

# **John Milton: An English Republican and a European Figure**

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## Connections, Networks and Cultural Transfers

The study of connections across time is undoubtedly the realm of the historian; to see how events over time impacted upon one another and caused a particular outcome. This, naturally, remains an important part of historical study, but recent scholarship has also begun to recognise that in exclusively studying history in this manner, spatial limitations have been imposed by and upon historical writings. This is something that has been particularly problematic in the realm of the history of ideas, since it is impossible to constrain intellectual concepts to arbitrarily imposed national boundaries. Franco Venturi was one of the first to acknowledge that attempting to trace ideas back to their origins was not necessarily beneficial in itself, since it could distort the history of ideas to suit a particular purpose or to serve a specific function.<sup>1</sup> It is now widely recognised that no country develops in isolation, hence the national focus of historical study can hinder our understanding of wider trends.<sup>2</sup>

The development towards transnational history began in the 1980's when the framework of national histories began to be challenged by German and French scholars, in relation to German historiography. A pioneering concept of 'cultural transfers' arose to address this issue and to allow historians to look more closely at the interactions between countries. It investigates how circumstances and channels of communication favoured the appropriation of certain aspects of the others culture, and how these aspects were adapted, contributing to the development of common learning and intellectual practise which was not confined to a particular national culture.<sup>3</sup> The concept of cultural transfers has, however, proven to be a tricky term, with some misunderstanding and misapplication; for instance, some have taken it to mean the wholesale transfer of a culture from one domain to another. Rather, it should be used to examine how circumstances and events favoured the appropriation as well as adaptation of certain aspects of culture. Modelling networks in this way across national, cultural or linguistic borders is still in its early stages. This is largely because of the sheer complexity of the task and the vast amount of information that must be

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<sup>1</sup> Franco Venturi, *Utopia and Reform in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ann Thomson and Simon Burrows, eds., *Cultural Transfers: France and Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Voltaire Foundation: Oxford, 2010), 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

collated in order to build up a broad understanding. Subsequently the scholarship is primarily in the stages of what Thomson and Burrows' call 'egocentric' networks, in which the focus is on a particular figure. This, in itself, can provide valuable insight into the functioning of networks and the level of interconnectedness that existed at any given time or place. The purpose of this article is to demonstrate some of the benefits that can be derived from examining one person in relation to the wider world.

I intend to demonstrate the way in which broadening our spatial perspective, particularly in the realm of intellectual history where ideas, by their very nature, disregard superficial national boundaries, can shed new light on even the most well studied people or themes. As Gaby Mahlberg and Dirk Wiemann acknowledge in their recent publication *English Republicanism in a European Context*, writing about the English republic is a 'collaborative' and 'cooperative' endeavour, in the sense that numerous republicans together make up the canon of what we now understand as an English republicanism.<sup>4</sup> However, what I would like to emphasise here is the sense that even within a single tract or one person's collected works, there is an amalgamation of ideas and sources which come together to form any theory or argument.

The case study used here is John Milton, the English poet and polemicist of the seventeenth century, who is generally regarded by historians on the period as the atypical 'classical republican'. This was initially associated simply with a commitment to a Polybian concept of mixed government; the idea of combining the one, the few and the many into a constitutional form which could ensure stability and longevity. However, this has recently been usurped by a commitment to a moral philosophy that emphasises virtue, liberty and the common good.<sup>5</sup> Milton has also been accused of being inconsistent in his republicanism; Blair Worden, for instance, has suggested that his republicanism only began developing in the 1640s and only became unequivocal in 1660.<sup>6</sup> In looking at simply one aspect of his republicanism - his attitude towards and later rejection of single person rule - from a broader spatial perspective, and through acknowledging the international nature and knowledge of

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<sup>4</sup> Gaby Mahlberg and Dirk Wiemann, eds., *English Republicanism in a European Context* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), 1-9.

<sup>5</sup> See for instance Zera Fink, *The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth Century England* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University, 1945); J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975); Jonathan Scott, *Commonwealth Principles: Republican Writing in the English Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Blair Worden, 'English Republicanism,' eds. J. H. Burns and Mark Goldie, *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 456.

