MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

RELIGIOUS DISSENT IN JOHN MILTON'S 1673 *POEMS, &C. UPON SEVERAL OCCASIONS* AND NONCONFORMIST SPEECH-ACTS IN THE RESTORATION

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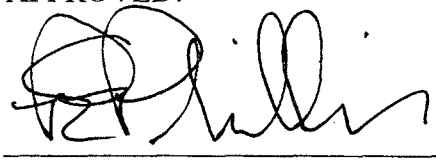

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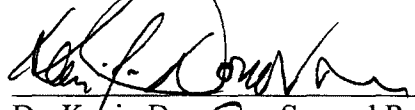

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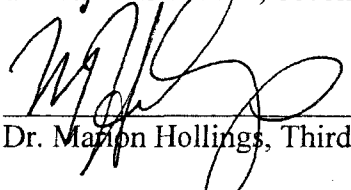

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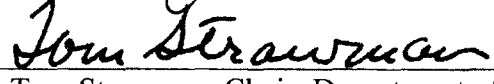

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ABSTRACT

This study reexamines the history of reception of John Milton and, in particular, his lyric poetry. Moving beyond the often examined social context of the 1640s, this work analyzes Milton's *Poems, &c. Upon Several Occasions* in the 1673 context of the republication of Milton's lyrics, focusing particularly on the discourse of England's post-Restoration religious nonconformity. The publication date of *Poems 1673* places the book in the hands of nonconformist readers, facing harsh penalties and social exclusion due to England's ecclesiastical penal codes. Such disenfranchised readers sought encouragement, instruction, and catharsis. A combined assessment of the published text of *Poems 1673* and of a post-Restoration nonconformist readership shows Milton's poetry to be material easily appropriated for the nonconformist agenda. Concerned with the coherency of *Poems 1673* as a nonconformist speech-act, the study focuses closely on three major divisions within the book. Seen through comparisons to nonconformist biography, the sonnet sequence of *Poems 1673* contains idioms typically employed by nonconformists to gain toleration and acceptance as well as to defend their public "voices." The pastoral section—dominated by *Lycidas* and *A Mask*—contains biblical typology utilized by nonconformist preachers and polemicists, engaged in the vitriolic debates over religious toleration. In their post-Restoration context, *Lycidas* and *A Mask* function as descriptions of the enemies of nonconformity in order to reverse the negative dichotomy placed on religious dissent. Finally, the Old Testament typology of Milton's Psalm translations provides emotional catharsis to disenfranchised individuals and groups facing the existential crisis of ideological uncertainty caused by persecution and isolation.

Through a comparative analysis of the writings of such pro-nonconformist authors as Andrew Marvell, Joseph Alleine, and Richard Baxter, the poetic idioms and typology of *Poems 1673* reveal their previously overlooked participation after the Restoration as nonconformist speech-acts.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Achinstein, *Dissent*	Sharon Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England*
CPW	John Milton, *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*
CSP	John Milton, *John Milton: Complete Shorter Poems*. Edited by Stella P. Revard
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
Keeble, *Nonconformity*	N. H. Keeble, *Literary Culture on Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England*
KJV	*King James Bible*
Lewalski, *Milton*	Barbara Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton: A Critical Biography*
Life and Death	Theodosia Alleine, et al. *The Life and Death of Mr. Joseph Alleine*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
PL	John Milton, *Paradise Lost*
Poems 1673	John Milton, *Poems, &c. Upon Several Occasions*
Poems 1645	John Milton, *The Poems of Mr. John Milton*
PWM	Andrew Marvell, *The Prose Works of Andrew Marvell*
SR	*Statutes of the Realm*
Watts, *Dissenters*	Michael Watts, *Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Books are not absolutely dead things"

– John Milton, *Areopagitica*

The life of a book once it has left the author's hands depends much upon whose hands are holding that book. Such has been the case with many of Milton's books. In the hands of Andrew Marvell, the continuation of the literary life *Paradise Lost* was recommended because of its poetic inspiration.[1] In the hands of the public executioner, the lives of Milton's interregnal tracts were condemned to death and subsequently burned as symbols of sedition.[2] In the hands of post-Restoration religious dissenters, *Samson Agonistes* served as a lasting literary monument to their trials, imprisonments, and deaths.[3] As both an author and a reader, Milton was aware of the various "lives" that were perhaps in store for his own books. In *Areopagitica*, Milton suggests that the interaction between readers and texts is an almost symbiotic relationship in which the process of reading breathes continued life into the author's words and in which the author's words affect the lives and minds of readers. Milton writes, "For Books are not absolutely dead things, but doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that soule was whose progeny they are; nay they do preserve as in a violl the purest efficacie

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[1] See Chapter 2.

[2] See below, 25.

[3] See Achinstein, *Dissent*, 130-53.

and extraction of that living intellect that bred them."[4] Of course, Milton's particular poetic, religious, and political efficacy was, at times, potent enough to elicit a wide variety of contemporary responses; furthermore, Milton's efficacy keeps scholars returning to his texts in order to study the "potencie of life" left in his individual works. Such is the goal of this study, which will examine the life that Milton's 1673 publication of lyric poems would have had in hands of post-Restoration religious nonconformists.

With the recent publication of *John Milton: Complete Shorter Poems with Original Spelling and Punctuation* (2009), edited by Stella P. Revard, the process of examining the intertextuality of Milton's shorter poems has never been easier. Revard takes great care to present Milton's poems as both text and work.[5] She provides glosses and contextual annotations, which inform the specific works; furthermore, she presents Milton's poems in an order which preserves the integrity of the various texts in which the poems first appeared as early printed texts. Much of this bibliographic replication is due to Milton's authorial presence in the design of his publications. Justifying her editorial decision, Revard states, "Because Milton so carefully designed the 1645 volume to present himself as a learned and wide-ranging poet who reinvents many of the genres he

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[4] *CPW*, 2:492.

[5] See Ann Hughes, *Gangreana and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 12. In her Introduction, Hughes discusses the benefits of examining a book as a text—"a fluid, collaborative, participatory entity"—rather than a specific work—"a self-contained, coherently authored, and authorized piece."

employs, we present the book, as Milton envisioned it, as an entity."[6] Therefore, Revard divides Milton's shorter poems into the sections "English and Italian Poems," "The *Poemata*, 1645," "*Elegiarum Liber Primus*," "*Sylvarum Liber*," "English Poems Added in 1673," "Latin and Greek Poems Added in 1673," "Poems Added to *Sylvarum Liber* in 1673," "Sonnets Published 1694," "Unpublished Latin Poems," "*Paradise Regained*," and "*Samson Agonistes*." The first four sections of the anthology reflect the textual structure of *Poems of Mr. John Milton*, published by Humphrey Moseley in 1645. This volume of poems, which Milton describes as a "twin book, rejoicing in a single cover, but with a double title page," contains a vernacular section with mostly English poems along with a small Italian sonnet sequence and a second section entitled *Poemata*, which contains mostly Latin poems and a few Greek poems.[7] The second three divisions of Revard's anthology present the poems added to the expanded second edition of Milton's poems, *Poems, &c. Upon Several Occasions*, published by Thomas Dring in 1673.[8] For obvious editorial constraints, Revard does not reproduce all of the poems included in *Poems 1673* that were previously printed in *Poems 1645*, but she does carefully explain

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[6] *CSP*, 1.

[7] Quoted in ibid., 1.

[8] In order to distinguish concisely between the 1645 text and the 1673 text, from this point on, *Poems of Mr. John Milton* (1645) will be designated *Poems 1645* and *Poems, &c. Upon Several Occasions* (1673) will be designated *Poems 1673* when referring to the titles of the books.

the additions and changes made to the structure of the 1645 edition in her various introductions and in her footnotes.[9]

As she has done elsewhere, Revard emphasizes the self-representational aspects of Milton's textual speech-act.[10] Additionally, Revard's anthology includes essential

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[9] See *CSP*, 1-9 and 284-87, for Revard's introductions to *Poems 1645* and *Poems 1673*. Although not discussed here, Revard also discusses the bibliographic structure of the Trinity Manuscript and the post-humus *Letters of State* as well as the 1671 *Paradise Regain'd. A Poems. In IV Books. To which is added Samson Agonistes.*

[10] See Stella P. Revard, *Milton and the Tangles of Neaera's Hair: The Making of the 1645* Poems (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1997). Revard follows the general thesis laid out by Louis L. Martz who argued that Milton's arranged his poems to emphasize his predestination as a great English poet, Louis L. Martz, *Poet of Exile: A Study of Milton's Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 31. See also C. W. R. D. Moseley, *The Poetic Birth: Milton's Poems of 1645* (Aldershot, England: Scholar Press, 1991).

The term *speech-act* comes into play most directly in this work from David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1-22. Like Norbrook, my use of the term is derived from J. L. Austin's theory of "performative utterances." See Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962). The assertion which Norbrook makes is that "we need to analyse [sic] not only [the] cognitive content [of a text], considered as timeless truths, but the kinds of 'illocutionary act' the

paratextual documents such as facsimiles of title pages and frontispieces, commendatory notes and *testimonia* from the stationer and other associates of Milton, as well as Milton's explanatory statements. Thus, alongside Milton's authorial craftsmanship, the anthology provides opportunities for examining the differences between the published versions of Milton's lyric poems in what Stephen R. Dobranski sees as the collaborative nature of the act of publishing in the seventeenth century.[11] Both Revard and Dobranski show that *Poems 1673* is a separate text from *Poems 1645*. However, not only does *Poems 1673*

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author was performing in publishing it: i.e. which positions he or she was attacking, how he or she was intervening in a contemporary context or debate" (10). Furthermore, like Norbrook, the use of speech-act theory in this work will not engage in the full range of technicalities and terms available in this branch of linguistics; instead, it will focus upon the illocutionary act created by the circulation of certain idioms within the religious and political culture of post-Restoration nonconformity as opposed to the overt and broad content of a text. For more on the application of speech-act theory to literary criticism, see Sandy Petrey, *Speech Acts and Literary Theory* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990).

[11] See Stephen B. Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Dobranski argues that it is necessary to recognize the influence of the author as well as the stationer in the creation of Milton's texts. He states that Milton is "a social writer who depended on others—especially printers and booksellers—to create the perception of his autonomy" (ibid. 2).

have different collaborators and textual composition than *Poems 1645*, but it also had a very different audience, creating a distinct post-Restoration reception for the text.

The thirty intervening years, along with the restructuring of Milton's lyric poetry, create an entirely new text, which was released in a unique historical context. Rather than a political period dominated by a Presbyterian Parliament, *Poems 1673* entered English culture during a time when Presbyterians and most other non-Anglican Protestant sects that did not conform to the Episcopal government of the Church of England were considered nonconformists and dissenters. Rather than being known as the "Divorcer" and a Presbyterian tractarian, Milton was known as the "Blank Verse Poet" and the defender of regicide. Furthermore, new idioms were dominating the public conversation over liberty, religion, life, and death. *Poems 1673*, in ways unlike its 1645 counterpart, reaches out to post-Restoration nonconformists and utilizes many of the idioms of nonconformity and typological imagery that was prominent in their literature.

The Historical Context of Post-Restoration Nonconformity

The decades following the Restoration of Charles II were turbulent times for those people whose religious convictions deviated from the social norms established by the Church of England. These people were said to have "tender consciences" because of their moral concern over the minutest doctrinal differences.[12] Tender consciences caused

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[12] The phrase "tender conscience" appears in print with negative connotations as early as 1508, see Richard Role, *The Remedy Against the Troubles of Temptation* (London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1508), $C2^{v}$. Role (1290-1349) suggests a tender

Protestants, who dissented from the established church, to form into a wide variety of religious sects during the mid-seventeenth century, such as Ranters, Diggers, Baptists, and Quakers Many of these nonconforming sects thrived—attaining both political and ecclesiastical agency—during the socially unstable years of the interregnum.[13] However, by the end of the 1650s, the Puritan Revolution was collapsing, and people with tender consciences were beginning to face the social trials associated with nonconformity. The rise and fall of the fortunes of nonconformists and religious dissenters of the 1650s was played out over and again throughout the post-Restoration decades. The Puritan

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conscience is the work of the Devil, who wants to lead men and women into sinful errors. However, by the 1640s, "tender conscience" was being used extensively by Protestant Christians who wanted to either "purify" or separate from the established state church; see William Fenner, *The Souls Looking-Glasse, Lively Representing Its Estate before God with a Treatise of Conscience* (Cambridge: John Rothwell, 1643). Fenner believes a tender conscience is "a singular blessing of God: And if we desire to attain unto it we must labour to see the odiousnesse of sinne, yea the malignity and exceeding evil there is in the least sinne" (83).

[13] Much of the research in this field stands on the shoulders of Christopher Hill and Michael Watts. Hill's works *The Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965) and *Change and Continuity in Seventeenth Century England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991) are seminal texts. Michael Watts, *Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) has also become a dominant text in the study of nonconformity in England.

independents, who gained so much power during the interregnum—but lost it all with the Restoration—continued to have lesser yet equally bitter defeats as conservative Episcopal Anglicanism re-established itself through a process of legalized persecution. Although the history of nonconformity during this period has been charted by previous scholars, an overview is beneficial prior to examining the placement of Milton's *Poems 1673* in its 1673 religious context.

In the Declaration of Breda (1660) Charles II promised that "liberty to tender consciences" would be confirmed by legislation upon his return to the throne.[14] Although religious radicalism and nonconformity had seen a political defeat that year, hope for legalized religious nonconformity did not disappear. When Charles landed at Dover on May 25, 1660, there were some nonconformists who were numbered among the royalists cheering Charles' arrival. For instance, Edmund Calamy—Presbyterian minister, one-time chaplain to General George Monck, and chaplain-in-ordinary to the King—hoped for a broad church settlement after the Restoration.[15] However, the decade that followed Charles' return to England instead saw the gradual installment of a series of erastian penal laws restricting the toleration of radical and non-Anglican religious groups. These laws are now commonly referred to as the Clarendon Code, named after Edward Hyde the Duke of Clarendon, Charles' Lord Chancellor during much of the 1660s.

When the newly elected Cavalier Parliament met May 8, 1661, replacing the Convention Parliament that had recalled the King, it had a decidedly royalist and

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[14] See Watts, *Dissenters*, 221-22.

[15] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 1

Anglican demographic.[16] One of the first official actions of the Cavalier Parliament was to reinstate the bishops to the House of Lords. This step provided conservative Episcopal Anglicanism with an overwhelming advantage over those who dissented from their prescribed orthodoxy. In December 1661, as part of the re-institutionalizing of Episcopacy, Parliament passed an Act for the Well Governing and Regulation of Corporations.[17] Known as the The Corporation Act, this law required all mayors, aldermen, and borough officials to swear an oath of loyalty to the King and take the sacrament according to the Church of England. The Corporation Act was the first of several legal defeats felt by nonconforming parishioners. From this point on, the 1660s were dominated by royalist Anglican policy designed to bring peaceful uniformity to a nation recovering from years of civil war and political upheavals. The Convention Parliament had redacted all laws set in place between 1648 and 1660, which allowed the Elizabethan Acts of 1593 once again to be used to persecute dissenters and to ensure that the Episcopal conservatism set in place over civil appointments extended into the realm

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[16] See Watts, *Dissenters*, 214-15. The Convention Parliament was strongly Presbyterian. Once General Monck reinstated the full Long Parliament on 3 February 1660, many Presbyterian MPs who were ejected by Pride in 1648 returned as members. As a conservative move, the Long Parliament set-up elections which removed the majority of radical nonconformists from the ranks of Parliament. The Cavalier Parliament further reduced the number of non-Anglicans to about sixty Presbyterians in the Commons.

[17] 13 Charles II, stat. 2, c.1, *SR*, 5:321-23.

of ecclesiastical government.[18] The Corporation Act was followed by an Act for the Uniformity of Publique Prayers and Administracion of Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies on May 19, 1662.[19] This Act of Uniformity required all ministers to conform

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[18] Passed during the conservative latter days of Elizabeth's reign, the Elizabethan recusancy laws could only be used to persecute the most rigid dissenters. The Act against Popish Recusants (35 Elizabeth I, c.2) required nonconformists—in this case Roman Catholics—to remain in a confined geographical space of five square miles, centered upon their home. The Act attempted to restrict the movements of Roman Catholics who "secretly wander[ed] and shift[ed] from place to place within this realm to corrupt and seduce her Majesty's subjects and to stir them to sedition and rebellion" (*SR* 4:843).

The Act against Seditious Sectaries (35 Elizabeth I, c.1) was aimed at radical Protestants who refused to attend state sponsored church services. It required all persons over the age of sixteen regularly to attend an official service within the Church of England to receive communion and "to hear Divine Service [as] established by her Majesty's laws and statues" (*SR* 4:841). After the Restoration of Charles II, the conservative members of Parliament were concerned whether or not these laws still held jurisdiction. See also Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 64. .

[19] 14 Charles II, c.4, *SR*, 5:364-70. See also Watts, *Dissenters*, 218-19. Watts counts the number of dissenting clergy who lost their livings being over a thousand. Altogether, he suggests that over two thousand laity and clergy were ejected from their positions in the first several years of the Restoration.

to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Faith outlined in the revised *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) and to seek re-ordination by a bishop by St. Bartholomew's Day 1662. The ultimatum was for people either to conform or to lose their livings; over 2,000 nonconforming clergy—including conservative Presbyterians who would have supported a national yet comprehensive church settlement—were removed from their livings between 1660 and 1662.[20]

Together, the Corporation Act and the Act of Uniformity projected onto those English men and women who chose not to conform to the Anglican hegemony an artificial label associated with the Other in referential opposition to the Church of England's orthodoxy.[21] However, the unfamiliarity and the radicalism of nonconformity could be placed in a broad spectrum of Otherness. There were, of course, some conservative Presbyterians, who were almost identical to their Episcopal neighbors; in fact, some Presbyterians were considered occasional conformers—attending Anglican services on occasion. On the other hand, the more radical Quakers were isolated by their idiosyncratic behavior and speech as much as their theological beliefs. Nevertheless, the Otherness of all nonconformity was to be a focal point for the attacks of Anglican

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[20] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 8; see also the example Joseph Alleine, Chapter 3, 107-12.

[21] The use of the term *Other* is related to the work of Judith Butler and Slavoj Žižek; the Other display non-normative behavior that is relegated to the margins of society in order to protect societal norms. *Otherness* is the perception the non-normative behavior of the Other by the dominant culture; see Judith Bulter, Ernesto Laclau, and Slavoj Žižek, C*ontingency, Hegemony, Universality* (London: Verso, 2000).

polemicists.[22] Real and imagined binary oppositions were constructed for post-Restoration religious discourse. Language and communication was often at heart of these binary oppositions. The Anglican establishment warned against the nonconformist ecstatic prophet as a source of violent enthusiasm and praised rational conformity as a form of civility. On the other hand, nonconformists worked to defend their dissenting speech and to define their acts of religious dissent as the marks of true piety; therefore, the nonconformists who suffered persecution were touted as martyrs descended from the Puritan hagiography of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563).[23] These binary oppositions

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[22] See Watts, *Dissenters*, 188-209. Quakers were among the most despised of nonconformists. Their refusal to take both civil and religious oaths excluded them from many social activities. Their repudiation of all forms of physical baptism excluded them from communion with other nonconformist sects to a point that some more conservative nonconformists considered them papists in disguise. See also Richard Baxter, *The Quakers Catechism* (London: Thomas Underhill and Francis Tyton, 1655). On the singularity of the Quaker's speech, see Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 245. For more on occasional conformity, see Chapter 4, 179-82.

[23] By 1684, Foxe's martyrology had gone through nine unabridged editions as well as appearing in many abridged editions. See John N. King, *Foxe's* Book of Martyrs *and Early Modern Print Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). As King explains, Jacob Bauthumley's *A Brief Historical Relation of the Most Material Passages and Persecutions of the Church of Christ* (1676) summarizes the first three sections of *Acts and Monuments* in order to provide martyrological material for

created strong reactions in post-Restoration England. Dissent was equated with the Other in order to inflame intolerance since outsiders and intruders were typically the people who most agitated the prejudices of the common people.[24] In the subsequent years following these acts of Parliament, the Otherness of dissenters took the shape of political radicals and anarchists, foreign spies, papal agents as well as other personifications of xenophobia. As a consequence of the fear of the Other associated with dissenters and nonconformists, the Anglican hegemony sought to go beyond the exclusion of nonconformists to their complete elimination. Similar steps were taken with political dissenters. The King's promise of a "Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion" to his enemies upon his restoration suggested a desire to forget; however, it also necessitated an eradication of offending memorials.[25] Likewise, the desire to remove the offenses of nonconformity required severe methods of religious persecution. Persecutory

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nonconformist sermons. By doing so, King suggests that Bauthumley encourages reading his book "as a crypto-nonconformist tract that offered consolation to sectarian dissenters who underwent persecution during the regime of Charles II" (ibid. 156).

[24] See Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 141.

[25] 12 Charles II, c.11, *SR*, 5:226-34. Upon the King's return to London, Cromwellian monuments were destroyed. On the anniversary of Charles I's execution, the buried regicides were exhumed and mutilated. The actions reveal the violence used to truly eradicate offensive memories. See Achinstein, *Dissent*, 23. Achinstein explores the way in which memory was a battle ground for nonconformity.

action by the State was in accordance with a long tradition going back to St. Augustine's theology of religious intolerance in which the State was under social obligation to supplement the work of the ecclesiastical hierarchy; Thomas Aquinas and Sir Thomas More both wrote of heresy being a cancerous lump to be cut off from the body.[26] Thus, tolerance was akin to letting a disease fester. The healthiest option was to eradicate the infected areas of the body.[27]

As long as religious dissent could be linked to social dissent and anarchy, the eradication of nonconformity could be made possible by penal laws. The Elizabethan Acts of 1593 were reinforced by the passing of an Act for Preventing Mischeifs and Dangers That May Arise by Certaine Persons Called Quakers in 1662.[28] The Quaker Act prohibited five or more Quakers from meeting for worship outside of an official church. This statute was extended to all nonconformists with an Act to Prevent and Suppresse Conventicles (August 1664).[29] The driving sentiment behind the Conventicle Act was political fear. It equated the assembling of a "conventicle or meeting, under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion in other manner than is allowed by the liturgy or

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[26] See ibid., 41-42.

[27] See Ann Hughes, Gangraena *and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Edwards uses disease and medical terminology throughout the entirety of his categorical examination of heretical sects and denominations.

[28] 14 Charles II, c.1, *SR*, 5:350-51.

[29] 16 Charles II, c.4, *SR*, 5:516-20. See also Watts, *Dissenters*, 225.

practice of the Church of England" with the "practices of seditious sectaries and other disloyal persons."[30] The language of the Act correlates the religious Otherness of nonconformists to the form of political Otherness. Once the two are combined, the xenophobia of one could be called upon by the polemicists writing against toleration and comprehension.[31] Furthermore, creating an unnatural divisiveness between neighbors, the Act prescribed strict monetary penalties for those who were found guilty of trespassing against the law as well as rewarded those who informed the authority. Thus, circumventing communal ties by appealing to the greed of the individual, the Conventicle Act was encouraged opposition between passive conformists and passive nonconformists for the sake of monetary gain. The desired result would have been the isolation of the individual nonconformist from other nonconformists as well as from the community at large. No one knew this better than the dissenting ministers who had been ejected from their livings by the Act of Uniformity and who felt the pangs of isolation more acutely after Parliament passed a new law restricting their movements in October 1665

During the plague year of 1665, when many Episcopal ministers had abandoned their London congregations for the safety of the countryside, nonconformist ministers returned to their former pastoral duties. However, the Act for Restraining Non-Conformists from Inhabiting in Corporations (the Five Mile Act) sought to end this

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[30] *SR*, 5:516.

[31] See Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 204. Walsham shows how Baptists, Levellers, Ranters, and other sects were all portrayed as Jesuits and papists in disguise. The presentation of secret leagues contributed to the Otherness *topos*.

practice by placing heavy fines on any ejected ministers found within five miles of their former parish or any corporate town whatsoever.[32] The Five Mile Act essentially cut off the dissenting laity from the fountainhead of their dissent, completing the isolation and containment program of the Clarendon Code; yet, when the prospect of dissent seemed most dismal in England, nonconformists saw their hopes rise.

With the fall of Clarendon following England's loss of the naval battle at Chatham in 1667, dissenters gained powerful allies in the new government which formed after the collapse of the previous one. Rising to power was the Cabal, consisting of men all associated with either Protestant dissent or Roman Catholicism.[33] Once again experiencing some political agency, the hopes of nonconformists rose late in 1667 as George Villers, Duke of Buckingham and John Owen, former chaplain to Cromwell and figurehead for Independents, sought to modify the Restoration church settlement to be more hospitable to nonconformists. Samuel Pepys chronicled the possible turn of favor for nonconformity in his diary entry for 21 December 1667:

> The Nonconformists are mighty high, and their meetings frequented and connived at: and they do expect to have their day now soon, for my Lord Buckingham is a declared friend to them, and even to the Quakers, who had very good words the

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[32] 17 Charles II, c.2, *SR*, 5:575. See also Watts, *Dissenters*, 226.

[33] *Cabal* is an acronym derived from the initials of Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley Cooper, and Lauderdale.

other day from the King himself. And, what is more, the Archbishop of Canterbury is called no more to the Cabal.[34]

The comprehension and toleration expected by Pepys was discussed by the Anglican and Presbyterian leadership, and bills were even drafted to present to Parliament.[35] However, the period of expectant success soon ended for the nonconformists when the House of Commons blocked the bills and instead sought to renew the Conventicle Act, due to expire in 1668. Furthermore, in the place of Clarendon, Gilbert Sheldon, the Archbishop of Canterbury, became the most active opponent of religious dissent.[36]

One result of the fluctuating legislative prospects of nonconformity was the print debates that corresponded with the debates happening within the government. The discussion of religious toleration was commenced by John Humfrey's *A Proposition for the Safety & Happiness of the King and Kingdom both in Church and State* (June 1667). Humfrey argued for the comprehension of Presbyterians within the national Anglican Church; however, Thomas Tomkins quickly responded with a counterargument showing the dangers of such toleration. Tomkins' tract, *The Inconveniencies of Toleration* (1667), as well as Humfrey's earlier tract elicited a reply by John Corbet with *Discourse of the*

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[34] Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. 2, ed. Mynors Bright (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1960), 128-29.

[35] Sir Matthew Hale drafted a bill for comprehension. Owen drafted a bill for indulgences and toleration. For the fundamental differences between these two appeals, see Harris, *London Crowds*, 86-87.

[36] See ibid. and Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 15.

Religion of England (1667), which, in turn, earned a response from Richard Perrinchief's *A Discourse of Toleration* (1667) and by Herbert Thorndike's *The True Principles of Comprehension* and *The Plea of Weakness and Tender Consciences* (1667). Both of Thorndike's works circulated in manuscript and were not published until in 1854.[37] With the polemical debates clearly escalating, Perrinchief further contributed *Indulgence Not Justified* (1668) as a response to John Owen. Owen had presented the argument for the toleration of dissent by means of indulgences for those who could not participate in a comprehensive national church. His two tracts *A Peace-Offering in an Apology and Humble Plea for Indulgence* and *Liberty of Conscience and Indulgence and Toleration Considered* were both published in 1667. The following year saw two more tracts on the matter written by Sir Charles Wolseley: *Liberty of Conscience upon Its True and Proper Grounds* and *Liberty of Conscience, the Magistrates Interest*. The bookstalls were rampant with polemical debate reflecting the many voices and messages for and against nonconformity.

Even though the Conventicle Act expired and was not renewed immediately, nonconformists were still on guard in the late 1660s. The penal laws had loosened, but the public discourse was heating up. In order to be heard in the cacophony of voices writing on religious matters, polemical arguments became more acerbic. Simon Patrick's *Friendly Debate* series (1668, 1669, 1670) provided—contrary to his title's suggestion—biting attacks on dissenters. The debate continued to rage on for the remainder of the

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[37] See Herbert Thorndike, *The Theological Works of Herbert Thorndike*, vol. 5. (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1854)

decade. Samuel Parker, a chaplain to Gilbert Sheldon, the Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote *A Discourse of Ecclesiastical Politie: Wherein the Authority of the Civil Magistrate Over the Conscience of Subjects in Matters of Religion Is Asserted. The Mischiefs and Inconveniences of Toleration Are Represented. And All Pretenses Pleaded in Behalf of Liberty of Conscience Are Fully Answered* (1669). As his title suggests, Parker's book encapsulated much of the anti-dissent arguments articulated in the previous years. Both Owen and Humfrey attempted to counter Parker's *Discourse of Ecclesiastical Politie* with *Truth and Innocence Vindicated* (1669) and *A Case of Conscience* (1669) respectively; however, Parker held the field at the end of the 1660s.

As the 1670s were beginning, Parker seemed to be dominating the polemical debates, and the nonconformists were dealt another blow: Parliament voted to reinstate the Conventicle Act in March 1670. The Second Conventicle Act was in some ways more potent than the first. While financial penalties were lessened for dissenting laity, penalties for ministers were compounded.[38] Furthermore, the reward for informing was

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[38] 22 Charles II, c.1, *SR*, 5:648-51. For the conditions caused by the financial penalties levied by the Second Conventicle Act, see Watts, *Dissenters*, 226-38. Ordinary worshipers received a fine of 5s. for their first offence, 10s. for their second while ministers and the property owners of the meeting houses received fines of £20 for the first offence and £40 for additional offences. Informers received a reward and negligent magistrates who turned a blind eye could be fined up to £100.

also increased.[39] After the Conventicle Act was renewed, nonconformists remained the target of persecution and continued to suffer both real and moral defeats for the next couple of years. Parker was promoted to the archdeaconship of Canterbury in June 1670 and, by 22 November 1670, was advertising his *Defence and Continuation of the Ecclesiastical Politie*. The volume of the debates over nonconformity stayed level until 1672. At this time, the King's actions called into question the ecclesiastical debates of the previous decade.

As part of Charles II's concessions to Louis XIV in the secret Treaty of Dover (22 May 1670), the King declared war against the Protestant Dutch and gave a Declaration of Indulgences to nonconformists and Roman Catholics (March 1672).[40] The Declaration of Indulgences, however, was not seen as a victory by many of the Protestant nonconformists. The King's use of the royal prerogative to negate Parliament's laws and to push the nation into a war against a Protestant ally caused many Englishmen to worry about the King's allegiance to France and Roman Catholicism. Presbyterians, Independents, and other dissenting Protestants did not necessarily want to yoke their

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[39] See below, Chapter 4, 161-63 and Harris, *London Crowds*, 20-25, 71-72. Harris suggests that it was very important to recruit the "crowd" for the enforcement of laws, rights, and customs. Yet, being an informer often was a form of breaking social mores.

[40] For the Declaration of Indulgences, see Edward Cardwell, ed., *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England, 1546-1716* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1839), 2:282. See also Watts, *Dissenters*, 247.

cause to Roman Catholicism. Furthermore, the King's actions had made it easy for Anglicans to combine anti-dissent and anti-Catholic arguments with anti-French arguments, creating a single polemical platform based on a conservative English national identity. Many nonconformists found themselves fighting polemical debates on two fronts: on one side they were promoting the comprehension or toleration of Protestant nonconformity and on the other they were arguing against the toleration of Roman Catholicism. This duel-sided rhetorical pose is the position Milton took when he published one of his few original, post-Restoration works of the 1670s: *Of True Religion, Haeresie, Schism, Toleration* (1673).

For better or for worse, the King's Indulgences linked nonconformity to the success of the King. For a time, nonconformity and the King were in league, politically and polemically, together against the Anglican, Tory majority. This change in circumstances elicited new statements in the ecclesiastical discourse. By the end of the year, a new book by Parker was being advertised in the Terms Catalogue. Parker added a preface to and published *Bishop Bromhall's Vindication of Himself and the Episcopal Clergy from the Presbyterian Charge of Popery, As It Is Managed by Mr. Baxter in His Treatise of Grotian Religion. Together with a Preface Shewing What Grounds there are of Fears and Jealousies of Popery* (1672). Humfrey answered the *Preface* with *The Authority of the Magistrate, About Religion* (1672). Furthermore, Andrew Marvell, as a late entry into the debate, anonymously published *The Rehearsal Transpros'd; Or, Animadversions upon a Late Book, Intituled, A Preface Shewing What Grounds There Are of Fears and Jealousies of Popery* (1672).

Marvell's participation in the debate on nonconformity had a significant role in shaping the discourse of the following years. Unlike many of the tracts which had preceded it, *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* goes beyond mere polemic. Alluding to the Duke of Buckingham's popular play *The Rehearsal*, which mocked John Dryden's dramaturgical practices, Marvell incorporates the satirical language of Restoration drama and poetry to create a scathing polemic that would appeal to a broader audience, not typically engaged in religious debates. Marvell reaches far and wide for his allusions and jokes, shaping the discourse over ecclesiastical polity of the 1670s into a different form.[41]

The year that saw Milton's publication of *Poems 1673* was equally as turbulent as the preceding year. By 4 February 1673, Charles II was forced to recall Parliament in order to request supplies for the Third Dutch War. Parliament used Charles' need for monetary support as a bargaining chip. Throughout February and March 1673, King and Parliament traded letters debating the future of dissent and nonconformity in England. Although Anglesey attempted to draft a bill to exempt Protestant dissenters from legal penalties, he was not successful, and by 8 March 1673, Parliament was able to coerce the King into revoking his Indulgences. Soon after, Parliament was again prorogued, but not before it could pass another Test Act.[42]

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[41] For a complete examination of Marvell's style, see Martin Dzelzainis, et al. eds., *PWM*. The editors state that "by successfully introducing wit and fantasy into an arena in which brute intellectual force was hitherto dominant, [Marvell] had transformed the rules of the discursive game" (ibid. 21).

[42] 25 Charles II, c.2, *SR*, 5:782-85.

The new Test Act caused political turmoil within the Kingdom. In June, the King's brother, James, the Duke of York, instead of complying with the Act, resigned from his post as Lord High Admiral, and thereby openly declared his Roman Catholicism. As heir presumptive to the throne, James' religious preferences portended a Roman Catholic succession, which was reemphasized by his marriage to Mary of Modine in September 1673. By mid-1673, England had the appearance of heading towards a settled Roman Catholic dynasty.

Meanwhile, the polemical debates had raged on. Marvell's *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* had elicited plenty of responses. Samuel Butler wrote *The Transproser Rehears'd* (1673).[43] *S'too Him Bayes* (1673) and *A Common-place Book Out of the Rehearsall Transpros'd* (1673) were both anonymous replies to Marvell's tract. Edmund Hickeringill added *Gregory, Father-Greybeard, with His Vizard Off* (1673), and, of course, Parker responded to Marvell with his own *Reproof to the Rehearsal Transpros'd* (1673). Taking Parker once again as his primary adversary, Marvell answered these tracts in November 1673 with *The Rehearsal Transpros'd: the Second Part*.[44] However,

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[43] See Nicholas von Maltzahn, "Samuel Bulter's Milton," *Studies in Modern Philology* 92, no. 4 (1995): 482-95. Maltzahn has convincingly argued for attribution of *The Transproser Rehears'd* to Butler.

[44] Dzelzainis, ed, *PWM*, 1:210. Parker's *Reproof* was the largest and most expensive of the responses to Marvell. Furthermore, Parker was the most notable author of the group. Marvell was under the assumption that Parker was the also the author of *The Transproser Rehears'd*, see *The Rehearsal Transpros'd, Part II* in *PWM*, 1:417.

over the course of the year, the King had repaired his differences with the Anglicans and was distanced more than ever from the will of nonconformists. The year ended dramatically with Shaftesbury being dismissed as chancellor and essentially defecting over to an oppositional party against the King. Meanwhile, Milton had, for the most part, remained relatively quiet and had published relatively few new works, and the entry of a new edition of his minor poems in the *Term Catalogue* on 24 November 1673 might have gone by largely unnoticed amid the polemical fireworks of 1673.[45]

The Biographical Context of *Poems 1673*

The years following the Restoration promised to be a turbulent time for Milton. He was almost sure to see an extended prison sentence, and his worst fear would have been to follow his friends and associates to the executioner. His many close associations with Cromwell—along with his defense of regicide in *Eikonoklastes* and *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano*—made him an easy target for royalist scorn and retribution as in the broadside *The Picture of the Good Old Cause Drawn to the Life in the Effigies of Master Prais-God Barebone. Several Examples of Gods Judgements on Some Eminent Engagers against the Kingly Government.* Dated 14 July 1660, Milton's name is given a prominent place as the third "eminent engager." Following descriptions of how two men associated with the regicide and commonwealth were stabbed as their just retribution, the pamphlet states, "Milton that writ two Books against the Kings, and Salmasius his Defence of Kings, [was] struck totally blind, he being not much above 40. years old."[46] Milton was

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[45] Lewalski, *Milton*, 504; 698n77.

[46] *The Picture of the Good Old Cause* (London, 1660).

effectively being listed among the condemned and had good reasons to be fearful for his life. As Parliament was determining the extent of the pardon and punishment for regicides and commonwealthmen, Milton was hiding in London. For several months, Milton lived in self-imposed isolation as the descriptions of the regicides' executions circulated through London, yet Milton's name never appeared upon the official lists of persons chosen to be made examples of treason.[47] In his place, Milton's two pro-regicide books were burned by the public executioner; and, even though a warrant for his arrest was issued, his name was not excluded from the Act of Free and General Pardon, Indemnity, and Oblivion, issued by the Convention Parliament on 28 August 1660.

After the Act of Oblivion, Milton was able to come out of hiding to face a short period of imprisonment and heavy fines as well as an onslaught of royalist attacks in the press. Satiric poems and Salmasian and pseudo-Salmasian texts surfaced to indict Milton for his interregnal politics and writings, and for the first time in his life Milton was powerless to answer back.[48] Instead, he remained silent and fearful of assassination during the early years of the Restoration from 1660 to 1667.[49] The period of intermittent isolation and discomfort provided Milton with some of the psychological material used in

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[47] See Lewalski, *Milton*, 398-400. Although Milton's name was mentioned in Parliament on June 8 as a possible addition to the list of non-regicides to receive extreme punishment, his name was not seconded. Secondhand reports from Edward Phillips attribute Milton's good fortune to the intercession of Andrew Marvell, MP for Hull.

[48] See ibid., 402-04.

[49] See ibid., 405.

the writing of *Samson Agonistes*, but gradually some comfort and normality returned to his life.[50] The mid to late 1660s saw an intermittent flow of visitors at Milton's home; furthermore, in February 1663 Milton married his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, and moved his household to his final residence in Artillery Walk near Bunhill Fields.[51]

During the 1660s—a period of retirement from public service—Milton, with the help of amanuenses, went about completing his long-foreseen epic. Alongside *Paradise Lost*, Milton was also at work on his theological treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana*, which would remain unpublished during his lifetime. However, these years were not wholly free from trials for Milton. His name was continually bandied around during times of political and ecclesiastical unrest.[52] Furthermore, for a period of several months in the summer and autumn of 1665, Milton was forced out of London by the plague. He moved

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[50] See Blair Warden, "Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, and the Restoration," in *Culture and Society in the Stuart Restoration*, ed. Gerald MacLean (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 111-36. Scholars are now in general agreement on the post-Restoration authorship of *Samson Agonistes*.

[51] His nephew, Edward Phillips, was a frequent visitor. So was Andrew Marvell and Samuel Parker, who would later trade remarks about their presences at Milton's home. Other visitors included the Quaker Thomas Ellwood and Cyriack Skinner.

[52] See *Cabala, or an Impartial Account of the Non-conformist Private Designs, Actings, and Ways. From August 24. 1662. to December 25. in the Same Year* (London, 1663), 12. Milton's name is listed among certain dissenters who were being cautiously watched by the authorities after the Act of Uniformity was passed.

his family temporarily to a cottage in Chalfont St. Giles, found for him by his Quaker friend Thomas Ellewood.[53] Once he returned to London, he soon faced another traumatic event. From September 2 to 6, 1666, the blind Milton was surrounded by the tumult caused by the Great Fire. Fueled by strong winds, the fire raged over the city yet stopped short of Milton's neighborhood, and he and his household were able to remain in their home near Bunhill Fields.

Even though Milton was experiencing trials during this period, he was also continually writing whenever he had someone to perform the tedious task of transcribing his words. During these years he continued working on *Samson Agonistes* and began composing *Paradise Regained* as a complementary piece to his longer epic. By 1667, Milton was ready to have *Paradise Lost* published; it appeared as a handsome quarto and written in a ten-book format.[54] The release of the epic was perhaps well-timed for a proper reception. It could be seen as a counterpoint to Dryden's new style of heroic poetry presented in *Annus Mirablilis* (January 1667). Furthermore, the disarray among the press licensers caused by the Great Fire might also have prompted its publication date. In any case, the poem was much talked about.[55]

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[53] Lewalski, *Milton*, 443.

[54] See Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*. The ten-book format follows the model set down by Lucan's republican and antimonarchical epic *Pharsalia*.

[55] See Nicholas von Maltzahn, "The First Reception of *Paradise Lost*," *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, 47, no. 188 (1996): 479-99.

Milton did not slacken in his productivity during his later years. As Lewaski explains, following the release of his morally didactic *Paradise Lost*, Milton

> revised and prepared for the press several unpublished works begun during his days as a private scholar and schoolmaster in the 1640s: a grammar, an art of logic and a *History of Britain*. All these apparently innocuous works allowed him to testify covertly against some norms of Restoration culture. They also allowed him to continue an educative role, endeavoring to help the English people develop the moral virtues and love of liberty that alone could enable them—in God's good time—to gain and sustain freedom in church and state.[56]

His *Accedence Commenc't Grammar* was announced by June 1669, and *the History of Britain* was published by November 1670. His Ramist *Artis Logicae Plenior Institutio* was published by May 1672. These previously unpublished texts were accompanied by the appearance of two more original poems; the dual volume containing *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* was registered with the Stationers on 10 September 1670 and was circulating soon afterwards. As Milton was involved in this clearinghouse publication program, he would have been aware of the ecclesiastical discourse over religious dissent and nonconformity that had reignited with the issuing of the Declaration of Indulgences.

