Introduction: strange bedfellows – patriarchalism and revolutionary thought

In 1615 James I ordered the publication of *God and the King*, which supported the obligation to take the oath of allegiance: the work announces itself to be "Imprinted by his Maiesties speciall priuiledge and command."[1] Attributed to Richard Mocket, at the time warden of All Souls, Oxford, the pamphlet defends divine right absolutism by making the patriarchal analogy linking father and king. Cast in the form of a dialogue, *God and the King* wastes little time in preliminaries. After a brief greeting, Philalethes, just come from a catechism, launches into a justification of monarchical authority by way of the fifth commandment. A good cathechumen, he recites the lesson that the names of father and mother include all other authorities, especially royal authority. The injunction to honor father and mother also mandates obedience to kings. Extrapolating from Isaiah 49:23, which "stile[s] Kings and Princes the nursing Fathers of the Church," Philalethes concludes, "there is a stronger and higher bond of duetie betweene children and the Father of their Countrie, then the Fathers of priuate families."[2] The tract insists on obedience to kings based on the "natural" and divinely sanctioned subjection of children to parents. Enjoying considerable royal patronage, *God and the King* appeared in both English and Latin, and in James's lifetime was reprinted in London in 1616 and in Edinburgh in 1617. James commanded all schools and universities as well as all ministers to teach the work, and directed all householders to purchase a copy. This command was subsequently enjoined by both the Scottish privy council and general assembly in 1616. The analogy also worked in reverse. While the king claimed paternal authority, fathers claimed to be kings of their domains in domestic handbooks. John Dod and Robert Cleaver's *Godlie Forme of Householde Government*, first published in 1598, and reprinted

[1] [Richard Mocket], *God and the King: or, A Dialogue shewing that our Soueraigne Lord King IAMES, being immediate vnder God within his DOMINIONS, Doth rightfully claime whatsoeuer is required by the Oath of Allegeance* (London, 1615), title page.
[2] *Ibid.*, 2–3.

numerous times, compares fathers to monarchs: "A Householde is as it were a little commonwealth," and the father-husband is "not onely a ruler but as it were a little King, and Lord of all."[3] Dod and Cleaver were not the only ones to enthrone the father as sovereign in the household. William Gouge's *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622), another popular puritan handbook, traces the origin of state and church back to it. Gouge makes similar claims that "a familie is a little Church and a little common-wealth, at least a lively representation thereof"; moreover, the family is a "schoole wherein the first principles and grounds of gouernment and subiection are learned: whereby men are fitted to greater matters in Church or common-wealth."[4] No matter their focus, these prescriptive works argue from the analogy to claim obedience to authority.

These pamphlets were but a few examples of texts turning to the widely used metaphor of family or household to conceptualize social organization. Susan D. Amussen goes so far as to claim that "the distinction between 'family' and 'society' was absent from early modern thought."[5] Among his many examples, Christopher Hill includes Walter Ralegh's comparison of the King to "the master of the household," Oxford and Cambridge "undergraduates [who] were urged to look upon their tutor as though he were head of their family," and the radical Digger leader, Gerrard Winstanley, speaking of a "bigger family, called a parish."[6] Besides bolstering the social order, the family-state analogy importantly supported the political order. Lancelot Andrewes preached in a sermon before James that patriarchal and royal rule were the same: "*Jus Regium* cometh out of *jus Patrium*, the Kings right from the Fathers, and both hold by one Commandement."[7] Robert Bolton argued that "before Nimrod, fathers and heads of families were Kings," and because in those days "men lived five or six hundred yeares . . . [it was] an easie matter for a man to see fifty, yea a hundred thousand persons of his posterity, over whom he exercised paternall power, and by consequence, soveraigne power."[8] Johann Sommerville says, "Many writers – including [John] Donne, [Roger] Maynwaring,

[3] John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Householde Government* (London, 1612), sig. A7, L8v.
[4] William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties: Eight Treatises* (London, 1622), sig. C1v, 18.
[5] Susan D. Amussen, "Gender, Family and the Social Order, 1560–1725," in Anthony J. Fletcher and John Stevenson, eds., *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 196.
[6] Christopher Hill, "The Spiritualization of the Household," in *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1964), 459, 461, 464.
[7] Lancelot Andrewes, *A Sermon Preached before His Maiestie, on Sunday the Fifth of August Last, at Holdenbie, by the Bishop of Elie, His Maiesties Almoner* (London, 1610), 13.
[8] Robert Bolton, *Two sermons preached at Northampton* (London, 1635), 15.

