's Wars of Religion'? Religious Conflict and the English Civil Wars," in *Church, Change and Revolution: Transactions of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch Church History Colloquium, Exeter, 30 August-3 September, 1988*, ed. Johannes van den Berg and P. G. Hoftijzer (Leiden: Brill, 1991), pp. 100-21.

[7] Support for this position is rapidly growing, to the extent of becoming a new orthodoxy. See Glenn Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion? The Evidence of Political Propaganda," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2000), pp. 173-201; Barbara Donagan, "Did Ministers Matter? War and Religion in England, 1642-1649," *Journal of British Studies* 33, no. 2 (1994), pp. 119-56.

[8] See J. P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England 1603-1640* (London: Longman, 1986), chpts. 1, 4, 6.

ways in which it was also a war *by* religion, that is, this thesis has aimed to demonstrate the ways in which theological ideas about war and violence both hindered and enabled the war.

A difficulty with the idea of a war *for* religion is that it indicates a desired goal. Yet there was little agreement about what the "further Reformation" of the Church would entail in concrete terms. Indeed, the ecclesiastical agenda in the early 1640s had few positive planks. What was known was what was not wanted, i.e., Laudianism; thus the agenda was anti-Catholic, anti-sacramental, anti-episcopal, anti-Arminian, etc. Such idols were obstacles to the true religion which unquestionably had to be purged. But what was to take their place was ambiguous from the beginning, and thus difficult (though not impossible) to square with a war *for* religion.

In examining the theology of violence, this thesis has shown some of the ways in which religion impeded violence, but also the ways in which it facilitated the conflict. It began by showing how the concept of a divinely established hierarchy of violence meant that violence against superiors was prohibited. This prohibition was, nevertheless, consistent with the idea of a God of war, who could be found on the battlefield and communicated with humanity through violence. This hierarchy of violence was largely accepted by parliamentarians, even those of a "puritan" persuasion, and as such gives the lie to the view of puritanism as a revolutionary spring, cocked and ready to rocket England into modernity.

Yet the perception of imminent danger (a perception itself influenced by religious preconceptions) opened the way for a further form of theologically justifiable violence, namely self defence. It was a concept that could be applied not only to individuals, but also to the kingdom as a whole. This idea coexisted with the long-established principle that God could also command violence directly, since violence was ultimately within the divine purview. Such wars were instantly just and drew on the same hierarchical view of authorised violence, and in the case of the regicide, the ultimate superior authorised violence against the earthly one.

The common theology did not prohibit violence; what it did do was command obedience and place legitimate violence in the hands of the hierarchy. Resistance was not contemplated or desired until the situation appeared to be one in which the king, the kingdom, and the people all risked ruin. It was then that ideas of defence, natural law, suicide, and coordination came into effect. These were not efforts to subvert the hierarchy; they were actions to preserve it. In the end, concern to have God's authorisation for violence went back to the source itself, and ever-present ideas of a new dispensation and direct divine authorisation took on increased importance. A broader understanding of the way in which the civil wars were *by* as well as *for* religion provides a fuller picture of the nature of England's wars of religion.

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