

Destiny and Choice
in Andrew Marvell's
'An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland'

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After the return of Cromwell from his success in Ireland, William Lenthall, Speaker of the Commons, gave him 'the hearty Thanks of this House for his great good Service', and delivered 'an eloquent Oration, setting forth the great Providence of God in those great and strange Works, which God hath wrought by him, as the Instrument'.¹ In her *Violence and Religion*, Judy Sproxtton argues that 'Marvell was as certain as other Puritans of his time that the events which had overtaken England in the mid-seventeenth century indeed manifested the will of God', and that it 'is in terms of his response to this that Marvell portrays Cromwell'.² But, while this may be truer in the case of the 'Cromwell' portrayed in the second of his Cromwell trilogy, 'The First Anniversary of the Government under His Highness the Lord Protector', especially in the patriotic and apocalyptic context of his foreign policy, Marvell's first recorded response to the head of the military coup, 'An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland', as many critics have pointed out, can be regarded neither as a whole-hearted panegyric nor, as I want to make clearer in this paper, as bearing positive testimony that Cromwell is acting under the spiritual guidance of God. Whereas 'The First Anniversary' presents Cromwell's rise to power as divinely ordained, in the 'Horatian Ode' Marvell seems to have been still 'undiscerned among the tumult blind / Who think those high decrees by man designed' ('The First Anniversary', lines 241-242).

On the one hand, 'The First Anniversary' was published in 1655, and when Marvell wrote it he was tutor to Cromwell's protégé William Dutton. And this panegyric poem might have been meant, and certainly served as, part of the credentials for Marvell's second attempt to acquire a position in Cromwell's government. It should not be surprising, therefore, that the poem was socially and politically conditioned.³ 'An Horatian Ode', on the other hand, was not published,

as far as we know, in 1650. 'It gives too much credit to Cromwell to please many parliamentarians and radicals', David Norbrook reasons, 'but is too Machiavellian and republican to please Cromwell'.⁴ The poem marks 'the line between a practice of verse at one remove from politics and a practice of verse as a political instrument', James Loxley asserts.⁵ I assume that Marvell's relativism is detrimental to the panegyric mode of writing. In 'An Horatian Ode', it may be said that the degree of his relativism is amplified by the Civil War, during which any view came to be most easily recognised as a factional view, a mere 'opinion'. That is why the Leveller *Manifestation* (1649), for example, had a special need to declare that 'All our Desires, Petitions and Papers ... [are] not moulded nor contrived by the subtile or politick Principles of the World, but plainly produced and nakedly sent, without any insinuating arts'.⁶ Marvell could not but be sceptical, or at least anxious, about making a judgment and an interpretation of the critical time in which he was actually living. Perhaps the fact of the matter is that he simply failed to produce an encomium, failed to fulfill the need of the factional requirement with which the encomiast's allegiance lay, and thus ended up by expressing both his inner confusion and his attempts at a conflation of widely differing reactions to the confused period and confused loyalties. In other words, with opposing views constantly around him, Marvell was not able to choose to espouse one ideology, turning thereby a blind eye to the other. It is no wonder, therefore, that throughout the 'Horatian Ode' the idea that Cromwell acts under the direct guidance of God is, consciously or not, undermined.

I shall illustrate first how the credibility of Marvell's seemingly providential account of events in 'An Horatian Ode' is questioned and undermined in relation to his other poems. Then I should like to demonstrate that the poem does disservice to itself not only by alerting the reader to the possibility of the human fallibility of Cromwell's choice, but also by emphasizing the law of nature, which is a kind of determinism but significantly not necessarily the will of God. Evidently, the 'Horatian Ode' raises the problem of Fate, especially as it involves the providential view of history current in Marvell's time. Puritans' claim was that God Himself summoned Cromwell from his pastoral privacy into irresistible activities; and undoubtedly Cromwell's conviction was that God mediates heaven to earth through the perpetual intrusions of the divine will into the course of history. My point in this paper is that, while Marvell could not cease to believe in a deterministic view of history, he looked upon it as a kind of national drama

determined by the characters and their choices under the providence of God, under the 'ordinary' (as opposed to the 'extraordinary') law of which, 'Much to the *man* is due' ('An Horatian Ode', line 28, italics mine). Given his knowledge that, as in 'The Coronet', the enticingly material means of mediation would deform and corrupt its spiritual ends, it seems reasonable to infer that Marvell was fully aware of the danger of waving the banner of justice, fighting and killing for the Prince of Peace, which may really be tantamount to fighting for Satan.

Typology Doubted

In order to support their political views, Puritans habitually turned to historical analogy. The exegetical technique frequently employed was 'prophesying', a means by which they applied scriptural examples to contemporary affairs. In addition, the wide acquaintance of Renaissance people with classical history and texts might be expected to have led to a cyclical view of history; if one knows what happened and what was said in the past, one must often experience the sense of *déjà vu* as one looks at the events and statements of the present. Throughout 'An Horatian Ode' parallels between ancient Rome and England are made, and thereby the providential nature of Cromwell's actions appears to be confirmed. For instance, the decapitation of Charles I is explained thus:

So when they [i.e., Romans] did design
The Capitol's first line,

A bleeding head where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run:

And yet in that the State
Foresaw its happy fate.

(lines 67-72)

The story is related by Livy, Pliny and Varro, and this prodigious Roman event appears to reflect Marvell's purpose, which is to show a providential aspect of the regicide. In all three sources, however, the head is not bleeding, nor is the architect terrified. Hence, R. I. V. Hodge feels, 'A reader will naturally find something sinister in this omen, until comforted by commentators', and Annabel Patterson asks, 'Can the very different sight of Charles's bleeding head, whose owner had

just died with courage and dignity on the “Tragick Scaffold”, really be dismissed by this learned sleight of hand?”⁷

Marvell’s tour de force in teleological interpretation here closely resembles that in ‘The First Anniversary’ (lines 175-228), which he would repeat in connection with Cromwell’s riding accident in September 1654, not at all promising topic for an encomium. ‘Royalists responded to the event with rather desperate suggestions that it proved Cromwell’s inability to rule. But even within the broadly defined pro-government ranks there was contention’. Typically, John Sanders saw Cromwell’s ‘great danger of being killed’ as ‘a sign of [God’s] anger’.⁸ And John Denham wrote that ‘all the Saints suspect him, / Doth Providence attend him’.⁹ In what Christopher Wortham calls Marvell’s ‘over-extended ingenuity’,¹⁰ however, Cromwell’s fall is the reward for being ‘the headstrong people’s charioteer’ (line 224): the people’s sins are to be blamed. The important thing, I argue, is that the reader would be able to suspect that Marvell’s lines are a brilliant exercise in artistic casuistry. As Jonathan F. S. Post, discussing Marvell’s attention to form in ‘On Mr Milton’s *Paradise Lost*’, has noted, that is, the reader cannot forget ‘the spuriousness of always assuming an easy identity between political beliefs and artistic expression’.¹¹ In addition, the very experience of civil war, in which writers of other factions employed the same models to argue different organizations and justifications, revealed to the contemporary reader, as Thomas Healy has reminded us, ‘the fallacy of the comprehensive prescriptions offered by literary texts’.¹² In fact, Marvell *was attempting* to make the best out of an embarrassing incident, the fall from the coach, as well as Charles’s decapitation, turning the political liability of Cromwell to political and poetic advantage, and in the king’s case, more specifically, to a drama of ‘the royal actor born’ on the ‘tragic scaffold’ (lines 53-54). Aristotle had explicitly stated that on-stage accidents have legitimate meaning and power in his discussion of complex plots in the *Poetics*: ‘the most amazing accidental occurrences are those which seem to have been providential’.¹³ Hence, Warren Chernaik is right in saying of Marvell’s description of Charles’s ‘bleeding head’ in ‘An Horatian Ode’ that ‘Portents are shown to be open to different interpretations, positive or sinister, depending on the perspective of the observer’.¹⁴

John Spencer, to whom Marvell refers in his prose work (ii. 165), discourages the political interpretation of natural phenomena:

Among the Ancient Romanes subtil Statesmen made use of that Superstitious observation of *Omens* and *Prodigies*, (to which they saw the people, in the ruder ages especially so invincibly addicted) to act and manage them to what perswasions might best serve the necessities of State; to which purpose they had their *Collegia Vatum* Publick Diviners, who knew to bend these Osier accidents [sic.] (as the *Mufti* can doe the *Alcoran*) to such a sence and signification as might make the easie multitude manageable to the purposes and designs of their Rulers.¹⁵

And, though writing almost two decades later than the date of Marvell's composition of the poem, in his *Of Credulity and Incredulity* (1668), Meric Casaubon stated:

As all other things in the world, not determinable by sense, those especially that relate to God, and his providence, have been liable to *superstition* and *credulity*, so this of *prodigies*, as much as any. The ancient *Romans* have been noted for their excess, in this kind, and their best Historian, *Titus Livius*, for inserting that, into the body of his History, which stood upon public records, hath been censured as fabulous.¹⁶

Likewise, to Marvell himself, the habit of characterizing the present events as part of a historical fulfillment based on either biblical or classical patterns must have appeared not only fabulous but also factional. Notably, in 'Tom May's Death' (presumably written soon after May's death on 13 November 1650, and thus quite soon after the 'Horatian Ode'), typology is treated as an ideologically biased strategy. Marvell satirizes May both as a 'Foul architect' (line 51) and as the 'Most servile wit, and mercenary pen' (line 40) for his customary linking of Cromwell's England to classical Rome:

Go seek the novice statesmen, and obtrude
On them some Roman-cast similitude,
Tell them of liberty, the stories fine,
Until you all grow consuls in your wine.
Or thou, Dictator of the glass, bestow
On him the Cato, this the Cicero,

Transferring old Rome hither in your talk,
As Bethlem's House did to Loreto walk.

(lines 43-50)

Given Marvell's scorn for the 'Roman-cast similitude', how should we interpret his use of typology in 'An Horatian Ode'? Is he ironically presenting and parodying a typical Cromwellian view of history? My answer is yes and no. Indeed, Marvell was sceptical about the typological manner in which Cromwellians would justify their actions, but one thing we have to remember is that to his contemporaries and to Marvell himself, typology and its related use of providential language might work as a psychological stabilizer, particularly as it does after the description of Charles I on the scaffold. During a period of radical social change, the use of typological hermeneutics in interpreting current history may be regarded as an effort to present it as having a more stable and ordered character than was actually experienced. In other words, Marvell half believes and half disbelieves Cromwellian (and his own) rhetoric of typology in the 'Horatian Ode'.

Correspondingly, while Cromwell is referred to as a 'Caesar ... to Gaul, / To Italy an Hannibal' (lines 101-102), the figure reflects political, and consequently Marvell's own, confusion. It has been pointed out, for example, that there are the great general Hannibal and the defeated Hannibal, and that there are two types of Caesar in the ode: one is 'Horatian', as a model of the legitimate and beneficent ruler, the other, Lucanian as a model of the usurper.¹⁷ And even when casting a Caesarian aura around the impetus of Cromwell by adapting arresting phrases from Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Tom May's translation of which probably influenced Marvell, he fails to shake off the condemnatory image of Caesar as an usurper. The poem depicts 'restless Cromwell' (line 9), confident in Fortune's unfailing favour, thrusting aside all obstacles that barred his march to supreme power:

... Caesar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.

(lines 23-24)

Of course, the 'Caesar' here should be taken as Charles I, and the lines would mean that Cromwell's 'three-forked lightning' (line 13) has struck down the king. But the verb 'blast' may be intransitive, and in that case 'Caesar's head' would be the subject of this sentence, signifying that Cromwell as a Caesar, i.e., as another king, presses upward and forces the crowning of his head with the symbol of

victory, which is 'his'. In either case, however, the speed and impetus of Cromwell is destructive. In the latter case especially, Cromwell's meteor-like Caesarian act of giving birth to himself — 'Did thorough his own side / his fiery way divide' (lines 15-16) while on his way to blasting Charles's 'head at last' — is unnatural, or might even seem monstrous like the birth of Death, who, Satan's 'own begotten, breaking violent way / Tore through [Sin's] entrails' in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Book 2, lines 782-783).

The ambiguity about the figure of 'Caesar' is not so much Marvellian as a reflection of contemporary political confusion. According to John S. Coolidge, Tom May quotes at one point 'a Latin epigram that was circulated among royalists at Oxford, and in which "Caesar" stands quite naturally for Charles as the legitimate ruler'.¹⁸ But in the Engagement Controversy, writers who both favoured and disfavoured the imposition of the Engagement frequently cited Caesar as an usurping tyrant. Edward Gee, for example, defines 'Usurpation' as 'a self-created, or self-authorized Power, such was ... that of Julius Caesar, who made himself Consul'. Interestingly enough, Gee denies the intervention of God's will in usurpers' actions: they 'not onely seize on the Power; but of its own minde, and will, or, by its force alone, abolish the settled, and set up a new mould of government'.¹⁹

Thus, we find in the ode to Cromwell not only the glorified image of Caesar but also the degraded image of him as the usurper, who 'ruin[ed] the great work of time, / And cast the kingdoms old / Into another mould' (lines 34-36). If the 'Horatian Ode' presented only heroic Caesar, it would end up with Tom May's 'Roman-cast similitude', and Marvell would be another 'Foul architect, ... who by Rome's example England lay' (lines 51, 53). But, because the poem evokes the complex Roman experience of the ambiguities of power and right, it in effect rejects the kind of reductionism underlying the tendentious rhetorical strategy of historical parallels, thus exposing the whole picture of the complex political realities of mid-seventeenth-century England.

