MILLENNARIANISM IN BROMLEY-BY-BOW:
QUIRINUS KUHLMANN AND THE STUARTS

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On 2 February 1684/5 Charles II, King of England, Scotland and Ireland, suffered a stroke and died in London four days later.¹ The fifty-four-year old monarch had a number of children, but no legitimate heir, and the crown passed to his younger brother James, Duke of York. The event was greeted with trepidation by many of the new king’s subjects because James was a professing Roman Catholic, and fears of a return to state Catholicism had been reflected in the Exclusion Crisis, attempts by Parliament to bar James from the succession, which had occupied the country from 1679. The German poet Quirinus Kuhlmann, then residing in Amsterdam, wrote two poems to mark the events of spring 1684/5: ‘Nun ist di grosse stund, Elender Carl, gekommen!’ and ‘Nun ist di grosse stund’, verworffner Jacob, kommen!’, in which he castigates the brothers and stakes his own claim to their ‘Kron, Hutt und Zepter’.² This article considers this claim by an itinerant merchant’s son from Breslau³ within the context of Kuhlmann’s verse autobiography, the Kühlpsalter, and against the background of the Nonconformists who were so vociferous during the Interregnum and the years following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. It offers a close reading of three related poems, demonstrating both Kuhlmann’s engagement with contemporary political events and the rich poetical processes of his often troubling mind.
Kuhlmann made the first of three journeys to Britain in March 1675/6, lodging initially with Edward Richardson, a clergyman he had known in Amsterdam. He had spent several years in the Netherlands, first in Leiden, where he continued his jurisprudence studies begun in Jena, and then in Amsterdam. For a young man who, as a teenager, had experienced religious visions, this period was life-changing, and Adelung identifies it as a fateful turning-point: ‘so daß ... aus dem Sonderlinge nunmehr ein erklärter Fantast der ersten Größe ward’. Kuhlmann read the writings of the theosophist Jakob Boehme and responded in 1674 with his Neubegeisterter Böhme, a work which also acknowledges his debt to the second important figure from this period, Johann Rothe, who presented himself as God’s chosen messenger for the approaching Millennium. Rothe seems at first to have encouraged Kuhlmann to consider himself the key figure in his prophecies, and Kuhlmann adopted the persona of ‘Jesuel’, the son of the Son of God, who would unite Europe under a ‘Kühlmonarchie’, the fifth monarchy of the Old Testament prophecies, which would precede the Second Coming and the end of the world. Kuhlmann, in turn, regarded Rothe as his ‘Kühl-Johannem’, John the Baptist to his own messianic figure, although the men eventually quarrelled, a recurring pattern for Kuhlmann and his supporters. Kuhlmann also read a work translated and edited by the philosopher and pedagogue Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius), Lux e tenebris, which contained prophecies by three Bohemians: Kryštofer Kotter, Mikuláš Drabík and Krystyna Poniatowska. These foretold the defeat of the Roman Catholic church, which would be brought about partially by the conversion and subsequent cooperation of the Turk. Kuhlmann adopted these writers as his ‘Kühlpropheten’, claiming that various events in his life mirrored their prophecies.
Kuhlmann came to England towards the beginning of his messianic travels, and here laid out his aim of uniting the Reformed confessions and overthrowing the papacy in the *General London Epistle*, describing his vocation in alchemical terms: ‘It was for this I was born, and called before I was born, that I might change *Babylon* into Gold, without the use of any material Sword, whether of Steel or of Lead…’.

He left London in 1678 to attempt to convert the Turkish Sultan:

> For the sixth Angel, poured forth through the fore-runners of the most High, the *Prophets, Wise-men, and Scripture-learned*, *his Vial*, by declaring that the Ruin of the Dragon, Leopard-Bear, and Lamb-Dragon is come, in this sixth Judgment, and that the Eastern Monarch, who is to execute the same, shall be converted, and that the lost Tribes of the Jews, shall (to the great Commotion of the whole World) of a sudden appear, and assist at the fore-said Execution. *Upon the great River Euphrates* of the Asiatick, as well as European *Babylon*. *(General London Epistle, § 59, p. 27)*

The belief that the conversion of Muslims and Jews would help to defeat Roman Catholicism and usher in the Millennium, a key point in the writings of his ‘*Kühlpropheten*’, was not unusual in this period. Kuhlmann was not even the only Nonconformist to attempt to bring it about: around 1658 Mary Fisher, an English Quaker, had been granted an audience with Sultan Mehmed IV at Adrianopolis, where she had been courteously received. Kuhlmann was not so fortunate. He sailed via France and Malta to Smyrna, but was refused permission to see the Grand Agha. He sailed on to Constantinople without the rather troublesome common-law wife and step-children he had acquired in Lübeck, but the Sultan was not in the city.
because of a plague, and Kuhlmann was whipped and sent packing. He travelled back to various European cities, returning twice to London, before undertaking what was to be his final journey to Moscow, where he arrived in April 1689. Within a month he and his supporter, the merchant Konrad Nordermann, were arrested, tried for heresy, not least because of the copy of Lux e tenebris that Kuhlmann carried, accused of Quakerism, and burned as dangerous fanatics in Red Square in October of the same year.

