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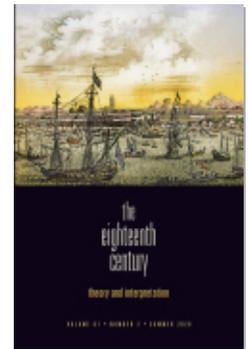
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# The Vicar and the Sovereign: Monarchism in Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*

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## 1. HOBBS AND THE VICAR

Singled out for both its wild popularity and its artistic shortcomings, Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) expresses its political theory as narrative lapse if not failure. In particular, this essay will argue, its idiosyncratic defense of monarchism revisits Thomas Hobbes's world without a sovereign—a grim scene of abandonment that is flagged in the very meaning of “vicar” as substitute or proxy. In Goldsmith's work, the fundamentally dystopic outlook that critics have long understood as driving the form of the sentimental novel registers a distinctly Hobbesian state of collapse.<sup>1</sup> The following comparative analysis emphasizes how in “the state of men without Civill Society,”<sup>2</sup> disruption has taken place not between subjects and their ruler but among subjects themselves—a crucial distinction underrecognized by contemporary reflections on sovereign power. A century after *Leviathan* (1651), Goldsmith reengages Hobbes's claims that “to make Covenant with God, is impossible.”<sup>3</sup> While the pairing of the unflinching philosopher with the author of exquisite sensibilities may seem unlikely, they share a primary concern in the tenuousness of social relations in a competitive market society. In Goldsmith's *Vicar*, as in Hobbes's writings at large, the possibility of civil life (that restraint of the powerful that alone permits “the Dominion of reason, peace, security, riches, decency, society, elegance, sciences, and benevolence”<sup>4</sup>) hangs on the shaken figure of the sovereign. For both writers, monarchy does not idealize any individual so much as confine the “impulse to dominate” to a single person.<sup>5</sup>

How does a Hobbesian explanation of Goldsmith's political theory illuminate an aspect of its form? In the case of this complicated writer's only novel,<sup>6</sup> much debate has centered on the *deus ex machina* function of Sir William Thornhill, the story's disguised man of feeling, who keeps pace with and eventually remediates

the vicar Primrose's battery of misfortunes. Clunkily allegorical, Sir William's character seems to sit uneasily with the novel form itself, as if holding the text back from achieving narrative felicity or even meaning.<sup>7</sup> Vivasvan Soni, in his reading of *Vicar* as a Christian trial narrative that endlessly defers the "real" story, writes, "Sir William Thornhill playing the benevolent god suggests that the labor of the narrative has been in vain, since it has not significantly impacted the protagonists' possibilities for happiness and can be set aside in a moment."<sup>8</sup> For Soni, *Vicar's* resolution, a triple-marriage plot in which Thornhill actively participates, "annul[s]" the meaning of the novel itself, reinforcing the "theological structure of a reward beyond narrative."<sup>9</sup> In John Bender's analysis, Thornhill's figuration of an "enlightened monarch" (which in the 1760s would have taken the hopeful shape of George III) expresses Goldsmith's nostalgic attachment to the person of the sovereign. For Bender, this residual commitment to the embodiment of authority (Goldsmith's royalist misprision that regulatory power derives from a person instead of the impersonal procedures of the modern state) prevented the novelist from alighting on free indirect style as the formal expression of the "neutral impersonality of modern government."<sup>10</sup> In particular, Sir William's "embracing, neutral, guarding force" contributes to the novel's "incongruous attribution of regulative omniscience to personal agents." Bender writes, "Overdetermined personifications of authority crowd the whole text."<sup>11</sup>

Whether or not we agree with Bender's ingenious argument that Goldsmith was knocking on the door of Jane Austen's style but was held back by his political attachments, we can appreciate from both his and Soni's readings the importance of attending to Sir William Thornhill. In particular, his sovereign figuration (as the text's "guarding force" and "benevolent god") seems to spur its failings—what Bender calls *Vicar's* "fractured, paradoxical mode of narration"<sup>12</sup> and Soni, its annulment of "the very meaning of narrative itself."<sup>13</sup> It is worth remembering that such lapses have long been attributed to *The Vicar of Wakefield*, a text famously called by Henry James "the spoiled child of our literature"<sup>14</sup> and described by George Eliot as a story "told in the most irregular fashion that an author's idiosyncrasy may prompt."<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, while not always naming Sir William, criticism has tended to constellate around the novel's improbable or inadequate characterization. Called into defending Primrose, Goldsmith responded that his creation was too good to appreciate: "In this age of opulence and refinement whom can such a character please?"<sup>16</sup> For one particularly displeased reviewer, what made Goldsmith "totally unqualified for success" in writing fiction was a "limited knowledge of men, manners, and characters, as they really appear in the living world"—evidently, the staple ingredient for "this species of composition."<sup>17</sup>

Engaging the long-running attempt to account for *Vicar's* challenges, my essay takes up its confusing stance of monarchism in order to consider the sovereign's uses to the sentimental novel. The non-novelistic dissonance of Sir William's character—his throwback, even gimmicky contours (what James calls a "*ficelle*

character"<sup>18</sup>)—reprises Hobbes's subject of absolute power, an inherently empty, nonrelational body that makes all relations possible. In what follows, I argue that the decline of monarchy lamented by Goldsmith's vicar signals the disappearance of the sovereign, who not only represents absolute political power but also explains conditions of unrest. For Primrose, only "monarchy, sacred monarchy" conduces to fair sociability—a very state of affairs obstructed by the "false compact" of an effective plutocracy (102). The picture of a society either held together by one "anointed sovereign" (102) or in dissolution from its absence returns us to the concerns of *Leviathan*, where Hobbes conceives of peaceful and productive coexistence as possible only in the form of a commonwealth, a structure maintained exclusively by the prohibitive function of the sovereign. While the form of sovereign power is not restricted to monarchy, some "visible Power" must keep subjects "in awe, and tye them by feare of punishment to the performance of their Covenants" to one another.<sup>19</sup>

The implausible pairing of Goldsmith and Hobbes would appear to defy a conventional account of eighteenth-century sensibility as a precise rejection of Hobbes, specifically, in the adoption of the claims of Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, for the innate benevolence and "natural affections" that underwrite a morally virtuous human community.<sup>20</sup> And yet, as other critical studies have shown, the genre of sentimental literature is fundamentally pessimistic—expressing, in John Mullan's important formulation, a rift between the demands of private feeling, or sensibility, on the one hand, and the idea of collective life, or sociability, on the other.<sup>21</sup> As Claudia Brodsky writes in a brilliant reading of Primrose as the mouthpiece of Sigmund Freud's death drive (quoting one of his infamous prison speeches), "To be 'completely miserable' is the goal toward which the Vicar strives, since it alone will guarantee the greatest reward in death."<sup>22</sup> Ultimately disproving the sustainability of universal benevolence, sentimental fiction, Mullan argues, comes to articulate more reduced, privatized versions of sympathy, "condensed," finally, "to the pleasures of reading."<sup>23</sup> More recently, Sean Gaston has argued that sentimental fiction marks the end rather than the beginning of the idealization of "fellow-feeling," a concept whose origins he relocates from Enlightenment discourses of sympathy to the religious volatility that culminates in the English civil war, a context fraught with "concern[s] about the stability and effectiveness of" feeling with or for select people, that is to say, choosing who were your "fellows" and who were not.<sup>24</sup> Enlarging Mullan's claim that sentimental fictions undermine the idea of public sympathy, Gaston describes how the "impossibility of sympathy" is actually a feature of the concept of sympathy itself. Understood through an early Puritan model, sympathy is less about "enter[ing] imaginatively into the feelings of another" than about advancing "intolerance, warfare, and persecution."<sup>25</sup>