Writing 'An Horatian Ode', Marvell must have had in mind at least something of the idea of what the poet should be, because "Tom May's Death" contains a description of the ideal poet:

When the sword glitters o'er the judge's head,
And fear has coward churchmen silencéd,
Then is the poet's time, 'tis then he draws,

And single fights forsaken Virtue's cause.
He, when the wheel of empire whirleth back,
And though the world's disjointed axle crack,
Sings still of ancient rights and better times,
Seeks wretched good, arraigns successful crimes. (lines 63-70)

Indeed, readers may ponder whether Marvell in the 'Horatian Ode', unable to defend 'ancient rights' heroically, lived up to this credo. But it should be stressed that in the ode he faces grim realities, and shows the greatest reluctance he can to lose sight of the ideal. For example, he seems to have been most unwilling to approve of inconsistency between justice and force; in other words, he could not quietly accept the fact that might is right. Vanquishing the Irish rebels had been the first instance of Cromwell's apocalyptic mission of anti-Catholic crusade, and hence it was the occasion for the poem, and could have won Marvell's unqualified acclaim for Cromwell as an instrument of God. The only explicit praise of Cromwell in the poem, however, is attributed not to the poet himself but to the beaten Irish who 'can affirm [Cromwell's] praises best, / ... How good he is, how just' (lines 77, 79), and undoubtedly their forced 'confess[ion]' (line 78) sounds partisan or at least can be read sardonically.²⁰ Moreover, when directed towards domestic affairs, he replaces the confrontation between right and might with that between right and fate:

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain ... (lines 37-38)

Charles I on the scaffold did not, as Marvell depicts him, call 'the Gods with vulgar spite / To vindicate his helpless right' (lines 61-62), and yet could not believe, unlike Richard II, that God would send an army of angels 'for heaven still guards the right'.²¹ He would have had no more success, had he attempted to assert his right, than Justice had had against Fate in pleading the ancient and still valid 'rights'. Charles's silence, surrounded with the vulgarity of Roundhead noise — 'while round the armed bands / Did clap their bloody hands' (lines 55-56) — could convey his (and Marvell's) tacit condemnation of their 'successful crime' buttressed by their clamorous providential language. He could not, but at the same time would not, claim that God is with us. It seems that only under the pretext of, or at

least only by introducing the notion of, fate, could the frustration in this opposition between justice and force be mitigated, or the moral question — why and how the ‘successful crime’ can be right — be answered even though it implied ultimately the inscrutability of God’s intention, demanding our faithful (but actually blind) acceptance of realities. Richard Baxter looked back on the morality of Cromwell’s conduct: ‘he thinketh that the end being good and necessary, the necessary means cannot be bad’. Although R. V. Young asserts that ‘Marvell ... applauds where Baxter condemns’, his judgement is half correct: Marvell, I argue, might have felt the same way as Baxter.²²

The relationship between force and the notion of right and wrong is referred to in ‘Upon Appleton House’: when William Fairfax of Steeton tried to rescue Isabel Thwaites from the nunnery ‘Founded by folly, kept by wrong’ (line 218), his use of ‘sword’ and ‘courage’ was compatible with ‘justice’:

He would respect
Religion, but not right neglect:
For first Religion taught him right,
And dazzled not but cleared his sight.
Sometimes resolved, his sword he draws,
But reverenceth then the laws:
For Justice still that Courage led (lines 225-231)

If the speaker of ‘An Horatian Ode’ could take the same panegyric position as the narrator of ‘Upon Appleton House’ here, or the speaker of ‘A Poem upon the Death of his Late Highness the Lord Protector’ in which Cromwell is presented as one who ‘first put arms into Religion’s hand, / And tim’rous Conscience unto Courage manned’ (lines 179-180), he would have devised somehow a means of expressing consistency between justice and force rather than having them ‘complain’ to each other. In fact, as James Loxley has noted, the Royalist William Cartwright described the Cornish hero Sir Bevill Grenville as ‘someone who took up arms solely in the defence of “Afflicted Right”’.²³ And on the opposite side, John Goodwin, an apologist for regicide, reasoned that ‘right and might [were] well met’.²⁴

The most powerful argument to support the claim that force is right was provided by Protestant providentialism. War more than anything else highlighted

providence, and during the Civil War many people believed that God's power naturally extended to determining the final outcome. 'The Lord of Hosts hath the absolute power over all weapons in battell, to let them prosper or not prosper as he pleaseth', observed Jeremiah Burroughes, Independent minister. 'All the successes in battels is from the Lord of Hosts'.²⁵ When God decides to align himself with one side in war, that side is certain to claim the victory. Following such a belief, Cromwellian armies' successive victories allowed them to proclaim that they were fighting for God. Indeed, read from this perspective, 'An Horatian Ode' would emerge from the complexities of its meaning as a due panegyric for Cromwell, who is seen as an instrument of God: "'Tis madness to resist or blame / The force of angry heaven's flame' (lines 25-26). And that would be why Charles 'called [not] the Gods with vulgar spite / To vindicate his helpless right' (lines 61-62). If any historical event is willed by God, whether one likes it or not, it must be accepted as such.

When the English soldier rode into the increasingly partisan bickerings of seventeenth-century England, however, he found it harder to win clear-cut victories. Both Cromwell and Engagers claimed that the new government was *lawful*.²⁶ But anti-Cromwellians, and even many Engagers, could not admit that it had a *just* title. If the omnipotence of God is doctrinally emphasized, as was done by Calvinist voluntarism, it is argued that justice must yield to providential will, Man being deprived of his ability to tell what is right or wrong. For example, as John Dury reasoned in *A Second Parcel of Objections against the taking of the Engagement answered* (1650), 'God's appointment of a power over us, is a just caus [sic] to oblige us to submission thereunto'; 'when things are to bee look't upon by you ... as determined events, which God hath appointed to fall out, in a way of Justice and Judgment[,] then you ought not to set your self against the same'.²⁷ Thomas Hobbes also argued: 'Power irresistible justifieth all actions really and properly in whomsoever it be found'.²⁸ Further, Machiavellian Engagers, while admitting there is no connection between ethical virtue and success, and that the question could not be decided by an appeal to 'right' precisely because legitimacy would be ever disputable, argued that the very instability of the relationship between right and success provided them with the best argument for the subject's obedience to those who are in 'actual possession' of power. Lewis de Moulin remarked of de facto political rulers in *The Power of the Christian Magistrate in Sacred Things* (1650) that 'It ought to suffice us that they governe, and that they

have not ascended by their own virtue, but are set over, and appointed by God'.²⁹ However, Hobbes's opponents, particularly, the Cambridge Platonists, and Arminians such as John Bramhall, condemned Puritan Calvinists' 'divine Fate' as 'immoral'.³⁰ According to them, God is identified with a principle of goodness, and the basis of goodness and justice is exempt from the arbitrary determinations of a capricious God. In other words, the ideas of good and evil, of righteous and unrighteous, cannot be understood as mere influences of a despotic will; and no power, not even omnipotence, can destroy these eternal and immutable natures, and make good bad or bad good.

It seems difficult to assume that there was nothing opposite to the Cromwellian argument in Marvell's mind. Just as 'first Religion taught [William Fairfax] right', the Cambridge Platonists taught Marvell that even God was subject to ethical laws. In *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, he suggests that God's consciousness of right and wrong are correspondent with Man's when he says that 'by Conscience I understand Humane reason acting by the Rule of Scripture, in order to obedience to God and a Mans own Salvation' (i. 340). When Marvell wrote in the 'Ode' that 'justice ... complain[ed]', evidently baffled by a Calvinist God, he must have had in mind the theodicy of the Cambridge Platonists, that God should conform to the first principle of morality, or, to put it most simply, that God cannot do an unjust thing. In addition, we may recall once again the notion of the ideal poet he put forth in 'Tom May's Death' as one who, 'when the wheel of empire whirleth back, / And though the world's disjointed axle crack, ... / Seeks wretched good, arraigns successful crimes'. In the context of the events of 1649-50, little of this statement appears ambiguous. Only the republicans — who, given the antithetical structure of that line, associated their enemies with the 'wretched' — could really be perceived as successful; but anti-Cromwellians, like Ben Jonson in 'Tom May's Death' as spokesman for the Royalists, regarded their loss as virtuous, and their opponents' victories as 'crimes'. In 'Ode. Upon his Majestie's Restoration and Return', Abraham Cowley challenges his Puritan opponents to explain the failure of their apocalyptic schemes:

Where are the Men who bragg'd that God did bless,
 And with the marks of good *success*,
Signe his allowance of their *wickedness*?
 Vain men! Who thought the Divine Power to find

In the fierce *Thunder*, and the violent *Wind*

And in *A Discourse concerning The Government of Oliver Cromwell*, he claims that the admiration for Cromwell was based upon 'a fallacy, that extraordinary, and especially, successful villanies impose upon the world'.³¹ Richard Baxter shared the same negative assessment of Cromwell: his 'general religious zeal giveth way to the power of ambition, which still increaseth as his successes do increase'.³² Edmund Elys, though again after the Restoration, explicitly taunted the King's enemies who had claimed to read the will of God in the overthrow of the monarchy:

O, that They, who did Boast their Cause to be
Most just, because 'twas Prosperous, would See
What God has Wrought for Him, whom They'd Withstand.³³

Similarly, in his prose work, 'four and twenty years' after 'the late War', Marvell himself wrote 'The chief of the offenders have long since made satisfaction to Justice' (i. 167), and later on wrote further that to claim God's sanction for human 'Administration' was blind arrogance: 'For there is not now any express Revelation, no Inspiration of a Prophet, nor Unction of that Nature, as to the declaring of that particular person that is to govern ... I do not understand that God has thereby imparted and devolved to the Magistrate his Divine Jurisdiction' (i. 342). Even during the Interregnum, Sir William Davenant, in his epic *Gondibert* (1651), let those defeated in the battle regard themselves as representing 'unlucky vertue' and their enemy 'prosp'rous vices', and maintain that the people 'beleeve the strong are still unjust; ... / where they see the pow'r, the right distrust'.³⁴ Henry Vaughan could articulate his hatred towards the Cromwellian 'Men of War', saying that 'I dare not ... / ... for a temporal self-end / Successful wickedness commend.' And, translating Boethius, he remembers the day of Charles I, 'When common justice none withstood'.³⁵ The opinion of the retired Fairfax accorded with such Royalist sentiments when he confided that 'beinge ledde on by good Success ..., some of us could not deserve (discern?) the Serpent, which was hidd under these sprelinge leaves of soe good Fortune'.³⁶ Given the royalist Marvell's arraignment of 'successful crimes' in 'Tom May's Death', it is inevitable that any of the republican Marvell's expressions of belief in justification by success in the

'Horatian Ode' would have to be qualified by the context of an imperialist Protestant crusade in Europe — 'What may not then our isle presume, / While Victory his crest does plume?' (lines 97-98) — and need to be, though rhetorically, questioned by the undertone of the suppositional 'may'.³⁷

Destiny and Choice in 'An Horatian Ode'

Of the pamphlets which supported the government's position, one of the most eloquent was Marchamont Nedham's *The Case of the Commonwealth of England, Stated*, published in May 1650, the month of Cromwell's return from Ireland.³⁸ In it, the Engager says:

The corruption of the old form hath proved the generation of another which is already settled in a way visible and most substantial before all the world; so that 'tis not to be doubted but, in despite of opposition, it will have a season of continuance as others have had according to the proportion of time allotted by Divine Providence. And this I am the more apt to believe in regard of its confirmation by a continued series of many signal victories and successes to the envy of all opposers and amazement of the world.

Like other Engagers, trying to legitimate the present government by appealing to providence, Nedham predicates his argument upon the notion that success means divine approval, and reasons further that 'Irriti sunt conatus humani' (Mortal efforts are vain):

... it must needs be as much madness to strive against the stream for the upholding of a power cast down by the Almighty, as it was for the old sons of earth to heap up mountains against heaven.³⁹

In very much the same vein as Nedham, Marvell may appear to argue for Cromwell when he says "'Tis madness to resist or blame / The force of angry heaven's flame' (lines 25-26). But at the same time, Nedham's wording and the image of the Tower of Babel remind us of Marvell's panegyric 'Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough, To the Lord Fairfax', in which Marvell contrasts Fairfax's

humility with

... mountains more unjust,
Which to abrupter greatness thrust,
That do with your hook-shouldered height
The earth deform and heaven fright (lines 9-12)

or 'the cliff / Of heaven-daring Tenerife' (lines 27-28). As David Reid has said, 'Ambition is a theme that recurs in Marvell's poetry with surprising insistence'.⁴⁰ Considering the reason for Fairfax's retirement from the public scene, it would seem difficult not to associate these images of the 'excrecence ill-designed' (line 13) not only with Cromwell's well-known wart or often ridiculed big nose, but also with the radical policies (including the execution of Charles I and the Scottish Campaign) of Cromwellian government.⁴¹ Our suspicion may be aroused: although Cromwell is said to be the 'force of angry heaven's flame', is it not merely that this was said by, or for, those, like Nedham, who sided with Cromwell? Didn't Cromwell know, as Francis Bacon had contended, that a man is likely to be unhindered by the envy of others in his own pursuit of power if he attributes his successes 'rather to divine Providence and felicity, than to his own virtue and policy'?⁴² Judging from Marvell's single, direct and bitter reference to Cromwell in 'An Elegy Upon the Death of My Lord Francis Villiers' — 'thou I know expect'st to tell / How heavy Cromwell gnashed the earth and fell' (lines 13-14) — or at least from the viewpoint of the retired Fairfax, who fell out with Cromwell, what the latter was doing under the pretext of providence was merely 'heaven-daring' and blasphemous. Cromwell's ambition was as dangerous as that of those who had attempted to build the Tower of Babel. In addition, it may be noted that Marvell in the 'Horatian Ode', while appearing to formulate a providential justification for Cromwell's power, does not clearly say that God approves of his power. On the contrary, Marvell refers to it as 'the *inglorious* arts of peace' (line 10, italics mine), and even reveals some misgivings as to the English republican ideology that had recently linked political liberty with military power: 'The same arts that did gain / A pow'r must it maintain' (lines 119-120).⁴³ For these lines cannot but evoke Matthew 26:52: 'all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword'. Whereas Cromwellians believed that violence saves and is redemptive in the hands of the righteous, their opponents such as Henry Vaughan insisted that '*Who with the*

sword doth others kill, / A sword shall his blood likewise spill ('The Men of War', lines 5-6), here translating Revelation 13:10. The ending of the 'Horatian Ode' had certainly become 'unusual in Caroline *prosphetika*', as David Norbrook has noted, 'which regularly ended with praise of the peace enjoyed by Britain while war raged elsewhere'.⁴⁴ And even republicans such as Milton understood that violence multiplies in a devastating and ongoing spiral: while he, as Nigel Smith puts it, saw 'the Army' as 'the arm of Providence and Machiavelli's armed citizens', he wrote to Fairfax 'what can war, but endless war still breed'.⁴⁵

Marvell may have heard John Hales say that '[God's] Kingdom is unlike to earthly Kingdoms; for the Kingdoms of the World are purchased and maintain'd by Violence and Blood, but so is not his', or that '[God] is a King of a Kingdom, which is erected and maintained, ... not by the Sword, but by the Spirit; not by Violence, but by Love; not by striving, but by yielding'.⁴⁶ After the Restoration, Samuel Butler was articulate enough to unravel the contradictory connection between religion and violence which was inherent in the Puritan Revolution, and ridiculed the way in which 'Errant Saints, whom all men grant / To be the true Church *Millitant*'

Decide all Controversies by
 Infallible *Artillery*;
 And prove their Doctrine Orthodox
 By Apostolick *Blows* and *Knocks*;
 Call Fire and Sword and Desolation,
 A *godly-thorough-Reformation*⁴⁷

Even before Marvell met Hales, or read *Hudibras*, he was surrounded by similar opinions when he wrote 'An Horatian Ode'. For example, an anti-Engager, Edward Gee, stated that 'The Sword makes not the Magistrate', refuting the argument that 'successe is the onely Arbitrator of Controversies of right, and is ever infallible'. He goes on to say:

Where there is no tittle but power, there can be no rule for Government but power and will: onely that which gives right to Magistracy must set bounds to it; how can they be tyed to Laws, in exercising Government, that are tyed to none in coming by it? If the basis or bottome of

Government be power, that must also be the measure of it.⁴⁸

The experience of the Civil War certainly contributed to the situation (to use Marvell's words in 'The Character of Holland'), 'where not one so strange / Opinion but finds credit, and exchange' (lines 73-74), and at the same time because of this chaotic currency of opinions, especially for a mind with such a sense of balance as Marvell's, nothing can have struck it as entirely credible. Alexandra Walsham in her study of providence in early modern England concludes that 'the engulfment of providence in factional strife and sectarian struggle assisted in undermining its credibility and contributed to a growing disavowal of previous assumptions about the scope and legibility of divine activity on earth'.⁴⁹ Written in the climactic moment when so many rival factions were vying for the authority of God's providence, the 'Horatian Ode' would naturally convey a sense of sustained uncertainty about how to justify godly power.