Milton's name and interregnal reputation were inevitably conjured in the debate between Marvell and Parker, two men that had frequented his home during the earlier years of the Restoration. Intended as a slight against Marvell, he and Milton were

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[56] Lewalski, *Milton*, 489.

grouped together in *ad hominem* attacks. Samuel Butler's *The Transproser Rehears'd* (1673), responding to Marvell's *Rehearsal Transrpos'd*, repeatedly attacked Marvell through Milton's politics and poetics. Butler believed Marvell had "made use of Milton's Pen" and had "clubb'd with our Writer" Milton.[57] Butler comments that "the odds betwixt a *Transproser* and a *Blank Verse Poet*, is not great" and later suggests that Milton is a "*Schismatick* in Poetry, though *nonconformable* in point of Rhyme."[58] Furthermore, Butler attempts to direct Marvell's nonconformist plea back towards the specter of political radicalism from which Marvell was attempting to distance himself. Drawing on Marvell's words and Milton's iconoclastic persona, he writes

> This Doctrine of *killing Kings in their own Defence*, you may safely vindicate as your own, it was never broacht before. And from such unquestionable Principles may we reduce your Account of the late War, p. 303. *Whether it were a War of Religion, or of Liberty, is not worth the labour to enquire. Which-soever was at the top, the other was at the bottome; but upon considering all, I thing the cause was too good to have been fought for*. Which, if I understand not amiss, is nothing but *Iconoclastes* drawn Little, and *Defensio Populi Anglicania* in Miniature.[59]

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[57] Samuel Butler, *The Transproser Rehears'd* (Oxford: Hugo Grotius and Jacob van Harmine, 1673) 147.

[58] Ibid., 41, 43.

[59] Ibid., 73. See also Samuel Parker, *Reproof to The Rehearsal Transprosed* (London: James Collins, 1673). In coming to the aid of Parker, Butler used Milton's

As in the 1660s, Milton's ability to respond to such attacks and derisive comments was limited by his precarious position with the authorities.

Although Milton did not record his thoughts during this time, a statement by his nephew, Edward Phillips, alludes to Milton's awareness of the vitriolic discourse swirling around his name. In a brief biography of Milton, Phillips suggests that Milton might have wanted to respond to these *ad hominem* attacks. He writes,

> [Milton] had, as I remember, prepared for the Press an answer to some little scribing Quack in *London*, who had written a Scurrilous Libel against him, but whether by disswasion of Friends, as thinking him a Fellow not worth his notice . . . this Answer was never publisht.[60]

Working chronologically through Milton's life, Phillips places this anecdote right after he mentions one of Milton's 1673 publications, set squarely in the high point of the debate between Parker and Marvell when *The Transproser Rehears'd* had been released, but, as Phillips says, Milton was dissuaded from responding, most likely due to the troubles it would have caused him. Though reluctant to answer his critics directly and address any

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name as a ready weapon against Marvell. Parker's own response to Marvell made fewer but similar references to Milton. Parker states, "And if we take away some simpering phrases, and timorous introductions, your Collection will afford as good Precedents for Rebellion and King-killing as any we meet with in the writings of J. M. in defence of the Rebellion and the Murther of the King" (212).

[60] Edward Phillips, "The Life of Mr. John Milton" in *Letters of State Written by Mr. John Milton* (London, 1694), xl.

specific social event or political issue, Milton did contribute to the discussion over the toleration of dissent. As mentioned above, *Of True Religion, Haeresie, Schism, Toleration, and What Best Means May Me Us'd against the Growth of Popery* appeared under the name of "The Author *J. M.*" sometime before May 6.[61] The tract takes issue with the toleration of Roman Catholicism as a consequence of toleration for Protestant nonconformity.[62]

After his brief foray back into polemic, Milton, the "blank-verse poet," began preparing to have a new edition of his shorter poems published. He reused the two-book format provided by his 1645 edition. The English poems and Latin *Poemata* were sold as a single octavo volume by the bookseller Thomas Dring and probably printed by William Rawlins sometime before it appeared in the *Term Catalogue* on 24 November 1673.[63] Added to the book was his tractate *Of Education*, originally published in 1644 as well as some short poems written before and after 1645. At the time of the volume's release, English readers were experiencing anxieties caused by the Duke of York's open acknowledgment of his Roman Catholicism due to his resignation of his position as Lord High Admiral under the Test Act.

There remained only one more year in Milton's life after he published the 1673 edition of *Poems 1673*. During this time, Milton continued his rigorous publishing program. He was attempting to see his letters of state, personal letters, and theological

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[61] Lewalski, *Milton*, 501.

[62] See ibid., 501-04.

[63] See ibid., 504; 698, n. 77.

treatise into print. The letters of state and theological treatise were too politically and theologically radical for any bookseller to print, but some of his personal letters were printed early in 1674 along side his *Prolusions*, a collection of seven college orations. Furthermore, Milton was revising *Paradise Lost* to appear in the twelve-book format he had eschewed in 1667. Also, unlike the first 1667 edition, the 1674 edition of *Paradise Lost* contained more paratextual material alluding to its subject and form. Along with the publisher's note and Milton's explanation of his blank verse, which had both been added in 1669, there was a Latin poem, "*In Paradisum Amissam Summi Poetae*," by S. B. M. D. and an English poem, "On *Paradise Lost*," by A. M. The Latin poem was probably by Samuel Barrow, and the English commendatory poem was by Andrew Marvell, the author of *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*.[64] This was the final textual speech-act Milton performed during his lifetime. Having suffered from the gout for a number of years, he died in November 1674, probably from renal failure.[65] He was buried in St. Giles Cripplegate, the parish church for his house near Bunhill Fields; however, in the years leading up to his death, Milton had left behind many texts to live on his stead.

The Text of *Poems 1673*

Because of its more modest presentation, numerous typographical errors, and regularized orthography, *Poems 1673* traditionally has been eclipsed by its 1645 counterpart. However, Stephen Dobranski has made the case that these textual peculiarities make the book notable by their very existence. Dobranski argues,

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[64] See ibid., 509.

[65] See ibid., 538.

> In 1673, we once again discover Milton in conversation, both in the act of writing and during the process of book-making. By attempting to reconstruct such relationships, we can begin to interpret the book as a unique document and appreciate the benefit of making both the 1645 and 1673 editions simultaneously available to modern readers.[66]

The unique document to which Dobranski alludes has been made more readily available by Revard's recent edition of Milton's short poems. However, a brief discussion of the textual apparatus of *Poems 1673* is necessary prior to beginning an examination of the unique document which post-Restoration readers would have found at their seventeenth-century booksellers.

As mentioned above, *Poems 1673* retains many characteristics of its earlier 1645 incarnation. Preserving the two-book format, Milton added poems to both the English and Latin portions.[67] As in 1645, the two sections are given separate title pages (see **Figures 1** and **2**) and have separate pagination. For the most part, the volume keeps the poems from the earlier edition in their same general order but intermingles some un-published English and Latin poems composed both before and after the publication of

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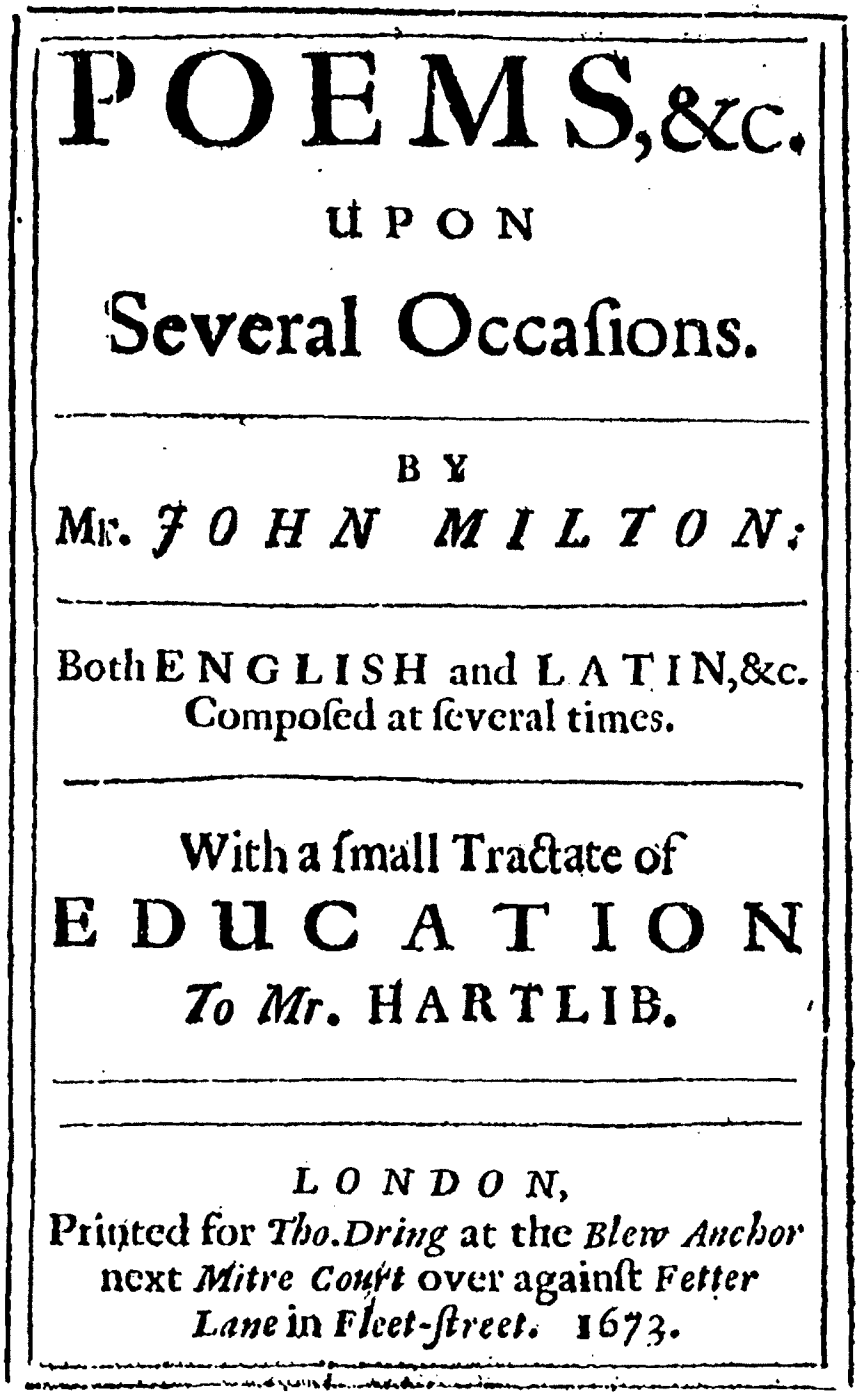
[66] Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 155.

[67] Unless otherwise noted, all references to the textual apparatus of *Poems 1673* are to an *EEBO* facsimile of the copy from Henry Huntington Library and Art Gallery (Wing M2161).



POEMS, &c.

UPON

Several Occaſions.

BY

Mr. JOHN MILTON:

Both ENGLISH and LATIN, &c.
Compoſed at ſeveral times.

With a ſmall Tractate of

EDUCATION

To Mr. HARTLIB.

LONDON,
Printed for Tho. Dring at the Blew Anchor
next Mitre Court over againſt Fetter
Lane in Fleet-ſtreet. 1673.

Figure 1. Title Page of *Poems 1673*. Wing (M2161). Copy from Henry Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

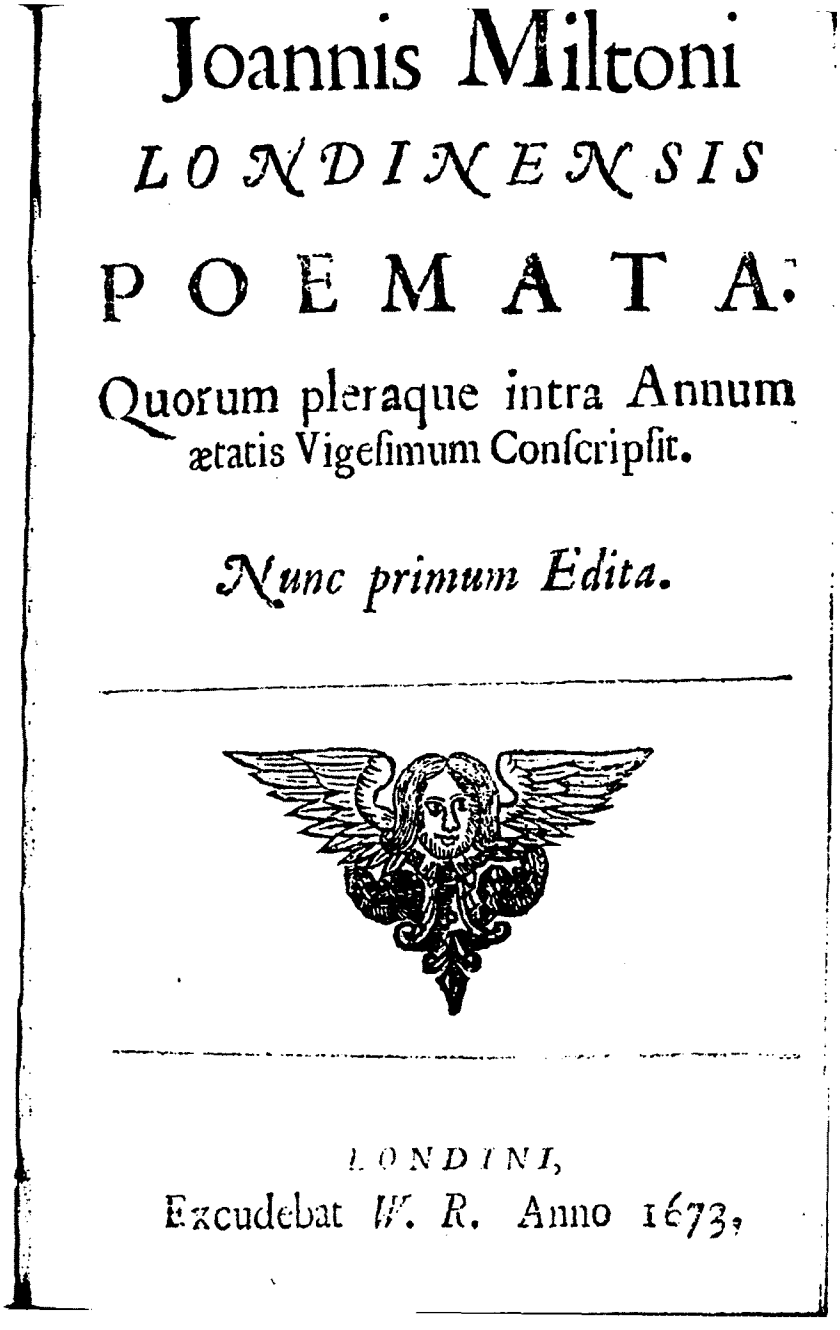

Joannis Miltoni
LONDINENSIS
POEMATA:
Quorum pleraque intra Annum
ætatis Vigeſimum Conſcripſit.
Nunc primum Edita.
LONDINI,
Excudebat W. R. Anno 1673.

Figure 2. Title Page of the Latin *Poemata* for *Poems 1673*. Wing (M2161). Copy from Henry Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

Poems 1645.[68] Choosing to add poems which he had initially thought unfit for print perhaps shows Milton's intentions to ensure his literary legacy was complete; at the very least, it emphasizes Milton's thorough effort to have his unpublished work ushered into print. The volume's new title, *Poems, &c. Upon Several Occasions*, fittingly describes the occasional nature of many of the new poetical works added to the book. "On the Death of a fair Infant dying of a Cough" and "*Anno Aetatis* 19. *At a Vacation Exercise in the Colledge*" are two poems which predate *Poems 1645* and were composed for specific occasions. The experimental funeral ode was written after the death of Milton's infant niece; the latter poem was composed as part of a college ceremony in 1628. "On the Death of a fair Infant" was placed towards the beginning of the volume among the section of poems highlighting Milton's juvenilia while "At a Vacation Exercise" was added in with the large group of additions made to Milton's sonnets even though the title references Milton's youth by dating its composition when he was nineteen years of age.[69]

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[68] *Poems 1673* is an octavo in 148 leaves. The prefatory paratextual material is un-paginated ($^{\pi}A1^{r}$-$^{\pi}A4^{r}$). Page 1 of the English book begins with "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" ($A1^{r}$) and continues through to the end of Psalm LXXXVIII on page 165 ($L3^{r}$). $L3^{v}$-$L4^{v}$, which includes the Latin title page, is un-paginated. Pagination for the Latin book begins with page 3 ($L5^{r}$) and continues to page 117 with the end of *Of Education* ($S6^{r}$). There is a five page, un-paginated bookseller's catalogue ($S6^{v}$-$S8^{v}$).

[69] See Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 155-65. The *errata* moves "At a Vacation Exercise" back to its chronological position between "On the Death of a Fair Infant" and "A Passion." The first item on the *errata* states, "Page 21. at

The sequence of sonnets noticeably increases in size with *Poems 1673*. The ten previously published Italian and English sonnets are followed by nine new English sonnets written at different periods in Milton's life. While many of the newly added sonnets are also occasional in nature, there are others that emphasize Milton's intellectual and emotional responses to the events and people around him. These social sonnets are interspersed among the occasional poems. The milieu which is created is distinctly personal yet social as Milton interacts with his associates, public events, and personal trials. The first two newly published sonnets—Sonnet XI: "A Book was writ of late call'd *Tetrachordon*" and Sonnet XII: "On the Same"—were written during the late 1640s and address Milton's persona as a controversial tractarian by focusing on the occasion of his divorce pamphlets being published and sold at the bookseller's stall.[70] The next two

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the end of the Elegie should have come in the Verses *at a Vacation Exercise*, which follow afterwards, from pag.64. to p. 68" (*Poems 1673* $^{\pi}$A4^{v}). Dobranski suggests that certain typographical changes such as this one reflect at least a minimal participation by Milton in the publication process of *Poems 1673*.

[70] Sonnet XI is the twelfth sonnet in the Trinity MS. The Trinity MS is an autograph notebook of Milton's poems, containing extensive corrections and revisions in Milton's hand. The MS contains work composed between 1631 and 1659. It is held in the Wren Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. Among the works contain in the Trinity MS are *Arcades*, *Lycidas* and *A Mask*. Additionally, Sonnets XII-XIX from *Poems 1673* and four additional political sonnets are presented in sequence that has the four non-1673

sonnets are both personal poems written to Milton's associates. Sonnet XIII is addressed to "*To Mr.* H. Lawes, *on his Aires*," and Sonnet XIV is about the religious memory of Mrs. Catherine Thomason.[71] Sonnet XV alternates back to an occasional piece as Milton reflects upon international events with "*On the late Massacher in* Piemont."[72] Following his invective sonnet, Milton becomes introspective with Sonnet XVI: "When I consider how my light is spent."[73] The next two sonnets return again to a social tone with Sonnet XVII to Edward Lawrence and Sonnet XVIII to Cyriack Skinner.[74] The sequence of

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sonnets integrated into the sequence. Furthermore, some of the later sonnets are written in the hand of amanuenses; see Revard, *CSP*, 542 and, below, Chapter 3, 82-84, 83n3.

Throughout this work, the Roman numerals will refer to the ordering found in *Poems 1673*. Sonnet XII is the eleventh sonnet in the Trinity MS.

[71] Sonnets XIII and XIV have the same order as in the Trinity MS.

[72] Sonnets XV is the eighteenth sonnet in the Trinity MS. Several politicized poems were excluded from publication in 1673. The sonnets to Fairfax, Cromwell, and Vain were numbers fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen respectively in the Trinity MS.

[73] Sonnet XVI is the nineteenth sonnet in the Trinity MS.

[74] Sonnet XVII is the twentieth sonnet in the Trinity MS, and Sonnet XVIII is the twenty-first sonnet in the Trinity MS.

sonnets ends with the domestic Sonnet XIX: "Methought I saw my late espoused Saint."[75]

Following the sonnets is the only English poem newly added to the volume which is not written in a rhyme scheme. Milton's translation of "*The Fifth Ode of* Horace. *Lib.* I." is printed along with an accompanying head note discussing its meter as well as a transcription of the Latin original on the facing page. Placed among sonnets, songs, and Psalms, the blank-verse poem stands out as a distinct example of Milton's ability as a blank-verse poet. Then comes "At a Vacation Exercise" and Milton's tailed sonnet, "*On the new forcers of Conscience under the Long* Parliament." The only other major addition to the English book is the substantial number of Psalm translations which were added on to the end of the vernacular portion. There are two groupings of Psalms added: Psalms 1-8, composed in August 1653, and Psalms 80-88, composed in April 1648. In *Poems 1673* they appear in biblical order rather than the chronological order of their composition.

The textual additions made to the Latin book are less extensive.[76] "*Apologus de Rustico & Hero*" is added to the end of the *Elegiarum Liber*. The Greek epigram,

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[75] Sonnet XIX is the twenty-third sonnet in the Trinity MS. The first sonnet to Cyriack Skinner, number twenty two in the Trinity MS, was also excluded from *Poems 1673* due to political allusions.

[76] The *Poemata* itself comprises a two-book format: the *Elegiarum Liber* and *Sylvarum Liber*. The *Elegiarum Liber* contains seven elegies and nine epigrams—counting the newly added "*Apologus de Rustico & Hero*"—composed in elegiac couplets.

originally found under the 1645 frontispiece, is entitled "*In effigiei Ejus Sculptore*" and is moved to the *Sylvarum Liber*. The Latin ode, "*Ad Joannum Rousium*," written in 1647 to accompany the lost copy of *Poems 1645* sent to John Rouse at the Bodleian library, now takes the prominent position as the final poem in the book; however, the volume does not end with the Latin ode on Milton's small book of poems. Appended to the vernacular and Latin books of *Poems 1673* is Milton's tractate *Of Education: to Master Samuel Hartlib*. The pedagogical work carries on continuously with the same pagination as the *Poemata* and is delineated with only minor flourishes, such as a line of ornamental stamping and a dropped first letter. The text of the tractate appears in *Poems 1673* as a relatively unchanged work, except for some regularization of spelling and punctuation, and its conclusion is the end of the authorial additions made to the volume.

However, understanding Milton's poetic and prose additions to the text of *Poems 1673* provides only a single layer of the impact the book would have had on its readers as a speech-act in 1673. The paratextual additions and subtractions to Milton's lyric poetry further inform the interactions between the text and its post-Restoration reader.[77] *Poems*

The *Sylvarum Liber*—containing the remainder of the newly added non-English poems—has thirteen poems composed in various meters and verse forms.

[77] For an examination the influence of the paratext on the early-modern reader, see Michael Saenger, *The Commodification of Textual Engagements in the English Renaissance* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006). Saenger reports a definition for paratextual material as "anything other than the text proper, including the title page, preface, frontispiece, dedicatory epistles and poems, tables, indices, errata, and colophons . . .

1673 would have had a very different appearance sitting in the bookseller's stall than its 1645 counterpart.[78] As Leah S. Marcus states, certain paratextual reductions cause "the 1673 volume [to be] far less lively and performative than 1645, if only because of the loss of the earlier book's dense referentiality established through contradictory messages of the frontispiece and the language and arrangement of the materials."[79] The title pages of the two volumes create separate personae for Milton. The title page and accompanying frontispiece of *Poems 1645* acts as a herald to the English bard following the path of the *rota Virgillii* (see **Figure 3**). Conversely, the title page for *Poems 1673* is far more descriptive of its volume's contents rather than its author's abilities. In fact, the title page

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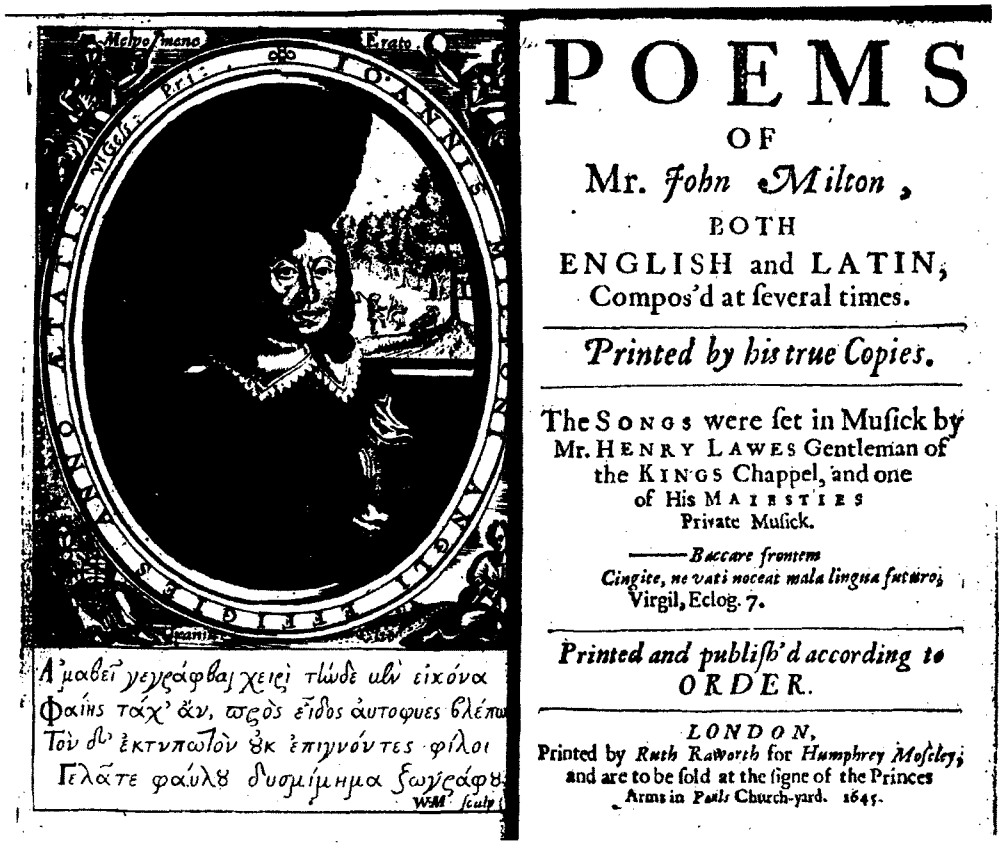
front matter includes some pages which come after the main text, as well as before it. These pages were normally in the control of the publisher, though 'front matter' may contain epistles and poems written by various people, including the author of the main text. Following the work of [Gérard] Genette, critics have given the term 'paratext' to anything in a book that lies outside of the main text; paratext and front matter are essentially synonyms" (ibid. 14-15).

[78] See Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 92. Dobranski suggests that *Poems 1645* did not sell well for Humphrey Moseley and remained on his catalogues on into the 1660s. Some post-Restoration readers may have had the opportunity to purchase both books new at the bookstall.

[79] Leah S. Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (London: Routledge, 1996), 225.



POEMS
OF
Mr. John Milton,
BOTH
ENGLISH and LATIN,
Compos'd at several times.

Printed by his true Copies.

The SONGS were set in Musick by Mr. HENRY LAWES Gentleman of the KINGS Chappel, and one of His MAJESTIES Private Musick.

——Baccare frontem
Cingite, ne vati noceat mala lingua futuro;
Virgil, Eclog. 7.

Printed and publish'd according to ORDER.

LONDON,
Printed by *Ruth Raworth* for *Humphrey Moseley*; and are to be sold at the signe of the Princes Arms in *Pauls* Church-yard. 1645.

Figure 3. Frontispiece and Title Page of *Poems 1645*. Wing (M2160). Copy from Folger Shakespeare Library

categorically emphasizes the separate portions of text which the reader will encounter during the reading process:

> POEMS, &c. | UPON | Several Occasions. | [single rule] | BY | Mr. *JOHN MILTON:* | [single rule] | Both ENGLISH and LATIN, &c. | Composed at several times. | [single rule] | With a small Tractate of | EDUCATION | *To Mr.* Hartlib. | [double rule] | London, | Printed for *Tho. Dring* at the *Blew Anchor* | next *Mitre Court* over against *Fetter* | *Lane* in *Fleet-street.* 1673.[80]

Of the four sections divided by single rules, three of them are descriptive of either the content or variety of the materials included in the publication. In the 1645 collection, Milton's name was integrated into the title as part of its descriptive emphasis; however, in 1673, Milton's name is separated from the primary title and isolated between dividing lines. Furthermore, Milton's name is printed in approximately the same sized typeface as

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[80] For further analysis of the 1645 title page and frontispiece, see Martz, *Poet of Exile*, and Gary Spear, "Reading Before the Lines: Typography, Iconography, and the Author in Milton's 1645 Frontispiece," in *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 1985-1991*, ed. W. Speed Hill (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Text and Studies, 1993), 179-97. See also Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance*, 204-23. Marcus explains how the 1645 "motif of poetic birth is abandoned for a more general emphasis on education" in the 1673 publication (ibid. 225). For analysis of the 1673 title page, see Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 168.

Hartlib's name. The result of the title page is a minimization of Milton's textual presence which is mirrored by the elimination of the representation of his physical presence.

Further paratextual additions and deletions work to reduce Milton's authorial persona in *Poems 1673*. As noted previously, the physical image of Milton on the frontispiece is excluded in 1673, and only the Greek epigram composed for it remains, placed deep within the *Sylvarum Liber* of the Latin *Poemata*. As Dobranski notes, without the referential image to point towards, "Milton's epigram loses its sardonic wit and autobiographical overtones."[81] With Milton's presence clouded, "*In Effigiei Ejus Sculptorem Effigium* (On the Engraver of his Portrait)" becomes ambiguous about the object of its critique. Since the epigram is unaccompanied by its effigy, the meaning of the text is not clear as to what it is referencing:

> By an unskilled hand you might perhaps say this portrait
> was engraved, when looking on nature's likeness itself.
> But since you do not recognize what is modeled here, friends,
> Laugh at the poor portrayal of a poor engraver.[82]

What exactly is referenced by "this portrait" and "what is modeled here"? From out of the ambiguity, arise questions about Milton's own artistic process. Without its antecedent, "this portrait" can be read as a meta-poetic statement referring to the entire volume of poems which supposedly highlights Milton's development as a poet and artist. Furthermore, the "Engraver" is no longer necessarily William Marshall, the engraver

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[81] Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 169.

[82] Stella P. Revard, trans., *CSP*, 353.

behind the 1645 frontispiece. Instead, as a creator of literary art, Milton is a possible substitute for Marshall. Therefore, the result of this change is that readers are now forced to fill in the omission with their own interpretations; as we have seen above, post-Restoration depictions of Milton could be either vitriolic or charitable and thus be read with either fear or charity.[83]

Other missing components in *Poems 1673* include Humphrey Moseley's note to the reader as well as all of the English commendatory letters, including those placed before *A Mask* in the 1645 edition. The authorial presence created by the commendatory notices and biographical tags which initially accompanied seventeen of the texts is erased in *Poems 1673*.[84] Instead, the English portion of the volume focuses its reader on the anthologized poems rather than the author of those poems. Immediately following the English title page is the table of contents "Of the *English* Poems." Next comes the table of contents "Of the *Latine* Poems" followed by the "*Errata*."[85] The paratextual

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[83] Attesting to the high level of interaction between readers and the printed text, a copy of *Poems 1673* (821 M64 L1673, c.1) in The Rare Book and Manuscript Library of The University of Illinois, Urbana, has the 1671 Dolle portrait of Milton pasted in as a frontispiece. This consumer addition confirms the lacking presence of Milton on the book's title page for at least one reader. Requiring greater authorial presence, the consumer manually reinforces Milton's authorial presence that was otherwise absent.

[84] Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 82.

[85] $^{\pi}A2^{r}$-$^{\pi}A4^{v}$. Dobranski notes that the addition of the tables of contents allows readers to circumvent the chronological ordering first established in *Poems 1645* and

documents continually direct the reader's attention towards the poems, minimizing the interpretive presence of the author and allowing the poems to present themselves sans the weight of Milton's post-Restoration biographical persona. Even in the Latin book, which retains much of its original paratextual apparatus, Milton's presence as an author is subdued.

The original Latin *testimonia* given by Milton's acquaintances are retained in the 1673 edition. Furthermore, the title page emphasizes its author's cultural and historical context using the same wording—sometimes erroneously—and roughly the same type setting as the 1645 *Poemata*:

> Joannis Miltoni | *LONDINENSIS* | POEMATA. | Quorum pleraque intra Annum | aetatis Vigesimum Conscripsit. | *Nunc primum Edita.* | [single rule] | [emblem] | [single rule] | *LONDINI,* | Excudebat *W. R.* Anno 1673.[86]

As Amy D. Stackhouse suggests, the title page seems to address a foreign or international audience by presenting Milton as an individual and a Londoner.[87] However, as the paratexts of the Latin book begin to single out Milton as a neo-classical prodigy who has

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move to the individual text of their choice; see Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 176.

[86] *Poems 1673*, L4[r]. Perhaps as a type-setting error, the 1673 *Poemata* has carried over the designation, "first edition".

[87] Amy D. Stackhouse, "The Damnation of Excessive Praise," in *Milton's Legacy*, ed. Kristin A. Pruitt and Charles W. Durham (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2005), 184.

written many of his poems prior to his twentieth birthday, the various *encomia* place Milton within a community of interactive readers, who have worked together with Milton in order to construct his authorial persona as well as form ways to critically approach his poems. The Latin preface announces, "Here follow testimonials concerning the author—though he himself understood them spoken not so much about him as above him."[88] The preface reveals the notably prevalent rhetorical agency of Milton's readers because the prominence of their discussion overshadows the topic of their discussion, which, of course, happens to be Milton. The personae of the readers are so prominent that they influence later portions of the text. Such is the case with the *encomia* written by Giovanni Salzilli, which places Milton in the lineage of Homer, Vergil, and Tasso; Milton's reciprocal interaction with his reader comes in his poem "*Ad Salsillam*" in which Milton attempts to situate his muse within Salzilli's expectations (6-20).[89] Four of the five *encomia* writers either have poems addressed to them or are mentioned within one of Milton's Latin texts. Stackhouse suggests that such interactions work to praise the readers of the *Poemata* as much as they praise Milton's authorial persona.[90] Taking a step farther, the *encomia* seem to reveal the power of the reader to form interpretive

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[88] *CSP*, 31. The Latin text reads, "Haec quae sequuntur de Authore testimonia, tametsi ipse intelligebat non tam de se quàm supra se esse dicta, eò" (*CSP* 130). All translations of Milton's Latin and Greek texts are from *CSP* unless otherwise noted.

[89] *CSP*, 132-33.

[90] Stackhouse, "The Damnation of Excessive Praise," 184.

pathways in *Poems 1673*, which has been seen already to be lacking in authorial integrity when compared to its 1645 counterpart.

The power of the reader to find meaning and form interpretations is in question in this study. Milton's speech-acts are too often examined exclusively for the forcefulness of Milton's utterances.[91] Questions still remain about the effect of Milton's forcefulness on his readers. In order to expand the history of the reception of Milton's lyric poems—a history that includes an analysis of text and reader—this study will examine the interpretive fortitude encouraged by the textual and paratextual components of *Poems 1673*, particularly within the context of post-Restoration religious nonconformity. Therefore, the origin of the speech-act is de-centered, and the reception of the utterance becomes centralized in this examination. The unique publication date of *Poems 1673* could have placed the book in the hands of nonconformist readers seeking consolation in the face of persecution as well as needing encouragement, instruction, and catharsis during times of isolation and existential crisis. These nonconformists would have found efficacy in the post-Restoration life of Milton's volume of poems.

As will be shown in Chapter 2, the post-Restoration nonconformist reader would have found Milton's poetry to be material easily appropriated for their own nonconformist agenda. Because he provides an account of reading one of Milton's texts, Andrew Marvell serves as a case study for understanding the nonconformist reader of the 1670s. Marvell's response to Milton's epic poem in "On *Paradise Lost*" shows how Milton's persona and poetic idioms could be incorporated into the debates over

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[91] A very prominent example is Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*.

nonconformity. Using the biography of the often imprisoned nonconformist minister, Joseph Alleine as a critical foil for Milton's poetry, Chapter 3 examines the newly expanded sonnet sequence as a whole and shows how *Poems 1673* contains nonconformist idioms typically employed in the biographical descriptions of nonconformist ministers. Battling with issues of vocational calling, rejection, and limitation, Milton's sonnets express statements of personal faith, grief, and religious enthusiasm utilized in the apologetic biographies created to defend against the misanthropic depictions of nonconformity. The sonnets, like *Poems 1673* as a whole, are texts which would have connected with a broad nonconformist demographic despite—and perhaps because of—Milton's personal biographical markers embedded within them. Chapter 4 begins to examine the pastoral section of *Poems 1673*, which is comprised of *Arcades*, *Lycidas*, *A Mask*, and the Psalm translations. The two major poems of this section, *Lycidas* and *A Mask*, incorporate biblical and pastoral typology used prominently by imprisoned nonconformist ministers to describe the dangers facing their congregations. This chapter focuses on the social context of nonconformity rather than personal emotions and biographical anecdotes discussed with the sonnet sequence. Chapter 5 continues the examination of the pastoral grouping by closely examining Milton's Psalm translations. The social nature of psalmody provided disenfranchised nonconformists with a connection to the past and the traditions of their Reformation heritage, and the biblical typology of the Psalms provided catharsis to nonconformist congregations experiencing the emotions associated with isolation and persecution. The study is then concluded with an explanation as to why *Poems 1673* was anything but "an absolutely dead thing" for the nonconformist readers who purchased it in 1673.

CHAPTER II

ANDREW MARVELL AND MILTON'S POST-RESTORATION READER

> "How shall we prove all things . . . unless we not only tolerate them, but patiently hear them, and seriously read them?"
>
> – Milton, *Of True Religion, Haeresie, Schism*

The process of examining the reception of the idioms of dissent and allusions to nonconformity in *Poems 1673* is contingent upon understanding how some post-Restoration readers could or would have approached Milton's volume of poems.[1]

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[1] Recent studies of Early Modern reading practices have provided greater insight into the possible reception of both canonical and non-canonical authors; for example, see Kevin Sharpe, and Steven Zwicker, eds. *Reading, Society, and Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Sharpe and Zwicker approach literary texts as "a set of events within the social histories of production and consumption" (ibid. 2). Furthermore, these studies show that Early Modern readers were active participants who asserted opinion into texts through marginalia and emendation; see Steven Zwicker, "The Constitution of Opinion and the Pacification of Reading," in *Reading, Society, and Politics in Early Modern England*, edited by Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). See also Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). Green's chapter "Hermeneutics and Reading Practices" examines how the broadly Protestant English reader approached biblical scripture and religious texts. For an earlier study of the reading practices of the lower classes and "humble laity" of the

Milton's other post-Restoration poetic publications had mixed responses, and these responses were often colored by Milton's pre-Restoration persona. The 1667 publication of *Paradise Lost* elicited responses very specific to the tumultuous social conditions leading up to and following its publication.[2] For example, Thomas Tomkins, the Episcopal licenser, read the epic for references which might instigate apocalyptic fervor and civil disobedience.[3] Sir John Hobart, a parliamentarian, responded to it by writing that he had "never read any thing more august, & withal more gratefull to my (too much limited) understanding."[4] For Hobart, *Paradise Lost* was not an emblem of radical politics but rather a balance to the immoral court culture of the day. John Beale, a country minister, had mixed feelings about the book and saw it as representing man's susceptibility to "enthusiastic" inspiration. Even though Beale considered enlisting Milton's poetic abilities to champion the Royal Society, he eventually saw Milton and his

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church, see Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and Its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981).

[2] See Nicholas von Maltzahn, "The First Reception of *Paradise Lost*," *Review of English Studies*, New Series, 47 no. 188 (1996): 479-99. For a catalogue of other contemporary remarks on Milton's poetry, see George Sherburn, *The Early Popularity of Milton's Minor Poems* (Chicago: University of Chicago Libraries, 1920) and below, Conclusion, 235n3.

[3] Maltzahn, "The First Reception of *Paradise Lost*," 481-87.

[4] Ibid., 490.

epic as tending towards faction and possibly sedition.[5] These various readings of *Paradise Lost* show that Milton and his poetry elicited a variety of available responses.[6] By the sheer force of his character, Milton often could alter interpretations of his poetry; however, much of what informed Tomkins, Hobart, and Beale's readings of the text was their own preoccupations.[7] At times, historical circumstances can combine with a reader's particular discourse to limit and, conversely, highlight the reader's responses to particular idioms or images present in Milton's epic.[8] In this case, all three of these 1667

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[5] Ibid., 487-99.

[6] See also Joad Raymond, "The Restoration," in *Milton in Context*, edited by Stephen B. Dobranski, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010). Raymond notes, "one German reader judged . . . that [*Paradise Lost*] was precisely a lament for the fallen republic," justifying Tomkins' concern (ibid. 466).

[7] See also Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in* Paradise Lost, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). Fish argues that Milton's desired reader response is contingent upon the reader's state of depravity and fallen nature and that the narrator entraps the reader in a series of linguistic lessons. However, Fish's reader is not historicized in a way that limits him to a post-Restoration social context.

[8] As Sharon Achinstein explains in *Milton and the Revolutionary Reader* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), tracking readership is difficult for this period, and "[m]ore people could read than could write in seventeenth-century England, so the most humble, but avid, readers left no written record of their reading habits" (ibid. 12). Achinstein re-constructs her seventeenth-century reader out of the conceptions of

readers of Milton could be used as examples of a type of post-Restoration reader. Another vivid example of a post-Restoration reader, noted for his eloquence and a strong polemical presence in the 1670s is Andrew Marvell.

Marvell makes a good case study because the post-Restoration reader is a person whose cultural context is informed by social tensions that are political, religious, and aesthetic and that often pull in opposing directions. Such was the case with Dryden, who wrote commendatory poetry for both Cromwell and Charles II and who turned from Protestantism to Roman Catholicism for the sake of his king, as it was also for the Presbyterian Richard Baxter, who lobbied for comprehension from within and from outside the established church.[9] Marvell's public and literary career, like Dryden and Baxter's, was one which adapted to the changing circumstances of the period. He participated in as well as responded to the tempestuous events happening around him. Furthermore, Marvell was active in a variety of discourses available to many post-Restoration readers. This is made explicit in his use of Buckingham's play, *The Rehearsal*, in his interactions with Samuel Parker. In *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* (1672) Marvell appropriates the irony and tone of a play that had just appeared on the London stage for the first time on December 7, 1671. He uses Buckingham's satirical attack on Dryden as a rhetorical *topos* for attacking the ecclesiastical polity of Samuel Parker. The tract reveals that Marvell was a reader of polemical tracts covering ecclesiastical law by

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them found in references made to audiences by the producers of texts rather than examining the accounts of reading made by the consumers of texts.

