

Manuel Schonhorn

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# Defoe's Politics

Parliament, power, kingship,  
and *Robinson Crusoe*

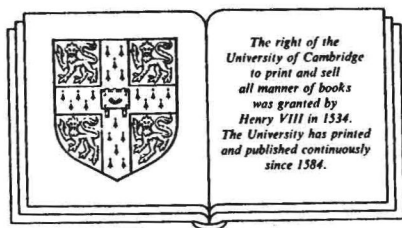


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*Defoe's Politics*  
*Parliament, Power, Kingship,*  
*and Robinson Crusoe*

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## For Bonnie

Even now

I know that I have savored the hot taste of life  
Lifting green cups and gold at the great feast.

Just for a small and forgotten time

I have had full in my eyes from off my girl

The whitest pouring of eternal light.

(From the *Caurapañcāsikā*, the Sanskrit freely translated as  
*Black Marigolds* by E. Powys Mathers)

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## Preface and acknowledgments

With Defoe we have all too often read the present into the past and judged and commended him because he anticipated *our* future rather than because he mirrored *his* present and *his* past. The following study presents a Defoe whose political ideas, while they were developed in the ideologically dense post-Revolution decade following the Allegiance controversy, rested on a firm Old Testament foundation. De-mythologizing the “Lockean” Defoe, this study returns him at the same time to the centrality of seventeenth-century political thought, with its rich biblical and constitutional contexts. Defoe has also been misinterpreted because we have failed to see his works as both propaganda and political theory. To understand Defoe rightly, he must be viewed as a writer concerned not only with this or that particular point of political policy, to paraphrase G. H. D. Cole, but also with the origins of government, the reasons for the successes and failures of political society, the ultimate principles of political obligation, and the nature of leadership at a historical crisis in western culture.

In this challenge to the traditional understanding of the “radical” Defoe, the “populist” Defoe, and his greatest political fiction, *Robinson Crusoe*, I hope that I will be considered as *more* than a certain meddlesome spirit, which, as Washington Irving wrote in his *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, “goes prying about the traces of history, casting down its monuments, and marring and mutilating its fairest trophies.”

Years ago, writing on Defoe’s maritime and pirate history, I incurred many debts as a result of my excursions in unfamiliar waters actual and metaphorical. Trying to make sense of some of the most turbulent decades in English politics, again I have many to thank, this time for helping me master the disciplines of history and political theory. Frank Bastian, Alan Downie, Frank Ellis, Howard Nenner, Henry Snyder and Martyn Thompson read, advised, and corrected much, always generously. I could have listened more and better. Richard Ashcraft, Stephen Baxter, Laura Curtis, Robert Eccleshall, P. N. Furbank, Mark Goldie, Henry Horwitz, Maximillian Novak, W. R. Owens, Spiro Peterson, J. G. A. Pocock, Clayton Roberts, Pat Rogers, W. A. Speck, Brian Tierney, and John Wallace helped. Howard Erskine-Hill and John Richetti guided me well to publication.

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*Studies in the Literary Imagination*. The Newberry Library had great faith in my project from its inception. The British Library, The New York Public Library and the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library always assisted with texts. Alan Martin Cohn, Humanities Librarian, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, my colleague and friend, lived long enough to hold the finished text in his hands. His stylistic integrity breathes from every page. Without him and his superlative staff this book would have been impossible.

Mardi and Morris, though they did not do this Index, helped by just being around; I hope they did not suffer too much neglect.

My wife Bonnie endured. This, then, as she well knows, is truly her book.

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## A note on attributions

The recent publication of P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens, *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), has cast in doubt some of the works attributed to Defoe by bibliographers in the past two centuries. The following can be said about the “largely destructive” (p. 125) consequences of their study: rather than an attack on the canon, it is primarily a debunking of the methods of the canonizers. And the doubts exhibited extend primarily to the attributions of the post-Queen Anne years, from 1714 and beyond, during Defoe’s Hanoverian tenure, when he was writing, in every possible and conflicting style and voice, tracts which supported, questioned, challenged, and humored the political and ideological confusions of the time; for example, the Walpole/Townsend faction’s defection to the Tories, or the Bangorian controversy of 1717–18.

