



The Empire of your Virtues Reacheth Far”*: Oliver Cromwell and the Imperial Protectorship

Jordan S. Sly

University of Maryland

jsly@umd.edu

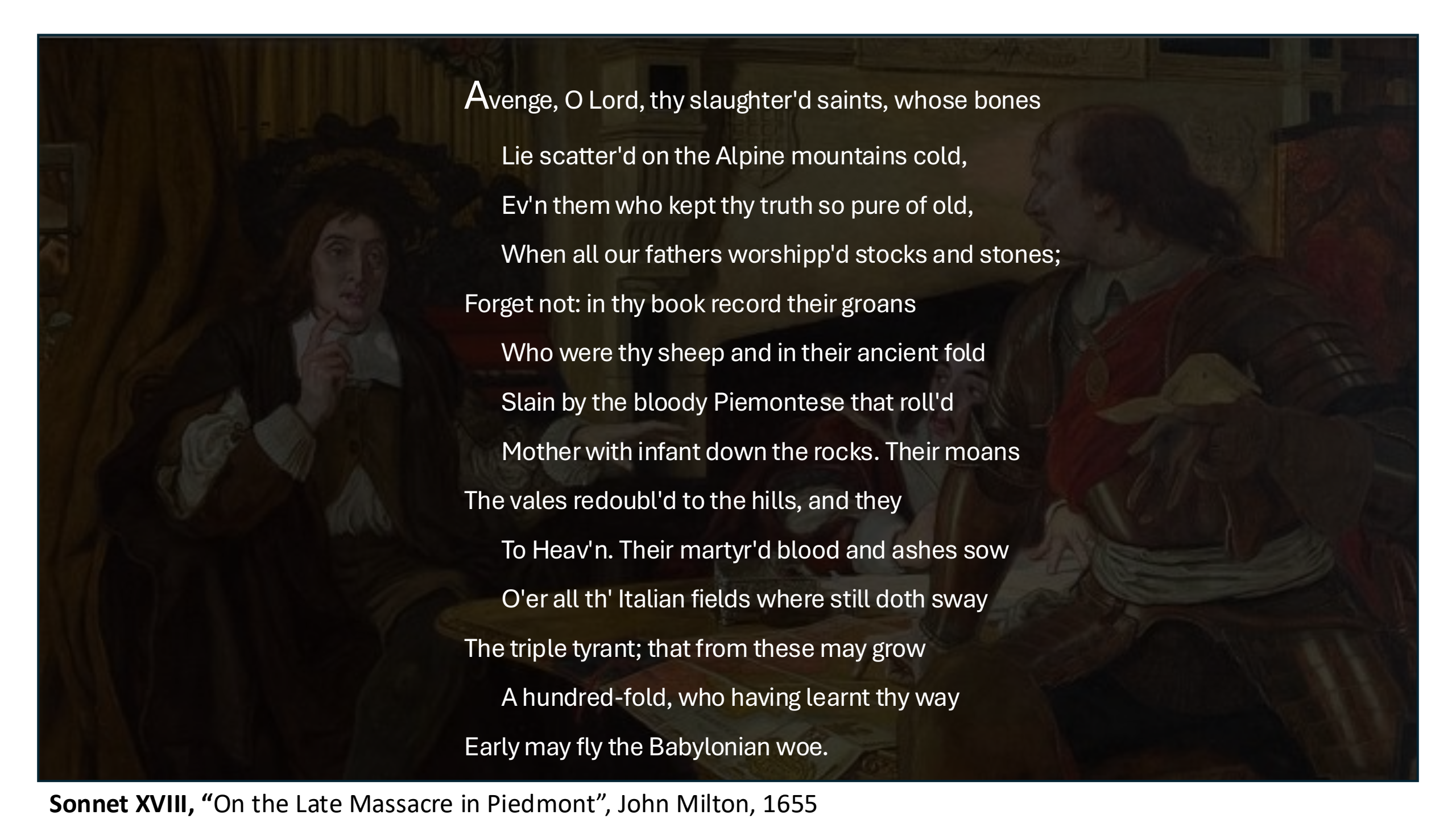
Mid-Atlantic Conference on British Studies | NYC, 20
March 2026

*Payne Fisher, *Veni; Vidi; Vici. The Triumphs of the Most Excellent & Illustrious Oliver Cromwell, &c. Set forth in a Panegyricke...*, 1652. Wing/ F1044 (EEBO, Huntingdon unstructured), 72.

Left, frontispiece from Nedham’s 1652 translation of John Selden’s *Mare Clausum*.



