

RENOUNCING SEX AND THE SELF: ASCETICISM IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

BY

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Abstract

At first glance, it might seem that ascetic practices disappeared in England with the introduction of Protestantism. With the monasteries demolished, priests encouraged to marry, and the laity cautioned against superstitious practices of mortification, how can there be a cultural history of asceticism after the English Reformation? Asceticism is one attitude towards the relationship between body and soul. But that relationship conjures, and was read in the early modern period as implicating, other binaries: word and meaning; letter and spirit; form and content; material and immaterial; sign and signified. Since these binaries were in constant recalibration by early modern religion, poetry, aesthetics, and philosophy (to name but a few), asceticism remained not just current, but *exigent*. The ascetic privileging of soul over body, the ascetic refinement of the soul through bodily austerity, and the ascetic suspicion of carnality were invoked any time words were purged of fleshly connotations (the plain style), an elaborate formal process sought to perfect content (metaphysical poetry), materiality impeded the immaterial (Neoplatonism), and sign stood in uncertain relation to signified (scriptural exegesis). How asceticism negotiates body and soul has relevance to these other relationships, and they to it. Since, for instance, the dynamic tension between form and content, word and meaning, animates literature, the ascetic negotiation of body and soul directly impacts literary aesthetics. By recovering that impact, along with how ascetic attitudes inform other theological and philosophical discourses, I show the need for a cultural history of asceticism *after* the English Reformation.

A central aim of this project is furthermore to expose a degree of incommensurability between pre- and modern eras by recovering an ascetic subjectivity in all its challenging antipathy for modernity. In its anticipation of contemporary ideas about subjectivity, the body, and sexuality, early modern England has at times been made to look like a viable precursor to

modernity. In the pages of this study, however, self-respect was a Satanic impulse that had to be annihilated; the body was not celebrated, but beaten into subjection; and, feeling circumscribed by sexual desire, ascetics sought relief in pain, solitude, and deformity. More challenging still, this mental and physical deprivation was not just experienced but *embraced*, for asceticism also transvalues what defines beauty, pleasure, and the self. To study asceticism is, therefore, to reclaim a sense of the discrete historical particularity of early modernity.

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Introduction

Understanding asceticism is integral to understanding early modern culture. Recovering the cultural contest around it has implications for the way we understand early modern literature, politics, aesthetics, and religion: it allows us to see afresh the lines drawn (and blurred) between puritan and Anglican, court and anti-court cultures, and provides a new interpretive lens through which to view much of the period's expressive literature. Reading asceticism back into early modern culture enables this project to offer new interpretations of the work of John Milton, Andrew Marvell, and John Bunyan, along with many non-canonical authors; it allows for an intervention into the historiography of the early Stuart Church; and (among other things), it facilitates a new conception of what could constitute beauty in early modern culture.

At the heart of this dissertation is the novel historical claim that the Laudian Church valued corporal acts of severe asceticism, including virginity, mortification, and monasticism. The valuation was novel in post-Reformation England, and it directly challenged puritanism and the puritan conception of asceticism. Anglican asceticism found affirmation in patristic ascetic writing, anti-Calvinism, a general *détente* with the Roman Catholic Church, and, as we shall discuss at length, the “beauty of holiness” (Psalms 96:9). Severe forms of ascetic practice were depicted by Anglicans as a way of purifying—and therefore beautifying—the soul from the dross of carnality and sinful flesh. Though the chancels with sunbursts and lavish reredos of Laudian ceremony may seem diametrically opposed to the gaunt figures of emaciated ascetics, this project theorizes their intimate involution.

In contrast, for puritans asceticism was largely an interior, spiritual process that did not manifest itself in corporal acts. Moderate fasting was the most severe form of corporal asceticism the godly were able to countenance. Even then, as we shall see in chapter one, some

puritans try to conceive of fasting without the body. As a means of pacifying God's wrath, rigorous corporal acts were, as William Gouge (1575-1653) inveighs, "vile and abominable in Gods sight."¹ Puritan asceticism consisted of spiritual self-denial, not bodily self-deprivation. In the asceticism of the godly there is an avoidance of any corporal emphasis that might risk reifying a spiritual process in the idolatrous externality of the body. Virginity becomes, not a physical state perpetually maintained, but a holiness of soul whose sacrality can persist regardless of anatomical reality. The title of this dissertation alludes, therefore, to the Anglican conception of asceticism as corporal (renouncing sex) and the puritan as spiritual (renouncing the self). In the physicality of sex and the interiority of the self, these two modes of ascetic definition are expressed.

While this dissertation is, in some ways, a tale of two asceticisms, the narration of each will not be equal. I will focus on Anglican asceticism simply because it occasions and provokes the greatest cultural, religious, and literary response. For example, Anglican ascetic practice helped to mobilize—and radicalize—puritan objections to the Laudian Church in the years preceding the English Civil Wars. The Laudian view of asceticism—with its emphasis on the single life and the world-denying austerities of mortification and monasticism—cut to the quick of a fundamental institution of Reformed, and especially zealous, Protestantism: the sanctity of marriage. For puritans, marriage was a vocation, and the due benevolence it entailed was to be treated with all the joyous assiduity that its designation as a calling required. To place virginity above marriage, or to agitate for singleness as more appropriate to the holiness of the priesthood, was to detract from matrimony as, in the words of Thomas Becon, "the best kynde of lyfe."² In

¹ William Gouge, *Gods three arrowes plague, famine, svord, in three treatises* (London, 1631), 45. See also Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999), 142-50, for discussion of godly animus towards propitiatory corporal acts.

² Thomas Becon, *A new postil* (London, 1566), fo. 93^v.

the 1620s and 30s, the Archbishop of Canterbury advocating the “popish” idea of clerical celibacy, the indignity of holy marriage being referred to by Anglicans as a mere “avocation,” and the Church of England’s renewed effort to valorize monasticism (and, coincidentally, regain monastic lands alienated at the dissolution), directly challenged this life’s designation as “best.”³

Though the motivations for the Anglican Church embracing asceticism are various, three main points of origin will be useful to introduce. Anglicans sought precedent for many of their ascetic beliefs in the writings of the Church Fathers, especially Jerome and the Greek Fathers. In so doing, they plundered a corpus of ascetic writings that Protestants had, since the Reformation, often regarded with suspicion if not outright derision. Asceticism helped to effect, then, the intellectual coup the Laudian Church staged by shifting the intellectual energy of the English Church away from Geneva and Zurich to Alexandria and even Syria. In addition to patristicism, the Laudian emphasis on asceticism found corroboration in Arminianism. The belief that one could remain virginal, suppressing lust and carnal desire, exhibited a much more optimistic view of human nature and the will’s efficacy than Calvinists possessed. A more capacious sense of the will accords well with the anti-Calvinism Nicholas Tyacke has found central to Laudianism.⁴ To put it simply, for Anglicans, asceticism became a demonstration of the will’s power; for puritans, ascetic self-denial was a renunciation of the will. The pain that severe ascetic acts inflicted on the body manifested willpower; they flexed it manfully, with the index of their willfulness being the discomfort the acts produced. In contrast, before the unimaginable preponderance of an omnipotent God, puritan self-denial made the individual will-less, so that

³ John Cosin, *A collection of private deuotions* (London, 1627), sig. B10^v; see also Anthony Stafford, *The Femall Glory* (London, 1635), 149.

⁴ Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987).

“*Thy* will be done.” As Robert Bolton contends about the individual and God’s roles during mortification, “wee are as able to shake the foundation of the earth with our little finger, as to shake our sin by our owne strength.”⁵

The sacramental theology of anti-Calvinism produced the beauty of holiness that also strongly influenced Anglican asceticism. To many, the beauty of holiness may seem to contradict ascetic valuation. The Laudian Church was notorious for its sumptuous devotional practices and using the “beauty of holiness” as a liturgical maxim. The barren leanness of rigorous ascetic practice countervails the sensual ritualism of holy beauty. The seeming contradiction, though, aptly expresses the paradoxical logic of Laudian asceticism. To the Laudian mind, the principle underlying ceremonial worship and austere asceticism is the same: the body can help dispose the mind towards—and through this austerity become a vessel of—piety. Ascetic practice can be another way of embodying the corporal discipline that ceremonial worship valorizes. For Anglicans, asceticism is an external manifestation of an internal holiness. This notion survives on the symbiotic relationship between internal/external on which the beauty of holiness also thrives. It posits a fundamental connection between the two and a reciprocal agreement in which the amplifying of the one magnifies the other. The beauty of holiness could easily coopt asceticism. Ironically, puritans rejected the Laudian preoccupation with the body as a sign of carnality, even though carnality was the very thing that asceticism (one manifestation of that preoccupation) was meant to transform. By exemplifying anti-Calvinism, the beauty of holiness, and a new direction in patristic studies, Anglican asceticism had the potential to further alienate puritans from the Laudian Church.

⁵ Robert Bolton, *The carnall professor* (London, 1634), 174-5.

With its investment in aesthetics, Laudianism found a ready interlocutor in literature. Indeed, the competing puritan and Anglican versions of ascetic thought occasioned a literary and cultural response/participation that has not yet been recovered. The competition played out not just in sermons and religious treatises, but also in poetry and court drama. Caroline court drama was particularly well-suited to the expression of ascetic ideals. The Neoplatonism that flourished at the Caroline Court was a natural medium, as it had been for primitive Christianity, in which asceticism could be celebrated. While Anglican prelates drew on eastern Christianity to provide patristic precedent for many of their ascetic views, court dramatists mined a Neoplatonic tradition that often ran parallel to, or intersected with, Greek patristicism. This intersection finds consummate expression in *The lover: or, Nuptiall love* (1638) by Robert Crofts. The work begins by advocating Neoplatonic chastity and ends by enjoining virginity, illustrating how the Caroline celebration of marriage could run coterminous with the Laudian valorization of the single life. While connections between the Caroline Court and the Laudian Church have been proposed to center around conformity in church and state, this study proposes a more fundamental link than a mutual love of decorum. A court culture that glorified non-corporeal union and a church that sought the utter subjection of the body had, it turns out, quite a lot in common.

The literary engagement with Anglican asceticism is not only a creature of the Caroline court. Major authors such as Ben Jonson, Richard Crashaw, John Milton, Andrew Marvell, and John Bunyan also engage ascetic controversies. Understanding an author like Milton's attitude towards asceticism can be a useful way of situating him in relation to the puritan/Anglican fissure. With a clear regard for bodily virginity and the heavenly rewards it reaps, Milton's ascetic views, I will argue, are suggestive of the Anglican sympathies for which many of the

early poems provide evidence. The following pages also recover ascetic discourse in the work of lesser known authors such as Thomas Nabbes, Robert Gomersall, Joseph Beaumont, the author of *Elizas Babes*, and Rowland Watkyns, to name just a few. Though the poetry of asceticism is quite various, we can theorize a rough poetics of themes that recur throughout it: ascetic practice as meritorious; asceticism and mysticism; the aesthetics of asceticism. Generally, the Anglican proponents of asceticism depict it as meritorious, mystical, and they figure it as highly beautiful through intricate formal presentation. The puritan critique of Anglican asceticism often tries to disarticulate, or transvalue, those things. For instance, in Andrew Marvell's "Upon Appleton House," a Catholic nun claims a monastic life allows for the mystical experience of espousal to Christ. After exposing the impiety behind this claim, the poem supplants this defunct, ascetic mysticism with the Hermetic philosophy favored by Marvell's puritan patron, Thomas Lord Fairfax. Though it is rather unintuitive, a baroque poetics, like the Laudian beauty of holiness, operates with a similar rationale towards its medium as an asceticism of corporal severity. Words can be the physical medium in which the harshness of corporal asceticism chastens. Language suffers the chastisement of a caesura, of an exacting technical process that transforms raw materials through the application of a precise, at times harsh, discipline. As Geoffrey Galt Harpham argues, "the horrifying emaciation of the ascetic body could testify to such traditional artistic virtues as 'a mastery of one's materials,' or 'technical control of the medium.'"⁶

Viewing literary forms through an ascetic lens may not seem so strange when we consider how texts were often perceived as having a body and spirit. This is especially true of Holy Writ. As Erasmus argues in the *Enchiridion*, "therfore the flesshe of the scripture dispysied chefely of the olde testament / it shall be mete and conuenient to serche out the mystery of the

⁶ Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *The Ascetic Imperative in Culture and Criticism* (Chicago, 1987), 24.

spyrite.”⁷ The four-fold method of Catholic exegesis represents, then, a complex process of ascetic refinement whereby that spirit could be sought. The scriptural body undergoes a technical discipline that purges its spirit of carnality. Protestants obviate the need for such severity by asserting scripture’s literality and/or its lack of physicality.⁸ In the words of Edward Polhill, “there is nothing terrene or carnal in this heavenly piece”; it is “pure spiritualness.”⁹ We shall later see Joseph Beaumont present the extreme asceticism of Simeon Stylites as a means of making him “All soule.” Since scripture is already all spirit, or the senses that Catholics try to extricate through an intricate hermeneutics are indissolubly corporate, there is no need for austere interpretive methods. The literary equivalent of this interpretive austerity is poetry that valorizes formal complexity and technical virtuosity. The critical and compositional asceticism the texts exhibit is the same. In a poem, words are the body, and their content a soul; through their ascetic refinement, the beauty of the soul shines more fully. In scripture, the spirit sheds its fleshly impairment through taxing analysis. Based on the example of scripture, in poetry treating ascetic topics, laconic sparseness (what we might today call “puritanical”) is not synonymous with corporal asceticism; rather, the sumptuous indulgence of ornate verse exudes an ascetic stylistics consonant with Laudian theology.