We can appreciate how a return to Hobbes is crucial to a reevaluation of sentimental literature. Shaftesbury, we remember, cast Hobbes as an intellectual casualty of the English civil war: one "so possessed with a horror of this kind that,

both with respect to politics and morals, he directly acted in this spirit of massacre."<sup>26</sup> And, until fairly recently,<sup>27</sup> literary studies has largely inherited Shaftesbury's write-off of Hobbes—the "nasty, brutish, and short"<sup>28</sup> view of his extensive philosophy—in spite of the centrality of his ideas to Enlightenment discourses of perception, judgment, and consent. Of the ambivalence towards Hobbes maintained by eighteenth-century philosophical culture, Isabel Rivers observes, "It seems fair to say that the freethinkers drew on aspects of Hobbes's treatment of religion and natural philosophy while discounting the uncongenial aspects of his moral and political thought."<sup>29</sup> This essay's focus on the sovereign in *Vicar*, a text once revered as "the bible of moral sentiments," represents one attempt to flag the persistence of Hobbes's thinking in eighteenth-century literature, in this case, in the worn-out heart of the sentimental novel.<sup>30</sup>

## 2. SINGLE-TYRANT SOLUTION

*The Vicar of Wakefield* lays out two theories to explain the broken state of society: a corrupt penal system and the collapse of monarchy. Primrose delivers his argument for the first in one of the novel's remarkable prison chapters, in which the vicar (jailed for debts owed to his daughter's seducer, Sir William's libertine nephew) reforms his fellow inmates and, in less than a week, transforms these "wretches divested of every moral feeling" into devout penitents and productive members of a commercial society (now cheerfully contributing to the vicar's cottage industry of tobacco stoppers and shoe lasts) (149). Primrose—a self-appointed "legislator, who had brought men from their native ferocity into friendship and obedience" (149)—details the wrongs of capital punishment for nonhomicidal offenses and bemoans the country's bloated prison population ("more convicts in a year, than half the dominions of Europe united" [151]). Finally, he arrives at the notion that all Britons are living under a false social contract—false because, echoing the familiar logic condemning suicide, people cannot stake their own lives where only God has such jurisdiction. The illegitimacy of this agreement, he says, is sweeping: "A compact that is false between two men, is equally so between an hundred, or an hundred thousand; for as ten millions of circles can never make a square, so the united voice of myriads cannot lend the smallest foundation to falsehood" (150).

Further, Primrose argues, it is the wealthy who perpetuate the falsity of the compact since only their interests are served by a legal system that threatens to sentence and imprison most of its citizens. Echoing the sentiments of Goldsmith's poem "The Traveller, or a Prospect of Society" (1764), published two years before *Vicar* ("Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw, / Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law"<sup>31</sup>), Primrose exposes the "refined community" of Britain as a country that puts its penal laws "in the hands of the rich" and on the backs of the poor (150). We hear a contemporary resonance in Michelle Alexander's trenchant analysis of mass incarceration during the drug war in the United States.

Of its “wholesale roundup” of citizens, Alexander explains, “the answer lies in the system’s design. Every system of control depends for its survival on the tangible and intangible benefits that are provided to those who are responsible for the system’s maintenance and administration. This system is no exception.”<sup>32</sup>

In his blanket denunciation of the state of the nation, Primrose singles out the anxious defense of those systemic benefits: “As if our property were become dearer in proportion as it increased, as if the more enormous our wealth, the more extensive our fears, all our possessions are paled up with new edicts every day, and hung round with gibbets to scare every invader” (150). Like Hobbes, Primrose does not blame the individual (human nature in a market society being what it is) but instead exposes a structure of vice—what Alexander calls “the system’s design.” Here, Primrose attributes the corrupted power of the rich to the diminishment of “monarchy, sacred monarchy” (102). As he tells his evening host, the “sacred power” of the sovereign “has for some years been every day declining, and losing its due share of influence in the state” (98). To his dinner companions’ accusations that a monarchist must be “an enemy to liberty,” “a defender of tyrants,” and an “advocate for slavery,” Primrose responds with an elaborate “harangue” on why monarchy is the best-case scenario for the middle class, a bracket of citizenry under “siege” by the rich (99).

The Vicar breaks down his argument this way:

1. All men are equal and therefore every man possesses an equal right to power. (“I would have all men kings. I would be a king myself. We have all naturally an equal right to the throne: we are all originally equal.”)
2. In a society in which all men have equal rights, most men will end up submitting to the strongest and craftiest among them (“for as sure as your groom rides your horses, because he is a cunninger animal than they, so surely will the animal that is cunninger or stronger than he, sit upon his shoulders in turn”).
3. Therefore, “there must be tyrants” even though tyranny is hateful (“I naturally hate the face of a tyrant”).
4. Since society must be organized by masters and subjects (“it is entailed upon humanity to submit, and some are born to command, and others to obey”), then “the question is” how to minimize the number of masters and to maximize their physical distance from their subjects.
5. The answer is monarchy, the form of rule that “diminishes the number of tyrants, and puts tyranny at the greatest distance from the greatest number of people.”
6. A “single tyrant” state is still dangerous insofar as all former co-tyrants (“men of opulence,” who control both “external commerce” and “internal industry”) will wish to take down the monarch in order to “resume their primaevial authority” and so accumulate more wealth, including slaves and dependents. (99–100)

The vicar’s stepwise endorsement of monarchy is many things: deeply cynical, surprisingly egalitarian, strangely secular (for a vicar), and thoroughly

unsentimental. And, while shocking to his companions, it recapitulates the free-thinking view of monarchy as the least of all evils in a world flung from God. Elizabethan poet Fulke Greville's posthumous *Treatise of Monarchy* (1670) influentially criticized hereditary monarchy while also endorsing it as the best answer to a general tendency to anarchy and corruption.<sup>33</sup> Anticipating Hobbes, Greville understood the appeal of monarchy to lie principally in its confinement of power to one body—"Since unity divided into many / Begets Confusion,"<sup>34</sup> and "the multiplicity / Proves apt to over-wrest."<sup>35</sup> Forms like democracy or other "new / Confused Moulds" only result, in Greville's thinking, in "*Oligarchal Tyranny*."<sup>36</sup> His ensuing emphasis on "union" as constituting "All native strengths of Sovereignty"<sup>37</sup> reappears in the shape of Hobbes's totemic creature, revived from Job 41, whose "scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal."<sup>38</sup> Radicalizing Greville's caution against "mixt humours" that "never well content,"<sup>39</sup> Hobbes's Leviathan represented a consolidated form of authority that would curb the deleterious effects of faction and stave off a tendency to "Intestine Discord."<sup>40</sup>