In many of the anti-Cromwellian arguments, we can find the demystification of their opponents' claim that a divine power was urging them. In 'The Men of War', emphasizing the deeply rooted Christian virtue of patient fortitude as against his antagonists' millenarian activism, Vaughan suggests that the New Model Army should not be mistaken for the heavenly one. He addresses himself to Christ:

Armies thou hast in Heaven, which fight,
And follow thee all clothed in white,
But here on earth (though thou hast need)
Thou wouldst no legions, but wouldst bleed.
The sword wherewith thou dost command
Is in thy mouth, not in thy hand,
And all thy saints do overcome
By thy blood, and their martyrdom. (lines 21-28)

Edward Gee refers to the 'Officers of the Army' as those 'who have so masked their courses with Providence', and argues that Cromwellians 'have accomplished their designs ...not with any extraordinary concurrence of Providence, but having abundantly sufficient power and assistances visibly, in their hand'. What is important here is the anti-Engager's polemical strategy of distinguishing between what God has done and what Man has done in this late 'change': in another pamphlet,

Gee alerts the reader to the distinction 'between the power which is ever of God, and ... the getting and usages of the power, Which [sic.] as to men is often most unjust not of God, but of mens lusts, and Satans malice'.⁵⁰ Nathaniel Ward, too, accuses Cromwellians of conflating religious and political necessity — referring to their contention based upon the fusion of God's providence and Man's ambitious will — when he says that 'To argue from what God can doe by his Sovereignty, to what man will doe in his arrogancie, is a figure in Logicke called *Phrensy*'.⁵¹

John Vicars penned *Jehovah-Jireh. God in the Mount* (1644), the 'sacred record ... of God's mercies to Sion', emphasizing God's glorious control of events in this world. In it, predictably, battles illustrate God's providence rather than testifying to the independent heroism of a commander or soldier.⁵² Similarly, Engagers argued that 'these present powers [were] from God', invoking to substantiate this biblical authorities such as Hosea 13:11, 'I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took *him* away in my wrath'. They claimed that 'All constitutions have their makeing, and marring, their standing, and falling from God'. Against such an argument, anti-Engagers' strategy was to distinguish between God's permission and command. Gee's powerful and logical disclaimer against the Engagement makes this distinction. In the former sense, everything is 'of God', and 'all power though unjust, Lawlesse, and against Gods Exprese Commandement', like the power that committed regicide, 'in regard of mans getting and holding of it, is yet (as it is a naturall force or evergie [sic.]) from God'. Quoting Scriptural examples such as 'Pilates *power to crucifie our Saviour*', Gee differentiates '*that which is of men*, from *that which is of God*'. And Engagers' contention is refuted not only by his logical thinking but also by the biblical endorsement, Hosea 8:4: '*They have set up Kings but not by me, they have made Princes, and I knew it not*'.⁵³

The theological distinction which the anti-Engagers frequently made concerning providence will be significant when we consider the two insistent ways in which Marvell appears to praise the addressee of his 'Horatian Ode'. One is its emphasis on Cromwell 'the man' and his Machiavellian tactics, what is called 'art'; and the other is its expressions of material necessity, more specifically, Marvell's description of Cromwell's power as 'a naturall force or e[n]ergie'. In these respects, I want to argue, Marvell shows an anti-Calvinist tendency to believe that both human free will and the concatenation of secondary causes can work independently of God's will.

In the world controlled by ordinary providence (as opposed to extraordinary providence) it is Man's free agency that can do bad as well as good things. And while Cromwellians tend to suppress 'that which is of men', and emphasize the view that what they have been doing is all 'that which is of God', anti-Cromwellians attempt to point out the fallibility of human choice made by individuals' free will. From this perspective, it can be argued that Marvell implies that the Revolution, at least some elements of it, may have been brought about not so much by God's command as by Cromwell's will (even if the latter is not regarded as vicious). It is fairly clear in Marvell's prose writings, especially the pamphlet defending Howe, that he rejected the Calvinistic interpretation of the dogma of double predestination, departing, like Milton, from what was still the main Protestant tradition to incline towards the Arminian emphasis on the doctrine of free will. While, under the doctrine of predestination, though it still demands action, actions could not bring about salvation, the Arminians and the English Latitudinarians in general emphasized 'humane reason', by which — together with the exercise of faith — Man must work out his own salvation.⁵⁴ Free will meant a lot to Marvell. Many of his poems assume, consider, plead for, or even imitate, the moments of significant choices which change or seem to change everything, among which two of the historically most important were Fairfax's retirement, and Cromwell's military victories and consequent assumption of power. These were crucial occasions when individuals acted decisively to change or try to change the course of history. Evidently, Marvell believed in the function of active will, knowing that tactics and manoeuvres may sometimes be required to facilitate achievements. Indeed, 'after 1642', as Alexandra Walsham suggests, 'Apocalyptic preaching spoke of a glorious kingdom of Christ on earth erected by an all powerful deity without any input from man whatsoever',⁵⁵ but Marvell described Cromwellian eschatology as reformist rather than transformist. In a letter to Thomas Rolt, a friend in Persia, he wrote the sentence which, of all his statements on this topic, was perhaps to be most frequently quoted: 'in this World a good Cause signifiys little, unless it be well defended'.⁵⁶

The problem for Marvell, however, is that he felt there was something inevitable about the great stream of history, compared to the strong flow of which, Man's action is but 'the vain curlings of the wat'ry maze / Which ... a sinking weight does raise' ('The First Anniversary of the Government under His Highness the Lord Protector', lines 1-2). If it is true that, as John Carey has argued, 'a

continual irritant in Marvell's poetry is the predicament of restriction — the condition of being thwarted, confined or enmeshed',⁵⁷ we may also say that what is predominant in his poetry is his desire to escape from the controlling power that puts him in such predicaments. We may think of the epicurean speaker of 'To His Coy Mistress' trying to break down the moral confinement which the Christian framework of time sets up, by tearing their 'pleasures with rough strife, / Thorough the iron gates of life' (lines 43-44), or of the speaker's disentangled soul in 'The Garden' breaking away from the flow of history which constituted 'busy companies of men' (line 12). In 'Upon the Death of Lord Hastings', Marvell's fantasy disrupts the orderly, and therefore restrictive, process of the heavens: in his vengeance on fate, the disconsolate narrator seeks to control the flow of nature by 'intercept[ing] some fountain in the vein' and so preventing its normal spring, or by 'arrest[ing] the early showers' and so stopping them from naturally falling (lines 1-6). His antipathy towards controlling power may be found even in one of the few recorded biographical episodes of his Cambridge days: the flight from the university probably in 1639.⁵⁸

Accordingly, in 'An Horatian Ode' while there is a strong sense of the more-than-human movement of history felt ('The force of angry heaven's flame'), both Cromwell and Charles have the ability to choose either to take the field or to withdraw into their personal selves, to a world of private calm, 'reservèd and austere' (line 30), or of private agony and personal courage. In Marvell's poetry, and especially his love-poetry, material necessity is never totally transcended by the mind. But it is the mind that must always decide whether or not it should allow the concatenation of causes to operate.⁵⁹ In the 'Horatian Ode', the speaker emphasizes Cromwell's virtues as a man, and likewise those of Charles as a man. Cromwell is praised for personal traits of practical effectiveness; he is said to display 'industrious valour' (line 33) and again, in an effective phrase, to be one 'That does both act and know' (line 76). And the way in which Marvell pictures the public emergence of Caesar-Cromwell as not a natural but, as we have already noted, 'a Caesarian birth' — 'as giving birth to himself by bursting "thorough his own Side" (line 15)' — suggests that it is brought about through his own volition.⁶⁰ The speaker brings out the truth about the current historical movement when he says:

... if we would speak true,

'Eye not man', Isaac Pennington Jr. might have responded to these lines, 'no not in those things wherein he appears as the main agent. Consider who it is that doth all, especially in such great changes. It is not the wit of man the will of man, which manageth these things but one above man'.⁶¹

Thus, by focusing on the human choice of a certain destiny rather than its particular supernatural cause, Marvell charts the historical movement from Calvinism to Arminianism, a passage from God's willful exercise of extraordinary providence to Man's exercise of free will in the more mundane sphere of ordinary providence. Marvell's humanistic (as opposed to theocentric) view of history is consistent with his description of Cromwell as a Machiavellian leader; he believes in the efficacy of human inventiveness to achieve ethical and spiritual ends. Marvell himself was referred to as 'Italo-Machiavellian' in 1656,⁶² and in the 'Horatian Ode' he seems explicitly to admire Cromwell's political manipulativeness:

And Hampton shows what part
He had of wiser art:

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope,
That Charles himself might chase
To Caresbrook's narrow case:

That thence the royal actor born
The tragic scaffold might adorn

(lines 47-54)

The idea that animals are willing to be killed to provide some great man's or woman's food is a popular topos, frequently found in eulogistic Cavalier poems. For example, Ben Jonson writes in "To Penshurst" that 'Fat, aged carps, that run into thy net, / And pikes, ... / Officiously at first themselves betray; / Bright eels that emulate them, and leap on land / Before the fisher, or into his hand', and Thomas Carew in "To Saxham": 'every beast did [to thy house] bring / Himself, to be an offering'.⁶³ Seen from such a Royalist perspective, Charles I might have been

regarded as a scapegoat willing to sacrifice himself at the critical juncture of English history. But the point about Marvell's rendition in the 'Ode' is that while the king 'himself' thought he was acting by his own volition, Cromwell, as was then believed, master-minded Charles's disastrous escape from Hampton Court. For Royalists, Marvell's lines might imply that, using 'subtle' fears and hope, Cromwell controlled the king's mind to further his own ambition. What can be emphasized here, therefore, is not the mysterious or divine power of the great person for whom the animals kill themselves in Cavalier poetry but Cromwell's 'wiser art', his political manipulativeness. For Meric Casaubon, for example, Cromwell must have looked like 'the craftie Politician,... that would seem to do all by God; and yet doth work more by *cunning*, then by *confidence*'. For 'that one that is wicked, if wise, should have good successe (in point of humane reason and judgement) in the world', Casaubon observed, 'is neither to be doubted, nor wondered at'.⁶⁴

Indeed, cunning, the wisdom of serpents, was as requisite a quality in God's service as was courage, but there was a distinction to be made: the line which John Owen drew between 'carnal policy' directed to 'self-ends' — 'that cursed policy which God abhors' — and 'civil wisdom, or, a sound ability of mind for the management of the affairs of men, in subordination to the providence and righteousness of God'.⁶⁵ Now in the 'Horatian Ode', is Cromwell described as using his craftiness out of ambition to excel? Or is he described as following God's will in employing it? If we see in Cromwell the arrogant image of the 'forward youth that would appear' (line 1), or, as many contemporaries and Joseph Anthony Mazzeo did, something of the 'Machiavellian Prince',⁶⁶ it would be difficult for us not to sense the beginning of the later Marvell's satirical treatment of the corrupted arts of modern political management, of procurement, bribery, cheating, fraud, influence-peddling.

The difficulty of 'An Horatian Ode' has always been its ambiguity; and the same thing can be said about its treatment of providence. While it can be read as meaning that 'Cromwell ... followed the course of action God had set before him',⁶⁷ we may say that history in the poem consists of the actions of men: Marvell's Cromwell is not ruled by his destiny, but rather rules it, having 'through advent'rous war / Urgèd his active star' (lines 11-12). In fact, this phrase subtly suggests an interplay between destiny ('star') and autonomous human will ('Urgèd'). The star is 'active', but also 'activated' by Cromwell. In 'A Poem upon the

Death of his Late Highness the Lord Protector' (1658), Marvell retrospectively refers to Cromwell as follows:

What man was ever so in heav'n obeyed
Since the commanded sun o'er Gibeon stayed? (lines 191-192)

It is evident, then, that Marvell did not see Cromwell as simply obeying heaven's will, but as acting on his own volition.