By documenting the historical influence of asceticism and theorizing an aesthetic ascetic, the more general goal of this project is to invigorate asceticism as a useful means of cultural, religious, and literary inquiry in early modern England. There has been excellent scholarship on certain aspects of ascetic life in England, but no book-length study has taken the demonstration of asceticism’s wider importance as a general theme or, indeed, argued that understanding

⁷ Erasmus, *A booke called in latyn Enchiridion militis christiani* (London, 1533), sig. H7^v.

⁸ See William Tyndale, *The Pentateuch* (Antwerp, 1530), unfol. (“To the Reader”); William Perkins, *A commentarie or exposition, vpon the fiue first chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians* (Cambridge, 1604), 345-6.

⁹ Edward Polhill, *Precious faith considered in its nature, working, and growth* (London, 1675), 33.

asceticism is vital to interpreting early modern culture. During this period, there is an efflorescence of ascetic writing, and ascetic thought is a formative and (oftentimes) provocative influence on how marriage, sex, virginity, aesthetics, and the self were conceived. While the temporal focus of this study is the years surrounding the beginning, ascendancy, and downfall of the Laudian Church, roughly 1600-1650, we will often move before and beyond these years. To examine puritan ascetic theory, it will be necessary to consider Richard Baxter's monumental *A Treatise of Self-Denial* (1675), and the consummate literary expression of a puritan ascetic in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678). To understand why the asceticism articulated by the Laudian Church was so controversial, I will refer to the writings of 16th-century English reformers on monasticism and clerical celibacy. Without a knowledge of John Foxe's invective against "Sodomiticall Monkerie," or John Jewel's cool and erudite defense of a married clergy, it would be easy to miss why William Laud's pronouncement in favor of clerical celibacy in 1631 could cause such a stir.¹⁰ The first half of the seventeenth century will serve as a guide, but it will only be possible to make sense of ascetic thought in these years by frequent reference outside of them. The study's engagement with major articulations of ascetic thought in the 16th and 17th centuries has motivated the ambitions of its title (*early modern* England). Before discussing the major themes of the project, I want to spend a moment defining my use of terminology and also explaining some omissions and oversights in the following pages.

Caveat Emptor

Throughout this study, I have often used the terms "Laudian" and "Anglican," and "puritan" and "Calvinist" interchangeably. This is, of course, not entirely accurate. The most

¹⁰ John Foxe, *Actes and monuments* (London, 1583), 1903. See *The Works of John Jewel*, 4 vols., ed. John Ayre (Cambridge, 1845-50), 3.395.

obvious problem being that, with a few exceptions in the form of radical sectary and independent groups, *everyone* was a self-professed “Anglican” before the civil wars.¹¹ From Prynne’s philippics seeking a restoration of the Elizabethan settlement, to Christopher Dow’s assertion that there was nothing really innovative about the Laudian programme, Anglicanism was always coopted to serve diametrically opposed ends: it was a catch-all term registering some vague affinity with a more docile, religiously “settled” past that religious and political opponents used to beat each other with. More difficult still, in the 1630s, there were certainly Anglicans who did not think of themselves as Laudians. To complicate the issue, they were often episcopal Calvinists who were not associated with puritan non-conformity. Bishops such as James Ussher, Joseph Hall, and Thomas Morton exemplify this trend. The Bishop of Lincoln, John Williams, ever the arch-nemesis of Laud, also illustrates how doctrinal scruples were often sacrificed on the pyre of political expediency. Williams was an Anglican in agreement with High Church policies—just not in so far as they issued from William Laud.¹² He was an anti-Laudian, High Church Anglican, so to speak. In 1637, as part of his constant attempts to undermine Laud, this High Church Anglican published *The Holy Table, Name & Thing*, agitating for moveable altars. Sometimes principle had to give way to politics, thereby rendering doctrinal labels subject to the whim of political intrigue and personal enmity.

The case does not get much easier when it comes to the term “puritan.” As John Coffey and Paul C.H. Lim observe, “defining Puritanism has become a favourite parlour game for early modern historians.”¹³ Patrick Collinson famously described puritanism as “not a thing definable

¹¹ Further illustrating the difficulty of naming, “Anglican” was not a term widely used until the 19th century.

¹² Ironically, and in what must have been for Williams a constant source of chagrin, he had actually supported Laud’s bid for Bishop of St. David’s in 1621.

¹³ John Coffey and Paul C.H. Lim, “Introduction,” in John Coffey and Paul C.H. Lim (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge, 2008), 1.

in itself but only one half of a stressful relationship.”¹⁴ My previous description of Richard Baxter as a “puritan” would seem to denote that he was doctrinally a Calvinist. Yet Baxter was accused by the Presbyterian Anthony Burgess of not being Calvinist enough. Burgess upbraided Baxter for not holding positions consistent with the Calvinist view of justification. To the government authorities in the 1660s, especially after the Act of Uniformity, however, Baxter was a definite non-conformist, as his arrest in 1669 under the Five Mile Act demonstrates. His puritanism was, to a certain extent, a matter of perspective: too puritan for the state authorities, not godly enough for a Presbyterian like Burgess. Moreover, illustrating the difficulty of pinning its definition down, Peter Lake has recently shown how puritanism was on the definitive move at the accession of James I. Discussing John Burgess and Matthew Hutton, Lake writes, “pro-puritan bishops like Hutton and moderate puritans like John Burgess did not in fact agree either on many of the central symbolic and liturgical issues that conventionally defined puritanism.”¹⁵ As the definition of puritanism changed, those regarded as puritans could not help but change too. The label is a moving target.

Despite these caveats, the terms puritan (i.e. Calvinist) and Anglican (i.e. Laudian) are still useful heuristics. As a practical matter, it is difficult to talk concisely or say anything worthwhile about the period without them. But like all generalities, they often run roughshod over the finer details. This study employs them to invoke a general sense of conformable Laudianism and (often, but not always) non-conforming Calvinism, but is also very much conscious of their limitations. As John Spurr opines, “puritanism is not reducible to Calvinist

¹⁴ Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York, 1988), 143.

¹⁵ Peter Lake, “Moving the Goal Posts? Modified Subscription and the Construction of Conformity in the Early Stuart Church, in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660* (Suffolk, 2000), 194.

theology, Presbyterian discipline or separatist ecclesiology. It comprised all of these and more.”¹⁶ Whenever possible, I have tried to supplement “puritan” and “Anglican” with biographical details explaining the extent of a given individual’s religious sympathies. In a way, though, I am not entirely unhappy with the discomfort my use of the terms may cause. Does a discomfort with the terms’ inadequacy not encapsulate a central paradox that this study seeks to elaborate: doctrinal heterogeneity and asceticism’s part in causing it?

Another potential oversight in this study is the omission of religious radicals. Individuals on the outskirts of mainstream religion often exhibit doctrinal heterogeneity and defy the Anglican/puritan divide over asceticism I have been arguing exists. Quakers were accused of advocating devotional practices reminiscent of Catholic monasticism. William Brownsword’s *The Quaker-Jesuite* (1660) attempts to prove that the Friends’ “practises are fetcht out of the Rules and Practises of Popish Monks.”¹⁷ In the Quaker Humphrey Smith’s *Man driven out of the earth and darkness, by the light, life, and mighty hand of God* (1658), written during one of his three stints in the Winchester gaol, Smith’s exegesis of Revelation 14:4 veers dangerously close to commending bodily virginity. Clearly sensing the potential for his interpretation to redound to virginity’s credit—he depicts those not defiled with women as “not among the world in filth”—Smith asks, “But do I forbid marriage? nay: Marriage is honourable.” He then proceeds to offer an interpretation of marital sanctity more in line with mainstream Protestantism.¹⁸

¹⁶ John Spurr, “Later Stuart Puritanism,” in John Coffey and Paul C.H. Lim (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge, 2008), 89-108, 100.

¹⁷ William Brownsword, *The Quaker-Jesuite, or, Popery in Quakerisme* (London, 1660), title page.

¹⁸ Humphrey Smith, *Man driven out of the earth and darkness, by the light, life, and mighty hand of God* (London, 1658), 15.

Radical female “prophets” also complicate the clear-cut picture I have offered. As Nigel Smith has observed, “gifted sectarian women displayed particular types of expression and language which are not dissimilar to those of medieval female mystics and anchoresses.”¹⁹ Their practices of severe corporal mortification were similar to medieval forms of asceticism that Anglicans were recovering. For instance, Sarah Wight (b. 1631) fasted for 65 days. During the period 1643-47, she often fasted, experienced trances, and expounded scripture while in a trance-like state.²⁰ Another female prophet, Anna Trapnel (fl. 1642-1660), was reported to subsist without food, save “small beer,” during her prophesyings.²¹

Perhaps even more than the fasts of the radicals Sarah Wight and Anna Trapnel, the asceticism professed by Roger Crab transcends a puritan/Anglican ascetic binary. In the 1650s, Roger Crab (c.1616-1680) devoted himself to a hermetic life, setting up a small hut at Ickenham, living on a vegetarian diet, and wearing a “sackcloth frock.” Indicative of just how severe Crab’s hermetic life was, one of his disciples, Captain Robert Norwood, died from starvation after adopting the lifestyle of his guru.²² In Crab’s relation of his hermetic life, *The English Hermite* (1655), he writes about himself, “In drinking cannot be drunk, / Nor am I moved to sweare: / And from wenching am I sunk, / My bones are kept so bare. / For it is the grossnesse of the flesh / That makes the soule to smart: / And is the cause of his owne lust, / That commits adultery in his heart.”²³ Crab places a clear emphasis on the potential for corporal practices of severe mortification to reduce lust. He articulates a connection between extreme fasting (“my

¹⁹ Nigel Smith, *Perfection Proclaimed: Language and Literature in English Radical Religion, 1640-1660* (Oxford, 1989), 13.

²⁰ Karen O'Dell Bullock, “Wight, Sarah (b. 1631),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com.].

²¹ Stevie Davies, “Trapnel, Anna (fl. 1642–1660),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com.].

²² Ariel Hessayon, “Crab, Roger (c.1616–1680),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) [http://www.oxforddnb.com.].

²³ Roger Crab, *The English hermite* (London, 1655), 15.

bones are kept so bare”) and an internal, spiritual process (“adultery in his heart”) that is characteristic of much of the Anglican asceticism we will examine. Despite this overlap with Anglicanism, Crab served in the Parliamentary Army and had millenarian views, and thus illustrates a clear way in which ascetic practice was doctrinally transgressive.

Crab, Wight, and Trapnel are all some version of puritans and/or radicals, and yet they embrace severe practices of mortification. Why this study does not deal with them at any length is regrettable, but the rationale is also aptly expressed by Alexandra Walsham’s commentary on these prophets who practice self-starvation:

But Protestantism’s passive acceptance and even active endorsement of ascetics and seers must not be exaggerated. Probably the majority of self-proclaimed prophets were regarded by the clergy with suspicion and stigmatized as witches, demoniacs, lunatics, or charlatans...Prophets whose pronouncements enshrined an implicit or explicit critique of the current religious and political regime, clashed with the priorities of powerful pressure groups, or presented a serious threat to the male and clerical monopoly on authority invariably became the targets of one or more of these strategies of demonization.²⁴

What if that active endorsement came not from a mere toleration of individual *ascetics*, but the established church’s promulgation of *asceticism*? What if this same strategy of ostracization and alienation were not possible because the ascetics were on the inside of religious conformity, not its outer fringes? In other words, what happens when an extreme ascetic practice cannot be dismissed as the misguided enthusiasm of a radical sectary, the nefarious conjurations of a demoniac, or the intemperate ravings of a lunatic? These are, I think, questions of significant exigence that have yet to be addressed, and precisely why this dissertation focuses

²⁴ Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, 214.

on mainstream religion. Having offered reasons for what has not been included, I would now like to turn to the major themes of what is to be found in this project.

Asceticism and Confessionalism

A recurrent theme in delineating a theory of Anglican and puritan asceticism will be how to situate both vis-à-vis Roman Catholicism. The puritan and Anglican attitudes towards the Roman Church were markedly different, especially under Archbishop Laud. As Anthony Milton has shown, Laudians fundamentally changed the Church of England's disposition towards Rome. They eschewed describing the pope as anti-Christ and avoided acerbic anti-Catholic polemic (a staple of English religious writing since the Reformation). Richard Montagu, a member of the Durham House Group who became Bishop of Chichester in 1628, even sought reunion with Rome, and many Laudians maintained the continuous visibility of a True Church within a courtly and corrupt Romish one.²⁵ In contrast, for puritans, any lessening of hatred towards the Roman see risked congress with that Babylonian Whore.