As Abraham Bosse's frontispiece of a populated torso of Charles II showcased, "*Sovereignty is an Artificiall Soul*" that animates, or "giv[es] life and motion to the whole Body" of the "Artificiall Man," that "great LEVIATHAN called a COMMONWEALTH, OR STATE."<sup>41</sup> The function of Hobbes's sovereign is to confer a single form upon a mass of individuals, to make them move as one for the sake of their preservation. Hobbes's sovereign "is more than Consent, or Concord; it is a real Unitie of them all, in one and the same Person."<sup>42</sup> Richard Tuck, in a recent study of sovereignty and democracy, emphasizes the equation in Hobbes's model between sovereignty and society since only the structure of a commonwealth can comprise "the *People*."<sup>43</sup> Of Hobbes's theory, he writes: "Above all, a people did not possess even conceptually a distinct identity from their sovereign."<sup>44</sup> Tuck's analysis returns to *De Cive* (1642), where Hobbes states that "prior to the formation of a commonwealth a *People* does not exist, since it was not then a person but a number of individual persons."<sup>45</sup> A disparate "multitude" becomes "a people" only through the formation of a state, an artificial body kept alive by sovereign power. Hobbes states clearly: "The *people* is not in being before the constitution of government."<sup>46</sup>

Writing on *Jure Divino* (1706), Daniel Defoe's elaborate verse essay and "great defense of revolution principles" meant "to discredit ideas of absolute monarchy, divine right of kings, and passive obedience for all time," Paula Backscheider observes how the poem propounds, among other claims, the notion that "society always precedes government"—in other words, Locke's crucial revision of Hobbes's point that the formation of the commonwealth instantiates society itself.<sup>47</sup> For Hobbes, "the state of equality is the state of warre."<sup>48</sup> That is to say, while it is true that all people are born free, that simply means that all people are born free to kill each other. Freedom, in Hobbes's logic, is not freedom to prosper but to transgress: "When private men or subjects demand *liberty*, under the name of liberty, they ask not for *liberty*, but *dominion*."<sup>49</sup>

Roberto Esposito picks up on this illogic (“a remnant of irrationality that is subtly introduced into the folds of the most rational of systems”) in his assessment of the nonrelation underlying Hobbes’s theory of relation. “What men have in common, what makes them more like each other than anything else,” writes Esposito of Hobbes’s philosophy, “is their generalized capacity to be killed: the fact that anyone can be killed by anyone else.”<sup>50</sup> In Esposito’s analysis, this fundamental “relation between equality and the capacity to kill” makes for an antisocial model of the state.<sup>51</sup> He writes, “If the relation between men is in itself destructive, the only route of escape from this unbearable state of affairs is the destruction of the relation itself.”<sup>52</sup> This self-cancelling basis of community induces the fiction of the covenant, “the originary fault line” that separates common life from commonwealth.<sup>53</sup> For Esposito, the vertical relation between subject and sovereign emphasizes the basis of Hobbes’s social contract on a no-kill rule: “The Leviathan-State coincides with the breaking of every communitarian bond, with the squelching of every social relation that is foreign to the vertical exchange of protection-obedience. It is the bare [*nudo*] relation of no relation.”<sup>54</sup> Esposito thus destabilizes Hobbes’s binary condition that makes collectivity either impossible (state of nature) or possible (sovereign rule). The very cleanness of the break speaks to its artifice. In the Leviathan-State, people “live *in* and *of* their refusal to live together.”<sup>55</sup>

When Goldsmith’s Primrose laments the inevitable pattern of submission and domination that emerges from a God-given state of equality, he reproduces Hobbes’s essential pessimism. In a state where everyone possesses a legitimate claim to power, he states, only some will prevail: “It is entailed upon humanity to submit, and some are born to command, and others to obey” (99). The horrible necessity of tyranny (“there must be tyrants”) is therefore borne of fundamental equality. Locke dramatically reinterpreted the natural state of equality from a state of war to “one community of nature” and “the foundation of that obligation to mutual love amongst men.” In distinguishing a “state of liberty” from “a state of license,” Locke made civil society the foundation of the state and not vice-versa.<sup>56</sup> It is worth noting how in spite of its Lockean politics, Defoe’s poem adopts a Hobbesian state of nature. Indeed, Primrose’s prison speech repeats *Jure Divino*’s opening nearly verbatim:

NATURE has left this Tincture in the Blood,  
 That all Men would be Tyrants if they cou’d;  
 If they forbear their Neighbours to devour  
 ’Tis not for want of Will, but want of Power  
 . . .  
 We’re all alike, we’d all ascend the Skies,  
 All would be Kings, all Kings would tyrannize.”<sup>57</sup>

But for Primrose, as well as for Hobbes, the point is precisely that there is only *one* king.

Primrose's endorsement of monarchy as a single-tyrant solution reformulates Hobbes's narrative of why sovereign power comes into being in the first place. In a covenant, explains Hobbes, "inequality was introduc'd by a generall consent" and monarchy reduced that inequality to its absolute minimum.<sup>58</sup> Everyone is equal except to a single person, and that is all it takes to maintain peace. "The inconveniences therefore which attend the Dominion of *one man* must be borne."<sup>59</sup> While Hobbes acknowledges the potential to abuse power—as in the allocation of public funds towards schemes of lustfulness, nepotism, or sheer fickleness—he argues that as any person of power will tend to corruption,<sup>60</sup> what is at issue is simply the number of powerful persons. In a rule of one, "there is a certain limit in private power, which if it exceed, it may prove pernicious to the realm."<sup>61</sup> At its absolute extreme, Hobbes argues, the depravity of a single person would not suffice to harm the entire commonwealth, that is to say, to jeopardize its peace. Primrose's single-tyrant solution reiterates this logic of negativity: one master at the furthest possible remove can only exact so much harm. Far from an antidote to corruption, monarchy is merely its "more tolerable" incarnation.<sup>62</sup>