The authors’ extended examination of what is, at least, “two Defoes” (p. 146), accommodates a portrait of an artist who was “contrary” (p. 142), “perverse” (p. 143), who revealed a “love of paradox” (p. 144), and had “no compunction about lying” (p. 148) – a compulsively complex personality with superior dramatic and impersonating abilities, who was capable of “working off secretive jokes on the public” (p. 148). In a word, in spite of their healthy and invigorating skepticism about the ascriptive procedures of their predecessors, the authors do not seriously undermine an eighteenth-century anecdotal tradition of a Daniel Defoe at a double desk, “whereon one (sic) he placed his *own Pamphlet*, & on the other he wrote *his own Answer to it*” (p. 11).

The following study of Defoe’s political ideas rests on a secure foundation of works indisputably by Defoe. They are a part of the Defoe canon because Defoe himself put them there, by signing his initials to them or by claiming them in his collective works. Others we admit because of the preponderance of opinion and the consensus which has emerged from the historical record. And it should be remarked that the most intimate and revealing exposition of Defoe’s political imagination, the most coherent definition of his psychology of leadership and his principles of political organization, is reaffirmed in his lengthy memorandum to his patron, Robert Harley, unsigned but in his own hand, preserved in the British Library. When there have been significant doubts about authorship I have indicated those doubts in the text and the notes.

Like Furbank and Owens, I suspect attributions based upon the recognition of favorite phrases. But also like them I have accepted Defoe's authorship of disputed texts because of certain idiomatic "tics" of style, but "tics" that, rather than being syntactical or grammatical, reveal themselves as weighty ideological counters in the transmission of his political ideas.

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## Abbreviations

Bastian, <i>Defoe's Early Life</i>	Frank Bastian, <i>Defoe's Early Life</i> (London: Macmillan, 1981)
Downie, <i>Robert Harley</i>	J. A. Downie, <i>Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979)
Locke, <i>Two Treatises</i>	John Locke, <i>Two Treatises of Government</i> , ed. Peter Laslett (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967)
Moore, <i>Daniel Defoe</i>	John Robert Moore, <i>Daniel Defoe, Citizen of the Modern World</i> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958)
POAS	<i>Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714</i> , vol. VI, ed. F. H. Ellis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970)
Review	<i>Defoe's "Review," Reproduced from the Original Editions with an Introduction and Bibliographical Notes by Arthur Wellesley Secord</i> , 22 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938)
Somers <i>Tracts</i>	<i>A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts on the Most Interesting and Entertaining Subjects</i> , 13 vols., ed. Walter Scott, 2nd ed. (London: T. Cadell, 1809-15)

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## Introduction

“Defoe war ein grosser Politiker.” Such is the unequivocal conclusion of Hans-Dietrich Kuckuk’s 1962 examination of Daniel Defoe’s political ideas.<sup>1</sup> Though it would come as a surprise to Defoe’s twentieth-century readers, it echoes the judgments of his eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ones. In the years following his death in 1731, nearly all of those commentators have responded to his political insights, which he derived from his supreme knowledge of the English people, their institutions, and their laws. Smollett admitted him to the ranks of “the most remarkable political writers of his age”,<sup>2</sup> and a century later, in 1869, J. S. Keltie deemed him the heir of the political Milton, who, though he “arose at a different crisis of the nation’s history, when all was confusion and turmoil, . . . saw the safety of the State rested as much upon the power of the pen as upon the power of the sword. The weapon that he could use, with more permanent effect than kings and parliaments could bring to bear, he used with unequalled persistency and success.”<sup>3</sup>