Monasticism is often a topic that brings the differing Anglican and puritan attitudes towards England's Catholic past into focus. For example, the Laudian Foulke Robartes responds to Thomas Cartwright's objection that the churchyards of cathedrals are superstitious remnants of monasticism by asserting the holiness of their monastic use. Churchyards, Robartes contends, "are consecrated with the Church unto God; as being the Courts of the Lords house. And have beene anciently used and yet may be, not onely for Dormitories or burialls, but also for divine worship, and have borne the name of Oratories for there they did hold Synods, sing Psalmes, and

²⁵ Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995).

administer the Sacraments.”²⁶ “Have been” and “yet may be” connect churchyards’ usage by pre-Reformation monasticism (as dormitories and, especially, oratories) and their potential for holy worship in an unbroken chain of pious continuity. Supporting the Laudian view of sacral space, there is something permanent about consecration; that permanence would help to further underscore the impiety of sacrilege during Laud’s crusade against impropriations. In a similar assertion of holy continuity, Richard Montagu holds that the monasteries should never have been demolished in the first place, but only reformed.²⁷ In a surprising correspondence, William Prynne also believes that remnants of monasticism should be preserved. But instead of maintaining connection to a pious past, he has another curatorial motive in mind. Similar to pre-Reformation images that were “broken and demolished...at the beginning of Reformation; ever since which time they continued unrepaired,” so too “the ruines of our Abbies and Monasteries” should remain “as Monuments of our indignation and detestation against them.”²⁸ The remnants of monasticism are not put to pious use or reformed, but they remain in ruin—like a bare wound on the land—to recall the godly zeal that first swept them away. And yet, despite vastly different attitudes towards their Roman Catholic inheritance (not to mention asceticism), there exists a marked similarity in how Anglicans and puritans depict their ascetic practices in relation to Catholicism.

Henry Mason (1575/6-1647), who influenced other Laudians’ ascetic views, composed *The epicures fast* (1626) to contest what he perceived as a lenient Catholic attitude towards the rigors of fasting. Mason criticizes the choice and quantity of meats consumed, number and time

²⁶ Foulke Robartes, *Gods holy house and service* (London, 1639), 39.

²⁷ Cf. Richard Montagu, *Theanthropikon* (London, 1640), 384, who argues that the monasteries should have been returned to their “veterum normam,” instead of the monastic “arae” being exchanged for the “haras.”

²⁸ William Prynne, *Canterburies Doome* (London, 1646), 463. Cf. John Bale, *The image of both Churches* (London, 1570), sigs. Hiii^r-v.

of meals allowed, and the dispensations given during Catholic fasts.²⁹ As a result of this laxity, he concludes that Catholic fasts “haue more affinity with the feeding of an Epicure, then with the fasting of a deuout Christian.”³⁰ Often, *The epicures fast* adduces patristic practice to prove the waywardness of Roman fasting.³¹ To Catholic claims of ancient precedent, Mason contemptuously responds, “the custome of the Ancients being heerein no more like to the custome of the present Romane Church, then Chalke is to Cheese.”³² Infidelity to antiquity leads Mason to allege, “we may boldly say, that now zeale is key-cold, or quite quenched in the Church of Rome.”³³ Probably with relish is “key-cold” employed. Sarcastically, Mason derides Rome’s claims of apostolic continuity, of possessing St. Peter’s keys, by showing how Roman fasts have veered from apostolic practice. The keys have fallen out of their hands. In contrast to the “superstitious fopperie” of Roman fasting, Mason urges his reader, “But when ye fast, vse a true abstinence, such as may *afflict* the body, *master* the flesh, *eleuate* the soule, and *humble* the whole man by repentance and sorrow: and together with outward abstinence ioyne inward exercises of deuotion.”³⁴ Mason aptly expresses the connection between “outward absintence” and “inward exercises of devotion” that makes corporal asceticism amenable to, and able to be coopted by, the beauty of holiness. Religious ceremony operates on the same principle of directly linking the disciplined actions of the body with the pious disposition of the soul. In a telling chronology, afflicting the body and mastering the flesh enable the soul’s elevation. These lines employ a part to whole reasoning (body » flesh » soul » whole man) that expresses how integral the bodily process is to the repentant man’s mystical ascendance. Since Catholic

²⁹ Henry Mason, *The epicures fast* (London, 1626), 7.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 56-7.

³¹ See esp. 50, 54.

³² *Ibid.*, 17.

³³ *Ibid.*, 37.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 56-7.

asceticism has become so lenient, its followers must not be admitted to the sublime mysteries of this ascent. Though Mason sharply criticizes Roman fasts, the purpose of *The epicures fast* is not to reject the practice of fasting or bodily humiliation, but to advance a more ascetically rigorous and humiliating form. The end of the tract opens the way for more rigorous abstinence, for even those who “chasten and afflict their soules with fasting...will thinke all little enough.”³⁵ Puritans also attempted to create a type of asceticism that was more rigorous than Catholic practice.³⁶ Though Max Weber labels puritan asceticism “rational” compared to its Catholic counterpart, the example of Christopher Wilson’s *Self Deniall: or, A Christians Hardest Taske* (1625) shows how puritans regarded the denial of reason as an ascetic aim.³⁷ *Self Deniall* presents a long list of innovations in the church, including “Solitary life, Abotts, Monkes, Friers, Pilgrimage, Purgatory, Fastings, Difference of meates, and Dayes, Distinction of Clergy, and Laitye, Single life.”³⁸ About all of them, Wilson argues, “they haue a shewe of carnall wisdom; and are measured, grounded and guilded over with witty reason.” As a result, “this admonisheth vs to deny reason, and humane wisdom, in matters of Gods Worshipp, and so suspect what euer is most plausible to it.”³⁹ What is reasonably plausible is to be met with incredulity and suspicion. As an alternative to these ascetic practices tainted with carnal reason, Wilson enjoins the following:

³⁵ Ibid., 58.

³⁶ Cf. Richard Baxter, *A Treatise of Self-Denial* (London, 1675), 345.

³⁷ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, transl. Talcott Parsons (London, 1930; repr. 1956), 126.

³⁸ Christopher Wilson, *Self Deniall* (London, 1625), sig. E2^r. Wilson’s text is largely a paraphrase of Thomas Brightman’s *The Art of Self-Deniall: or, A Christian’s First Lesson* (London, 1646). There is no ODNB entry for Wilson, and this is his only publication. Brightman, a prolific author and major millennial thinker, died in 1607, so I would assume (but am not certain) that authorship belongs to him.

³⁹ Ibid., sig. E2^v.

This shewes vs the difficulty of true Religion; for what can bee harder to man then to ouercome himselfe, to deny his owne reason and choice, and wholly to subiect himselfe to Gods; to renounce his owne will, and to chuse and doe the will of God.

This is harder then to offer all outward sacrifice, then to vndergoe the severest penance of whip and sack-cloath.⁴⁰

The penance of whip and sackcloth that punishes the body does not compare in ascetic severity to the spiritual self-denial Wilson advocates. A telling expression of the higher level of difficulty appears in the verbs accompanying Protestant and Catholic asceticism: “ouercome” versus “vndergoe.” The impressionable passivity of “vndergoe” pales in comparison with the heroic activity, the godly exertion, of “ouercome.” To think of this as a more reasonable form of Catholic ascetic practice does not adequately account for the unprecedented rigor Wilson attributes to it. As Wilson maintains, this self-denial is not at all rational in its concomitant denial of one’s “owne reason.” If reason is but choosing, then Wilson doubly denies a rationalist impulse by also denying choice. Paradoxically, and illustrating the ambiguity of the self that Gavin Flood finds integral to asceticism, the denial of choice also constitutes a muscular exercise of it; one “chuse[s]” to do the will of God, thereby denying his own choice.⁴¹

Later in the tract, Wilson elaborates on what makes this self-denial so difficult:

As on the contrary, when our affections carry us to the mislike off [sic], and flying from a thing as grievous, yet to imbrace that with joy and delight: o how happie a thing it is? this is a worke farre passing the severest Popish Discipline, which in their blinde devotions men inflict on themselves: As to wallow in the snow, and to cast themselves

⁴⁰ Ibid., sig. E4^r.

⁴¹ Gavin Flood, *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory and Tradition* (Cambridge, 2004), 13-6.

into the cold of waters, or to lye in hayre cloath or in shirts of male, or with Baals Preists, to launch their own flesh.⁴²

Contempt for Catholic ascetic practice as a kind of passive endurance (rather than active accomplishment) is evident in “wallow”; these ascetics loll about in the snow. In two of the examples, external conditions provide the tools of ascetic discipline. The individual is acted upon instead of acting to generate ascetic self-denial from within. Expressing the shift from corporal to internal asceticism, Wilson locates the severest form of ascetic activity—not in the body’s subjection to climatic extremes or intense pain—but in disciplining the affections. Weber argues that a characteristic of puritan asceticism is the “destruction of spontaneous, impulsive enjoyment.”⁴³ Here, though, instead of the destruction of impulsive enjoyment, Wilson advocates the endurance of intense dislike. Impulsive enjoyment is not destroyed, but impulsive dislike. It is not really destroyed, though. In a radical disregard for one’s self, the intense disaffection for a grievous thing is transferred to the intensity of its celebration as something to be delighted and joyed in. Feeling enjoyment in affliction is the ultimate goal of Wilson’s self-denial, whereas Weber posits joy’s eradication as the desired outcome.⁴⁴

More largely, the examples of Wilson and Mason show how puritans and Anglicans believed their respective ascetic projects to be more severe than Roman Catholic asceticism. At this point, though, the consensus breaks down. The asceticism Mason advocates is still consistent with Catholic ascetic practice; he does not, as we noted, suggest discontinuing fasting—just invigorating it. Though Wilson moves along a similar trajectory of embracing

⁴² Christopher Wilson, *Self-Deniall*, sigs. L2^{r-v}. Cf. Thomas Brightman, *The art of self-deniall: or, a Christian's first lesson*, 53-5.

⁴³ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 119.

⁴⁴ Cf. Jeremiah Burroughs, *Moses his self-denyall* (London, 1641), 161.

greater ascetic severity, he does not focus on its corporal expression. He advocates an asceticism of the self (reason, will, choice, affections) that is not (or not nearly) as consistent with Roman Catholicism. In short, while critiquing Catholic asceticism, Mason still preserves ascetic practices intelligible to it; Wilson, however, theorizes an asceticism that is not comprehensible within a Roman Catholic tradition emphasizing acts of corporal severity. An initial similarity between Mason and Wilson points up a more fundamental difference. We shall also see this obtain in the puritan and Anglican conception of asceticism's relation to aesthetics.

Asceticism and Aesthetics

In a telling observation about the church father Origen, who died after the tortures he suffered during the persecution of Decius (250 C.E.), Peter Brown writes, "Origen, and many like him in later centuries, felt, with the intangible certainty of a refined, almost an aesthetic, spiritual sensibility, that married intercourse actually coarsened the spirit."⁴⁵ Patristic authors often emphasize this connection between abstinence and aesthetics. John Cassian writes about asceticism as a beautifying process in the *The Institutes*; Jerome uses The Song of Solomon to depict the virgin's attractiveness to Christ in "To Eustochium"; and Ambrose of Milan remembers his brother Satyrus as having a face blush with a suffusion of virginal modesty ("quadam virginali verecundia suffusus ora").⁴⁶ Similar to Ambrose, in Anthony Stafford's *The Femall Glory* (1635), he observes the aesthetic effects that sexual renunciation has on the faces

⁴⁵ Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988), 173.

⁴⁶ John Cassian, *The Institutes*, transl. Boniface Ramsey (New Jersey, 2000), 5.35; *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vii: *St. Jerome Letters and Select Works*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (New York, 1893), 22-3; *Patrologia Latina*, xvi: *De excessu fratris sui Satyrus*, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris, 1844-55; repr. New Jersey, 1965).

of virgins: “You who have lived spirituall Amourists, whose spirits have triumphed over the Flesh, on whose Cheeks Solitude, Prayers, Fasts, and Austerity have left an amiable pale...”⁴⁷

One of the more extreme examples of a patristic author connecting asceticism and beauty is found in Jacob of Serug’s (c. 449-521 C.E.) sermon on Simeon Stylites. Simeon (c. 386-459 C.E.) practiced an especially austere form of early Christian asceticism living atop a pillar (*stylos*) for nearly forty years. At one point, a corrupt wound on Simeon’s foot began to decay from gangrene, having been infested with worms. And yet, as Jacob writes, “however much the Evil One afflicted him, that much his beauty increased.” Eventually, Simeon’s foot atrophied to the point of only the bone remaining. Instead of passing over this gruesome detail, Jacob expands on its aesthetic potential: “and he watched his foot as it rotted and its flesh decayed. And the foot stood bare like a tree beautiful with branches. He saw that there was nothing on it but tendons and bones.”⁴⁸ The reference to a tree could evoke the Tree of Knowledge and a return to an Edenic state. As the Syriac homily *On Hermits and Desert Dwellers* maintains, ascetics “greatly afflict their bodies, not because they do not love their bodies, / rather, they want to bring their bodies to Eden in glory.”⁴⁹ The foot has returned to a pre-lapsarian state, purged as it is from the sinful flesh.