[9] See Richard Baxter, *Sacrilegious Desertion* (London, 1672).

Parker as well as by John Hales, Richard Hooker, John Owen, and Archbishop Matthew Parker; therefore, he was very conversant in the terms of the debate over toleration and comprehension for religious nonconformity. However, Marvell was much more than a reader of ecclesiastical law or a patron of popular drama. The idioms used by Marvell in his post-Restoration writings suggest that Marvell had access to an extensive and rather expensive library.[10] In the first part of *The Transproser Rehears'd*, Marvell's reading reflects his interest in literary and imaginative works. Marvell's commentators have identified allusions to "Aesop, Horace, Juvenal, Heliodorus; Montaigne, Bacon, Jonson's *Volpone*, *Don Quixote*, Guarini, Davenant's *Gondibert*, Butler's *Hudibras*."[11] What is more, Marvell's reading extends far beyond these literary sources in his other writings. He references scholarly materials, biblical commentaries, and obscure and popular ancient works by Pliny, Strabo, Juvenal, Martial, Plautus, Vergil, Horace, and Tacitus. Furthermore, he includes

> travel books and geographies by Peter Heylyn, George Sandys, Sebastian Münster, Samuel Purchas, and R. Knolles; Talmudic materials about Jewish rituals; the old ecclesiastical historians Sozomen and Socrates Scholasticus; European histories by Philip de Commines and Lieuw van Aitzema; ancient

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[10] See Annabel Patterson, Introduction to *PWM*, 1:xi-xli. Patterson suggests that Marvell had access to the library of the earl of Anglesey as well as books belonging to the dissenter John Owen (ibid. xxx-xxxi).

[11] Ibid., xxix.

religious polemic by Augustine, Nazianzus, Chrysostom, and recent ecclesiastical polemic by Heylyn, Milton, and Grotius.[12]

Beyond the idioms and sources made available to him through books, Marvell also accessed the ephemeral conversations of the coffeehouse and scoured printing houses and bookseller stalls for the latest information and gossip.[13] For these reasons, Marvell is an ideal case study for examining how some post-Restoration readers could have approached Milton's poetry. Milton had high standards and expectations for his readers of his prose tracts and epic poem. In Book VII of *Paradise Lost*, Milton's narrator expresses his hope that the poem will find a readership that is "fit . . . though few."[14] Milton's description of a small but mentally astute audience reveals the high standard of intelligence that the author believes is necessary to follow the didactic intricacies of the epic. Furthermore, the limitations of Milton's "fit . . . though few" goes beyond intellectual rigor; the epic requires an audience sympathetic to or at least aware of Milton's ideological concerns. Marvell would have met Milton's expectations because he would have been had the appropriate "ability, inclination, and background" which Dobranski sees in Milton's ideal reader.[15] Marvell uses the wide variety of religious and

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[12] Ibid., xxx.

[13] Ibid., xxviii-xxix.

[14] *PL*, 7.30.

[15] Stephen B. Drobranski, "Milton's Ideal Reader," in *Milton's Legacy*, ed. Kristin A. Pruitt and Charles W. Durham (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2005), 191.

cultural idioms informing the debates and literature of the period, unlike some coffeehouse patrons, fashionable playgoers, or religious polemicists, who all can be very conversant in their respective areas but did not read beyond their interests and, therefore, had access only to limited idioms.[16]

This is a starting point to begin the introduction to the types of idioms competing for the attention of a post-Restoration reader of Milton. Marvell's dedicatory poem "On *Paradise Lost*" records his response to reading Milton's epic poem. Written in 1674 and printed in the second edition of *Paradise Lost*, Marvell's poem employs several of the idioms available during the period when *Poems 1673* was reissued. "On *Paradise Lost*" shows how classical allusions and Miltonic language can function as a nonconformist speech-act when Milton's language is properly restructured. Marvell's commentators have thoroughly examined his use of Miltonic poetics and appropriation of Milton's language. Nigel Smith's commentary on Marvell's poem lists the variety of ways Marvell captures a Miltonic tone by "suspending the caesura until late in the line (l. 5); the running over of sense from one line to the next, with one meaning generated at the turn of the (unpunctuated) line (l. 21); epic lists (ll. 3-4); extended, repetitive use of

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[16] See Joad Raymond, "Irrational, Impractical, and Unprofitable: Reading the News in Seventeenth-Century Britain," in *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 185-212.

consonance, significant for the poem's meaning (ll. 32-2)."[17] Therefore, it is clear that despite his decision to use "tagged" lines rather than follow Milton in using blank verse, Marvell is able to mirror Milton's poetic style. What is more, Marvell additionally culls words from the lexicon of *Paradise Lost*. John McWilliams has argued that this imitation of Milton's style by Marvell is a symptom of the anxiety of influence: McWilliams suggests that Marvell uses the terms "bold," "design," "ruin," "fable," and "vain" to describe Milton because they are words that Milton typically associates with Satan and his cohorts throughout *Paradise Lost*.[18] In McWilliams' reading of the poem, Marvell remains the doubting reader throughout the poem and never turns to a true resolution and moment of praise for Milton's poetic achievement. He argues that "Marvell's insistent echoing of *Paradise Lost* itself in the opening section of his poem all but writes its criticisms into the body of Milton's epic and ensures that, as we read, we associate Satan's bold plans and vain designs with Milton's own grand project."[19] Consequently, according to McWilliams, Marvell's use of Miltonic language is designed to make the

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[17] Nigel Smith, ed., *The Poems of Andrew Marvell* (London and New York: Pearson Longman, 2003), 182.

[18] John McWilliams, "Marvell and Milton's Literary Friendship Reconsidered," *SEL* 46, no. 1 (2006): 164-69. McWilliams suggests Marvell was distancing himself from Milton when he was writing *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* and that Marvell's reading of *Paradise Lost* remains critical by connecting Milton with the rhetoric and descriptions of Milton's Satan.

[19] Ibid., 172.

lines between the paratextual and the textual components of the 1674 *Paradise Lost* blend together, thus presenting a synergistic reading process for both poems. However, when Marvell's reading of Milton's epic poem is removed from the narrow context of its textual placement and re-contextualized in the polemical debates informing the early 1670s, a new reading becomes available. When the use and placement of some of the idioms prominent in the debates over dissent and religious nonconformity are examined, "On *Paradise Lost*" is seen to use the very same terms examined by McWilliams to form the literary trope of the doubting reader in the mold of an Anglican polemicist. The poem subsequently follows a conversion pattern familiar to nonconformist Restoration readers.

The first step in making this connection is examining how Marvell's skepticism employs the characteristic idioms of the typical Anglican polemicist. This is a persona with which Marvell is clearly conversant through his participation in the debate over the licensing of conscience in the early 1670s. In 1672, Marvell had inserted himself into this debate with the publication of *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, a poignant response to Samuel Parker, an Anglican polemicist who would later become the Bishop of Oxford. Marvell's tract would elicit responses such as *The Transproser Rehears'd* and the *A Reproof to the Rehearsal Transpros'd*, as well as some others. By 1673, Marvell would add a second part to his book. Thus, as an active participant in these debates, Marvell had a distinct opinion of the judgmental Anglican polemicist. In his description of Samuel Parker in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, Marvell states that Parker "can endure no man's Tautologies but his own" and that Parker is the epitome of contentiousness "in [his] understandings, in [his] expressions, in [his] humour, in [his] contempt and

quarrelling of all others," and that his "Talents do peculiarly lie in exposing and personating the Nonconformists."[20]

The reader persona in "On *Paradise Lost*" begins by appropriating this tone and position of the Restoration authorities. In fact, Marvell uses idiomatic language that was at one time directed towards both himself and Milton in the debate with Parker. The opening lines of the poem, "When I beheld the poet blind, yet bold" (1), seem to correspond directly to *ad hominem* attacks from Samuel Butler's *The Transproser Rehears'd*. Butler writes:

> So even timerous Minds are Couragious and bold enough to shape prodigious Forms and Images of Battels; & dark Souls may be illuminated with *bright* and shining thoughts. As, to seek no farther for an instance; the *blind* Author of *Paradise lost* . . . begins his third Book thus, groping for a beam of *Light*.
>
> *Hail, holy Light, Off-Spring of Heav'n first Born,*
>
> *Or of th' Eternal Coeternal beam*
>
> . . . . . .
>
> No doubt but the thoughts of this *Vital Lamp* lighted a *Christmas* Candle in his brain. What dark meaning he may have in calling this *thick drop Serene*, I am not able to say; but for his *Eternal Coeternal*, besides the absurdity of his inventive Divinity, in making *Light* contemporary with it's [sic] Creator, that jingling in the

[20] *PWM*, 1:51.

> middle of his Verse, is more notoriously ridiculuous, because the *blind Bard* . . . studiously declin'd Rhyme as a *jingling sound of like endings*.[21]

Butler has appropriated the name of Milton as a useful weapon against Marvell, and we should keep in mind that Milton's blindness was seen as a punishment for his defense of the Interregnum government and regicide.[22] It is a comment of derision when Butler writes that Marvell is just like "the *blind* Author of *Paradise lost* (the odds betwixt a *Transproser* and a *Blank Verse Poet,* is not great)."[23] In Marvell's poem, Milton is being presented as this very same radical poet and tractarian; however, he also is being connected to the popular conception of dissenters as being dangerous schismatics and political radicals.

From the outset of the Restoration, religious dissenters were equated with political anarchists. One broadsheet printed in March 1659 presented a mock manifesto for "A Phanatique LEAGUE and COVANENT, Solemnly enter'd into by the Assertors of the GOOD OLD CAUSE." The flyer professes that certain "ignoble men"

> shall with all sincerity to the hazard of our Estates and lives, endeavour the mutual support of one another, whether under the Notion of Quakers, Anabaptists, Fift Monarchist, Ranters, &c. And notwithstanding we differ in judgement from

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[21] Butler, *The Transproser Rehears'd,* 41-42.

[22] See Achinstein, *Dissent.* Achinstein shows that it was not uncommon for Milton's name to be used as "a ready weapon in the debates over the religious settlement in the early 1670s" (156).

[23] Butler, *The Transproser Rehears'd,* 40.

> our selves, as well as from all Orthodox Christians, yet we will make it appear to the world, and to the Author of that model of a Commonwealth, call'd the *Rota*, that we are a Wheel, whose Spokes, though divided in circumference, yet concenter in this, *viz*. A total extirpation and subversion of all Government, both Ecclesiastical and Civil.[24]

Printed during the days when the Presbyterian-dominated Long Parliament was recalling Charles II, this sheet reveals how early on in the Restoration process religious nonconformists were popularly associated with political nonconformists. The satirical author turns the "tender consciences" of non-Presbyterian dissenters into "corrupt hearts and consciences, endeavour[ing] by all means possible, in our several capacities, to obstruct and abolish all Decency, Order, and Form whatsoever, in the Government of Church or State . . . whereby we may be in anything restrained from our ambitious, malevolent, and most pestilent Designes and Undertakings."[25] Marvell's reader persona may suggest that Milton's book contains the same sentiments found in this "radical manifesto." He suggests that it also yields a "vast design" which needs unfolding. Such a description of Milton's poetic strategy echoes rumors of sectarian plots to overthrow the government, which continued to be prominent in post-Restoration England.[26] The

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[24] *A Phanatique League and Covanent* (London: G. H., 1659).

[25] Ibid.

[26] For more on the rumors of seditious activity among dissenters, see Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 49-50; Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 68-73.

penal laws against nonconformists often were justified for their stated purpose of keeping civil order and stopping radical political conspiracies. For example, the Second Conventicle Act of 1670 provided "further and more speedy remedies against the growing and dangerous practices of seditious sectaries and other disloyal persons, who under pretence of tender consciences have or may at their meetings contrive insurrections."[27] Thus the "poet blind, yet bold" together with the phrase "vast design" creates an image of Milton which resembles both the bogeyman his name had come to conjure along with the more nondescript religious dissenters rumored to be the instigators of seditious designs.

Language reminiscent of the debate surrounding nonconformity continues to be prominent in the remainder of the poem's first stanza. Marvell writes:

> the argument
> Held me a while misdoubting his intent,
> That he would ruin (for I saw him strong)
> The sacred truths to fable and old song
> (So Sampson groped the Temple's post in spite)
> The world o'erwhelming to revenge his sight. (5-10)

These lines, which strongly pronounce Marvell's skepticism, refer to a biblical story that was—after the Restoration—a rallying call for religious nonconformists as well as Revolutionary Puritan enthusiasm. It has been shown that Milton uses the story of the blind and imprisoned Samson to express the existential crisis of dissenters during the

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[27] 22 Charles II, c.1, *SR*, 5:648.

persecution of the Clarendon Code.[28] The literature written by imprisoned Quakers and other dissenters attempted to find consolation in the midst of adversity, yet the idiom of Samson was not used solely by religious dissenters. It was also used by political radicals. Republican theorists and supporters who had become dissatisfied with Cromwell's "overthrow" of the Commonwealth in 1653, and who were even more dismayed by the Restoration of Charles II, used the figure of Samson as an analogy of England's errors and political plight. The regicide Edmund Ludlow, the exile and alleged Rye House Plot conspirator Algernon Sidney, and the regicide Sir Henry Vane were three notable figures labeled as dangerous individuals by the Restoration government. All three men appropriate the figure of Samson and the tyrannical Philistines in their writings.[29] George Sykes, Vane's biographer, wrote that he "has more advantage[d] a good CAUSE and condemned a bad one, done his honest countrymen more service and his enemies more disservice, by his death (as Samson served the Philistines) than before in all his life, though that also were very considerable."[30] The violence of the Old Testament was transposed upon current political events in order to find meaning in the failure of the Good Old Cause and justification for its continued revenge in the midst of the enemies of the republican commonwealth. As Marvell's Anglican-orthodox persona turns to the

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[28] See Achinstein, *Dissent*, 113, 176-77.

[29] See Blair Warden, "Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, and the Restoration," in *Culture and Society in the Stuart Restoration*, ed. Gerald MacLean (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 111-36.

[30] Quoted in ibid., 115.

image of Samson, he focuses on it as an image of danger for the establishment and, therefore, equates Milton with the most radical elements of Puritan dissent. In a commendatory poem the allusion to Samson is counterproductive because it is inflammatory to political prejudice and suspicion.

Rather than following the more natural path of alluding to Homer or any other blind bard, which would be appropriate for a commendatory verse about an epic written by a blind man, Marvell makes a more significant, darker allusion when he incorporates the biblical typography of Samson. The explicit fear invoked by Marvell's allusion to Samson is that Milton's reimagining of a scriptural story has performed a "ruinous" and "overwhelming" act of literary imagination—one that could destroy biblical truth. Additionally, there is a more subtle implicit fear that is inherent in Marvell's allusion. Invoked alongside the popular nonconformist idiom of Samson are all of the social anxieties going back to the very beginning of the Restoration. This implicit fear is that Milton's act of literary imagination can lead to the toppling of Church and State.

There are linguistic cues in the text which enforce the implicit fears inherent in the Samson typology. The terms "spite" and "revenge"—along with "ruin" and "overwhelming"—can be connected to the religious radicals of the Interregnum, who wanted to erase all forms of earthly government in order to usher in a heavenly kingdom. Although the political and military agency of the regicides and religious sects like the Fifth Monarchists was long past by 1674, rumors of their continued threat haunted

Restoration writings, with revenge being their driving force.[31] Many Fifth Monarchists and similarly minded dissenters suffered imprisonment and harsh treatment during the Restoration, which makes their similarity to a revenging Samson more poignant. However, the image that can be used as a symbol of danger by the orthodox Anglican persona was also an image of hope among nonconformists facing earthly trials. Thus, an inherent tension in Marvell's poem is how to navigate between reading Milton with fear and reading him with charity.[32] Milton himself calls for such a balancing act in his sole post-Restoration tract concerning religious toleration. In *Of True Religion, Haersie, Toleration* (1673), Milton asks, "How shall we prove all things, which includes all opinions at least founded on Scripture, unless we not only tolerate them, but patiently

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[31] The poem *A Mene Tekel to Fifth Monarchy* (London, 1665), ridicules the idea of an earthly reign of Christ that would topple a heavenly ordained king while also suggesting that continued sedition is in the spirit of the fallen angels whose "evil fury . . . can take no rest" (31-32).

[32] See Raymond A. Anselment, "Satiric Strategy in Marvell's 'The Rehearsal Transpros'd,'" *Modern Philology* 68, no. 2 (1970): 137-50. Anselment suggests that Anglican polemicists, despite their dedication to rationality and use of "the massive array of arguments marshaled to support absolute conformity," could not "conceal an overwhelming fear and hatred for Nonconformists" (142). This "fear" and "hatred" was turned into vehement zeal directed against nonconformists in the form of anti-dissent propaganda and polemic. See also Chapter 1, 17-19.

hear them, and seriously read them?"[33] To do otherwise, Milton suggests, is a "groundless fear."[34]

In the next stanza, Marvell begins to waver in his strictly orthodox reading and inserts a more patient and charitable reading. He continues with "Yet as I read, soon growing less severe, / I liked his project, the success did fear" (11-12). The lines signal the possibility of a change of heart which allows the following lines to be read in a different light. Marvell worries how "[t]hrough that wide field . . . [Milton] his way should find / O'er which lame Faith leads Understanding blind" (13-14). These lines extend the earlier earthly-trials imagery. The terms "lame" and "blind" enforce the allusions to a groping Samson and a "poet blind." But rather than a destructive agent, Milton can be linked to the suffering, nonconformist-pilgrim hero. On one level, Milton is like Bunyan's Christian, who is beset by various trials and tribulations through which he must progress. N. H. Keeble has shown that terms such as guiding, walking, progress, and leading are used prominently in the nonconformists' faith-based devotional literature.[35] Since Milton's personal trial is his blindness, the blindness idiom also connects Milton to the Samson of *Samson Agonistes*, who must find his epistemological and spiritual balance in the face of his imprisonment and political failure rather than the anarchic, revenging dissenter presented in Anglican polemical tracts. On another level, the poem presents Milton as following the path recommended to all nonconformists: that

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[33] *CPW*, 8:436.

[34] Ibid., 8:437.

[35] See Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 266-67.

of being led blindly by faith. The account of Abraham's blind faith in Hebrews 11.8 was a passage often referenced by nonconformists. It states, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."[36] Thus, we see an image of Milton that is very similar to depictions of displaced, nonconformist ministers.[37]

Despite beginning to reveal sympathy towards Milton, his poetic enterprise, and the nonconformist plight, Marvell continues to include rhetoric used by the orthodox critic against dissenters. He loads his poem with politically charged terms borrowed directly from the debate over the licensing of conscience. As Sharon Achinstein observes, Marvell uses the words "fear" (12) and "jealous" (18) because they are "Restoration slogans hurled by both sides over the causes of civil war."[38] Furthermore, they are terms which were very prominent in Marvell's own polemical debate: the title of Parker's work, which first elicited Marvell's participation in the polemical debate, is a *Preface Shewing What Grounds there are of Fears and Jealousies of Popery*. This phrase is used again by Marvell in his extended title for *The Transproser Rehears'd*. Achinstein suggests that "[b]y using these terms—code words for the false inspiration that led to the rebellion—to describe his misgivings, Marvell signals that he, too, is

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[36] See ibid., 266.

[37] After the Five Mile Act was instated, many nonconformist ministers were forced to move away from their established ministries or else face the penalty of heavy fines (*SR* 5:648-51). See also Chapter 1, 15-16.

[38] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 175.

concerned about false inspiration that could lead to political turmoil."[39] Thus, it is with continued idiomatic tensions that Marvell directs his concerns to clarity and speech.

Marvell's reader persona begins to question the communicative properties of Milton's epic. One concern is that Milton has "perplexed the things he would explain, / And what was easy he should render vain" (15-16). Keeble shows that, after the Restoration, Anglicans condemned nonconformists for making sermons that were too complex and lacking "plain style."[40] For example, the conformist Joseph Glanvill writes in *An Essay Concerning Preaching* (1678), "The Preacher should use *plain words*: so the end, *Edification*, requires. He that affects hard ones, speaks in an unknown tongue, and is a *Barbarian* to his Auditors; they hear the sound, but are not edified: of all the vanities of Speech, there is none more contemptible than this."[41] Yet, as Keeble explains, the stylistic complexity of Puritans was a reflection of their enthusiasm and experience of grace. Interpretation of difficult passages of scripture or metaphorical allusions in sermons was made possible by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit.[42] The

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[39] Ibid.

[40] See Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 240-46.

[41] Joseph Glanvill, *An Essay Concerning Preaching* (London: H. Brome, 1678), 21.

[42] Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 248. Keeble explains that for nonconformists "clarity" was to declare "what they felt" as the Spirit provided personal interpretive inspiration; conversely, "clarity" was not found in the simple "duties and precepts" of the conformist

conformist's plainness of style, as seen by nonconformists, was a symptom of a prescriptive and descriptive moral code devoid of personal faith.[43] In Marvell's poem, the concern for clarity and understanding directly follows the description of Milton's

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liturgy because, as "human inventions," the Spirit was not present to convey meaning in the actions.

[43] The association of nonconformist preaching with "complexity" and conformist liturgy with "plainness" is a reversal of the situation of earlier decades, so too is the emphasis on edification. However, the change is primarily semantic rather than ideological. The introduction of Laudian Arminianism and the ceremonies it championed in the 1620s and 1630s was seen by many Puritans as the introduction of human inventions that were unbiblical and thus heretical complications to a religion that should be based solely on biblical scripture. The plainness of Puritan preaching was a reduction of the complexity of the ornamentation of Archbishop Laud's church. The "complexity" of later seventeenth-century Puritanism is a natural progression of a faith which encouraged scriptural exegesis and personal introspection. Likewise, edification is a semantic term. For conformists, society could be edified by a unified system of mores. For Puritans and nonconformists, edification was always primarily focused on the individual's soul. See Achsah Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton: Literature, Religion and Cultural Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 11-43. Guibbory explains that to the Puritans unadorned worship is preaching the unadorned body of Christ and follows the Puritan emphasis of *sola scriptura* (ibid. 18). See also, below, Chapter 5, 219-25.

blind faith; therefore, Marvell is both directing at Milton a common complaint against nonconformist ministers while also defending Milton with the type of response given by nonconformists. This is a moment of tension in the poem which allows for a significant re-evaluation of previously stated sentiments.

The orthodox anxieties expressed in the early portion of the poem, allow Marvell to experience a change of position as a consequence of the reading process. He states, "Pardon me, mighty poet, nor despise / My causeless, yet not impious, surmise. / But I am now convinced" (23-25). The term *convinced* signals a change in belief and a new state of mind while additionally alluding towards a state of conviction.[44] Until this point in the poem, Marvell's orthodox-Anglican voice has been presented in the past tense: he "beheld," he was "held . . . misdoubting," he "read," and he "did fear." If we continue to look to the idiom of dissent for an explanation of this shift, we can consider the spiritual autobiographies of the Quaker, George Fox, the Presbyterian, Richard Baxter, or countless other nonconformist testimonials. These authors recount youths of searching, skepticism, or doubting followed by a conversion experience and regenerate life. Baxter's *Reliquiae Baxterianae* suggests that his conversion was aided by a generous reading program in radical theology.[45] Marvell's reading experience also follows this convention of nonconformist autobiographical literature where the act of reading skeptically results in an ideological conversion. When Marvell states, "But I am now

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[44] *OED* definition 3a for *convince* denotes a change of belief; definition 3c. denotes a moral conviction.

[45] See Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 158.

convinced," Marvell suggests that it is the reading process which has done the convicting and the convincing (25). Marvell has presented his own conversion narrative of sorts—complete with doubting past—allowing him to reinterpret the idioms from earlier in the poem.

The conversion idiom plays out as the poem progresses into statements of faith in Milton, which replaces the rhetoric used by the orthodox-Anglican critic with the idioms used by dissenters. Milton has become a vessel for the continuance and preservation of God's kingdom. Marvell's reformed reader states,

> That majesty which through thy work doth reign
> Draws the devout, deterring the profane.
> And things divine thou treats of in such state
> As them preserves, and thee, inviolate. (31-34)

These lines point towards a long standing concern of nonconformists of many persuasions, which was to whom to give the ordinance of communion. Skeptical of the open communion of the national church, nonconformist ministers would judge their members according to their public behavior and thus refuse the profane. For example, in 1640, a group of nine ministers listed among their concerns on ecclesiastical polity whether people, "though of approved piety, are not to be received to the Lords Supper, until they be admitted as set Members."[46] The nine ministers explained their official stance thus:

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[46] Simeon Ashe, *A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England* (London: Thomas Underhill, 1643), 17.

> [W]e account it our duty to keepe the unity of spirit inviolate with any, in whom we discerne any fruits of the spirit, so we hold our selves bound to discharge this duty, according to order . . . Church communion we hold onely with Church members admitting to fellowship of the seals the known and approved, & orderly recommended members of any true Church.[47]

The Puritan Simeon Ashe provided them with a confirmation of the above mentioned ecclesiastical stance. Ashe wrote, "Your liberty to receive such satisfaction . . . is not called into question, nor whether you are to keep the bond of the Spirit inviolate according to order . . . (viz) to exclude from the Sacrament."[48] Marvell's poem presents Milton's poetic discernment in terms similar to these discerning, nonconformist ministers. Though Milton is still being presented as a religious dissenter, the depiction has been reversed from the point of view of the Anglican polemicist to that of the nonconformist. Milton is no longer the dangerous schismatic; he now "preserves" "things divine" and keeps them sanctified. The charitable re-depiction of Milton continues with a reconsideration of Milton's speech-act as Marvell reads through the eyes of a nonconformist. The newly dissenting persona believes Milton "sing'st with so much gravity and ease" (36). With a reversal of his earlier concern, Milton is now a clear interpreter of the word rather than the possibly difficult preacher. Finally, as in many of the spiritual autobiographies of nonconformity, the promise of spiritual transcendence over earthly suffering is given. The next lines state that Milton and his epic

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[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., 18.

above human flight dost soar aloft

With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft.

The bird named from that Paradise you sing

So never flags, but always keeps on wing. (37-40)

Gone is the image of the blind and weakened Milton reminiscent of the imprisoned yet dangerous Samson. He has been freed from earthly ties and now "dost soar aloft" (37). Marvell is alluding to the hope which sustained so many imprisoned post-Restoration dissenters; this hope was the heavenly rewards which were to come after their present life of persecution had ended. They would not come through political or military victory. The dissenter John Howe wrote that it is "a delightful thing to the spirit of a man, when he is sensibly disentangled and at liberty from the care, desires, griefs, and fears that were wont to inwrap his heart."[49] Therefore, the never-flagging Milton becomes an image of the faithful Christian who has transcended the troubles of earth through his faith.

Finally, Marvell's experience reading Milton's speech-act has wrought such a conversion in the poet's persona that, by the end of the poem, Marvell has transformed from an orthodox Anglican critic to an active participant in defending the causes of nonconformity as he broaches the topic of rhyme and blank verse. Milton's decision to abstain from using the heroic couplet in *Paradise Lost* was an attempt to recover an

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[49] Quoted in Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 201.

"ancient liberty . . . from the troublesom and modern bondage of Rimeing."[50] As Keeble explains,

> This choice set Milton against contemporary literary fashions and their chief proponent Dryden, for whom rhyme, the most exalted and elevated and therefore the 'noblest kind of modern verse,' had over blank verse, a manner 'too low for a poem,' advantages too numerous to mention. . . . Milton's choice was political as much as aesthetic; it set him not only against Dryden but against the regime of which Dryden was the laureate.[51]

Marvell's reader persona summons the figure of "the town-Bayes" (47) who "tires without his bells" (48) and who, for fashion's sake, adds "tag[s]" to his poems (50). Nigel Smith and Keeble have pointed to Marvell's dual use of the term "town-Bayes" to encompass Dryden as well as Samuel Parker. Dryden had in 1674 used Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a source for his rhymed play, *The State of Innocence* (first published 1677). As Marvell's reader judges Milton's aesthetic choice as the superior position, he is siding against literary detractor, Dryden. However, two years earlier, Marvell had used the name Bayes to refer to Parker, and, as Keeble suggests, written by Marvell, these lines "are inescapably self-reflective; Parker cannot be far off. . . . Dryden and Parker,

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[50] John Milton, "The Verse" in *Paradise Lost, a Poem in Twelve Books* (London: S. Simmons, 1674), $A4^{v}$.

[51] N. H. Keeble, "Why Transprose *the Rehearsal*?" in *Marvell and Liberty*, ed. Warren Chernaik and Martin Dzelzainis (New York: St. Martin's, 1999), 261.

sharing a penchant for rhyme, share also a penchant for repressive politics."[52] Therefore, in the dedicatory poem, as he did in the second part of *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, Marvell defends Milton's reputation against their common enemies. In his tract, Marvell writes,

> But [Milton] never having in the least provoked you, for you to insult thus over his old age, to traduce him by your Scaramuccios, and in your own person, as a School-Master, who was born and hath lived more ingenuously and Liberally then your self [sic]; to have done all this . . . it is unhumanely and inhospitably done.[53]

Since Milton's use of non-rhyming poetry was associated with the interregnum's radical anti-monarchical and anti-Episcopal poetics, he was an easy target for Anglican polemicists.[54] For Marvell's reader persona to have moved from his earlier stance of commenting on Milton's frailties to now supporting his poetics suggests that the reader persona is fully transformed and has moved across the entire spectrum of the idioms of

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[52] Ibid., 262-63.

[53] *PWM*, 1:418. Marvell is addressing the author of the *Tranproser Rehears'd* who he thought was Samuel Parker. Both men had spent time at Milton's lodging in the early 1660s. *Scaramuccios* is a reference to an Italian dramatic caricature.

[54] Rhyme could be associated with bondage, tyranny, and custom; Milton's aversion to rhyme and adoption of blank verse in *Paradise Lost* was seen as a rejection of the pro-absolutism brand of monarchy championed by the "town-Bayes" (l.47), i.e. John Dryden and his royalist poetry. See Nigel Smith, ed., *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 180-84 and Achinstein, *Dissent*, 173-80.

dissent by first attacking, then believing, and finally defending the nonconformity of Milton's epic poem. Marvell's reader persona is bearing similar fruit as the nonconformist ministers Richard Baxter and John Owens, who were both active defenders of their beliefs throughout the persecution of the 1660s and 70s. This final step is the culmination of the conversion idiom which Marvell has created for his reader.

However, the final lines of the poem still yield some contradictions. If Marvell's reader persona has undergone a transformation from Anglican polemicist to dissenter as a result of reading Milton, the question remains: to what extent is he a disciple of Milton's heterodoxy and politics. A closer inspection of the defense of Milton's blank verse provides some insight to this question. Marvell's ambiguous "commendation" suggests that he is not a dissenter cut from Milton's cloth; rather, Marvell's newly dissenting reader persona has his own identity and agenda. He writes:

> Well mightst thou scorn thy readers to allure
> With tinkling rhyme, of thy own sense secure;
> While the town-Bayes writes all the while and spells,
> And like a pack-horse tires without his bells:
> Their fancies like our bushy points appear,
> The poets tag them; we for fashion wear.
> I too transported by the mode offend,
> And while I meant to praise thee, must commend.
> Thy verse created like thy theme sublime,
> In number, weight, and measure, needs not rhyme. (45-54)

In these lines, Marvell divides readers of *Paradise Lost* into a separate camp from Milton. Marvell, as one of Milton's readers, is among the group that could be scorned by Milton in line 45. In addition, Marvell gives the perception that Milton alone is of his "*own* sense secure" (emphasis mine). Marvell focuses upon Milton's perceived ownership of meaning with repetition of the pronoun *thy* in lines 45 and 46 and twice in line 53. It is as if Milton's exact ideology is idiosyncratic to Milton. Furthermore, it is as if Marvell is suggesting that only Milton can hold his "sense" or meanings stable. In the hands of other "poets," the nonconformist idioms of *Paradise Lost* are, in effect, unstable. As mentioned above, Marvell alludes to the fact that Dryden, as the "town-Bayes," was transforming the images of *Paradise Lost* into a pro-establishment work in his drama, *The State of Innocence*. Even though Marvell criticizes Dryden's actions, he equally confesses that Marvell "too [is] transported by the mode." Thus Marvell's reader persona is among the "we" of the readers and poets separate from Milton, and it is in this opposition that Marvell's dissenting agenda is apparent.

When Marvell's reader persona admits that he "meant to praise" Milton, he is suggesting that praise, while perhaps the initial purpose of the poem, has not been the end result of the dedicatory poem. However, since a conversion experience has happened over the course of the poem, it is doubtful that the reader persona has reverted back to a state of Anglican orthodoxy. Instead, another reading is that Marvell's reader is now a dissenter with separate political aims. Instead of praising, Marvell admits that he "must commend" *Paradise Lost*. Some early modern usages of the term *commend* suggest a meaning beyond the denotation of recommendation or the bestowing of praises to an object or person. Since Marvell has stated that he has not praised but only meant to

praise, an alternative denotation for *commend* is a better reading for the term. The etymology of word derives from the Latin *commendare*: "to commit to any one's charge, entrust, commed to his care." Thus, seventeenth-century writers occasionally used the terms *commend* and *command* interchangeably.[55] This alternate denotation helps in the reading of the contradictory reservations found in the final lines. Marvell is admitting that he has taken command of the dissenting idioms associated with Milton and *Paradise Lost* and is now using them according to his own purposes. Thus we see a hybrid idiom which appropriates both the religious nonconformity associated with Milton and the offending "mode" of Restoration popular literature: in this case, the heroic couplet. In fact, the idiom which dominates "On *Paradise Lost*" is similar to the one which Marvell created for *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* to counter the arguments of Samuel Parker.

The Rehearsal Transpros'd is a text which redefined the means of polemical discourse in the early 1670s.[56] As Martin Dzelzainis explains,

> Marvell's text was a tissue of often fragmentary allusions to [Buckingham's play] *The Rehearsal*, an act of appropriation which allowed him to couch ecclesiastical controversy in an idiom that would accommodate it to a variety of milieux

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[55] See *OED*, etymology and definition 2 for *commend*; the term can denote, "favourable acceptance, regard, consideration, attention, or notice" as in *recommend*. See also definition 9, which uses Marvell as an example of the alternate or "confused" usage.

[56] See Keeble, "Why Transprose *The Rehearsal*?"

> otherwise unsympathetic to it: coffeehouses, theatres, the Inns of Court, and the Court itself.[57]

Marvell's co-mingling of classical, biblical, and theological sources with Restoration drama and poetics was not lost on his audience.

Marvell's method is seen in Butler's response to Marvell. Butler addresses Marvell's tactics directly and replies using Marvell's own discursive model. Immediately following the discussion of Milton's blindness and boldness quoted above, Butler mockingly highlights Marvell's conflation of polemic and poetics:

> You see Sir, that I am improved too with reading the Poets, and though you may be better read in Bishop *Dav'nants Gondibert*; yet I think [Milton] . . . as authentic ev'ry jot, as any *Bishop Laureat* of them all. Tell not me now, of turning over the moth-eaten Criticks, or the mouldy Councils: the *Gazetts* and the *Plays* are fitter Texts for the *Rehearsal* Divines . . . than a company of dry Fathers and School-men, who write in *Latin* and *Greek*.[58]

By reusing Marvell's rhetorical ploys, Butler confirms the usefulness of poetic re-appropriation for post-Restoration audiences. Furthermore, he confirms how volatile a text *Paradise Lost* could be when Milton's interregnum specter is attached to it. Thus, the minefield which Marvell is navigating in "On *Paradise Lost*" is treacherous, and the nonconformist idiom could backfire. As a result, Marvell must highlight the most obvious schism between himself and Milton: rhymed couplet and blank verse. His

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[57] Dzelzainis, ed. *PWM*, 1:10.

[58] Butler, *The Transproser Rehears'd*, 43.

decision to utilize rhymed couplets was perhaps originally provided by Butler when he puts Marvell's rhyming and Milton's blank verse in opposition:

> As for [Marvell's] wonderful Gift of Rhyming, I could furnish him with many more of the *Isms* and *Nesses*, but that I should distast a *Blank Verse* Friend of his, who can by no means endure a Rhyme any where but in the middle of a Verse, therein following the laudable custom of the *Welsh Poets*.[59]

Butler's term *distast* is appropriate for Marvell's purposes. A seventeenth-century usage of the term denotes "mutual aversion, estrangement, difference, quarrel."[60] Creating an estrangement or notable difference is exactly what Marvell needs to do in order to appropriate Milton's dissenting idioms under his own dissenting idiom, and this is what he does in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd, part 2*. Marvell writes,

> You do three times at least in your *Reproof*, and in your *Transproser Rehears'd* well nigh half the book thorow, run upon an Author J. M. which does not a little offend me. For why should any other mans reputation suffer in a contest betwixt you and me? . . . For by chance I had not seen [Milton] of two years before; but after I undertook writing, I did more carefully avoid either visiting or sending to him, least I should any way involve him in my consequences.[61]

McWilliams cites these lines to assert the anxiety of influence felt by Marvell and consequently expressed by him in "On *Paradise Lost*;" however, what McWilliams is

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[59] Ibid., 133.

[60] *OED*, *distast*, definition 5.

[61] *PWM*, 1:417.

registering as anxiety of influence may be friction caused by Marvell's assertion of dominion and appropriation of the dissenting idioms for his own purposes in his support of the agenda of the Cabal ministry as stated in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*.[62]

Marvell's dedicatory poem shows that not only were Milton's poetry and name useful in nonconformist polemic but also Milton's texts could be read by nonconformists in ways which ran occasionally cross grain to Milton's particular forms of dissent. Because of intrepid readers such as Marvell, it is important to consider both the text and the readers of the text in question when determining the particular reception of a book during any giving period.

As Marvell brought with him an agenda when reading *Paradise Lost*, post-Restoration nonconformists may have allowed their own experiences and agendas to overlap with their reading of Milton's *Poems 1673*—a poetic text which soon was followed by Marvell's poem and the 1674 *Paradise Lost* and which contains many of the same easily-appropriated idioms. With sonnets reflecting on vocation, social acceptance, and rejection; pastorals cautioning the various dangers to religious communities; and Psalm translations balancing the emotions of prejudicial fear and public charity, *Poems 1673* is a text that was made for post-Restoration nonconformists.

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[62] See Annabel Patterson, Introduction, in *PWM*, 1:9. She describes *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* as "the Cabal's literary memorial; the most brilliant defense of its keynote policy of religious toleration." Though Marvell and Milton shared similar goals for religious toleration, their political means were at odds.

CHAPTER III

NONCONFORMIST BIOGRAPHY AND THE SONNET SEQUENCE OF *POEMS 1673*

> "The Eyes of God and Angels are upon you, and the eyes of Men are upon you; now you will be critically observed"
>
> – Joseph Alleine, *The Life and Death of Mr Joseph Alleine*

As demonstrated by Marvell's dedicatory poem, Milton's biblical epic, *Paradise Lost*, contains subject matter that was conducive for appropriation in the post-Restoration polemical debates over nonconformity. However, the lyrics of *Poems 1673* are not always so obviously polarizing; therefore, they have been ignored as post-Restoration nonconformist speech-acts. As explained in the introductory chapter, many of Milton's lyrics are occasional, having their beginnings in the relative peacefulness of pre-Civil War society or commenting on events and acquaintances specific to Milton's life and educational or occupational experiences. This feature is especially true of the sonnet sequence in *Poems 1673* when they are read as a group. The ten republished and nine new sonnets present the sonneteer's life progression through the emotions of youthful romance on to the tensions of professional advancement then finally on to the questions and consolations of old age.[1] All along the way, the reader encounters Milton's personal

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[1] On reading Milton's sonnets as a sequence, see William McCarthy, "The Continuity of Milton's Sonnets," *PMLA* 92.1 (1977): 96-109. McCarthy argues that the sonnets can be divided into three groups: the "poems of youth," the "poems of maturity," and the poems of "retirement" (ibid. 96). McCarthy's reading of the sonnets is

relationships and historically topical comments on war (Sonnet VIII) and international events (Sonnet XV). Being located within Milton's domestic and social spheres, the sonnets lend themselves to a psychological analysis of Milton rather than an analysis of the reader who would have read them in *Poems 1673*.[2] Furthermore, several of Milton's sonnets that could have elicited strong post-Restoration political responses are missing from the 1673 volume. Not published until after Milton's death, these poems include the sonnets "To my Lord Fairfax," "To Oliver Cromwell," "To Sir Henry Vane," and "To Mr. Cyriac Skinner, Upon his Blindness."[3] Revard suggests that these sonnets were "withheld in 1673, probably because of the notoriety of the men whom they praised—

"macroscopic," examining the broad pattern of the "human career in its three conventional phases of youth, maturity and old age" (ibid.). McCarthy's argument is informed by E. A. J. Honigmann, *Milton's Sonnets* (London: Macmillan, 1966). Honigmann takes a microscopic view of the sonnets but also concludes that the order of the sonnets contains intrinsic continuity (ibid. 59-74).

[2] Honigmann writes, "the sonnets chronicle one man's reactions to the events and individuals of his time, one man's self-exploration and exploration of values, he, the poet, remaining the common factor" (ibid. 72).

[3] These are the titles for the poems as they were presented by Milton's nephew, Edward Phillips, in *Letters of State* (1694). Significantly, the sonnet on Vane had been appropriated for the Vane's biography by George Sykes (1662). The sonnet praises Vane's service to England during the Interregnum and advocates for religious liberties. Sykes' biography was intended to be a post-Restoration memorial for causes of dissent.

leading men of the Civil War and Commonwealth—and because in them Milton affirmed his commitment to the Commonwealth and the pursuit of Liberty."[4] Having been politically excised by the editor's pen—this could have been the action of Milton, Thomas Dring, or another collaborator during the printing process—the sonnet sequence requires participation from a reader who could make generic connections between Milton's sonnets and popular nonconformist speech-acts.[5] This is the kind of reader who Keeble suggests would have been presupposed by Nonconformist writers: that is a reader, who is aware of a "moralistic, educative, and didactic purpose."[6] Even though Milton's political sonnets on Cromwell, Fairfax, and Vane do not appear in *Poems 1673*, the volume still contains significant other sonnets that interact with nonconformist idioms and mimic the genres of their speech-acts to an extent that even his more amicably "mainstream" sonnets work within the nonconformist idiom.

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[4] *CSP*, 354.