Milton, it will be demonstrated that his republican thought can be understood with greater clarity and consistency.

### International Connections

It was first noted in the 1970s, by Christopher Hill, that there was a need to study John Milton outside of the ancient and Christian framework that he is traditionally studied in, and rather to look to his immediate predecessors in order to see what impact they might also have had on his thought. Although Milton has been studied extensively since, no-one has whole-heartedly taken his advice despite the growing interest in transnational and connected histories.<sup>7</sup> This is particularly surprising, since it is almost impossible to argue that Milton was only an English national figure. Indeed, he had been on a tour of Europe prior to the outbreak of the civil war in 1642, where he is known to have made an excellent impression, particularly in Italy. He is known to have many connections on the continent, having made several important meetings during his travels; we know, for instance, that he met Hugo Grotius and Galileo Galilei. Milton was made Secretary of Foreign Tongues under the English Commonwealth, meaning that he would have had a good knowledge of European affairs, and be in regular contact with the continent. Furthermore, his Latin works were intentionally written for a European audience, thus demonstrating that he considered himself to be an international figure, not simply an obscure English writer. He has therefore been unfairly misrepresented by many historians as a national figure by imposing spatial limitations on interpretations on his republicanism.

It can be expected that Milton had a particularly good knowledge of the events happening in the Dutch Republic. He was personally acquainted with Leo van Aitzema, a native of the Netherlands with whom Milton met several times in the 1650s. Van Aitzema later went on to publish a history of the United Provinces, suggesting both that he had an extensive knowledge of the subject and that he may well have shared this knowledge with Milton during their meetings. Furthermore, in his *Commonplace Book*, in which he noted books he had read and quotes he found particularly important or interesting, he has quoted from Thuanus's *Historia* in which he tells of the resistance of the Netherlands to the tyranny of Philip of Spain. Milton also engaged in polemic debates, in the form of his two 'defences'

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<sup>7</sup> Christopher Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), 9.

of England, with Claudius Salmasius and Pierre Du Moulin, both of which made significant reference to and utilisation of the Dutch experience.<sup>8</sup>

It is also highly probable that Milton had a very good grasp of the way in which the Venetian Republic functioned, or, at least, he understood how the ‘myth of Venice’ claimed the Venetian system functioned. He requested, for instance, that his friend Charles Diodati send him the work of ‘Giustiniani, Historian of the Veneti’, indicating a desire to learn more about the way in which Venice operated.<sup>9</sup> There were also many accounts of the Venetian system available in England, and although we have no proof that Milton read them, he would at least have had knowledge of them. James Howell, for instance, published *S.P.Q.V. A Survey of the Signorie of Venice* in 1651, whilst in 1599, Lewis Lewkenor had undertaken a translation into English of a classic work of Venetian history by Gasparo Contarini.<sup>10</sup> There were, therefore, plenty of opportunities for Milton to study the histories of both the Dutch and Venetian systems, and in understanding the knowledge these works and people possessed we can gain a deeper understanding of Milton’s republican thought.

### Single Person Rule

By examining Milton’s attitude towards monarchy and single person rule, and the way in which this develops throughout his prose works, it will be clear to see that his interaction with and knowledge of Dutch, Venetian and Polish ideas and constitutional structures influenced the way he formulated his proposals for English republican rule. Furthermore, an analysis of the underlying principles guiding these European republics will enable us to pinpoint the desire for virtuous rule for the common good which guided the route of his republicanism. The classical understanding of a commonwealth stood in great contrast with what might be recognised now. Whilst a modern audience might see a republic as standing in opposition to a monarchy, for classical thinkers a commonwealth was ‘the weal of

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<sup>8</sup> See Milton, *A Defence of the People of England In Answer to Salmasius’s Defence of the King* (London: 1651), ed. Don Wolfe, *Complete Prose Works of John Milton, Volume 4, Part 1* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 301-537; Milton, *A Second Defence of the English People Against the Base Anonymous Libel Entitled The Cry of Royal Blood to Heaven against the English Paracides* (London: 1654), CPW, Vol 4, Part 2 (1966), 548-686.