Patristic praise for Simeon’s gangrenous foot may seem perverse (the barbarous views of a benighted past), but Simeon’s extreme brand of asceticism found admirers in early modern England. In “Lemniscus ad Columnam S. Simeonis Stylitae appensus,” Joseph Beaumont

⁴⁷ Anthony Stafford, *The femall glory* (London, 1635), 148.

⁴⁸ Susan Ashbrook Harvey (transl.), “Jacob of Serug, *Homily on Simeon the Stylite*,” in Vincent L. Wimbush (ed.), *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook* (Minneapolis, 1990), 15-28, 20-22.

⁴⁹ Joseph P. Amar, *On Hermits and Desert Dwellers*, in *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook*, 66-80, 72.

(1616-1699) not only praises Simeon's ascetic austerity, but he also observes its beauty.⁵⁰

Beaumont was a fellow, along with Richard Crashaw, of Peterhouse College, Cambridge from 1636 to his ejection by the Earl of Manchester in 1644. W.H. Kelliher notes that Beaumont and Crashaw were favorably disposed towards the Laudian innovations Peterhouse had undergone: "Peterhouse under its successive masters Matthew Wren and John Cosin had become a centre of Laudianism, and the two young men played an enthusiastic part in the ritual of the new chapel there."⁵¹ In Beaumont's poem, Simeon's foot exhibits the "wide / Mouth of a putrified Wound," and he "Indures from Wormes those piercing Woes." Simeon's wound recalls John Donne's description of a similar instance of severe mortification in *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610). While criticizing "blinde and stupid obedience" to the strictures of monastic life, Donne includes the following example: "Who would wish S. Henrie the Dane any health, that had seene him, When wormes crawled out of a corrupted Ulcer in his Knee, put them in againe?"⁵² In contrast with Donne's rejection of obstinate mortifying severity, Beaumont depicts Simeon's eventual triumph over the wound as evidence of his "Angelik Fervencie, / Whose Mystik Power hath made Him now / All Soule: Sure Simeon feels no blow / Nor wound, but those, w^{ch} LOVE'S sweet Darts / Bestow on Saints Delicious Hearts." When Simeon's wound has become the most revolting, and when the reader's stomach turns from imagining it, the stanza concludes by emphasizing how delectable Simeon now is. The contradiction is appropriate at this moment of mystical fervency. Patricia Cox Miller posits that, in ascetic writings, "paradoxical linguistic constructions use

⁵⁰ Quotations of Beaumont's poetry are from Eloise Robinson (ed.), *The Minor Poems of Joseph Beaumont, D.D., 1616-1699* (Boston, 1914). No critical edition of Beaumont's poetry exists, and the lines in Robinson (ed.) are unfortunately unnumbered.

⁵¹ W. H. Kelliher, "Beaumont, Joseph (1616-1699)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/1878>, accessed 12 June 2013]

⁵² John Donne, *Pseudo-Martyr*, ed. Anthony Raspa (Ottawa, 1993), 134-6.

words against themselves to express a view of the human being in those ecstatic moments of contemplative seeing in which temporality gives way to the timeless expanses of eternity.” The paradox is “revelatory of a transformed sense of human identity.”⁵³ We will see this paradox perhaps most memorably displayed in John Milton’s “Epitaphium Damonis” (1639), where the virginal Damon is described as participating in Bacchic orgies under the thyrsus of Zion. The paradox of grotesque physicality and delectability indicates Simeon’s transformation; or, we might say, transfiguration.⁵⁴ He has become “All Soule”: a diaphanous liminality in which the materiality of flesh gives way to ethereal spirit. The moment of transformation is also characterized by beautification. After his heart is referred to as delicious, the next stanza begins, “Twas LOVE, which on y^e Pillar set / Him as his fairest Mark.” The ascetic process, through which Simeon becomes more spirit than flesh, makes him beautiful (“fair”) to Christ (i.e. Love). In the eyes of Christ, Simeon is delectable: “LOVE shot full oft, & every Dart / Flew directly to the Heart / Of this fair Mark.” The eroticism of Christ pining so intensely and frequently for Simeon underscores his desirability. Christ flying directly to the heart recalls an earlier statement made by Simeon to an incredulous bystander: “Look heer, says He, how rottennesse / Gins Me already to possesse, / And judge whither I a Spirit be, / Or weaker Worme then these you see, / Which on my foot in Triumph pray / Unto my Heart eating their way.” Though the worms might wend their gangrenous way to Simeon’s heart, Christ has gotten there first. The worms are superseded by—but the debilitating process of mortification they describe also facilitates—Love flying to Simeon’s heart; their disfiguring makes the Saint a fair Mark for

⁵³ Patricia Cox Miller, “Dreaming the Body: An Aesthetics of Asceticism,” in Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis (eds.), *Asceticism* (Oxford, 1998), 281-300, 290.

⁵⁴ See Kallistos Ware, “The Way of the Ascetics: Negative or Affirmative,” in Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis (eds.), *Asceticism*, 3-15, 12.

Christ. In the worms' supersession and enabling of Love's entry, the paradox of an extreme *askesis* that putrefies *and at the same time* beautifies is aptly expressed.

Simeon represents, of course, a very counterintuitive notion of what constitutes beauty. Beauty is often considered the product of symmetry, fullness, and completion. And yet, deformity, amputation, and putrescence are what's aesthetically pleasing here. This aesthetic constitutes what Brett Kaplan describes as "an anti-aesthetic, an aesthetic devoid of beauty."⁵⁵ Asceticism delights in these kinds of paradoxes, and they are fundamental to how it—and its aesthetic—work. Ascetics attempt to escape circumscription by the self, body, and sexuality. To accomplish this, practitioners of asceticism employ various methods. For instance, pain is used as leverage against the body; it becomes a means to resist embodiment and, perhaps, entirely disassociate from it. Ascetics also discover an erotics of virginity; they find pleasure in pain; and they locate a fullness of self that is beyond all subjectivity in self-annihilation. These contradictions represent a revolt against the logic by which sexuality, the self, and the body normally operate. They complicate circumscription, not by escaping what circumscribes, but by contracting it. For instance, to locate sensual eroticism in virginity collapses the binary of desire vs. abstinence so integral to sexuality. In the same way, finding pleasure in pain collapses a dichotomy central to embodiment—the avoidance of physical pain and the experience of pleasure. If we understand aesthetics as providing some kind of pleasure, then Simeon's fairness—in its collocation of pain/pleasure—represents a version of escaping embodiment. This is an aesthetics whose counterintuitive beauty is a product of the contradictory means by which ascetics challenge circumscribed embodiment. Similar to a no-self self, or a virginal eroticism, this is a kind of anti-beauty beauty that is articulated in protest against circumscription.

⁵⁵ Brett Ashley Kaplan, *Unwanted Beauty: Aesthetic Pleasure in Holocaust Representation* (Illinois, 2007), 11.

Based upon the example of Simeon, though, how can Laudians find a link between conventional beauty and asceticism? The fact that beauty—even of the perverse anti-beauty sort—could be found in physical disfiguration provides a more general license for the Laudian impulse to make liturgical ceremony and holy worship compatible. Beauty *is* important to holiness. Though Beaumont’s Simeon may radically challenge what constitutes beauty, he does not, in the end, unseat those conventions. Rather, beauty and anti-beauty exist in a dialectical relationship. The challenge that anti-beauty offers cannot be registered without reference to beauty. How would one know that it represents anti-beauty? Thus, even while heroically resisting circumscription, the means by which that resistance is effected ironically reify what was circumscribing in the first place. Illustrative of this reifying, while deformity that is described as beautiful might be surprising, conventional terms of beauty are employed during that description. As Beaumont attests, Simeon’s severe devotions make him “fair” to Christ.

In some of Beaumont’s other poetry, no conflict between asceticism and the beauty of holiness is evident. For instance, in “Ashwednesday” Beaumont describes “A Feast, whose Musik doth rebound / A welcome & delicious Sound / Unto His Eares / Who tunes y^e Sphears. / A Feast where Groanes / And dolorous Tones / Wait on each draught of Teares, whose variation / Makes y^e grave Musik of Mortification.” An important component of what Graham Parry calls the arts of the Anglican counter-reformation was sacred music.⁵⁶ For instance, in a ceremonial innovation that met with puritan hostility, Laudians created a more musical liturgy through the incorporation of organs into church service. Beaumont’s insistence on the conjoining of Ash Wednesday and fasting could provoke the puritan animus towards set fasts, making the “Musik

⁵⁶ See Graham Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour: The Arts of the Anglican Counter-Reformation* (Suffolk, 2006), 157-70.

of Mortification” offensive to puritans.⁵⁷ Moreover, the music’s variation signals a formal complexity that accords with the melodic ornateness Laudians favored. The tones and groans alternate to produce an elaborate, interwoven melodic texture. The polyphonic variation contrasts with the puritan preference for vocal and melodic uniformity. As we have seen in the poems on St. John and Simeon Stylites, “delicious” often signals an ascetic act becoming aesthetically pleasing to God. Here, the groans and sighs of the mortified Christian produce a holy music of mortification. The liturgical calendar, complex sacred music, and mortification are all mutually supportive as Beaumont depicts asceticism as aesthetically gratifying.

Beaumont finding compatibility between asceticism and the beauty of holiness locates Laudians in an ancient tradition of promoting continuity between the two. In the Syriac homily *On Hermits and Desert Dwellers* by Pseudo-Ephrem, the author makes the connection explicit:

Their bodies are temples of the Spirit, their minds are churches;
their prayer is pure incense, and their tears are fragrant smoke.

Their groaning is like the oblation; their psalmody like joyous melodies.

Their sighs are pearls, and their modesty is like beryl.⁵⁸

The lines could be describing a Laudian chapel-of-ease. Just like the groans that serve as oblation in P-Ephrem’s poem, the “Groanes / And dolorous Tones” that comprise Beaumont’s “Musik of Mortification” are equally pleasing (delicious) to God. Both Beaumont and the Syriac homily, therefore, uncover the beauty of holiness in a process of physical debilitation.

⁵⁷ See Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement, c. 1620-1643* (Cambridge, 1997), 61-4.

⁵⁸ Joseph P. Amar (transl.), *On Hermits and Desert Dwellers*, in *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook*, 66-80, 70.

Puritans could also discover aesthetic gratification through an ascetic process, just not one that entailed acts of corporal severity or beautiful religious ceremony. John Collings' *A Lesson of Self-Deniall: or, The true way to desirable Beauty* (1650) contains an extended account of this beautifying. Collings (1623/4-1691), who favored Presbyterian church government, was strongly influenced by Matthew Newcomen (John Rogers' successor) while a student at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and he would later become a Bartolomean in 1662. In the treatise, Collings describes the way to true beauty:

Hark, you that desire beauty, here's the way of beauty which you have not known; it is to deny your selves in all these things, and whatsoever else is contrary to the law of Christ, or short of him; yea, and this, 6. Shall make you desirably beauteous, that Christ shall desire you, and the Saints shall desire you; this is the way to ravish his heart.⁵⁹

The soul's beauty that ravishes Christ alludes to The Song of Solomon. Earlier in the treatise, Collings writes, "it implies, That the Lord Jesus Christ shall love such a soule, discovering in it a suitable excellency; he shall love it, his heart will be ravished with it, Cant. 4.9."⁶⁰ In The Song of Solomon, the Bridegroom exclaims, "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse." In contrast to Beaumont, Collings does not emphasize a corporal act that leads to beautification or compare that beauty to religious ceremony. For Collings, ascetic self-denial is chiefly composed of the following three elements: "To study every day more and more the vanitie of the creature"; "Converse little with your fathers house, have as little to doe with the world...as you can"; "Be more acquainted with Jesus Christ, get nearer to him, bee more in communion with him."⁶¹

⁵⁹ John Collings, *A Lesson of Self-Deniall: or, The way to desirable Beauty* (London, 1650), 83-4.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 87-8.

Study your vanity, do not converse with the world, and commune more with God. Collings documents a spiritual process that hallows the soul, not harrows the body. There is also a certain generality to the three enjoinders. “Be more acquainted with Jesus Christ,” is not that the sum of all Christian religion? The generality is indicative of a puritan asceticism that resists prescribed ascetic practices just as it resists prescriptive methods of prayer. Self-denial is enjoined, but its practical application rarely specified. Instead, it is left to the individual discretion of each holy soul.