### 3. BROKEN COVENANT

In Hobbes's version of a social contract, subjects make a covenant not with the sovereign (as in Job 41: "Will he make a covenant with thee?"<sup>63</sup>) but with each other. Hobbes states clearly, "A *Common-wealth* is said to be *Instituted*, when a *Multitude* of men do Agree, and *Covenant*, every one, with every one, that to whatsoever *Man*, or *Assembly of Men*, shall be given by the major part, the *Right to Present* the Person of them all."<sup>64</sup> Imagining the ultimate moment of consent, in which individuals cede their natural freedoms (to take from and kill each other) to a common authority who offers protection from within and without, he casts the social contract as a profoundly unanimous act, "as if every man should say to every man, *I Authorise and give up my Right of Governing my selfe, to this Man, or to this Assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy Right to him, and Authorise all his Actions in like manner.*"<sup>65</sup>

In this political primal scene, each subject takes a leap of faith to give up his freedoms for greater security, a goal attainable only through mutual action (the logic being, *I'm not jumping unless you are* and vice versa). This vision of simultaneous, collective buy-in means that everyone is not beholden to the sovereign (who enforces their contract) but to each other, "bound, every man to every man."<sup>66</sup> The defiance of sovereign power undoes social (not strictly sovereign) trust. Hobbes attributed the war itself to the misprision that subjects are in covenant with the sovereign: the idea that "subjects may resist, conspire, or covenant against the supreme power" when in revolting, they actually break faith with each other.<sup>67</sup>

Jacques Derrida elaborates Hobbes's tenet that "there is no convention, no covenant with God."<sup>68</sup> Of Hobbes's dismissal of those who claim a direct pact

with divinity, Derrida quotes chapter 18 of *Leviathan*: “This pretence of Covenant with God, is so evident a lye, even in the pretenders own consciences, that is not only an act of an unjust, but also a vile, and unmanly disposition.”<sup>69</sup> Derrida writes, “Clearly, Hobbes is very angry, very aggressive, cannot find words hard enough to describe those who in his eyes are guilty of vile lies; they are liars who know that they are lying, they are unjust, cowardly, vile, and unwholesome. Of what are they guilty in their very lie?”<sup>70</sup> The answer for Derrida lies in their rejection of a mediator, that is to say, their rejection of a sovereign, which for Hobbes amounts to a rejection of political life itself: “The mediator [is] the one who intercedes as the (human) lieutenant of God, the one who, standing in for [*tenant lieu de*] God, representing God on earth among men, God made man, as it were, articulating a human politics, a human sovereignty, a human state in accord with God but without an immediate convention with God.”<sup>71</sup> The sovereign fulfills “this concept of standing in, of *lieu-tenance*, of the substitute representative of God in the earthly city of human politics and state.”<sup>72</sup> This model is early featured by James VI of Scotland, later James I of England, who in a 1587 letter to Elizabeth I characterizes the monarch as the “supreme and immediatt lieutenant of Godd in heaven,” whose anointing “can not be defylid” and who is “subjectid to the censoure of none in earth.”<sup>73</sup> Derrida reminds us that for Hobbes, the political sovereign was the only religious mediator who counted: “In every Christian Common-wealth, the Civill Sovereign is the Supreme Pastor, to whose charge the whole flock of his Subjects is committed, and consequently that it is by his authority, that all other Pastors are made.”<sup>74</sup> To the extent that the church acts as a body, it is “*united in the person of one Sovereign; at whose command they ought to assemble, and without whose authority they ought not to assemble.*”<sup>75</sup> What matters in the definition of the word “vicar”—which comes from the Latin *vicārius* and refers to “one who takes the place of, or acts instead of, another; a substitute, representative, or proxy”<sup>76</sup>—is that there is just one.

In *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Goldsmith’s incompetent deputy records a double absence: the monarch (“the one principal governor with the most sacred circumspection” [102]) stands in for a missing god, but the vicar (the self-styled, travestied “legislator” [149]) stands in for a withdrawn monarch.<sup>77</sup> Far from Howard D. Weinbrot’s characterization of Sir William Thornhill as “a powerful secular force,”<sup>78</sup> Sir William functions as the returned emissary of the divine, “that *Mortall God*”<sup>79</sup> who alone secures the commonwealth. As Carl Schmitt made clear, the centerpiece of Hobbes’s philosophy was his adherence to the person of the sovereign.<sup>80</sup> The form of “juristic reality” sought by Hobbes “lies in the concrete decision, one that emanates from a particular authority,” writes Schmitt. The content of the decision is less significant than the subject that makes it: “What matters for the reality of legal life is who decides.”<sup>81</sup>

Schmitt describes juristic form by way of what it is not: it is not an empty transcendental form (“it arises precisely from the juristically concrete”); it is not a technical form (it has no “material and impersonal” goal); and it is not an aesthetic

form (because art “knows no decision”). The juristic form of the sovereign is instead, like the Christian god, both personal and immaterial: “In the theory of the state of the seventeenth century, the monarch is identified with God and has in the state a position exactly analogous to that attributed to God in the Cartesian system of the world.”<sup>82</sup> This theory was pushed through in the prior century. As Jane Rickard writes in her comprehensive study of the writings of James I, “God is speaking through James [who] . . . has particular access to God’s mysteries,” conferring upon “the King’s word both political and spiritual authority, as though he were not only a ruler but also akin to a prophet.”<sup>83</sup>

In a recent study, Peter DeGabriele importantly challenges the notion that Enlightenment writers somehow broke from the seventeenth-century view of “the necessity of sovereign power to the formation of the social bond,” replacing this concern with “a more broadly sociable political realm in which sovereign power is replaced either by the communicative reason of the public sphere, a bourgeois individualism, or disciplinary power.”<sup>84</sup> DeGabriele argues that far from the notion that eighteenth-century sympathy replaced the vertical relation between subject and sovereign with horizontal bonds between individuals, novels of the period express a continued meditation on the shaping of the subject by the threat of sovereign violence, even as they made “the most rigorous attempts . . . to remove it from the political sphere.”<sup>85</sup> This essay emphasizes that for Hobbes and for Goldsmith, the vertical relation between subject and sovereign is not in play during the *formation* of a commonwealth. Where DeGabriele posits (in his reading of David Hume’s *A Treatise of Human Nature* [1739–40]) the doing away with “the Hobbesian necessity of an original moment of compact between sovereign and subject,”<sup>86</sup> I understand *The Vicar of Wakefield* as reminding us of the social compact’s key feature of lateral agreement, however phantasmatically retroacted.

While there is no direct agreement between subjects and sovereign, the relation comes to an end for Hobbes on one occasion: when the commonwealth no longer affords protection. Hobbes writes,

The Obligation of Subjects to the Sovereign, is understood to last as long, and no longer, than the power lasteth, by which he is able to protect them. For the right men have by Nature to protect themselves, when none else can protect them, can by no Covenant be relinquished. The Sovereignty is the Soule of the Common-wealth; which, once departed from the Body, the members doe no more receive their motion from it. The end of Obedience is Protection.<sup>87</sup>

Once individuals must draw on their own resources for the purposes of self-preservation, the body politic (a “common” wealth of moving parts) has come to a standstill. *The Vicar of Wakefield* assumes that death. Its subjects are left not only unprotected but aggressively hounded, imprisoned, molested, and humiliated by the rich and powerful. Only the Odyssean king come back in disguise,

“whose virtues and singularities scarce any were strangers,” can reinstate protection and inspire new life into the social body (168).