But in the twentieth century, democracy and transformations in the genre of the novel have not served the political Defoe well. Writing always from the protagonist’s point of view, Defoe came to be identified with the orphans and waifs, the put-upon females and the possessive individualists, of his fictions. Able to elicit the dominant “liberal” sympathies of our time, imbued with an emerging capitalist vigor that celebrated middle-class values, and consumed with the passion of a social reformer, Defoe struck the dominant chords of the present century. He became our contemporary. Tracts that had remained anonymous for years were attributed to him because they were “modern” in their propositions or because they seemed to champion the right causes or classes. In his handling of time, space, and tempo, he was pictured as a present-

<sup>1</sup> “Die Politischen Ideen Daniel Defoes,” Diss., Christian-Albrechts-Universität (Kiel, 1962), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> In his *History of England* (1757–58), cited in *Defoe: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Pat Rogers (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *British Quarterly Review*, 50 (1869), cited in Rogers, p. 193. The essay is assigned to Keltie in the fourth volume of the *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824–1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), IV, 160, item 1045. It might be informative to note the reasons for attribution: “The preface to Keltie’s edition of *Defoe’s Works; with Chalmers’ Life of the Author*. Edinburgh, 1869, raises many points found here with similar phrases and verbatim passages.”

day cinematographer.<sup>4</sup> He was "like Norman Mailer" in his journalism;<sup>5</sup> he could claim "Conrad, Twain, Bellow" as his progeny.<sup>6</sup>

But politically Defoe has been given short shrift by the twentieth century. He was recognized correctly as a great political reporter and journalist, possessing heaps of information, but he was found unable to contain all that he knew within any conceptual framework. He has been perceived as chameleon-like, contradicting himself, becoming all things to all men in order to promote, pragmatist that he was, any aspect of government policy that he was paid to promote. Thus, what had once been seen as an astute political imagination is now revealed as only that of a polemicist and party writer. If Defoe had any fundamental political ideas, like his economic ones they challenged outworn orthodoxies. Defoe "is a modern, writing to defend the Junto Whigs, the Bank of England, and the standing army."<sup>7</sup> Or he is seen as diametrically opposed to Aphra Behn's Royalist stance: 'Robinson . . . might even be described as a sort of counter-Oroonoko.'<sup>8</sup> Jeffrey Hart's 1964 anthology, *Political Writers of Eighteenth-Century England*, omitted any mention of Defoe. It included, among others, Swift's *Modest Proposal*, some *Spectator* essays, and an excerpt from Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*.<sup>9</sup> And when Defoe's political ideas were seriously examined, they were only the reflected ideas of the philosopher who seemingly provided the dominant political ideology of our time: John Locke. In his poetry and prose, Defoe did nothing more but paraphrase the familiar ideas – rather crudely and superficially – of the *Two Treatises of Government*. In 1986 Richard Ashcraft published his meticulous and comprehensive study of Locke's revolutionary ideas. Examining a single Defoe essay written in one of the most volatile years of William's reign when partisan passions were excessively high and an extraordinary quantity of propaganda was published, his judgment echoed that of every political commentator in the twentieth century: Defoe's "principles are distinctly Lockean and radical."<sup>10</sup> One part of the following study contends that Defoe did more than proselytize for Locke in mediocre verse, and to monotonously proclaim Defoe as Lockean is an unfair and oversimplified perspective.

<sup>4</sup> Paul K. Alkon, *Defoe and Fictional Time* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), chapter 5.

<sup>5</sup> Maximillian E. Novak, *Realism, Myth, and History in Defoe's Fiction* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), p. 25; cf. pp. 44, 46, 95, 112.

<sup>6</sup> Paula Backscheider, *Daniel Defoe: Ambition & Innovation* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), p. 122; cf. pp. 91–92, 93, 238.

<sup>7</sup> J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 433–34. It should be noted that Professor Pocock very infrequently goes beyond citations from the *Review* for his "modern" reading of Defoe.