The discretionary principle of puritan self-denial invariably complements (and compliments) the godly notion of a chosen few who would not need an exhaustive, how-to ascetic guide, but only a friendly reminder of self-denial’s place in Christian life. If, as Collings argues, the end of this discretionary asceticism is communion with God, then a fundamental disconnect exists between Anglicans and puritans over what could actuate such union. In a visitation sermon from 1633, the Laudian William Strode concludes, “For whether we dedicate our Goods, our Bodies, our Souls, or our Service, still we aime at a nearer Union of the creatures with God.” Strode then proceeds to advocate vows of virginity “or any other unusuall Abstinence, or work of Excellence” as a way in which the individual believer “might be bountifull towards Him” and “appear before him the more perfect.”⁶² In the discrepancy between vowing virginity or meditating on one’s own vanity enabling union with God, the fundamental difference between Anglican and puritan versions of asceticism is apparent. While both could conceive of asceticism as beautifying, a discrepancy lies in whether that ascetic practice primarily consists of a spiritual or corporal process.

⁶² William Strode, *A sermon preached at a visitation held at Lin in Norfolk, June the 24th anno 1633* (London, 1660), 6-7.

Puritan Asceticism and Renouncing the Self

If the beauty of holiness served as an organizing principle for Anglican asceticism, self-denial was equally central to puritan ascetic theory. Puritans believed so strongly in the denial of the self that some advocated a particularly extreme form of it: self-annihilation; that is, the complete extirpation of all subjectivity. Puritans treated the self with the same severity that Anglicans treated the body. It is clear that self-denial constitutes the puritan answer to corporal asceticism. As various examples have illustrated, when faced with the intolerable physical severity and superstition of Catholic and/or Anglican asceticism, puritans articulate a theory of self-denial.⁶³ The following pages will provide an introduction to puritan asceticism while also considering how it might complicate current theories of asceticism.

Indicating self-denial's place in puritan ascetic theory, Richard Baxter declares, "I take the *Love of God* and *Self-denial* to be the sum of all saving Grace and Religion."⁶⁴ John Cotton, in reference to Luke 9:23, similarly affirms, "this selfe-denyall is the first principle in Christianity."⁶⁵ Since it is so foundational, Matthew Lawrence cautions, "the setting up of Self, is the denying of the Faith, and a denying of God."⁶⁶ There are varying degrees of severity, though, as to how completely the self must be denied. For Baxter, self-denial constitutes a paradoxical process of sanctification through which man actually finds himself:⁶⁷

The illuminated soul is so much taken with the Glory and Goodness of the Lord, that it carrieth him out of himself to God, and as it were estrangeth him from himself, that he

⁶³ See "Asceticism and Confessionalism" above.

⁶⁴ Richard Baxter, *A Treatise of Self-Denial*, sig. A2^r.

⁶⁵ John Cotton, *A practicall commentary, or an exposition with observations, reasons, and vses upon the first Epistle generall of John* (London, 1658), 383.

⁶⁶ Matthew Lawrence, *The use and practice of faith* (London, 1657), 431.

⁶⁷ Cf. Samuel Rutherford, *Christ dying and drawing sinners to himself* (London, 1647), 358.

may have communion with God; and this makes him vile in his own eyes, and abhor himself in dust and ashes; He is lost in himself; and seeking God, he finds himself again in God.

Estranged from himself, there he finds himself more truly and more strange. As Richard Valantasis remarks, “becoming a stranger, therefore, stands at the heart of ascetic activity.”⁶⁸ In an interesting way, depravity does not preempt the estranged soul’s communion with God; it facilitates it. As he is carried towards God (nb. he is not “in God” at this point), the soul contemplates this potential communion and is overcome with abhorrence for itself. In this lost and desperately seeking state, God is found. Baxter describes a mystical process of the illuminated soul’s “communion with God.” The mystic St. John of the Cross summarizes *The Dark Night of the Soul* as showing how “this terrible night is purgatory, and how therein the divine wisdom illuminates men on earth with the same illumination which purges and illuminates the angels in heaven.”⁶⁹ In *Conjectura cabbalistica* (1653), Henry More understands one of the effects of God raising the “heavenly Principle” in man to be an ability to distinguish “betwixt the condition of a truly illuminated soul, and one that is as yet much benighted in ignorance, and estranged from the true knowledge of God.”⁷⁰ For Baxter, estrangement becomes a means for soulful illumination, not a sign of its absence. Baxter’s account of self-denial, though rigorous and alienating for one’s subjectivity, does not work towards the self’s complete nullification.

In *A Lesson of Self-Deniall* (1650), John Collings presents a harsher attitude towards the self, asking “Were your soules ever in such a true *bitternesse for sinne*, that it wrought in thee an

⁶⁸ Richard Valantasis, *The Making of the Self: Ancient and Modern Asceticism* (Oregon, 2008), 174.

⁶⁹ San Juan De La Cruz, *The Dark Night of the Soul*, transl. Gabriela Graham (London, 1905), 181.

⁷⁰ Henry More, *Conjectura cabbalistica* (London, 1653), 56.

indignation against your selves; that you could even *eat* your owne flesh, to think you should ever have been such a *vaine, wanton, wretch*, such a *proud sinner* as you have been?”⁷¹ Also employing the imagery of self-consumption, John Stalham (d. 1667), ejected for non-conformity in 1662, attests, “Joy in self, and joy in Christ, are heterogeneall, and of a contrary root and principle; And the later [sic] will and must (if the heart be upright) eat out, and consume the former.”⁷² In this grim communion, the self must be removed root and branch. The self-destructive cannibalism that Collings and Stalham implicate in self-denial also finds articulation in the violence that Christopher Wilson urges in *Self Deniall: or, A Christians Hardest Taske* (1625). Wilson recounts the function of grace during self-denial: “Grace teaches vs to take the Anotomizing knife of Gods word, and ripp vp our owne hearts, and makes vs willing and ready to acknowledge and confesse our sinnes vnto the Lord.”⁷³ Thomas Reeve, though no puritan, adopts similar language of anatomization while discussing self-denial: “And thus ye see, how repentance doth not onely anatomize, but atomize you, naught you, nusquam you, null you.”⁷⁴ Self-denial vaporizes the individual. The intensity of the violence (“eat your owne flesh”; eat joy in self; “ripp vp our owne hearts”; “atomize you”) is indicative of a more extreme conception of self-denial as annihilation. As these graphic metaphors indicate, even though they desperately want to, puritans are not able to exorcise entirely the spectre of physical austerity that still haunts asceticism. If they cannot escape it, though, they metaphor-ize—figurize—it, as a means of, at least, containment. By making corporal severity merely figural, puritans could retain the ascetic difficulty it denotes but redirect its bodily emphasis towards the soul or self.

⁷¹ John Collings, *A Lesson of Self-Deniall* (London, 1650), 62.

⁷² John Stalham, *Vindiciae redemptionis* (London, 1647), 164.

⁷³ Christopher Wilson, *Self-Deniall: or, A Christians Hardest Taske*, sig. F1^v.

⁷⁴ Thomas Reeve, *God’s plea for Nineveh* (London, 1657), 83.

Puritan ascetic theory, drawing especially on Galatians 2:20, frequently urges the nullification of self. The Calvinist Edward Polhill (bap. 1622, d. 1693/4?), appointed a Sussex county judge by the Barebone's Parliament, rapturously exclaims about the debasement called for in scripture: "Oh! what manner of self-denial doth it call for? how doth it labour to un-selve, and as it were un-man us, that God may be all in all?"⁷⁵ Like Polhill, John Stalham posits an inverse relationship between the absence of the self and the omnipresence of God: "He that shall more annihilate himself, shall finde more the creatures all in Christ; Christs all in him, for him, to him."⁷⁶ While Polhill and Stalham depict annihilation as enabling God's fullness, it is often represented as accompanied by self-emptying. This is the case in the ejected minister Thomas Watson's *The duty of self-denial* (1675), where Watson asserts, "But a Man must deny himself; this self-emptying, or self-annihilation is the Strait Gate through which a Christian must enter into the Kingdom of God."⁷⁷ Here, Watson articulates the ascetic ideal of *kenosis* ("κένωσις"), or self-emptying. Based on Christ's emptying of himself in Philippians 2:7—"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men"—many ascetics regarded this emptying as the goal of their austerities.⁷⁸ For instance, the Presbyterian minister Timothy Manlove urges, "Let this Mind be in us that was in Christ, who made himself of no Reputation...Let us exercise our selves frequently and solemnly in Self-Annihilation."⁷⁹ Watson's version of *kenosis* is particularly severe. He flatly asserts, "*Self* is an *Idol*, and it is hard to sacrifice this Idol; but this must be done."⁸⁰ Iconoclasm energizes the

⁷⁵ Edward Polhill, *Precious faith considered in its nature, working, and growth*, 34.

⁷⁶ John Stalham, *Vindiciae redemptionis*, 170.

⁷⁷ Thomas Watson, *The duty of self-denial* (London, 1675), 48.

⁷⁸ Kenneth Barker (ed.), *King James Study Bible* (Michigan, 2002).

⁷⁹ Timothy Manlove, *Praeparatio evangelica* (London, 1698), 159.

⁸⁰ Thomas Watson, *The duty of self-denial*, 48.

intensity of Watson's annihilation of self.⁸¹ For puritan advocates of self-denial, any strong affection risked idolatry. Samuel Smith's *The Character of a Weaned Christian. Or the Evangelical Art of promoting Self-denial* (1675) determines, Abraham "chose rather to be held Guilty of Murther, by the verdict of sense and carnal reason, than to be taxt of mental Idolatry, in an over-fond Affection to his Isaac."⁸² Unwillingness to kill one's son constituting idolatrous doting is not an easy idea to grasp. Like self-annihilation, it signifies one of the extreme lengths to which the doctrine of self-denial could be carried. Any idol, whether of the self or one's kin, had to be destroyed.

One of the fullest descriptions of the process of self-annihilation, particularly what comes after it, is supplied by the Presbyterian minister John Howe (1630-1705), ejected for non-conformity in 1662. In *The blessednesse of the righteous* (1668), Howe describes self-annihilation as "a pure nullifying of self."⁸³ When the soul has been "trained up in acts of mortification...through a continued course, and series of self-denyall," then "nothing now appears more becoming, than such a self-annihilation." What eventuates from this contraction of the self to nothing is, paradoxically, everything: "Self gives place that God may take it, becomes nothing, that he may be all. It vanishes, that his glory may shine the brighter." This is distinct from Baxter's description of a communion with God that results in the discovery of another self. In Howe's account, the self is simply superseded—nullified—by the ubiquity of God, by an "overcoming sense of his boundless, alsufficient, every where flowing fullness." By emptying the self, one can be filled with the fullness of God. In a remarkable culmination of this fullness, Howe, a Calvinist, describes the experience in the following way: "'Tis to live at the rate of a

⁸¹ For other puritans referring to the self as an idol, see John Stalham, *Vindiciae redemptionis*, 161.

⁸² Samuel Smith, *The Character of A Weaned Christian. Or The Evangelical Art of promoting Self-denial* (London, 1675), 8.

⁸³ John Howe, *The blessednesse of the righteous* (London, 1668), 123.

God; a God-like life. A living upon immense fulness, as he lives.”⁸⁴ The apotheosis that Howe records does not correspond to the Calvinist belief in the depravity of man. In order to retain some notion of man’s depraved condition in light of this deification, we must assume that self-annihilation is complete: the self has been totally eclipsed in order to facilitate this God-like state. It does not remain.

Howe’s example, and the others we have examined, of a complete nullification of the self are important because they offer an opportunity to revise some prominent theories about asceticism. In volume two of *The History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault regards asceticism as having primarily a self-forming function. Foucault includes sexual austerity under the “rule of conduct”: “that is, the manner in which one ought to form oneself as an ethical subject acting in reference to the prescriptive elements that make up the code.” There is “no forming of the ethical subject without ‘modes of subjectivation’ and an ‘ascetics’ or ‘practices of the self’ that support them.”⁸⁵ According to Foucault, then, asceticism is part of an ethical process that actuates subjectivity. Foucault’s theory of self-forming asceticism is, I think, clearly contradicted by evidence from the preceding writers. Geoffrey Galt Harpham has usefully critiqued Foucault’s ascetic theory in light of early Christian monasticism. Instead of self-forming, he proposes self-transcendence and self-unforming as descriptive of an ascetic reaction against the self.⁸⁶ The bloodless notion of self-unforming, though, does not adequately describe the violent process of annihilation—of rigorous extermination—these self-deniers attempt. The cannibalistic metaphors of eating one’s own flesh, heart, joy, or undergoing a process of

⁸⁴ Ibid., 124-27.

⁸⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, transl. Robert Hurley (New York, 1990), 26-8. Cf. 251. For an elaboration of Foucault’s views, see John Behr, *Asceticism and Anthropology in Irenaeus and Clement* (Oxford, 2000), 6-10; John Behr, “Shifting Sands: Foucault, Brown and the Framework of Christian Asceticism,” *The Heythrop Journal* 34 (1993), 1-21.

⁸⁶ Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *The Ascetic Imperative in Culture and Criticism*, 28.

atomization are not effectively conveyed in the relatively painless “self-unforming.”

Maintaining a sense of self-denial’s violence is important. Without it, we can lose sight of how puritans sought to create an asceticism that was every bit as rigorous with respect to the self as other forms of asceticism were towards the body. Foucault’s asceticism, then, is too self-invested and Harpham’s cannot account for the violence with which ascetic self-deniers invested a besieged self.