<sup>9</sup> Bernado Giustiniani, *De Origine Urbis Venetiarum Rebusque ab Ipsa Gestis Historia* (Venice, 1492), cited in Milton’s Letter to Charles Diodati (1637), CPW, Vol. 1, 328.

<sup>10</sup> James Howell, *S.P.Q.V. A Survey of the Signorie of Venice* (London, 1651); Gasparo Contarini, trans., Lewis Lewkenor, *The Commonwealth and Government of Venice* (London, 1599). Both online editions.

the people, although it may be well and justly ruled either by a king, by a few optimates, or by the whole people'.<sup>11</sup>

In *The Readie and Easie Way*, Milton's lengthiest espousal of constitutional republicanism, he argues that 'a free Commonwealth without single person...is by far the best government'.<sup>12</sup> However, an analysis of his work prior to, and after this period, reflects a different pattern in Milton's republican thought. In his earlier work, for instance *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, he argues only against tyranny, not the concept of monarchy itself. He praises the Dutch for rejecting 'all obedience and subjection to Philip King of Spain' and for issuing a Declaration in 1581 in which they 'justifie their doing for that by his tyrannous government against faith so many times giv'n and brok'n'.<sup>13</sup> That Milton saw a connection between the two countries is evident since he declares that although the United Provinces was 'inferior in all outward advantages', they had been through 'greater problems to achieve stability'.<sup>14</sup>

After the execution of the Charles I, Milton saw the connection between the two countries as running even deeper, although the Dutch did not see it in this way. As Pierre du Moulin highlights in his contribution to the debate between Milton and Salmasius, the Estates-General did not 'regard these assassins worthy of even addressing'.<sup>15</sup> However, Milton beseeches the Dutch to 'remember not to look with an evil and prejudicial eye upon their neighbours walking by the same rule'.<sup>16</sup> Milton therefore saw the actions that were taken against both King Philip and Charles I as equivalent; that they were both tyrannous rulers who had overreached their powers. Absolute rule was then, to Milton's mind, always justifiably resisted and universally despicable; as he notes from Machiavelli's *Art of War*, 'kingdoms that have good rule do not give their monarchs absolute power'.<sup>17</sup> Milton demonstrates how such tyranny had come about in England, that the kings and magistrates (whom the people elected in the first place) 'for a while governed well, and with much equity decided all things at thir own arbitrement: till the temptation of such a power left absolute in

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<sup>11</sup> Cicero cited in Augustine, trans, Marcus Dods, *The City of God* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009), 56.

<sup>12</sup> John Milton, *The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (London: April 1660), in CPW, Vol. 7, (1980), 429.

<sup>13</sup> Milton, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (London: 1649) CPW, Vol. 3, (1962), 226.

<sup>14</sup> Milton, *The Readie and Easie Way*, CPW, Vol. 7, 423.

<sup>15</sup> Pierre Du Moulin, *The Cry of Royal Blood to Heaven Against the English Parricides* (1652), Appendix D in CPW, Vol. 4, Pt. 2, 1074.

<sup>16</sup> Milton, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, CPW, Vol. 3, 226.

<sup>17</sup> Niccolo Machiavelli, *Art of War, Book 1*, cited in John Milton, *Commonplace Book*, in CPW, Vol. 1, 443.

thir hands perverted them at length to injustice and partialitie.’<sup>18</sup> Fundamental to Milton’s thought then was a deep distrust of *absolute* monarchy, since he recognises that complete power in the hands of a single man will almost inevitably decline into tyranny and cannot rule virtuously in the public good.