The danger involved in human free will is its fallibility; as Calvin said dogmatically, 'simply to will is [the part] of man; to will ill, of a corrupt nature'.⁶⁸ Obviously, Marvell doubted that human free will always chooses the right. Marvell warned Samuel Parker that 'whosoever shall, to the prejudice of our Saviours Merit, and debasing the operation of the Holy Ghost, attribute too much to his own natural vigour and performances, will be in some danger of finding his *Bona Opera perniciosa ad Salutem*' (i. 364). In 'A Poem upon the Death of his Highness the Lord Protector', he refers to the view that Puritan zeal was 'a mask' (line 225) for aggressive egotism. As Casaubon argues, a zealot can be 'the instrument of carnall ends and affections, and misguided withal by false doctrine'.⁶⁹ Discussing Marvell's 'The Coronet', Christine Rees has pointed out that in this Calvinistic poem the act of choosing itself is regarded as a sin: 'In theory, the writer is free to devote his skill to whatever end he chooses; but he cannot separate himself, and therefore his sin, from the act of writing or choosing'.⁷⁰ Perhaps that is why the classical rhetoric of *suponte sua* was appealing to Marvell. Just as Virgil had praised the spontaneous power of nature that functions 'under no man's constraint' and that 'far from the clash of arms, most righteous Earth, unbidden, pours forth from her soil an easy sustenance' (*Georgics*, Book 2),⁷¹ so did Marvell, thus virtually eschewing the act of free will in describing the fruits in his Eden:

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach (‘The Garden’, lines 33-38)

Genesis 3:6ff. informs us that when Eve saw that the fruit of the forbidden tree was good, pleasing and desirable, it was she that took some and ate it; and her husband did likewise. Marvell's speaker in 'The Garden', on the other hand, is entirely passive so that he is not responsible for man's mortality and fallen condition. In 'Casting the body's vest aside' (line 51), he is different from Shakespeare's Iago, who believed 'our bodies are gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners', or Adam and Eve, who have a reformatory job to do in the figurative garden in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.⁷²

What is more, another danger involved in Cromwell's action was power resting on force — the 'forced power' of Parliamentary victory: the danger that England as a garden state becomes a typical seventeenth-century garden where 'Tis all enforced' ('The Mower against Gardens', line 31). John Rogers, comparing the Diggers' ideologically loaded precipitate action of 'digging' with 'the curiously analogous activity of "mowing" in the lyrics of Marvell', argues that 'the emphasis in these poems on Damon's tragic folly pressures us to acknowledge the ironic self-defeat of this attempt — perhaps any attempt — to force an alliance with the forces of nature'. '[T]he Mower's intervention in the realm of natural process — his "stroke between the Earth and Root" — functions as a gesture of revolutionary activism that invariably fails'.⁷³ Likewise, when Marvell wrote that Cromwell 'As if his highest plot / To plant the bergamot, / Could by industrious valour climb' ('An Horatian Ode', lines 31-33), he could not but suggest part of his eager denunciation of Cromwell's deed as the despicable 'plot' of 'Spartacus' ('Tom May's Death', line 74). Given the monarchical association of the bergamot pear, the garden plot Cromwell is plotting to reach could not but imply the highest status of kingship. It seems that Independents, though sometimes lumped together with more radical sectarians, were infamous for their excessive plotting. In his *Gangraena* (1646), Thomas Edwards, himself a member of the Presbyterian party, which stood for 'the Crown, the Kings person and Honor, his just greatnesse, and his posterity after him', regarded 'the Independent party' as 'against Monarchy, the Kings person and honour', and wrote that 'they lay plot on plot, and lay snare on snare: Machiavelli and the Jesuits are but punies and fresh men to them'.⁷⁴

The fallibility of human will may be manifested by a sense of impetuosity conveyed by the way in which some of the characters in Marvell's poetry are described. The essential weakness of the human will is shown, for instance, in his

love poems, where love appears as a force to which Man is helplessly susceptible. As we discussed earlier, ignoring the distinction between primary and secondary causation, Calvinists thought that what happened on earth was also designed by heaven. Therefore, it was inevitable that their approach to history added impetus to Puritans' social commitments. The Lord's servants were not to 'tempt' providence by inaction or inertia, but their divine agency became capable of meritorious actions. That is why the 'Horatian Ode' presents, or at least appears to present, Cromwell as God's elect (though this is not so clearly indicated as in 'The First Anniversary'), drawing from the Calvinistic version of predestination the inference that he can hasten the hour of bliss: 'The ill delaying, what th'elected hastes' ('The First Anniversary', line 156). The first of Marvell's Cromwell poems, however, reflects the anxiety that a thoughtful, patriotic Englishman might feel at the time, the hesitation of one who later articulated his opposition to acting swiftly because it hinders 'Meditation and Judgment' (ii. 418). Cromwell himself recommended one 'who is not persuaded' of the justness of the Revolution to 'have patience towards them that are, and judge not'.⁷⁵ In other words, those who acted encouraged people not to think, claiming that scruple should not hinder decision and action. Cromwell must have agreed with Richard Sibbes, who said 'After we have rolled ourselves upon God, we should immediately take that course he inclines our hearts unto, without further distracting fear'. Otherwise, it is a sign we 'commit not our way to him'.⁷⁶ Thus, like the lovers in 'To His Coy Mistress', who say 'Let us roll all our strength, ... up into one ball' (lines 41-42), Cromwellians acted, stopping both themselves and other undecided people from thinking further. It may be said that the action encouraged during the Civil War was a way of allaying the psychological panic produced by the uncertainty both about what the Revolutionaries were doing and about the future.

Ernst Cassirer says of the 'religious development of puritan England' that the 'attitude in which man faces reality and believes he can see into the nature of things, even on their purely religious side, is not that of quiet contemplation or of mystical communion, but of active usurpation, of conquest and subjection'.⁷⁷ Puritanism set up the ideal of an active faith, and demanded for the truth it advocated a concrete and practical verification. Puritans' insistence on action was such that sometimes they, when uncertain how to act, resolved to 'try providence', or 'cast my self upon Providence'.⁷⁸ In the case of Cromwell, too, it was his 'experiment' (so to speak) on the battlefields and his consequent victories that

convinced him that he was following God's footsteps. Cromwell exhorted Robert Hammond to reject 'reasonings' and to 'try what truth may be in them', assuring him that 'the Lord teach[es] us'. In the First Parliament, presenting a fiscal policy, he said:

Supposing this cause, or this business [of raising money], must be carried on, either it is of God, or of man If it be of God, He will bear it up. If it be of man, it will tumble, as everything that hath been of man, since the world began, hath done. And what are all our histories, and other traditions of actions in former times, but God manifesting Himself that He hath shaken and tumbled down and trampled upon everything that He hath not planted?⁷⁹

Cromwell's argument here is suggestive of Acts 5:38-39, where Paul's Jewish teacher, Gamaliel, advises the council to stay away from Christ's apostles: 'let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it'.

Of course, there were those who voiced their concern about Puritans' excessive confidence and their impetuosity. Sibbes, for example, said in a sermon that 'Christians should not outrun God's providence'.⁸⁰ Colonel Robert Hammond expressed his fear of (in Cromwell's words) 'acting presumptuously in carnal confidence' when he mentioned that it was 'somewhat as if, by acting against such opposition as is like to be, there will be a tempting of God'.⁸¹ Slingsby had also noted 'the human presumption in attempts to control God; to attempt to force Him into action, or to declare that the response to a challenge expressed divine opinion, was too obviously akin to superstition'.⁸² In this context, the title of Meric Casaubon's work published in 1655 is meaningful: *A treatise concerning enthusiasme, as it is an effect of nature: but is mistaken by many for either divine inspiration, or diabolical possession*.⁸³

Evidently, there were many who felt that 'restless Cromwell ... / Urgèd his ... star' at the time when the 'Ode' was written. By then it seemed clear that the army of Cromwell had not been under the control of Parliament, especially of its Presbyterian members. The author of the pamphlet *The Hypocrites Vnmasking* (1647), for example, noted that 'the Agitators and Officers in the Army ... now exalt themselves above king and Parliament, & give Lawes to both'.⁸⁴ So the

image of Cromwell as falcon responsive to the control of Parliament (lines 91-96) may be read as wishful thinking on Marvell's part, or, as Michael Wilding has pointed out, as a way 'to counter the memory of the army resisting Parliament's orders to disband, and ultimately marching on London and occupying it' in 1647, that of 'the military purging of Parliament' in 1648, and that of 'the trial and execution of King Charles' in 1649.⁸⁵ Furthermore, the impression of Cromwell's relative deference to Parliament in 1650 — 'Nor yet grown stiffer with command, / But still in the Republic's hand' (lines 81-82) — would have struck the reader as ominous if he or she took the words 'yet' and 'still' here as a manifestation of Marvell's discernment of the Commander's future impatience with Parliament. What warranted Cromwell's flexibility and demanded his agility — in other words, what gave him the political pretexts for his lawlessness and restlessness — was providentialism; it exempted him from being 'wedded and glued to forms of government'. It enabled him to think of them as 'dross and dung in comparison of Christ', and to move swiftly from one constitutional position to a markedly different one.⁸⁶

Our question is whether Marvell believed with Cromwell that the Revolution was of God. And the most probable answer is, not necessarily so at this moment of his composition of 'An Horatian Ode'. The double-edged reading of the poem, which has stirred up much critical debate, would allow us to detect its sustained anxieties regarding Cromwell as a human being. Marvell, however, would give an approving nod to John Wilkins when the latter wrote 'when you see the violent perverting of judgement and justice in a Province, marvell not at the matter ... though men may be apt to secure themselves in such proceedings, by the greatness of their own strength, as if there were nothing above them, yet there are higher then they. And there is a time, when God will judge both the righteous and the wicked'.⁸⁷ Or it can be argued that Marvell sided with anti-Engagers. Edward Gee, for example, quoting Acts 5:38-39, asserts:

Now to discern what is of God, so as to impose upon us, we must not go to his secret will or providence, many things come about to us that way which we are not bound to embrace and acquiesce in; but may, yea, ought to use remedy against, and strive to avert or remove; such as are tentations to sinne, diseases of the body, captivity, oppression, dishonour, defamation, and such like. These evils, albeit we are patiently and

submissively to bear them for the present, as they come from Gods correcting hand, when they are come to passe; yet we are allowed and required to speak the preventing of them when threatned, and the removall of them when befallen; Unjustly advanced Magistrates are of this nature.⁸⁸

Given this viewpoint, the image of Cromwell as the 'force of angry heaven's flame' would imply not that he is the Elect, but that he is a scourge of God, 'God's correcting hand'. And, when Marvell says 'Though Justice against Fate complain, / And plead the ancient rights in vain', he would seem to admit that Cromwell is one of these 'Unjustly advanced Magistrates'. In *A Short Historical Essay Concerning General Councils, Creeds, and Impositions, in Matters of Religion*, Marvell, as Stocker noted, used the idea that 'men's own inclinations were utilized by God for His purposes'. And 'If he felt that Cromwell was an unrighteous rebel, ... he had to acknowledge that providence had decreed Cromwell's rise and the triumph of his cause'.⁸⁹ In view of specific providential goals, that is, God may have reinforced (through indirect influences) the evil that certain persons were already inclined to perform. The evil actions themselves were the result of the free decisions of the people in question, but God did indirectly (without utter efficacy) influence them toward these decisions. Presumably God did this for the sake of achieving some specific and righteous goal.

It should be noticed, however, that Marvell says that justice complains, not against God, but against 'Fate'. This distinction may be important, if we take into consideration the fact that Cromwell hesitated at least once to use the word 'Fate' because he thought that 'that were too paganish a word'.⁹⁰ Calvin had been careful to distinguish his doctrine, 'that particular events are generally testimonies of the character of God's singular providence', from the 'Stoics' dogma of fate': 'We do not, with the Stoics, contrive a necessity out of the perpetual connection and intimately related series of causes, which is contained in nature'.⁹¹ Further, the reference to Fortune in the 'Horatian Ode' in Cromwell's final appellation 'the War's and Fortune's son' (line 113) might even sound atheistic in the Hobbesian context. In his *Leviathan*, Chapter 12, explaining the natural cause of religion, Hobbes argues that if men think of 'their fortune', 'the solicitude whereof, both enclines to fear, and hinders them from the search of the causes of other things; and thereby gives occasion of feigning of as many Gods, as there be

men that feigne them'.⁹² Or alternatively, what Marvell had in mind might have been the sentence in Plutarch's *Morals*: 'there is no other cause of good and evill accidents of this life, but either fortune or els the will of man'.⁹³ Cleanth Brooks applauds 'Legouis's refusal to see the Cromwell of the poem depicted as "a kind of Scourge of God, since there is nothing Christian in this ode" — nothing, at least, that is specifically Christian'.⁹⁴ From this angle, it should be noted that what is emphasized in the poem is not God's will as the first cause but what Calvin would have called the Stoic law of nature as secondary cause:

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain:
But those do hold or break,
As men are strong or weak.

Nature that hateth emptiness,
Allows of penetration less:
And therefore must make room
Where greater spirits come.

(lines 37-44)

In the natural world, it is necessary that, just as nature abhors a vacuum, it tolerates even less two bodies in the same place at the same time. Here, while the material principle (derived from contemporary physics) is superimposed on a language of non-materiality — 'greater spirits', Cromwell is described as a natural force. And that is why restless Cromwell 'could not cease' (line 9) even if he would. If we may regard Machiavellism as a kind of physics of politics, what is expressed in the lines quoted above would seem to be materialism in politics: the old system did not 'hold' but broke because the distribution of power had changed.⁹⁵ Elsewhere in the 'Ode', too, he is a natural creature like a falcon, and a physical phenomenon like lightning. The image of the controlled falcon carries with it the implication of a certain helplessness on the falconer's part; he can only whistle and wait. What he cannot do is to reason with a force of deaf, unreasonable nature. Furthermore, when we are told that like a falcon Cromwell 'Falls heavy' (line 92), as David Norbrook has pointed out, 'the agency of hunting blurs into a sense of gravitational inevitability'.⁹⁶

Lightning was once thought to be a portent, not least by Cromwell himself. As

Keith Thomas has explained, "Thunder-storms seemed another manifestation of divine displeasure; indeed death by lightning was often taken as a direct act of God".⁹⁷ In the 'Horatian Ode', when 'laurels' (line 24), or things wreathed in laurel, are blasted by Cromwell's 'three-forked lightning' (line 13), the ode attempts to replace one myth with another. Every Roman Emperor — every Caesar — had the right to wear the laurel wreath at any time, and in Roman belief recorded by Pliny laurels were proof against lightning, so could not be burnt or blasted.⁹⁸ And here this myth clearly represents the Divine Right of Kings, for which Cromwell substituted the myth of the coming millennium and the image of himself as the instrument of God. Cromwell's, and Parliament's, case against a Divine Right monarchy could be legitimated only by appealing to the higher authority of God. A form of humanly contrived magic was an integral element in those political and religious institutions Cromwell was instrumental in abrogating. Whether the view that Cromwell's lightning is God's is really a genuine belief or another form of humanly contrived magic, however, depends on the reader's political viewpoint.