Finally, in addition to providing critiques of prevalent theories of asceticism, puritan self-annihilation demonstrates how problematic viewing the renaissance and early modern period as essentially individualistic can be. In the puritan ascetic theory we have examined, individualism, the will, agency, reason, and, most especially, the self, are not prized or sought after; rather, they are renounced. In Watson’s formulation, self is an idol that must be sacrificed. This is not a process of self-fashioning, but of self-demolition.⁸⁷ For self-annihilators, self-expression and self-fulfillment were not desirable realities, were not terms of praise, but rather Satanic impulses that had to be destroyed. In a sermon from 1649, the Smectymnuan Stephen Marshall fulminates, “self-love, self-preservation, self-interest, self-content, self-respect...is the Abaddon, the Apollion, the abomination that was all desolation, and certainly this ruins Kingdoms, ruins Commonwealths, overthrows Churches, it is the great waster that destroys all.”⁸⁸ If the self began to matter for the first time in the early modern era, then there was an equally strong impulse to annihilate it.

⁸⁷ See Jacob Burckhardt, transl. S.G.C. Middlemore, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (New York, 1904), 129; Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and the Arts: Collected Essays* (Princeton, 1964; repr. 1990), 65; Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, 1980; repr. 2005), 2. For critique of Renaissance individualism, see John J. Martin, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (New York, 2004), 127.

⁸⁸ Stephen Marshall, *The vvorks of Mr Stephen Marshall* (London, 1661), 115.

Transgressive Asceticism

One of the recurrent arguments of this study is that a different view of asceticism caused conflict between Anglicans and puritans. Though I am intent to emphasize this divergence between perspectives, and to suggest that it animates religious conflict in the 1630s and '40s, I also want to remain alert to where cracks emerge in this binary. Asceticism often produces a certain degree of doctrinal heterogeneity (as one chapter will discuss), for it is inherently transgressive. Patricia Cox Miller proposes the oxymoron as asceticism's natural medium, and Turid Seim theorizes the "chronic liminality" of ascetic practice.⁸⁹ Asceticism crosses all kinds of boundaries and feels constrained within existing ones. As we have seen, ascetics attempt to transgress the body—indeed, materiality itself—by turning themselves into all soul; they reject the self and, paradoxically, try to empty themselves of it; they disrupt social customs by devoting their lives to virginity or monasticism; and asceticism often confounds gendered distinctions as well. In his poem "S. Gregorie Nazianzen," Beaumont depicts Gregory and Basil of Caesarea as entering into matrimony because of their mutual vows of virginity: "Thus wert Thou [Gregory] married to thy Masculine Spouse: / When the Soule weds, no useless Sex she knows."⁹⁰ With this penchant for transgression, it is no wonder that ascetic statements often defy doctrinal bounds, putting Anglican (or even Catholic) words in the mouth of puritans and vice versa. It can really be no wonder, then, that these ascetics often do not fit neatly into the schematized boundaries I have proposed. To conclude this introductory section, I want to examine statements that cross the puritan/Anglican divide over asceticism. We have seen how radicals often cross this divide. If, as I am suggesting, there is something inherently unstable and volatile about

⁸⁹ Turid Karlsen Seim, "Children of the Resurrection: Perspectives on Angelic Asceticism in Luke-Acts," in Leif E. Vaage and Vincent L. Wimbush (eds.), *Asceticism and the New Testament* (New York, 1999), 115-26, 118.

⁹⁰ *Poems of Joseph Beaumont*, 268.

asceticism, especially its interaction with well-defined binaries, then we should find evidence of these transgressions in mainstream Anglicans and puritans as well.

Though Anglican encomiums to virginity often use marriage as a foil for the single life's elevation, notable exceptions are also prevalent. Even the eventual Catholic Richard Crashaw (1612/3-1648), whose poetry so extravagantly praises the Virgin Mary, carefully elevates virginity so as not to detract from marriage. In the epigram "On Marriage" (*Steps to the Temple* [1646]), Crashaw declares, "I would be married, but I'de have no Wife, / I would be married to a single Life" (1-2). Here, virginity is still circumscribed by marriage; it does not disarticulate, but rather *re-articulate*, marriage. Ironically, Crashaw takes that which negates marriage (virginity) and conceives of a married single life; and he finds in that which nullifies virginity (marriage) a virginal version of it. Instead of each term simply contradicting the other, Crashaw suspends the conflict in paradox. Indicating the intimate interconnection between the two, the speaker is betrothed to the single life, and the strength of his commitment to virginity draws on the ideal of marital fidelity. At the moment when celebrating virginity, Crashaw ingeniously manages to compliment marriage.

A similarly complex relationship between virginity and marriage appears in Jeremy Taylor's *The rule and exercises of holy living* (1650). Taylor (bap. 1613, d. 1667) benefitted from Laud's patronage and was appointed his chaplain in the late 1630s. In the section "Of Chastity" in *The rule and exercises of holy living*, Taylor asserts, "Virginity is a life of Angels, the enamel of the soul, the huge advantage of religion." The advantage enables its professor to engage in a mystical union, for "it is apt to converse with God." Virginity "flames out with holy fires, till it be burning like the Cherubim and the most extasied order of holy and unpolluted Spirits." After describing the conversation and ecstasy that can accompany virginity, Taylor

argues that “chosen and voluntary” virginity “is therefore better then the married life.” However, this qualification ensues:

not that it is more holy, but that it is a freedom from cares, an opportunity to spend more time in spiritual employments; it is not allayed with businesses and attendances upon lower affairs: and if it be a chosen condition to these ends; it containeth in it a victory over lusts, and greater desires of Religion, and self-denial, and therefore is more excellent then the married life, in that degree in which it hath greater religion, and a greater mortification, a lesse satisfaction of natural desires, & a greater fulnesse of the spiritual.⁹¹

Virginity is angelic, more apt to promote conversation with God, it can flame “with holy fires” similar to those experienced by “holy and unpolluted Spirits,” and yet it is not more holy than marriage. Isn’t virginity being superior to marriage “in that degree in which it hath greater religion” the equivalent of being holier? What is having “greater desires of Religion” and “greater religion” if not being more holy? Taylor falls all over his previous statements (and argumentative logic) in order to make a special allowance for matrimony. His is a much less subtle and convincing valuation of marriage than Crashaw, undermined as it is by a kind of frantic backpedaling. The tenuous logic of Taylor’s effort, though, draws attention to how spectacular it is. He is determined, even if it outrages sense, to make some allowance for marriage in light of virginity’s overweening sanctity. The determination evidences the complex (here, confused) relationship between praising virginity and denigrating marriage that the writing of Anglicans can evince.

⁹¹ Jeremy Taylor, *The rule and exercises of holy living* (London, 1650), 82.

Similar to how the Anglican valorization of virginity is subject to variety and complexity, so too is the puritan commitment to the sanctity of marriage. Zealous forms of self-denial could result in a disregard for matrimonial ties. In the Independent minister Jeremiah Burrough's (d. 1646) *Moses his self-denyall* (1641), he relates the story of the Marquess of Vico, Marcus Galeacius. After hearing a sermon by the Italian reformer Peter Martyr, Marcus reads scripture obsessively and decides to "change his former company, and to make choise of better." Galeacius resolves to "leave court, and father, and honours, and inheritance, to joyne himself to a true Church of God; and according to this his resolution he went away." Burroughs then depicts a poignant scene where "much meanes were used to call him backe": "His children hung about him with dolefull cryes, his friends standing by with watery eyes, which so wrought vpon his tender heart (hee being of a most loving and sweet disposition) that, as he hath often said, he thought that all his bowells rouled about within him...but he denyed himself in all."⁹² The rhyme of "cryes" and "eyes" heightens the scene's affective poignancy. In a cleverly synaesthetic way, it connects an aural phenomenon ("dolefull cryes") with an optical one ("watery eyes"), tangling the reader's emotional response in a complex and compelling web of sentiment and sensory crossings. The rhyme also reinforces the pathos evoked. "Eyes" and "cryes" are brought into close proximity through rhyme, and this results in a new compound that supplies the lines with another iteration of tearful grief: eyes *do* cry. The scene is reminiscent of John Bunyan's description of Christian taking leave from his family in *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678). There exists an interesting correspondence between the two texts. Before Christian leaves, he confesses to his family, "O my dear wife, said he, and you, the children of my bowels,

⁹² Jeremiah Burroughs, *Moses his self-denyall*, 32-4.

I your dear friend am in my self undone.”⁹³ Upon leaving, Galeacius’ “bowells rouled about within him,” and Christian addresses his children as being “of my bowels” before departing. Both texts emphasize the physical connection between father and children, making the forced disconnection seem unnatural and even more difficult. The connection is only implicit in Burroughs’ text, but, read in relation to Bunyan, his bowels must roll in a kind of physical revolt against the separation. Henry Burton concludes in a sermon from 1641, “deny our selves in those things, which otherwise we are bound to love by the Law of Nature. Trample upon thy Father, cast off thy wife and children, saith a Father, if they seeke to draw thee from Christ.”⁹⁴ The body finding Galeacius’ departure offensive signifies the Law of Nature rebelling. In a theology that seeks the subjection of the body, this reaction emphasizes the piety of Galeacius’ actions. As Burroughs’ celebration of Galeacius demonstrates, puritans could valorize an asceticism that, in its disassociation from the world and family, reproduces the eremitic life of monasticism.

John Everard’s *The Gospel treasury opened* (1657) also embraces the eremitic life, but it conceives of it as a type of spiritual—not physical—exile. Elizabeth Allen describes Everard (1584?–1640/41) as “the dominant figure influencing London separatism outside the Baptists” in the 1630s.⁹⁵ In the 1620s, Everard was an outspoken critic of the Spanish match, and in 1639 the Privy Council fined him the enormous sum of £1000 for his activities resisting the Laudian establishment. In a sermon from *The Gospel treasury opened*, Everard advocates self-annihilation as a way “to be emptie in our selves, to be Nothing.” This *kenosis* would

⁹³ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, ed. James Blanton Wharey, rev. Roger Sharrock (Oxford, 1928; rev. 1960), 8.

⁹⁴ Henry Burton, *A most godly sermon* (London, 1641), sig. A2^v.

⁹⁵ Elizabeth Allen, “Everard, John (1584?–1640/41),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/8998>, accessed 29 June 2013].

undoubtedly have appealed to Everard's mystical interests, evidenced as they are by his translation of P-Dionysius and the influence the Dominican contemplative tradition and Henry Niclaes exerted on him. To accomplish this emptying, what Everard refers to as "Iness or Selfness" must be removed: "but these things, Iness and Selfness, being let in, These, these things make us deformed; this is that makes us like the Devil himself."⁹⁶ The removal of "Iness" is achieved by a studied detachment from, and a disciplined indifference towards, the things of this world. The detached man "if he have Wife, Children, Honours, Riches, &c. he sets not his heart on them."⁹⁷ As Everard explains, "If ye love Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Goods, Honour, Credit what great acts have ye done? what have you done more then Heathens do? But as ye are Christians, I injoyn you A Love above all these: You are to love, That Noble, that Divine, that Internal part that is in them." Not loving them, but loving God in them achieves the "Abdication I speak of."⁹⁸ When one can manifest this disinterested detachment towards his relations and the world, he can reach the ultimate goal of self-annihilation. Namely, to become "a sequestered man which hath lost all that ever he hath in this world."⁹⁹ Importantly, the use of "sequester" attributes a monastic connotation to the self-denial Everard describes. It is a word often applied to isolation (i.e. sequestration) in a monastery. In Robert Crofts' *The terrestriall paradise* (1639), he criticizes those who would "sequester our selves for fear / Into a Monastery."¹⁰⁰ Moreover, the English translation of Scipione Mazzella's history of Naples, *Parthenopoeia* (1654), depicts Charles V's abdication as removing himself "from so many Thrones to enter himself into a Monastery (or Hermitage rather) that by that reclus'd life he

⁹⁶ John Everard, *The Gospel treasury opened* (London, 1657), 232-33.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 238.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 246.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 238.

¹⁰⁰ Robert Crofts, *The terrestriall paradise* (London, 1639), 57.

might sequester himself from all mundane negotiations and delights.”¹⁰¹ By using “sequester,” Everard attributes a monastic sensibility to self-denial. Thus, Everard’s self-annihilation recreates cenobitic indifference towards the world in one’s emotional disposition towards, not physical dislocation from, it. One does not leave his family, but loves them (in)differently. This is the emotional and spiritual equivalent of monastic sequestration.