[5] See Stephen B. Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999). Dobranski suggests that "Dring and Milton would not have dared published such treasonous verses praising Cromwell's 'faith and matchless Fortitude' (line 3), Vane's 'sage counsel' (line 1), and Fairfax's 'firm unshak'n virtue' (line 5); presumably a licenser would not have allowed it" (ibid. 175). Dobranski alludes to Dring, Milton, and the hypothetical licenser as editorial forces at play on the text of *Poems 1673*.

[6] Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 135.

The Social Currency of Joseph Alleine's Personal Experiences

In the seventeenth century, writers seeking to articulate personal experience in a public context explored and developed the genre of biography. As Allan Pritchard explains, the seventeenth century was a highly experimental period for the genre. He connects the increase in biographical writing to "three different but interrelated" facts:

> First, there was a great enlargement and broadening of the two traditional types [of biography], the lives of saints and other notable religious figures, and the lives of princes and other great secular figures, stimulated both by the aftermath of the sixteenth-century religious revolution and by the seventeenth-century conflicts that culminated in the Civil War. Second, biographical elements were developed increasingly in various established literary forms that had not previously contained much biographical component, ranging from sermons to histories. Third, a number of forms were developed that had little earlier precedent in England and can be regarded as distinctly new seventeenth-century types of biography, including the prefatory life and the brief life.[7]

The greatest boom in biography occurred in religious biography as various English Protestants continued to appropriate Roman Catholic hagiography in the tradition set

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[7] Allan Pritchard, *English Biography in the Seventeenth Century: A Critical Survey* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2005), 10. Of course, Edward Phillips' *Life of Milton* (1694) is a product of seventeenth-century biographical interest and development.

down by John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563).[8] Protestants rejected the limited definition of the saint as a canonized miracle worker. Instead, they broadened the label to include many sincere members of the laity and clergy, as long as they lived lives of virtue and sanctity. All who professed to be Christian and, more importantly, lived accordingly were considered to be among the saints.[9] As with Foxe's Protestant hagiographical work, written as a response to the persecution of the Marian exiles, many seventeenth-century religious biographies were written in response to suffering and defeat experienced by nonconformists after the Restoration and even by pro-royalist Anglicans during the

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[8] See John N. King, *Foxe's* Book of Martyrs *and Early Modern Print Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). King's examination of Foxe's work is concerned with presenting the history of this dominant text of Protestant ideology. As part of his study, King studies the various published incarnations of the book throughout Early Modern literary history. A corresponding aspect of this study is the examination of how Protestant readers utilized *Acts and Monuments* for encouragement and consulation during times of trials and persecution. During the persecution under the Clarendon Code, post-Restoration nonconformists used *Acts and Monuments* as a model for their own personal histories (ibid. 313).

[9] As with most labels, "sainthood" was used differently, even among English Protestants. Between Laudian Arminians and English Calvinists, there continued to be debates on who were truly saints and "the elect of God."

Interregnum.[10] The authors and publishers of religious biography used these narratives as ideological speech-acts that were didactic and apologetic.

In 1672, the prominent Presbyterian divine Richard Baxter and the nonconformist bookseller Neville Simmon worked together to employ the memory of the ejected minister Joseph Alleine as nonconformist hagiography. *The Life and Death of Mr. Joseph Alleine* (1672) is a collaboration of several parties. His wife, Theodosia Alleine, provided the foundation text for the biography, but other nonconformist activists and divines contributed personal anecdotes from the life of Alleine. Bringing popular name recognition to the book, Baxter wrote the introduction, in which he suggests that "among all parts of Church-History, the Lives of Wise and Holy Men, do seem to be not least *Useful* and *Delightful*."[11] The biography presents many aspects of Alleine's ministry, but the narrative emphasizes the trials that Alleine faced in his life, namely the time he spent in prison and subsequent years of illness. Many of his letters sent from prison to his friends, family, and congregation are bound together with his biography. Additionally, his biographers emphasize Alleine's insistence on education and catechism as necessary tools for salvation; there is a whole chapter dedicated to presenting an "Account of his Catechizing, both in Publick and Private," and it is appended with an abridgement of

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[10] Pritchard, *English Biography in the Seventeenth Century*, 10-13.

[11] *Life and Death*, 13. Baxter's introduction is very polemical. He posits the edifying aspects of biography in comparison to the "many lies in the Popish Legends." Alleine is presented as a model of the Christian saint, which every elect believer can aspire to be.

Alleine's devotional catechism.[12] Furthermore, Alleine's funeral sermon, written by his senior Taunton minister, George Newton, is also included in the text.[13] The book contains many of the seventeenth-century innovations in biography. It is, in effect, a collection of brief lives, which all happen to be about the same person. Furthermore, the text focuses on a relatively unknown religious figure, who ministered in a relatively small parish. Finally, the book contains a variety of genres, which have biographical narratives woven into them, such as the funeral sermon and Alleine's correspondence.

The Life and Death of Mr. Joseph Alleine is more than just an informative history or a collection of anecdotes about a man's life. The text is an amalgamation of nonconformist documents, all of which function independently as particular forms of nonconformist speech-acts. Baxter's introduction works to situate Alleine in a line of Puritan hagiography descending from Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. Baxter, of course, intends the biography to be instructional to nonconformists—Alleine's life is presented to be a noble example to which others may aspire; however, the biography also reads as an apologia of nonconformity to conformists. Baxter emphasizes that some contributors to the text are conformists who knew Alleine to be a just and holy man. One advertisement to the reader announces:

> Let the *Reader* know, (to assure him that Faction and Partiality are not the Authors of this History) that the two full Narratives that are not subscribed, are

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[12] *Life and Death*, 43-61.

[13] See Achinstein, *Dissent*, 27-37.

> written by two Conformable Ministers of very great sincerity and abilities, who were long intimately acquainted with Mr. *Joseph Alleine.*[14]

The participation of conforming ministers in constructing Alleine's biography is a response to efforts of the Clarendon Code and Anglican polemicists to alienate nonconformists from the mainstream. The text shows that nonconformity and conformity did not need to be diametrically opposed; instead, it shows that they could have shared values. Throughout the text, the contributors emphasize Alleine's congeniality. Richard Fairclough writes,

> [Alleine] became all things to all men, that he might gain the more, and so communicative innocent and obliging were all his Converses, that he commanded the imitation and admiration of his Friends, and forc'd this acknowledgment from his Adversaries, both Prophane, Atheistical, and Sectarian, *viz.* That if there were ever a good Man among them, (meaning the *Non-conformists*) Mr. Allein was he.[15]

This is one example of how Alleine is repeatedly shown to be well tempered, kind, approachable, charitable, conversational, etc. In this way, he is presented as the opposite of the contentious and vicious sectarians characterized in anti-dissent satires, such as Simon Patrick's very popular and somewhat misnamed dialogue, *A Friendly Debate between a Conformist and a Non-conformist* (1668, 1669, 1670), or the scathing poem *The Mock-Elogie on the Funeral of Mr. Caryl* (1673). Patrick's dialogue features a

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[14] *Life and Death*, 4.

[15] Ibid., 108.

witless nonconformist, whose religious prejudices often overwhelm his reason and amiability. The hubris of the nonconformist is seen in the opening exchange between the two participants:

> [Conformist]. Good morrow, Neighbour: I am very glad to see you, and you are welcome home.
>
> [Nonconformist]. I thank you kindly: But I do not understand your Salutation, not having been from home this twelve-month.
>
> C. No? what's the reason then that we have not seen you at Church of late?
>
> N.C. I believe you did not see me: but I assure you that Church never wants my company.
>
> C. How can that be? Are you there as the Angels are, after an invisible manner?
>
> N.C. Pish! You do not apprehend me. Do you take your house of stone to be the Church?[16]

The passage shows a conventional exchange of salutations breaking down in the face of the nonconformist's need to justify his religious beliefs and behavior. Written between the lines is the fact that the nonconformist has exiled himself from his community for the past year, and more overtly referred to in this passage is the fact that the nonconformist's exile is based on his haughty sense of spiritual superiority. The nonconformist extols the spiritual nature of his conception of church and discounts the physical nature of the conformist's conception of the church. As the discussion continues, the nonconformist

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[16] Simon Patrick, *A Friendly Debate between a Conformist and Non-conformist* (London: Richard Royston, 1669), 1.

eventually becomes crestfallen as he gives in to the reasoning of the conformist. However, the dialogue between the two speakers is always tempered by the skepticism of the nonconformist. While the primary goal of Patrick's dialogue is to counter the arguments made in support of nonconformity, a secondary goal was to highlight any anti-social tendencies of nonconformity. For example, while describing the character of a nonconformist minister, Patrick writes,

> [They] are of an haughty Humour, of a furious and factious Disposition, puft up with a conceit of their Gifts to such a height, that they will scarce allow any man to know any thing of God, who is not of their Party. Sowr and crabbed they are above all other men, cross and peevish beyond all expression; they never speak well of our Governours or Government; they are always reviling Bishops and Common-Prayer; and talking like men inspired: it is an easie matter for them to disparage all our Ministry, and begat an ill opinion of them in the minds of their credulous Followers.[17]

According to Patrick, nonconformists are misanthropic to the core—in their speech, behavior, and opinions—and, rather than spreading the gospel, they spread discord. Throughout *A Friendly Debate*, Patrick addresses anti-social behavior that ranges from nonattendance at church services to attendance at seditious conclaves.[18] Responding to such allegations, Alleine's biographers suggest that he was a model nonconformist, who was anything but anti-social or misanthropic.

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[17] Patrick, *A Friendly Debate*, 155.

[18] Ibid., 119-20.

Of course, anti-dissenter propaganda took many forms, and depictions of the anti-social behavior of nonconformists went to various extremes. In *The Mock-Elogie on the Funeral of Mr. Caryl*, nonconformists in attendance at a funeral procession are depicted as dangerously anti-social to the extent of being anarchic and seditious. After a series of comic caricatures of various nonconformists—living and dead—the author warns his community of the anti-social dangers of nonconformists:

London! By *Plague*, learn to be *wise*:
These *Rebels* have *enflam'd* thee *twice*:
With *Tumults* these did thee *enflame*,
To punish *which* the fire came;
God took the *Rod* and *laid it on*
For *unrepented* sedition.[19]

By linking nonconformist action with anti-social catchwords like *tumult* and *sedition*, the author of the poem renders nonconformist behavior impossible to ignore. Furthermore, he not only links nonconformity with anti-social behavior, but he also links it with the two historical events that were most destructive to English society during the Restoration period: the plague (1665) and the Great Fire of London (1666). As the poem continues, the author exaggerates the otherness and disparity of the nonconformists from the general population and from themselves. He writes,

Look *this* day on *this* factious Crew,
They *All* are of a *Different* hue:

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[19] E. H., *The Mock Elogie on the Funeral of Mr. Caryl* (London, 1672).

Their *Features* have a *several* Grace,

Yet *now* they seem to have *one* face.

What brings *to Church* All these *sects* now?

Right *Hypocrites*! All's for a *show*.

How came *all sects* thus to *combine*?

Oh! I can tell you, '*tis designe*

Which makes them *All* agree in *one*,

In *what* d'ye think? In *Sedition*.[20]

The sectarianism of post-Restoration nonconformity is suggested to be so factious and anti-social that it seems a wonder that these various sects could join together for a common cause, such as a funeral, unless the goal is some greater, anti-social cause. Though the poem begins with a satirical attack on nonconformity, the end of the poem represents the darker forms of anti-dissent propaganda during the period—the kind of literature that could arouse violent social prejudice against nonconformity.

It is in response to the negative depictions of nonconformity that Alleine's personal experiences become a type of social currency to buy back broader sympathy for nonconformity in his community. Various congenial experiences from Alleine's life are interspersed within the text at key points to emphasize Alleine as a character to be admired rather than abhorred. In the chapter illustrating his "Industrious and Prosperous pursuit of Learning," one biographer explains that, despite exhibiting the "Zeal of Religion" and being "very diligent in private Prayer, and so fixed in that Duty, that he

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[20] Ibid.

would not be disturbed," Alleine was "more amiable by his sweet and pleasant deportment towards all he conversed with."[21] Though Alleine at times sequestered himself from society to perform his devotional studies, he continued to be an active member of his community. Thus, his zealotry is tempered with amiability. Later in the text, after explaining that Alleine was a "Man of Courage" who "feared no dangers in the way of his Duty," the contributor balances Alleine's aggressive boldness by adding that Alleine was

> a zealous Peace-maker among differing Brethren, in case of personal Quarrels and Contentions; and he was also of sober and peaceful Principles, and an healing spirit, as to Parties or Factions upon the account of Religion. He had an awful and reverend regard to Magistrates, abhorring all provoking and insolent expressions, or tumultuous Action against them.[22]

Here again, Alleine's zealotry is refocused onto socially positive outcomes rather than destructive or contentious outcomes. In the character of Alleine, nonconformity strengthened social bonds rather than caused disruptions. Furthermore, the ministry of Alleine is emphasized for his charitable works, such as public education for children and benevolence for the poor. His wife writes,

> Though his Sickness had been long, and his Expenses great, he thought he could never spend enough for him from whom he had received all: He constantly gave

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[21] *Life and Death*, 29.

[22] Ibid., 40.

> Money or Apples to all the Children . . . besides all he gave to Teachers, and Poor, which indeed was beyond his ability, considering his Estate.[23]

These are only a few of the numerous instances in which Alleine's biographers emphasize his philanthropic and sociable tendencies. In the context of the genre of religious biography, these experiences are examples of God's grace manifested in Alleine's life; however, within the nonconformist idiom, they are also counterarguments to anti-dissent literature. Hence, even personal experiences became valuable tools in the literature of nonconformists.

The Currency of Milton's Experiences

Post-Restoration nonconformist readers of *Poems 1673* would have found in Milton's sonnet sequence many topical and generic similarities between Milton's lyrical descriptions of a career as a poet, Puritan, and public figure with the type of spiritual biography exemplified in Alleine's nonconformist life. In fact, when the sonnet sequence of *Poems 1673* is read as a nonconformist biography, certain sonnets, which seem unlikely to interact with the post-Restoration nonconformist idiom, perform a nonconformist speech-act. For example, Sonnet XIII, "*To Mr.* H. Lawes, *on his Aires*," has been cited as one of Milton's more sociable and less divisive poems.[24] This is

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[23] Ibid., 90.

[24] See Nicholas McDowell, "Dante and the Distraction of Lyric in Milton's 'To My Friend Mr Henry Lawes,'" *Review of English Studies*, New Series, 59 no. 239 (2007): 233-54. McDowell writes, "The desire for post-war cultural *rapprochement* is apparent in the sonnet that Milton addressed . . . to the most prominent member of the royalist

because Milton exhibits his sociability with someone with whom he is in ideological opposition.[25] In fact, the sonnet is outright conversational as Milton directly addresses the well known royalist musician, Henry Lawes:

> *Harry* whose tuneful and well measur'd Song
> First taught our English Musick how to span
> Words with just note and accent, not to scan
> With *Midas* Ears, committing short and long[.] (1-4)

The address is both congenial and laudatory. Highlighting shared interests and an innate connection of nationalistic brotherhood, Milton finds common ground with Lawes as he broaches the topic of "our English Musick" (2). This congenial address exists despite that fact that Lawes' music had long been associated with the agenda of the royalist and

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community with whom he had a personal and creative connection—Henry Lawes" (240). McDowell suggests that, in this sonnet, Milton is breaking with the Presbyterian camp that he had associated with prior to the Civil Wars rather than attacking the Royalist culture.

[25] Milton, of course, collaborated with Lawes on various projects. Lawes provided the music for *A Mask*, performed the role of the Attendant Spirit at its 1634 staging at Ludlow Castle where Lawes was employed as the music teacher to the Earl of Bridgewater's children, and he had *A Mask* printed in 1638. Lawes perhaps helped make the introductions between Milton and his patron. Furthermore, Sonnet XIII appears as a prefatory poem in a collection of Lawes' compositions, *Choice Psalmes Put into Musick For Three Voices* (London: Humphrey Moseley, 1648).

Anglican establishment. In *Choice Psalmes Put into Musick* (1648), Lawes dedicates his book to Charles I, "King of great Brittane, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith" and labels the Civil Wars as "these dissonant times" and "unnaturall Warres."[26] Later in the Interregnum, Lawes contributed the music to Izzak Walton's "Angler's Song," a component of Walton's pro-Episcopal propaganda in *The Complete Angler* (1653). Even after Lawes' death in 1662, his music and memory was associated with Royalist and Episcopalian institutions. A posthumous collection of songs, *The Treasury of Musick* (1669), represents Lawes as "late Servant to His Majesty in His Publick and Private Musick."[27] Furthermore, the epigraph under the frontispiece reads,

> Although the Cannon, and the Churlish Drum
> Have strooke the Quire mute, and the Organs Dumb:
> Yet Musicks Art with Ayre and String, and Voyce
> Makes glad the Sad, and Sorrow to Rejoyce.[28]

The epigraph is a politically loaded poem from the Interregnum, reminding the reader of the time when the choirs and organs of the Anglican church-service were silenced by the violence of the Puritan Revolution. It places Lawes' music in opposition to the disruptive forces of the Interregnum and attributes to Lawes the power to rally the temporarily

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[26] Lawes, *Choice Psalmes Put into Musick For Three Voices*, A3^{r}, A4^{r}. See also Chapter 5 for the polemical uses of psalms in the post-Restoration nonconformity.

[27] Henry Lawes, *The Treasury of Musick: Containing Ayres and Dialogues to Sing to the Theorbo-Lute or Basse-Viol* (London: John Playford, 1669), A2^{r}.

[28] Ibid., A1^{v}.

disenfranchised establishment. Despite this ideological divide between a supporter of the Revolution and a supporter of the toppled establishment, Milton's sonnet praises Lawes. As the poem progresses, Milton's conversational tone continues as Milton apostrophizes Lawes with "Thy" (5), "Thou" (9), and "thee" (12). The sonnet is not an abstracted monologue but, instead, part of a dialogue between two colleagues. However, as in the sociable anecdotes from Alleine's biography, the sonnet retains the ideological divide for effect. Underlying his sociability, Milton is aware that he is discoursing with the "other." He writes that Lawes' "worth and skill exempts [him] from the throng" (5). In this sonnet, the throng is not a positive entity for Milton; instead, it represents the misinformed and misled demographic of his country. Milton's intellectual discernment continually distances him from the throng and allows him to select from within this categorical other those with whom he can be amicable on matters, which nonconformists would say "belonged to doubtful Disputations . . . that wholly depend upon *Topical* Arguments."[29] In the final lines of the sonnet, Milton reveals that his congeniality is, in fact, limited by a substantial divide.

Throughout the sonnet, Milton employs classical allusions to illustrate Lawes' skill as a musician. Early in the poem, he alludes to the myth of Midas' choice of Pan over Apollo (4) and later, to Phoebus and the Muses (10). Milton's praise for Lawes is intellectualized within the classical idiom, giving Milton a neutral zone to meet with his ideological other. However, in the final three lines, Milton moves his metaphor to

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[29] *Life and Death*, 46. Alleine's biographers explain that these types of matters would not keep him from having genuine interactions with other believers.

Dante's *Purgatorio*, revealing Milton's full perception of Lawes. Milton writes, "Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher / Then [*sic*] his *Casella*, whom he woo'd to sing / Met in the milder shades of Purgatory" (12-14).[30] In Book Two of *Purgatorio*, Dante meets with his deceased friend and asks the musician to sing for him. Casella concedes and sings a verse written by Dante. Milton's allusion places himself in the role of Dante, the transient music connoisseur, and Lawes in the role of Casella, deceased and existing in spiritual limbo. As in many of his sonnets, Milton utilizes this turn with the sestet to remark upon and temper his previous statements. David Norbrook suggests, "the gesture of friendship is there, but so too is the acknowledgment of a huge ideological gulf, compared to the gulf between the living and the dead."[31] Even though Milton has associated with Lawes in the past and appreciates his music, the sonnet still presents Milton in a superior position to Lawes because Milton, at least, is heading towards ideological *Paradiso*. Furthermore, it is Dante's words, which Casella uses to please Dante, perhaps suggesting that Lawes' musical ability which Milton is praising would be better suited for Milton's ideological causes.

The allusion to Dante represents a type of real respect and amicable interaction that can exist between two people who could otherwise be separated by the circumstances

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[30] Honigmann, *Milton's Sonnets*, 132-33. The meeting between Casella and Dante takes part on the shores of Purgatory: "the 'mildest' part of Purgatory itself" (ibid. 133). This may be read a censure of Lawes, albeit a mild one.

[31] David Norbrook, *Writing the English Revolution: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 162.

of their beliefs and actions. However, it does not deny the ideological gap between the two associates. This is a distinction used often in Alleine's biography and in nonconformist literature seeking the establishment of comprehension or toleration. The possibility of peaceful cohabitation was essential to addressing social prejudices, and such cohabitation exits throughout the personal sonnets of *Poems 1673* In Milton's sonnet sequence, Royalists, Republicans, and Parliamentarians socialize together with the Miltonic persona at their center. The sonnet on Lawes cohabitates with Sonnet XVII, written to Edward Lawrence, the son of Henry Lawrence, a member of Cromwell's Council of State. Those two sonnets cohabitate with Sonnet XVIII, written to Cyriak Skinner, Milton's one-time student, who shared Milton's political sympathies. Despite a consistent, underlying concern for domestic, religious, and political liberties, the sonneteer is careful to orchestrate conviviality. For example, the sonnet to Edward Lawrence, tempts the reader into focusing upon the political activity of both the "virtuous Father," Henry Lawrence, who served as Lord President, and the political activity of the "virtuous son," Edward, who served as a Member of Parliament.[32] In fact, virtuous action seems necessary as the sonneteer depicts a "dank," "mir[y]," and "sullen day" (2,4) and rhetorically asks "what may be won / From the hard Season gaining?" (4-5). A tirade on the poor state of the world seems to be approaching; however, the sonneteer instead turns to themes of feasting, wine, and music. The virtuous minds who are gathered for this show of conviviality are asked to focus their efforts on judging the benefits of these "delights." The concluding lines state, "He who of those delights can judge, And spare /

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[32] Honigmann, *Milton's Sonnets*, 177-79

To interpose them oft, is not unwise" (13-14). The political virtue suggested in the first lines is not totally discarded in these lines; it remains as part of the balancing act performed by the wise yet sociable man.

Sonnet XVIII, written to Cyriack Skinner, accomplishes a similar task. The Miltonic persona evokes the memory of Sir Edward Coke, who, the sonneteer reminds us, defended English "Lawes, / Which others at their Barr so often wrench" (1-2), only "to drench / In mirth" (4-5) such "deep thoughts" (5). Anxiety and political tension hang over the sonnet with the constant reminder that time could be spent considering "what the *Swede* intends, and what the *French*" rulers intend to do (8) or that many "superfluous burden[s] loa[d] the day" (13). However, the sonneteer—with some difficulty—dispels these thoughts based on a heavenly mandate for fellowship when "Heav'n a time ordains" (11) and "God sends a cheerful hour" (14).

The inclusion of these convivial sonnets tempers the depiction of the Miltonic persona of the sonnet sequence and shows a sonneteer who is concerned with personal liberty yet yearns for social tranquility. Through these convivial sonnets Milton both describes and performs socially constructive acts of reasonability, moderation, tolerance, and temperance. The interaction with Lawes seen in Sonnet XIII is just a single anecdote in a series of anecdotes illustrating the sonneteer's life and career. As stated above, the sonnet sequence presents a spectrum of life events, which work together to reveal the sonneteer's biography, much the same way that the various biographies of Alleine present a larger picture of the deceased nonconformist minister. Both works can be said to reveal a constructed persona which performs the actions required by a social contract of amiability. William McCarthy argues, "The Milton in the sonnets, as in all the works,

is . . . an implied author. . . . [H]e is a character whose beliefs we are desired to adopt and whose judgments we are meant to approve."[33] McCarthy explains that the sonnets cannot fully represent the mind and experiences of the historical Milton because there are thoughts and events that were not iterated in his prose or poetry. Instead, the sonnet sequence presents a cultivated and selective biography. Pritchard argues that the same thing can be said of the biographies of Alleine and other nonconformist ministers.[34]

As carefully constructed works of literature, nonconformist biographies could be used for many purposes. As shown above, they could be used to ease social tensions and promote amelioration. They could also been used to illustrate the proper forms of devotion. A key aspect of Protestant hagiography is the depiction of the outpouring of Heavenly grace through the actions and thoughts of an elect saint. Biography played an important role in the growth of emerging Protestant sects during the seventeenth century. The expansion of Quakerism was supported by its biographies.[35] George Fox and other nonconformists told of their conversion experiences, sometimes highlighting the work of what Fox called the "inner light" or the guidance of the Holy Spirit in matters of biblical hermeneutics and homiletic speech.[36] These conversion experiences were tools for

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[33] McCarthy, "The Continuity of Milton's Sonnets," 97. McCarthy is using Wayne Booth's term.

[34] Pritchard, *English Biography in the Seventeenth Century*, 53.

[35] Watts, *Dissenters*, 200-01.

[36] For the implications of Fox's radical hermeneutics, see Achinstein, *Dissent*, 161. Achinstein states, "In this radical hermeneutics, Fox's spirit was one and the same as

evangelism and the active promotion of nonconformist faith.[37] Alleine's biography repeatedly refers to the "patience [with which] he ran the Race that was set before him."[38] The various hurdles that Alleine faced throughout his life's race are represented as didactic experiences that served as models to the nonconformist community.[39] Achinstein suggests that Theodosia Alleine "amplified her husband's virtues not simply on account of her wifely role, but to contribute to a literary culture of Dissent in which the portrayal of significant figures was a means to consolidate political and spiritual unity among the dispossessed."[40] In his biography, Alleine is presented as being predestined for such a purpose. Shortly after his spiritual conversion, an act of fate pushes Alleine into

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that of the prophets. Uttering the words of the Bible was therefore performing the work of God. This took to the extreme the Protestant premise that the Holy Spirit should guide the reading of Scripture, and gave scope to a new valuing of individual experience."

[37] See Pritchard, *English Biography in the Seventeenth Century*, 39. Prichard states, "The most striking and characteristic difference between Puritan and Anglican biographies is the greater prominence given in the Puritan lives to inner religious experience and conversion than is common in Anglican biography" (ibid. 39).

[38] *Life and Death*, 62; see also ibid., 29.

[39] See Pritchard, *English Biography in the Seventeenth Century*, 53-77. Pritchard explains that the religious biographer "seeks not to display the individuality of his subject but to show his conformity to ideal models and patterns, and not to give 'a complete account of the person' but an account of religious aspects worthy of imitation" (ibid. 53).

[40] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 34.

religious ministry. One of his biographers writes, "While he thus openly began to run his Christian Race, his Brother Mr. *Edward Allein*, a worthy Minister of the Gospel departed this Life: Whereupon [Joseph] earnestly desired to be brought up in Preparation, to succeed him in the Work of the Ministry."[41] Spiritual calling and the work of the inner light are images cultivated in nonconformist literature because these aspects of the spiritual life emphasize the relationship with the higher power that authorizes their religious dissent.

The sonnet sequence of *Poems 1673*, like the religious biographies of nonconformists, also emphasizes a spiritualized vocational calling and the work of an inner light. Furthermore, the conventions used by religious biographers are employed within the sonnet sequence. In many seventeenth-century religious biographies, the period of childhood and youth is either excised or shortened in order to focus on the subject's active ministry. The exception, as Pritchard explains, is when "the biographers give one or two anecdotes from the early years to show the subject's promise of future distinction."[42] In the extended sonnet sequence of *Poems 1673*, the presentation of youthfulness is presented in the first seven poems.

The "Italian" section, which contains the amatory sonnets of youthful vigor and ambition, show the Miltonic persona's dedication to the poetic muse and to love. In Sonnet I, "O Nightingale," the sonneteer admits that "the Muse, [and] Love . . . / Both them I serve, and of their train am I" (13-14). With five more sonnets and a Canzone, all

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[41] *Life and Death*, 29.

[42] Pritchard, *English Biography in the Seventeenth Century*, 56.

written in Italian, Milton dallies with the theme of romantic love and Petrarchan conceits.[43] However, these sonnets serve merely as a preface to the sonneteer's more significant career path. Throughout the Italian sonnets and the Canzone, tension builds between the distraction of love and the activity of grand poetic utterance. Concerning this tension, Lewalski writes,

> [T]his lover-poet carefully avoids Petrarchan subjection to the bonds of Cupid and the lady's power. His is no all-encompassing Petrarchan passion. . . . Moreover, Emilia is not his Muse, like Petrarch's Laura and other sonnet-ladies; to the contrary, the Italian love poetry she inspires diverts him from the greater poetic achievements. . . . More surprising still, the last [Italian] sonnet (VI) is a curious self-blason, praising the speaker's own moral virtues and poetic aspirations—"the mind's gift, high courage, and the sounding lyre and the Muses"—rather than the physical beauties of the Lady. In this Petrarchan staging of desire, the Miltonic speaker retains his autonomy and insists on his own virtue and worth.[44]

Lewalski is describing the sonneteer's awareness of a strong vocational calling that begins to be played out in the remaining sonnets. Much like the anecdotes of youth and education in biographies of nonconformist ministers, the Italian portion of the sonnet sequence prefaces sonnets emphasizing the sonneteer's public career. In Alleine's biography, a similar anecdote is presented. When asked by a fellow unmarried university

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[43] For Milton's Petrarchan experimentation, see Lewalski, *Milton*, 39-40.

[44] Ibid., 40.

student about the pursuits of love and the benefits and deterrents of having a wife, Alleine is quoted as having said,

> Thou wouldest know the Inconveniences of a Wife, and I will tell thee; First of all, whereas thou risest constantly at four in the Morning, or before, she will keep thee till about six. Secondly, Whereas thou usest to study fourteen Hours in the day, she will bring thee to eight or nine. Thirdly, Whereas thou art wont to forbear one Meal a day at least for thy Studies, she will bring thee to thy Meal: If these be not Mischiefs enough to afright thee, I know not what thou art.[45]

While the biographer suggests this anecdote is an example of Alleine's "jesting manner," he also emphasizes it as an example Alleine's dedication to "studiousness" and preparation for the ministry.[46] Likewise, the vying for attention between ministry and love is the concluding theme of the final Italian sonnet. While, in Sonnet VI, the sonneteer calls himself a "young, kind, simple lover" (1), this description is qualified by his admission, "I doubt how to escape myself" (2). As the sonnet progress, the speaker reveals a preoccupation with occupation. The sonneteer admits that his heart has previously "proven steadfast" (4) in other matters, for example, "Whenever this great world / roars and the thunder strikes" (6-7). Like Alleine, Milton's sonnet ironically alludes to the public realm in his examination of the private matters of the heart, and dedication to public career is the fortuitous beneficiary of the sonnet's praises.

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[45] *Life and Death,* 32. It should be noted that this anecdote is not recorded by Alleine's wife.

[46] Ibid.

The abrupt conclusion of the Italian section calls the vocational subtext of the previous sonnets into the forefront of the sonnet sequence. The last Italian sonnet provides little resolution to the amatory relationship that has developed in the previous poems. Instead, the preoccupation of the earlier sonnets overwhelms the sequence. In Sonnet VII, "How soon hath time the suttle theef of youth," the sequence abandons Petrarch's language and images, and the Miltonic persona switches to his native tongue and begins to express overtly the anxieties associated with vocational achievement or the lack thereof. As John T. Shawcross has noted, Sonnet VII is a turning point in the sonnet sequence: the sonneteer performs a "self-evaluation" of past and future actions.[47] Shawcross reads into Sonnet 7, Milton's anxieties of "ordination." He suggests that "Read against the [Puritan] covenant of grace, the lines indicate the prescience of God [in Milton's early life], but not any ordination from Him, the expectation of predestination, and the grace extended to humankind through the inward law."[48] When Sonnets VI and VII are read in succession, the opening lines of Sonnet VII seem to chastise the previous youthful sonnets:

> How soon hath Time the suttle theef of youth,
>
> Stoln on his wing my three and twentith yeer!
>
> My hasting days flie on with full career,
>
> But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th. (1-4)

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[47] John T. Shawcross, *John Milton: The Self and the World* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 154-55; see also ibid., 167.

[48] Ibid., 155.

The octave of the sonnet looks negatively back upon the "youthful" period of the sonneteer's life by utilizing remorseful imagery. The period has been "stoln" by a "suttle theef," and the springtime of the sonneteer's youth is revealed to be lacking "ripeness" (7), if not completely barren. The effect of the octave is a subordination of the contents of the previous poems to the hopeful possibility of more fulfilling activities and achievements located within a particular vocational calling. Significantly, the vocational calling in the sonnet sequence reveals itself to be a strongly Protestant and Puritan vocation, ordained by "the will of Heav'n" (12).

The remorsefulness of the first eight lines is followed by an emotional turn as the sonneteer surrenders to his vocational calling. Following the popular nonconformist idiom of blind faith, the sonneteer is willing—much like Abraham in Hebrews 11.8—to "go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance."[49] In the sonnet, receptiveness to divine will is directly proportionate to the range of possible vocational callings:

> Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
>
> It shall be still in strictest measure eev'n,
>
> To that same lot, however mean, or high,
>
> Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n;
>
> All is, if I have grace to use it so,
>
> As ever in my great task Masters eye. (9-14)

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[49] See above, Chapter 2, 66-67.

Acceptance is the major theme in the concluding sestet because the particulars of his calling remain vaguely clouded to the sonneteer. He could be tasked to do many things or only a few things, and they could be required of him at any moment (9). Furthermore, he could be required to serve in a grand or minor capacity (11). With the juxtaposition of the sonneteer's limited knowledge of his future accomplishments to the omniscient eye of God, which represents divine providence (14), the speaker's acceptance of his vocation—despite the vagaries associated with his calling—positions the Miltonic persona in a subservient role to the "will of Heav'n" (12).[50] The role is the opposite of the preoccupied lover persona of the Italian sonnets. Therefore, Sonnet VII acts as a Puritan-like conversion experience in which the sonneteer is embracing the higher calling of his "great task Maste[r]" (14).

In the sonnet that follows—Sonnet VIII, "Captian or Colonel, or Knight in Arms"—the Miltonic persona is no longer a youthful initiate poet or apprentice. As a consequence of the self-evaluation of Sonnet VII, the sonneteer has accepted his vocational calling, and he is now an active participant in his ordained work and capable of strong poetic utterance; therefore, he is able to be listed among a brotherhood of other well respected poets like Pindar (11) and Euripides (13). The sonneteer states that "he knows the charms / That call Fame" (5-6) and that his words can "spred [a] Name o're Lands and Seas" (7). Thus, he characterizes himself as a poet who is authorized and capable of powerful speech-acts. Furthermore, the sonneteer admits that these talents do not solely originate in his own abilities. Rather, they are partly the consequence of his

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[50] Honigmann, *Milton's Sonnets*, 100.

dwelling within the "Muses Bowre" (9). The cohabitation of poet and Muses adds agency to the poet's words and consecrates him for a special purpose: one that ought to be preserved from harm (9). The sonneteer's allegiance to a higher, authorizing power allows his poetic voice and vocation to be protected from the violence and danger caused by approaching military forces, and the anxieties naturally associated with the promise of personal harm are subordinate to confidence arising from the sonneteer's vocational calling.[51] As suggested by Honigmann, the sonneteer "writes detachedly, playfully, as if for a less serious situation."[52] The detached tone of the sonnet reflects the attachment of the sonneteer to "higher" matters.

Like many post-Restoration nonconformist ministers and their concern with their ministerial voice, the sonneteer estimates his poetic voice as a major component of his value to his community, and, since the ordination and consecration described in Sonnet VII and VIII takes on a strongly Protestant tone, the sonnet sequence parallels similar emotional petitions made by nonconformist ministers facing possible restrictions, harm, and violence. For example, Sonnet VIII contains many of the idioms utilized by Alleine in an exhortation he made to his fellow imprisoned ministers on the day they were to be released from prison. Appealing to their position as specially consecrated spokespersons for God, he states,

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[51] See Honigmann, *Milton's Sonnets*, 101. This sonnet was composed in late 1642 as Royalist forces were moving towards London. Honigmann writes, "Royalist atrocities against parliamentarians were widely publicized in the autumn" of that year (ibid.).

[52] Ibid., 102.

> Oh my Brethren, stir up your selves to render praises to the Lord: You are the People that God hath formed for his Praise, and sent hither for his Praise; and you should now go Home as so many Trumpets to sound forth the Praises of God. . . . There is an Expression, *Psal. 68.11. The Lord gave the Word, great was the company of them that published it.* So let it be said of the Praises of God now, Great was the company of them that published them. God hath sent a whole Troop of you here together, let all these go home and sound the praises of God where-ever you come.[53]

Alleine places high value upon the ministers because their ability to access the "Word" of God and publish it in their communities. Furthermore, Alleine goes on to suggest that their time of imprisonment has been a time of mercy and comfort rather than harm or suffering. By redefining the prison experience as an experience of comfort, Alleine negates the official exclusion and censorship against their nonconformist speech and turns it into a time of inspired education. Reauthorizing the imprisoned ministers, Alleine proposes, "God hath sent you hither, that you should learn the sweet and pleasant Notes of his Praise."[54] Alleine's speech categorically addresses the rejection, persecution, and suffering faced by post-Restoration nonconformists and attempts to redefine it in positive terms. In the latter half of the sonnet sequence, many of these same issues facing post-Restoration nonconformists are addressed by the sonneteer. Rejection,

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[53] *Life and Death*, 71.

[54] Ibid., 72.

persecution, and suffering are experiences to which the sonneteer responds, often in the context of his vocational calling as a public speaker, author, and general exhorter of truth.

Authorized Speech and the Act of Uniformity

The largest portion of Alleine's biography is provided by his wife. Although her chapter is labeled "a full Narrative of his Life," it actually records only the period "from his Silencing till his Death."[55] The "silencing" is a reference to the day when the Act of Uniformity came into effect. The Act of Uniformity required all ministers of the Church of England to conform to the Thirty-Nine Articles outlined in the revised Book of Common Prayer and to seek re-ordination by a bishop by St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1662.[56] The ultimatum was to conform or to be ejected from the pulpits in which many ministers had served since the 1640s, if not longer. Over 2,000 nonconforming clergy—including conservative Presbyterians who would have supported a national yet comprehensive church settlement—were removed from their livings between 1660 and 1662.[57] The Act of Uniformity placed those who did not conform into the definitive category of the Other in opposition to the Church of England's orthodoxy. There were those who conformed and retained an authorized voice, and the Others were those who refused uniformity and lost their voice. Part of the existential crisis facing nonconformists—especially those whose vocations were invested in their religious beliefs—was the choice to go on without a voice or to elect to speak in an unauthorized

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[55] *Life and Death*, 62.

[56] 14 Charles II, c.4, *SR*, 5:364-70. See also Chapter 1, 9-13.

[57] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 8.

voice. For those who chose not to conform, St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662, became a traumatic and life changing moment.

Nonconformists often memorialized the day in print. For example, printed shortly after the Act of Uniformity came into effect, *The Farewell Sermons of the Late London Ministers, Preached August 17th, 1662* (1662) is a collection of sermons preached on the last day that nonconforming ministers could address their congregations. Many of the sermons share similarities with the finality and mournfulness of funeral sermons.[58] For decades after the "silencing" of nonconforming ministers on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662, nonconformists continued to memorialize the day as a traumatic turning point in the history of England. Richard Baxter's *An Apology for the Nonconformist Ministry* (1681) is a defense "For the Silenced Ministers, Especially for their not ceasing to Preach Christs Gospel."[59] Baxter's 1681 text, an expansion of treatises published in 1668 and 1669, argues that nonconformists have been suffering under "cruel silencing, violence or

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[58] Baxter's farewell sermon takes a very solemn turn with his conclusion as he begins to see the coming "death" of his pastoral ministry; Baxter's final admonishment to his congregation is to "be longing to die" and be learning how to die properly (L4[r]). See also, Achinstein, *Dissent*, 38-39. Achinstein examines the title page of the book, which is adorned with the effigies of the ministers, appears much like a collection of funeral monuments.

[59] Richard Baxter, *An Apology for the Nonconformist Ministry* (London: Parkurst and Newman, 1681), 1.

blood" for seventeen years.[60] He calls the Act of Uniformity, along with the other components of the Clarendon Code, "Engines [used] to wrack and tear in pieces the Church and Kingdom, at such a time, when they groan'd, and beg'd, and hoped for healing."[61] Referencing both the traumatic effects of the Act of Uniformity and the labeling of nonconformity as the Other which it caused, Baxter's primary agenda is to re-authorize the voices of nonconformists that were silenced on St. Bartholomew's Day. In the case of Joseph Alleine, the day redefined his position within society and marks the beginning of his biographical story. Theodosia Alleine opens the history of her husband by writing,

> Before the *Act for Uniformity* came forth, my Husband was *very earnest day and night with God*, that his Way might be made plain to him, that he might not desist from such Advantages of saving Souls, with any scruple upon his Spirit; In which, when he saw those *Clauses* of *Assent* and *Consent*, and *Renouncing the Covenant*, he was *fully satisfied*: But he seemed so *moderate before*, that both my self and others, *thought* he *would have Conformed*: He often saying, *he would not leave his work for small and dubious Matters*: But seeing his way *so plain* for quitting the publick station that he held . . . he presently took up a firm resolution to go on with his Work in *private*, both of *Preaching* and *Visiting* from House to House,

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[60] Ibid., A2[r].

[61] Ibid.

> till he should be carried to Prison, or Banishment, which he counted upon, the Lord assisting him.[62]

Theodosia Alleine's narration focuses upon the transformative effect that St. Bartholomew's Day had upon Alleine. Prior to the Act of Uniformity, Alleine was considered to be a moderate conservative by her and others around him. The transformation that occurs is surprising and immediate: overnight, Alleine changes from a "moderate" to a nonconformist destined to "be carried to Prison, or Banishment." Accompanying this transformation are the restrictions placed upon Alleine's public voice. He is forced to limit his speech—formerly used in the "publick station"—to the private sphere. If Alleine transgresses this boundary with unauthorized speech, he will face imprisonment or banishment as a consequence.

For many ejected ministers, the fear of imprisonment or banishment was enough to silence them; however, there were those who continued to preach without government authorization. Baxter relates how he gradually returned to preaching after a period of abiding by the various restrictions of the Clarendon Code and lobbying for comprehension.[63] On the other hand, Alleine's biography states that he did not let a week

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[62] *Life and Death*, 62.