Primrose recounts of Sir William’s newly revealed identity, “The poor Mr. Burchell was in reality a man of large fortune and great interest, to whom senates listened with applause, and whom party heard with conviction; who was the friend of his country, but loyal to his king” (168). Thornhill is effectively the king of this novel, and he issues his commandments in the very idiom of sovereign power. To his guilty nephew, now kneeling and “implor[ing] compassion,” he pronounces, “Thy vices, crimes, and ingratitude . . . deserve no tenderness; yet thou shalt not be entirely forsaken, a bare competence shall be supplied, to support the wants of life, but not its follies” (179–80). By the time Sir William scoops up his “heavenly beauty” and dispenses cash gifts all around, he has sprinkled sovereign glitter over the plot, liberating and enriching a son, transforming one daughter from prostitute to wife (that fake marriage license was real!), and turning the other into a lady (“Lady Thornhill”)—not to mention affording “almost instantaneous relief” to the vicar’s burnt arm by exercising his surprising pharmaceutical skills (181). When, at the end of the day, Primrose gives himself a moment to pour “out my heart in gratitude to the giver of joy as well as of sorrow,” he would appear to be giving thanks to Sir William as much as to God, indistinguishable as they are (181). The divine Sir William is no narrative hitch or failing then but an all-purpose plug for social collapse, improbable but presumably total.

#### 4. MARKET-FRIENDSHIPS

We recall that for Hobbes, civic society is not reducible to sociability. As he writes in a footnote to *De Cive*, “Civil societies are not mere meetings, but bonds, to the making whereof faith and compacts are necessary.”<sup>88</sup> Structurally secured social bonds cannot compare to the feeble connections of mere company, attractive mostly for its boost to self-interest or “vain glory,” that always alluring overestimation of one’s own powers.<sup>89</sup> In a world saturated by commerce, “We do not therefore by nature seek society for its own sake,” but pursue what Hobbes calls “market-friendship.”<sup>90</sup> As C. B. Macpherson definitively argued in his still-resonant study of possessive individualism (modernity’s reconceptualization of persons from contributors to a moral or social whole to independent proprietors of their own capacities), Hobbes’s philosophy is premised on the establishment of a possessive market society in which individuals are compelled into a ceaseless grab for (each other’s) power. While this totalizing structure of competition, in which all land and labor are subject to market forces, was still in the making, Macpherson argues that its fundamental transformation of social life had become clear enough to Hobbes and to others in seventeenth-century England, where wage-earning had substantially replaced more paternal forms of relation between workers and owners.<sup>91</sup> In this structure in which “all morality tends to be the

morality of the market" and "common rationality is a tenuous and imprecise quality in comparison with the insecurity and subservience . . . [that lay] just beneath the surface of everyday life," affects, too, are calibrated responses to living in a competitive market society.<sup>92</sup> Monarchism, I am suggesting, was a sentiment of this order, a reaction to an altered field of human relations.

In Goldsmith's case, the world of venal plutocracy and disintegrated social ties is one on the verge of industrial capitalism. As in Hobbes's proleptic vision, monarchy is seen in this reality as warding off more baleful forms of domination. Goldsmith spells out this logic in more explicit socioeconomic terms in his poetry. "The Deserted Village" (1770) portrays the goodness, beauty, and simplicity of natural life as blighted by urbanization, commerce, and the usurpation of rural land by the wealthy. Likewise, "The Traveller; or, a Prospect of Society" (1764) can be read as the historical fulfillment of Hobbesian rupture. Its landscape features "Freedom," whose "charms" "dazzle and endear" and unbind people from each other: "That independence Britons prize too high, / Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie."<sup>93</sup> In "The Traveller," the speaker laments a country in which "all obedience bows to" the "Fictitious bonds . . . of wealth and law—now equivalent forces."<sup>94</sup>

Like Primrose, Goldsmith's Traveller equates the roaring conditions that feature human beings at their worst with a contraction of monarchy: "Contending chiefs blockade the throne, / Contracting regal power to stretch their own."<sup>95</sup> As in Primrose's speech to the partygoers, the Traveller addresses his fellow sufferers: "Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour / When first ambition struck at regal power / And thus, polluting honour in its source, / Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force."<sup>96</sup> The emphasis here is not on the abdication or even defeat of the monarch, but on the betrayal of the many by the few, "a factious band" who "call it freedom, when [only] themselves are free," exploiting those at home and abroad.<sup>97</sup> So jaded is the speaker by the end of the poem's global survey of governments that he winds up in spiritual retreat from politics altogether: "Vain, very vain, my weary search to find / That bliss which only centers in the mind."<sup>98</sup> Rehabilitated in *Vicar*, this burnt-out man of feeling reenters the body politic.

Underpinning Hobbes's complex argument for the benefits of monarchy is the idea that the best form of government is one in which ruler and subjects share the same harms and benefits. A monarch is upheld by the material wellbeing of his or her subjects—their capacity "to maintain themselves and their families, . . . conserve their bodily strength and vigor, . . . [and] to acquire, even by their industry, necessaries to sustain the strength of their bodies and minds."<sup>99</sup> To this end, Hobbes suggests that the monarch who partakes in the overall welfare of his citizenry must not be rich individually but only through the labor of his subjects (the monarch "who, with never so great a stock or measure of riches, is not able to keep his authority or his riches without the bodies of his subjects"<sup>100</sup>). Hobbes's absolute sovereign is paradoxically heteronomous:

Since it was necessary for the preservation of ourselves to be subject to some *Man*, or *Councell*, we cannot on better condition be subject to any, than one whose interest depends upon our safety, and welfare; and this then comes to passe when we are the inheritance of the Ruler; for every man of his own accord endeavours the preservation of his inheritance. But the Lands and Monies of the Subjects are not onely the Princes Treasure, but their bodies, and active minds.<sup>101</sup>

Before Hobbes, James I formulated a political theology of the sovereign in *The True Law of Free Monarchies: The Reciprocal and Mutual Duty Betwixt a Free King and His Natural Subjects*, the 1598 treatise that advanced monarchy as the state closest in form to divinity: a “forme of government, as resembling the Divinitie, approacheth nearest to perfection, as all the learned and wise men from the beginning have agreed upon; Unitie being the perfection of all things.”<sup>102</sup> For our purposes, James’s text not only reinforced his claim for the divine right of kings, as propounded earlier in the *Basilikon Doron* (1597–98), but more pointedly constructed the sovereign as the ultimate man of feeling, whose identity is constituted by the feelings of his subjects and whose interests cannot be separated from theirs. If, in James’s logic, monarchy is a heaven on earth, then the king is not just an imitation of an inhuman godhead but the incarnation of its best blessings in the form of exquisite, self-sacrificing paternal care: “Bound to care for all his subiects,” to take on “all the toile and paine that the father can take for his children,” and “to care for [their] nourishing, education, and vertuous gouernment” even at “the hazard of his owne person.”<sup>103</sup> Only the sovereign—the political theological fusion of his two bodies<sup>104</sup>—achieves a self-erasure that is also the meaning of his power: “Think[ing] all his earthly felicitie and happinesse grounded upon your weale, caring more for himselfe for your sake then for his owne, thinking himselfe onely ordained for your weale.”<sup>105</sup>