Adelung suggests that the original motivation for Kuhlmann crossing the English Channel was financial: unable to live on what he had extracted from Christian Werner, his Mennonite supporter in Lübeck, Kuhlmann decided to travel to London ‘wo die damahls überall herrschende Schwärmerey ihm eine reichere Aernte versprach’. It is the case that Kuhlmann found financial support in London, not least from John Bathurst, a gentleman resident in Islington, who opened his Bromley-by-Bow house to Kuhlmann and at least partially financed his voyage to Turkey, and with whom Kuhlmann corresponded even after Bathurst sailed to Jamaica, where he appears to have owned a plantation. And Restoration England certainly proved fertile soil for Kuhlmann’s ideas. The Civil War, Republic and Protectorate had seen the rise of a number of Nonconformist groups, including the Diggers, the Ranters, the Muggletonians, the Quakers, and the Fifth Monarchy Men, and Bernard Capp has pointed out that there were a number of cases of people claiming to be Christ, Abraham or other biblical figures, most famously the Muggletonians John Reeve and Lodowicke Muggleton, who claimed to be the two witnesses from Revelation 11, while the Quaker James Nayler was punished for blasphemy after staging a triumphal entry into Bristol on Palm Sunday 1656.
‘Millenarianism meant not alienation from the spirit of the age, but a total involvement with it,’ notes William Lamont. These groups largely survived into the Restoration period, although their fortunes fluctuated as, by turns, they were granted varying degrees of toleration or suffered the enforced limitation of their conventicles, depending on which way the political wind was blowing.

Kuhlmann had already felt an affinity with English Nonconformists. His mentor, Rothe, had lived in England and associated with the Fifth Monarchy Men, political radicals often belonging to other religious groups. They took their name from the Old Testament prophecy of Daniel, which outlines the four temporal monarchies and the fifth, divinely-established kingdom. Kuhlmann also shared common sources with several English groups. Rosicrucianism had made inroads into English thought, for example by association with John Dee, and the Flemish alchemist, Franciscus Mercurius van Helmont, who lived in London and was acquainted with Kuhlmann, was a friend of Christian Knorr von Rosenroth. Komenský had been in England in the early 1640s, promoted by the circle around the Anglo-German intellectual Samuel Hartlib, and Lux in tenebris, later revised and republished as Lux e tenebris, was translated into English in 1664. Boehme’s works were read and known, not least by the Cambridge philosopher Henry More and the Anglican priest John Pordage, who would later found the Philadelphia Society together with Jane Leade, drawing extensively on Boehme’s texts. Statements about Boehme’s influence on George Fox appear to have been greatly exaggerated, but contemporary critics such as Richard Baxter grouped Behmenists and Quakers together, despite the fact that some Quakers wrote anti-Behmenist tracts, and Kuhlmann was certainly linked with Quakerism by some of his
opponents. Quaker communities were founded in Northern Germany and the Netherlands from the middle of the century, Kuhlmann’s fellow Silesian Hilarius Prache had become a Quaker in London, and van Helmont occasionally attended meetings of the Friends.

London, ‘Ort der Lichteswunder’, was particularly fertile ground for the proliferation of chiliastic religious sects because of the nation’s political upheavals, particularly the execution of Charles I in January 1648/9, which suggested to some contemporaries that they were living in end times. The Fifth Monarchy Men were a particularly significant presence in the 1650s. A number sat in Barebones Parliament (1653), including the man for whom it was nicknamed, Praise-God Barebone, but Capp notes that, after it was dissolved, many became disillusioned with the ensuing Protectorate. When the monarchy was restored, they saw another opportunity, and in January 1660/61 fifty of them marched on London, but were defeated after four days, and their leaders executed. Rothe was in London and witnessed these events. The fortunes of Nonconformists following the Restoration rather fluctuated. In 1664 and 1670 Conventicle Acts prohibited religious gatherings of more than five people outside the established church. In 1672 these restrictions were relaxed under the Declaration of Indulgence, which allowed greater freedom of worship for both Catholics and Nonconformists. However, the Cavalier Parliament of the following year repealed this Declaration: anyone holding public office was henceforth required to profess allegiance to Anglicanism and to deny the doctrine of the real presence in the Eucharist. James fell foul of this Test Act, which, together with his marriage to Mary of Modena in the same year, contributed to the Exclusion Crisis which occupied several abrogated parliaments and the pens of numerous
writers in the late 1670s, and was prompted by the infamous (and fabricated) ‘Popish plot’ of 1678. Between 1679 and 1681 Charles II used his royal prerogative to dissolve three parliaments to block the bill, and no parliament sat during the last four years of his reign. Keeble states that Nonconformists, often Whig supporters, were subjected in this period to a Tory backlash, and prosecution and persecution of Dissenters reached a new high. 38