[63] See Baxter, *An Apology for the Nonconformists Ministry*, 12-14. See also Baxter's farewell sermon in Edward Calamy, et al., *The Farewell Sermons of the Late London Ministers* (London, 1662), $I1^{r}$-$L4^{r}$. In an attempt to re-authorize his voice under a higher authority than the government, Baxter writes, "'Tis not the denyal of publick liberty that loses that relation between a Pastor and his flock, nor any word from man

pass by in forced silence. His wife writes, "without delay . . . the *Thursday* after he appointed a *Solemn Day* of *Humiliation*, when he preached to as many as would adventure themselves with him at our own House."[64] Alleine's biography explains that he was soon afterwards charged, tried, and imprisoned in the first of several imprisonments. The vast majority of Alleine's biography, focusing on his dedication, perseverance, and virtue in the face of imprisonment and illness, follows after this point, but only after his wife is able to interject the intended subtext for Alleine's biography. She writes,

> Here behold how many Ministers have these eight or nine years been silenced in *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, whose Holy Skill and Conscience, Fidelity and Zeal, is such, as would have justly advanced most of the Antient Fathers of the Church, to far greater renown, had they been but possessed with the like: Of whom indeed the World is not worthy. O! how many of them am I constrained to remember, with joy for their great Worth, and sorrow for their Silence! But though Learning, Holiness, wonderful Ministerial Skill, and Industry, Moderation, Peaceableness, true Catholecism, absolute Dedication unto Christ, Zeal, Patience and Perseverance, did not all seem sufficient to procure his *Ministerial* or

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should cause a poor soul to trust it self for guidance of Salvation to one that is not able: a mans soul is not to be hazarded upon damnation, by being deprived of the officers & ordinances of Christ, and cast upon the conduct of a blind guide, merely for the pleasuring of a meer man" ($K6^{r}$).

[64] *Life and Death*, 62-63.

> *Corporal* Liberty in his latter years; yet they did much more for him than that, in qualifying him for the Crown which he now enjoyeth; and to hear, *Well done good and faithful Servant, enter into thy Masters Joy.*[65]

While the biographer's moralizing turns Alleine into a nonconformist everyman to be used for the didacticism of Protestant virtues, she more significantly attempts to re-authorize the "silenced" nonconformists with a superior authority based on their "Holy Skill and Conscience, Fidelity and Zeal." Having provided the higher authorization for nonconformist voices, she turns any censorship directed towards their voices into acts that harm society rather than help it. Alleine's divinely-inspired voice and philanthropic actions are continually illustrated in his biography to demonstrate how the voices of nonconformist ministers effect positive change in England; however, the positive change can only happen when the voice and message is not rejected. Similar rhetorical ploys are used in the sonnet sequence when it turns to issues of speech and rejection.

The Ministry of the Sonnets

When Sonnets VII and VIII are read as the ordination and consecration of the sonneteer in a ministerial-like public vocation, the sonnets that follow reveal a persona who is engrossed in the proper activities of a Puritan minister. The sonneteer executes many performance utterances that are similar to ministerial speech-acts. For example, following the ordination and consecration in VII and VIII, the sonneteer begins "sermonizing" on Christian virtues, particularly the virtues of Christian women in Sonnets IX, X, and XIV. These sonnets reject the Petrarchan mode used in the Italian

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[65] Ibid., 64-65.

sonnets and present alternative manifestations of idealized women. The sonnets go beyond mere praise and incorporate doctrinal instruction. The anonymous lady of Sonnet IX, "Lady that in the prime of earliest youth," is presented within various biblical and Puritan metaphors. As Honigmann notes, "Since the sonnet was written by a Puritan it seems reasonable to assume that Milton applauds the lady's Puritan inclinations."[66] Compared to Mary Magdalene and Ruth (5), the lady is a studious young woman who "hast shun'd the broad way" that leads to destruction in Matthew 7.13 (2). Like many nonconformist sermons, the sonnet rejects popular faith and promotes a faith followed by an eminent few (3). By repeatedly extolling the virtues of Puritan behavior with biblical references, the sonneteer's voice advocates for nonconformist zealotry. He writes, "Thy care is fixt, and zealously attends / To fill thy Lamp with deeds of light" (9-10). The lines refer to the virgins of Matthew 25.1-13, who await the coming of the bridegroom; however, this virgin is distinctly Puritan. Her zealous faith is defined by both her virtuous external actions as well as the indwelling of the "inner light," which is the source of those virtuous deeds. The sonnet utilizes the same idiom used by Alleine in a letter written to his Taunton congregation from prison. Commenting on the "marks of Salvation," Alleine tells his reader to reject the "madness of the blind World."[67] His admonition of the "worldly" way continues as he asks, "What would not these foolish

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[66] Honigmann, *Milton's Sonnets*, 106.

[67] Joseph Alleine, *Christian Letters Full of Spiritual Instructions, Tending to the Promotion of the Power of Godliness, Both in Person and Families* (London: Neville Simmons, 1673), 27.

Virgins do at last, when it is too late for a little of the Oyl of the Wise; Oh, for one dram of that Grace which they have scorned and despised."[68] Taking a nonconformist stance, Alleine explains that true grace does not originate in "Profession, nor performing external duties: No, no, you must be converted," at which point the marks of salvation present themselves as virtuous actions.[69] The sonneteer has a similar purpose behind all of his praise. Eventually the extolling of virtue turns to instruction as he warns the reader to persevere in faith:

Therefore be sure
Thou, when the Bridegroom with his feastfull friends
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
Has gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure. (11-14)

The virtues praised in the sonnet are the marks of salvation, signaling the presence of true grace, which will, in turn, be detected by the metaphorical apocalyptic bridegroom. As the sonnet alludes to a salvation experience that is limited to those who are "wise and pure," it follows the beliefs of post-Restoration nonconformists who rejected the non-discerning grace offered by the Anglican Church through the sacraments.[70] In line 12, "Thou" is placed emphatically at the beginning of the line to contrast with the conforming *they* that "overween" doing faithless deeds (6). Therefore, as the sonnet transforms into a theological sermon in the final lines, the sonneteer is following his

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid., 28.

[70] See Chapter 5, 219-21.

vocational calling by going beyond poetic adoration to providing edification to his audience and community. A similar action is performed in Sonnet X as the sonneteer again praises another virtuous woman.

In Sonnet X, "Daughter to that good Earl, once President," the sonneteer praises virtues that are less distinctly Puritan and instead advocate for general civil dissent. Written to Margaret Ley, daughter to James Ley, whom Milton presents as a political supporter of liberty, the sonnet alludes to the death of Isocrates, who was believed to have starved himself for the causes of liberty.[71] The sonnet extols the lady's familial connections to Ley, but more importantly, the sonneteer praises her because of the way her "words his noble vertues praise" (12). The sonnet not only advocates dissent for the causes of liberty, but it also actively encourages people to embrace it as a virtue rather than a fault. In doing so, the sonneteer is lobbying for the amelioration of dissenters.

Completing the trilogy on virtuous women, Sonnet XIV, "When Faith and Love which parted from thee never," is modeled after the conventions of Puritan funeral sermons for women.[72] Leland Ryken has noticed five rhetorical features of this sermon

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[71] Lewalski, *Milton*, 159-60.

[72] The Trinity Manuscript gives the title for this sonnet as "On y^{e} religious memorie of M^{rs} Catharine Thomason my christian friend deceas'd 16 Decem. 1646." For a thorough examination of the Puritan funeral sermon and Milton's sonnet, see Leland Ryken, "Milton's 'Sonnet 14' and Puritan Funeral Sermons for Women," in *Milton's Legacy*, edited by Kristin A. Pruitt and Charles W. Durham (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2005), 136-48.

genre in Milton's sonnet: "(1) the practice of building the sermon around a single text from the Bible, (2) a combining of sermon and eulogy, (3) offering the deceased woman as a model to be emulated, (4) painting a portrait of spiritual and moral piety, and (5) finding consolation in heavenly reward."[73] The sonnet uses as its expository text Rev. 14.13, as it describes the deceased woman's transition to heaven.[74] Her "Works and Alms and all [her] good Endeavour" (5) are presented as Christian virtues to be emulated. In this context, the sonneteer abstains from any Petrarchan allusions to external beauty; instead, the sonneteer utilizes the voice of a Puritan minister extolling the internal virtues of a pious woman who has lived a life of "Faith and love" (1). The end result of the sonneteer's sermonizing is a polemical discussion on the dominance of faith over works. As in Sonnet IX, virtuous action is precipitated by the inner light of faith.[75] Incorporating a popular theme among post-Restoration nonconformists, the sonnet suggests the woman's constant faith will be her advocate "Before the Judge, who thenceforth bid [her] rest / And drink [her] fill of pure immortal streams" (13-14). Looking ahead to the justification of the final judgment was a source of consolation for the embattled and

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[73] Ibid., 139.

[74] *KJV*: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

[75] Ryken, "Milton's 'Sonnet 14' and Puritan Funeral Sermons for Women," 145-46. Ryken argues that the sonnet "makes a subtly nuanced theological statement about the intricate relationship between faith and works over which Protestant theologians exerted themselves for two centuries. . . . 'Sonnet 14' *is* in fact, a polemical poem."

silenced nonconformists. In *The Farewell Sermons of the Late London Ministers*, earthly death and the biblical final judgment are two themes which are repeated with regularity by the ministers facing—in their eyes—an unjust sentencing in man's court of law.[76] The final judgment before their God was seen as a time when their faith and principles would be a more articulate advocate than their earthly voices ever could have been. For this same reason, Alleine's chronic sickness leads up to his climatic death in his biography. Alleine's biography, as with many nonconformist writings, subordinates the suffering and forced silence of life on earth to the superior rewards and existence of the afterlife.[77]

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[76] Calamy, et al., *The Farewell Sermons of the Late London Ministers*. Baxter's sermon concludes with a digression encouraging his congregation to be "longing to die," for in death they will find peace and justification ($L4^{r}$). The latter half of Watson's afternoon sermon is also concerned with preparing for eternity ($S1^{v}$-$S2^{v}$). William Bates' sermon appeals to God's judgment as the ultimate source of truth. He states, "as to my non-conformity, I shall onely say thus much, It is neither fancy, faction, nor humour, that makes me not to comply, but merely for the fear of offending God. And if after the best means used for my Illumination, as prayer to God, discourse, study, I am not able to be satisfi'd concerning the lawfulness of what is required; if it be my unhappiness to be in error, surely *Men* will have no reason to be angry with me in this world, and I hope *God* will pardon me in the next" ($P2^{v}$).

[77] Alleine's death is as an important part of his memory as his life, together they make him a "monument of [God's] mercy," (*Life and Death* 88). Further connecting Alleine's memory to the process of dying is his sermon, "The Art of Dying Well," which

With this Protestant subtext as a theme, Sonnet XIV reveals the sonneteer to be performing another nonconformist speech-act, utilizing his poetic voice in the cause of his ordained ministry. However, like the biographies of many nonconformist ministers, the description of the sonneteer's vocational arc is not free from rejection and hardship.

Not all of the sonneteer's messages are focused on positive exhortation and Puritan instruction. While the sequence often "ministers"—as seen in Sonnets IX, X, and XIV—it also analyzes and defends the vocation and ministry of the sonneteer. Sonnet XI is an apology for a negatively received utterance. In this sonnet, the Miltonic persona closely overlaps with the historical Milton of the Restoration.[78] The sonneteer comes to the defense of one of Milton's notorious divorce tracks. He comments upon its negative—or lack of—public reception, and defends the learning which went into its

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was published as the keynote sermon in the *Remaines of that Excellent Minister of Jesus Christ, Mr. Joseph Alleine* (London: Peter Parker, 1674).

[78] See Samuel Butler, *The Transproser Rehears'd* (Oxford: Hugo Grotius and Jacob van Harmine, 1673). After forty years, Milton's divorce tracts were still used as ammunition against him in the polemical debates over religious nonconformity. Alluding to Marvell's associations with Milton, Butler writes, "And for his fellow Journey-man, they may direct the *Leaf-turners* to one of his books of *Divorce,* (for he has learnedly *parted Man and Wife* in no less than four Books) namely, his *Doctrine* and *Discipline*" (126).

creation.[79] The opening lines announce that a "Book was writ of late call'd *Tetrachordon*;" and explains how it was "wov'n close, both matter, form and stile" on a "Subject new" (1-3). The sonneteer's tone conveys pride in his prose book, suggesting that it was supported by sound scholarship: "Numbering good intellects; now seldom por'd on" (4). However, the pride of the opening lines is tempered by the lament for the book's troubled reception. With some bitterness, the sonneteer addresses the fact that the mere title confounds many passing readers: "Cries the stall-reader, bless us! what a word on / A title page is this!" (5-6). Taking the tone of a post-Restoration animadvisor, the sonneteer uses his detractors' own words against them as proof of their own ignorance. Only in the final sestet does the Miltonic pedagogue answer the complaint with his own sad remarks. Calling out to a sixteenth-century educational muse, he laments, "Thy age, like ours, O Soul of Sir *John Cheek*, / Hated not Learning wors then Toad or Asp; / When thou taugh'st *Cambridge*, and King *Edward* Greek" (12-14).[80] The

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[79] Lewalski, *Milton*, 203-05. Lewalski explains that Milton was dismayed that one of his most learned tracts had been all but ignored in England.

[80] See *DNB*: Sir John Cheke was fellow of St John's College, tutor to Edward VI, and a professor of Greek at Cambridge. The sonnet's appeal to Cheke echoes Milton's words later in life when he wrote that he should have published his divorce tracks in Latin in order to meet a more specific audience. In *A Second Defence*, he states that the "[o]ne thing only could I wish, that I had not written it in the vernacular, for then I would not have met with vernacular readers, who are usually ignorant of their own good" (*CPW* 4:610). The undertone of "Sonnet XI" and the lines in *A Second Defence* is that the

sonneteer commiserates with the deceased Sir John Cheke because he sees only ignorance in those around him. Cheke represents the type of audience the sonneteer wishes he had appealed to—a more educated one—and had found. Sonnet XII, "*On the Same*," continues the topic of the reception of the divorce tracts. The Miltonic persona shakes his head at England and suggests that he has been "casting Pearl to Hoggs" (8). The comparison to hogs is a continuation of other animal imagery. In earlier lines, the sonneteer likens the culture of the age to a cacophony of "Owles and Cuckoes, Asses, Apes and Doggs" (4) as well as "Froggs" (5).[81] The "barbarous noise" produced by these animals is the product of ignorance, and, as in Sonnet XI, the pedagogical sonneteer laments this social condition. He writes that they "bawle for freedom in their senceless mood, / And still revolt when truth would set them free. / License they mean when they cry libertie" (10-13). The sonneteer continues to defend his divorce tracts by suggesting that the public is not yet ready for the "truth" that he has offered to them. By highlighting the clashes of truth and ignorance, Sonnets XI and XIII not only defend Milton's prose tracts openly, but they also remind the reader of the sonneteer's vocational calling as a public defender of the causes of liberty and, by doing so, subsequently defend

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English reading public needs a more rigorous education which introduces them to the "good intellects" mentioned in the sonnet.

[81] The Circean-like rout of Milton's detractors reappears in *A Mask* in the court of Comus as assailants of virtue and unwary travelers; see Chapter 5. Together in Sonnets XI and XII as well as in *A Mask* cacophonous voices are presented in opposition to rational and well-ordered voices.

the author as an available source of truth that has been rejected by the society in which he wants to serve. He has been silenced not of his own volition but rather by the overwhelming "noise" produced by those still attached to the "cloggs" of traditional beliefs and prejudices.

The defensive position of Sonnets XI and XII is often found in post-Restoration nonconformist writing. For much of the 1660s, nonconformists lacked a public polemical presence, and thus found themselves fighting to regain polemical ground when the licensing of the press slackened following the Great Fire and the plague year in the late 1660s. As latecomers to the polemical battle, nonconformists had to answer the detractions set against them as well as justify their voices during a time of forced silence. In the *Apology for the Nonconformists*, Baxter attempts to navigate these pitfalls. Facing the vitriolic depictions of nonconformists in Patrick's *A Friendly Debate* series, Baxter answers the objection that "the *Friendly Debate*, and the *Politician* fully unanswerably opened the folly and villainy of your Religion? and can you yet for shame desire leave to preach and propagate such a Religion as that?"[82] Baxter cuts to the heart of the issue as he prefaces his answer: "Because so great prejudice is taken against us from those Books, I intend in the end to have given a full answer to all that concerneth us; not in their mode, but in my own, that is certain Propositions containing our judgment and our reasons about those matters."[83] The "matters" that Baxter defends are not only his beliefs but

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[82] Baxter, *An Apology for the Nonconformists*, 115.

[83] Ibid., 115-16.

also the articulation of his beliefs, i.e. the preaching of nonconformist doctrine. Like Sonnets XI and XII, Baxter defends the content and the dissemination of his beliefs.

Baxter's apology for nonconformist ministers, like the sonneteer's defense of his prose tracks, is contingent on his belief that these ministers have been called by a supreme authority to perform a special service for their society. To defend nonconformist preaching, Baxter authorizes the voices of nonconformist ministers with a "Sacred" authority. He writes, "We do hold that Sacred *Office* of the Ministry consisteth in an *obligation* to do the *work*, and *authority* to warrant us therein. And that both these are essential to the office."[84] Baxter's emphasis that obligation and authority are essential to the work of nonconformists articulates a commonly held belief among ejected ministers that God had called them to perform a necessary duty among their people, which is the same sentiment that is presented in the ordination of Sonnets VII and VIII. Furthermore, it reveals the existential crisis faced by nonconformists who were no longer able to defend themselves through public utterances. The silencing of nonconformists limited their ability to preach evangelistically—thus limiting their growth in numbers—as well as to teach doctrinally—thus limiting their sustainability. Silence was therefore a matter of ideological life or death.

Faced with ideological demise, nonconformists saw no choice but to answer the attacks against them. In *An Humble Apology for Non-Conformists* (1669), John Norton, also responding to Patrick's books, expresses the anxieties related to the necessity of making such apologetic utterances. He writes,

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[84] Ibid., 14.

> The Author of the *Friendly Debate* having smitten us on the face, both on the right cheek and on the left; lest our deep silence be brought evidence to proclaim our guiltiness, and so having lost our Livings, we should lose our good Names also, which ought to be dearer to us than our very Lives, It may seem high time to Apologize for our selves, and to make it appear to the World that we are not so black and ugly as we are painted, nor so bad as we are represented.[85]

Norton suggests that existential integrity is more important than the financial integrity provided by their ministerial duties. He sees continued silence as a detriment to his calling not because he cannot articulate his belief—thus negating financial restitution—but because the absence of speech signifies the absence of truth in his belief system—thus negating his authority. In their apologies, both Baxter and Norton attempt to show that nonconformists are not "black and ugly" social pariahs; instead, they argue that the majority of nonconformists behave as the sort of model citizens depicted in Joseph Alleine's biography.

The great lengths that Alleine's biographers take to show his participation in new forms of ministerial speech-acts is no accident. By explaining that Alleine "went on with much vigour and affection in his Work, both of Preaching, and Visiting, and Catechizing, from House to House" soon after the Act of Uniformity was enacted shows that his existential integrity as a minister of God was intact.[86] Each time the biography expounds upon Alleine's participation in writing catechisms for private instruction and devotion or

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[85] John Norton, *An Humble Apology for Non-Conformists* (London, 1669), A2^{r}.

[86] *Life and Death*, 63.

holding meetings in his house, the biographers are presenting the adapted yet still authorized voices of nonconformist ministers. Alleine's letters written from prison to his congregation in Taunton and published alongside his biography perform the same function.[87] Giving a voice back to Alleine, the letters take the place of pulpit sermons and are "Full of Spiritual Instructions, Tending To the Promoting of the Power of Godliness, both in Persons, and Families."[88] Similarly, Norton's *Humble Apology*, defends various alternative speech platforms—such as catechizing, afternoon sermons, and conventicles—as beneficial activities for society.[89]

Alleine's biographers, Baxter, and Norton all are participating in the reclamation of the nonconformist's voice. Finding alternative ministerial outlets and subsequently defending those new forms of communication was a major preoccupation for nonconformists. Naturally, the process of negotiating the evolution of pulpit minister to catechizer, letter writer, polemicist, or stoic imprisoned martyr was repeated in many other nonconformist narratives as part of the nonconformist existential crisis; and, significantly, the process is performed by the sonneteer in Sonnet XVI, "When I consider how my light is spent."

Like Alleine's biography, the sonnet sequence depicts the crisis faced by an ordained public servant whose public voice has defined his position in society but is

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[87] Alleine is of course following in a tradition of prison writing started by the New Testament apostles; see below, Chapter 5, 188-90.

[88] *Life and Death*, a1^{r}.

[89] Norton, *An Humble Apology for Non-Conformists*, 60-68.

eventually faced with the possibility of losing "that one Talent," which had defined him (3). As in Sonnet XI and XII, the persona of the sonneteer closely aligns himself with Milton's post-Restoration self. Throughout the Restoration Milton's blindness was a characteristic component of how he was perceived—for better or for worse—by the public. Concerning Milton's poetic career, Andrew Marvell describes Milton as "the poet blind, yet bold," and Samuel Butler presents "the *blind* Author of *Paradise lost* . . . groping for a beam of *Light*."[90] Milton himself appropriates the blind-bard idiom in the invocation to Book VII in *Paradise Lost*. On the other hand, Roger L'Estrange, reasserting arguments made by Salmasius in the 1650s, labels Milton's blindness as a punishment from God and a manifestation of Milton's flawed character in multiple Restoration tracts, for example, *No Blinde Guides, In Answer to a Seditious Pamphlet of J. Milton's* (1660) and *Physician Cure Thy Self* (1660).[91] Marvell and Milton appropriate the image to denote the poet's alternative access to an "inner light" of inspiration. However, Butler sees it, quite literally, as a stumbling block. L'Estrange and the other

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[90] See Chapter 2, 58-60.

[91] Roger L'Estrange, *No Blinde Guides, In Answer to a Seditious Pamphlet of J. Milton's* (London: Henry Broome, 1660); *Physician Cure Thy Self* (London: Henry Broome, 1660). See also Joseph Jane, trans., *Salmasius his dissection and confutation of the diabolical rebel Milton in his impious doctrines of falsehood* (London: J. G. B., 1660). Jane presents Salmasius' response to Milton's Eik*conoclastes*; prior to the Restoration, Salmasius' books were outlawed by Cromwell's government. The book promises Milton's blindness to be the first of many punishments (ibid. 28).

authors following Salmasius' *ad hominem* tradition hope that Milton's blindness—and perhaps other forms of punishment—will put an end to his writing. For all of these writers, Milton's eyesight and his voice are connected in rhetorical situations that ask the reader to judge Milton's past and future literary actions.

The sonneteer presents a similar rhetorical situation in Sonnet XVI as he examines the loss of "that one Talent," which has defined the development of the sonnet sequence. Sonnet XVI is both retrospective and forward looking in the opening octave:

> When I consider how my light is spent,
>
> E're half my days, in this dark world and wide,
>
> And that one Talent which is death to hide,
>
> Lodg'd with me useless, though my Soul more bent
>
> To serve therewith my Maker, and present
>
> My true account, least he returning chide,
>
> Doth God exact day-labour, light deny'd,
>
> I fondly ask. (1-8)

The allusion to the biblical parable of the talents (Matt. 25.14-30) obviously loads the sonnet with anxieties faced especially by ordained ministers. The parable was well known to post-Restoration nonconformists, especially those who felt a direct higher calling for their vocations.[92] As suggested by Shawcross, the darkness encompassing the

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[92] See Richard Baxter, *Directions for Weak Distempered Christians* (London: Nevil Simmons, 1669). Baxter forms several key directions around the parable of the talents (145-48). Citing Matt. 25, Baxter writes, if a minister were "denied liberty to

poet is the ignorance of the fallen world, which can "be dispelled—or partially dispelled—by wisdom (God's light within humankind)."[93] Milton conflates physical ability and mental ability into a God-given gift: his talent.[94] The talent alluded to by the sonneteer is the ability to use his inner light as well as his poetic voice to dispelled such ignorance. The biblical story tells of three servants chosen by their master to increase their master's assets by investing the monies given to them by him. Fear of failure and disappoint contests with duty and obligation in the parable, and those who faithfully attempt their duty despite fear of failure are rewarded while the one who conflates fear and duty into inaction is punished. As the sonneteer considers his past achievements and future accomplishments, he faces the crisis that he has been limited by circumstances out of his control "E're half [his] days" are over (2). The possibility of inaction is, therefore, not the result of unwillingness because his desire has never been "more bent / To serve therewith [his] Maker" (4-5). Instead, the talent has been limited. Like the nonconformist ministers who felt a calling to preach and had a desire to preach but were

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preach, it would far more trouble him that he is hindered from doing good, than that he is deprived of any profits, or honours, to himself. He doth not only comfort himself with the foresight of the reward, but in the very *doing of good* he findeth so much pleasure, as makest him think it the delightfullest life in the world" (101-02).

[93] Shawcross, *John Milton: The Self and the World*, 101.

[94] The literal talent was a silver coin. As a transferable object of value, the talent—and the abilities it represents—can be given as a gift and also required as a payment of service.

silenced by forces out of their control, the sonneteer's talent has been limited in its scope of uses. Since, for the sonneteer and the nonconformist, the talent would be "death to hide" (3), a willingness to adapt to circumstances resolves the sonneteer's crisis in much the same way nonconformists adapted to the silencing of the Act of Uniformity. The sonneteer resigns himself over to the possibility of performing alternative ministerial functions. His more patient half admits,

> [Those] who best
> Bear his milde yoak, they serve him best, his State
> Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
> And post o're Land and Ocean without rest:
> They also serve who only stand and waite. (10-14)

The final lines of the sonnet allude to the various orders of angels who serve in Heaven under various capacities. Like Alleine, who was able to serve as a monument to nonconformity not as a pulpit minister but while pinioned to a sick bed or remanded to a prison cell, the sonneteer accepts any of the duties—minor or grand—given to God's angels.[95] This moment of existential re-identification mirrors the tension and resolution in Sonnet VII, when the sonneteer first accepts his vocational role "be it less or more, or soon or slow" (9). Shawcross sees in this moment "an emptying of self and the past, and a picking up the pieces of what remains to reform them in the present and future."[96] Such

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[95] It should be noted that *angel* and *evangelist* have shared etymologies. The sonnet signals that there are various evangelical duties in God's Kingdom (11).

[96] Shawcross, *John Milton: The Self and the World*, 259.

was the determination of many nonconformists who were making vocational transitions after the Act of Uniformity. Sonnet XVI shows that, despite facing debilitating circumstances (1), the sonneteer remains aware of his responsibilities (7), dedicated to his cause (4-5), and willing to find new forms of service (11-14). In doing so, the sonneteer successfully navigates a similar existential crisis faced by many post-Restoration nonconformists.

Though the sonnet sequence proceeds with several more sonnets depicting social and domestic harmony, Sonnet XVI is the dramatic climax in the sonnet sequence of *Poems 1673*. Likewise, Alleine's biography also contains a denouement of domestic bliss. Following Alleine's death, Theodosia Alleine recounts several happy times she shared with her husband between his imprisonments and relapses of illness, and several other brief biographies give abstract descriptions of Alleine's personality. These anecdotes, like the concluding sonnets, humanize Alleine and the Miltonic persona. Despite the higher calling, which sets them apart and makes them open to rejection, the social components of their stories make them able to be socially integrated into society as productive members, not social pariahs. However, as will be seen in the next chapter, dangers persisted for nonconformists despite their attempts to reach social amelioration and regain their voices in society.

CHAPTER IV

THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING IN *POEMS 1673*

> "I never before knew the meaning of that Latine Proverbe, *Lupus in Fabula*, but now I Guess the English to be *An INFORMER* in a *Meeting-house*."
>
> – *The Character of an Informer*

As demonstrated in "On *Paradise Lost*," Marvell was aware of the effects of enthusiastic speech-acts, both as a means to incite fear as well as a means to inspire the heart and the mind. Marvell's reading process, as described in his prefatory poem for Milton's epic, shows the critical discernment of a cautious mind that is willing to read with charity rather than fearful reservation. Elsewhere in his writings, Marvell shows a similar concern for enthusiastic rhetoric. Marvell sees Samuel Parker, the polemical champion for the Church of England, as one of the dangerous threats facing post-Restoration nonconformity; therefore, throughout *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, Marvell addresses Parker's polemical vehemence against nonconformists. Marvell attempts to reshape Parker's own vehemence into an enthusiasm that is far more dangerous than that of Milton or nonconformist ministers. In "On *Paradise Lost*," Marvell creates a fictive Anglican reader persona whom he subsequently sends through a conversion experience. Similarly, in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, Marvell appropriates a fictive persona, which he endows with Parker's polemic in order to respond subsequently to it.[1] As Marvell

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[1] See Raymond A. Anselment, "Satiric Strategy in Marvell's 'The Rehearsal Transpros'd,'" *Modern Philology* 68 no. 2 (1970): 137-50. Anselment uses the phrase "fictive redefinition" for Marvell's satirical attacks on Parker (ibid. 140).

wittily deconstructs Parker's *Preface Shewing What Grounds There Are of Fears and Jealousies of Popery* (1672), he systematically and satirically mocks Parker's moral character and polemical writing. Marvell's *argumentum ad hominem* gradually creates an image of Parker—as well as all other Anglican polemicists—that embodies a type of enthusiasm conventionally prescribed to the nonconformists.[2]

At one point, in an attempt to disarm both Parker's character and writing in the same idiom, Marvell begins to question Parker's sanity. Using a conventional mode of attack, Marvell describes Parker as "a madman in print."[3] He is following a common convention used by polemicists, connecting the verbal attacks of his opponent to the babblings of an incoherent mind. In fact, Parker himself uses the convention when responding to Marvell. Parker broadly labels Marvell's platform of liberty of conscience as allowing a type of mental illness to spread. He states,

> to give [Nonconformists] their Liberty is not only to suffer them to act any extravagance they have a mind to, but to spread and propagate the Infection of their Madness: For there is no Frenzy in Religion that the lower sort of the People are not too apt to be tainted with; so that instead of allowing them Conventicles it

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[2] See ibid., 144-147. Anselment explains that Anglican rationalists employed Henry More's analysis of enthusiasm in *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus* (1656; 1662) as a means of ridiculing nonconformist religious zeal. Marvell re-appropriates More's description of enthusiasm and gives Bayes similar physiological symptoms and megalomania.

[3] *PWM*, 1:77.

were more proper to build them Bedlams, nothing can govern them but Chains and Keepers.[4]

Parker's attack against nonconformity is most likely influenced somewhat by the mid-century Presbyterian Thomas Edwards' *Gangraena*, which categorically examines the various sects and branches of religious dissent under the idiom of disease in order to conflate the fears of infectious diseases with fears of infectious heresies. Although Edwards' text was first published in the 1646, going through at least six printings spread among three editions, it became a popular text after the Restoration.[5] With Edwards' book acting as a foundational text for future heresy hunters, it is no wonder that illness—physical or mental—became a common allusion for post-Restoration polemic. Likewise, Marvell is being somewhat conventional with his use of the madness trope. Perhaps utilizing the work of Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1641) or any one of the

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[4] Samuel Parker, *Reproof to the Rehearsal Transpros'd* (London: James Collins, 1673), 442. See also John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come by John Bunyan*, ed. James Blanton Wharey, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), 88-98; accosted by the crowd at Vanity Fair, Christian and Faithful are accused of being bedlams and mad.

[5] Ann Hughes, Gangraena *and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 2-3. See also David Loewenstein, "Toleration and the Specter of Heresy in Milton's England" in *Milton and Toleration*, ed. Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 45-71 and above, Chapter 1, 13-14, 14n26.

many seventeenth-century medical treatises on the subject, Marvell combines medical terminology with his diagnosis of what he sees as Parker's diseased rhetoric.[6] For example, Marvell explains how Parker's madness in print has been exacerbated by sitting "up late at nights, and wanting sleep, and drinking sometimes Wine to animate his Fancy" and in doing so, "it increas'd his Distemper."[7] He goes on to suggest that Parker has "lost all the little remains of his understanding, and his *Cerebellum* was so dryed up, that there was more brains in a Walnut."[8] Therefore, Marvell, like Parker and to some extant Edwards, uses terms associated with illness and disease to characterize the negative aspects of Parker's polemical content. Marvell, however, adapts the insanity idiom and combines it with a distinctly popular Protestant typological symbol: that of the wolf.[9]

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[6] In addition to Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford: Henry Cripps, 1641), see also Jacques Ferrand, *Erotomania, or A Treatise Discoursing of the Essence, Causes, Symptomes, Prognosticks, and Cure of Love, or Erotique Melancholy* (Oxford: Edward Forrest, 1640). Citing ancient, medieval, and early modern medical writers, Burton and Ferrand both analyze the causes, symptoms, and cures of various forms of madness or melancholy in an attempt to understand the sometimes erratic behavior of people.

[7] *PWM*, 1:77.

[8] Ibid.

[9] For Milton's use of the term *Wolf* throughout his corpus, see Karen Edwards, "Wolf", *Milton Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (2009): 277-87.

As Marvell continues to develop his diatribe about Parker's mental stability, he goes on to describe the particular variety of mental illness which is plaguing Parker: Marvell explains that Parker's "Madness hath formed it self into a perfect *Lycanthropy*."[10] One collection of hard words, published in 1661, defined *Lycanthropy* as "a frenzy, or melancholy, wherewith some being haunted, think themselves turned into Wolves, fly the company of men, and hide themselves in caves and holes, howling like

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[10] *PWM*, 1:78. Interestingly, Marvell alludes to the Parker's mental instability directly following Marvell's account of Parker's biography, which features supposed illicit affairs and sexual promiscuity (ibid. 75-76). As Marvell transitions into the madness trope, Parker's sexual promiscuity and his onset of madness blend into a unified rhetorical attack. Seventeenth-century physicians occasionally referenced madness as a result of venery. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* cites several sources which list "Melancholy amongst those diseases which are *exasperated by Venery*." He gives two examples of men who became "melancholy mad" from excessive "*chamber-worke*" done over a short time (105). Not so well known to modern scholars as Burton's book, Jacques Ferrand's *Erotomania, or A Treatise Discoursing of the Essence, Causes, Symptomes, Prognosticks, and Cure of Love, or Erotique Melancholy* makes similar conclusions yet goes into more detail in the description of symptoms of madness resulting from venereal disease. Ferrand describes in extreme cases of what he terms erotic melancholy that, if "Remedies availe not, and the disease still growes stronger, . . . the Patient will grow Wolfe-mad" (340-41).

Wolves."[11] The definition reflects a scientific approach to the term rather than a mystical conception, and this is the denotation which Marvell seems to be reaching for in his use of the term. Marvell writes that Parker "doth so verily believe himself to be a Wolf, that his speech is all turn'd into howling, yelling, and barking: and if there were any Sheep here, you should see him pull out their throats and suck the blood."[12] And a little later, he writes, "this Phrensy had subverted both his Understanding and Memory."[13]

Early Modern conceptions of lycanthropy went through a metamorphosis in the seventeenth century. By 1601, an actual physical lycanthropic transformation—caused by supernatural or demonic possession—was considered implausible and superstitious. John Deacon's *Dialogicall Discourses of Spirits and Divels* attempts to explain away superstitious misconceptions about lycanthropy by means of medicine and rational experience.[14] Similar texts are found throughout the seventeenth century. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* has a lengthy section of the book devoted to cataloguing

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[11] Thomas Blount, *Glossographia, or, A Dictionary Interpreting All Such Hard Words of Whatsoever Language Now Used in Our Refined English Tongue* (London: George Sawbridge, 1661), Aa1^{v}.

[12] *PWM*, 1:78.

[13] Ibid., 78-79.

[14] See John Deacon, *Dialogicall Discourses of Spirits and Divels Declaring Their Proper Essence, Natures, Dispositions, and Operations, Their Possessions and Dispossessions* (London: George Bishop, 1601).

lycanthropy as a form of melancholy madness.[15] By 1665, lycanthropy was being discussed among intellectuals in France, and three possible explanations for historical, biblical, and mythological accounts of lycanthropy were given. Only a few of these accounts suggest that lycanthropy was the effects of evil spirits and sorcerers. The examples given for these transformations were either lycanthropy of the mind, as in the case with Nebuchadnezzar in the Old Testament, or lycanthropy of the physical body, as in the case of Circe and Ulysses' companions. However, these historical and biblical examples were skeptically provided in order to emphasize other more plausible or scientific explanations of lycanthropy, such as the historical and biblical accounts of lycanthropy were merely metaphorical or, more likely, explained away as being the effect of some poisonous food on the mind.[16] Therefore, the possible use of the term for Marvell is either as a reference to mental sickness or as a component of a metaphor.

As shown above, Marvell is definitely using the term in reference to Parker's mental health; however, another possible metaphor which also suits Marvell's purposes is the biblical metaphor employed in Jesus' commission to his disciples. As early as 1615, the term was adopted by Protestant preachers for use in the idiom of the wolf in sheep's

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[15] Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 13-14.

[16] G. Havers, trans., *A General Collection of Discourses of the Virtuosi of France, upon Questions of All Sorts of Philosophy and Other Natural Knowledge* (London: Thomas Dring and John Starkey, 1664), 203-06. "Of Lycanthropy" is listed as the topic to part one of Conference XXXIV. It is again mentioned in part one of Conference LXXVI, "Of Madness," 452-55.

clothing. In a sermon by Thomas Adams, *Lycanthropy, or The Wolfe Worrying the Lambes*, the lycanthrope is a manifestation of the false prophet. Adams' source texts are Matthew 7.15: "Beware the false Prophets which come to you in sheepes cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves" and Luke 10.3: "Behold, I send you forth as Lambes among Wolves."[17] The thrust of Adams' sermon is that God's elect are required to live among the wolves but never become wolves themselves. The image of the lycanthropic half-man, half-wolf adds a sense of diseased grotesqueness to the biblical metaphor.[18] The lycanthropic false prophet is a danger to the Christian flock because he could devour the sheep and could contaminate the sheep. Marvell gradually manipulates his use of the term to follow the Puritan typology used by Adams. Marvell warns,

> For want of Cattel here, you find him raving now against all the Calvinists of England, and worrying the whole Flock of them. For how can they hope to escape his chaps and his paws better than those of Germany and Geneva; of which

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[17] Thomas Adams, *Lycanthropy, Or the Wolfe Worrying the Lambes* (London: William Jaggard, 1615), $A1^{r}$ and $A3^{v}$.

[18] The wolf bringing disease into the church's fold is proverbial among English authors: "Under a weak and negligent shepherd (the wolf befouls the wool, and the unguarded flock is torn to pieces by him)." In *Piers Plowman*, Langland writes, "Thy shep ben ner al shabbede, the wolf shyt the wolle" [The sheep are scabbed, the wolf fouls the wool], (IX.265). The phrase also appears in the *Liber Parabolarum* of Alanus de Insulis and Chaucer's *Physician's Tale*; see Derek Pearsall, ed. *Piers Plowman: A New Annotated Edition of the C-Text* (Exeter: University of Exeter, 2008), 181-82.

> he is so hungry, that he hath scratch'd up even their dead bodies out of their Graves to prey upon? And yet this is nothing if you saw him in the height of his fits.[19]

Marvell's description of Parker's lycanthropy moves beyond merely satirizing his vitriolic speech and begins to present Parker as both a madman and an insatiable beast of prey. Marvell suggests that Parker's malicious attacks against Lutheran and Calvinist theologians will be directed towards nonconforming English Protestants. The humor of the madness trope fades away with Marvell's admission that Parker is actually dangerous and that his diseased rhetoric should be handled with caution. Following the description of Parker's lycanthropy, in a moment of somberness, Marvell directly addresses his nonconformist reader rather than Parker or the Anglican establishment. Presenting a word of caution, Marvell writes that, when Parker's tracts are read, the reader should "beware . . . of valuing too high, and trusting too far to your own Abilities."[20] In this moment of candor, Marvell reiterates the real danger that he sees in Parker's words: as the champion of the Church of England, Parker has the rhetorical ability to speak convincingly in order to win converts to his cause. Marvell recognizes this and warns his readers of naïve self-confidence when confronting such a formidable danger. Instead of reading Parker's rhetoric purely with satirical skepticism, Marvell intermixes his animadversion with fearful caution. In doing so, Marvell incorporates into his satire of

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[19] *PWM*, 1:78.

[20] Ibid.

Parker an idiom which was being commonly used among nonconformists during the years after the Restoration.

Though rare in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, Marvell's cautionary tone is not an anomaly among nonconformist writings. During the years under the First Conventicle Act (1664-1668) and the Second Conventicle Act (1670-1672, 1673-1689), nonconformist writers were extremely cautionary and aware of the dangers facing those who dissented from the religious hegemony. As N. H. Keeble suggests, one goal for nonconformist authors during and after the years dominated by the Erastian penal laws of the Clarendon Code was to encourage those suffering isolation and harsh persecutions.[21] As previously shown, the Clarendon Code attempted to isolate and disrupt nonconformity. The Conventicle Acts denied religious nonconformists the right to gather in groups larger than five and levied heavy fines upon those who gathered together in what was labeled as "seditious sectaries."[22] In an attempt to hinder dissent at its fountainhead, the heaviest penalties were given to the preachers and organizers of these groups. Preachers would accrue double fines and often imprisonment.[23] As a result, nonconformist literature is teeming with prison autobiographies and testimonials written by imprisoned ministers.[24] Emulating the imprisoned Church Fathers of the New

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[21] Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 76-78.

[22] 16 Charles II, c.4, *SR*, 5:516-20; see also 22 Charles II, c.1, *SR*, 5:648-51.

[23] See ibid., and Chapter 1, 19n37.

[24] John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* is an excellent example of the literary response to the Conventicle Act's penalties.