The danger of monarchy declining into private, tyrannous rule is also reflected in Milton’s criticisms of the material trappings associated with it. Milton condemns the ‘fond conceit of something like a Duke of Venice’ which I take to mean the pomp and ceremony surrounding the position of the Venetian Doge.<sup>19</sup> As has been noted, there were many accounts of Venice available for Milton to read and many of these demonstrated the outward glory of the Doge. James Howell writes that the Doge had a ‘kind of Regall, though dependent power’ and that he ‘hath the representation and gravity of a Soverain Governor’ despite holding little personal power. Perhaps worse for Milton though were the airs and graces of royalty that the Doge seemed to shroud himself in, in spite of his limited and dependent power; Howell tells of how the Doge ‘goes allwayes cladd in silk and purple’ and ‘hath a place elevated like a Throne in the Senat’.<sup>20</sup> Gasparo Contarini, whose work on the history and politics of Venice was a classic account and was widely available in England due to its translation in 1651, also writes that ‘the Venetian prince, who sitting at the helme of this citie shineth in all exterior ornaments of royall dignitie’.<sup>21</sup>

Milton mocked such courtly pretensions as these; in fact by the second edition of *The Readie and Easie Way* his criticism of court life is particularly lengthy. He condemns the way in which a king ‘must be ador’d like a Demigod’, the ‘vast expence and luxurie’, which is the ‘price of our subjection and their debauserie’.<sup>22</sup> A king sets a ‘pompous face upon the superficial acting of State’ who ‘pageants himself up and down’.<sup>23</sup> Milton therefore mocks the Doge for dressing his role in the clothing of a king whilst possessing none of the power. This could also reflect a posthumous criticism of Oliver Cromwell. When he was re-installed as Lord Protector in 1657, the ceremony was disturbingly reminiscent of a royal coronation, despite his rejection of the title of ‘King.’ In it, he wore a purple ermine-lined robe, and the

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<sup>18</sup> Milton, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, CPW, Vol. 3, 198.

<sup>19</sup> The Doge represented the ‘one’ in the Venetian polity, but he did not possess monarchical power. He had constitutional limits on his power and although the position was undoubtedly prestigious, he was primarily a figurehead.

<sup>20</sup> Howell, *S.P.Q.V.*, 11.

<sup>21</sup> Contarini, trans., Lewkenor, *The Commonwealth and Government of Venice*. A2-3.

<sup>22</sup> Milton, *The Readie and Easie Way*, CPW, Vol. 7, 425-6.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

ceremony contained several royal symbols, including: a sword of justice and a spectre. For Milton, the material trappings of monarchy were a sign of self-interest since it 'elevated them above thir brethren'.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps worse than this though, in the nobility and gentry it 'bred up then to the hopes not of public, but of court offices'.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the 'demigod'-like monarch was not only himself corrupt, but corrupted those around him who would no longer look to the common good but rather would pander to his interests and ambitions. Under such rule, Milton believed the common good could not hope to prevail.

Milton was therefore against forms of monarchy which were un-virtuous and self-interested. However, he was not against all forms of single person rule, and so long as they were virtuous, both before and after 1660, Milton advocated the rule of the individual. For instance, when the Dutch deposed Philip of Spain, they 'declar'd it lawful to choose another in his state'.<sup>26</sup> Milton's admiration of Philip's successor, the stadholder<sup>27</sup> Henry of Nassau, is demonstrated in a letter he sent to his friend Alexander Gill in which he teases: 'I do not really know whether I should congratulate Henry of Nassau more on his capture of the city or on your Verses; for I think this victory has brought forth nothing more brilliant nor more distinguished than this short poem of yours.'<sup>28</sup> Hence, it was not single person rule that Milton resisted, but rather that of un-virtuous rule, for he later claims that 'from that time [the overthrow of Philip] to this no State or Kingdom in the world hath equally prospered'.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, in the years after the restoration of the monarchy, Milton projects a similar attitude with reference to Poland. He translates a document which declares the election of a new Polish monarch, King John, but little is known about the circumstances surrounding the translation, whether he undertook it of his own accord or on behalf of another. Subsequently, over the years it has been side-lined by historians. However, through analysing this document in the context of his other European references, it can be fit more neatly into his thought. The declaration notes the new king's 'admirable virtue, supreme command in arms, senatorial

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 424-5.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Milton, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, CPW, Vol. 3, 226.