Kuhlmann’s response to these events is found primarily in the Kühlpsalter, a tiny but tightly-packed volume with a type area of around 108 by 55 mm. 39 The title shows the work’s intended link to the biblical psalter, and in the first Kühlpsalm Kuhlmann explicitly describes his writing as ‘Davidisiren’. 40 The ‘Kühl’ element refers to his name, but to call it a pun would be to misunderstand how Kuhlmann regarded his own biography. He saw providential links between his life and biblical and contemporary prophecies, and adopted the pseudonym ‘Refrigerator’ to illustrate that his monarchy would bring cooling, an allusion to the time of refreshing in Acts 3. 20. 41 The Kühlpsalter was published between 1684 and 1686 in Amsterdam in three parts, divided into eight books. 42 Each book is preceded by a preface, and each poem by a prose description, which locates Kuhlmann temporally and geographically at the time of writing, 43 tells the reader something of his mood, gives clues to interpreting the poem, or points forward to later events. For example, the prose preface to Kühlpsalm 13, apparently written in Bromley-by-Bow in June 1677, refers to a rift with Bathurst that had not then taken place. 44 It foretells Jesuel’s betrayal by the Dathan of the Thames (Bathurst), the Korah of Amsterdam (Friedrich Brekling), and the Abiram of the Seine (Stephan Polier), referring to his friends and supporters as the three men from the Book of Numbers who were
swallowed up by the earth as punishment for rebelling against Moses and Aaron \((KP, I, 38)\). The same reference occurs in the preface to Kühlpsalm 79, written in December 1681 \((KP, II, 111)\), which suggests that Kuhlmann continued to edit and rewrite his poems. Volker Meid has noted the importance of names for Kuhlmann’s writing.\(^{45}\) He often alludes to the meanings of his own names — this accounts for the proliferation of references to the number five from Quirinus, as well as to wordplays on the notion of cooling — and the names of people he encountered. Occasionally these function as puns: Bathurst becomes ‘Badhors(e)’, for example in Kühlpsalm 93 \((KP, II, 181, \text{preface and l. 2326 [14326]})\). But, as Meid notes, there is also a belief in the correlation between name and essence, influenced, in part, by Boehme’s theory of signatures.\(^{46}\) Details of Kuhlmann’s life and his fulfilment of prophecies are not always spelled out explicitly; he makes considerable use of anagrams, numerological paragrams, and acrostics. In line 10622 of Kühlpsalm 72 \((KP, II, 55-61) \text{‘A.L.L.E.S.’}\) refers to significant places in his missionary journeys: Amsterdam, London, Lutetia (Paris), Edinburgh and Smyrna, and ‘A.V.S.’ in line 10697 signifies Amsterdam, Vratislaviensis (Breslau) and Stampold (Istanbul).\(^{47}\) Such devices are by no means uncommon in seventeenth-century poetry, but whilst for most poets they were poetical games,\(^{48}\) for Kuhlmann they play a more fundamental interpretative and cabbalistic role.

Kuhlmann presents his work as more than a collection of poems outlining his visions and decoding his life. It is intended to validate his messianic claims by demonstrating how his life fulfils both biblical and more recent prophecies. Indeed, he considers the Kühlpsalter as part of a nine-fold Scripture, as he explains in his Quinary of Slingstones against the Goliath of all Kindreds, People, and Languages,
his ‘invincible Love-Apology for, and defense of’ his writings, according to the title-page. His scheme of Scripture is as follows:

The Three-one Union of the *Holy Scripture*, according to *Law, Gospel*, and the Times of *Cooling*, in its nine parts, viz. *Moses, the Psalms, the Prophets*, *Evangelists, Epistles, Revelation, New-Prophets, New Psalms, New Revelations*, alias *Cooling-Prophets, Cooling-Psalter, and Cooling-Revelation* for the Jews, *Turks and Heathens*.49

It is also laid out in the seventh Kuhl-Jubel of spring 1687:

\[
\text{Vom Abraham und Isaac kommt Jacob:}
\]
\[
\text{Von dem Gesätz und Evangelium geht doch hervor di Kühlzeit.}
\]
\[
\text{Des Abrahams Gesätz/ und Isaacs Martherthum}
\]
\[
\text{Gibt dem Kühl-Jacob Kraft zum Zwölf der Kühlungs-reiche/}
\]
\[
\text{Gott ist Gott Abrahams/ Gott Isaacs/ Gott des Jacobs:}
\]
\[
\text{Ein einger Gott/ doch unter drei Personen. (KP, II, 350)}
\]

Here the Trinity culminates in Kuhlmann: Father (Abraham), Son (Isaac, who typologically prefigures Christ’s sacrifice) and son of Son (Kuhlmann-Jacob), with the corresponding ages of the Old Testament (‘Gesätz’), New Testament (‘Evangelium’) and the third age (‘Kühlzeit’). The political events of Kuhlmann’s time are thus part of God’s teleological plan, and are recorded in the *Kühlpsalter*.