Instead of removing the body to a monastery, puritan self-denial brings monasticism within the soul of each individual believer. Max Weber argued that puritan asceticism is “inner-worldly asceticism,” a more rational, practical, and secular version of Catholic monasticism.¹⁰² For Everard, puritan self-denial is still very much otherworldly; the otherworldliness derives, not from isolation in a monastery, but the location of a monastic disregard for the world in the soul. Otherworldliness is resituated in the world. The dichotomy that Weber formulates between inner-worldly Protestant and otherworldly Catholic asceticism is, therefore, more complexly dialectical. The door is not, finally, slammed on the monastery, for its passageway still stands open in the spiritual life of each sequestered man.¹⁰³ Basil of Caesarea’s famous second letter (c. 358 C.E.) to Gregory Nazianzen aptly describes this kind of virtual asceticism: “Now one way of escaping all this is separation from the whole world; that is, not bodily separation, but the severance of the soul’s sympathy with the body, and to live so without city, home, goods, society, possessions, means of life, business, engagements, human learning, that the heart may readily receive every impress of divine doctrine.”¹⁰⁴ Basil’s exhortation to escape the world while still residing in it encapsulates the inner-worldly otherworldliness puritan asceticism often tried to

¹⁰¹ Scipione Mazzella, *Parthenopoeia* (London, 1654), 2.

¹⁰² My translation by Parsons has “worldly,” though this has been rejected by later editors of Weber’s work. See Richard Swedberg, *The Max Weber Dictionary: Key Words and Central Concepts* (Stanford, 2005), 10.

¹⁰³ See Weber 154.

¹⁰⁴ *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series, Volume VIII—Basil: Letters and Select Works*, ed. and transl. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Massachusetts, 1961; repr. New York, 2007), 359-60.

achieve. Ultimately, the paradox of worldly monasticism and a celebration of virginity that still glorifies marriage points to the peculiar genius of early modern asceticism: it was resilient, adaptable, and creative enough to accommodate divergent Anglican and puritan ascetic views even in moments of their convergence. The purpose of this study is to explain something of its resiliency and creative genius.

Chapter 1

Reconsidering Laud: Puritans and Anglican Asceticism

A major debate in the religious history of early modern England has been whether the Caroline/Laudian Church (1625-45) disrupted the consensus between Anglicans and Calvinists that the Jacobean Church (1603-1625) tenuously maintained. Nicholas Tyacke's seminal study, *Anti-Calvinists* (1987), argues that the Caroline Church did disrupt the Jacobean, Calvinist consensus by promoting liturgical innovations (ceremonialism), appointing Arminians to ecclesiastical positions where Calvinists had once been, and punctiliously enforcing religious conformity through the policies of Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645), whom Patrick Collinson once referred to as the "greatest calamity ever visited on the Church of England."¹⁰⁵ Tyacke's rise of anti-Calvinism thesis has not gone unchallenged. Historians have contended that Arminianism played a minimal role in creating religious discord (Davies), that the degree of consensus in the Jacobean Church has been misunderstood (White), and that Laud was far more conciliar in enforcing conformity than his reputation as that "Little hocus pocus" has allowed.¹⁰⁶ Though the conflicting arguments may seem like the esoteric niceties of theological dispute, it is important to understand the Laudian Church because of religion's role in the English Civil Wars (1642-46, 1648-9), which John Morrill has even called the "last of the Wars of Religion."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987). Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society, 1559-1625* (Oxford, 1982), 90.

¹⁰⁶ Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church: Charles I and the Remoulding of Anglicanism 1625-1641* (Oxford, 1992). Peter White, "The *via media* in the Early Stuart Church," in Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (Stanford, 1993), 211-230. Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992), 291. For an overview of the debate, see Kevin Sharpe *Remapping Early Modern England: The culture of seventeenth-century politics* (Cambridge, 2000), 345-57; David R. Como, "Predestination and Political Conflict in Laud's London," *The Historical Journal* 46 (2003), 263-94, 266 n. 5.

¹⁰⁷ J.S. Morrill, "The religious context of the English civil war," *Trans. Royal. Hist. Soc.* 34 (1984), 155-78, 178. See also Glenn Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion? The Evidence of Political Propaganda," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 61 (1998), 173-201; Edward Vallance, "Preaching to the Converted: Religious

While the debate over Jacobean and Caroline continuity has been extensive and vigorous, rarely have the terms of that debate been questioned. Most fundamentally, have we fully understood what constitutes Laudianism? This essay argues that we have not.

The following pages attempt a revision of religious historiography of the Laudian movement by positing asceticism as an important component of Laudianism. Scholarship of the Laudian Church has rarely made mention of asceticism.¹⁰⁸ Austin Warren and Anthony Milton do mention it, and this present study is indebted to their scholarship. But more work still needs to be done. Warren and Milton spend a combined five pages on the topic, and each observes only two of its three components.¹⁰⁹ Laudian asceticism consists of valorizing virginity (spiritual *and* physical), monasticism, and bodily mortification. As we will see, with their emphasis on asserting the rights of the church (monasticism), supererogatory acts (virginity), and imitating patristic asceticism (mortification), the valuations exemplify three characteristics of the Laudian Church: clericalism, anti-Calvinism, and patristicism. These valuations also provoked an intensely polemical response. I will document some of that response, for polemical anti-Laudianism reflects, distorts, and, to some extent, corroborates Laudian asceticism. By proposing the asceticism, this essay intervenes in religious historiographical debate by reevaluating what

Justification for the English Civil War," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 65 (2002), 395-419; D. Alan Orr, "Sovereignty, Supremacy and the Origins of the English Civil War," *History* 87 (2002), 474-490.

¹⁰⁸ Representing a selected bibliography of Laudian scholarship, see H.R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645* (London, 1963); Robert S. Bosher, *The Making of the Restoration Settlement: The Influence of the Laudians 1649-1662* (New York, 1951); Charles Carlton, *Archbishop William Laud* (London, 1987); Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995); Graham Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honor: The Arts of the Anglican Counter-Reformation* (Suffolk, 2006); L.J. Reeve, *Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule* (Cambridge, 1989); Davies, op. cit.; Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford, 2009); Tyacke, op. cit.; Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church*; Achsah Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton: Literature, Religion, and Cultural Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1998); and Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I*, 275-402.

¹⁰⁹ Austin Warren, *Richard Crashaw: A Study in Baroque Sensibility* (Michigan, 1939; repr. 1957), 8-10; Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 317-8.

constitutes Laudianism and advancing a new way in which the Laudian Church diverges from Jacobean Calvinism.

William Watts' sermon *Mortification Apostolicall* (1637) presents the most comprehensive (though not the only) account of the Laudian view of mortification.¹¹⁰ Watts (c. 1590-1649) is perhaps most well-known for having been Prince Rupert's chaplain and writing an account of the prince's adventures in the 1640s. Watts was also a committed Laudian. He wrote a tract defending the surplice, and the end of *Mortification Apostolicall* criticizes those who too highly value sermons.¹¹¹ Requiring the surplice and curbing excessive preaching were both Laudian policies intended to suppress non-conformity (or ferret it out). Before becoming Prince Rupert's chaplain, Watts served as chaplain to Laud's friend and political ally Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford. In 1638, Laud attempted to secure preferment for Watts. Though Laud was ultimately unable to prefer Watts because of the number of the king's chaplains-in-ordinary also seeking advancement, in a letter to Strafford he reassures him, "Yet this you shall be sure of, I will slip no opportunity till I have done somewhat."¹¹² Laud's resolute assurance witnesses Watts' place and preferability within the Laudian establishment.

Mortification Apostolicall argues for the holiness and necessity of mortification. Watts describes those mortifying as destroying sin (6). That description is consistent with the Calvinist definition of mortification as killing, or dying to, sin. Watts, though, goes farther. In contradistinction to Calvinists, the sermon claims that mortification takes place not only in the

¹¹⁰ See also John Pocklington, *Altare Christianum* (London, 1637), 38, 04 [sic, i.e. 40]; see Richard Montagu, *Immediate addresse vnto God alone* (London, 1624), 182 for his approval of *scleragogie*.

¹¹¹ William Watts, *Mortification apostolicall* (London, 1637), 47. Subsequent references to page numbers will appear in-text.

¹¹² William Laud, *Works*, 7 vols. (Oxford, 1847-1860; repr. New York, 1975), 6.557. All quotations of Laud's works are from this edition. See Kenneth Fincham, "William Laud and the Exercise of Caroline Ecclesiastical Patronage." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 51 (2000), 69-93, 81 on Watts' preferment.

soul, but also *on* the body. To this end, Watts advocates robustly corporal mortifying. His mortification consists of barefoot processions (3, 19, 45); “praying prostrate in Sack cloath and afhes” (4); the hermetic life (10), including living in a cell or the wilderness (27-28); avoiding all women if one is prone to lust (24); hard labor (30); “extream long fasting” (41); and late watchings and an observance of “Canonicall howers” (46-7). Rather provocatively, Watts uses church father Origen—notorious for his self-castration—as a paragon of apostolic mortification and virginity: “Take Origens experience, for your encouragement” (9). This kind of appeal to patristic (i.e. apostolic) example occurs throughout *Mortification Apostolicall*, and it is symptomatic of Laudian patristicism. Jean-Louis Quantin characterizes that patristicism as a movement away from Continental reformers back to the Greek and Latin fathers (like Origen).¹¹³ Julian Davies locates the movement’s motivation in the following: “For the Laudian mind the traditions of the early Church constituted the context in which both the Church and the Bible had origin and meaning.”¹¹⁴ *Mortification Apostolicall* seeks to recover those traditions in all their austerity. As Watts boasts at the sermon’s beginning (while justifying a seeming divergence from patristic precedent), “I glory to be an imitator of the holy Primitives” (2).

By promoting this austerity, Watts inveighs against what he perceives as a bowdlerizing of mortification: “Some of our New Writers, handle this Doctrine, fomething delicately. One English Commentator upon my Text; puts it under Repentance: and another, under Regeneration” (18). These “new” (i.e. non-apostolic) writers are Calvinists. For example, the Scottish Presbyterian Robert Bruce refers to repentance as mortification, and William Perkins articulates how mortification, repentance, and regeneration are related: “In whomsoever this worke of regeneration is wrought, there is euer found the action of mortification, for he that is

¹¹³ Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*, 170.

¹¹⁴ Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church*, 51.

resolved to endeuer his godly repentance, and laboureth the reformation of his sinfull life, must labour two things principally and of necessarie [sic], Mortification and Regeneration.”¹¹⁵ The delicacy of Bruce and Perkins’ handling consists in their disassociation of the body from mortification.

Calvinist Jacobean clergymen also perform the disassociation. In his commentary on the epistle of Paul to Titus (1612), Thomas Taylor impugns severe mortifiers, particularly the pride of hermits and anchorites, those using barefoot processions, and the mortifiers who look “for heauen as a reward for the strictnesse of their liues.”¹¹⁶ Similarly, Robert Jenison’s *The Christians appareling by Christ* (1625) criticizes the recluses who “mew themselues vp in Cloysters, as men mortified to the world.”¹¹⁷ Even William Barlow, the Bishop of Lincoln with Calvinist sympathies whom Anthony Milton refers to as an “avant-garde” conformist, rejects many of the mortifying deeds that Watts recommends.¹¹⁸ In *An answer to a Catholike English-man* (1609), Barlow singles out “Almes, deeds, Watchings, wearing haire-cloth, and the like” as especially objectionable.¹¹⁹ Finally, questioning the larger rationale of corporal mortification, Joseph Hall asks in *Quo vadis?* (1617), “looke into the melancholike cels of some austere Recluses; there you may finde perhaps an hairecloth, or a whip, or an heardle; but shew me true mortification, the power of spirituall renouation of the soule?”¹²⁰ Watts’ preoccupations with the body, then, must miss any opportunity for renovating the soul. With their condemnation of watchings, haircloth, monastic and hermetic life, and barefoot processions, the writings of these

¹¹⁵ Robert Bruce, *The way to true peace and rest* (London, 1617), 350; William Perkins, *A garden of spirituall flowers* (London, 1610), sig. D2^r. Cf. Thomas Granger, *Commentarie on Ecclesiastes* (London, 1621), 158.

¹¹⁶ Thomas Taylor, *A commentarie vpon the Epistle of S. Paul written to Titus* (Cambridge, 1612), 465.

¹¹⁷ Robert Jenison, *The Christians apparelling by Christ* (London, 1625), 363-4.

¹¹⁸ Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 23.

¹¹⁹ William Barlow, *An answer to a Catholike English-man* (London, 1609), 75.

¹²⁰ Joseph Hall, *Quo vadis?* (London, 1617), 78.

Jacobean Calvinists could be collected and entitled, *Animadversions on a late sermon by W. Watts called Mortification Apostolicall*.

Watts' contemporaries also took issue with the sermon. As Anthony à Wood notes, *Mortification Apostolicall* "gave great offence to the Puritan."¹²¹ That offense is apparent in the Scottish Presbyterian Robert Baillie's *Ladensium Autokatakrisis* (1641). Baillie adduces *Mortification Apostolicall* while refuting the Laudian affinity for monasticism, including the belief that monks' "barefooted proceffions through the ftreets, that their Canonick houres of devotion, at midnight in their Cloisters...is all commendable service."¹²² The Laudian emphasis on corporal mortification may also motivate Hezekiah Woodward's criticism of Laud's unmortified lust in *The life and death of VVilliam Lawd* (1645). Woodward, an eventual chaplain of Cromwell's and militant Calvinist, uses Laud as a cautionary tale: "But this man, we have spoken of, is sufficient alone to presse us to this Christian duty. Pride of life was notorious [sic] in him; and he was so farre from shewing any care to mortifie that lust, that he did all to give life and strength unto it." Laud's bad example causes Woodward to exhort his audience, "we must lead our lust captive; throw it down, from its dominion, casting it-out of our hearts from having place there, in our affections" (37).¹²³ Woodward locates mortification in the heart; his is an inward mortifying in which the body is not at all the focus. Thus, *The life and death of VVilliam Lawd* envisions a type of mortification very much the opposite of that which Laudianism—à la Watts—advocated.