Testament, imprisoned nonconformist ministers often sent letters of encouragement back to their congregations. These letters emphasized the spiritual blessings that were being accrued by mortal suffering as well as instructed the laity on immediate spiritual dangers and pressing theological issues. Joseph Alleine provides a good example of the efforts nonconformist ministers took to communicate with their congregations. Arrested shortly after the First Conventicle Act was issued, Alleine was in prison from 1664 to 1667.[25] Alleine's letters to his family, friends, and church range in topics from instructing his wife on how to live on a small income to warning his "*dearly beloved flock in Christ*" to "Prepare for Suffering."[26] Although the original coterie intended for his letters was his family and church at Taunton, his letters were circulated beyond his local parish to other nonconformist communities. Eventually, about the time that the Second Conventicle Act was reinstated when the Declaration of Indulgences had been revoked, his letters were collected in print to be circulated among the wider nonconformist population.[27] One epistle by Alleine, written and subsequently sent to the press while he was imprisoned in 1664, articulates the specific concerns felt by disfranchised nonconformist ministers during the persecution of the Clarendon Code. The tract, *A Call to Archippus; or an Humble and Earnest Notion to Some Ejected Ministers (By Way of Letter) to Take Heed*

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[25] *DNB*

[26] Joseph Alleine, *Christian Letters Full of Spiritual Instructions, Tending to the Promotion of the Power of Godliness, Both in Person and Families* (London: Nevil Simmons, 1673), 3, 9.

[27] Ibid.

to Their Ministry That They Fulfil It (1664), is written specifically to exhort young and newly ordained ministers who have been charged with the care of the "flock" while Alleine and other preachers have been imprisoned. Alleine uses four biblical quotations as epigraphs for his title page: Col. 4.17; Acts 20.28; Acts 20.29; and 1 Pet. 5.1-2. While all four of these scriptures evoke the importance of a watchful elder or minister, three specifically engage the biblical typology of the Good Shepherd as well as the wolf in sheep's clothing, especially the two from Acts:

> Acts 20.28. Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the Flock, over which the holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
>
> 29. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock.[28]

While the passage from 1 Peter does not utilize the image of the wolf, it does call to the mind the image of the "roaring Lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour" found in verse eight of that chapter. Furthermore, it employs the same image used by Milton in the ecclesiastical satire in *Lycidas* (119-27): the biblical pastoral typology of

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[28] Joseph Alleine, *A Call to Archippus; or an Humble and Earnest Motion to Some Ejected Ministers (By Way of Letter) to Take Heed to Their Ministry That They Fulfil It* (London, 1664), A1^{r}.

the shepherd-as-minister who is commanded to feed his sheep without seeking gain.[29] Like many instructional manuals for ministers from the period, Alleine's text relies upon the figure of the Good Shepherd opposed to the bad shepherd to set up dichotomies between doctrinal truth and fallacy. Throughout the text, Alleine uses the dichotomy to provide a sense of immediacy in his call to action. The figure of the wolf in sheep's clothing becomes the embodiment of all of the spiritual dangers facing Alleine's congregation. He is worried that in his absence, his congregation will be absorbed by another congregation founded on contrary beliefs. Alleine asks the other ministers and congregational leaders to consider "[w]hether a great part of your Flocks will not be in extreemest danger to run wild to Seducers, and despisers of Government, if you do not step in."[30] Alleine, like Marvell, acknowledges the possible dangers of misappropriated enthusiasm. Without proper guidance, rhetorical vehemence could direct spiritual enthusiasm into nonproductive forms, such as sedition and political violence. Furthermore, Alleine warns that, without proper guidance, the laity "wil [*sic*] be under strongest temptations, to run to the Tents of Erroneous Teachers, and (to their great peril) lend their ears *to the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge*" (italics

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[29] *KJV*, 1 Peter 5.2: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, no by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

[30] Alleine, *Christian Letters*, 10. Alleine is concerned that his flock will be radicalized and this become an source of misanthropy to his society.

his).[31] Alleine sees "seducers" and "Erroneous Teachers" who are wolves in sheep's clothing as specific dangers to a congregation devoid of its pastor. However, he further relies upon the biblical pastoral metaphor to describe some particular dangers to the ministers and not only the flock. He asks,

> Are not you the Shepherds of the Flocks? And shall the true Shepherds flee, as soon as they see the Wolves, and leave the Sheep? When should they shew their care and diligence, their solicitude and watchfulness, if not when the beasts of prey come to tear, and to destroy?[32]

Alleine goes on to describe the possibilities of imprisonment, heavy fines, and social exclusion. These various tribulations facing ministers are metamorphosed into the dark and ominous emblem of the wolf, from which the metaphorical minister-as-shepherd flees. As shown by Alleine, vehement enthusiasm directed towards nonconformists could come in two types: the type which encouraged fallacy and the type which discouraged dissenting faith. In either case, without the presence of their minister and shepherd, nonconformist congregations lacked the proper instruction to respond to either form.

The Biblical Pastoralism of *Poems 1673*

As illustrated by Alleine and Marvell, the idiom of the biblical pastoral provided nonconformists with a ready-made and biblically inspired analogy for discussing the dangers facing religious dissenters. However, it should be kept in mind that the

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., 5.

antagonism between shepherd and wolf utilized in biblical pastoralism has a long tradition in English literature stemming from the various Bible passages referenced above. For example, in *Piers Plowman* (ca. 1350-80), William Langland makes use of the biblical parable when he warns, "For many wakere wolues ar writhen into thy foldes."[33] Gradually, the exhortative allusions to the biblical text weave themselves into the narrative rather than act as cautionary asides. In the early modern period, Edmund Spenser's *Shepheardes Calendar* (1579) is the best example of a mixture of Arcadian pastoralism and the biblical typography of the shepherd and the wolf. In Spenser's ecclesiastical *Maye* ecologue, two shepherds incorporate the very same biblical parable of the wolf in sheep's clothing into their discussion of behavior suitable to their vocations. Piers, the shepherd for reform, writes, "Tho under colour of shepeheards, somewhile / There crept in Wolves, ful of fraude and guile, / That often devoured their owne sheepe.[34] The figure of the wolf—and later the fox—are typological "characters" in the narrative that symbolize "both Roman Catholic priests and crypto-Catholic clergy within the Church of England who prey upon an innocent 'flock.'"[35] As John N. King notes,

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[33] William Langland, *Piers Plowman: A New Annotated Edition of the C-Text*, edited by Derek Pearsall (Exeter: University of Exeter, 2008), IX.260.

[34] Edmund Spencer, "The Shepheardes Calendar" in *The Yale Edition for the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, edited by William A. Oram, et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), ll.116-31.

[35] John N. King, *Spenser's Poetry and the Reformation Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 19.

"Spenser adopts not only Virgil's pastoral pose of poetic apprenticeship but also the recognizable voice of the English religious reformer for his poetic debut" in the *Shepheardes Calendar*.[36]

The wolf and lycanthrope idiom used by Alleine and Marvell passes through the biblical pastoralism of Spenser and his precursors on its way to post-Restoration nonconformist readers, and it is with this in mind that the final portion of the English volume of *Poems 1673* may be examined. Starting with *Arcades*, Milton groups together a series of pastoral poems to conclude his English poems. In the 1645 *Poems*, the grouping is limited to *Arcades*, *Lycidas*, and *A Mask*; however, in 1673, the pastoral grouping is enlarged and thus somewhat modified.

Poems 1673 retains the 1645 order for the original three works, beginning with *Arcades*, an aristocratic entertainment featuring characters that "*appear on the Scene in Pastoral Habit.*"[37] *Arcades* is still followed by *Lycidas*, a pastoral monody featuring a satire against the "*corrupted Clergie then in their height.*"[38] However, *A Mask* no longer forms the conclusion of the English volume of poems. In 1673, it is followed by Milton's English Psalm translations, which happen to contain some pastoral laments written by the Old Testament's most prominent singing shepherd: David. As a result of this grouping,

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[36] Ibid., 14. In his chapter "Protestant Pastoral Satire," King argues that Spenser is writing in a tradition that saw Petrarch as a proto-Protestant reformer. King lists other English authors who contributed to this tradition (ibid. 14-46).

[37] *Poems 1673*, $E3^{v}$.

[38] Ibid., $E6^{r}$.

the vernacular portion of *Poems 1673* ends with a conflation of the biblical and classical pastoral idioms. Consequently, when read as a whole, the pastoral grouping articulates the whole spectrum of nonconformist idioms based upon the Bible's shepherd to minister and sheep to elect analogies.

Lycidas

As the headnote to *Lycidas* explains, the poem is written as a lament for the death of "*a learned Friend, unfortunately drown'd in his passage from* Chester *on the* Irish *Seas,* 1637."[39] The headnote emphasizes the poem's aforementioned inclusion of an ecclesiastical satire. Milton scholars know the deceased friend to be Edward King, a friend and fellow student of Milton at Christ College, Cambridge, and literary critics have long discussed the effectiveness of the poem as a vehicle for grief and sadness.[40] In fact, Samuel Johnson's pronouncement that the poem "is not to be considered as the effusion of real passion" has often been quoted as a starting point for this debate.[41] Even though Johnson's opinion of the poem is notoriously harsh, it does reveal some hints about how the poem was read during the century following Milton's death. In 1779, Johnson is skeptical about the use of the pastoral setting because, "though it be allowed that the representation [of Milton and King as shepherds] may be allegorical, the true meaning is

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[39] Ibid.

[40] *Lycidas* was originally published as the final poem in the Cambridge University memorial volume *Justa Edovardo King naufrago* in 1638.

[41] Samuel Johnson, "from The Life of Milton," in *Milton's Lycidas: The Tradition and the Poem*, rev. ed. (Columbia, Mo: University of Missouri Press, 1983), 60-61, 61.

so uncertain and remote that it is never sought because it cannot be known when it is found."[42] Since Johnson refuses to imagine Milton in the habit of a rustic shepherd, he finds the pastoral framework of *Lycidas* to be absurd. However, his remark begs the question, if the true meaning is never sought, what meanings are inferred? Johnson's further remarks might provide an answer. He suggest an even "grosser fault" in the poem is the combination of the classical pastoral imagery with the ecclesiastical satire. He states,

> With these trifling fictions are mingled the most awful and sacred truths such as ought never to be polluted with such irreverend combinations. The shepherd likewise is now a feeder of sheep, and afterwards an ecclesiastical pastor, a superintendent of a Christian flock. Such equivocations are always unskillful; but here they are indecent, and at least approach to impiety.[43]

Johnson's reading of *Lycidas* is overwhelmed by the ecclesiastical satire to a point where Johnson's interest in the ecclesiastical content dominates the conclusion of his entire critique. He focuses upon decency and indecency, piety and impiety. Rather than finishing with pronouncements on literary decorum, Johnson responds with moral and spiritual decorum, and he believes that any other reader would have a similar experience "had he not known its author."[44]

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[42] Ibid., 61.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

Even though post-Restoration readers of *Poems 1673* would have had no reason not to place Milton into their reading of *Lycidas*, they would have had a difficult time recognizing Edward King as the poem's title character. Furthermore, they would have been required, as Johnson suggests, either to seek out the meaning or create one for themselves.[45] For some nonconformist readers, an available meaning may have been found in the inter-textuality of the poem's grouping. As nonconformist readers worked their way through the final portions of the English book, they repeatedly would have encountered familiar idioms of religious dissent located in the analogies of the biblical pastoralism found in *Lycidas*' ecclesiastical satire.

While the 1638 version of the poem can be read easily within the classical pastoral genre, the emphasis on the ecclesiastical satire given by the poem's 1645 and 1673 headnote redirects readers to consider the shepherd as the type of allegorical clergy prominent in Spenser's *Shepheardes Calendar* from the very outset of the poem. The loss of Lycidas felt by Milton's "uncouth Swain" is identifiable with the loss felt by many nonconformists who had lost their shepherds during the various stages of the

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[45] See Neil Forsyth, "'Lycidas': A Wolf in Saint's Clothing," *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 3 (2009): 684-702. Forsyth has also recognized the interpretive force of the ecclesiastical satire. He states, "Never mind what was already present in the 1638 poem, which Milton invites us with the 1645 headnote to notice and reassess. The wolfish digression becomes the prophetic and political centre, validating—and now qualifying—everything else" (700). Since Milton reuses the 1645 headnote in 1673, the effect is the same if not intensified by time.

Clarendon Code. Nonconformists sought out speech-acts, which could articulate both their emotional response to the situation and also their political responses; the combination of elegy and satire fulfills this need.

Elegy and mock elegy were two genres which could be fiercely used in the rhetorical battles of post-Restoration religious discourse. For example, *The Mock-Elogie on the Funeral of Mr. Caryl* (1672) was written to ridicule a "*motley*-throng" comprised of "*Presbyters, Sectarists . . . Quakers*, with *Kiffin* and *J.O. / Ranters*, with *Praise-god Bare-bones* too" who gathered to witness the burial of the deceased Independent minister Joseph Caryle in 1672.[46] The mock-elegist accuses the mourners of having contrived emotions as well as seditious intentions. The anti-dissent poem elicited a quick verse response in the form of *A Scourge for the Libeller or a Sober Vindication of Doctor Wild, and the Memory of Mr. Caryl, from the Rude Aspersions of a Scandalous Sheet Intituled, The Mock-Elogie, &c* (1672). Interestingly, almost as an inversion of *Lycidas*, the poem is an ecclesiastical and polemical satire which features an elegiac pastoral digression. The poet's primary concern is attacking the "*black unhallowed* Tongue" who has done

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[46] E. H. *The Mock-Elogie on the Funeral of Mr. Caryl* (London, 1672). The author intermixes among the "*motly*-throng" well known political and religious dissenters, in order to emphasize later the connections between seditious acts and dissenting religious acts. See Achinstein, *Dissent*, 27-32.

"These *Reverend Ashes* basely wrong."[47] He laments that is it a "Sad Age! When ev'ry paltry Penn / Dares Scandalize such worthy men."[48] Eventually he turns to the pastoral idiom to express the emotional preoccupations associated with the loss of Joseph Caryl. The author presents one nonconformist minister who did "come / A Mourner unto Caryls Tomb" as the reluctant singing shepherd. He writes,

> What though perhaps it may be true,
>
> When whilome fatal *Bartholmew*;
>
> Refreshing Parsonage withdrew,
>
> Sometimes the old *unbusied Swain*
>
> On Oaten Reed might pipe a strain.

The poet is bridging the classical and biblical pastoral idiom to comment upon the ejection of ministers following St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662. Though the shepherd has been "unbusied" by the Act of Uniformity, he manages to occasionally "pipe a strain" or preach a sermon. However, the poem reveals new anxieties and hopes arising from the Declaration of Indulgences. The poet goes on to write,

> Yet since *Indulgence* now decrees
>
> Him *Flock* again, (though not the *Fleece*)
>
> He hopes *better* to spend his Tyme

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[47] *A Scourge for the Libeller or A Sober Vindication of Doctor Wild, and the Memory of Mr. Caryl, from the Rude Aspersions of a Scandalous Sheet Intituled, The Mock-Elogie, &c.* (London, 1672).

[48] Ibid.

Than in vain Frolliquengs of *Rhyme*.[49]

Poetical vocation and religious vocation are united in this poem's version of a "faithful Herdman."[50] This post-Restoration shepherd both has received a renewed calling and also is suffering from the loss of his friend. These anxieties are similar to the ones experienced by the uncouth Swain in *Lycidas*. The Swain laments, "For *Lycidas* is dead, dead ere his prime / Young *Lycidas*, and hath not left his peer" (8-9). The emotions expressed by Milton's lines, like those of the nonconformist elegy, include not only grief but also a sense of loss. The poem goes on to articulate the anxieties naturally arising from these emotions also felt my nonconformist authors and readers.

Lycidas' digression on Fame is an example of the emotions of grief and abandonment overwhelming the Swain's elegiac song. The anxiety of losing Lycidas inevitably leads to morbid thoughts of self-preservation, which, in turn, distract from the swain's proposed task to "sing for Lycidas" (10). Thus the digression on Fame is a morbid digression resulting from the analogy made of Lycidas to Orpheus in the preceding stanza (50-63) and subsequently from the analogy of Lycidas to the Swain. The morbidity of the swain's line of thought creates an existential crisis that makes him question his vocation "[t]o tend the homely slighted Shepherds trade" (64). Considering that this self-questioning is a result of morbid thoughts, Johnson's critique does not seem off base; the dangerous life of a singing shepherd in an Arcadian landscape seems to be an absurd construct. However, nonconformists reading the poem in search of corrupted

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[49] Ibid.

[50] See *Lycidas*, 114.

clergy and lost ministers would connect with this existential digression. The persecution of the Clarendon Code caused nonconformists to avoid the unnecessary danger of gathering in unlicensed church meetings. In letters written to his congregation in Taunton, the imprisoned minister Joseph Alleine warned against giving into such fears. He worried that without their minister, his flock would "grow slack, and slight, and careless in that duty."[51] The duty which he is here concerned about is communion. He writes, "manage your duties with what prudence you can, but away with that Carnal prudence, that will decline duty to avoid danger. Is the Communion of Saints worth the venturing for?"[52] He goes on to explain that the heavenly rewards of such a risk are worth the venture. The rhetorical similarities between Alleine's letter and Milton's poem are significant. Alleine uses a cost/risk analysis which takes into account the blessings given by God in heaven. He writes, "do you indeed not know that he that runs most hazard for Christ, doth express most love to Christ, and shall receive the greatest reward; away with that unbelief, that prefers the present safety, before the future glory."[53] In *Lycidas*, the Swain also contemplates the rewards of an easy life compared to the risks of following his true vocation. He asks himself, "Were it not better don as others use, / To sport with *Amaryllis* in the shade, / Or with the tangles of *Neæra*'s hair?" (67-69). This is the option of avoidance and self-preservation. The other option is "[t]o scorn delights,

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[51] Joseph Alleine, *Christian Letter Full of Spiritual*, 42.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

and live laborious dayes" in search of Fame (72). Using apocalyptic terms recognizable to most post-Restoration nonconformists, Milton writes,

> *Fame* is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> But lives and spreds aloft by those pure eyes,
>
> And perfet witnes of all judging *Jove*;
>
> As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
>
> Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed. (78, 81-84)

Even though the passage utilizes classical deities, the allusion to the biblical final judgment is prominent, and the classical pastoral conceit of poetic vocation is overwhelmed temporarily by the risk and rewards of spiritual vocation.

As in the case with Alleine, the discussion of pastoral vocation in *Lycidas* is closely tied to the consequences and dangers of inaction. *Lycidas* hinges upon the dichotomy between the deceased and consequently absent shepherd and those corrupted clergy who are currently intermingled with the flock. Interestingly, the biblical allusions found in the poem's ecclesiastical satire create an image of a gradual metamorphosis. The corrupted clergy prefigured by the headnote are first presented within the pastoral motif as the physical and moral opposite of "the faithful Herdman" (121). They "for their bellies sake, / Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold" (114-15). The language invokes connotations of animal-like movements; however, the lines parallel language that Jesus uses to differentiate between the Good Shepherd and thieves and robbers in John

10.1-2.[54] As the satire progresses, the image of the corrupted clergy does not remain static; it continues to develop by undergoing an almost lycanthropic change.[55]

A lycanthropic change does not come unexpectedly in the poem. As pointed out by Neil Forsyth, there are etymological similarities between the name *Lycidas* and *Lycanthropy*. Meaning "son of wolf" or "wolf's whelp," Lycidas' name evokes connotations of concern and dread for what the deceased shepherd might have become. Forsyth believes there is an anxiety inherent in the poem concerning Lycidas'—that is Edward King's—future as a member of the headnote's "corrupted clergy" had he lived. The possible corruption of Lycidas is exhibited with the description a lycanthropic change in the ecclesiastical satire. The humanity of the intruders slowly begins to fade as the poem strips them of both rational and physical dexterity. Rather than being fully considerate of their behavior, "they little reck'ning make, / Then how to scramble at the shearers feast" (116-17). First conceptualized as mere thieves, the corrupted clergy are no longer fully human because they cannot utilize their reason against their baser appetites. They, therefore, become merely "Blind mouthes! that scarce themselves know how to hold / A Sheep-hook" (119-20). Often read as Milton's critique on ecclesiastical education and spiritual calling, the inability to handle the shepherd's crook can hold a double meaning when the metamorphosis taking place is considered. The corrupted

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[54] *KJV*: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth by the door is the shepherd of the sheep."

[55] See Forsyth, "'Lycidas': A Wolf in Saint's Clothing," 696.

clergy, presented as thieves, have given in to their base and depraved desire; therefore, they no longer have a need for human devices or relations. They cannot act in the place of the "faithful Herdman" because they are not men. As the metamorphosis continues, interpersonal relations cannot continue; the objects which the clergy should protect and tend become objects of irrational desire (122-23). Like the lycanthropic madman who howls and yells in caves, their voices and pastoral songs are anything but melodic; instead, they are lean, flashy, and grating to the ears (124-25). However, the metamorphosis does not cease at the stage of an animalistic man; its final stage is that of the "grim Woolf with privy paw" that devours all the sheep which do not die from the "foul contagion" spread by the infected lycanthropic beasts (128, 127). For post-Restoration nonconformist readers of *Poems 1673*, the biblical typology of *Lycidas* provides the same double warning giving by Marvell's lycanthropy metaphor in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* where in threats to nonconformists' ideological integrity is as dangerous as the physical threats opposed to the flock.

The Conventicle Acts

Since ideological vehemence was not the only danger facing nonconformists, it stands to reason that nonconformists utilized the idioms of biblical pastoralism to describe the various dangers. As a further attempt to isolate nonconformists from the conforming majority, the Conventicle Acts promoted social discord by rewarding informants who could provide information on nonconformist gatherings. By encouraging active participation in the persecution of nonconformists, the magistrate promoted social

discord and transformed disinterested bystanders into mischievous interlopers.[56] Therefore, this was a time when those who saw themselves as God's elect were beset by trials and who often found themselves without their pastoral guidance and wary of finding the proverbial wolf in their midst. In order to guard against the dangers facing dissenting congregations, nonconformist writers mixed cautionary tales with encouraging exhortations.

One anonymous "schismaticall phamphlett," titled *The Character of An Informer wherein His Mischeivous Nature, and Leud Practices are Detected*, expresses the anxieties felt by nonconformists during this period.[57] The short, five-page octavo describes the Informer in several capacities. He is described in animalistic and monstrous terms, causing pregnant women to miscarry at his sight ($A2^{v}$). He is a "Mischeivous *Vermin*" ($A2^{r}$); he is "like a Beast of Prey" ($A3^{r}$); and most significantly, he is the "*Lupus in Fabula*" which the author translates into English as "An INFORMER in a Meeting-house" rather than the wolf in the fable ($A4^{r}$). The author of the tract shows the ever-present caution used when conducting nonconformist church meetings under the confines of the Clarendon Code. Furthermore, this tract shows how the ecclesiastical penal laws

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[56] See Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 20.

[57] See *The Character of An Informer wherein His Micheivous Nature, and Leud Practices are Detected* (London: L.P., 1675). A copy from the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, presented in facsimile on *EEBO* has "A Schissmaticall Phamplett" written opposite the first page of the tract ($A1^{v}$).

could change interpersonal relationships: every person present was a possible wolf even though they had the appearance of a normal congregant. Monetary greed could metamorphose friends and neighbors into informants. At times, the tract goes beyond the animal kingdom and describes the informer as something otherworldly. He is an "Evil Genius that is perpetually haunting and Egging [men] on to Mischief" ($A4^{r}$), and he is like a "conjurer" who reads "Scripture, to *do mischief* with it" ($A2^{v}$). While all of these descriptions hint at the distasteful attributes of the informer's mind, the tract further describes the distasteful actions of the informer. He is of course, as the title of the tract suggests, mischievous and lewd; he is also a drunkard and an apprentice in debauchery ($A3^{v}$). Furthermore, he is not to be trusted because he acts "under pretence of Authority" ($A2^{r}$); he has "no *Conscience* himself, [and] is resolved to be a *Plague* to all those that dare own they have *any*" ($A2^{v}$); and he "values an Oath no more than a Gamester, and swallows Perjuries as fast and as easily as a Juggler does Pins and Daggers" ($A3^{v}$). According to the tract, the source of all the informer's insincerity and wolfish desire for money is his carnal desires, which cause him to spend all his reward money quickly and begin plotting ways to earn more; therefore, the author of the tract equates appetite with misanthropic action. Like Marvell's fictive caricature of Parker's lycanthropic madness, the informer is caricatured in a way that differentiates him from the rational and benevolent behavior of nonconformists and passive conformists. By conceiving of the dangers to nonconformity in this way, nonconformist writers utilize the biblical pastoral idiom in such a way that informers, Anglican polemicists, and harsh magistrates are able to be relegated to a spiritual and ideological Other that goes beyond the social Otherness prescribed to the nonconformists by penal laws and Anglican polemicists.

If the descriptions found in *The Character of an Informer* sound familiar to Milton scholars, it is because most of them are applied to Comus at some point throughout *A Mask*. Comus is called "a Sorcerer" (521), "damn'd wizard" (571), and "the necromancer" (649) by the Attendant Spirit. These terms are akin to the Informer's enchanting abilities as an "evil genius" and conjurer. Furthermore, once the Lady has been betrayed by Comus, she refers to him as "false traitor" (690), "foul deceiver" (696), "this Jugler" (757), and "Impostor" (762).[58] Both Comus and the Informer are deceitful, manipulative, and wolfish threats to those they prey upon. Comus himself admits to an agenda similar to the Informer's. He states,

> I under fair pretence of friendly ends,
> And well plac't words of glozing courtesie
> Baited with reasons not unplausible
> Wind me into the easie-hearted man,
> And hugg him into snares. (160-64)

Read by a dissenter in the 1670s, many of the actions and descriptions of Comus bear resemblance to the Other used to describe the enemies to nonconformity. In one of the few arguably authorial changes made to the 1673 version of *A Mask*, Comus emphasizes

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[58] See Harris, *London Crowds*, 72. Harris explains that informers were often ridiculed and disliked by nonconformists and conformists alike since informing broke certain social mores among neighbors.

a voyeuristic strangeness similar to the Informer.[59] Like a vice character from a medieval mystery play, Comus reveals his plan to the reader while preparing to ensnare the Lady. In the 1645 text, he states,

> When once her eye
> Hath met the vertue of this Magick dust,
> I shall appear som harmles Villager
> Whom thrift keeps up about his Country gear,
> But here she comes, I fairly step aside
> And hearken, if I may, her business here. (164-169)

In 1673, this passage contains some spelling and punctuation changes as well as some textual omissions and alterations. The line, "Whom thrift keeps up about his Country gear" is missing, and the last two lines are interchanged. Furthermore, these lines are singled out in the book's very limited list of Errata. It reads, "p. 91. l. 19. leave out the Comma after May, and for here r. hear."[60] When the changes suggested in the Errata are applied to the already altered 1673 text, the lines would read,

> When once her eye
> Hath met the vertue of this Magick dust.
> I shall appear some harmles Villager

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[59] See Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 155-65. Dobranski makes a convincing argument for Milton's participation in the 1673 errata as well as the line revisions in *A Mask.*

[60] *Poems 1673*, $^{\pi}$A4^{v}.

And hearken, if I may her business hear.

But here she comes, I fairly step aside. (164-69)

The alterations make a two-fold impact on the way in which Comus is read. First, Comus' metamorphosis into a "harmless Villager" becomes more mysterious. Without the reference to "Country gear," Comus' ability to deceive the Lady is based solely on his magical powers rather than his mere appearance. While scholars have suggested that there was not a costume change in the performance version of *A Mask*, a reader of the text could imagine a magical wardrobe change.[61] The implication would be that Comus would have the appearance of a country shepherd to both the reader and the Lady. However, in the 1673 version, Comus' otherness remains intact in the reader's eyes. The second implication of these changes comes directly from those alterations made by the Errata. The alteration of "here" to "hear" puts a double emphasis on Comus' eavesdropping. He both "hearkens" and attempts to "hear" the Lady's business in the woods. This small change alters the nature of the threat which Comus poses to the Lady. He now receives part of his power from what he learns from her, and the Lady's own unguarded words serve as part of her entrapment.

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[61] For a discussion of the material conditions of *A Mask*'s aristocratic performance, see John Creaser, "The Setting of *Comus*," in *The Court Masque*, ed. David Lindley (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1984), 111-34.

A Mask

Milton's Puritan masque, sometimes referred to as *Comus* but referred to here as *A Mask*, is a text that is noted for its intermixing of pastoral and romance genres as well as its lengthy and complex textual history.[62] *A Mask*'s complex textual history is due to its having made several appearances in print during Milton's lifetime—1637, 1645, and 1673—as well as existing in two significant manuscripts.[63] Further complexities arise out of the nature of the masque genre, which requires some collaboration with musicians, set designers, and even actors.[64] Additionally, the nature of seventeenth-century book printing required collaboration with printers, typesetters, and booksellers. These complexities all affect the way modern scholars have approached, read, and interpreted

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[62] For Milton's interplay of romance and pastoral, see Heather Dubrow, "The Masquing of Genre in *Comus*," *Milton Studies* 44 (2005): 62-83.

[63] The two manuscripts are the Trinity MS and the Bridgewater MS. Revard includes the text of the Bridgewater MS as an appendix in her anthology *CSP*. See also Leah S. Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (London: Routledge, 1996), 177-78. Marcus writes, "In the course of its printing history, A Mask gradually metamorphoses from a public document of state into a more private expression of its author's convictions" (ibid. 78).

[64] See Katherine R. Kellett, "The Lady's Voice: Poetic Collaboration in Milton's Mask," *Milton Studies* 50 (2009): 1-19. Kellet acknowledges the collaboration in the material production of the text but examines collaboration in the creation of its meaning, especially concerning the Lady's virtue.

the text. Dobranski explains how the 1645 presentation of the work emphasizes pro-royalist sentiments.[65] However, as part of a grouping of pastoral works at the end of *Poems 1673*, *A Mask* is separated from its pre-Civil War origins as well as from the extravagances of an aristocratic performance; as a result, the typology and symbolism of the work is destabilized and open for new interpretations according to its 1673 reception because *A Mask* is a different text in 1673 than it was when first performed on Michaelmas Night in 1634 or when it appeared in print in 1637, presented by Henry Lawes, or in 1645 as part of Humphrey Moseley's royalist-styled volume of Milton's *Poems 1645*.

While, in fact, there are only a few textual changes made to the 1000-plus lines in 1673, many of the accompanying paratextual materials found in the 1645 text are absent from the 1673 text. In 1645, *A Mask* is set off from the other poems in the work by its own title page highlighting the nature of its aristocratic performance before "The Earl of BRIDGEWATER Then President of WALES."[66] The full title page reads, "A | MASK | Of the same | AUTHOR | PRESENTED | At *LUDLOW*-Castle, | 1634. | Before | The Earl of BRIDGEWATER | Then President of WALES. | [woodcut block] | Anno Dom. 1645." In *Poems 1673*, the additional title page has been removed, and there is not extensive delineation separating it as a text more significant than those preceding or following it. Furthermore, there are other paratextual documents in the 1645 collection, connecting the work with its origins, which are eliminated from the 1673 edition. These include two

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[65] See Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, 92.

[66] *Poems 1645*, E2^{r}.

prefatory letters: one is from Henry Lawes—the court musician who was music teacher to the Egerton children and musical composer for *A Mask*—to John, Lord Vicount Bracly, noting the Vicount's part in its initial performance. The two letters are absent from 1673 as is the list of *dramatis personae*, which in 1645 listed "*the chief persons which presented*" the masque as "Lord *Bracly*, Mr. *Thomas Egerton* his Brother, [and] The Lady *Alice Egerton*."[67] The only significant piece of paratextual material held over from the 1645 edition is the secondary title, which is given again immediately preceding the text. In 1673, the title, "A | MASK | PRESENTED | At LUDLOW-CASTLE, 1634. &c," is the only reminder of the masque's noble patronage and performance.[68]

Removed from its aristocratic context, the post-Restoration nonconformist reader would have more easily identified with *A Mask*'s generic and topical idioms. Milton's Puritan typology of weary travelers and his allusions to prowling monsters would have evolved into different signs over the course of the intervening thirty years. With the diminished emphasis on *A Mask*'s original context as a social event in *Poems 1673*, the text's romance and pastoral conventions are more pronounced and accessible to the reader. In fact, the post-Restoration reader would have some reason to approach *A Mask* as a pseudo-allegorical romance with full of typology. In 1671, Erycius Puteanus' neo-Latin text *Comus, sive Phagesiposia Cimmeria* had been translated and published under

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[67] Ibid., E5^{v}.

[68] *Poems 1673*, F2^{v}.

the title *The Vision of Theodorus Verax* by Bryce Blair.[69] Puteanus' text is familiar to Milton scholars as a possible source for Milton's conception of Comus. Whether or not Milton was aware of Puteanus' text does not necessarily matter here. The 1671 publication of Blair's translation interposes Puteanus' Comus into the post-Restoration reading of this Bacchanalian character. Blair's translation, unattributed to Puteanus, follows the original version closely, rendering the anacreonic verses into rhymed iambic couplets. *The Vision* features two characters, Theodorus Verax and his companion, Aderba, as they observe and participate in the revelries in and around the palace of Comus. The character of Comus and his allegorical companions feature as the primary objects of narrator's examination. For example, with amazement Theodorus describes Comus' entry:

> In the mean while enters *Comus*, attended with two Ladies, Riot, and Wantonness. To what purpose shall I declare his Pomp and Magnificence? His Garments richly perfumed, did cast forth a most sweet smell. Love, and Madam pleasure did follow him; the Graces, Delights, Comeliness, and Joy, did follow Love and Pleasure; with Saturity was her sister Ebriety, with her hair loose, her face red like the morning, shaking a Javelin with her hand; and in fine, resembling *Bacchus* in

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[69] For a brief examination of Puteanus' *Comus*, see Ralph H. Singleton, "Milton's *Comus* and the *Comus* of Erycius Puteanus," *PMLA* 58, no. 4 (1943): 949-57. For Blair's version, see Charles C. Mish, "*Comus* and Bryce Blair's *Vision of Theodorus Verax*," *The Milton Newsletter* 1, no. 3 (1967): 39-40.

every action: Near those were madness, fury, brawling, chiding and fighting, then vomit, Crudity and Diseases.[70]

The Vision becomes a discussion of the virtues of stoicism and the pleasures of hearty hedonism; the allegorical characters are embodiments of vice and virtue in action. *The Vision* draws many inherent moral lessons from the observations of the two companions; however, Blair takes some measures to ensure the correct allegorical interpretation of the characters.[71] One of the few additions made to Puteanus' text by Blair is the addition of marginal notations in which Blair makes subtle emendations to the text or provides elucidation.[72] A third of the way through *The Vision*, Blair becomes blatant in explaining his meaning for Comus; he glosses the character's name with "*By* Comus *is here to be understood the prodigal customs of the times*."[73] Blair's gloss directs the reader to consider the lasciviousness with which the royal court had come to be equated after the

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[70] Bryce Blair, *The Vision of Theodorus Verax* (London: William Leake, 1671), 24-25.

[71] These moral lessons may have been intended for the Duke of Monmouth, from whom Blair hoped to receive "some special and signal Service." His dedicatory letter is addressed to "the most Illustrious and High born Prince, James Duke of Monmouth and Bucclugh, one of his Majesties most Honourable Privy Councel" (ibid. $A3^{r}$-$A3^{v}$).

[72] See ibid., 71. The text states, "Ebriety doth not beget but brings forth vice." Blair's annotation contradicts directly by stating, "Yet it both begets and brings forth vice."

[73] Ibid., 55.

Restoration and the need for moral reformation—an interpretation that does not necessarily transfer to *A Mask*—however, the gloss sets a precedence for a topical application of Milton's Comus in the form of another "prodigal custom of the times."

The Attendant Spirit's opening address in *A Mask* creates an artificial landscape that could be layered with various topical references or meanings; nevertheless, in 1673, one of the concerns which weighed heavily upon the minds of nonconformists was the manner in which their religious services might be held. Nonconformist congregations who were unwilling to meet in the diminutive-sized groups demanded by the Conventicle Acts sought out ways to circumvent the watchful gaze of the magistrate and the spying eyes of informers. Congregations went to great lengths to protect their ministers and ensure their ability to hold their religious meetings peaceably. Some Presbyterian religious services were held under the guise of feasts and entertainments. The Quaker George Fox explains that, if the magistrates intruded upon their services, "they would put up their Bibles" and take out their "tobacco pipes, flagons of drink, cold meat, bread and cheese."[74] Additionally, covert communications and hidden rooms allowed some nonconformists to evade the magistrate while religious meetings took place. However, subterfuge was not always successful. Chronicling the hardships felt by ejected ministers in Scotland, the Presbyterian John Brown, describes the tense circumstances of a house raid:

> Hence were houses forced and searched, and many hailed to prisons, and several necessitate to escape at windows with the hazard of their lives; Officers and Spies

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[74] Quoted in Watts, *Dissenters*, 230.

> sent unto and set in several suspected places, to seize and fall upon such, as they found at such meetings, or but suspected to have been there: whence it came to pass that many, both men and women, young and old, have been dragged to Prisons, and there close keeped, as if they had been worst of Malefactors.[75]

Brown's history of the indulgences shows how ministers were forced to adapt to the changing laws and customs of their times. Some dissenters who lived in more rural settings utilized more remote locations such as fields and forests as covert gathering places. Brown writes,

> The faithful Ministers and people, desireing still to follow the Lord, in the duty of the day, and finding so many so great Difficulties, in their Assembling in Houses, where they were so easily attraped, and could with so great hazard meet, and with difficultie escape the hands of these Burrioes, were constrained at last to keep their Meetings in the fields, though without all shelter from Cold, Winde, Snow, and Raine: Whereupon the rage and fury of the Rulers, instigated by the Prelates, did break forth into more excessive and boundless Flames.[76]

Meetings were held at odd times throughout the week and were often scheduled for late at night; therefore, it was not uncommon for a group of nonconformists to meet in the forest in the middle of the night.[77] Hence, forests, fields and other isolated locales are

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[75] John Brown, *The History of the Indulgence Shewing Its Rise, Conveyance, Progress, and Acceptance* (Edinburgh, 1678), 2.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Watts, *Dissenters*, 230-32.

liminal spaces where there is a possibility of life-altering danger—if a meeting is discovered by the magistrate—as well as instruction—if the service remains uninterrupted.

In *A Mask*, the Spirit takes the setting of the "wilde Wood" and presents it as a liminal space inhabited by transient beings and juxtaposes it to the spiritual realms "of *Joves* Court / . . . where those immortal shapes / Of bright aëreal Spirits live insphear'd" (1-3). Below the spiritual realm where Jove and the attendant spiritual beings exist lies the "smoak and stirr of this dim spot, / Which men call Earth" (5-6). The language used by the Attendant Spirit implies that the Earth and especially the woods of *A Mask* are part of a hazy, dreamlike landscape, which lacks in substance when compared to the higher spheres. The "smoak and stirr" of the setting suggests that the events and surroundings of the masque will be dreamlike; this indistinct landscape, like Spenser's "dark conceit," signals the reader of the text that a topical extrapolation is possible. The Attendant Spirit goes on to explain that those who live on Earth are "Confin'd, and pester'd in this pin-fold here" (7). The pastoral imagery allows the post-Restoration reader to access the biblical typology that places man in the role of a sheep in need of the protection and guidance of a shepherd. Continuing in his speech, the Spirit elaborates on certain "true Servants" among the wider herd (10). These are the select few who "by due steps aspire / To lay their just hands on that Golden Key / That ope's the Palace of Eternity" (12-14). Thus, the "steps" of the "just" pass through the dim world of Earth as they progress to the spiritual realm of Eternity. The terrestrial world, therefore, is shown to be a transitional phase where the just endeavor to gain the rewards of the next life.

After establishing Earth broadly as a liminal space, the Attendant Spirit turns his attention to particular liminal construction of the "wilde Wood." The reader is told that there will be three children and that they are entering into a complex and darkened landscape in order to "attend their Fathers state" (35). The Spirit is beginning to differentiate the three protagonists from the broader population and position them among the aforementioned "aspiring just." By doing this, Milton controls how the Other will be defined within *A Mask*. For example, later in the masque the Lady is able to distance herself from the brutish masses who are easily deceived by Comus (700). As transient characters, the siblings run the risk of being intruders in the woods; however, this is not the case. They are aligned with the more stable heavenly spheres and by familiar associations to the landowner. When the Attendant Spirit first appears to the Brothers under the guise of Thyrsis, he addresses them as "my lov'd masters heir, and his next joy" (501). Since the reader is already aware that the Spirit has been "dispatcht for their defence, and guard" by Jove, this statement may appear false (42). If the reader is to take the Spirit's words as truth rather than deception, the children's earthly father and ruler must become their heavenly father. However, the children are transient characters who do not belong in the wood; they merely are passing through the woods in order to fellowship with their Father. The Spirit explains that the children's "way / Lies through the perplex't paths of this drear Wood, / The nodding horror of whose shady brows / Threats the forlorn and wandering Passinger" (34-39). By being described as transient characters associated with a noble pedigree, the protagonists are set apart from other travelers as both heirs to their father and among the elect of God. Since the woods do not fit into the mold of the idyllic pastoral landscape, scholars have suggested that Milton

places his characters into a fallen world filled with both physical and spiritual trials.[78] The inherent dangers that are present in the fallen landscape threaten to dislodge *A Mask* from the pastoral grouping; however, as Heather Dubrow points out, "[*A Mask*] also recuperates pastoral by associating both the natural world and the genre in question with cure no less than disease."[79]

While the fallen landscape presents the just travelers with the possibility of danger and persecution, it also provides opportunities for expressions of faith and virtue as well as spiritual assistance and promised rewards. In this way, the journey made by the children in *A Mask* is similar to that John Bunyan's famous nonconformist spiritual allegory. In the verse apology to *Pilgrim's Progress*, which Bunyan states is written in "the Similitude of a Dream," Bunyan reiterates the transient nature of his protagonist, Christian, who seeks "the everlasting Prize."[80] Bunyan's allegorical narrative

> . . . shews you whence [Christian] comes, wither he goes,
>
> What he leaves undone, also what he does;
>
> It also shews you how he runs and runs,
>
> Till he unto the Gate of Glory comes.[81]

Milton's three siblings, like Bunyan's Christian, who is travelling to a great feast in the Celestial City of Zion where his spiritual Father resides, are also progressing towards a

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[78] See Dubrow, "The Masquing of Genre in *Comus*," 70.

[79] Ibid., 71.

[80] Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*, 6.

[81] Ibid., 1.

celebration hosted by their father. From the beginning of the work, the reader learns that the characters may experience either danger or celebratory fellowship. Of the two options, danger is the subject that is personified by the work's most memorable and prominent character.