The short poems on the death of Charles II and the accession of James II appear in the fifth book, published in the second part in 1685 (*KP*, II, 62-63). They are appended to an earlier poem (*Kühlpsalm 72*) which marks a journey to Edinburgh
in July 1681 (KP, II, 55-61). The first is addressed to Charles: ‘Nun ist di grosse stund, Elender Carl, gekommen!’; and the second addresses three monarchs: Charles II, James II and Louis XIV of France. The refrain at the end of each strophe shows a move from past to present to future. Louis is referred to as King Saul. Drabík had prophesied that Louis would take the imperial crown from the Habsburgs as God’s divine instrument. But by calling him Saul, Kuhlmann is suggesting that the anointed one has proved a disappointment, and must be replaced by David, the Psalmist who is Jesuel himself. France is the staff which props up James’s precarious power, but Kuhlmann suggests that this will prove false with the term ‘Rohrstab’ (l. 10870), which echoes Isaiah’s warning: ‘Verlessestu dich auff den zu brochen Rohrstab Egypten: welcher so jemand sich drauff lehnet/ gehet er jm in die hand vnd durchbohret sie. Also thut Pharao der könig zu Egypten allen die sich auff jn verlassen’ (Isaiah 36. 6).

Kuhlmann claims that the first of the two 1684/5 poems was written half a month before Charles’s death (31 January 1685 NS). This allows him to present the poem as prophetic, and to link it, through the interval of forty-two months, to the earlier poem, written on 31 July 1681 (NS), in which Kuhlmann attacks James and the threat of Catholic succession. Forty-two months (three and a half years) refers to the biblical notion of ‘time, times and half a time’, which in the book of Daniel (7. 25 and 12. 7) describes the length of time for which the fourth monarch will oppress God’s people before the fifth, godly kingdom is established. In Revelation 13. 5 it denotes the period given to the beast from the sea to exercise its wicked power. The second 1684/5 poem was purportedly written forty-two days after Charles’s death. The sense of time and its passing is important in understanding the
title of this section, the ‘Fatalschlus des Fatalschlusses’. The Latin ‘fatale’ means ‘fatal’, ‘destined’ or ‘deadly’ when used as an adjective, but signifies a legal time-limit when used as a noun, for example, the date by which an appeal must be lodged or evidence presented. Kuhlmann had studied jurisprudence, and it is likely that his use of the term encompasses both meanings. It suggests an end-point, a reckoning when destinies will be finally and eternally settled.

The earlier poem of 1681 is the twelfth psalm of the fifth book. Not all poems in the Kühlpsalter draw a close connection with the corresponding biblical psalms, but Kühlpsalm 72 does so explicitly by pointing out its divergence from the end of the Psalm, stating that the ‘Fatalschluss’ stands in the place of the biblical Psalm’s conclusion. The biblical psalm is a prayer for Solomon, ‘des Königs Sohn’ (Psalm 72.1), and is therefore very appropriate for the millennial ambitions of Kuhlmann, the self-styled ‘Sohn des Sohnes Gottes’. It sketches out the ideal ruler, who will govern with God’s law over a peaceful, fruitful and righteous kingdom. Kuhlmann returns to this in the middle section of his Kühlpsalm.

The 1684/5 poems are written in blank verse, but the Kühlpsalm is formed of twenty-three ten-line rhymed strophes and a twenty-fourth strophe with a substantially lengthened final line. The acrostic device which operates from strophe to strophe, covering the whole alphabet (with the exception of the duplicate letters ‘j’ and ‘v’), suggests the universal significance of Jesuel’s vision. The poem divides into three blocks. Strophes one to nine attack James, Duke of York, and the House of Stuart. Ten to twenty, which are more closely related to the biblical Psalm, focus on God’s deliverance of Kuhlmann, who represents himself in strophe thirteen as the new Moses, the one with direct communication to God: ‘Es sprach dein Mund von
Mund zu Mund’ (l. 10730; cf. Numbers 12. 8), and as God’s instrument to chastise the wicked in strophe twenty:

Gottlosen, Eilet eilt! Nicht einer sol verbleiben:
Ich wil euch all aufreiben.\textsuperscript{57} (ll. 10797-98)

Strophes twenty-one to twenty-three turn again to James and the political situation. The final strophe offers a clear echo of the Magnificat (Luke 1. 48):

\begin{quote}
Zusigle, meine Seel, mit Gottes Ehrenlob!

Spring in Mariens Wonn!

Jehova\textit{Jesus ist, der seinen Knecht erhob}:

\textit{Mein Heiland, meine Sonn!}

Von nun an werden mich verseelgen alle zungen,

\textit{Bei denen dis erklungen.} (ll. 10833-38)
\end{quote}

It concludes with an extended final line which emphasises past, present and future; the God who was, who is, and who is to come; the three persons of the Trinity, who will bring ultimate peace to earth:

\begin{quote}
Sein war, ist, wird, sein ist, wird, war, sein wird, war, ist, dis
wunder voll, hoch, reich erbarmen. (l.10842)
\end{quote}

The strophes that concern James and the House of Stuart present a series of binary oppositions: dark / light; Edinburgh / York;\textsuperscript{58} Colman / Kuhlmann; James (Jakob) / both the biblical Jacob and Jakob Boehme; Rome / Constantinople; the Pope / Constantine. The opening equates Scotland, where James was Lord High Commissioner from 1681, with the enslavement of God’s people:

\begin{quote}
Ach, Ach, Egypten, Ach, das du recht Scotisch heist,
\end{quote}
Mit finsternis verdekt! (ll. 10603-604)\(^59\)