[Robert] Willan, [John] Rawlinson and [Richard] Field – endorsed the view that Adam's power had been kingly."[9] Even in the Elizabethan period, similar ideas were articulated by Hadrian Saravia, born in Flanders but naturalized as an Englishman in 1568, who argued that the "first governments were paternal" (*prima imperia fuisse paterna*) and that the "father's power is kingly" (*patriam potestatem regiam*).[10] Later Saravia became a translator of King James's Authorized Version of the Bible, and his work was republished in 1611 at the height of the controversy over the nature of political authority between James and Catholics like Cardinal Bellarmine. But the representative English text of political patriarchalism is Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha: The Naturall Power of Kinges Defended against the Unnatural Liberty of the People*. Written some time between 1635 and 1642 in the years leading up to the civil wars, it circulated in manuscript until it was first published in 1680, nearly thirty years after the author's death, to support the Tory position in the Exclusion Crisis. Influenced by Jean Bodin, Filmer codified the patriarchalist position for the English, asserting that fatherly sovereignty was absolute. He made the link between paternity and sovereignty literal by deriving monarchical power from the fact of fatherhood. Tracing sovereignty back to Adam, he claimed it descended to kings through an unbroken succession of natural fathers and so was to "succeed to the exercise of supreme jurisdiction."[11]

In both social and political patriarchalism the family-state analogy has been read as fundamentally conservative and authoritarian, if not absolutist. The underlying assumption is that the family was rigidly hierarchical, as depicted by Lawrence Stone's influential *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500–1800*.[12] Recent decades, however, have witnessed challenges to the account of the family as an authoritarian institution. Questioning Stone's narrative of the change in the family from authoritarianism to "affective individualism," Ralph Houlbrooke and others argue that relations in the family before the eighteenth century were more affectionate than Stone allowed, and that these relations changed little between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries.[13] This led to challenges to the traditional account

[9] J. P. Sommerville, *Royalists and Patriots: Politics and Ideology in England 1603–1640*, 2nd edn (London and New York: Longman, 1999), 32.

[10] Hadrian Saravia, *De imperandi authoritate*, in *Diversi tractatus theologici* (London, 1611), 167.

[11] Sir Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha and Other Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 10.

[12] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500–1800* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

[13] Ralph Houlbrooke, *The English Family, 1450–1700* (London and New York: Longman, 1984); E. P. Thompson, "Happy Families," *Radical History Review* 20 (1979), 42–50; Lois G. Schwoerer,

of domestic patriarchalism. Reassessing claims of patriarchal oppression, Margaret Ezell suggests women had more authority than has been acknowledged, given the high number of widowed women and orphaned children – at least one child in three lost his or her father before reaching adulthood.[14] In a fatherless society, wives managed estates and arranged marriages. Even arch-patriarchalist Robert Filmer, who praises the virtues of a good wife in an unpublished work, upon his death left the management of his estate to his wife rather than to his many brothers or to his grown sons.[15]

Beyond the domestic sphere, literary critics and historians interpret family tropes to emphasize closeness rather than distance between ruler and subject. Taking new historicist literary critics to task for assuming that Stuart representation of the nurturing father is "an ideological concealment of oppressive power relations," Debora Shuger argues the image of the father is part of the emergence of the loving family in the sixteenth century as a defense mechanism "in response both to the increasingly mobile and competitive conditions of Renaissance society and to the rather arbitrary power of the state."[16] In his history of early modern youths, Paul Griffiths similarly suggests courts and guilds employed familial rhetoric when arbitrating between masters and servants "to support an 'imagined' ordered household: . . . to cultivate a mood of inclusion to lighten the sense of differentiation and distance upon which their authority depended."[17] The affective family, however, still maintains the top-down structure of the authoritarian family. While Jonathan Goldberg's *James I and the Politics of Literature*, singled out for opprobrium by Shuger, describes the monarch as the center who becomes subverted but whose subversion is ultimately contained, Shuger's own reading of James, overly optimistic about the absence

"Seventeenth-Century Englishwomen: Engraved in Stone?" *Albion* 16 (1984), 389–403; and Eileen Spring, "The Family, Strict Settlement, and the Historians," in G. R. Rubin and David Sugarman, eds., *Law, Economy and Society, 1750–1914: Essays in the History of English Law* (Abingdon, Oxon.: Professional Books, 1984), 168–91. For the affective family, see Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983); and Linda A. Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). In contrast, J. C. D. Clark, disagreeing with Stone, argues that patriarchalist and divine-right political doctrines as well as a hierarchical social order based on paternalism remained in place in England until 1832 (*English Society, 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure, and Political Practice during the Ancien Régime* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985]).