When the Attendant Spirit first describes Comus' dangerous arts, he focuses upon the effects of his "orient liquor in a Crystal Glasse" (65). Comus entices weary travelers with his potions, which change all those who imbibe the liquid into monstrous beings. The Spirit has knowledge of Comus' powers over weary travelers and explains,

> (For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst)
> Soon as the Potion works, their human count'nance,
> Th'express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
> Into som brutish form of Woolf, or Bear,
> Or Ounce, or Tiger, Hog, or bearded Goat,
> All other parts remaining as they were,
> And they, so perfect is their misery,
> Not once perceive their foul disfigurement. (68-75)

Comus' potion has two distinct effects upon the human travelers: first, there is a physical transformation that results in a debasement of their "resemblance of the gods." By succumbing to their baser desires, they are transformed into the baser creatures. Their external appearances merely reflect the change that has been wrought on their internal beings, which have succumbed to depravity. The second change effected by drinking the potion is the debasement of mental perception or acuity. The change, shown by the travelers' inability to recognize their disfigurement, is a result of physical desire

overwhelming virtuous reason. The concept is so important to the Attendant Spirit that he restates the danger when he addresses the two brothers. He warns again,

> Within the navil of the hideous Wood,
> Immur'd in cypress shades a Sorcerer dwels
> Of *Bacchus*, and of *Circe* born, great *Comus*,
> Deep skill'd in all his mothers witcheries,
> And here to every thirsty wanderer,
> By sly enticement gives his banefull cup,
> With many murmurs mixt, whose pleasing poison
> The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
> And the inglorious likenes of a beast
> Fixes instead, unmoulding reasons mintage
> Character'd in the face. (520-30)

In both accounts, Comus' unsuspecting victims transform into monstrous creatures who are half-man and half-beast. The Spirit goes on to tell how Comus "and his monstrous rout are heard to howl / Like stabl'd wolves, or tigers at their prey" (533-34). Once they fall victim to Comus' magic, the metamorphosed beings become parties to Comus' sinister deeds. They all partake in

> Doing abhorred rites to *Hecate*
> In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
> Yet have they many baits, and guilefull spells
> To inveigle and invite th'unwary sense
> Of them that pass unweeting by the way. (535-39)

As the Attendant Spirit goes on to describe the dangers of the forest, he does not differentiate between Comus and those who have succumbed to his potion. They are all of the same depraved and monstrous mindset, intent on falling upon new prey. Thus, the members of the court of Comus are thoroughly indoctrinated with Comus' program and agenda. In a Puritan reading of the text, the metamorphoses of the members of Comus' court could reflect their decline into carnality; however, in the post-Restoration context of *A Mask*'s 1673 publication, the threat is similar to the lycanthropy described and subsequently cautioned by Marvell. Anglican polemic and anti-dissent propaganda, as designed by Robert L'Estrange and Samuel Parker, was designed not only to produce active participation in the persecution of nonconformists but also to discourage any defection from the Church of England's conformity.[82] The Attendant Spirit warns, "Yet have they many baits, and guilefull spells" (537). This line implies that those who have been ensnared by Comus now use his methods to ensnare others. Significantly, it takes an almost sacramental act of drinking Comus' potion for those who hear his words and believe to transform into lycanthropic beasts. The way in which the unsuspecting travelers conform to Comus' wishes re-engages Milton's Laudian imagery; and in this way, *A Mask* interacts with the post-Restoration debates over nonconformity and cautions against both the doctrines and ceremonies of complicit conformity.

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[82] While nonconformist authors were focusing on the "heart of the man," mainstream dramatists and court poets of the Restoration were moving towards the expression of proper social mores that were to be imitated and valued; see Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 214.

Ministers and parishioners who did not prescribe to all of the Church of England's Thirty-Nine Articles because of tender consciences still faced the dilemma of deciding between complete nonconformity and occasional conformity. The more radical Quakers, General Baptists, and Antinomians rejected most of the Anglican Church settlement, including what they considered to be extra-biblical ceremonies; however, some Presbyterians and Independents rejected merely the ecclesiastical government of prelacy or certain liturgical accoutrements.[83] Some of these occasional conformists would take communion at their parish church and later attend doctrinal sermons at a gathered church. Richard Baxter's *Sacrilegious Desertion* (1672) debates the question of occasional conformity and the use of the King's Indulgence at the height of the debate. Baxter asks,

> What if any number of persons as good as you, shall think that the *Liturgie* is guilty of all the *Disorders* and *Defects* which once were charged on it, and of some Doctrinal Corruptions since: And what if they think that the Parish Churches are void of Christs true Discipline, and are under an Alien, one which they judge

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[83] For a history of separatism (Brownists) and occasion conformity (Jacobites) see Watts, *Dissenters*, 26-29 and 53-56; 94-105. For a brief discussion of Quaker theology, see ibid., 188-210. After the Act of September 1660 re-establishing the Episcopal church settlement, many pre-Restoration occasional conformists (Jacobites) were forced to become separatists (Brownists) (ibid. 217). This blurred the lines between the different dissenting sects and the terms *dissenter* , *nonconformist*, and *free-churchmen* began to be the appellations used for Particular Baptists, General Baptists, Independents, and Congregationalists (ibid. 1-6).

> unlawful. What if they say that yet your Churches may be true Churches, and all this may be submitted to, when we can have and do no better[?][84]

Baxter's answers to these questions reflect his desire for a comprehensive religious settlement which could encompass Presbyterianism. Seeing occasional conformity as a tool for evangelizing, he states,

> I suppose that most of the Nonconformists that live in Country Parishes which have good Ministers of their own, will not call themselves a distinct Church (totally) but will hold their meetings as *Chappel-Meetings* are held . . . [and] will keep all loving correspondence with them, and seasonably sometimes Communicate with them, to shew their principles by their practice.[85]

Baxter makes a case for occasional conformity which many radical nonconformists would eschew as a slippery slope. The Independent John Owen cautioned against occasional conformity because it could lead to religious error. In *A Discourse Concerning Evangelical Love, Church-Peace and Unity*, Owen counters the stance held by Baxter. He explains, "Some would prescribe this *Measure* unto us, that we should *occasionally joyn with Parish Assemblies* as now stated in all their worship and sacred Administrations; but will not require of us that we should absolutely forbear all other ways and means of our own Edification."[86] Owen goes on to warn that "the *Difficulty*

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[84] Baxter, *Sacrilegious Desertion*, 14-15.

[85] Ibid., 15-16.

[86] John Owen, *A Discourse Concerning Evangelical Love, Church-Peace and Unity* (London, 1672), 14-15.

will be increased . . . [and] we may expect justly to be pressed severely to answer, why we do *no more*. For others say immediately, that our Attendance on the publick Worship must be *constant*, with a forbearance of all other ways of Religious worship." Owen begins to ground his argument on the idea that such a compromise would be "a perpetual *dissimulation* of our Judgments."[87] Hence Owen's refrain becomes "Truth with Peace."[88] Owen is articulating the nonconformist stance against Episcopal Arminianism which relegated the burden of sin caused by any dogmatic errors in the established religion to the magistrate and ruler rather than laying the fault on the faithful laity.[89] Owen believes that conformity to what he sees as superstition would require nonconformists to act against their Spirit-guided consciences and reason. Despite his generally amicable tone, Owen takes a hard line against the Church of England's inventions.[90] For Owen,

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[87] Ibid., 15.

[88] Ibid., 19.

[89] Marvell also addresses this concern in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, see *CPW*, 1:93-110. Parker's argument was that "if there be any sin in the Command [of the Church], he that imposed shall answer for it, and not whose duty it is to obey" (100). Marvell counters by suggesting that this would lead to "sanctified Villany."

[90] See Owen, *A Discourse Concerning Evangelical Love*, 59. While recounting the history of invented doctrines in which the Church of England is participating, Owen alludes to the days when "the Men had not yet found out those things which were the *Causes of Differences* in after-Ages, and which yet continue so to be" (ibid.). Owen uses language suitable for Comus' rout; he writes, "Where there was any difference, it was for

occasional conformity is like Comus' "monstrous rout" who have "unmold[ed] reasons mintage" (29) with their participation in Comus' "abhorred rites" (535).

The dangers to nonconformity represented by the ceremonial practices of Comus and his rout are highlighted elsewhere in *A Mask*. As seen in the Attendant Spirit's speeches quoted above, both Comus' rhetoric and his "orient liquor" are understood to have dangerous allurements and work together to entrap and transform travelers, much the same way that Owen implicates both Anglican doctrine and ceremony. This theme is continued in the Lady's speeches after it has been revealed that she has been deceived by Comus. Like the Attendant Spirit, the Lady lists Comus' verbal and physical powers in tandem:

> false traitor,
> 'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
> That thou has banish't from thy tongue with lies,
> Was this the cottage, and the safe abode
> Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
> These oughly-headed Monsters? Mercy guard me!
> Hence with thy brew'd inchantments, foul deceiver,
> Hast thou betrai'd my credulous innocence
> With visor'd falshood, and base forgery,

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the most part on the account of some noysom foolish *Phantastical Opinions*, vented by Imposters, in direct opposition to the Scripture, which generality of Christians did with one consent abhor" (ibid.).

> And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
>
> With lickerish baits fit to ensnare a brute? (690-700)

As the Lady's speech alternates between exposing Comus' falsehoods and rejecting his potions, she expresses contempt for the simplicities of his allurements, which are fit only for unlettered brutes—those who are not capable of discernment. The Lady admits that she has erred once in naively believing Comus; however, she consciously refuses to err again in the practical matter. The Lady's speech impugns those who give in to Comus' snares with both doctrinal and practical transgressions, the former directly flowing from the latter. This line of argument is also used by Marvell in his rebuttal against Parker's justification of conformity in all of the Church of England's sacramental acts. Nonconformists argued that performing sacraments which they saw as "indifferent" according to the law of scripture was turning an error of doctrine into an error of discipline. Marvell reiterates this concern within the madness trope. He suggests,

> the transforming of things, at best indifferent, into necessary points of practice, hath been of as ill consequence. And (to reform a little of my seriousness) I shall not let this pass without taking notice that you Mr. [Parker], being the most extravagant person in this matter that ever I heard of, as I have shown, you are mad.[91]

The conflation of belief and practice in the Lady's retort against Comus carries the same tone as Marvell's imputation against Parker. They both believe that two wrongs do not make a right. However, the Lady's expression of dissent does not end the debate. Like

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[91] Ibid., 153.

the polemical debate that raged in the late 1660s and the early 1670s, she and Comus participate in an elaborate rhetorical contest which remains mostly unresolved. The Lady experiences a prolonged trial of her virtue until her Brothers, aided by the Attendant Spirit, rush into Comus' lair in an effort to defend and rescue her.

Danger's Remedy

Since Comus and his court read as topical representations of the dangers facing nonconformists, it stands to reason that his counterpart, the Attendant Spirit, would function as a representation of the defenders of nonconformity in such a reading of *A Mask*. Part of Comus' lycanthropic aspect is that he mystically transforms himself, moving from the wolf to the habit of the shepherd. However, as pointed out above, this transformation only serves to deceive the Lady, who has been wandering the woods without guidance and instruction. The reader, and later the two Brothers, have the benefit of instruction given by the Attendant Spirit.

Similar to the children's position mentioned above, the Attendant Spirit has a dual nature. He is both a servant to God and a servant to man. Following his opening monologue, he puts "off / These my skie robes spun out of Iris Wooff, / And take the Weeds and likenes of a Swain, / That to the service of this house belongs" (82-85). In the habit of the shepherd Thyrsis, the Spirit is able to assist the Children in their trials and journey.[92] Harkening back to the ecclesiastical satire in *Lycidas*, the Attendant Spirit is

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[92] Milton uses the conventional pastoral name Thyrsis elsewhere in *Poems 1673*; see *Epitaphium Damonis*.

performing the task of the "faithful Herdman." Acting as a cautionary and an instructional voice, the Spirit is a foil to Comus' position as one of the corrupted clergy.

While the reader might expect the Spirit's assistance to manifest itself in a mystical form, throughout *A Mask* the Spirit's primary source of power comes from his experience as a shepherd. In his first address to the Brothers, the Spirit explains that he has learned of the threat of Comus while "Tending my flocks hard by i'th hilly crofts" (531). Making little reference to his spiritual origins, the Attendant Spirit becomes more and more an emblem of the biblical Good Shepherd, distinctly in opposition to Comus' wolf in sheep's clothing. As Thyrsis, whose "smooth-dittied Song, / Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar, / And hush the waving Woods" (86-87) and who has experience hunting the "pilfering Woolf" (504), the Spirit's words are inspired and backed by his experience as a shepherd. While some of the knowledge used to instruct the Brothers comes from Thyrsis' own experience as a shepherd, other essential knowledge is gained through the broader community of shepherds. For example, the knowledge of the haemony root's powers to counteract Comus' enchantments is learned from "a certain Shepherd Lad / Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd / In every virtuous plant and healing herb" (619-21). As the Spirit explains, "here thy sword can do thee little stead, / Farr other arms, and other weapons must / Be those that quell the might of hellish charms" (611-13). Since physical violence is not an option for the Brothers, the Spirit's pastoral knowledge becomes essential for facing the threat of Comus. This is the first example of a community's discourse being used to fortify itself against an outside danger. Another example is when Comus has escaped with his wand. The Brothers and the Spirit do not have the physical strength or mystical powers to release the

Lady; however, the Spirit once again has communal knowledge which gives agency to his words. He states,

> Yet stay, be not disturb'd, now I bethink me,
>
> Som other means I have which may be us'd,
>
> Which once of Meliboeus old I learnt
>
> The soothest Shepherd that ere pip't on plains. (820-23)

The story of Sabrina has been passed down from the old shepherd to the Spirit, and it is through this communal knowledge that Sabrina is evoked and the Lady is eventually freed from Comus' throne. Therefore, in the guise of the "faithful Herdman," the Attendant Spirit acts as a font of instruction and encouragement to the besieged and at times discouraged children. In a similar way, nonconformist ministers, as in the case of Joseph Alleine's prison letters, addressed the dangers facing their flocks by sharing their own experiences or by recommending speech-acts which would help encourage and calm their troubled flocks in times of distress. Their experiences of persecution could be transformed into shared experiences which were disseminated among the nonconformist community. As a result the emotional and spiritual trials experienced by Alleine and other imprisoned ministers became sources of catharsis during emotional times.

CHAPTER V

THE PSALMS TRANSLATIONS AND THE EMOTIONS OF IDENTITY AND DOCTRINE

> "If thou seest that evill men lay snares for thee, and therefore desirest Gods eares to heare thy prayer, sing the 5. psalme."
>
> – *A Treatise made by Athanasius the Great*

In one of his letters written to the "*Flock of God* in Tauntan," Joseph Alleine begins with one of his typical refrains: "I Am now a Prisoner of the Lord for you *Gentiles*."[1] Like so many of his other letters, he instructs his congregation on how to live a life of holiness while beset by trials and surrounded by what he sees as ungodliness. He reminds his reader that "we may now cry out as the *Psalmist*, in his complaint, *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my Glory into shame? Ps.* 4.2."[2] For Alleine, the psalm works as a dynamic speech-act. On one level, it is an act of personal devotion. More specifically, it is a speech-act wherein the speaker aligns his personal spiritual agenda with that of God's. The person who recites this psalm identifies with the affront to holiness felt by the psalmist and by God; thus, the "sons of men," though perhaps in the majority, are categorized as the true "others." On another level, Alleine is presenting this psalm as a speech-act that can be a rallying call to a group of believers. Since Alleine is suggesting that this psalm should be read by his entire flock, the psalm

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[1] Joseph Alleine, *Christian Letters, Full of Spiritual Instructions* (London: Neville Simmons, 1673), 57.

[2] Ibid., 58.

works as a common emotional focal point. Alleine, who is writing from "the common gaol at Juelchester," or Ilchester, continually attempts to console his congregation in their times of distress.[3] Earlier in the same letter he writes that he has "sent these few Lines, to beseech you by these Bonds which I gladly endure for your sakes, to hold forth, and hold fast the profession of your Faith without wavering."[4] With justifiable cause to complain or lament, both Alleine and his congregation are apt to experience emotions which would transgress their moral belief systems. Achinstein explains that depression was a major concern among imprisoned nonconformists. She describes the harsh reality of seventeenth-century imprisonment:

> Present were the dangers of maltreatment, physical abuse, loneliness, harassment, humiliation, starvation, gaol-fever, plague, or smallpox. Families as well as individuals suffered: bouts in prison could mean the loss of a household's income. The psychological consequences of imprisonment were debilitating: the loss of public presence, social esteem, and personal agency.[5]

Since nonconformists believed that they were called to suffer for Christ, depression was counterintuitive to their belief system. Joy was the biblically appropriate response, exemplified by the often imprisoned Apostle Paul; therefore, Alleine utilizes and

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[3] Ibid., 60. The letter is dated 3 December 1663, which during Alleine's first jail sentence for breaking the Act of Uniformity by continuing to preach after St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662.

[4] Ibid., 57.

[5] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 61.

recommends the singing of psalms to alleviate negative emotions.[6] In the case of this psalm suggested by Alleine, the recitation provides a biblical precedent for emotional vehemence in which Alleine and his congregation can take part. Thus, when Alleine suggests that his flock read Psalm 4, he is choosing from a biblical commonplace of cathartic speech-acts that were useful to embattled post-Restoration nonconformists.

The psalms have had an established place in Protestant English worship from the beginning of its development in England. They were among the first pieces of the Bible translated into English, and they were among the first vernacular translations accepted by the established church. Therefore, it is hard to label any particular psalm as principally nonconformist. Rather, the psalms have been tools used for worship, polemic, and education by England's broad Protestant base. In fact, other than the various Bible translations used during the seventeenth century, the psalms were most widely accessed through a single text which dominated in English Protestant worship for over 150 years: *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (1562), known commonly as the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter.[7] Throughout the seventeenth century, this book was used both by Arminian

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[6] See Acts 16.23-34. Paul and Silas are beaten and imprisoned only to spend the night singing and praising God, which results in the conversion of their jailor and his family, which, in turn, results in more rejoicing.

[7] For the history of psalms and psalters during this period, see Hannibal Hamlin, *Psalm Culture and Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Hamlin traces the rise of the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter and explains the various responses to it.

Anglicans and Calvinist Presbyterians as well as various Independents.[8] Consequently, the same psalm could be used as a speech-act by the majority of the Protestant collective: Anglican, Presbyterian, or Independent. The fact that the psalms were used collectively as a commonplace book for Christianity is exemplified in a document that was often appended to the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter. *A Treatise made by Athanasius the Great* appeared as a paratext to editions of the psalter in the early seventeenth century.[9] The text gave suggestions on how best to utilize the psalms. For instance, the text suggested singing Psalm 1 if "thou wouldest at any time describe a blessed man" or singing either Psalm 6 or 88 if "thou feelest Gods dreadfull threats, and seest thy selfe afraid of them."[10] These types of collective emotional outlets were exactly what post-Restoration nonconformists would have been attempting to access in their use of the psalms.

While metrical and verse translations of psalms were widely accessible to all Protestants, post-Restoration nonconformists may have been using the psalms in ways different than Anglican worshipers. After the Restoration, the singing of psalms in the

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[8] Ibid., 29-41. Hamlin examines the peculiarities of how various psalters were bound. Owners would customize their worship texts to suit their particular theological leanings. Inscriptions and paratextual materials reveal a wide range of ownership over the cultural spectrum of England.

[9] Ibid., 29-30.

[10] "A Treatise made by Athanasius the Great," in Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins, *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (London: The Stationers Company, 1619), A2^{r}.

Anglican service became more professional. Anglican Chant, in which a trained choir or soloist performs the musical segments of the liturgy, began to replace congregational singing.[11] Most nonconformist meetings rejected this trend. As seen in the last chapter, nonconformist services were often informal and domesticated because of the enforcement of the penal laws. The psalms had been sung domestically throughout the Reformation and afterwards, so nonconformists were not developing a new form of worship to support their nonconformity; rather, they were participating in a long-held Reformation tradition believed to be established by the early Church fathers.[12] For nonconformists, the singing of psalms could be both an act of religious dissent and an act of conservation. While Anglican services returned to the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1662 under the Act of Uniformity, some nonconformists still used the liturgical handbooks of the Interregnum for their ecclesiastical direction. For example, although it was a product of the authoritarian Presbyterian Church of the 1640s, some Independents joined the Presbyterians in using the services prescribed by the Westminster Assembly's *Directory for Publike Worship of God* (1644).[13] In "Of Singing of Psalms," the final section of the *Directory*, worshipers are told,

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[11] Hamlin, *Psalm Culture*, 32-33.

[12] Ibid., 4.

[13] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 30. Nonconformists wanted to avoid the "Popish" ceremonies of the Anglican liturgy, such as kneeling and other "superstitions" which were banned in the *Directory*.

> It is the duty of Christians to praise God publikely by singing of Psalms together in the Congregation, and also privately in the Family. . . . That the whole Congregation may joyn herein, every one that can read is to have a Psalm book, and all others not disabled by age, or otherwise, are to be exhorted to learn to read.[14]

In this passage, the Puritan emphasis on education and reading derives from their desire to build a community of worshipers who can experience individual devotion as well as a shared cathartic effect, and it is with these uses in mind, that the psalms of *Poems 1673*, may be read as a post-Restoration text.

Milton had a high regard for the affective nature of the poetics of the Bible. Earlier in his life, he wrote in *Reason of Church-Government* (1642) that within the scriptures can be found examples of the highest forms of literature: lyric, pastoral, tragedy, and epic.[15] For example, he writes, "the Apocalyps of Saint *John* is the majestic image of a high and stately Tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn Scenes and Acts with a sevenfold *Chorus* of halleluja's and harping symphonies."[16] However, it is the psalms of the Old Testament that Milton sees the utmost potential for a transformative performance utterance. He writes,

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[14] *A Directory for Publike Worship of God Throughout the Three Kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland* (Edinburgh: Evan Tyler, 1645), 64-65.

[15] *CPW*, 1:813-18.

[16] Ibid., 1:815.

> But those frequent songs throughout the law and prophets beyond all these . . . appear over all the kinds of Lyrick poesy, to be incomparable. These abilities, wheresover they be found, are the inspired guift of God rarely bestow'd . . . and are the power beside the office of a pulpit, to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of vertu, and publick civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune, to celebrate in glorious and lofty Hymns the throne and equipage of Gods Almightinesse, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his Church, to sing the victorious agonies of Martyrs and Saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious Nations doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ, to deplore the general relapses of Kingdoms and States from justice and Gods true worship.[17]

Beyond the ability of the psalms to instill virtue, Milton sees them as a source for catharsis. The psalms "set the affections in right tune" and they turn agony into "victorious agonies of Martyrs and Saints." Milton had already linked together the act of catharsis and his Restoration poetry in his introduction to tragedy for *Samson Agonistes* (1671). Citing the opinion of Aristotle, Milton focuses on the ability of some poetry to be grave, moral, and profitable. He explains that tragedy has the power to raise "pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of those and such like passions, that is to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirr'd up by reading or seeing those passions well imitated."[18] Milton is specifically advocating for tragic drama; however,

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[17] Ibid., 1:816-17.

[18] *CSP*, 461.

the tenets of tragedy—the inclusion of "sadness and gravity" and the exclusion of "Comic stuff—are the same tenets he praised in the lyric poems of the Bible in *Reason of Church-Government*. The psalms of *Poems 1673* meet the requirements of being grave, moral, and profitable, and readers of the psalms would have found "such like passions" clearly invoked by the Psalmists. In fact, as Dobranski notices, with the inclusion of the headnote dating, the first psalm section "reads like a poet's diary."[19] With the added fact that the majority of the psalms are laments, Milton himself may have originally intended the psalms as a cathartic release during the emotionally trying times of the 1650s, when he was experiencing the diminishment of his eyesight and sensing his republican government collapse around him.[20] As the final English poems in *Poems 1673*, the psalms are the last outlet for the emotional feelings of rejection and failure depicted in the sonnet sequence as well as the anxieties evoked by the wolfish and monstrous threats depicted in the pastoral section with *Lycidas* and *A Mask*.

The inclusion of a final cathartic section in nonconformist literature is conventional for the period. For instance, following the various depictions of imprisonment, illness, and death in *The Life and Death of Mr. Joseph Alleine*, there is a careful focusing of emotional release prescribed by George Newton in Alleine's funeral sermon, which serves as the final textual component in the volume. Newton preaches upon Luke 23.28, and asks, "What Subject fitter for this sad Occasion, then a Theam of

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[19] Stephen B. Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 170.

[20] Ibid., 174.

Weeping? what Language can we better speak, or more agreeable to the dark Providence that we are under, then Sighs, and Cries and Lamentations?"[21] Early in the sermon, the death of Alleine is substituted for the plight of nonconformists as the object to be mourned. Newton's agenda "is not wholly to suppress, but to rectifie [the mourners'] sorrow." Newton makes two observations on grief: "The first, *That it is not unlawful nor unfit sometimes to express our grief in tears*. The second, *That we are very* [a]*bject to misplace our grief, and to mistake the ground and object with the first*."[22] The implication of the sermon is that the sorrow felt with the death of Alleine—and by extension the persecution of nonconformists—should not be internalized or self-indulgent. Rather, a proper cathartic release should be lamenting for the state of the fallen and unrepentant world. Likewise, Milton's psalm translations focus the emotions and anxieties elicited by *Poems 1673* into biblically ordained outlets, which consolidate nonconformist identity and reinforce nonconformist ideology.

Psalms 1-8

The psalm sequence of *Poems 1673* is divided into two distinct sections: Psalms 1-8 and Psalms 80-88. Although the text frequently refers to the dates for the psalms' composition, the text does not strictly adhere to the chronology created by their various

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[21] *Life and Death*, *A2^{r}. The sermon begins with new signatures and pagination. Luke 23.28 states," Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children" (*KJV*).

[22] *Life and Death*, *A4^{r}.

headnotes. Instead, Milton presents the seventeen psalms in biblical order, a convention used in the many psalters compiled during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The headnote to Psalm 1 reads "*PSAL. I. Done into Verse,* 1653."[23] The next seven psalms expound upon the temporality of the works and, in the case of Psalm 2, the experimental prosody. Psalm 2 reads, "*PSAL. II. Done* Aug. 8. 1653. *Terzetti.*"[24] Psalm 1 may have an earlier date of composition than Psalm 2 since the exact day is not specified by the text; however, it is likely that it was composed along with the others in the series. Psalms 3-8 show a gradual process of composition ending with both 7 and 8 being done "*Aug.* 14. 1653."[25] The date for the writing of these psalms has attracted attention by scholars interested in Milton's emotional and biographical connections to his poetry.[26] As one critic suggests, this was a "time of depression for Milton."[27] During these days, Milton was experiencing personal and public losses. He was suffering from

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[23] *Poems 1673*, I1^{v}.

[24] Ibid., I2^{r}.

[25] Ibid., I5^{v} and I6^{r}.

[26] In addition to Lewalski, *Milton*, 269-99 and Hamlin, *Psalm Culture*, 140-44, Christopher Hill remarks on the dating of the psalms, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), 382-83. See also William Riley Parker, *Milton: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 1.429-31; and John T. Shawcross, *John Milton: The Self and the World* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 164.

[27] Hamlin, *Psalm Culture*, 140.

complete blindness, and the government in which he had invested so much of his time was collapsing.[28] Lewalski suggests:

> [Psalms 1-8] may reflect [Milton's] hopes, however qualified, for the Nominated Parliament, whose composition might seem to be indicated in one Miltonic line—"Nor sinners [abide] in th'assembly of just men." Another theme, the suffering, beleaguered psalmist's cry for God's protection against slandering enemies, resonates with Milton's sense of his own situation, grieving, weak, under attack by enemies but confident of God's deliverance: "Lord how many are my foes."[29]

Post-Restoration readers may have been able to make this biographical connection to the author's life due to their memory of their country's recent past, but, even if not, they could recognize a poet endeavoring to create a form of catharsis. The result of Milton's poetical response to this historicized moment is a series psalm translations in which each varies in metrical form. Milton uses rhymed iambic pentameter, the aforementioned *terza rima*, and other complicated stanzaic patterns in his first section of psalms. This poetical experimentation places Psalms 1-8 categorically into the psalm tradition established by Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke's experimental psalm

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[28] See Lewalski, *Milton*, 296-99. In the spring of 1653, to the dismay of republicans the Rump parliament was dissolved by Cromwell, and a nominated parliament, commonly called the "Barebones" after Praisegod Barebones, was established in its place.

[29] Lewalski, *Milton*, 298.

translations.[30] The metrical variety and the attempt at emotional catharsis are characteristics of a literary endeavor that utilizes the type of inspiration often linked with dangerous enthusiasm in post-Restoration criticism.

As seen above in Marvell's reading of *Paradise Lost*, radical poetics could be equated with radical agendas. In many ways, Psalms 1-8 foreshadows the "dangerous" poetics of *Paradise Lost*. Hannibal Hamlin recognizes in these psalms "an example of Milton's mature prosody, with an extensive use of enjambment, caesuras occurring early in the line, with frequent metrical substitutions (reversed feet for rhetorical emphasis)."[31] Furthermore, Milton's subject matter is not merely biblical but scriptural, and, as in *Paradise Lost*, Milton takes liberties with the text, silently adding in words, phrases, and emphases not found in the original Hebrew.[32] The combined result is an inspired, scriptural speech-act which incorporates emotional catharsis that is not limited to the 1653 moment of its composition. Psalms 1-8 are effective speech-acts in their moment of publication because they reach out as a rallying cry to castigated and emotionally depressed nonconformists in 1673.

Like *A Mask*, Psalms 1-8 feature the embattled traveler. In Psalm 3, the psalmist asks, "Lord how many are my foes[?]" (3.1).[33] Once again, the assaults on the just

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[30] See ibid., 638n110 and Hamlin, *Psalm Culture*, 140.

[31] Hamlin, *Psalm Culture*, 141.

[32] Ibid., 142-44 and Lewalski, *Milton*, 298.

[33] For the psalms, citations will be provided parenthetically with the psalm number followed by the line numbers.

believer come in a liminal space through which the speaker progresses physically and emotionally. The psalmist moves between states of waking and sleeping, and he blurs the lines between physical suffering and mental suffering. The psalmist states,

> I lay and slept, I wak'd again,
>
> For my sustain
>
> Was the Lord. Of many millions
>
> The populous rout
>
> I fear not though incamping round about
>
> They pitch against me their Pavillions. (3.13-18)

Since the psalmist is beset by trials while waking and sleeping, his suffering is not merely physical. In fact, loneliness seems to be the more dangerous cause of his isolation rather than a lack of physical protection and safety implied by the military imagery. Here, as in *A Mask*, there is distinction between the "populous rout" and the just. Using some of the same terminology, the first series of psalms highlight a just person's progression through a fallen world. Like the children sojourners of *A Mask*, Psalm 1 presents a blessed man, who is set apart from the erring majority. In fact, his blessings originate in his dissent from that majority. Prior to the listing any of his virtuous attributes, Psalm 1 states,

> Bless'd is the man who hath *not* walk'd astray
>
> In counsel of the wicked, and ith' way
>
> Of sinners hath *not* stood, and in the seat
>
> Of scorners hath *not* sate. (emphases mine) (1.1-4)

The repetition of the various activities in which the blessed man does not participate is a reminder of his nonconformity. However, in this opposition between the blessed man and

the sinful majority, the sinful majority initially is given almost a position of legal and political superiority. The terms *council* and *seat* connote the gathering of law makers or the judgment seat of a legal proceeding, which is reiterated in the final lines of the psalm. Early in the poem, these types of proceedings are not condoned by any heavenly power; thus, the blessed person becomes a conscientious objector. From this position of nonconformity, the psalm sets up a dichotomy by which divine justice may be properly assigned away from the unrighteous courts of the majority. For the post-Restoration nonconformists who were being penalized with imprisonment or heavy fines, such a promise of justice was reassuring.

Implicit in Psalm 1's description of the blessed person are instructions for coping with the earthly trials brought on by the Clarendon Code. It explains that "*Jehovahs* Law is ever his delight, / And in his Law he studies day and night" (1.5-6). This insight into God's law is reassuring in the face of earthly, flawed laws, which nonconformists felt could be capricious. The psalmist describes God as the author and judge of a code of law that is unerring. In the divine court of God, the tables are turned. The former nonconformists are now justified in their dissent, and the sinners have lost their place as lawmakers and judges. The psalmist now suggests,

> so the wicked shall not stand
> In [judgment], or abide their tryal then,
> Nor sinners in th'assembly of just men.
> For the Lord knows th' upright way of the just,
> And the way of bad men to ruine must. (1.12-16)

Psalm 1 establishes a theme for the first series of poems by looking forward to the day when God will take on the role of judge as presented in the Book of Revelations. In Psalm 7, the psalmist yearns for God to be his judge rather than other people. He states,

> Lord my God if I have thought
>
> Or done this, if wickedness
>
> Be in my hands, if I have wrought
>
> Ill to him that meant me peace,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Let th' enemy pursue my soul. (7.7-10, 13)

The psalmist is seeking assurance that he has acted righteously. Like many post-Restoration nonconformists who were experiencing prison or persecution, the psalmist wants to know if his persecutions are the result of his own sin or the sinful actions of other people. Determining the cause of their suffering was a component of the emotional and existential crises experienced by nonconformists.

The assignment of blame was a step in finding emotional resolution for imprisoned or penalized religious dissenters. Achinstein explains that guilt and hope were often "twinned in the prisoner's heart."[34] Richard Baxter's sermons from early in the Restoration often focus upon repentance of past iniquities and failures: such as seeking too much earthly power during the days of the interregnum or allowing the commonwealth to fail.[35] Only after nonconformists had repented of their true past sins

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[34] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 63.

[35] Ibid.

could they seek righteous justification in their current situations. Thus, repentance and "righteous" judgment were important idioms of nonconformist prison writing.

A clean conscience allowed nonconformists to turn their trials into platforms from which to declare their innocence and indict their persecutors.[36] Such was the case with the Quaker husband and wife, George Fox and Margaret Fell, who both were imprisoned multiple times for not observing the Conventicle Act. They turned their court testimonies into dissenting religious testimonies that were made "official" by their roles in official court proceedings. Joseph Alleine also used his trial as a pulpit to justify his dissent and to promote his religion. Prior to facing his accusers, his wife records him telling his fellow imprisoned ministers, "The Eyes of God and Angels are upon you, and the eyes of Men are upon you; now you will be critically observed. Every one will be looking that you should be more Holy than others, that are called forth to this his glorious Dignity, to be the Witnesses of Christ Jesus, with the loss of your Liberties."[37] For Alleine, God and the angels are positioned as the superior judges to those of man though both will make

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[36] See Keeble, *Nonconfomity*, 52-53; also, Achinstein, *Dissent*, 59-83. During the seventeenth century, judicial trials became public forums open to the scrutiny of the general population. Often, as the jury was passing "judgment" on the accused, the public was judging the legality of the court proceedings—such was the case with the trial of Charles I, which Parliament presented to the public in printed transcripts, and the public trial of John Lilburne; see Sharon Achinstein, *Milton and the Revolutionary Reader* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 29-30, 42-58.

[37] *Life and Death*, 66.

judgments. The psalmist in Psalm 7 sees the same predicament and asks for a similar platform from which to declare his innocence. He demands,

> Judge me Lord, be judge in this
> According to my righteousness
> And the innocence which is
> Upon me: cause at length to cease
> Of evil men the wickedness
> And their power that do amiss. (7.31-36)

The psalmist—like Alleine and many other authors of nonconformist testimonials—exudes confidence in the propriety of his actions and the eventual justification by God because, in the heavenly law courts of God, the elect regain a position of agency and justification directly flowing from God's power.

Nonconformists used such biblical reassurances as these psalms—or the story of the New Testament martyr Stephen—because they believed they were living in a time of irrational depravity in which they were incapable of being judged fairly.[38] The trial scene that follows Alleine's exhortation to "be the Witnesses of Christ Jesus" depicts Alleine's judges as being overwhelmed with irrational anger and sinful emotions. Theodosia Alleine writes,

> And yet they accused him of being at a *Riotous Assembly*, though there were not Threats, nor dangerous Words, no Staves, nor Weapons . . . Here he was much

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[38] See ibid.; Alleine is compared to "the Martyr Stephen" who pitied those who stoned him (Acts 7.54-58).

> abused, receiving many scorns and scoffs from the Justices, and their Associates, who were met to hear his Examination, also from the Ladies and other Gentlemen, who called him often Rogue, and told him, he deserved to be Hang'd, . . . With many such like scurrilous Passages, which my Husband received with much patience.[39]

Alleine's trial scene is almost riotous in its nature; judges and bystanders mix together with acerbic taunts founded on prejudice rather than forensic evidence. Alleine comes close to experiencing the events depicted in *Pilgrim's Progress*, when at Vanity Fair, Christian and Faithful are accosted and "tried" by a riotous mob of reprobate jurors, resulting in a lynch-mob execution of Faithful.

Nonconformist literature is filled with depictions of reprobate juries and irrationally depraved judges. For example, John Griffith, a General Baptist preacher imprisoned in Newgate, composed a 150-page poem as a response to his imprisonment. He wrote his poem—aptly called *Some Prison Meditations and Experiences* (1663)—especially for other nonconformists, who also were suffering similar persecutions. His preface states,

> I have in this Poem rudely scattered here and there some of those MEDITATIONS and EXPERIENCES, that God hath been pleased to visit my Soul with; the which I present to view, and comment to the serious thoughts of all

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[39] *Life and Death*, 67.

> the Faithful, but more particularly, to that Remnant and chosen ones to whom I stand more immediately and particularly related in the bonds of the Gospel.[40]

By alluding to the "bonds of the Gospel," Griffith implies a double meaning. He is referencing the biblical beatitude promising suffering to the righteous; therefore, his readership consists of those who wear prison bonds like himself.[41] He also implies that his readership—the types of people who are suffering under the Clarendon Code—are bound together by a common and truly Biblical religious stance, one opposed to the Anglican ecclesiastical courts.[42] For this specific readership, Griffith presents his poem as a means of comfort and instruction. The "experiences" alluded to by his title and in preface are descriptions of his particular response to his imprisonment. The "meditations" are often verse translations or paraphrases of biblical passages along with exegetical analysis of those pieces of scripture. Griffith presents the scriptural meditations as a biblical antidote to an emotional crisis. He explains,

> It's matter of comfort to the Lords poor despised people, in a dark day, that he is pleased not to leave his nothing-ones (that either have or do suffer any thing for

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[40] John Griffith, *Some Prison Meditations and Experiences* (London, 1663), A3^{v}.

[41] See *KJV*, Matthew 5.11-12: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

[42] See Griffith, *Some Prison Meditations and Experiences*, 1. Griffith satirically addresses the Anglican Bishops as "their Worships" in his poem.

> the sake of blessed Jesus) without some signal tokens of his comforting and strengthening-presence with them, by which they are in a good measure kept from fainting, and that he doth seal up instruction to their souls, leading them to the Rivers of pleasures, causing them to drink deep of his Love and Free-Grace in his dear Son.[43]

Like *A Mask*, and to some extent *Lycidas*, Griffith's words utilize biblical pastoralism by making allusion to the "Rivers of pleasure," which obviously flow through a fallen and dangerous world. Though his landscape is dark and dangerous, he has the consolation of his faith and confidence in its ability to ease his mental condition if not his physical condition. Also like *A Mask*, *Lycidas*, and the above psalms—as well as in Alleine's trial narrative—there is an ever-present opposition to Griffith's faith. In his poem he presents the Anglican authorities as the conductors of unjust law courts. It begins by describing his bewilderment in what he sees as illegal action:

> As I in Prison lie, I sometimes muse
> What should the reason be they me so use
> That they contrary unto *Law & Reason*,
> Should keep me here in *Jayle* so *long a season*,
> No *crime* or *charge against me* can *they* lay,
> Yet I *shall lye in Prison still*, they say.[44]

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[43] Ibid., $A2^{r}$-$A2^{v}$.

[44] Ibid., 1.1-6.

Griffith's layered poetry suggests that the magistrate's rationale is contrary to divine reason and, therefore, irrational. Seeing no just cause for the actions taken against him, Griffith's poem purports his innocence and indicts the authorities. He inevitably presents his actions as holy and any contrary stance as wicked:

(they say) I am a Preacher,
And of *Phanatiques* am a constant Teacher;
And therefore 'tis they me in Prison hold,
Unless I would be wickedly so bold
To promise them that I will preach no more,
Then will they me to liberty restore;
If I'll conform, then they will shew me favor,
Methinks to me these things have no good savor.[45]

These lines continue on his theme of rationality. He shows that it only seems to be a reasonable decision to conform and gain his liberty. Like many nonconformists, who tended to lose much of their worldly possessions while in prison, Griffith must find a reason for why he has refused to conform to the Church of England's Thirty-Nine Articles as required by the Act of Uniformity. He has rejected the lures of financial security of a ministerial position within the post-Restoration religious settlement; therefore, he takes great care to expound upon the differences between the worldly fool,

[45] Ibid., 2.

concerned with temporal gains, and a fool for "precious Jesus," concerned with heavenly rewards.[46] Griffith writes,

> I were a fool indeed if for a trifle
>
> I should so much my Conscience wrack and rifle
>
> Of all that consolation, joy and peace,
>
> And in a moment cause it all to cease.[47]

Griffith redefines the meaning of rationality and irrationality within the parameters of nonconformity and gives nonconformists the morally superior position. That is why much of Griffith's poem is dedicated to providing, as the subtitle to his poem suggests, "*Some Hints touching the Fall of the Mother of Harlots, and the exaltation of the Son of God upon the Throne of David.*" The latter half of the poem uses the biblical metaphor of the Whore of Babylon to attack Rome, and, by extension, the Episcopal Church of England, which uses "all their *Romish* stuff, / their dross and scum."[48] Thus, Griffith's

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[46] Ibid., 8.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., 10. See also Achsah Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Guibbory shows that, throughout the seventeenth century, anti-ceremonialist Puritans used the Whore of Babylon metaphor to present the ecclesiastical rites of the Laudian church as lewd and indecent. Puritans believed that the "worship of God ha[d] no need of the bodily, material garments of ceremony, which threaten to obscure or contaminate its spiritual purity" (ibid. 19). Guibbory's chapter "John Milton: Carnal Idolatry and the

poem, like Milton's Psalm 1, presents the dominant ecclesiastical and legal system that is capable of making legal decisions on earth as unsubstantial, temporary, and irrational when compared to the heavenly king, whom he sees as his means for ultimate justification. What is more, Griffith incorporates the text of Psalm 2 in his own poem to express his hope in a more substantial kingdom yet to come. His translation begins, "*The Heathen rage, / Vain things imagine; . . . / God sits in Heav'n, and hath them in derision.*"[49] Milton's Psalm 2 naturally shares the same theme and can be used as a similar kind of speech-act condemning a temporal persecutor. Milton's psalm begins by questioning the rationality of governments that take a hard line against the just:

> Why do the Gentiles tumult, and the Nations
>
> muse a vain thing, the Kings of th' earth upstand
>
> With power, and Princes in their Congregations
>
> Lay deep their plots together through each Land,
>
> Against the Lord and his Messiah dear. (2.1-5)

Reconfiguration of Worship, part I, 1634-1660," presents Milton's use of this metaphor in *A Mask* and *Lycidas*.