References to Egyptian and Babylonian captivity run through the poem.\(^60\) Scotland under James must weep as Rachael wept for her children, a reference from Jeremiah 31 to the Babylonian exile, with strong connotations for a reader steeped in Lutheran polemics and Behmenism. Set in contrast to Pharaoh-James, is ‘Gottes Wunder..., das nun in York aufreist’ (l. 10605), Kuhlmann himself, who, like James, had stopped in York on his journey to Scotland. James had received a cold welcome,\(^61\) but Kuhlmann may have been received more warmly because the city was a significant Quaker centre.\(^62\) He identifies York as the place where Constantine was proclaimed emperor in 306 on the death of his father in the city: Constantine protected Christians in the Roman Empire, and Kuhlmann will rid Christendom of Roman Catholicism, the scourge of the Holy Roman Empire. The final four lines of the opening strophe evoke both Christ foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem\(^63\) (Luke 19. 43-44) and John the Baptist, the prophetic voice crying in the wilderness (Isaiah 40.40, John 1. 23).

Scotland is swathed in ‘finstre nacht’, but Kuhlmann is a ‘feurig Wesen .. im allerlichtstem [sic] lichte’ (l. 10607), bringing the dawning of inexpressible radiance (l. 10617). Strophe four echoes the opening of John’s Gospel:

\begin{quote}
Das feuriglichte licht ist, Scotien, nun da!
Es scheint dir unerfast!
Das licht brennt aus dir fort! Wer ist, der dis an sah?
Du kennst nicht, was du hast!
Es fährt aus dir in eil! Aus deinen finsternissen!
Rom wird es ewigst büßen.
\end{quote}
Es fährt aus dir nach dem Egyptschem stuhl,
Dem Scotischem Fegfeuerpfuhl.
Auf, Volk im finsterm [sic] Land! Dis licht wird dich erfreuen!
Besonnenmeeren dich! di finsternis zerstreuen. (ll. 10633-42)

But to bring this light, Kuhlmann must also bring judgement on the House of Stuart, represented in line 10677 by the golden sword ‘geschärft mit feuerlichter hitze’. It is the sword of judgement, ‘[g]espitzet ohne spitze’, and will dismember Babylon (ll. 10678-80). Pharaoh-James may flee in his trumpery carriage, but he must fall before Jesuel’s golden chariot, with its nod to Elijah’s chariot of fire (l. 10682). In strophe twenty-three Kuhlmann makes the final allusion to fire by representing himself as the angel with the flaming sword who guards the gate of Eden (l. 10829), closed forever to James, who is, in the first strophe, represented as powerless against the inferno that will engulf him: ‘Du lescht zulangsam, Ach! Dein leib ist schon entglommen’ (l. 10612). In 1666 James had played a key role in directing attempts to control the Fire of London, and had enjoyed popular regard as a result. Kuhlmann may be alluding to this event to suggest that there will be unquenchable flames of far greater intensity awaiting James, who has supped with the Whore of Babylon (l. 10805) and abused Jehovah’s ‘huldgedult’ by praying to the dead (ll. 10665-66), a clear marker of Roman Catholicism.

James’s Catholicism is, of course, at the heart of the opposition voiced here. The attack is not only broad-brush, contrasting Rome and Constantinople. It also draws in details of contemporary political events in the person of Edward Colman, chief accused in the so-called Popish Plot (1678), which supposedly intended to bring about the assassination of Charles and the accession of James. This fabrication
by Titus Oates and Israel Tonge tapped into the anti-Catholicism that had long affected England and parts of Scotland. By August 1681 it was generally accepted that the plot was a fiction, and when James came to power Oates was punished as a perjurer, but Kühlpsalm 72 was written before this date. In any case, for Kuhlmann Colman was a poetic gift, his name so close to Kuhlmann’s own, and yet so diametrically opposed in meaning. Kuhlmann refers to him directly in strophes nine and ten:

JehovaJesus gibt dem Kuhlmann seine krafft:

Sein Königreich ist fest.

JehovaJesus hat den Kohlmann wegeschaft

Mit allem seinem Rest.

[...]

Kühlmannisir, mein Geist, das alle Welt gekühlt,

Das alle Welt entkohlt! (ll. 10683-86, 10693-94)

He discusses the plot in a 1679/80 letter, as well as in the London Epistle, where he claims to find numerous points of agreement between Oates’s document and his own prophetic dates, and in Kühlpsalm 52, which extolls London as ‘Ort der Lichteswunder’, apparently penned the year after Colman’s execution in December 1678:

Satan gibt dem Kohlmann kohlen,

Di Gott durch den Kühlmann küht:

Rom wird selber weggespült,

Wann es London wird weghohlen.
Rom verleuhret seinen stuhl,
Und versinkt in schwefelpfuhl,
Vor dem Lilirosenkuhl.69 (KP, I, 228, ll. 6440-46)