[14] Margaret J. M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife: Literary Evidence and the History of the Family* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 18.

[15] "In Praise of the Vertuous Wife" is published in Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, Appendix I, 169–90.

[16] Debora Kuller Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 235.

[17] Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England 1560–1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 292.

of coercion, depicts a consensual society. Despite apparent differences, however, both emphasize uses of the analogy to consolidate monarchical or paternal power, whether coercive or benevolent.

While these revisions show a complex relation between family and state even within patriarchalist thought, the pervasive modern assumption that the family-state analogy is intrinsically patriarchal needs to be challenged. The most useful and thorough discussion to date is Gordon Schochet's *Patriarchalism in Political Thought*: Schochet studies the history and forms of patriarchalism in early modern England and the sudden emergence in the seventeenth century of political theory that uses familial reasoning as direct justification of political obligation, rather than simply as a bolster to social order or criterion for membership in a political community. While the study resists reducing patriarchalism into one form, it nonetheless maintains a distinction between patriarchalism and contractarianism, with the family-state analogy a strategy of patriarchalism. This view is also implicit in Johann Sommerville's study of the struggle between absolutism and constitutionalism, *Politics and Ideology in England 1603–1640*. This is partly because patriarchalist writers tended to use the familial origin of society – an important strand of this logic is the supposed fact that God gave dominion to Adam, the first father – as evidence for their argument that the king rules by paternal power. Moreover, scholars who see a sharp divide between patriarchalism and contractarianism adhere too closely to John Locke's influential (and negative) account of patriarchalism in *The Two Treatises of Government* (1698). Filmer's *Patriarcha* has come to be seen as the representative text of patriarchalism because Locke and other Whig writers chose it as the target of their attack during the Exclusion Crisis.[18] The opposition between social contract theory and patriarchalism was less absolute than Whig history would have us believe. The two discourses were in dialogue about the nature of family and state.

The use of the familial metaphor need not lead only to a patriarchal conclusion. R. W. K. Hinton points out that Sir Thomas Smith's *De Republica Anglorum* describes marriage as a partnership, emphasizing consent and cooperation in both family and political society.[19] Even political texts arguing for patriarchalism indicate ways in which the family-state analogy can be used within a political theory of voluntary association or social

[18] The major studies of Filmer are James Daly, *Sir Robert Filmer and English Political Thought* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979); and Gordon J. Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought: The Authoritarian Family and Political Speculation and Attitudes Especially in Seventeenth-Century England* (New York: Basic Books, 1975).

[19] R. W. K. Hinton, "Husbands, Fathers and Conquerors," *Political Studies* 15 (1967), 292–93.

contract.[20] Although he does not pursue the point, Schochet admits that "Althusius's conception of the political community as a voluntary association seriously undermined the main thrust of the moral patriarchal theory."[21] Indeed, analogical use of the family could support politics that were or had the potential to be oppositional to the crown. During the interregnum, in justifying a limited use of civil power in religion in *The Humble Proposals . . . for the . . . Propagation of the Gospel* (1652), the Independents asserted, "the magistrate must be a nursing father to the church," and proposed "the establishment of congregationalism as the national discipline."[22] John Rogers refused to exclude civil magistrates from adjudicating in religious matters, arguing, "it is [the civil magistrate's] duty to provide for and encourage the faithful preachers and professors of the Gospel, and to be a nursing father to the church of Christ."[23] By calling the magistrate a nursing father, the Independents and Rogers were appropriating for the magistrate the patriarchal power to rule, putting them in conflict with the king. Comparing Moses to the commonwealth, the parliamentarian Henry Marten asserted that the House of Commons "were the true mother to this fair child" and therefore the "fittest nurses."[24] Such parliamentary appropriations of the parental metaphor were mocked in a series of satiric pamphlets by the royalist Sir John Birkenhead, who wittily asked, "Whether the House of Commons be a widow, a wife, a Maid, or a Commonwealth?"[25] From a royalist point of view, in believing itself to be the entire commonwealth, the Commons herself was a widow who murdered her royal husband, and ultimately a whore, a common woman neither maid, wife, nor widow.

The pamphlet war over the regicide demonstrates how authors exploited the inherent contradictions of the family-state analogy for political debate. In defending monarchy, royalists depicted Charles as a father betrayed by disloyal children. In the popular *Eikon Basilike* (1649), which appeared immediately after the regicide, the ghostly voice of Charles reproached his

[20] While her essay does not go so far as to identify republican uses of the family-state analogy, Constance Jordan distinguishes among several different uses of Aristotle that vary in their commitment to patriarchy ("The Household and the State: Transformations in the Representation of an Analogy from Aristotle to James I," *Modern Language Quarterly* 54 [1993], 307–26).