For, during the seventeenth century, the belief in the direct connection between God and lightning was being called into doubt, and becoming really a myth, especially for those who regarded secondary causes as operating free from divine intervention. They were often rehabilitators of atomism, whose anti-teleological view, like Lucretius's demystification of thunder and other threatening phenomena, would be able to adduce the fact that thunder-bolts strike without discrimination.⁹⁹ Walter Charleton, for example, referring to Lucretius, discusses '*the ordinary intervention of many effects inconsistent with the justice and righteous administration of Divinity*'

Since we observe the Thunder-bolt (I.) To be, for the most part, discharged on the heads of the *Innocent*, and not the *Guilty*: (2.) To batter *Sancta Deúm delubra*, the Temples of the Gods themselves, more frequently, then common buildings: (3.) To be idly spent at random, upon the sea and void Campanias; and so seems not to have been the Artillery of *Divine Vengeance*, prepared for the punishment of impious mortals: (4.) To be generated, like other meteors, by natural Causes, being a sulphureous exhalation compacted in the clouds, and thence darted *ala volee*, or at a venture, on whatever is situate in the level of its projection: it appears an

absurdity of timorous superstition to believe, that every single occurrence is praeordained by *Wisdom*, or that all extemporary *Accidents* have their praescripts in the book of *Fate*.¹⁰⁰

Or at least such thinkers believed that most of the scripture verses that speak of the divine causal influence over natural events, such as rain (Matthew 5:45), clouds, sea, lightning, and wind (Psalm 135:5-7) can be understood as declarations of God's ordinary providence, of the deity being the ultimate, sustaining and permissive cause of such phenomena, but not necessarily of God being the direct cause. An anti-Engager, Nathaniel Ward, too, referred to 'thundering and lightning' scientifically as a natural phenomenon: 'they are the violent eruptions of fiery exhalations', and ridiculed those Parliamentarians who

shall prove such *Jupiters* as to fall a thundering and lightning so numinously over our heads, that it must not concerne us what they doe: I hope the People will be so wise hereafter as to chuse no more *Boanerges*, but such as are right and true *Heliastae*.¹⁰¹

In this context, Margarita Stocker is right in saying that Cromwell merely '*acts as the lightning*' (my emphasis) and that Marvell implies that 'Cromwell was the Prime Mover of the regicide'.¹⁰² Marvell must have 'read in Horace that heaven sent thunder and plague upon earth as a punishment for crime', but, as John Klause has remarked, 'he would not have overlooked the same poet's melancholy observation that "Jove often strikes the good along with the wicked when he is scorned"'.¹⁰³ Even if Marvell saw Cromwell's 'lightning' as 'numinous', and meant the 'Caesar's head' in line 23 to be the head of Charles I, nonetheless, as discussed earlier, because of the ambiguity about the referent of 'Caesar', it could be read as meaning that Cromwell's head may be blasted by some upcoming rising power in the future, another flash of lightning or ominous 'spirits of the shady night' (line 118). A Ranter, Joseph Salmon, for instance, refers to the generals of the Army as 'the rod of God', who 'have a commission from the Lord to scourge England's oppressors'. But he warns the generals that 'the same measure you mete, shall be met [sic.] to you again, for the Lord will ere long cast his rod into the fire of burning and destruction'.¹⁰⁴

Thus, paradoxical as it may sound, Cromwell as a man is equally presented as

impersonal, being an agent of the historical process, or an elemental force. And the response to the image of him as a natural force can be bifurcated, depending on which category this force falls under, extraordinary or ordinary providence. As has been pointed out, it can be seen as skilful propaganda for the emergent powerful individual; then the image would propagate the view that Cromwell is an instrument of God. The simile of the laws of physics in the 'Ode' would suggest the materialist alternative to the act of extraordinary providence implicit in the image of Cromwell. And to explain the English Revolution as such a natural phenomenon would indeed be a way of making order out of chaos. For example, as John M. Wallace has argued, the 'Engagers, and especially Ascham, with their support for the power of usurpers, also defended the status quo by natural law, and Henry Parker had even, like Marvell, found analogies between the laws of physical matter and the laws of political change'.¹⁰⁵

There was a different perspective, however, which emphasized 'the demystifying powers of naturalistic explanation',¹⁰⁶ namely, the natural force in history as a manifestation not of extraordinary providence but of ordinary providence. 'In historical writing it became increasingly unfashionable after the mid seventeenth century to explain events in terms of God's providence', stated Keith Thomas. 'The Earl of Clarendon did not deny that God's finger could be perceived in the Great Rebellion; but nevertheless chose to concentrate on the "natural causes" which had brought it about'.¹⁰⁷ The particular emphasis Marvell's 'Horatian Ode' puts on secondary causes is consistent with its suggestion that the natural force can operate against the principle of goodness and that Cromwell, too, is beyond ethical categories.

It may be argued that Marvell was torn between the intensity of the historical moment and a somewhat calmer, wider, historical perspective. While the time in which Marvell was actually living seemed to attest to the truth of Cromwell as a man both approved of and led by God, it might be possible that, when seen from the perspective of hindsight, the same man would turn out to be a mere rebel, local events of the mid-seventeenth century such as Cromwell's victory over Ireland being reduced to small anomalies in a larger process of history. The apparent truth of the moment backed up by religious and political enthusiasm may be denied from a wider historical perspective.

The experience of 'Though Justice against Fate complain' must have been, as Barbara Everett has perceptively noted, 'not a sense of conflict, but its opposite —

a bewilderment at the absence of clear issues, a tragi-comic sense of the withdrawal of the rational'.¹⁰⁸ The inscrutable forces may be identifiable as the will of God, operating in terms which defy immediate comprehension but which, fundamentally, have a far greater significance than the mere achievements of one man. In the way in which Marvell views and interprets contemporary events, he is close to a tragic dramatist; he is ready to face the fact that the world is not a just place, that might may, and often does, overcome right, that the law of nature is not the law of equity and that heaven does not intervene on the side of legitimacy. 'While round the armèd bands / Did clap their bloody hands', Charles I on the 'tragic scaffold'

... nothing common did, or mean,
Upon that memorable scene;
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try.

Nor called the Gods with vulgar spite
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed. (lines 54-64)

To the Royalists, Charles was indeed the 'royal actor' (line 53), the medieval *Christomimetes*, who went to his death like a second Jesus. Perhaps here Marvell is echoing Strafford at the block: 'I am not afraid of death ... but doe as chearfully put off my doublet at this time as ever I did when I went to bed'.¹⁰⁹ Dramatizing the scene, Marvell repeats 'memorable' and makes 'forcèd' carry the implication both of force and Fate: 'This was that memorable hour / Which first assured the forcèd pow'r' (lines 65-66). The association between force and Fate, however, could be detrimental to the view Cromwellians tried to spread, the view that their actions were validated by God's will. It might remind the reader that in contradistinction to Charles, who was 'born' (line 53) to be an actor in the providential theatre of history, his position demanding that royal role, Cromwell had to 'climb' (line 33) to it, eventually by executing the king forcibly. And when Marvell wrote in lines 53-54 'thence the royal actor born / The tragic scaffold might adorn', 'thence', meaning 'as a result of Cromwell's stratagem',¹¹⁰ might signal

that the apparent providential drama was in fact fashioned by Cromwell as a Machiavellian schemer.

The pre-Christian *Fatum* appears in Marvell's lyric poems as well. Fate drives the 'iron wedges' (line 11) between the lives of the lovers in 'The Definition of Love', for example. In 'The Picture of Little T. C. in a Prospect of Flowers', the 'darling of the gods' (line 10) is subject to Flora just as Olympian gods are to Fate. We might be able to see a parallel between Little T. C. and Cromwell in that both god-like figures are overruled by a higher power. In the 'Ode', while Charles is likened to the hunted animal netted by Cromwell, Cromwell is compared to the fierce falcon held on the lure of the falconer. In this respect, powerful contemporary figures are diminished, and the conflict described in the poem resolves into the sense of process: time, nature, history move on and take Charles and Cromwell with them. Although Cromwell seems to be the addressee of the 'Ode', in the final analysis he is 'Fortunes's son' (line 113), and the dominant, though invisible, figure is Fate, or Necessity, which Horace in his Ode I, 35 associates with Fortune.¹¹¹

Marvell's attitude towards the concept of Fate is ambivalent. On the one hand, like anti-Cromwellians, he was able to recognize in the providential language of 'necessity' sophistry designed to justify Cromwellians' violence, but on the other hand he seems to rely on its determinism to reduce both the bewilderment and conflict of the political elements to something much stiller. In 'Upon the Death of Lord Hastings', for instance, while the poet needs to alleviate the pain of the bereaved by saying 'Needs must he die' (line 10), the necessity is curiously politicized: 'the democratic stars did rise, / And all that worth from hence did ostracize' (lines 25-26).

In the early modern period, 'necessity' retained reputable philosophical credentials as a branch of providence. Nicolaus Cusanus asserted that God is 'necessitas absoluta'. And Sir Thomas Browne wrote that 'That fatal necessity of the Stoics is nothing but the immutable law of [God's] will'.¹¹² Especially, the two terms and ideas were closely associated with each other in Puritan minds.¹¹³ But as the providential language came to be employed for political purposes, more and more people began to notice the fact that, as Keith Thomas summarizes the situation, 'too often the belief in providence degenerated into a crude justification of any successful policy'. Consequently, 'Preachers warned their flocks against making providence "a warrant of our actions", insisting that although God might sometimes make the meaning of his judgements clear they were normally

unsearchable'.¹¹⁴ In the mid-seventeenth century, many anti-Engagers mocked the Puritan use of providential language for ideological purposes. Henry Hall contended that, by the Engagers' lights, Joseph could have slept with Pontiphar's wife if he had claimed that providence put her in his way.¹¹⁵ Clement Walker stated that 'it fareth with the People of England as with a traviler fallen into the hands of thieves ... they Robbe him by Providence, And then Murder him by Necessity'.¹¹⁶ Nathaniel Ward asserted that 'that *Necessity* which will warrant such a formidable and precipitant mutation of a State' was similar to the following episode:

It must be truly reall, and not fantastick, *Von Don Dosme* standing so neer his Fire, that he burnt his Shins, thought there was an absolute *Necessity* that the Masons should be presently sent for to pull downe the Chimny, and set it up again further from his Legs, but he might have set his Legs further from that at a lesser Charge.

And he concluded that 'Ignorance is the Grand-mother of mistaken *Necessity*; pretended *Necessity*, the Father-in-law of intended iniquity'. He reiterated the same point, using the word 'Providence' this time:

I acknowledge there are demonstrating and determining *providences*; all that I speake against is, that men follow *Providences* of their owne making, mis-construe Gods *Providences* to their owne fansies, and then follow them to the destruction of themselves and many others.¹¹⁷

Cromwell himself admitted that there were 'Feigned necessities, imaginary necessities': Certainly these are 'the greatest cozenage that men can put upon the providence of God, and make pretences to break known rules by'. Nevertheless, he persuaded himself to the point where he could justify the Revolution in the following terms: 'it is as legal and as carnal and as stupid, to think that there are no necessities that are manifest necessities, because necessities may be abused or feigned. And truly I should be so, if I should think so'.¹¹⁸ And what Marvell could not help expressing in writing 'An Horatian Ode' was, at least partial, agreement with Cromwell, who was so confident that providence was operating in the great change.

In *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, Marvell distinguishes Fate into 'several Families of the Necessities' (i. 321). It may be assumed that, when he was writing the 'Ode', he was at a loss, unable to differentiate the original necessity

that was pre-eternal to all things, and exercised dominion not only over all humane things, but over Jupiter himself and the rest of the Deities, and drove the great Iron nail thorough the Axle-tree of Nature (*ibid.*)

from the 'Necessity that has no Law, ... that Necessity where the King loses his Right', or 'the Necessity of the Calf':

For the Calves of the Legs being placed behind where they are altogether unuseful, it were necessary in some mens opinion, to place the Calf rather before for defense, lest men should break their Shins by making more hast then good speed. (i. 322.)

Marvell criticizes his insufferable antagonist Samuel Parker for suggesting precisely this kind of imaginary necessity:

That is to say, You do hereby seem to imagine, that Providence should have contrived all things according to the utmost perfection, or that which you conceive would have been most to your purpose. (i. 323)

Marvell reproves Parker for his use of the verb 'must': 'Still *must, must, must* ... Why *must* again, eight times at least in little more then one page' (i. 272). In this connection, discussing the 'Horatian Ode', Patterson is right to point out that 'That other small word, *must*, ... acquires greater force as the poem continues': 'The sense of Necessity, perhaps undesirable, undergirds the poem, from that normally unstressed 'Must' (competing with 'now' for emphasis), through to the central philosophical proposition, that "Nature ... must make room / Where greater Spirit come", and thence to the final exhortation to Cromwell to keep his military prowess alive: "The same Arts that did gain / A Pow'r must it maintain".¹¹⁹ Even at the time Marvell was writing the 'Ode' for Cromwell, there were around them many people who condemned Cromwell, just as Marvell was to condemn Parker, specifically for his penchant for presumptuously interpreting God's purposes to

suit his argument.

But it seems that Marvell was not sure whether Cromwell's power was approved of by God or merely permitted as the scourge of God. Again, *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* may elucidate retroactively his perplexed feelings towards the destructive Civil War:

As God has hitherto, ... subjected Mankind to the dismal influence of Comets from above, to Thunder, and Lightning, and Tempests from the middle Region ..., beside all other the innumerable calamities to which humane life is exposed, he has in like manner distinguish'd the Government of the World by the intermitting seasons of Discord, War, and publick Disturbance. Neither has he so order'd it only (as men endeavour to express it) by meer permission, but sometimes out of Complacency.

(i. 323)

Since, as Marvell says in 'The Character of Holland', 'Necessity [is] that [which] first made kings' (line 37), it may be the necessity of God that prompted Cromwell. Given Marvell's statements in his prose work that 'the Mind is in the hand of God' (i. 166) and that God can 'sway and temper the Minds and Affections of Mankind' (i. 323) — although Marvell disagreed with Hobbes's doctrine of the necessity of all, which maintained that 'it is not in a Mans Power now, to choose the Will he shall have anon'¹²⁰ — it may be argued that the 'Horatian Ode' suggests that God masterminded the actions of Cromwell, who did so with those of Charles I. Or, alternatively, it may be argued that, if sometimes God does not simply permit the War, but takes satisfaction in it, the poem recognizes both the force of necessity and the rare quality of the man who can draw that force to himself. But at the same time it undoubtedly tries to conceal the dangers of spiritual pride and blind self-assurance which Cromwell may bring as is suggested in the line: 'Nor yet grown stiffer with command' (line 81). And if the ruler addressed falls off from the terms in which the poet praises him, the force of necessity will shift its nature from divine to artificial: the 'Fate' in the 'Ode' will sound, just as it does to readers who dislike Cromwell, like some pretext of necessity, or 'the pretence of the cause of God', into which his spiritual arrogance and blind self-centredness have trapped him.