The Jacobs that pepper the 1681 poem also yield fruitful antitheses. James, the ‘falsch[e] Jacob’, (l. 10621) is contrasted with Israel, ‘dem wahren Jacobsstamm’ (l. 10622), by extension the true Christian church, and also Kuhlmann in his own scheme of Scripture, outlined above. And in strophe nine, James is contrasted with Jakob Boehme, and shown the writing on the wall:

JehovaJesus gab im Böhmschen Jacob segen,
Um Jacob recht zu wägen.
Di Wagschal ist nach Gottes heiligem Recht
In allen Zahlen wunderschlecht.
Des Kohlmanns Jacob hat zuleicht und schwer gewogen:
Des Kühlmanns Jacob hat nach Gotteswink gezogen. (ll. 10687-92)

Like Belshazzar, James has been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and the implication would have been readily understood by a reader who knew the book of Daniel: the writing heralds the end of Belshazzar and his kingdom, which passes into the hands of another dynasty. The criticisms are not levelled at the Duke of York alone; the false father of the Stuart dynasty, James I, is evoked in line 10647. It may seem surprising that James, a Protestant and intended victim of the 1605 Gunpowder Plot, should incur Kuhlmann’s wrath. The explanation is given in the following strophe, where he is compared with the duplicitous Laban, father-in-law to the biblical Jacob. James I’s daughter Elizabeth married Friedrich V, Elector
Palatine, in London in 1613. In 1619 he was elected Friedrich I, King of Bohemia, but fell from power in the following year. His weak situation vis-à-vis the Imperial forces, which ultimately defeated him, was not helped by the fact that James did not come to his son-in-law’s aid. In the *London Epistle* (§. 121), Kuhlmann discusses Friedrich as the representative of Calvinism, the fifth steeple on the united church. For Bohemians he had been the great hope of a non-Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor, and Andrew Weeks suggests that contemporary propaganda presented him as a new Barbarossa.\(^7^0\) Kotter’s prophecies about the defeat of the Papacy and the Emperor focus largely on Friedrich and his descendants. Komenský had presented them to Friedrich in exile in The Hague,\(^7^1\) and Robert Codrington dedicated the English translation of Komenský’s *Lux in tenebris* to Friedrich’s third son, Prince Rupert, Duke of Cumberland.\(^7^2\) Kuhlmann represents the recent troubles of the House of Stuart as the inevitable consequence of its betrayal of God’s chosen instrument. Like the idolaters of the Old Testament, the Stuarts are punished into the third and fourth generation (Deuteronomy 5. 9): in line 10659 Kuhlmann alludes to rumours that James I died from poison administered by his favourite, Buckingham,\(^7^3\) and in lines 10651 and 10660 the execution of Charles is equated with Friedrich’s fall from power: ‘Eur Vater muste theur di Friedrichsschmach erfahren’ (l. 10651). Jehovah has set aside the dregs for the Stuarts to drink (l. 10652), showing their godlessness through the allusion to Psalm 75. 8: ‘Aber die Gottlosen müssen alle trincken/ vnd die Hefen aussauffen’, and the predicted end of the dynasty is presented in apocalyptic terms:

\[Das dritt und viirdte gid schwebt erst in grausen nöthen:\]
Der gantze Erdkreis wird vor seinem end erröthen. (ll. 10660-61)

Threats to the House of Stuart are set firmly within this millenial framework, as hints about the conversion of the Turk make clear. Strophe three states that Ishmael will gain what Ishmael lost, and refers to Constantinopel / Istanbul, the power base of the Ottoman Empire. It is also implied in the ‘Sechsgericht’ (ll. 10608), a reference to the vials of God’s wrath, poured out by seven angels in Revelation 16. The contents of the sixth vial will dry up the Euphrates to prepare a way for the Kings of the East, and Armageddon, generally understood to occur at the end of the Millennium, appears to take place between the sixth and the seventh vial, which will bring the world to an end. Line 10632 suggests that the time of fulfilment is now approaching: ‘Nun nahet dir der kern nach Constantinens schale!’

Constantine is the shell, the prefiguration, with Jesuel as the kernel, the sign that becomes essence. The related term ‘Wesen’ is used in the ‘Fatalschlus’:

Di stunde naht! Ich komme auf dich zu!

Das wesent eilt! Hinweg ist deine Ruh!’ (ll. 10843-44),

and also in the poem addressed to Charles (‘Nun trifft das wesent dich’, l. 10851), and it is part of the central triad ‘Zeichen, Figur, Wesen’ in Kuhlmann’s writings.74