Ford Maddox Brown: 1877, *Cromwell, Protector of the Vaudois*



Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold,
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones;
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubl'd to the hills, and they
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who having learnt thy way
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

Paris the 2. June, 1655.

Hee that writes to you from Germany, must not make ^{more} haste then good speed: I believe that all y^e trading of Blake in y^e Mediterranean Sea, is but a preparative to the designe, wch hee aimes, at wee should set upon; but hee must not have his Chickens live, before they are hatched. I looke upon matters as Prudently laid; & wch could not bee so soone attempted, & believe y^e Providence will open a dore to y^e worke, before wee can bee well reddie for it: this busi^{ness} of Piemont may happily become a dore unto it, if his High^{ness} as is reported, hath given Blake a Commission against Savoye. From Geneva one of the chief^{est} Pastors, writes to M^r. Tury, of the 28. May: stil: vet:

John Pell to Samuel Hartlib, 1655 (extracted)

"I looke upon matters as prudently laid; & weh could not bee so soone attempted, & believe the Providence *will open a dore to the worke*, before wee can bee well reddie for it: *this business of Piemont may happily become a dore unto it*, if his Highness as is reported, hath given Blake a Commission against Savoye...

ly entreated in y^e name of all y^e Reformed in this Towne & Country, that you will please to insinuate their Case unto his High^{ness}. (whom G. seemes to have raised not only to bee the Prot. of the Commonwealth of Engl: but likewise of y^e Gospels Cause, & of the true Protestant Religion) to oblige y^e said King in his Treatises with him, y^e y^e Reformed in this Towne

Hartlib in reply:

"...you will please to insinuate their case unto his Highness (whom God seems to have raised not only to bee the Protector of the Commonwealth of England but likewise of the Gospels Cause and of the True Protestant Religion)..."

to the Roman. There is passed by an Envoyee^a with eight in company, who goes from Cromwell to Sauoye and called at the French court to know if they auowed the massacre in Sauoy of the Protestants. The French Court (and I am sure

^a Samuel Morland, at this time an Assistant-Secretary under Thurloe; knt. and bart. in 1660, and Gent. of the Privy Chamber. He left London for his mission on 26 May, and, after treating with Louis XIV. and Mazarin at La Fère, reached Rivoli on 21 June and remained there and at Turin until 19 July.

Christopher Hatton, first Baron Hatton to Sir Edward Nicholas: “The French Court (and I am sure the people here) crie out of it and it is like to have great effects; for Cromwell, they say, upon this occasion entends to make himself protector of the Protestant party of Europe...”

344

NICHOLAS PAPERS.

1655. the people heere) crie out of it and it is like to haue great effects; for Cromwell, they say, vpon this occasion entends to make himselfe protector of the Protestant party ouer Europe, and the Huguenotes heere looke high. The wisest I heere of in England beleeeue Cromwell seekes now a quarrell with Spaine for a pretext for the Indies, and he hath demanded the cessation of the Inquisition proceedings against Protestants. It is miraculous that Spaine and France will

A
MANIFESTO
OF THE
LORD PROTECTOR

OF THE
Commonwealth of *England, Scotland,
Ireland, &c.*

Published by Consent and Advice of his
Council.

Wherein is shewn the Reasonableness of the
Cause of this Republic against the Depre-
dations of the *Spaniards*.

Written in *Latin* by JOHN MILTON, and first
printed in 1655, now translated into *English*.

*Whence is it that the proud Iberian, thus,
In their own well-asserted Element,
Dares rouse to Wrath the MASTERS OF THE MAIN?
Who told him, that the big incumbent War
Would not, e'er this, have roll'd his trembling Ports,
In smoky Ruin? —* BRITANNIA.

To which is added,
Britannia, a Poem; by Mr. Thomson, first
published in 1727.

LONDON:
Printed for, and Sold by A. MILLAR, at *Buchan-
nan's Head*, over against *St. Clement's Church* in
the *Strand*. 1738.
(Price Six-Pence.)



**Hither th' oppressed shall henceforth resort
Justice to crave, and succour at your Court,
And then your Highness, not for ours alone,
But for the Worlds Protector shall be known.**

-Edmund Waller, "A Panegyrick to my Lord Protector"
1655, Wing/W507, p. 3



POURTRAITURE
OF HIS
Royal Highness,
OLIVER
LATE *Cromwell*
Lord Protector &c.

In His
LIFE and DEATH;
With a short View
OF HIS
GOVERNMENT.

*As also a Description of his standing and
lying in State at Sommerfet-house,*