Thus, the fate in the 'Ode' can potentially be a quiet irony; but in addition it

has an important psychological function. Whether it is interpreted as Christian providence or pagan Fate, its doctrinal determinism provides the dictates of authority to rely on, so that those who are challenged can evade their own responsibility to judge and choose. Norbrook has perceptively noted that '[t]he stress on natural laws retrospectively raises questions about the "Must" of line 2: what at first sounded like a moral imperative turns out to be no more than an impersonal necessity',¹²¹ but the point is that the subtle ambiguity of the word indicates the poet's wish and effort to believe that moral choice is not necessary under the critical conditions of the time. When one's present acts are illegible as signs in an incompletely known text, understanding the self as subjected to its transcendental script gives one both an excuse for and consolation in one's actions. Furthermore, by encouraging one to discern an eternal and even inexorable purpose behind the contingent and seemingly random events of time, providence provided a way of coping with the increasing complexity of the seventeenth-century world. As Keith Thomas has pointed out, for most believers at most times the doctrine of providence exercised its greatest influence as a system of consolation and tranquility.¹²²

During the Civil War, however, it was especially needed, as is illustrated by the title of a book such as John Wilkins's *Discourse concerning the Beauty of Providence in All the Rugged Passages of It. Very seasonable to quiet and support the heart in these times of publick confusion* (London, 1649). In it, Wilkins admits 'unequall dispensation' in his time, when 'a just man should perish in his righteousness, and the wicked should prosper in his wickedness' and when 'there is a violent perverting of judgement and justice in a Nation; and on the side of the oppressor there is might, but the oppressed have none to comfort them'. He thinks, however: 'It may be our lots perhaps in these times, to see onely the *beginning* of the fabrick, when the old frame is demolished, the rubbish lyes scattered about, the new materials being gathered into heaps. Posterity perhaps may see the end of it, when all these confused preparations shall be made up into a beautifull structure'. And he condemns one who 'looks no further then second causes, unto which he ascribes the successe or miscarriage of events; and doth not take notice of that divine Providence by whose influence they are guided'. 'Remember', he advises, 'that God sits in heaven, observing and ordering all these inferior motions for the best'. Wilkins praises the 'Stoicks' for being 'never troubled at any crosse event, [because they know] nothing could have been better then it is', and goes on

to argue that 'if meer reason could advance *Heathen* men to such resolutions, much more then should a *Christians faith* in the Providence of God ... raise his minde to this heroick temper, and make him bend himself with a submissive compliance unto every condition'.¹²³ In 'Upon Appleton House', Marvell prophesies that Mary Fairfax's virtue shall not save her from the priest's sacrificial knife. His implicit advice to her parents to 'make their destiny their choice' concerning her marriage (line 744) is in fact Stoic. The freedom of the Stoic sage consists in acting by his own choice together with necessity. Seneca said 'The Fates lead the person who is willing, but drag the one who is unwilling'. So, following the fates voluntarily is much better than being dragged by them, though we will in any case be compelled. '[T]he task of the philosopher', Epictetus observed, 'is to make his wish[es] fit what happens' so that he spends his life 'without distress, fear or anxiety'.¹²⁴

Edward Corbett said that 'I shall only touch upon the power and providence thereof, so far as may conduce to the quieting of our thoughts in these distracted times'.¹²⁵ And Henry Vaughan wrote his poem 'Providence' to palliate the sufferings which his political enemies inflicted on him during the Civil War: although providence is 'secret' (line 1) and 'in a mystic cloud' (line 7), Vaughan believes in God's 'strange sure mercies' (line 8), concluding the poem with the lines, 'Gladly will I, like *Pontic* Sheep, / Unto their wormwood-diet keep / Since thou hast made thy Arm my fold' (lines 46-48). The verses Charles I was reputed to have written in prison also show a man trying to come to terms with his hardships by referring to providence:

In all things here Gods providence,
and will alone commands,
The life of my poore spirit sad,
is only in his hands.¹²⁶

The common source of these attitudes seems to be Calvin's view of providence, which 'emphasized comfort for Christians; for, although the disposition and intricate work of God remained a mystery, the course of each particular event was in the hands of God'.¹²⁷

Similarly, Marvell's description of the execution of Charles I may be regarded as his attempt to place the tragedy of the regicide in an impersonal and inevitable

historical process: if there is a fatal or providential stream which sucks him in, it cannot be helped, and no one will be responsible for the king's death; and the execution is a necessary sacrifice to assure the future of the English state. Charles's eye which is 'keener [than] / The axe's edge' (lines 59-60) may suggest that he looks at something beyond the immediate cause of his impending death — some spiritual meaning beyond what his physical eyes can see. Charles's eye is close to the eye of 'a Drop of Dew' which, 'gazing back upon the skies' ('On a Drop of Dew', line 11), and 'the world excluding round' (line 29), 'all about does upwards bend' (line 36), in that neither of them finds value in struggle on earth, not even in the 'spiritual combat' so dear to Cromwell and other Puritans. The 'Horatian Ode' as a whole may seek to attain that distinction of poise displayed by the king which is the one unambiguous virtue it can offer. As we have already noted, because the 'Ode' suggests that fate exercises dominion over Cromwell as well as Charles, the fearful power of Cromwell is rendered acceptable by the vision of his destiny. Since the poem contains an effort to grasp a crisis or climacteric moment in a larger process of flowing time, the impersonal sense of the historical process and continuity distances the accompanying violence. The poem is also an attempt on Marvell's part to evade personal emotion, the natural human need to choose sides, and to reach a level of inevitability where destiny exempts him from choice. It is the very act of attempting to persuade the reader and himself that there is no conflict and so, no room for choice. The poet failed, however, and as a result the tone of the poem would be best described as a 'tentative suspension of final judgment'.¹²⁸

It must be remembered that Marvell was not one of those who, to borrow William Perkins's words, 'imagine that all things are governed by fate or an unresistable and violent necessity'.¹²⁹ Nor could he rely on 'special providence' as whole-heartedly as Hamlet in the last act of the drama.¹³⁰ For Marvell, theologically speaking, determinism, whether that of fate or of providence, had to be, if not cancelled, at least qualified by his belief in the doctrines of free will and secondary causes, both of which would be able to operate independently of God's will. He would have concurred with Richard Baxter when the latter said that sinners 'shall lay all the blame on their own Wills in Hell for ever'.¹³¹ He knew that they could not shelter behind determinism, because punishment is the result not of God's fault, but of their own. Consequently, Marvell's 'Horatian Ode' had to reveal two almost diametrically opposite sentiments concerning the relationship between fate

and Cromwell. While on the one hand it makes political and psychological attempts to render the brute reality acceptable, the inchoate coherent, and the illegible accessible, by suggesting a strong sense of fate, on the other hand it obliquely indicates the possibility of human errors inherent in choice. Marvell cannot judge whether Cromwell has made destiny his choice or choice his destiny, or in other words, whether Cromwell's providential role has been assigned by himself or by some inevitable power of the natural process.

Notes

All quotations from Marvell's verse and Nigel Smith's notes are taken from *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Nigel Smith (London: Longman, 2003). Quotations from the former are accompanied by references to line numbers, and from the latter's annotations by page numbers. References to Marvell's prose works are, unless otherwise noted, to *The Prose Works of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Annabel Patterson, Martin Dzelzainis, N. H. Keeble, Nicholas von Maltzahn, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale UP, 2003).

1. Wilbur Cortez Abbott, *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell: With an Introduction. Notes and a Sketch of His Life*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1937-47), ii. 262.
2. Judy Sproxton, *Violence and Religion: Attitudes towards Militancy in the French Civil Wars and the English Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 89.
3. Patsy Griffin, *The Modest Ambition of Andrew Marvell: A Study of Marvell and His Relation to Lovelace, Fairfax, Cromwell, and Milton* (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press), pp. 138-139, argues that in 'The First Anniversary' Marvell's 'strategy is to establish firmly the carriage accident and the loss of Cromwell as God's threat to the English, as well as to emphasize the providential nature of Cromwell's deliverance' whereas Cromwell himself 'seems bound to have interpreted the event, as others did, as a possible sign of God's displeasure'. Annabel Patterson, *Andrew Marvell* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1994), p. 40, however, suggests that 'The First Anniversary' is 'an exercise in readerly frustration': 'Perhaps the biblical types are intended to function in the same provocative but ultimately unsatisfying way as the echoes of Roman history

inserted so un reassuringly into the "Ode".

4. David Norbrook, 'Marvell's "Horatian Ode" and the Politics of Genre' in *Literature and the English Civil War*, ed. Thomas Healy and Jonathan Sawday (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), p. 158. In his *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), p. 270, Norbrook explains that 'Cromwell's sublimity ... necessarily sets up a tension with the demands of a republic to avoid cults of personality', and that 'Marvell lays ... much emphasis on Cromwell's agency in establishing the republic'.
5. James Loxley, 'Prepar'd at Last to Strike in with the Tyde? Andrew Marvell and Royalist Verse', *The Seventeenth Century* 10 (1995), p. 56.
6. *A Manifestation from Lieutenant Col. John Lilburn, Mr. William Walwyn, Mr. Thomas Prince, and Mr. Richard Overton, Now Prisoners in the Tower of London and Others, commonly (though unjustly) styled Levellers* (London, 1649), in *Leveller Manifestoes of the Puritan Revolution*, ed. Don M. Wolfe (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1944), p. 392.
7. R. I. V. Hodge, *Foreshortened Time: Andrew Marvell and Seventeenth Century Revolutions* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1987), p. 126. Annabel Patterson, *Andrew Marvell*, p. 38. See also Nigel Smith's footnote in *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, p. 276.
8. Joad Raymond, 'Framing Liberty: Marvell's *First Anniversary* and the Instrument of Government', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 62 (1999), pp. 341-342.
9. [John Denham], 'A Jolt on Michaelmas day 1654', *Rump: or an Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs relating to the Late Times. By the most Eminent Wits, from Anno 1639 to Anno 1661* (London, 1662), p. 364.
10. Christopher Wortham, 'Marvell's Cromwell Poems: an Accidental Triptych', in *The Political Identity of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Conal Condren and A. D. Cousins (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1990), p. 39. Wortham, discussing Marvell's architectural image of the Commonwealth in 'The First Anniversary' (lines 87-98), says 'One senses desperation in Marvell's over-extended ingenuity' (p. 39), and that 'There is an empty hollowness at the centre' (p. 40).
11. Jonathan F. S. Post, *English Lyric Poetry: The Early Seventeenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 286.
12. Thomas Healy, "'Dark all without it knits": Vision and Authority in Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*', in *Literature and the English Civil War*, ed. Thomas

- Healy and Jonathan Sawday (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), p. 173.
13. Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1452a, in *Aristotle The Poetics, "Longinus" on the Sublime, Demetrius on Style*, trans. W. Hamilton Fyfe and W. Rhys Roberts (London: William Heinemann, 1960), p. 39.
 14. Warren Chernaik, 'Was Marvell a Republican?', *The Seventeenth Century*, 20 (2005), p. 83. Laura Lunger Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell: Ceremony, Portrait, and Print 1645-1661* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), sees much of 'The First Anniversary' as 'address[ing] the act of viewing', giving 'a lesson in hermeneutics, showing the reader how to read, interpret, and judge rightly' (p. 98), and argues that the right interpretation is, as George Wither did in his *Vaticinium Causuale*, to read 'the accident as providential, a reminder to the people of the divine source of Cromwell's power' (p. 97).
 15. John Spencer, *A Discourse concerning Prodiges: Wherein the Vanity of Presages by Them Is Reprehended, and Their True and Proper Ends Asserted and Vindicated* (Cambridge, 1663), sig. B. In *A Discourse Concerning Vulgar Prophecies* (London, 1665), p. 11, Spencer, discussing the 'political Sophism in reference to Prophecy', takes as an example Caesar, 'who told the *Romans* in open Senate, as from the Oracles of *Sibylla* that *he that they had now their King in reality, must have the title of King too, if they would be in a safe condition*'. This is of course the same de facto argument as was used in the mid-seventeenth-century Engagement Controversy.
 16. Meric Casaubon, *Of Credulity and Incredulity in Things Natural, Civil, and Divine* (London, 1668), p. 150.
 17. Blair Worden, 'Andrew Marvell, Oliver Cromwell, and the Horatian Ode', in *Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Kevin Sharp and Steven N. Zwicker (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1987), pp. 171-172, notes that 'Nedham's *The Case of the Commonwealth Stated* remarked that "the hand of heaven" had been against Hannibal'. For the comparison of Cromwell with Caesar, see A. I. N. Wilson, 'On "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland"', *Critical Quarterly*, 2, No. 4 (1969), pp. 325-341, rpt. in *Andrew Marvell, Poems: A Casebook*, ed. Arthur Pollard (London: Macmillan, 1980), pp. 180, 195. See also John S. Coolidge, 'Marvell and Horace', *Modern Philology*, 63 (November, 1965), p. 115. For 'the conceptual likeness between Lucan's Caesar and Marvell's Cromwell', see also Cleanth Brooks, *Historical Evidence and the Reading of Seventeenth-Century*

- Poetry* (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1991), pp. 135-136. Nigel Smith, 'Paradise Lost from Civil War to Restoration', *The Cambridge Companion to Writing of the English Revolution*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), p. 251, notes that 'in the mid and later seventeenth century ... the translation of and allusion to Lucan [are works of] Parliamentarian[s] and even Republican[s], especially that of Thomas May'.
18. John S. Coolidge, *ibid.*
 19. Edward Gee, *An Exercitation concerning Vsvrpt Powers* (London, 1650), pp. 4-5; cf. p. 13: 'If violent occupation made a right; then it were lawfull for any, that could make a sufficient strength for it, to rise up in Arms, invade, and seise on any Kingdome or Territory, he can prevail over; yea to kill and destroy men and Countreys for Empire and Dominion, as Caesar inclined to hold'. Once again, when Cromwell became Lord Protector, republican attacks on him were published, such as *A Politick Commentary on the Life of Caius Julius Caesar* (London, 1654), depicting him as England's version of Julius Caesar, the tyrant who had usurped Rome's liberties.
 20. Blair Worden, 'Andrew Marvell, Oliver Cromwell, and the Horatian Ode', p. 169, quotes the sarcastic verse of the Royalist Alexander Brome: 'That side is always right that's strong / And that that's beaten always wrong'. David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660*, pp. 246-249, has found 'some wholly non-ironic praise of Cromwell ... in an Irish Catholic source', pointing out 'unexpected links between English republican and Irish Catholic circles'. Owen Roe O'Neill, for instance, 'had proposed that Ireland should become an independent Catholic republic', and 'in the late 1640s, his representatives opened negotiations with the English Independents'. Worden, nonetheless, is correct in saying that 'while we can explain the invocation of the Irish without an ironical reading, we cannot explain it away' (p. 174).
 21. William Shakespeare, *King Richard II*, 3.2.62, ed. Peter Ure (London: Methuen, 1961), p. 97.
 22. Richard Baxter, *The Autobiography of Richard Baxter*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Totowa, N. J.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1974), p. 88, quoted in R. V. Young, 'Marvell and the Politics of Providence', *Ben Jonson Journal*, 1 (1994), p. 222.
 23. James Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The Drawn Sword* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), p. 193.