<sup>8</sup> Eve Tavor, *Scepticism, Society and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1987), p. 245; cf. her rare judgment that the society on Crusoe's island is "an egalitarian society" (p. 23).

<sup>9</sup> New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

<sup>10</sup> *Revolutionary Politics and Locke's "Two Treatises of Government"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 565.

Defoe appears rarely to have disguised his sources. James Sutherland noted that "Defoe's reader is usually presented with most of the information he needs," that is, information that generally contains both the assumed ideas and their authorship.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps some credence, then, could be given to Defoe when he wrote, during a long-running political debate with Rev. Charles Leslie, Mr. Rehearsal, on the subject of government:

I know, what Mr. *Lock*, *Sidney* and others have said on this Head, and I must confess, I never thought their Systems fully answer'd - - - But I am arguing by my own Light, not other Mens; and therefore my Notions may be new, yet I beg the Favour to be heard, and if confuted, no Man shall be sooner silenc'd than I.<sup>12</sup>

It is a truism that genius makes its breakthrough by compounding the traditional and the original. Much of the content of Defoe's political writings, reviewed in their immediate context, has resulted in evaluations that concentrate on its novelty. Rhetorical analysis taken over from the study of his fictions has narrowed the measure of Defoe's political intelligence, for it has removed his polemical writings from the historical moment that, at the very least, birthed them.<sup>13</sup> Brian Tierney has wisely cautioned us that "two contexts at least must always be taken into account when we consider any sophisticated work of political theory - the actual world of experience which the author was trying to explain, and the inherited world of ideas which helped to shape his attitudes toward that experience."<sup>14</sup> Defoe's modern critics have stressed the former: the following chapters explore the latter. Though I have explored the insistently topical nature of his writings, I have also sought abiding themes and metaphoric and allusionary strains that move beyond the actual world of experience. They present a Defoe who did not yet believe that God had removed himself from the world of politics, and a Defoe who did not share a Whig and Lockean preoccupation with the evils of executive power, but a Defoe who was a vigorous defender of monarchical control.

There is no denying Defoe's radical and Lockean language, but the Defoe of the following chapters is not the radical or the Lockean we have come to accept. Paradoxically, the Defoe discovered in my examination of the larger cultural and historical contexts has important correspondences with Locke, not the Locke of the twentieth century, but the Locke of the seventeenth, whose primary commitment was to the principles of Christianity.<sup>15</sup> For Defoe, as for Locke, theological determinants were the basis of his political arguments, and a Protestant-Calvinist heritage serves as the foundation of his political thought. Studying the constituent elements of Defoe's vocabulary

<sup>11</sup> *Daniel Defoe: A Critical Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> *Review*, III, 108 (10 Sept. 1706). Citations are to volume and issue, not page.

<sup>13</sup> See the useful summary in John J. Richetti, *Daniel Defoe* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1987), pp. 15-33.

<sup>14</sup> *Religion, Law, and the Growth of Constitutional Thought, 1150-1650* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 81.

<sup>15</sup> See John Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke: An Historical Account of the Argument of the "Two Treatises of Government"* (Cambridge: University Press, 1966). But Defoe's militarism separates him from Locke as it does from virtually all of his contemporaries; see Richard H. Cox, *Locke on War and Peace* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), chapter 4.

that remained constant beyond the polemical occasions that called them forth, we discover an antiquated rhetoric of politics and kingship that is anchored in Old Testament story and admits the immediate hand of the Israelite God in the nomination of kings.