[49] Ibid., 137. Griffith translates all of Psalm 2 as well as some other similarly themed psalms. He follows them with some exegesis aiming metaphorical vengeance upon the corrupted church (ibid. 137-43).

Here, the plotting is not done by seditious sectaries, but, instead, by governments of men, which are obsessed with hollow vanities and temporal power.[50] After relegating the power of temporal governments to mere insurrection, the psalm continues to deconstruct the power of rebellious nations. Milton has placed the seat of true power and rationality not on earth but with him "who in Heaven doeth dwell" (2.8). From this heavenly vantage point, the temporal powers of earth not only seem rebellious but also are absurd. The psalm states that God "[s]hall laugh, [and] the Lord shall scoff" at the nations (2.9).

As Milton's Psalm 2 progresses, it taps into the fervor similar to that of the Fifth Monarchists' religious and political hopes from the mid-seventeenth century. At times, it comes close to championing an earthly reign of Christ in favor of various depraved monarchies. Milton's language mirrors the ordination of the Son in *Paradise Lost*.[51] Through the psalmist's words, the Father states,

> [I] anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
> On Sion my holi' hill. A firm decree
> I will declare: the Lord to me hath say'd
> Thou are my Son I have begotten thee
> This day; ask of me, and the grant is made;

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[50] These themes are repeated throughout the first series of psalms. In Psalm 4, the "Great Ones" of the world tend "to love vanity, / To love, to seek, to prize / Things false and vain and nothing else but lies" (4.10-12). In Psalm 5, these vanities have led to rebellions against God (5.29-32).

[51] See *PL*, 5.600-15 and 3.56-371. See also, Hamlin, *Psalm Culture*, 142.

As thy possession I on thee bestow

Th' Heathen, and as thy conquest to be sway'd

Earths utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low

With Iron Scepter bruis'd, and them disperse

Like to a potters vessel shiver'd so. (2.12-21)

Griffith's explication of these lines in his poem provides a typical post-Restoration nonconformist reading of Psalm 2; his reading looks forward to a future, post-apocalypse dispensation which places Jesus as the world's highest monarch rather than a millennial dispensation in which God's kingdom on earth is in the process of being established or already established.[52] This reading invalidates present governments in favor of God's future governance. Griffith argues that the psalm does not refer to David, Solomon, or any other temporal King, but rather to the time "[w]hen Saints shal reign with Christ triumphantlie!"[53] Griffith shows that this psalm was a source for the promise of restitution as well as revenge for the persecutions of post-Restoration nonconformists. While Milton's Psalm 2 does promise judgment for those who have misused their power, it does not quite culminate in a truly Fifth-Monarchist revolution. Instead, its promise to nonconformists is much more immediate: "Happy all those who have in him their stay" (28).

Interestingly, the reward emphasized at the end of Milton's Psalm 2 is not political or ecclesiastical agency. Instead, the ultimate reward is an emotional state specific to the

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[52] See Watts, *Dissenters*, 241-42; Achinstein, *Dissent*, 102-07.

[53] Griffith., *Some Prison Meditations and Experiences*, 142.

individual rather than a harmonious state of government or social tranquility. The happiness promised by Milton's psalm can be experienced in this world today from the prison cell to the meeting house merely by pronouncing and by dwelling upon the vengeance and violence, which *will* come to the unjust. Elsewhere in the psalms, similar cathartic effects are promised or implied. Such is the case in Psalm 4. The psalm begins with the psalmist in "straights and in distress" (4.3), but the speaker eventually experiences an emotional rest:

> In peace at once will I
> Both lay me down and sleep
> For thou alone dost keep
> Me safe where ere I lie
> As in a rocky Cell.
> Thou Lord alone in safety mak'st me dwell. (4.37-42)

By incorporating the image of a cell, the psalm connects with an imprisoned readership and promises a cathartic process that does not require a change in physical location but instead promises an emotional change provided by God that eases the burdens of the his persecuted followers. In fact, the recitation of the psalms work in a way that is similar to the musical interludes and songs sung by either the Attendant Spirit or the Lady in *A Mask.* When the cause seemed all but lost, the Attendant Spirit prefaces his invocation of Sabrina by saying, "In hard besetting need, this will I try / And adde the power of som adjuring verse" (8.57-58).

Although their often irregular verse patterns make them difficult to sing, Psalms 1-9 are verses written for use in a darkened landscape, similar to the wolf-inhabited

landscapes of the biblical pastoralism in *Lycidas* and *A Mask*, and their usefulness to nonconformists consists in their cathartic and meditative qualities. On the other hand, Psalms 80-88 extend their usefulness beyond the imprisoned individual to entire groups.

Psalms 80-88

Compared to Psalms 1-8, the second section of psalms is far more regularized and conservative. The paratext for Psalms 80-88 reveals a composition date prior to Psalms 1-8. The nine psalms share a common headnote which states, "April. 1648. J.M. | *Nine of the Psalms done into Metre, wherein all but what is in a different Character, are the very words of the Text, translated from the Original.*"[54] As with the first series of psalms, the paratext draws the reader's attention towards the personal and occasional nature of the poems as well as to their form and content. The meter that Milton refers to is the "common meter"—made conventional for psalms by the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter.[55] As suggested by the headnote's dating, Milton began this series of psalm translations when the Westminster Assembly had reconstituted a committee that was to work on a revision to Francis Rous' metrical version of the psalms in order to replace the Sternhold and Hopkins.[56] The date could suggest that Milton intended these psalms for inclusion in a new Puritan psalter.

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[54] *Poems 1673*, I8[r].

[55] Common meter is alternating tetrameter and trimeter with lines 1 and 3 and lines 2 and 4 rhyming.

[56] Stella P. Revard, ed., *CSP*, 324n3.

As mentioned above, post-Restoration nonconformists did not have a monopoly on the use of psalms. Many English Protestants turned to the psalms as a spiritual commonplace book as well as means of advancing their polemic. In fact, there were other disenfranchised groups, who attempted to appropriate the psalms for their ecclesiastical and polemical aims during the seventeenth century. Throughout the Interregnum, the Old Testament captivity idiom often expressed in the psalms was appropriated by royalists and Episcopalians, who themselves had been ejected from their livings by Puritan and Independent divines. Attesting to the commonplace nature of biblical stories, and especially the psalms, Paula Loscocco reveals that the "story of Israelite defeat at the hands of the Babylonians became the narrative of choice for writers seeking to make sense of—and polemical hay from—political and cultural catastrophe."[57] Exilic psalms, such as Psalm 137, were used by high-church Anglicans as reminders of the discarded "traditional" forms of English worship, notably the liturgical ceremonies found in the *Book of Common Prayer*.[58] Throughout the 1640s and 1650s, Puritans and Episcopalians

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[57] Paula Loscocco, "Royalist Reclamation of Psalmic Song in 1650s England," *Renaissance Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (2011): 528.

[58] See *KJV*, Psalm 137.1-3, which reads, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us [required of us] mirth, saying, Sing us [one] of the songs of Zion." The psalm incorporates nostalgia for a lost liturgy / "song" and rejects the new captive

fought a literary battle over the appropriation of psalms. Some royalist poets—such as Jeremy Taylor with *The Psalter of David* (1655), led on by the example set by Charles I's *Eikon Basilike* (1649), attempted to re-appropriate Puritan psalm culture for their own ecclesiastical and political goals. Loscocco writes,

> It is poetry that advances the polemical project . . . a project in which Puritan metrical psalms were claimed as royalist property by means of set-form prayers (in Taylor and the *Eikon*) whose implicit prosody (in the *Eikon*) justified their partisan re-presentation as psalmic poetry and song.[59]

As set-form prayers, these Anglican psalms of the 1650s acted as liturgical substitutes for the banned *Book of Common Prayer.* Since psalters and psalms were some of the few texts that still were part of Puritan worship, they were a means by which to insert suppressed Anglican polemic back into the ecclesiastical discourse of the Interregnum. These Anglican psalms utilized simplistic language and the common meter, so, as Jeremy Taylor blatantly states, they could be read by any "Childe or an ignorant Woman . . . [who] need[s] milk, not strong meat."[60] These psalms were designed to promote a brand

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"song." Loscocco suggests the psalm anticipates a return to the old ways and promotes "cultural survival," see Loscocco, "Royalist Reclamation," 528.

[59] Ibid., 524.

[60] Quoted in ibid., 530. Taylor is referencing two groups commonly considered to possess limited literacy skills; in doing so, Taylor emphasizes the linguistic simplicity in which he wants the psalms to be translated as well as the theological simplicity of the

of Laudian Arminianism in which the act of reciting the psalm would bring grace down upon the reader, whose ignorance and depravity would otherwise hinder a spiritual encounter with God. While Milton's Psalms 80-88 are written in the approachable and familiar common meter, they contain anything but simplistic language or the mere milk of religious study. Their presentation within text of *Poems 1673* imposes deeper inquiry into the complexities of their biblical source.

The headnote, typographical layout, and glosses of Psalms 80-88 reflect Milton's attention to the original Hebrew as well as the Puritan emphasis on *sola scriptura*. As noted above, the headnote promises a literal translation in spite of the meter and rhyme required by lyrical poetics. Unlike the first series of psalms, the portions of the text appearing in "different Character"—i.e. italics—is revealed to be strictly Milton's poetic additions. In this way, Psalms 80-88 follow the convention used by the editors of the Authorized Version, where the use of italics allows readers to discern original scripture from human adjustments. Although the psalms are not free from polemic, their assertion is that they are free from inconspicuous extra-biblical polemic. The reader understands that Scripture must be studied in order for its meaning to be revealed. The idea is emphasized by Milton himself later in the volume when, in *Of Education*, he writes "the Hebrew tongue at a set hour might have been gain'd, that the Scriptures may be now read

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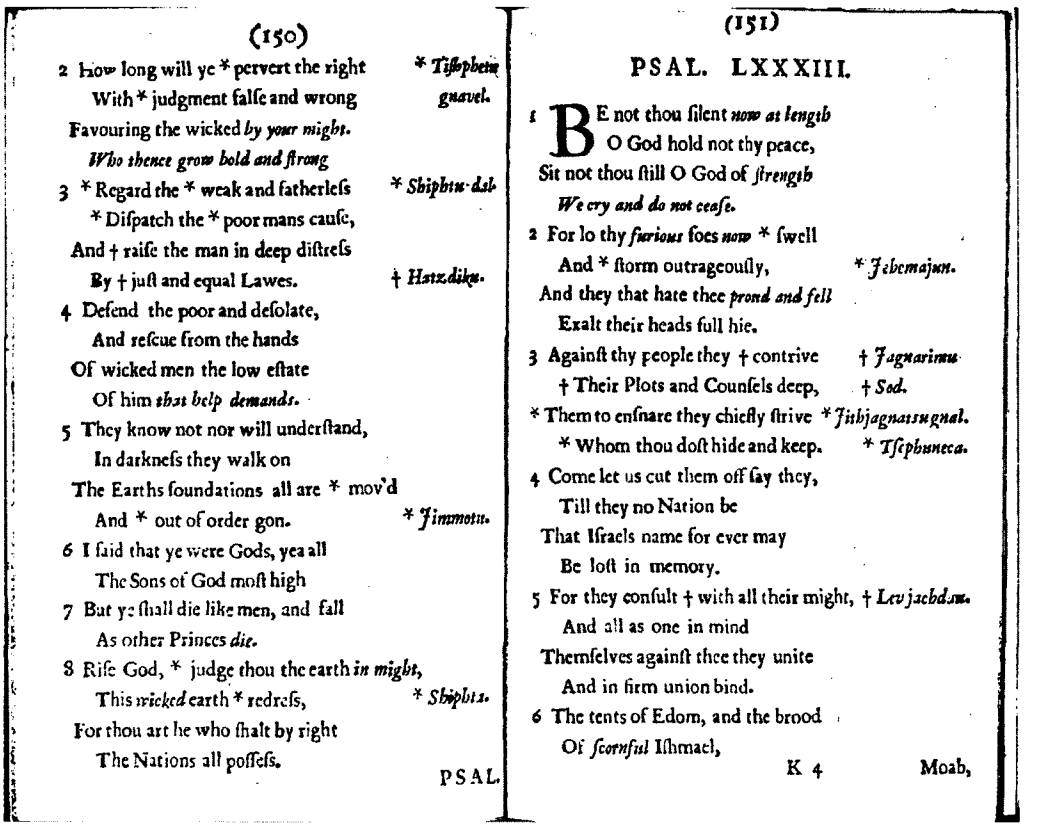
content. Taylor's prejudicial statement reveals his interest in the indoctrination of the "masses" not necessarily the education of "critical" thinkers.



(150)

2 How long will ye * pervert the right * *Tiſhphetu*
With * judgment falſe and wrong *gnavel.*
Favouring the wicked *by your might.*
Who thence grow bold and ſtrong
3 * Regard the * weak and fatherleſs * *Shiphtu dal.*
* Diſpatch the * poor mans cauſe,
And † raiſe the man in deep diſtreſs
By † juſt and equal Lawes. † *Hatzdiku.*
4 Defend the poor and deſolate,
And reſcue from the hands
Of wicked men the low eſtate
Of him *that help demands.*
5 They know not nor will underſtand,
In darkneſs they walk on
The Earths foundations all are * mov'd
And * out of order gon. * *Jimmotu.*
6 I ſaid that ye were Gods, yea all
The Sons of God moſt high
7 But ye ſhall die like men, and fall
As other Princes *die.*
8 Riſe God, * judge thou the earth *in might,*
This *wicked* earth * redreſs, * *Shiphtza.*
For thou art he who ſhalt by right
The Nations all poſſeſs.

PSAL.

(151)

PSAL. LXXXIII.

1 BE not thou ſilent *now at length*
O God hold not thy peace,
Sit not thou ſtill O God of *ſtrength*
We cry and do not ceaſe.
2 For lo thy *furious* foes *now* * ſwell
And * ſtorm outrageouſly, * *Jehemajun.*
And they that hate thee *prond and fell*
Exalt their heads full hie.
3 Againſt thy people they † contrive † *Jagnarimu*
† Their Plots and Counſels deep, † *Sod.*
* Them to enſnare they chiefly ſtrive * *Jithjagnatsugnal.*
* Whom thou doſt hide and keep. * *Tſiphuneca.*
4 Come let us cut them off ſay they,
Till they no Nation be
That Iſraels name for ever may
Be loſt in memory.
5 For they conſult † with all their might, † *Levjachdau.*
And all as one in mind
Themſelves againſt thee they unite
And in firm union bind.
6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
Of *ſcornful* Iſhmael,

K 4 Moab,

Figure 4. Psalm 82 and 83 with Marginal Glosses on the Hebrew. Wing (M2161) Copy from Henry Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

in their own originall."[61] This type of studious inquiry is possible with Psalms 80-88 because they are adorned with a paratextual accoutrement not found on any of the other texts in *Poems 1673*. They include marginal glosses for the Hebrew (see **Figure 4**). When Milton translates a word liberally, he includes a corrective gloss providing the original Hebrew word; although, the glosses themselves are at times imperfect.[62] This paratextual anomaly in *Poems 1673* transforms the final portion of Milton's vernacular poems into an almost didactic text that is doctrinally opposed to the ceremonialism found in the set-form liturgy of the Restored Church of England.

Arminianism had become the dominant doctrinal theology of the Church of England during the late 1620s and 1630s and contributed to the reactionary fervor of the Puritan Revolution during the 1640s. Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609), a member of the Dutch Protestant Church, articulated a strong theological counterargument to John Calvin's assertion that the world was divided into two groups: the elect of God, who were predestined for salvation, and the reprobate, who, without God's limited grace, were predestined for Hell. Arminius' beliefs, which came to be known as Arminianism, posited that God had given universal grace to mankind and that man had the freewill to obtain or to reject salvation. As Nicholas Tyacke explains,

> Arminianism in England emerged with an additional, sacramental dimension to that in the United Provinces. Arminius was read with approval by anti-Calvinists in England but adapted to the local situation. English Arminians came to balance

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[61] *CPW*, 2:400.

[62] See Revard, ed., *CSP*, 324-37.

> their rejection of the arbitrary grace of predestination with a new found source of grace freely available in the sacraments, which Calvinists had belittled. Hence the preoccupation under Archbishop Laud with altars and private confession before receiving communion, as well as a belief in the absolute necessity of baptism.[63]

For Archbishop Laud the outward performance of worship was symbolic of inner belief; therefore, the images, ceremonies, and vestments of high-church liturgy, which stimulated the body, provided greater spiritual stimulation for the soul, which was connected to the body. As a sociopolitical bonus, the ceremonial conformity of Laudian Arminianism created a strong sense of community for those who participated in its liturgy and services. As Achsah Guibbory explains, Laudian Arminianism was a conservative force on English society by strengthening existing power structures. Guibbory writes,

> With its focus on the body, which bears the marks of class, gender, and wealth, ceremonial religion perhaps inevitably reinforces social hierarchy. Intertwined with absolutist politics, the increased attention to ceremony in the earlier seventeenth century was conservative response to a sense that the sociopolitical order was under stress. Obedience and order in worship, reverence, and submission, could encourage those qualities in the political and socioeconomic

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[63] Nicholas Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c. 1530-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 141. For a brief but thorough history and definition of Arminianism in England see, Tyacke, "Chapter 5: Puritanism, Arminianism, and Counter-Revolution," 132-59, and "Appendix: Defining Arminianism," 156-59.

> spheres. . . .The goal was not only confirmation of a particular political order but reconstruction of a communal, "corporate Christianity" such as had existed in England before the Reformation.[64]

As early seventeenth-century Puritans and post-Restoration nonconformists were rejecting the theological premises behind the ceremonies of the Laudian church, they were also rejecting the community which the participation in these ceremonies provided. Consequently, Puritans and subsequently post-Restoration nonconformists found new sources of communal interaction; the "Word of God" was one such focal point. The manner in which Psalms 80-88 emphasizes the original Hebrew coincides with this need for a communal space to gather and to worship in the biblical text. In this location, the individual inspiration of the Holy Spirit could be shared through exhortative exegesis. Thus, the textual glosses and emphasis on original source gives individual believers a regularized and inclusive experience focused on God's word rather than man's inventions.

Beyond their emphasis on the Bible rather than liturgy, Psalms 80-88 enforces the positions of nonconformists who were opposed to the ceremonialism found in the doctrines of the Restored Church of England. While Laudian Arminianism was inclusive to all those who participated in the Church of England's ceremonies, its exclusivity lay within its sacerdotal leanings because sacramental grace could only be administered by an elite group of people, the ordained clergy. As a result, seventeenth-century nonconformity, both before and after the Civil Wars, contained anti-ceremonial

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[64] Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton*, 20-21.

sentiments as well as anti-clerical sentiments.[65] For example, in order to quell the resurgence of Laudian Arminiansim, some post-Restoration nonconformist polemicists traced its role as one of the unnecessary causes of social tension leading up to the Civil Wars. In *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, Marvell gives a prolonged account of the rise of Laudian Arminianism. He suggests that, in the time before the wars, the episcopacy used Arminianism to infringe upon the rights—and purse-strings—of Englishmen. Furthermore, he critiques the arbitrary worship prescribed by the liturgy as being superficial. All throughout his history, Marvell interweaves anti-ceremonial and anti-clerical sentiments directly connected to doctrinal issues:

> And the Calvinists were all studiously discountenanced, and none but an Arminian was judg'd capable and qualified for imployment in the Church. . . . So that those who were of understanding in those dayes, tell me, that a man would wonder to have heard their kind of preaching. How instead of practical Doctrine [i.e. Calvinism] which tends to the reforming of mens Lives and Manners, all their Sermons were a very Mash of Arminian Subtilties, of Ceremonies, and Decency . . . brew'd together[.] . . . And though there needed nothing more to make them unacceptable to the sober part of the Nation, yet moreover they were exceeding *pragmatical*, so intolerably ambitious, and so desperately proud, that scarce any Gentleman might come near the Tayle of their Mules. . . . [H]ow natural it is for

[65] Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton*, 18.

men to desire to be in Office; and no less natural to grow proud and intractable in Office, and the less a Clergy-man is so, the more he deserves to be commended.[66]

Marvell's interpretation of the rise of Laudian Arminianism suggests that the "tyranny" of Charles I's reign had its beginnings in the ambitions of the episcopacy. His ecclesiastical history is interwoven with martial images. The transition to Arminianism reads like a military conquest rather than an ideological shift. He states that the "Kingdom was turned into a Prison" and that it was "endued with that captivity."[67] Furthermore, conformity to the liturgical services is likened to the fines and ransoms placed on the captives of war. Lamenting the "war-torn" state of his nation, Marvell exclaims,

> What Censures, what Excommunications, what Deprivations, what Imprisonments? I cannot represent the misery and desolation . . . many thousands of his Majesties Subjects, to his and the Nations great loss, thought themselves constrained to seek another habitation; and every Country, even though it were among Savages and Caniballs, appear'd more hospitiable to them than their own.[68]

As in times of war, the ideological shift of the Church of England creates hostile living conditions and eventually refugees. Having described the rise of Laudian Arminiansim as an almost military maneuver, the English Civil Wars seem more like a counter-

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[66] *PWM*, 1:190-91.

[67] Ibid., 1:188.

[68] Ibid., 1:189.

offensive rather than a revolutionary uprising. Marvell's purpose is to use this ecclesiastical history as warning to Samuel Parker and other post-Restoration promoters of High Church Episcopacy, whose ambition and need for religious conformity is beginning again a cycle of ideological captivity and, perhaps, eventually civil war. Even though Marvell is often hyperbolic and satirical in his history, his concern was justified because these doctrinal tensions still existed after the Restoration.

Doctrinal as well as ecclesiastical differences continued to disassociate nonconformists from the Church of England. Many nonconformists wanted to return to an emphasis on the "priesthood of the individual believer." They, therefore, continued to educate their laity rather than rely upon the ceremonies of an extra-biblical liturgy, so the laity might eat "meat" rather than "milk." For example, after the Act of Uniformity had ejected Joseph Alleine from his living, his most prominent activity was catechism. As indicated above, Alleine's biography emphasizes its importance to him and relates his perseverance in promoting education as a pathway to salvation.[69] In one letter "to the Unconverted" of Tauntan, we writes,

> Many among you remain under the power of Ignorance: Ah! How often have I told you the dangerous, yea, damnable estate that such are in. . . . I have told you often, and now tell you again, God must be false in his Word, if ever you be saved without being brought out of the state of ignorance: If ever you enter in at the

[69] See above, Chapter 3, 85-95.

> door of Heaven, it must be by the Key of Knowledge, you cannot be saved, except you be brought to the knowledge of the Truth.[70]

Alleine's doctrinal views preclude the idea that free grace can be given to all who participate in religious ceremony. Instead, it requires not only belief but also understanding. The use of set-form prayers and non-proved sacramental grace are among the proclivities of the uneducated and ignorant masses. In the same letter, Alleine directly rejects ceremonialism:

> Others have escaped the gross pollutions of the world, but stick in the form of Godliness, and content themselves with a negative Righteousness, that they are no Drunkards, nor Swearers, &c. or at best with an outward conformity to the duties of Religious, or some common workings, instead of a saving. O I am jealous for you that you should not lose the things that you have wrought, and miss your reward for want of sincerity.[71]

Alleine presents the "common workings" of conformable worship as being empty show "instead of a saving" grace. Without giving it a name, Alleine is disavowing Laudian Arminianism, and his answer for it, as stated above, is the "Key of Knowledge."

The doctrinal divide, which provokes Alleine's concern for learning and which is described in terms of military battle lines by Marvell, is given similar treatment in Psalms 80-88. It has already been shown that the psalms promote the kind of studious inquiry needed to replace the ceremonialism of Laudian Arminianism, but they also provide

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[70] Alleine, *Christian Letters*, 16.

[71] Ibid., 18.

encouragement to those held "captive" under its liturgy. While the first series of psalms work well as contemplative speech-acts for the individual sufferer, Psalms 80-88 are much more approachable by groups facing ideological pressures. Psalm 80 begins the second series with an invocation to God to attend to his flock:

Thou Shepherd that dost Israel *keep*
Give ear *in time of need,*
Who leadest like a flock of sheep
Thy loved Josephs seed,
That sitt'st between the Cherubs bright
Between their wings out-spread,
Shine forth, *and from thy cloud give light,*
And on our foes thy dread. (80.1-8)

The plural possessive in the eighth line makes the psalm a communal statement. Rather than a single imprisoned believer, this psalm features a nation beset by troubles. The common meter allows the invocation to be given by the group, not just a single spokesperson. The psalm laments their social status as an object of "strife . . . *and a prey* / To every neigbour foe" (25-26). Moreover, there is a suggestion that this beleaguered group has fallen from a position of honor or safety because the psalm's refrain looks back to more peaceful days. The psalmist asks God to "Turn us again, *thy grace divine* / *To us* O God *vouchsafe*" (80.13-14). Later, he pleads, "Return us, *and thy grace divine* / O God of Hosts *vouchsafe*" (80.29-30). Similar refrains are sung in lines 57-58 and 77-78. These lines would have resounded with the nonconformist congregations who had suffered social exclusion since the activation of the Clarendon Code. Dispersed and

meeting in small groups, they could remember the days of the Interregnum when many Presbyterian and Independent congregations held their services in prominent locations in their parishes and cities. This was a past that nonconformists did not want to forget but that the Church of England did. Nonconformists appropriated the mournful laments of the Old Testament to add continuity to their theological and social history. As the Clarendon Code sought to erase the memory of the religious radicalism of the Interregnum, nonconformists likened themselves unto the beleaguered Israelite nation in attempts to ease mental anguish and disappointment while also sustaining their memories of the past with biblical familiarity. It was a matter of psychological survival as well as ideological survival. The biblical stories of Israelite suffering were used as instructional narratives—at times emphasizing repentance, perseverance, holiness, or nonconformity. In his *Discourse Concerning Evangelical Love*, John Owen refers to Israel as precedence for his justified nonconformity. He reminds his reader,

> Such was the state of things in the Church of *Israel* of old, after the Defection under *Jeroboam*. It was no more a true Church nor any Church at all, by virtue of positive Institution: For they had neither *Priests*, nor *Sacrifices*, no any Ordinances of Publick worship, that God approved of. Hence it was the Duty of all that feared God in the *Ten Tribes*, not to joyn with the Leaders and Body of the People in their worship . . . Accordingly many of the most Zealous professors among them, with the *Priests* and *Levites*, and with a great Multitude of the People, openly separated from the Rest, and joined themselves unto Judah in the worship of God, continued therein. . . . In a like manner, . . . we are commanded

> *to come out from among them*, in open visible professed Separation, that we be not Partakers of their Sins and Plagues.[72]

Owen emphasizes the ecclesiastical oppositions found in the biblical history of Israel and Judah and projects his own polemical situation upon it, thus making it an illustration of his polemic. Imprisoned and socially-exiled nonconformists, realized that their own stories could be equally instructive to posterity. Achinstein explains, "What is important [for nonconformists] is that misery is recognized, given witness, that no one experience pain without record, without meaning. The fear is about the loss of memory that becomes equivalent to the denial of existential meaning."[73] Therefore, stories from *Exodus* and the *Book of Judges* along with the grief stricken language found in *Lamentations*, the *Book of Jeremiah*, and certain psalms were mimetic tools to be appropriated by nonconformists. These are the sources that gave existential meaning to the nonconformists' social exclusion. As Achinstein puts it, it was "through the framework of diasporic exile, and finding in the words of the Bible a divine, ongoing purpose, Dissenters could both make sense of recent events and name their place within history."[74] Many of Milton's psalms perform a similar role for nonconformist readers.

Psalm 83 contains many of the mimetic components that were necessary in this type of appropriation. It allows the biblical past to be combined with the post-

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[72] Owen, *Discourse Concerning Evangelical Love*, 72-73.

[73] Achinstein, *Dissent*, 75.

[74] Ibid., 75-76.

Restoration present in order to form a connection between nonconformist identity and the embattled "people of God." It is here that the psalmist describes his "*furious* foes,"

Against thy people they contrive
Their Plots and Counsels deep,
Them to ensnare they chiefly strive
Whom thou does hide and keep.
Come let us cut them off say they,
Till they no Nation be
That Israels name for ever may
Be lost in memory. (83.9-16)

The psalm emphasizes the dangers facing the social identity and memory of Israel. Furthermore, the dangers are couched in idioms used by nonconformists. As in the first series of psalms, *plots* and *councils* are the devices of those who are persecuting rather than those who are persecuted. In this psalm, like Comus in *A Mask* or the *lupus in fabula* found in *The Character of An Informer*, the enemy is subtle and strives to "ensnare" his prey. However, the emotional anxiety summoned by the dangers of the hostile landscape is eased by the reminder of God's protection. The secrecy of nonconformist meetings is justified when the psalmist states that God "does hide and keep" his people during times of danger. Almost half of Psalm 83 is dedicated to providing taxonomy of the enemies of Israel from Amalec and Ammon to Zeb and Zeba (20-48). The extensive list ends with a political agenda very similar to the accusations made by Marvell against the Restoration Anglican church settlement and the ambitions of the Episcopal agents, such as Samuel Parker:

For [Israel's enemies] *amidst their pride* have said

By right now shall we seize

Gods houses, and *will now invade*

Their stately Palaces. (83.45-48)

Because the enemies of Israel are presented as usurpers of Israel's religious and political establishment, this psalm becomes useful to nonconformist ministers and congregations, who had been ejected from their own places of worship and positions of authority by the Act of Uniformity. While meeting in small residences, woods, and fields, nonconformists could easily join in with the complaint that their religious houses had been "seized" by someone who had already "seized" their country's throne. Ultimately, these existential similarities allow nonconformists to read along with the psalmist's closing imprecatory lines, which call down figural apocalyptic fire (83.53-56) and catastrophic tempests (83.57-58) onto Israel's persecutors. In this way, this and the other psalms encourage ideological fortitude in the face of social pressure and prejudice. In Psalm 81, these types of ideological speech-acts are explicitly requested. The psalmist states,

To God our strength sing loud, *and clear*

Sing loud to God *our King*,

To Jacobs God, *that all may hear*

Loud acclamations ring. (81.1-4)

The subject matter for the song is to be the "Statute giv'n of old / For Israel *to observe* / A Law of Jacobs God, *to hold*" (81.13-15). Hence, the psalm provides a biblical imperative for conserving and promoting a doctrinal stance that is not fashionable or

popular. Furthermore, the psalm itself is a nonconformist speech-act because ideological survival is the theme of Psalm 81. The diasporic psalm engages the story of Israel's exodus from Egypt and explains that the statute that Israel must "observe" and "hold" predates the influence of Egyptian fashions and persecutions (81.19). The implication is that God's protection can uphold Israel's religious identity through another occupation; this implication could have been appropriated by post-Restoration nonconformists each time the Conventicle Act was passed. However, this appropriation necessitates a dichotomy of ideologies, where one belief system is given preference over another. Marvell was aware of this when he presented Arminianism as the invaders and the English Calvinists as captives. Similarly, for post-Restoration nonconformists attempting to live out their faith, the mandate for ideological perseverance requires an active faith in the "true" religion and a rejection of "false" religions. Here again Psalm 81 serves the nonconformist's purpose. The psalmist writes,

> Hear O my people, *heark'n well,*
>
> I testifie to thee
>
> *Thou antient flock of* Israel,
>
> If thou wilt list to mee,
>
> Through out the land of thy abode
>
> No alien God shall be
>
> Nor shalt thou to a forein God
>
> In honour bend thy knee. (81.33-40)

To those who do not abandon their doctrinal beliefs and traditions, the psalm promises ideological protection given directly by God, and, for those who are being oppressed,

God will "soon bring down their foes / That now so proudly rise" (81.57-58). However, God's protection is necessitated upon doctrinal purity, which was an issue that deeply concerned many nonconformists, as seen in John Owen's *Discourse Concerning Evangelical Love*.[75] Thus the psalm speaks again to nonconformists when it warns of Israel's doctrinal complacency:

> Then did I leave them to their will
>
> And to their wandering mind;
>
> Their own conceits they follow'd still
>
> Their own devices blind. (81.49-52)

The religious practices of those who stray from the purer doctrines are described as "conceits" and "devices." These words often were used in a negative sense by nonconformists to indicate extra-biblical doctrines and ceremonies. In *The Reasons of Christian Religion* (1667), Richard Baxter advises, "worship God according to His Holiness, and his Word, in Spirit and Truth, and not with Fopperies and Imagery according to our own devices which may dishonour him, and lead us to Idolatry."[76] Later in the same book, he writes, "Ignorance is the great cause of unbelief. This objection cometh from many errours, and false conceits about the things of which it speaketh."[77] For Baxter, ideological integrity is essential to salvation, and, conversely, ignorance is

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[75] See Chapter 4, 179-83, 182n90.

[76] Richard Baxter, *The Reasons of Christian Religion* (London, Fran. Titon, 1667), 224.

[77] Ibid., 406.

what leads to a breakdown in ideological integrity. Late in Psalm 81, there is an admonishment to Israel that iterates these concerns held by Baxter, Owen, and Alleine. The psalm states,

> O that my people would *be wise*
>
> *To* serve me *all their daies*,
>
> And O that Israel would *advise*
>
> *To* walk my *righteous* waies. (81.53-56)

Having remarked on the trials, persecution, and ideological captivity that Israel faced in their own history, the psalm simply encourages perseverance. As nonconformists faced their own trials, persecutions, and ideological captivity, they sought out such biblical assurances. Post-Restoration nonconformist readers of *Poems 1673*—remembering the uses of psalms suggested in the *Treatise made by Athanasius the Great* added to many of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalters—could recite the final portion of Milton's vernacular poems with this thought in mind: "If thine adversaries flock together on every side, & threaten to destroy the house of God, and make their conspiracies against thy Religion, let not their number and power trouble thee, for thou hast an anker of the worlds of the 83 psalme."[78]

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[78] "A Treatise made by Athanasius the Great," in Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins, *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (London: The Stationers Company, 1619), A4^{r}.

CONCLUSION

If, as Milton suggests in *Areopagitica*, "books are not absolutely dead things," then Milton's lyric poems—some close to a half century old by 1673—could still have been in the youth of their interpretive development. As both a republication of older material and also a new publication of never-before printed material, *Poems 1673* demands to be examined in its own cultural moment and in regard to its own readership. Sharon Achinstein has called for this type of critical investigation as part of a "renovated methodology for the history of reception."[1] This methodology incorporates critical inquiry not only of content but also of the material production of books and the ways in which contemporary readers consumed these texts. Achinstein describes a three-pronged approach for this methodology:

> [A] study of the ideological contexts in which the republication of an author bears meaning, a material history of that republication, and an analysis of how a range of readers made sense of a significant literary forbear. We are only just beginning to understand how major authors are chosen by successors who retroactively

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[1] Sharon Achinstein, "Reading George Herbert in the Restoration," *English Literary Renaissance* 36, no. 3 (2006): 464. In this article, Achinstein looks at the republication of George Herbert's *Temple* as "a lens through which to view the state of the Church through the contours of this turbulent century" (ibid. 465). Milton's *Poems 1645* and *Poems 1673* can additionally serve this purpose: one being an optimistic statement looking forward to revolutionary change and the other responding to the challenges caused by the failure of that ecclesiastical revolution.

> construct a legacy from them and how the facets of publication bear on those constructions. A robust history of reading needs to include the material as well as the ideological contours of reception.[2]

Unfortunately, there is little extant commentary describing how *Poems 1673* was received by its readers and which aspects of the material artifact was most appealing to consumers in 1673.[3] Nevertheless, *Poems 1673* would have had a distinct life during this contentious period of English literary history and would have been recognized as a product of a nonconformist poet. For example, shortly before the publication of *Poems 1673*, Milton's writing was categorized as nonconformist by a detractor of nonconformity. Moreover, the image of Milton summoned is not necessarily his polemical voice, or even his epic voice. In *The Mock-Elogie on the Funeral of Mr. Caryl* (1673), Milton is not merely a rebel polemicist but also a rebel elegist. In the poem, a satirist puts the nonconformist poet Robert Wild in competition with Milton for most rebellious verse. He writes,

> . . . [I]n Blasphemous *Elogies*,

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[2] Ibid., 464.

[3] See George Sherburn, *The Early Popularity of Milton's Minor Poems* (Chicago: University of Chicago Libraries, 1920). Sherburn attempts to investigate contemporary remarks on Milton's minor poems from *Poems 1645*, *Poems 1673*, and later editions. He uses contemporary records as well as anecdotal remarks from Milton's eighteenth-century biographers; thus, some of Sherburn's conclusions are contingent on hearsay.

[Wild] praises Rebels to the skies,

And *Milton's* hackney-*Pen* out-vies,

On their *Urnes* offering sacrifice.[4]

Though the connection made to nonconformist memorial poetry is a negative one, it is important to note that Milton's writing is being read as a voice in league with "*Presbyters, Sectarists, . . . / Quakers, . . .* and *J*[ohn] *O*[wen]."[5] Furthermore, the satirist suggests that Milton's authorial voice participates with the voices of other poets in the poetical memorializing of nonconformist sects and personalities. If this critical pathway was available to satirists attacking nonconformity, then conversely it would have been accessible to those writing and reading pro-dissent literature. This study has attempted to reconstruct this and other critical pathways available to post-Restoration readers of *Poems 1673* in order to expand the history of reception for Milton's minor poems in the cultural moment of the 1670s.

The previous chapters have examined this post-Restoration cultural moment with the intention of conceptualizing the idioms available to some English nonconformist readers, who were experiencing the effects of the Clarendon Code and who were engaged in the turbulent ecclesiastical polemical debates following the Restoration. The nonconformist readers depicted in the previous chapters were seeking cultural amelioration within a skeptical and prejudiced society tainted by years of civil violence and political upheaval. They were dealing with an existential crisis of wanting to be set

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[4] E. H., *The Mock-Elogie on the Funeral of Mr. Caryl* (London, 1673).

[5] Ibid.

apart yet not wanting to be seen as the seditious other. Responding to this need, nonconformist biographers—such as Richard Baxter and Theodosia Alleine—and other nonconformist writers depicted the providential hand of God working alike through nonconformist ministers, such as Joseph Alleine, and though lay people to rebuild society in productive and benevolent ways. Such reconstructive efforts attempted to regain and to justify the voice of nonconformity lost with the ejection of ministers after the Act of Uniformity. However, when ameliorative efforts failed and anti-dissent propaganda overwhelmed nonconformist apologetics to alienate nonconformists and to provoke social angst, nonconformist writers attempted to caution their congregations against the various dangers leveled against them by a strict penal code, which levied heavy fines and promised imprisonment to even the congregants of nonconformist meetings. The alienation and distrust fostered by the Conventicle Acts and vitriolic polemicists, like Samuel Parker and Robert L'Estrange, were personified in tales of government informers and licentious monsters preying upon God's people. Reversing the dichotomy of the Other placed upon religious dissenters, nonconformist writers used their cautionary efforts to instruct their readers to be mindful of cultural malevolence while at the same time giving encouragement by identifying them as a people group set apart. Furthermore, in the face of such dangers, persecutions, and trials, nonconformist writers sought to provide emotional catharsis to counter the social alienation and constant defeat felt by temporal disenfranchisement. Nonconformists turned to biblical examples of grief and pain and appropriated the psalms and laments of the Bible to express their own righteous suffering. In doing so, they transcended their own historical moment to create a sense of

community among all of God's persecuted peoples and found consolation in the possibility of heavenly rewards.

Within three of its primary divisions—the sonnet sequence (as shown in Chapter 3), the pastoral works (as shown in Chapter 4), and the Psalm translations (as shown in Chapter 5)—*Poems 1673* incorporates the images and idioms used in the ameliorative, cautionary, and exhortative efforts of post-Restoration nonconformist authors. Much like the *Life and Death of Joseph Alleine*, Milton's text becomes a monument for the experiences of nonconformity during a time when many such textual—and even non-textual—monuments were being constructed. When Charles II gave a Declaration of Indulgences in 1672, many nonconformists petitioned for licenses to preach and subsequently registered their nonconformity with the government. The following months were a time when many polemical tracts entered the market and nonconformist meeting houses were constructed all across the English countryside to allow for the coming together of English nonconformists.[6] These texts and buildings were constructed in hopes of strengthening the foothold of English nonconformity.

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[6] Keeble, *Nonconformity*, 75. For a brief period in 1672—from the Declaration of Indulgences to the reinstitution of a 1673 Test Act—buildings were constructed specifically for nonconformist church use, and congregations attempted to legitimize their religious practices by moving from domestic and natural settings to consecrated buildings.

Though outside the scope of this study, the construction and architecture of such buildings need to be examined as types of nonconformist speech-acts.

Milton's attentiveness to republishing his mid-century poetry and educational treatise—along with some other long-finished works: the *History of Britain* (1670), *Artis Logicae Plenior Institutio* (1672), and *Epistolarum Familiarium Liber Unus* (1674)—fortuitously corresponded with this moment in the history of English nonconformity. Milton and the nonconformists were active in the early 1670s in constructing a legacy and image that will outlive the moment. Milton was solidifying his credentials as a humanist scholar, who is concerned with instructing his nation on how to live rightly.[7] Furthermore, the subtly political—if not apolitical—nature of these works presents Milton not as the contentious defender of regicide and republicanism of the Interregnum but rather as a conscientious defender of virtue and religious liberty. By reaching back to the foundation text of *Poems 1645*, which announces Milton's poetical voice to his nation, and by adding to the text poems informed by the various trials associated with a life of service in the Puritan cause, Milton presents *Poems 1673* as a text that blends inspiration and conscience with the joys and disappointments experienced by many post-Restoration English religious nonconformists.

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[7] Joad Raymond, "The Restoration" in *Milton in Context*, edited by Stephen B. Dobranski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 468.

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