24. John Goodwin, *Right and Might Well Met, or a brief and unpartiall enquiry into the late and present proceedings of the army under the command of... the Lord of Fairfax; wherein the equity and regularnesse of the said proceedings are demonstratively vindicated upon undeniable principles, as well of reason as religion. Together with satisfactory answers to all materiall objections made against them* (London, 1649). In response to this, John Gere wrote *Might overcoming Right. Or, a cleer answer to M. J. Goodwin's Might and Right well met. Wherein is cleared, that the action of the Army in secluding many Parliament men ... is neither defensible by the rules of solid reason, nor religion* (London, 1649).
25. Jeremiah Burroughes, *The Glorious Name of God, The Lord of Hosts: Opened in two Sermons, at Michaels Cornhill* (London, 1643), p. 19. Christopher Hill, *God's Englishman: Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (1970; rpt. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1972), p. 136, finds that 'by the 1650's ... [Cromwell's] doctrine of providence [had] slipped over easily into a theory of justification by success'. See also pp. 246-250.
26. Cromwell said, for example, 'I do not therefore think the authorities may do anything, and yet such obedience [be] due, but all agree there are cases in which it is lawful to resist' (*Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, i. 697). And the attitude of Engagers is clearly exemplified by the title of Francis Rous's pamphlet, *The Lawfulness of Obeying the Present Government* (London, 1649).
27. John Dury, *A Second Parcel of Objections against the taking of the Engagement answered* (London, 1650), pp. 23-24.
28. Thomas Hobbes, *The Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance. Clearly Stated and Debated between Dr. Bramhall Bishop of Derry, and Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury* (London, 1656), p. 89. He continues: 'Less power does not. And because such power is in God only, he must needs be just in all his actions. And we, that not comprehending his Counsails, call him to the Bar, commit injustice in it'.
29. See Victoria Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric: From the Counter-Reformation to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1994), pp. 162-163.
30. For Marvell's early contact with Cambridge Platonism, see Legouis, *Andrew Marvell*, pp. 3-4. The words quoted here are Cudworth's. See Ernst Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*, trans. James P. Pettegrove (Edinburgh:

Nelson, 1953), p. 79.

31. Abraham Cowley, *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Abraham Cowley*, 2 vols., ed. Alexander B. Grosart (New York: AMS Press, 1967), i. 160, ii. 295.
32. Richard Baxter, *The Autobiography of Richard Baxter*, ed. N. H. Keeble, p. 86.
33. Edmund Elys, *Anglia Rediviva* (London, 1660), sigs. A3v-A4r. In another of many other instances, Meric Casaubon, *Of Credulity and Incredulity*, pp. 117-118, says: 'God in all ages hath suffered, sometimes, as lately amongst us, eminently a wicked cause to prosper: and Godly men, his faithful Ministers and Servants; yea godly Kings and Princes (Whereof our late most pious *Sovereign*, a rare example) to fall into the hands of the wicked'.
34. Sir William D'avenant, *Gondibert: An Heroick Poem* (London: Tho. Newcomb, 1651), The Second Book, Canto 2, Stanza 59 and Canto 4, Stanza 44, *Sir William Davenant's Gondibert*, ed. David F. Gladish (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 142, 149.
35. 'The Men of War', lines 14-16, 'Translation of Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy* II v', line 27, *Henry Vaughan: The Complete Poems*, ed Alan Rudrum (1976; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), pp. 283, 120.
36. 'Memorials of Thomas Lord Fairfax' (in 'Antiquarian Repertory', vol. 3, 1808), p. 4, as quoted in R. I. V. Hodge, *Foreshortened Time: Andrew Marvell and Seventeenth Century Revolutions*, p. 139.
37. John Klaus, *The Unfortunate Fall: Theodicy and the Moral Imagination of Andrew Marvell* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1983), p. 138, states that both Milton and Marvell 'at one time or another expressed something of a "desperate faith in successful leaders" and were tempted to believe that success marked the approval of Providence'.
38. The careers of Nedham and Marvell, both close friends of Milton, have suggestive parallels. E. E. Duncan-Jones has noted a series of verbal resemblances between Nedham's pamphlet and Marvell's 'Horatian Ode'. See 'The Erect Sword of Marvell's Horatian Ode', *Etudes Anglaises* (1962), pp. 172-174.
39. *The Case of the Commonwealth of England, Stated by Marchamont Nedham*, ed. Philip A. Knachel (Charlottesville, Va.: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1969), p. 13.
40. David Reid, *The Metaphysical Poets* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 207.
41. Blair Worden, 'Andrew Marvell, Oliver Cromwell, and the Horatian Ode', p. 175, quotes the doggerel from the Royalist newspaper *The Man in the Moon* for

- 5 June 1650: 'And art returned (Great Noll) again, / And left Ireland behind? / Nay then I see god Nose must reign, / And Tom-ass [Fairfax] come behind'. The phrase 'god Nose' is an allusion to Cromwell's big nose, his pretended divine role, and possibly the doubt about his divine mission: 'God knows'. See also Laura Lunger Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell: Ceremony, Portrait, and Print 1645-1661*, pages indicated by Index, 'Cromwell, Oliver: nose, satirized'. Knoppers points out that Cooper's 'water-colour miniature evinces Cromwell's warts even more prominently' than Peter Lely's portraiture (p. 80).
42. Francis Bacon, *Essays*, introd. Michael J. Hawkins (London: Dent, 1972), p. 160.
43. Admittedly, however — as David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660*, has pointed out — 'Marvell is frequently belligerent' (p. 296). For republican militarism, see, for example, Marchamont Nedham's editorials in the government newsbook, *Mercurious Politicus*, no. 103, 20-27 May 1652, pp. 1609-1613.
44. David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627- 1660*, p. 258.
45. Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640-1660* (New Haven: Yale U. P., 1994), p. 194; John Milton, 'On the Lord General Fairfax at the siege of Colchester', line 10, *Complete Shorter Poems*, ed. John Carey (1968; rpt. Harlow: Longman, 1984), p. 320. David Armitage, 'John Milton: Poet against Empire', in *Milton and Republicanism*, ed. David Armitage, Armand Himy, and Quentin Skinner (1995; rpt. Cambridge: CUP, 1998), p. 219, relates the passage in *Defensio Secunda* that marks 'the lowest point of Milton's faith in victory as the basis of *de facto* power' — 'A cause is neither proved good by success, nor shown to be evil' — to Satan's victory in *Paradise Lost*. Whereas Abdiel in *Paradise Lost* (ed. Alastair Fowler [1968; rpt. Harlow: Longman, 1986], p. 317) claims that 'nor is it aught but just, / That he who in debate of truth hath won, / Should win in arms, in both disputes alike / Victor' (Book 6, lines 121-124), as Boyd M. Berry, 'Puritan Soldiers in *Paradise Lost*', *Modern Language Quarterly* 35 (1974), p. 393, has pointed out, 'we may thirst for brilliant personal victories, clear-cut and decisive, but that is not the sort of life the creatures lead in *Paradise Lost*'.
46. John Hales, *Golden Remains, of the ever memorable Mr. John Hales, of Eaton College, & C.*, p. 191. Hale's influence on Marvell occurred both through printed

- pages and through personal contact: Marvell writes, 'I account it no small honour to have grown up into some part of his acquaintance, and convers'd a while with the living remains of one of the clearest heads and best-prepared breasts in Christendom'. See Pierre Legouis, *Andrew Marvell*, pp. 96-98.
47. Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*, First Part, Canto I, lines 191-192, 195-200, ed. John Wilders (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p.7.
48. Edward Gee, *An Exercitation*, pp. 14-15.
49. Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (1999; rpt. Oxford, OUP, 2001), p. 333. See also pp. 214, 217, 221, 334.
50. Edward Gee, *A plea for Non-Scribers*, Appendix, p. 14. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 7: 'the Chaldeans who were to come upon Judah, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs, whose Judgement and dignity shall proceed of themselves, who shall come all for violence, and Impute that their Power unto their God'; *An Exercitation*, pp. 74-75.
51. Nathaniel Ward, *Discolliminium* (London, 1650), p. 35. Meric Casaubon, *A Treatise concerning Enthusiasme as It is an Effect of Nature: but is mistaken by many for either Divine Inspiration, or Diabolicall Possession* (London, 2nd ed. 1656), p. 2, observes: 'it was expedient for the public good, that gallant Heroick men should believe themselves, though falsely, (*ex Diis genitos*) to be issued of the Gods, that upon that confidence they might attempt great matters with more courage; prosecute them with more fervency; and accomplish them more luckily: as deeming such confidence and security, though but upon imaginary grounds, a great advantage to good successe'. Discussing Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, John Coffey, 'Pacifist, Quietist, or Patient Militant? John Milton and the Restoration', *Milton Studies* 42 (2003), pp. 165-166, argues that Milton's 'explanation of why Samson has fallen coincides with his own understanding of why the Puritan revolution failed': 'Manoa is clear that Samson's fall has come about because he trusted in his own strength rather than in God's empowerment: "O ever-failing trust / In mortal strength! And O what not in man / Deceivable and vain!" (348-50)'.
52. John Vicars, *Jehovah-Jireh. God in the Mount; or, Englands Parliamentarie-Chronicle ...* (London, 1644).
53. See Edward Gee, *A plea for Non-Scribers*, Appendix, p. 2.
54. See Caroline Robbins, 'Marvell's Religion: Was He a New Methodist?', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 23 (April-June, 1962), p. 270. For a 'fine "fiction"' to

- explain the integration of divine providence and the Puritan's individual acts, see Thomas Adams, *The Soldiers Honour* (London, 1617), sig. B1v quoted in Boyd M. Berry, 'Puritan Soldiers in Paradise Lost', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 35 (1974), p. 381.
55. Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p. 307.
 56. Andrew Marvell, *Poems and Letters*, ed. H. M. Margoliouth, 3rd edn, rev. Pierre Legouis and E. E. Duncan-Jones, 2 vol. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), ii. 324.
 57. John Carey, 'Reversals Transposed: An Aspect of Marvell's Imagination' in *Approaches to Marvell: The York Tercentenary Lectures*, ed. C. A. Patrides (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 138.
 58. Pierre Legouis, *Andrew Marvell*, p. 4.
 59. Conversely, for example, as Milton wrote in his *Paradise Lost*, Book 12, lines 86-90, 'Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed, / Immediately inordinate desires / And upstart passions catch the government / From reason, and to servitude reduce / Man till then free.'
 60. Donald M. Friedman, 'Rude Heaps and Decent Order', in *Marvell and Liberty*, ed. Warren Chernaik and Martin Dzelzanis (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p. 127.
 61. Isaac Pennington Jr., *The Fundamental Right, Safety and Liberty of the People* (London, 1651), To the present Parliament of England.
 62. A phrase used of Marvell during his stay in France in 1656. He was with William Dutton. See *The Poems and Letters of Andrew Marvell*, ed. H. M. Margoliouth, 3rd edn. ii. 378; Legouis, *Andrew Marvell*, p. 106. John Klause, *The Unfortunate Fall: Theodicy and the Moral Imagination of Andrew Marvell*, p.148, has noted that Marvell's 'sense that the "mystery" in the state was a divine presence working towards a millennium gave way to a less "enthusiastic" faith in "natural" politics'. See also Marvell's reference to the separation of Christ's kingdom from Caesar's at the opening of *A Short Historical Essay, Touching General Councils, Creeds, and Impositions in Matters of Religion* (ii. 115ff.).
 63. 'To Penshurst', lines 29-38; 'To Saxham', lines 21-26, *Ben Jonson and the Cavalier Poets: Authoritative Texts and Criticism*, ed. Hugh Maclean (New York: Norton, 1974), pp. 22, 164. Richard Lovelace also refers to the fish in 'Aramantha. A Pastoral' as 'The happy captive gladly ta'n / [which] Sues ever to be slave in vain' (lines 143-144, *Richard Lovelace: Selected Poems*, ed. Gerald

Hammond [Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1987], p. 56).

64. Meric Casaubon, *A Treatise concerning Enthusiasme*, pp. 290, 254.
65. *The Works of John Owen*, ed. W. H. Goold, 24 vols. (Edinburgh, 1850-1853), viii. 348-349.
66. Joseph Anthony Mazzeo, 'Cromwell as Machiavellian Prince in Marvell's "An Horatian Ode"', *JHI*, 21 (1960), pp. 1-17. Contemporaries often attributed Cromwell's opportunism to his Machiavellianism. See for instance William Prynne, *The Machiavellian Cromwellist and Hypocritical New Statist* (London, 1648). William Kiffin, in John Lilburne, *As You Were* (London, 1652), p. 4, says that Cromwell is the man who 'walks by the Principles of ATHEISME & MACHIAVELLSME'. Edward Sexby, *Killing Noe Murder* (1657; rpt. London, 1689), suggests that Cromwell had 'the Skin of the Lion and Tail of the Fox, as well as he [had] the Violence of the one and Deceit of the other' (p. 5), and insists that 'his Highness's own *Evangelist*' was '*Machiavelli*' (p. 6).
67. Judy Sproxton, *Violence and Religion*, p. 82. In a similar way, Bruce Lawson, 'Representing Cromwell: Marvell's "Wiser Art"', *Comitatus* 23 (1992), pp. 71-72, discusses George Wither, who, he argues, trying to justify the regicide, 'reduces the focus on Cromwell as individual mover, making him the receiver of the action rather than the subject' because 'an interpretation that sees events as the consequences of the willful act of a self-motivated individual would make the execution an act of treason'.
68. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 2, Chapter 3, Section 5, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), i. 295.
69. Meric Casaubon, *A Treatise concerning Enthusiasme*, p. 219.
70. Christine Rees, *The Judgment of Marvell* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1989), p. 34.
71. Virgil, *Georgics*, Book 2, lines 10, 459-460, *Eclogues, Georgics and Aeneid I-VI*, trans. Rushton Fairclough (London: Heinemann, 1967), pp. 116, 117, 148, 149.
72. William Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1.3.320-321, ed. M. R. Ridley (London: Methuen, 1958), p. 40; Alastair Fowler, in his edition of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, p. 215, quoting Broadbent, notes that 'the gardening should probably be regarded as an emblem of moral or even of political activity (like the gardening in *Richard III* iv, which symbolizes maintenance of order in the commonwealth)'. In Book 9, the serpent tells Eve that 'high from ground the branches [of the tree