Technological developments evolve from the simple to the refined; what is sophisticated is anticipated in the rudimentary. We have come to understand how Defoe the novelist evolved out of Defoe the journalist. Thus in the following chapters I have ordered by chronology rather than by theme, for I see Defoe's major political ideas evolving over the course of his life. Controversy and current events refined his political myth; his early and instinctual ideas were not significantly altered. In his first political essays following the Revolution of 1688, Defoe discloses his distinctive political stance that was definitively elaborated in *Jure Divino* (1706) and characterized his mindset to the end of his career. It is a myth of communal origins and monarchy, educed by a mind susceptible to experience. In an age during which the rhetoric, symbols, and even the locale of traditional authority were being forsaken, Defoe sustained the ideal of the warrior-king, whose beginnings lay both in sacred and human time. The sword-bearing sovereign was made necessary by England's variegated society. His importance was reinforced by the tendencies of Defoe's mind, which harbored no illusions about the sociability of mankind. Perhaps this vision is the upside, so to speak, of Defoe's potentially self-destructive and socially dangerous rootlessness and individualism. Skeptical about the idea of a secular social contract and unconvinced that legislative sovereignty could contain the tensions of a changing world, Defoe fixated on the more traditional theme of the soldier-redeemer who, like the warrior-prophets of the Old Testament, rescues his people from tyranny. In his day, he would provide heroic leadership to the international Protestant crusade that energized the reign of every English prince from the time of the Reformation. Confronting a nation that seemed on the verge of a parliamentary constitutionalism, Defoe turned to traditional royalism. It is a royalism in which the king was the indispensable keystone in the arch of society, but yet a royalism that retained its scriptural, medieval, and English antecedents and never forgot that the people shared in the activating power of government. Defoe's mind, imbued with the romance and reward of trade, both personal and imperial, remained possessed with the heroics of the campaign. Defoe's tendency was to have it both ways, for, as Stephen Baxter has written, "no one is less popular in a trading nation than an army man – when there is no fighting to do."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> William III and the Defense of European Liberty, 1650–1702 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1966), p. 177. For the tendency in Defoe's critics to see him having it both ways, see Alkon, *Defoe and Fictional Time*, p. 35; Novak, *Realism, Myth, and History in Defoe's Fiction*, p. 65; and C. Hill, "Robinson Crusoe," *History Workshop: A Journal of Socialist Historians*, 10 (1980), 18.

Defoe's concept of the prince, who creates harmonies in the social order, frees the imprisoned and disenfranchised, and leads his people step by step to liberty, as he poetized in *Mock-Mourners* (1702), connects Defoe to the central tradition of the west. Though I have not chosen to explore the continual occurrences of the hero-prince theme, from its obscurity in folklore to its mythological elaboration in classical literature and its revival in the Renaissance, some passing observations are in order. Defoe's Old Testament God, who sanctifies the origins and morality of the martial monarch, distinguishes Defoe's creation from its emblematic counterparts in its past. Plato, for example, divorces arms from leadership as he develops his ideal of the philosopher-king, one whose temperament and duties are different from those of his warrior-guardians. The lawgiver will be structured on educational foundations provided for and developed in the warrior-guardian, but bravery and courage, attributes of the latter, are the necessary but not sufficient conditions for leadership. Arms, in fact, are not the ingredients of ultimate authority. It is the tyrant in Plato's myth who is associated with wars.<sup>17</sup> But it is Defoe's guardian-king who reigns supreme, not by his intelligence, but by virtue of his weapons. He maintains order and discipline in his state because he wields, not "the sword of the spirit," but the more earthly and visible sword of the campaign.<sup>18</sup>

And, unlike Erasmus's Christian prince of peace, Defoe's monarch is tainted with blood, modeled after conquering kings like Saul and Solomon.<sup>19</sup> For Erasmus, the soldier was the height of evil; those who lived by the sword were agents of social misrule. The last chapter of his *Education of a Christian Prince* denounces *in toto* what the earlier pages had noted in passing: war, its pretexts, agents, and aftermath. The Erasmian ideal, a summary of sources from the ancient to the medieval period, is judged good and great by the distance between himself and the actions and ethos of the warrior. But Defoe's myth establishes an equation between bravery and princeliness, between the quest for martial honor and the good of mankind.