Kuhlmann left England for what was to be the last time in 1684.75 He travelled with his English common-law wife, Mary Gould, whom he subsequently married in Amsterdam.76 He did not experience James’s turbulent reign at first hand. In the year of his accession James faced rebellions from the Duke of Monmouth in England and the Earl of Argyll in Scotland. He made a number of unpopular appointments of Catholics, disregarding the Test Act, and fear over the
long-term future of a re-catholicised England and Scotland came to a head in 1688 with the birth of his long-awaited son, James Francis Edward Stuart. In the autumn of that year Kuhlmann’s wish came — at least partially — true. James fell from power, but the crown passed not to Jesuel, but to James’s daughter Mary and her husband, William of Orange. William came across the Channel not with ‘Jesus Millionen’ (l. 10848), but with an army of some 15,000 men. James eventually fled to France. He attempted to regain his throne from Ireland, but was defeated at the Battle of the Boyne (1690). He returned to France, and lived out his life in exile. The Stuart dynasty died out with James’s second daughter, Queen Anne, in 1714, and although Jacobite risings prolonged Catholic hopes for almost another half century, the Battle of Culloden in 1746 effectively brought these to an end. The spectre of state Roman Catholicism was vanquished, but the Millennium failed to materialise. What Kuhlmann made of James’s ignominious defeat is unknown. He was on his way to Moscow by the time of James’s flight, and although it is possible that news of this second toppled Stuart might have reached him via merchants or travellers, he was in prison from May 1689, and on 4 October his writings, presumably the unpublished as well as the published ones, were consigned to the same flames which took the life of their author.

1 John Miller, James II, Yale 2000, pp. 118-119. Kuhlmann gives the date as 15-16 February 1685 because he is already using the Gregorian (New Style) calendar, which was not introduced into England until 1752. The dual year refers to the fact that, until then, the year began on 25 March.
Biblical citations are here given according to the 1545-46 edition of Luther’s translation. Italics from original publications have been retained.

2 The same demand occurs in Kühlpsalm 117, Der Kühlpsalter, ed. Robert L. Beare, 2 vols, Tübingen 1971, II, 326, l. 20018. All further references will take the form KP.


4 In Kühlpsalm 9 Kuhlmann gives the date of his arrival in London as 2 April (NS): KP, I, 30.

5 Bock, Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 40.

6 The most significant early visions occurred in the aftermath of an illness in 1669. See Kuhlmann’s account in the ... Quinary Of Slingstones, against the Goliah of all Kindreds, Peoples and Languages ..., Paris 168[?], pp. 5-6; cited (in the German edition) by Clark, introduction, Der Neubegeisterte Böhme (see note 3), I, XXIII. See also Bock, Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 10.


Quirin Kuhlmanns Widerlegte Breklingsworte ... , Amsterdam 1688, fol. A4r.

Jan Amos Komenský, Lux e tenebris ..., Amsterdam 1665; extended edition of Lux in tenebris ..., [n.p.] 1657; abridged English translation by R[obert] C[odrington], Prophecies of Christopher Kotterus, Christina Poniatovia, Nicholas Drabicius ..., London 1664.

Bock suggests that Kuhlmann dressed in blue and white to correspond more strongly to Kotter’s writings (Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 55).


The Leopard-Bear and Lamb-Dragon, the beasts of Revelation 13, are given their power by the Antichrist, the dragon of chapter 12.


Adelung, Narrheit (see note 7), V, 49-51.

Ibid. V, 37.

For more information on Bathurst, see Beare, ‘Where and when?’ (see note 3), pp. 380-82. For Kuhlmann’s 1677 letter to him see ... Quirin Kuhlmanns Des Christen Des Jesuitens, Lutetier= oder Pariserschreiben, London 1681, pp. 22-65.


See note 11.


31 See, for example, Abraham Calov’s Anti-Böhmius, Wittenberg 1684, pp. 39-40, and Ehregott Daniel Colberg, Das Platonisch-Hermetisches Christenthum, 2 vols, Frankfurt and Leipzig 1690-91, I, 323; both cited by Clark, introduction, Der Neubegeisterte Böhme (see note 3), I, XLVII. In the Moscow court documentation Kuhlmann and Nordermann were described as Quakers (Bock, Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 74).

32 Claus Bernet, ‘Quaker missionaries in Holland and North Germany in the late seventeenth century: Ames, Caton, and Furly’, Quaker History, 95 (2006), 1-18


34 Kühlpsalm 52, KP, I, 227, l. 6419; cited by Bock, Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 42.

35 Capp, The Fifth Monarchy Men (see note 21), p. 75.

36 Schmidt-Biggemann, ‘Erlösung durch Philologie’ (see note 9), p. 258.

37 Adrian Davies suggests that prosecutions and fines tended to be sporadic: The Quakers in English Society, 1655-1725, Oxford 2000, p. 171. In his monograph The literary culture of Nonconformity in
Later seventeenth-century England, Athens GA 1987, p. 47, N. H. Keeble explains that the second act imposed less severe fines, but that informing was widespread.

Ibid. 61. Miller states that James also turned against the Dissenters because he saw them as key players in the Exclusion Crisis (James II (see note 1), p. 110-11).

Beare, introduction, KP, I, X. A copy can be seen in the British Library: shelfmark 3434.a.18.

KP, I, 5; also cited by Bock, Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 8.


The first book had already appeared in Amsterdam in 1677 as D. Funffzehn Gesänge.

Some journeys appear to be spiritual rather than actual, such as the journey to Jerusalem.

This is confirmed by the very brief prose preface to the first edition of this poem in D. Funffzehn Gesänge (see note 42), which merely mentions a ‘Centnerplage’ and the date of June 1677.


Ibid., pp. 275-76. See also Philip C. Almond, Adam and Eve in seventeenth-century thought, Cambridge 1999, p. 139.