[21] Schochet, *Patriarchalism*, 36.

[22] Arthur E. Barker, *Milton and the Puritan Dilemma, 1641–1660* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1942), 221–22.

[23] John Rogers, *A Vindication of that Prudent and Honourable Knight, Sir Henry Vane, From the Lyes and Clumnies of Mr. Richard Baxter* (London, 1659), 14.

[24] Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *The History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649–1660*, 4 vols. (London and New York: Longmans, Green, 1903), 1:243.

[25] John Birkenhead, *Paul's Church-Yard, Centuria Secunda* (London, 1652), 7.

people for their failure to show him proper filial obedience. Two of the most significant defenses of the king, Claude de Saumaise's *Defensio Regia pro Carolo I* (May 1649) and Pierre du Moulin's *Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Coelum Adversus Paricidas Anglicanos* (August 1652), made the case that killing the king was patricide. In his tract commissioned by Charles II, Saumaise, better known by his Latinized name, Salmasius, tracing the growth of the state from its origins as a family unit, went even further to assert that because the king took precedence over fathers as an *über*-father, the killing of kings was more heinous a crime than homicide or patricide. The defenders of the new English republic took the claims of royalist patriarchalism seriously enough to respond to them. As polemicist for the English commonwealth, John Milton answered the three tracts by reworking the family trope, alternately suggesting in *Eikonoklastes* that the king was insufficiently caring as a father and arguing in the *First Defence* that the people were parents to kings.

At the root of the family-state analogy was not a single ideology but a debate. With a long history dating back to the ancient world, the analogy's meaning was not stable. From the start, the exact relation between family and society had been disputed. Plato claimed that the various arts of kingship, statesmanship, and householding were equivalent.[26] But Aristotle disagreed, arguing in the first book of *Politics* for an "*essential* difference" between families and kingdoms and between fathers and rulers.[27] Cicero, however, believed the family fundamental to the state: in *De Officiis*, he writes, "For since it is by nature common to all animals that they have a drive to procreate, the first fellowship exists within marriage itself, and the next with one's children. Indeed that is the principle of a city and the seed-bed, as it were, of a political community [*seminarium rei publicae*]."[28] Seventeenth-century authors could appeal to different conceptualizations of the relation between family and state for a variety of political ends. The family-state analogy proved to be enduring and its deployment was not simply a mark of social conservatism. Rather, it was a sign of the politicization of literature. For the argument by analogy was a powerful mode of analysis. Noting the pervasiveness of analogues in the early modern period, Kevin Sharpe suggests that the historian of political ideas needs to go beyond canonical texts of political philosophy, for "in a system of correspondences

[26] Plato, *The Statesman*, ed. Harold N. Fowler (London, 1925), 259:3, 12.
[27] Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle*, trans. Ernest Barker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946; reprint, 1958), 2, emphasis in original.
[28] Cicero, *On Duties*, ed. M. T. Griffin and E. M. Atkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1:54, 23.

[where] all [is] related to all," the language of treatises on subjects from gardening to the body was "politicized at every turn."[29]

In tracking the many varied permutations of the family-state analogy, this study finds the analogy a supple vehicle for political debate, used to imagine a range of political communities from an absolutist monarchy to a republic. As such, the family-state analogy was a political language as defined by the Cambridge contextualist approach to politics and not a worldview in the sense understood by older intellectual history. Political argument was conducted in a variety of idioms or "languages" such as, for instance, the language of common law. A political language was a "mode of utterance available to a number of authors for a number of purposes."[30] According to J. G. A. Pocock, to identify such languages one looks, among other things, for evidence "that diverse authors employed the same idiom and performed diverse and even contrary utterances in it" and for its recurrence in a variety of texts and contexts.[31] The ubiquity of the family-state analogy suggests it was such an idiom. Open to appropriation, it allowed a range of authors to make contradictory claims. It was found in a wide array of texts of different kinds and genres – including domestic manuals, political theory, controversial tracts, private letters, court masques, prose narratives, lyric and epic poetry. From this perspective, the family went beyond functioning as extra-discursive "common ground" for interpreting discursive events to take on discursive form in contemporary political and literary discourses.[32]

By examining the field of discourse defined by its use, this study historically contextualizes the family-state analogy to offer a better sense of the political debates. Instead of interpreting canonical texts of political theory as timeless, addressing perennial questions, Pocock, Quentin Skinner, John Dunn and others practicing the contextualist approach place texts within historical contexts in order to identify what authors might be doing in writing. They shift the scholar's focus from intention to performance, viewing "participants in political argument as historical actors, responding to one another in a diversity of linguistic and other political and historical contexts that gave the recoverable history of their argument a very rich texture."[33] Thus, in his edition of Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*, Peter

[29] Kevin Sharpe, *Remapping Early Modern England: The Culture of Seventeenth-Century Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 101.
[30] J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 10.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 69.
[33] Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History*, 3.