Both God and the sword, the Gospel and the camp, are also absent from the universe of Bolingbroke's Patriot King. Bolingbroke has no interest in origins. Thus he may chant phrases like "the monarchy of the Supreme Being" or "the Author" of Nature, but God is disjoined from what can only loosely be called his political theory.<sup>20</sup> *The Idea of a Patriot King* is an Opposition manifesto and, like all manifestoes, is long on emotion and short on substance. It projects a "mystical" monarch who will eradicate parties; Defoe, who took faction and opposition as universal givens, remained with a prince of power who dominated and controlled party by virtue of his control

<sup>17</sup> *The Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), I, 295-307; 163-75.

<sup>18</sup> I take the phrase from John R. Knott, Jr., *The Sword of the Spirit: Puritan Responses to the Bible* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

<sup>19</sup> *The Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. Lester K. Born (1936; rpt., New York: Octagon Books, 1965), p. 134.

<sup>20</sup> *The Idea of a Patriot King*, ed. Sydney K. Jackman (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), pp. 19, 13.

of the power of the sword. If Bolingbroke beamed his monarch down to his English and earthly community via Horace, Seneca, Tacitus, and Terence, Defoe beamed his down via Saul and David. Bolingbroke's Patriot King may be "the common father of his people" and dominate the "patriarchal family, where the head and all the members are united by one common interest,"<sup>21</sup> but his Tudor imagery denies the polemical import of the tract. His ideal is less a portrait of a Renaissance prince and more a chapter in his Opposition history to the Walpole ministry, less a myth of kings and community, as Defoe's is, and more, as Simon Varey concludes, "a punitive satire on King George, the would-be tyrant who destroys the value of British life."<sup>22</sup>

Some years ago, Maximillian Novak intimated that Defoe could have found justification for his doctrine of necessity in Machiavelli, but he concluded that Grotius and Pufendorf, whom Defoe clearly read and often cited, were more significant influences on his ideas.<sup>23</sup> If Defoe's ideology of kingship and rule also calls to mind a Machiavellian inheritance, two things must be remembered. The first is that an affinity is not an influence. Detailing the necessary properties of his monarch-prince, Defoe, at times, in public – and, as we shall see, in private in his memorandums to Harley – naturally echoed the proverbial content of the advices-to-princes genre of secular tradition. Bracton, for example, enjoined that "to rule well a king requires two things, arms and laws," a maxim that fixed itself in the English imagination two and one-half centuries before it was repeated in *The Prince*.<sup>24</sup> The inherited tags of political discourse, such as "vox populi vox dei," or "salus populi suprema lex," that are found in both Machiavelli and Defoe, are unavoidable similarities of thought that show, in these obvious cases at least, no signs of indebtedness. The second thing to note is that Defoe very rarely turns to Machiavelli, despite the fact that, as Felix Raab proved, the Italian's name had disappeared as a term of abuse and his work could be mined to support almost any ideological fashion.<sup>25</sup> Defoe's very few quotations from Machiavelli – he calls them "Maxims" – are really distillations of policy and procedure, usually from the *Discourses*, and are concentrated in his later years. Between 1715 and 1717 Defoe cited Machiavelli three times. One "Machiavillian Maxim . . . whenever it has been practiced, we shall always find it had been fatal." Another is put in the mouth of a "certain Lord" who

<sup>21</sup> *The Idea of a Patriot King*, pp. 45, 53, 46.

<sup>22</sup> Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1985), p. 101. "As political philosophy the *Idea* is disappointingly superficial" (p. 98). For Bolingbroke, it might be noted, the trinity of monarchical authority is the crown, scepter, and throne, or the crown, scepter and miter. A warrior-monarch carrying the sword is totally absent from his imagination.

<sup>23</sup> *Defoe and the Nature of Man* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 58, and chapter 3.