<sup>27</sup> The stadholder was an unusual position within the Dutch polity. The position of stadholder had initially acted as governor for the Spanish kings, but since the Dutch Revolt had been the figurehead for the new Republic. Constitutionally their position was undefined. For a detailed summary of the position of stadholder, see Jonathan Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Politics of Particularism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 247-256.

<sup>28</sup> Arthur Turner suggests that this is a reference to the capture of the city of 's-Hertogenbosch in September 1659, a city which had been a strategic stronghold garrison of the Spanish, and thus represented a significant victory. Gill wrote a poem about it entitled 'In Sylvam-Ducis', of which he was known to be proud. See Letter Four, to Alexander Gill within 'Milton's Private Correspondence', in CPW, Vol. 1, 317.

<sup>29</sup> Milton, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, CPW, Vol.3, 226.

Honour, civil modesty...piety, love to his fellow citizens in words and deeds, constancy, faithfulness, and clemency towards enemies'.<sup>30</sup> Although this is a polemic document and the facts must be treated lightly, King John was indeed known for his exceptional virtue and courage in successfully driving Turkish and Cossack forces from Polish land after years of invasion.

These two figures, the stadholder and the Polish monarch, therefore represent Milton's ideal ruler for England. He continues to believe in a brave and virtuous ruler who can be chosen above all others, and moreover who is capable of ruling in the interests of the people. Thus, it can be derived that Milton fundamentally had no opposition to single person rule, that what mattered most to him was whether or not this rule was virtuous.

Milton could also see in foreign examples the ways in which these individual figureheads are constrained and limited by constitutional means from becoming tyrannous and gaining absolute power. Both the Doge and the Polish monarch had relatively concrete limitations on their power which prevented them gaining excessive personal authority. Although the position of Doge was undoubtedly a prestigious one, through the use of devices such as the *promissione ducale* – a constitutional oath recognising loyalty to the Republic and the limitations on his power - he had been excluded from personal sovereignty, and restrictions on the powers of the Doge became an important part of Venice's conception of its polity.<sup>31</sup> For the Polish, accounts of monarchy were crucial to its own conception of republicanism, but significantly it lacked some of the traditional attributes of kingship, particularly the notion of the divine source of monarchical authority. The Polish monarch did not therefore see himself as the natural source of law, and was therefore held to account by an oath with the nation known as the *pacta conventa*. Breaking this oath, which formed a type of contract between the king as the 'nation' and the Polish nobility, would mean repudiating the pact and authorising the nobility to rise up.<sup>32</sup> Both these figureheads also had their power constrained by placing them as a member, albeit a ceremoniously elevated one, of a council. Howell describes the Doge as 'but a colleague to the rest of the Senators', since he was incapable of acting independently, and had to have at least four of his Council of Six advisors

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<sup>30</sup> Milton, trans., *A Declaration, or Letters Patents of the Election of This Present King of Poland John the Third*, (1674), in CPW, Vol. 8, 447.

<sup>31</sup> William Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defence of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of Counter Reformation* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1968), 61.

<sup>32</sup> Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, 'Anti-Monarchism in Polish Republicanism in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Republicanism: A Shared Heritage, Vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 47-50.



with him in order to make any decisions.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, his advisors were able to act without the Doge even being present. Similarly, the Polish monarch was bound to always have a group of senators around him with whom he was to confer on all matters of state.

This knowledge helps us to understand why Milton turns against monarchy, the stadholdership and allegedly single person rule, which by 1660 he saw as ‘unnecessary, burdensome and dangerous’.<sup>34</sup> A later stadholder, William II had, by the early 1650s, proven to be as potentially troublesome as Philip had been. After his personal power and armies had been limited by the Treaty of Münster in 1648, he marched ten thousand troops on Amsterdam, threatening the economic and political heart of the Dutch Republic. A desire for greater personal power and a disregard for the common good had motivated the attack, and though the military threat soon died away, the political threat posed by the stadholder only ceased with ‘the most providential death of that headstrong youth’.<sup>35</sup> By accommodating a stadholder, Milton argues that the United Provinces had placed themselves at risk of a new ‘slavery...prepared for you and a new ruler’ which would have caused ‘the liberty which had been won by so many years of hard toil’ to then ‘perish from your midst’.<sup>36</sup>