Goldsmith’s vicar, like any vicar, takes the temperature of a postlapsarian state beyond God’s direct care. The false compact he decries, like the broken covenant in *Leviathan* that inaugurates a philosophical Kingdom of Darknesse, is a world that bears its dark fruit not only in social structures (a perpetually enslaved or incarcerated working class) but also in metaphysical crises. When in Goldsmith’s terms “the natural ties that bind the rich and the poor together are broken” (87), the affective medium of society is shot through with mistrust. Hobbes explains in his preface to the reader of *De Cive*, “The dispositions of men are naturally such, that except they be restrained through fear of some coercive power, every man will distrust and dread each other; and by natural right he may, so by necessity he will be forced to make use of the strength he hath, toward the preservation of himself.”<sup>106</sup> It is important to note that regression here is not characterized by the event of war but by the *dread* of war. “Distrust” is not conflict (in which you actually can trust that the other party is your adversary) but rather a state of “mutuall fear” and “a certain foresight of future evill.”<sup>107</sup> In a competitive market society, anxiety becomes universal: “A perpetuall solicitude of the time

to come" that results in "a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth only in Death."<sup>108</sup> For Hobbes, what releases people from this state cannot be the belief in or triumph of human rationality but only a mutual secession to an external force—individuals cannot be delivered from distrust and dread "except by compact."<sup>109</sup>

Goldsmith revives Hobbes's arguments, integrating not only the self-regulating function of commerce (what A. O. Hirschman memorably called the triumph of the interests over the passions<sup>110</sup>) but, more importantly for our purposes, his narrative commitment to black-or-white characterization, the delineation of good guys and bad. Such an approach would have defied the established trend in fiction toward a mixed-bag take on human nature—that "mingl[ing of] good and bad qualities" that made Samuel Johnson precisely fear novels' abandonment of romance's starker representations of the wicked as wicked and the good as good.<sup>111</sup> Johnson famously argued that in depicting a natural coexistence of vice and virtue, novels loosen readers' hold on moral distinctions: "We lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness for being united with so much merit."<sup>112</sup> Novelistic failure is therefore built into the allegorical contours of Goldsmith's characters, and yet such a specific (and already much discussed) approach to figuration would also be central to its design. As Henry James wrote in his introduction to a 1900 edition of the novel, "We are tempted to say of *The Vicar of Wakefield* that it has been happy in the manner in which a happy man is happy."<sup>113</sup> "Happiness and misery," "evils or felicities,"<sup>114</sup> vicars and seducers—Goldsmith's novel returns us to the land of heroes and traitors, "deliverers and persecutors," or "beings of another species" that Johnson had described as populating the lost world of heroic romance (with its salubriously remote "machines and expedients"<sup>115</sup>).

## 5. THE PLACE OF GOD

In Goldsmith's updated form, not only do kings and queens belong to this machinery, but a new allegorical construct emerges. Primrose reveals the entrance of a special subject into human society's dismal landscape of masters and slaves: "The People," or "that order of men which subsists between the very rich and the very rabble" (101). If not exactly a player in the narrative action, the middle class are fleshed out theoretically as both too prosperous to serve the wealthy and yet "too poor to set up for tyranny themselves" (102). Only this tranche of humankind is situated outside of a corrupted order. Even Primrose seems to recognize Sir William as an artifact of heroic romance. Hobbes had described the grab for power as unavoidable, leading every individual to pursue domination and acquisition, but Primrose here exempts a bracket of citizenry. Felicitously independent, "this order alone is known to be the true preserver of freedom" (101–2).

In a gesture of philosophical jujitsu, Primrose recasts collective security *as* freedom, opposing terms in Hobbes's account. Threatened from above and disconnected from below, "all that the middle order has left," according to the vicar, "is to preserve the prerogative and privileges of the one principal governor with the most sacred circumspection," i.e., the optimal one-tyrant solution of "monarchy, sacred monarchy; for if there be any thing sacred amongst men, it must be the anointed sovereign of his people, and every diminution of his power in war, or in peace, is an infringement upon the real liberties of the subject" (102–3). No longer the freedom to prosper individually, real liberty is peaceful survival, the enjoyment of "that pleasure and beauty of life, which peace and society are wont to bring with them."<sup>116</sup> Primrose spells out what Hobbes calls "the specious name of Libertie"<sup>117</sup>: "I found that monarchy was the best government for the poor to live in, and [parliamentary] commonwealths for the rich. I found that riches in general were in every country another name for freedom" (121). Reburnishing the concept of freedom, the vicar names the litany of current systemic injustices (incarceration of the poor, bloated legal institutions, a culture of avarice) and fantasizes about a world beyond market-friendship. Even if this fantasy ends in reconfiguring sovereign power as narrative authority, the text's layered monarchism expresses less conservative nostalgia than, as in so much eighteenth-century writing, a desperate attempt at social repair.

Etienne Balibar, writing on the ambiguous necessity of sovereign obedience in the otherwise radically democratic vision of Benedictus de Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670), observes "the impossibility for modern political societies to be entirely contemporaneous with themselves."<sup>118</sup> In Balibar's reading, Spinoza reveals a curious affinity between theocracy and democracy in their assumption of individuals' equal footing before god or the law. Part of what the long road to democracy, or collective authority, tells us (in Spinoza's tracing of the ills and ideals of a modern Dutch republic back to the Hebrews' theological political project) is the persistent need for *figuration*. Balibar writes that an "imaginary method of establishing democracy is, perhaps, the only way in which it can begin to exist. But it supposes a figuration."<sup>119</sup> In Goldsmith's anachronistic approach to fictional character, a vicar fills in, stands for, takes the place of—restaging the magical, originating moment of social compact, when force becomes protection, the multitude a state. "The *place of God*," writes Balibar, "must both be given a material form and left vacant if it is to house an authority that can transform the rules of social life into a set of sacred obligations. Can such a place be occupied by 'no one'?"<sup>120</sup> In Bender's analysis, the literary form of Austenian narration proves exactly that it can. Free indirect discourse, he writes, is the "textual ideology" of the modern state's "impersonal network of laws, rules, parties, and bureaucratic procedures that intersperse authority throughout everyday life."<sup>121</sup> In other words, the key feature of free indirect discourse, "transparency," is like the spectral "no one" that holds the reins of democracy in Balibar's analysis,

a source of authority that must be both empty and real. In its residual commitment to figuration, *The Vicar of Wakefield* insists that what is more important than the impersonality of power is its testament to dereliction—the vacancy that is the result of moral and political abandonment, a series of failures that cannot and perhaps should not be filled in with novelistic technique.<sup>122</sup>

## NOTES

1. See Robert Hopkins, *The True Genius of Oliver Goldsmith* (Baltimore, 1969). Hopkins reads *Vicar* not as a sentimental novel but as a scathing satire.