<sup>24</sup> *Bracton on the Laws and Customs of England*, trans. Samuel E. Thorne, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), II, 19; *The Prince*, trans. and ed. Robert M. Adams (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> *The English Face of Machiavelli: A Changing Interpretation, 1500–1700* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 238–63.

is a member of a group of treasonous malcontents who design to bring in the Pretender. The third bends, perhaps, a theme from the *Discourses* to indict the High Church faction for its unrelenting adherence to principles of persecution and tyranny.<sup>26</sup> Defoe surely read Machiavelli but the evidence suggests that he found little substance in his secular program for rule to influence his Sauline myth of kingship.

Defoe's concept of the social contract in his *Reflections Upon the Late Great Revolution*, in print six months before the *Two Treatises of Government*, is insistently theological. Just as he did not need Locke for his theory of mutual agreements between God, king, and community, having learned from the Old Testament of the Israelite monarchs who were heavenly appointed mediators between God and the people,<sup>27</sup> Defoe did not need Machiavelli to educate him about the malignity of men, nor of the martial ingredient of princely leadership. Machiavelli went to the Old Testament parable of Saul and David to educe support for his conviction that one is victorious in one's own armor; that is, that the prince must eschew mercenaries and fight with his own native armies.<sup>28</sup> Defoe turned to Saul and David to assert the necessity for a warrior-statesman in the origins of the commonwealth. Like Machiavelli, Defoe was greatly attracted to the idea of "fortune's first gift," the unique lawgiver-founder of the state.<sup>29</sup> But unlike Machiavelli, who rejects the strongest and the bravest for the wisest and most just, Defoe cannot dislodge political wisdom from martial prowess. Writing as a British soldier in 1715 to counter mounting propaganda attacks on the army, Defoe claimed fortitude, or bravery, as pre-eminent among the moral virtues:

I know of none that dare vye or enter into Comparison with it but *Justice*; under which Head I particularly comprehend, and have regard to, the truly venerable *Art of framing Laws*, and governing with *Equity*, and restraining *Vice*. But surely, among *Virtues*, the Precedence is mostly due to that, without which the others cannot subsist. *Solon* and *Lycurgus* had ranged Mankind under admirable Regulations in vain, had there been no *Themistocles*, no *Agesilaus*, no *Epaminondas*, to protect *Constitutions* formed with the utmost *Foresight* and *Wisdom*.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *His Majesty's Obligations to the Whigs* (London, 1715), pp. 17–18 ("fatal"); *Secret Memoirs of a Treasonable Conference at Somerset House, For Deposing the Present Ministry, and Making a New Turn at Court* (London, 1717), p. 60 ("a certain Lord"); *Faction in Power* (London, 1717), p. 32. See also "Machiavel, a Politician of the first Reputation," preferring Rome to Greece, in *The Ballance* (London, 1705), pp. 34–35. For the Machiavellian maxims see *The Discourses of Niccolo Machiavelli*, trans. Leslie J. Walker, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), I, 253, 272, 295, 395, 214.

<sup>27</sup> For covenant-contract language in Jewish and Protestant thought see Klaus Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary In Old Testament, Jewish, and the Early Christian Writings*, trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971); Kenneth Hagen, "From Testament to Covenant in the Early Sixteenth Century," *Sixteenth-Century Journal*, 3 (1972), 1–24; Richard L. Greaves, "The Origins and Early Development of English Covenant Thought," *The Historian*, 31 (1968), 21–35; and Leonard J. Trinterud, "The Origins of Puritanism," *Church History*, 20 (1951), 37–57.

<sup>28</sup> *The Prince*, pp. 40–41.

<sup>29</sup> *Discourses*, I, 215, For Solon and Lycurgus see I, 215, 235, 211. For them "having recourse to God" see I, 242.

<sup>30</sup> *An Apology for the Army. In A Short Essay on Fortitude, Etc. Written by an Officer* (London, 1715), p. 10.