The ability of the stadholder to pose such a threat to the Dutch Republic and its stability derives from the lack of constitutional clarity regarding the stadholder’s position. Although he did not possess sovereignty (which was held by the provincial States) the vagueness of his position meant that if he so desired, he could gain a large degree of control which, in turn, could unbalance the States General and undermine the federal system – in exactly the way William II had done. Nor was the stadholder constrained by a conciliar structure. In fact, the stadholder was able to make appointments to positions in the political and administrative systems, as well as being in command of the army and navy of the Republic, increasing his potential power and danger. This level of independence was feared by Milton by 1660; in *The Readie and Easie Way* he argues that a king cannot be ‘remov’d, not to be contrould, much less accus’d or brought to punishment, without the danger of a common ruin’.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, ‘in a free Commonwealth, any governour or chief counselour offending, may be remov’d and punishd without the last commotion.’<sup>38</sup> It can therefore be understood that Milton sees the danger of the stadholder resting in the difficulty

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<sup>33</sup> Howell, *S.P.Q.V.*, 6.

<sup>34</sup> Milton, *The Readie and Easie Way*, CPW, Vol. 7,409.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 312.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 426-7.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

of removing him because of his independence, whereas as members of a council, the Doge and Polish monarch could be removed or die without causing constitutional chaos.

This issue of stability may also be related in Milton's thought to how these single rulers are chosen. The stadholder was a quasi-monarchical remnant of Spanish rule, and technically it was an elected position, although the choice of most of the provinces almost inevitably fell on a member of the Orange-Nassau family, giving the position a pseudo-hereditary nature. In Poland, the principle of 'free' elections was accepted after 1572, meaning that any person could be chosen to be King and his children had no special succession rights. Similarly, the Doge was an elected position and they did not tend to elect from within one family (although the number of patriciate families who were eligible to be elected was still relatively small). Milton expresses only concern about the Dutch, writing that their liberty was being 'hamperd or hoverd over by any ingag'ment to such a potent family as the house of *Nassaw*,' who he says 'stand in perpetual doubt and suspision'.<sup>39</sup> As a result, Milton saw a contrast between an elective and hereditary monarchy, asserting: 'I denie not but that ther may be such a king who may regard the common good before his own...but this rarely happens in a monarchy not elective.'<sup>40</sup> Milton's fear of a powerful family returning to England was clearly mirrored in the events that he had seen in the Dutch Republic, and that by 1660 his fear of un-virtuous rule is subsequently intertwined with his concerns for the stability and continuance of the commonwealth.

### Conclusion

Through analysing his utilisation of European models of republicanism it has been possible to tease out Milton's attitude to single person rule. In understanding that Milton had a continental outlook from his numerous connections with the continent, and the wide availability of accounts of European constitutions and events, it is possible to see that Milton was actually remarkably consistent in his underlying principles. Milton was looking to virtuous rule throughout and only looking to specific constitutional structures when England was at its most unstable. It has been shown that his concern focused particularly on the Dutch republic for two reasons. Firstly, because of the unspecified limitations on the stadholder's power and personal authority, making the decline into absolutism or tyranny more likely; and

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 375.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 448.

secondly, because of its quasi-hereditary nature, the threat from the Orange-Nassau family which he saw as mirroring that of the Stuart family.

Connections, networks, transnational history, shared history – no matter the language that is used, the goal to create a broader analysis of history is one which should be encouraged. The purpose here was not to proclaim allegiance to one form of terminology or another, instead to simply demonstrate that by utilising this new historical framework, new light can be shed on topics that may seem well worn. It has been demonstrated that Milton's utilisation of European models of republicanism, and the ways in which he came to have knowledge of these foreign ideas and structures, certainly informed the progression and adaptation of his proposals to suit English circumstances. In reassessing 'English' republicanism in this manner, it may be possible to suggest that such a thing did not exist at all.

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