2. Thomas Hobbes, *De Cive: The English Version* [1642], ed. Howard Warrender, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1983), 41.

3. Hobbes, *Leviathan: The English and Latin Texts* [1641], ed. Noel Malcolm, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes, vols. 3–5 (Oxford, 2012), 4:210.

4. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 130.

5. My use of this phrase comes from D. W. Harding, *The Impulse to Dominate* (London, 1941).

6. Revisionary new scholarship on Oliver Goldsmith's life and writing establishes the singularity and slipperiness of his politics and personality. See Norma Clarke's *Brothers of the Quill: Oliver Goldsmith in Grub Street* (Cambridge, Mass., 2016); and Michael Griffin, *Enlightenment in Ruins: The Geographies of Oliver Goldsmith* (Lewisburg, 2013).

7. See Ildiko Csengai, *Sympathy, Sensibility and the Literature of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Houndmills, 2012). Csengai reads Sir William as a figure of "pathological dependence," Hegelian domination, and Freudian narcissism—a case of failed relationality in which others can only be recognized as objects of the ego (131–32). See also Margaret Anderson, "Stoic Constructions of Virtue in *The Vicar of Wakefield*," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 69, no. 3 (July 2008): 419–39. Anderson's revisionary account of the compatibility between Stoicism and sentimental ethics in *Vicar*, while focused on Primrose, casts Thornhill as an exemplar of philosophic virtue whose industrious benevolence "prevents the Stoic sage from falling into the apathetic passivity that his famous indifference would seem to produce" (438).

8. Vivasvan Soni, *Mourning Happiness: Narrative and the Politics of Modernity* (Ithaca, 2010), 278.

9. Soni, 279.

10. John Bender, *Ends of Enlightenment* (Stanford, 2012), 141. For Bender's historical analysis of populist visions of an "enlightened monarch," he draws on E. P. Thompson, "Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class?," *Social History* 3, no. 2 (1978): 133–65. Thompson argues there that what Whigs feared was not the absolute authority of the crown but, rather, notions of a "patriot king" whose impartiality would absorb the impersonal workings of a modern bureaucratic state in league with the self-regulation of a free market (140).

11. Bender, 146.

12. Bender, 143.

13. Soni, 278.

14. Henry James, "Henry James's Introduction to *The Vicar of Wakefield*, 1900," in *Oliver Goldsmith: The Critical Heritage*, ed. G. S. Rousseau (London, 1974), 65–69, 68.

15. George Eliot, "George Eliot on Story Telling and Narrative Art in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, in *Essays and Leaves from a Notebook*, Edinburgh, 1884," in *Critical Heritage*, 63–64, 64.

16. Oliver Goldsmith, "Advertisement" to *The Vicar of Wakefield* [1766], in *Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith*, 5 vols., ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford, 1966), 4:3–184, 14.

17. Unsigned Notice, *Monthly Review*, 27 May 1766, in *Critical Heritage*, 44.

18. James, preface to *The Ambassadors* [1903] (New York, 1964), 13.
19. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:85.
20. Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, "Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author" [1710], in *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. Lawrence E. Klein (Cambridge, 1999), 70–162, 94–95.
21. See John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: the Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1988). Responding to Hopkins, Mullan counters that to read *Vicar* as satire "leaves us with a history of 'misreadings'" since most of its readers fully embraced the story. Mullan continues, "Where there had been an audience willing to accept Pamela's account of her own modesty, it is hardly surprising that there were readers for whom Primrose's celebration of his own humility did not look like Goldsmith's satire" (139).
22. Claudia Brodsky, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle of Death: (Anti-)Sociability in Goethe's *Werther* and Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*," in *Einsamkeit und Geselligkeit um 1800*, ed. S. Schmid and R. Emig (Hamburg, 2008), 31–40, 35.
23. Mullan, 32.
24. Sean Gaston, "The Impossibility of Sympathy," *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 51, nos. 1–2 (2010): 129–52, 141.
25. Gaston, 137.
26. Shaftesbury, 42.
27. For close readings of Hobbes within eighteenth-century studies, see especially Helen Thompson, *Ingenious Subjection: Compliance and Power in the Eighteenth-Century Domestic Novel* (Philadelphia, 2005); and Jonathan Kramnick, *Actions and Objects from Hobbes to Richardson* (Stanford, 2010).
28. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:193.
29. Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660–1780*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 2005), 1:21.
30. Fred Kaplan, *Sacred Tears: Sentimentality in Victorian Literature* (Princeton, 1987), 34. In his study of the connections between eighteenth-century sentimentalism and Victorian literature, Kaplan describes at length how much the "Victorians loved *The Vicar of Wakefield*" (35). Where texts like Henry Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* (1771) had lost much of their currency by the nineteenth century, Goldsmith's "Dr. Primrose seemed a paragon of virtue whose adventures exemplify the good heart and the moral sentiments, and to see virtue was not only to admire but to love it" (34).
31. Goldsmith, "The Traveller, or a Prospect of Society" [1764], in *Collected Works*, 4:243–69, lines 385–86.
32. Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York, 2012), 72. "Nothing," writes Alexander, "has contributed more to the systemic mass incarceration of people of color in the United States than the War on Drugs" (60). According to Alexander's research, between 1980 and 2000, the number of incarcerated persons rose from three hundred thousand to two million and mainly consisted of those arrested for nonviolent, minor offenses like marijuana possession (60).
33. See Paula Backscheider, "The Verse Essay, John Locke, and Defoe's *Jure Divino*," *ELH* 55, no. 1 (1988): 99–124, 114. Backscheider demonstrates the influence of Fulke Greville's poem on Daniel Defoe's *Jure Divino* (1706) and, in a close examination of the verse essay form as an optimal vehicle for delivering philosophical arguments, observes the historical intimacy between literary form and the debate over monarchy—in Defoe's case, the view that "absolute, hereditary monarchy [is] a mortal threat to human happiness, the Protestant religion, property, and civil rights" (109).
34. Fulke Greville, *A Treatise of Monarchy*, in *The Remains of Sir Fulk Grevil Lord Brooke: Being Poems of Monarchy and Religion* (London, 1670), sec. 15, line 658. Subsequent references will be to section and line numbers.
35. Greville, 15.650.
36. Greville, 15.653.