49 Kuhlmann, *Quinary* (see note 6), p. 22.

50 Bock suggests that Kuhlmann had hoped to arrange a meeting with the Duke of York (*Kuhlmann als Dichter* (see note 3), p. 72).


52 Louis appears as Saul in Kühlpalms 106 and 107, written in the weeks before the poem on James’s accession. Kuhlmann explicitly mentions Drabík’s ‘anointing’ of him, warns Saul–Louis not to expect a Witch of Endor to bring the executed Drabik back to life (a reference to the conjuring of the dead prophet in Samuel 28), and asks Jehovah’s spirit to depart from Louis and come to rest on the new David (*KP*, II, 281, l. 6025 [18025], and 286, l. 6156 [18165]). Louis had become increasingly hostile to Protestantism; by the 1680s Huguenots were experiencing growing levels of state persecution, and the end of the year would bring the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. See Philip Benedict, *The Faith and Fortunes of France’s Huguenots, 1600-85*, Aldershot and Burlington VT 2001, pp. 297-300.

53 In his prophecy of 11 June 1644 Drabik describes the House of Spain as the broken reed on which the Holy Roman Emperor leans (*Prophecies* (see note 11), p. 103).

54 The notion of ‘time, times and half a time’ was popular in chiliastic texts, as Komenský explains in the introduction to *Prophecies* (see note 11), p. 13.


The verb ‘aufbreiben’ appears in Luther’s translations of Jeremiah 14.12 and Hosea 11.6 to describe God’s punishment of sinners.


James also appears as Pharaoh in Kühlpsalm 106, written a few weeks after Charles’s death (*KP*, II, 279, l. 5961 [17961]).

In her vision of 21 January 1628, Krystyna Poniatowska describes the Pope and the Emperor as proud Pharaohs (*Prophecies* (see note 11), pp. 79-80).


For more on this, see David Scott, *Quakerism in York, 1650-1720*, Borthwick Papers, 80, York 1991.

‘Denn es wird die zeit vber dich ko/ come das deine Feinde werden vmb dich/ vnd deine Kinder mit dir/ eine Wagenburg schlahen/ dich belegern/ vnd an allen örten engsten/ Vnd werden dich schleffen vnd keinen Stein auf dem andern lassen/ Darumb/ das du nicht erkennet hast die zeit darinnen du heimgesucht bist.’

Luther uses this verb for Yahweh’s sword in Ezekiel 21.10: ‘Es ist gescherfft/ das es schlachten sol/ Es ist gefegt/ das es blincken sol.’

In Malachi 4. 5 Elijah’s return is identified as a sign of the end of time. Elijah’s prayer, which produced a drought lasting three and a half years (see James 5. 17-18), is also referenced in the first
66 ‘The Duke of York hath wonn the hearts of the people w[ith] his continuall and indefatigable paynes day & night in helpeing to quench the Fire, handing Bucketts of water with as much diligence as the poorest man that did assist...’; letter from John Rushworth, 8 September 1666; reproduced by G. J. A. in Notes and Queries, 5th series, V (1876), 306; and in Adrian Tinniswood, By permission of Heaven. The story of the Great Fire of London, London 2004, p. 80.


68 ‘Hence it was, that when at Cadiz ... I heard the first News of the English Conspiracy ... I rejoiced with great joy to see that my Jehovah was making way according to his promises. ... Coleman intended to subject London, the Metropolis, not onely of three Kingdoms, but of all Protestants in General, to the kiss of the Popes Toe, with a Design as black as his Name: Kuhlman on the contrary received London from the most High for his Sixth City, where he might sensibly perceive the Application of the Seven Revelation Spirits, to the end the execrable Papal and Roman Senary 666, might Eternally amongst all Hellish Spirits abide a Senary 666, with a Design too, which answers and agrees with his Name.’ (London Epistle (see note 13), postcript, §. 5 and 13.)

69 Cited by Bock, Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 66, and by Meid, Die deutsche Literatur im Zeitalter des Barock (see note 45), p. 275. Lilies and roses are polyvalent symbols in the writings of both Kuhlmann and Boehme, representing human and divine love, the male and female principles, or the red and white alchemical stages. Their union symbolizes the eternal reuniting of what is divided, as Kuhlmann notes in Kühlpsalm 62 (KP, II, 13, 9266-70). See Schmidt-Biggemann, ‘Erlösung durch Philologie’ (see note 9), p. 283; Kaspar Bütikofer, Der frühe Zürcher Pietismus (1689-1721), Göttingen 2009, p. 349; Sibylle Rusterholz, ‘Klarlichte Dunkelheiten. Quirinus Kuhlmanns 62.'


72 See note 11.

73 For more on this, see Alastair Bellamy and Thomas Cogwell, The Murder of King James I, New Haven 2015.


75 Bock, Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 68.

76 Mary Gould appears in Kuhlmann’s writings as ‘Maria Anglicana’. She bore him a son named Salomon in accordance with his persona as the new David, but mother and child died soon afterwards. See Schmidt-Biggemann, ‘Erlösung durch Philologie’ (see note 9), p. 254, and Bock, Kuhlmann als Dichter (see note 3), p. 73.