

John Milton

John Milton was born on December 9, 1698, in London. Milton was educated at Cambridge University. He grew up to have bold and radical ideas about an infinite amount of political issues. However he concentrated much more on poetry than the academic life he had been set for. He had three wives, two of whom all died, three daughters and a dead infant son. Interestingly he was good friends with Cromwell and played a large part in the Commonwealth period. Milton also became blind for the last twenty years of his life due to Glaucoma. However before this he travelled to Italy where he studied and met such figures as Galileo. ✓

Government

During the Civil war many took it upon themselves to publish their own ideas and views on the war in pamphlets, and Milton was no exception. He wrote many pamphlets that were very bold for his time and included such quotes, as; "Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind". Milton was a Republican during a time of absolute monarchies.

Religion and philosophy

Milton as far as we know was a Protestant however explored and mentions many other various religious ideas in his work such as Arminianism and Socinianism which said that Jesus was not divine. Milton also wrote about the idea that your soul dies with your body in his most famous work, Paradise Lost, which is called mortalism. Milton was also a monism which is the notion that a single material substance which is "animate, self-active, and free" composes everything in the universe. = ?

Famous Work

Milton's most famous work was his poem called Paradise Lost. The Poem is about the story of Adam and Eve from Satan's point of view, who is portrayed sympathetically, in order to show us how easy it is to give into sin. Paradise Lost has also been commented to exemplify Milton's own disappointment with the failure of revolution but yet shows optimism for the human potential. ✓

Pamphlets

Milton's pamphlets had an array of different context. Milton produced many, defending such issues as divorce and protesting for its legality and morality. He also supported the Presbyterians in their attempt to reform the Church of England and created pamphlets attacking the Church of England and Archbishop William Laud. In 1649 he wrote "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates", which supported independents who imprisoned the King. In the pamphlet he declared that subjects might depose and put to death an unworthy king. This pamphlet secured Milton a position in Cromwell's government as Latin secretary for foreign affairs. Milton continued to defend Cromwell and the Commonwealth in such pamphlets as "Eikonoklastes". ✓

Aftermath

After the Civil War Milton emerged as a main figurehead for the new beginning of the country in poetry, beliefs and a root supporter of the commonwealth. He supported not only this but independents who had arrested and put Charles on trial, but also Cromwell himself and the idea of Revolution. However upon the Restoration in May 1660 Milton went into hiding due to a warrant being sent out for his life. His works were ordered to be burnt, and many of them perished at public fires of "free speech" literary. Nevertheless on a public pardon in he emerged yet was imprisoned for a while then influential friends intervened. Milton spends the rest of his life quietly living in London with his wife Elizabeth. He later dies on February 24, 1663 due to kidney failure. ✓

Threat to the Commonwealth

Milton was a great supporter of the Commonwealth and its not believed he was ever a main rival or threat to its progress. However if Milton had been opposed to it he may have had some influential techniques such as his poems and pamphlets to get the message across. He was a key figurehead along with Cromwell throughout this revolutionary period and he expresses his thoughts and beliefs through this time in such poems as "Paradise Lost". People looked to him for guidance in this time of break through and out-of-step ideas.

A sound effort Claire on a difficult topic. You have made a good attempt to present his ideas and overall significance.

18/20 (A)