Laslett shows how the work was Locke's intervention in the Exclusion Crisis, rather than simply a theoretical work on social contract removed from considerations of everyday politics. The attention to performance derives from J. L. Austin's "speech-act" theory, which strives to discover the force of an utterance; in other words, what might someone be doing by saying something, which Austin calls the "illocutionary" force of utterances.[34] With reference to Ludwig Wittgenstein's assertion that "words are deeds," Skinner argues that beyond reading for content we need to attend to "illocutionary acts" – how authors were participating in contemporary debates.[35] The history of political thought is thus reconceived as a history of political discourse that is also a history of political action. Texts, whether primarily political or literary, do not simply describe or record history; they also create it. In a magisterial study, David Norbrook employs such methods to reconstruct painstakingly a narrative of the emergence of republican literary culture: "An approach through speech-acts points us away from closed systems of thought into dialogue, into the constant invention of arguments and counter-arguments." For Norbrook, this approach better elucidates early modern English culture where "monarchy was being reinvented in response to recurrent challenges."[36] Likewise, the sheer range of contradictory uses to which the family-state analogy and family metaphors were put demand a reexamination that does not presuppose that such metaphors constituted a unified symbolic system.

The evidence suggests a contentious public sphere. As England entered civil war in the early 1640s and censorship laws came to an end, the intensified flurry of pamphleteering created a new Habermasian literary public where battles were fought as often in print as on the field.[37] This public was probably not one but many: Nigel Smith speaks of a public space "permeated by private languages."[38] Each was a community, no matter how ill-defined, asserting itself in the marketplace of ideas. At the same time, massive dislocations of the political system and fragmentation of the Christian *communitas* into numerous separate churches made new ways of conceptualizing identity both possible and increasingly urgent. No wonder

[34] J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 99.
[35] See Skinner's essays in James Tully, ed., *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).
[36] David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 11.
[37] This reading public is suggested by Sharon Achinstein, *Milton and the Revolutionary Reader* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[38] Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640–1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 25.

political theories proliferated in the period. It is in response to the chaos of civil war that Thomas Hobbes wrote *Leviathan* (1651), the founding work of the modern discipline of political science. Theories of society were intimately connected with contemporary events. In the particular circumstances, with a weakened central authority, theories could and were put into practice, whether on a national scale like the republican commonwealth of the interregnum, or on a more modest scope like the sectarian churches. As the English debated the limits of political authority in a period when civil wars put pressure on old forms of government, old forms of worship, and old ways of thinking, the family-state analogy as a common political language underwent various permutations, taking on both absolutist and revolutionary aspects. With it, authors challenged old communities and constituted new ones (imagined and real), finding new affiliations and forging new collective identities.

In linking history with literature, this study is also indebted to a literary-critical movement known as new historicism or cultural materialism. Emphasizing historical contextualization, new historicism, like the contextualist approach in politics, was influenced by postmodernist ideas about the constitutive role of language or discourse in social and political relations, particularly Michel Foucault's ideas of power. With beginnings in the 1980s, new historicism/cultural materialism has had a profound influence on Anglo-American literary studies but critics point to significant flaws, in particular the arbitrariness of its use of anecdotes in place of historical narrative. It has become unfashionable to practice new historicism, such that historicist critics prefer to dissociate themselves from it. Thus, in his major revision of Goldberg's new historicist reading of Jacobean literature, Curtis Perry describes his own work as "part of an ongoing movement in Renaissance studies towards the reconsolidation of the considerable advances of new historicism with old historical narratives of individual agency."[39] Whatever its name, historicist literary criticism as currently practiced has turned firmly away from old literary history, which viewed history as merely the background to the study of a distinct sphere of autonomous works of art. While hoping to avoid the pitfalls of early forms of new historicism, this study is unabashedly historicist in blurring the boundaries between historical and literary material.

[39] Curtis Perry, *The Making of Jacobean Culture: James I and the Renegotiation of Elizabethan Literary Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 6. A recent collection of essays on literature and history coined a new term not far different from the old: Robin Headlam Wells, Glenn Burgess, and Rowland Wymer, eds., *Neo-Historicism: Studies in Renaissance Literature, History, and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).