37. Greville, 15.649.
38. Job 41:15 (Authorized King James Version).
39. Greville, 15.642.
40. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 5:21.
41. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:16.
42. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:260.
43. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 5:740.
44. Richard Tuck, *The Sleeping Sovereign: the Invention of Modern Democracy* (Cambridge, 2016), 96.
45. Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, ed. Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge, 1998), 95, quoted in Tuck, 98.
46. Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, 95, quoted in Tuck, 196.
47. Backscheider, 114.
48. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 132.
49. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 135.
50. Roberto Esposito, *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Stanford, 13).
51. Esposito, 25.
52. Esposito, 27.
53. Esposito, 14.
54. Esposito, 14.
55. Esposito, 14. See also C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford, 1962). Macpherson, too, isolates this pessimism as a kind of blind spot for Hobbes, what made him fail to see the possibility of solidarity in a market structure made for interest groups. But if Hobbes failed (or refused) to recognize opportunities for productive nonsovereign relations, the very hopelessness of that occlusion resounded into the next century.
56. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge, 1988), 270–71.
57. Defoe, introduction to *Jure Divino: A Satyr in Twelve Books* (London, 1706), i–iv, i.
58. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 132.
59. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 132; italics in the original.
60. Hobbes writes, “I confess this is a grievance, but of the number of those which accompany all kinds of government” (*De Cive*, 133).
61. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 134.
62. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 133.
63. Job 41:4 (Authorized King James Version).
64. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:264.
65. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:260.
66. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:265.
67. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 21.
68. Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign*, 2 vols., ed. Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet, and Genette Michaud, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago, 2009–11), 1:50.
69. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:266, quoted in Derrida, 1:50.
70. Derrida, 1:51.
71. Derrida, 1:52.
72. Derrida, 1:52.
73. James VI of Scotland to Elizabeth I of England, January 26, 1587, in *King James’s Secret; Negotiations Between Elizabeth and James VI. Relating to the Execution of Mary Queen of Scots, from the Warrender Papers*, ed. Robert S. Rait and A. I. Cameron (London, 1927), 180, quoted in Jane Rickard, *Authorship and Authority: The Writings of James VI and I* (Manchester, 2007), 89.
74. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 5:852.

75. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 5:732.

76. See *OED Online* [Oxford University Press], s.v. “vicar, *n.*,” [www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com).

77. Hobbes expresses his skepticism of any self-styled “vicar” in his long rebuttal of Robert Bellarmine’s defense of papal powers over civil sovereigns: “For though the Pope were Christ’s onely Vicar, yet he cannot exercise his government, till our Saviour’s second coming: And then also it is not the Pope, but St. Peter himselfe, with the other Apostles, that are to be Judges of the world” (*Leviathan*, 3:316). See Patricia Springborg, “Thomas Hobbes and Cardinal Bellarmine: *Leviathan* and ‘The Ghost of the Roman Empire,’” *History of Political Thought* 16, no. 4 (1995): 503–31.

78. Howard D. Weinbrot, “*The Vicar of Wakefield* and Genre: Goldsmith Through Crane, Conte, and the Complex Plot,” *The Age of Johnson* 22 (2012): 145–62, 155.

79. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:260.

80. See Carl Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes*, trans. George Schwab and Erna Hilfstein (Chicago, 1996). A commitment to a single, personalized sovereign also explains for Schmitt his representation of the commonwealth as “an immense person” in the famous frontispiece by Abraham Bosse of the populated body of Charles II (47).

81. Schmitt, 34.

82. Schmitt, 46.

83. Rickard, 81.

84. Peter DeGabriele, *Sovereign Power and the Enlightenment: Eighteenth-Century Literature and the Problem of the Political* (Lewisburg, 2015), xxvi.

85. DeGabriele, *Sovereign Power*, xxvii–xxviii.

86. DeGabriele, “Sympathy for the Sovereign: Sovereignty, Sympathy, and the Colonial Relation in Edward Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,” *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 53, no. 1 (2012): 1–22, 4. DeGabriele’s reading, in taking up the questioned status of the King “as personal sovereign” (“Sympathy for the Sovereign,” 3), expands on J. G. A. Pocock’s account of monarchy under George III (1763–83) as a “crisis within the realm, and interrelatedly a crisis in the relations between realm and empire” (“Political Thought in the English-Speaking Atlantic, 1760–1790, Part 2: Empire, Revolution and the End of Early Modernity,” in *Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500–1800*, ed. Pocock, Gordon J. Schochet, and Lois Schworer [Cambridge, 1994], 283–320, 285, quoted in DeGabriele, “Sympathy for the Sovereign,” 3.) For DeGabriele, “a fundamental disjunction between the happiness of the sovereign and his subjects” forms “a caesura at the center of political society” (“Sympathy for the Sovereign,” 3).

87. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:344.

88. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 110n.

89. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 114.

90. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 111.

91. See Macpherson, especially the section entitled “Hobbes and the Possessive Model” (61–68).

92. Macpherson, 85–86, 88. For a reading of affects as responses, see Wendy Anne Lee, “The Scandal of Insensibility; or, The *Bartleby* Problem,” *PMLA* 130, no. 5 (2015): 1405–19.

93. Goldsmith, “The Traveller,” lines 339–40. Subsequent references will be to line numbers.

94. Goldsmith, “The Traveller,” 351–53.

95. Goldsmith, “The Traveller,” 380–81.

96. Goldsmith, “The Traveller,” 393–94.

97. Goldsmith, “The Traveller,” 384.

98. Goldsmith, “The Traveller,” 423–24.

99. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 223.

100. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 223.

101. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 140.

102. James I, *The True Law of Free Monarchies: The Reciprocal and Mutual Duty Betwixt a Free King and His Natural Subjects* (London, 1603), 1.
103. James I, 8.
104. See Ernst Kantorowicz's classic exposition of the medieval political theology of "the king's two bodies" (one natural and mortal, the other political and perpetual) in *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1958).
105. James I, 8.
106. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 99.
107. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 45.
108. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 164.
109. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 101.
110. See A. O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism Before Its Triumph* (Princeton, 1977).
111. Samuel Johnson, *The Rambler* No. 4 [March 31, 1750], in *The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, vols. 3–5: *The Rambler*, ed. W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss (New Haven, 1969), 3:19–24, 23.
112. Johnson, 23.
113. James, "Introduction to *The Vicar of Wakefield*," 66.
114. The quoted phrases are drawn from the subtitle to chap. 28: "Happiness and misery rather the result of prudence than of virtue in this life. Temporal evils or felicities being regarded by heaven as things merely in themselves trifling and unworthy its care in the distribution" (151).
115. Johnson, 19.
116. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 118.
117. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4:110.
118. Etienne Balibar, *Spinoza and Politics*, trans. Peter Snowdon (London, 2008), 46.
119. Balibar, 47.
120. Balibar, 47.
121. Bender, 142–43.
122. On Goldsmith's abandonment of the novel form and return to the redemptive genre of comedy, see my reading of *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) in Lee, "The Man of No Feeling," chap. 3 in *Failures of Feeling: Insensibility and the Novel* (Stanford, 2019), 91–124.