- of knowledge] would require / Thy utmost reach or Adam's' (lines 591-592), and Fowler's comment is apposite: Milton 'makes the point in favour of divine providence, that if the fruit was so difficult of access there was no chance of its being plucked without a firm decision' (p. 473).
73. John Rogers, *The Matter of Revolution: Science, Poetry, and Politics in the Age of Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell U. P., 1996), pp. 62, 65, 68.
 74. Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena: or A Catalogue and Discovery of many of the Errours, Heresies, Blasphemies and pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years* (London, 1646), The First Part, p. 159, The Second Part, p. 182. Cf. According to *ODNB*, s.v. 'Fairfax [née Vere], Anne', Lady Fairfax 'was widely believed by contemporaries to have had a considerable influence over her husband's actions during the civil wars. This belief was reinforced by her public support for the presbyterian ministry and her tenacity in accompanying her husband on campaign'. Soon after the composition of the 'Horatian Ode', Marvell was to enter the household of Thomas Fairfax.
 75. *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, ed. W. C. Abbott, i. 698.
 76. Richard Sibbes, 'The Soul's Conflict', *The Complete Works*, 7 vols., ed A. B. Grosart (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1862-64), i. 211.
 77. Ernst Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*, p. 69.
 78. *Diary of Ralph Josselin, 1616-1683*, ed. A. Macfarlane, Brit. Acad. Records of Social and Econ. Hist., new ser., 3 (London: OUP, 1976), p. 8; [Slingsby Bethel], *The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1668), p. 2.
 79. *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, i. 697, iii. 590.
 80. Richard Sibbes, 'The Soul's Conflict', *The Complete Works*, i. 416.
 81. *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, i. 698.
 82. Quoted in Barbara Donagan, 'Providence Chance and Explanation: Some Paradoxical Aspects of Puritan Views of Causation', *JRH*, 11 (1981), p. 397.
 83. See my forthcoming article, 'A Dialogue between the Puritan and the Royalist: Who is the Speaker of Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress"?'.
 84. [William Prynne], *The Hypocrites Vnmasking: Or A Cleare Discovery of the grosse Hypocrisy of the officers and Agitators in the Army, concerning their pretended forwardnesse, and reall sincere desires to relieve Ireland, ... By a Letter of the Agitators to Lieutenant Generall Cromwell, March 30. 1647 ...* (London, 1647), p. 3.

85. Michael Wilding, 'Marvell's "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland"', the Levellers, and the Junta', *The Modern Language Review*, 82 (January, 1987), p. 9. Margarita Stocker, *Apocalyptic Marvell: The Second Coming in the Seventeenth Century Poetry* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986), pp. 83-84, also says: 'While Augustus was technically answerable to the Roman Senate, this was largely a fiction which Augustus himself was anxious to maintain because of vestigial Roman antimonarchism. The position of Cromwell in the English republic was increasingly similar to that of Augustus in the Roman'.
86. *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, i. 527, 540.
87. John Wilkins, *Discourse concerning the Beauty of Providence in All the Rugged Passages of It. Very seasonable to quiet and support the heart in these times of publick confusion* (London, 1649), 'To the Reader'.
88. Edward Gee, *An Exercitation*, pp. 62-63.
89. Margarita Stocker, *Apocalyptic Marvell: The Second Coming in the Seventeenth Century Poetry*, pp. 322, 68-69. See also p. 103: citing a polemical pamphlet, *An Honest Discourse between Three Neighbours* (1655), Stocker argues that the pamphleteer 'like Marvell, ... must acknowledge that Cromwell's authority is divinely sanctioned' in spite of the fact that 'In his view there is no doubt of Cromwell's political malignity and selfish ambition'.
90. *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, iii. 590.
91. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 1, Chapter 16, Section 7 and Section 8, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, i. 205, 207.
92. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan, or The Matter, Forme, & Power of a Commonwealth and Civill* (London, 1651), p. 53.
93. Plutarch, *Morals*, trans. Philemon Holland (London, 1603), p. 538.
94. Cleanth Brooks, *Historical Evidence and the Reading of Seventeenth-Century Poetry*, p. 137. Discussing the 'Horatian Ode', M. L. Donnelly, "'And still new stopps to various time apply'd": Marvell, Cromwell, and the Problem of Representation at Midcentury', in *On the Celebrated and Neglected Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1992), p. 157, observes that Marvell 'forgoes the sanction of religious and scriptural figures'.
95. See Christopher Hill, *Some Intellectual Consequences of the English Revolution* (London: Phoenix, 1997), p. 45. Quoting from Hobbes's *Leviathan* a

theorem that 'The Obligation of Subjects to the Sovereign, is understood to last as long, and no longer, than the power lasteth, by which he is able to protect them', Robert Wilcher, *Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), p. 118, says, 'Hobbes's theory of sovereignty is based on a materialistic conception of natural law'.

96. David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660*, p. 265.
97. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (1971; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), p. 97.
98. Pliny, *Natural History*, XV, 135, The Loeb Classical Library, trans. H. Rackham, 10 vols. (1938-1963; rpt. London: Heinemann, 1949-1969), iv. 379.
99. Titus Lucretius Carus, *De Rerum Natura*, 6, 379-422, trans. W. H. D. Rouse, 2nd edn. revised by M. F. Smith (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1982), pp. 520-525. Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, pp. 124-125, cites early seventeenth-century examples. 'When the steeple of Olveston church was struck by lightning in 1606, the local Gloucester-shire schoolmaster lamented that "scarce one or two" among the multitude that flocked to see the charred remains "but this was his complaint, what a mishap is this, what a mischance is here, what hard hap, what bad fortune, with such heathenish speeches, as if the spears of heaven were the wheeles of fortune, and the clouds, hayle, lightning, thunder, and all the terrors of God else, were but a cast at hazard"; "To ascribe the cold winter of 1608 to chance, wrote the gentleman astrologer Sir Christopher Heydon to the Cambridge divine Samuel Ward, was "with the Epicure [to] erect temples to blind Fortune". Yet he no less firmly rejected the hypothesis that it was an act of God as "unworthy of a scholar". See also p. 127. Another example is found in Simon Harward, *A Discourse of the Severall Kinds and Causes of Lightnings* (London, 1607), sigs. [C3v]-[C4r]: "This lightning on monday the 17. of Nouember did not onely this harme in *Surry*, but also it afflicted *Sussex* and diuers other places. It was very strange that at the same time when it fiered *Bleachingley* steeple it entered also into the house of one *Stephen Lugfford* of *Buckstead* in *Sussex* almost twentie miles from *Bleachingley* and melting the lead of his glasse windowes did with great violence breake through and rent in sunder a strong bricke chimney: the man is of honest report and zealous in

religion, we must not therefore iudge of men by those outward accidents, but commit all iudgement [sic.] to God to whom it doth belong'. John Klause, *The Unfortunate Fall: Theodicy and the Moral Imagination of Andrew Marvell*, p.171, notes that 'Marvell was quite familiar with the *De rerum natura*', and goes on to say that 'Another of Marvell's favorites was the "atheist" Pliny, who, along with Lucretius and the satirist Lucan, was ranked among the foremost enemies of religion by Christians of the Renaissance'.

100. Walter Charleton, *The Darknes of Atheism dispelled by the Light of Nature: A Physico-Theological Treatise* (London, 1652), p. 101. See also p. 155.
101. Nathaniel Ward, *Discolliminium*, pp. 25-26.
102. Margarita Stocker, *Apocalyptic Marvell: The Second Coming in the Seventeenth Century Poetry*, pp. 76, 81.
103. John Klause, *The Unfortunate Fall: Theodicy and the Moral Imagination of Andrew Marvell*, p. 129.
104. Joseph Salmon, *A Rout, A Rout* (London, 1649), in *A Collection of Ranter Writings from the 17th Century*, ed. Nigel Smith (London: Junction Books, 1983), pp. 190-191; 193.
105. John M. Wallace, *Destiny His Choice: The Loyalism of Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge: CUP, 1968), p. 76.
106. Michael Witmore, *Culture of Accidents: Unexpected Knowledges in Early Modern England* (Stanford: Stanford U. P., 2001), p. 136, discusses what he calls 'anagogic wonder', which 'could accommodate a mode of providential speculation that was wholly indifferent to the demystifying powers of naturalistic explanation'.
107. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 127.
108. Barbara Everett quotes as 'representative of the feeling of all the moderates of [the] time' a Parliamentarian, Sir William Waller, who describes 'the Wars as both "this tragedy", and yet *Opus Domini*, the work of the Lord'. See 'The Shooting of the Bears: Poetry and Politics in Andrew Marvell', in *Andrew Marvell: Essays on the Tercentenary of his Death*, ed. R. L. Brett (Oxford: Univ. of Hull, 1979), pp. 87-88.
109. Quoted by George R. Hibbard, 'The Early Seventeenth Century and the Tragic View of Life', *Renaissance and Modern Studies*, 5 (October, 1961), p. 11. In *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, that is, long after the Cromwellian regime is over, Marvell says that 'Serious Men consider whether he [Bishop Bramhall]

- were engaged in the conduct of the Irish army, and to have brought it over upon England, for the Imputation of which the Earl of Strafford [Thomas Wentworth] his Patron so undeservedly suffered' (i. 56)
110. Margarita Stocker, *Apocalyptic Marvell: The Second Coming in Seventeenth Century Poetry*, p. 78. Blair Worden, 'Andrew Marvell, Oliver Cromwell, and the Horatian Ode', p. 163, noted that Marchamont Nedham, writing of Cromwell's return from Ireland, called him 'Novus Princeps', pointing clearly to Machiavelli, who at the start of *The Prince* distinguishes two kinds of ruler: the hereditary prince, whose task is relatively easy and about whom he has little to say, and the new prince ("il nuovo principe"), who reaches power by a coup or by conquest, and whom Machiavelli's book is designed to educate'. My point is that the way in which Marvell describes the *virtù* of the new prince could not necessarily be accepted as a positive virtue in the context of the providential drama of the regicide.
111. Horace, *The Complete Odes and Epodes with the Centennial Hymn*, trans. W. G. Shepherd (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), pp. 98-99.
112. Nicolaus Cusanus, *De docta ignorantia*, I. 22, *Of Learned Ignorance*, trans. Fr. Germain Heron (1954; rpt. Westport, Conn.: Hyperion Press, 1979), p. 50. Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici Hydriotaphia*, and *The Garden of Cyrus*, ed. Robin Robbins (1972; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 22. I refer to these because it seems evident that Marvell read them. See also Justus Lipsius, *Two Bookes of Constancie*, ed. Rudolf Kirk (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers UP, 1939), ch. 15; Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. M. Evans (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), pp. 489-490; Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I. v. 25; Samuel Butler, *Prose Observations*, ed. Hugh de Quehen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 14; *The Works of Tacitus*, trans. T. Gordon, 2 vols. (London, 1728-1731), i. 25. Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p. 22, says: 'According to the post-Reformation ministry, an unhealthy confusion between divine determinism and pagan fatalism persisted throughout English society'.
113. See, for example, *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, iii. 60-61, 460, 590-591, and iv. 261, 353; *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution 1625-1660*, ed. S. R. Gardiner (1889; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), p. 403; *The English Banner of Truth Displayed* (London, 1650), pp. 7-8; John Dury, *Considerations concerning the Present Engagement* (London, 1650), pp.

- 13-14. (Cf. *Two Treatises concerning the Matter of the Engagement* [London, 1650], p. 9); A. S. P. Woodhouse, *Puritanism and Liberty* (1938; rpt. London: Dent, 1974), p. 443; *Original Letters and Papers of State ... Addressed to Oliver Cromwell*, ed. John Nickolls (London, 1743), p. 91; N. H. Keeble, *Richard Baxter, Puritan Man of Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 3, 29; cf. J. A. Mazzeo. *Renaissance and Seventeenth-Century Studies* (New York: Columbia UP, 1964), p. 200.
114. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 124.
115. Henry Hall, *Digitus Testium* (London, 1650), p. 30.
116. Clement Walker, *The High Court of Justice; or Cromwell's New Slaughter House in England* (n.p., 1651), pp. 58-59.
117. Nathaniel Ward, *Discolliminium*, pp. 15-16, 20. The abuse of the providential excuse finds its most extreme form in the perfectionism and illuminist doctrines of the sects. R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion with Special Reference to the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), quotes an antinomian perfectionist's formula: 'If therefore it be the will of God that I should commit sin, my will must be the same. And I must not desire even to abstain from sin' (p. 125). And for those who 'live by the inner light' such as mid-seventeenth century Quakers, they are 'in some sense ... divinized, ... [or] realize the dwelling of God's Spirit in' them, thus becoming 'above sin-level' (p. 153).
118. *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, iii. 460.
119. Annabel Patterson, 'Andrew Marvell and the Revolution', in *The Cambridge Companion to Writing of the English Revolution*, ed. N. H. Keeble, p. 115.
120. Thomas Hobbes, *The Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance*, 'To the Reader', sig. a.
121. David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660*, p. 265.
122. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, ch. 4. passim.
123. John Wilkins, *Discourse concerning the Beauty of Providence in All the Rugged Passages of It. Very seasonable to quiet and support the heart in these times of publick confusion*, sig. A5r, pp. 70, 73-74, 76-77, 116, 108-109.
124. R. W. Sharples, *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics: An Introduction to Hellenistic Philosophy* (1996; rpt. London: Routledge, 1999), p. 77, 76.
125. Edward Corbett, *God's Providence, A Sermon Preached before the Honourable*

- House of Commons* (London, 1642), p. 3.
126. *The Kings Last Farewell to the World, or the Dead Kings Living Meditations, at the Approach of Death Denounced against Him* (STC K597, a single sheet dated 1648 [1649]). The punctuation has been amended.
127. Ronald J. VanderMolen, 'Providence as Mystery, Providence as Revelation: Puritan and Anglican Modifications of John Calvin's Doctrine of Providence', *Church History*, 47 (1978), p. 36.
128. John M. Wallace, *Destiny His Choice*, p. 103.
129. William Perkins, *Works*, 3 vols. (London, 1626-31), ii. 669. A Cavalier poet Thomas Randolph also says 'Higher powers rule us, ourselves can nothing do' ('Upon Love Fondly Refused for Conscience's Sake', line 9, *Ben Jonson and the Cavalier Poets*, ed. Hugh Maclean, p. 218).
130. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, 5.2.192, ed. Philip Edwards (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), p. 234.
131. Richard Baxter, *The Saints Everlasting Rest* (London, 1650), p. 338.