¹²¹ Anthony à Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses* (London, 1691), 831.

¹²² I am quoting from its first London printing (1641), rather than its first printing (Amsterdam, 1640). Robert Baillie, *Ladensium Autokatakrisis* (London, 1641), 79-80. Cf. William Prynne, *Canterburies Doome* (London, 1646), 208.

¹²³ Hezekiah Woodward, *The life and death of VVilliam Laud* (London, 1645), 36-7.

Though clear divisions emerge between puritan and Anglican views of mortification based on Watts' work, this is not to say that overlap does not also exist. One mortifying practice advocated by both puritans and Anglicans illustrates this. Fasting was a practice integral to puritanism. Tom Webster observes an "experiential radicalisation" in "the voluntary devotions of Puritans in England" during the 1630s.¹²⁴ One of the features of that radicalization was private fasting. Laudians even tried to limit the widespread practice of private fasting, viewing it—like conventicles—as a way to subvert ecclesiastical authority (or conducive to actions that did).¹²⁵ Despite its integral importance to puritanism, a wide variety of puritan opinion exists about fasting. To illustrate this variance, no one less than Thomas Cartwright embraces wearing sackcloth and watchings during times of fasting in his 1582 treatise *The holy exercise of a true fast*.¹²⁶ Generally, though, puritans reject severe fasting (and many of its austere accoutrements like sackcloth, ashes, and watchings) and an emphasis on the body during the period of abstinence. For instance, in *The doctrine of fasting and praier* (1633), Arthur Hildersam cautions, "Bodily exercise profiteth little...But godlinesse (whereof the inward afflicting of the soule, and mortifying of our lusts is a chief part) is profitable unto all things."¹²⁷ With a similar nod to 1 Timothy 4:8, Humphrey Chambers asserts in a 1643 sermon before Parliament, "true, it is, that the substance of the duty of religious fasting stands not in these, or any bodily acts, and exercises whatsoever."¹²⁸ Considering their concerted effort to avoid making fasting about bodily exertion, it is no wonder that puritans reject extreme fasts. In William Attersoll's "The

¹²⁴ Tom Webster, "Early Stuart Puritanism," in John Coffey and Paul C.H. Lim (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge, 2008), 48-66, 60.

¹²⁵ See Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999), 165.

¹²⁶ Thomas Cartwright, *The holy exercise of a true fast* (Scotland?, 1582), 15-7.

¹²⁷ Arthur Hildersam, *The doctrine of fasting and praier* (London, 1633), 58.

¹²⁸ Humphrey Chambers, *A divine balance to weigh religiovs fasts in applied to present vse in a sermon preached before the honourable House of Commons in S. Margarets Westminster at their publique fast Sept 27, 1643* (London, 1643), 16.

conversion of Nineveh: opening the doctrine and practise of prayer and fasting, as also of faith and repentance” in *Three treatises* (1633), he asks about severe mortification, “what commendation of patience can arise to them, that afflict themselves, and suffer willingly from their own hands?”¹²⁹ In *Compunction or pricking of heart* (1648), R.J. derides the “civill formalist, superstitious and meriting Papist who spares not his own body, but macerates it with whippings, fastings or pilgrimages.”¹³⁰ Samuel Smith’s *The Character of a Weaned Christian* (1675) argues that Paul “censures all monastic, self-imposed Severities, which spare not the Body” and includes under this censure “immoderate Fastings.”¹³¹

Puritans are so anxious about avoiding these “immoderate Fastings,” and the will-worshipping idolatry of Roman Catholic practices, that they could make the body completely disappear during fasts. For instance, in *The Christians sanctuarie vvhetherinto being retired, he may safely be preserued in the midst of all dangers* (1604), the Calvinist George Downame includes a treatise on “The Christian exercise of Fasting.” In the treatise, Downame rejects corporal practices such as “sitting in the ashes, the renting of their cloths, their girding of themselves with sackcloth, their putting of earth upon their heads, and such like” as superseded Old Testament ceremonies that also have a popish connotation.¹³² Instead, he articulates a conception of fasting in which the body fades into obscurity: “the fasts of Christians are rather spiritually to be observed, than carnally. Wherefore let vs principally fast from sinne...principally therefore let our mind fast from euill.”¹³³ Defining fasts as an abstinence from sin obviates the need for any bodily expression at all. Downame leaves it entirely up to the

¹²⁹ William Attersoll, *Three treatises* (London, 1633), 37.

¹³⁰ R.J., *Compunction or pricking of heart* (London, 1648), 318.

¹³¹ Samuel Smith, *The character of a weaned Christian* (London, 1675), 56-7.

¹³² George Downame, *The Christians sanctuarie vvhetherinto being retired, he may safely be preserued in the midst of all dangers* (London, 1604), 55.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 44.

individual godly believer whether any exercise “to observe the outward fast” is even required.¹³⁴

Regarding fasting as a spiritual, rather than a carnal, observation is in definitional conflict with how Jeremy Taylor defines fasting in *The great exemplar of sanctity and holy life according to the Christian institution* (1649): “Fasting is principally operative to mortification of carnall appetites, to which feasting and full tables do minister aptnesse, and power, and inclinations.”¹³⁵

Downname would agree with Taylor’s proposition that fasting should mortify carnal appetites, and Taylor would no doubt assent to Downname’s belief in the importance of spiritual observation, but whereas Downname could conceive of fasting without the body, Taylor could not. As Taylor argues earlier in the work, “the body is the shop, and forge of the soul.”¹³⁶

The extrapolation from Downname and Taylor’s basic premises about fasting could result in significant divergence as to what corporal exercises aid the practice. For instance, Taylor argues,

Hard lodging, uneasie garments, laborious postures of prayer, journeys on foot, sufferance of cold, paring away the use of ordinary solaces, denying every pleasant appetite, rejecting the most pleasant morsells; these are in the rank of *bodily exercises*, which though (as S. Paul sayes) of themselves *they profit little*, yet they accustome us to acts of self-denyall in exteriour instances and are not uselesse to the designes of mortifying carnall and sensuall lusts.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Ibid., 55.

¹³⁵ Jeremy Taylor, *The great exemplar of sanctity and holy life according to the Christian institution* (London, 1649), 157.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 125.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 158.

The careful and qualified place Taylor finds for bodily exercises (“are not uselesse”) contrasts with Chambers’ complete and unqualified rejection of them (“the substance of the duty of religious fasting stands not in these...whatsoever”). If one begins with a premise viewing the body as an integral part of fasting, then the inclusion of these kinds of austere practices could be justified. To puritans, they would signify the corruption of spiritual fasting by officious and harmful bodily concerns. With their concerted bodily emphasis, Taylor’s views are descriptive of those of William Watts and, as we shall see, Henry Mason. Ultimately, then, whereas profound disagreement exists between puritans and Anglicans over the doctrine of virginity and monasticism—what they are, and whether or not they are even lawful—the disagreements over fasting are more about discipline. No puritan or Anglican would claim fasting as unimportant, but the extent of the body’s importance during fasts could occasion considerable disagreement. The fault-lines are much more pronounced when it comes to the Laudian affinity for monasticism: it was heavily contested.¹³⁸ The affinity diverges from Jacobean Calvinism and from Reformation Protestantism’s general condemnation of monastic practices.¹³⁹ Condemnation is evident, for instance, in Calvin derogating monasteries as “starke brothelhouses.”¹⁴⁰ Specifically, I want to consider positive appraisals of monasticism in the work of John Weever and William Strode and, more largely, why these appraisals occur in their anti-sacrilege works. Resisting sacrilege and recovering church possessions from lay ownership were central policies of the Laudian Church. Laud attacked impropriation at its financial source by working to

¹³⁸ Milton notes a favorable attitude in Hausted and Montagu (*Catholic and Reformed* 317). Cf. Thomas Turner, *A sermon preached before the King at White-Hall* (London, 1635), 30-31; Peter Heylyn, *The historie of that most famous saint and souldier of Christ Iesus; St. George of Cappadocia* (London, 1631), 349.

¹³⁹ See Martin Luther, *A commentarie of M. Doctor Martin Luther vpon the Epistle of S. Paul to the Galathians* (London, 1575), 220; Theodore Beza, *Master Bezaes sermons vpon the canticle of canticles* (Oxford, 1587), 241-2.

¹⁴⁰ John Calvin, *Sermons vpon the Epistle of Sainte Paule to the Galathians* (London, 1574), 274.

dissolve the feoffment, the puritan corporation that bought in impropriations, in 1632.¹⁴¹ The Laudian campaign against sacrilege exemplifies L.J. Reeve's description of Laudian clericalism: Laud "sought to reduce the power of the laity in the Church and promoted the rights of Convocation, High Commission and ecclesiastical property, as well as the idea of episcopacy *jure divino*."¹⁴² As we will see, Weever and Strode illustrate how praise of monasticism strengthens anti-sacrilege arguments. The praise ultimately serves, then, a clericalist end; it is a means by which the case against sacrilege could be more forcefully made.

John Weever's antiquarian work, *Ancient funerall monuments*, was published in 1631. The work indicates its Laudian sympathies by complimenting Laud's munificence in contributing to the rebuilding of St. Paul's Cathedral. Weever also commends Laud in his capacity as Bishop of London (1628-33), claiming that the bishopric "at this day is right worthily ruled, ouerseene, and guided by the right reuerend Father in God, and prudent States-man, *William Laud*, one of his Maiesties most honourable priuie Councill."¹⁴³ Commending Laud's governance, oversight, and guidance of the London see is tantamount to commending Laudianism. Laudian sympathies are also apparent in Weever's acute criticism of impropriations.¹⁴⁴ About the fate of churches connected to monasteries after the dissolution, Weever remarks, "which Churches, when the Abbeyes and Monaferies were fuppreffed, became Laye Fees, to the great damage of the Church."¹⁴⁵ The suppression of monasticism was part of a series of events deleterious to the church. Such implicit approval of monasticism becomes

¹⁴¹ For Laud and the feoffees, see John Parker Lawson, *The Life and Times of William Laud, D.D.* 2 vols. (London, 1829), 1.549-555; for Laudians preaching against sacrilege, see Thomas Laurence, *Two Sermons* (Oxford, 1635), 22-23; Richard Bayly, *The Shepheards Starre* (London, 1640), 58-60.

¹⁴² L.J. Reeve, *Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule*, 65.

¹⁴³ John Weever, *Ancient funerall monuments* (London, 1631), sig. A1^v; 383.

¹⁴⁴ See also the Laudian antiquarian Sir Henry Spelman's, *The larger treatise concerning tithes* (London, 1647), 159.

¹⁴⁵ John Weever, *Ancient funerall monuments*, 183.

explicit when Weever responds to those who find it “vnpleasing” that he “extoll[s] the ardent pietie of our forefathers in the erecting of Abbeyes, Priories, and such like sacred Foundations.”

Sacred foundations like monasteries are not an unpleasant subject, for

I hold it not fit for vs to forget, that our Ancestours were, and we are of the Christian profession, and that there are not extant any other more conspicuous and certaine Monuments of their zealous deuotion towards God, then these Monasteries with their endowments, for the maintenance of religious persons, neither any other seed-plots besides these, from whence Christian Religion and good literature were propagated ouer this our Island.¹⁴⁶

Here, Weever affirms monasteries’ reputation as seminaries (from the Latin word for “seed” [*semen*]) by referring to them as “seed-plots.” Whereas some Calvinists might argue that these brothel-house-monasteries have propagated only the French disease, Weever claims that zealous and devotional Christianity has sprung from them—paradoxically, from their virginal practices. Indeed, Weever’s metaphor of the monastery as healthfully generative seed may contest indictments of monastic uncleanness or virginal sterility.

In the passage, Weever alludes (as he earlier notes) to these sentences from William Camden’s *Britannia* (1610):

Our ancestoures were, and we are of the Chriftian profeffion when as there are not extant any other more confpicuous, and certaine Monuments, of their piety, and zealous

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., sig. A1^r. See also Sir Henry Spelman, *The history and fate of sacrilege* (London, 1698), 227-28.

devotion toward God. Neither were there any other feed-gardens from whence Christian Religion, and good learning were propagated over this ifle, howbeit in corrupt ages fome weeds grew out over ranckly.¹⁴⁷

The allusion also significantly alters Camden's text.¹⁴⁸ Weever completes the comparative clause that Camden leaves in suspense. *Ancient funerall monuments'* inclusion of "then these Monasteries" after "zealous deuotion towards God" links devotion to monasticism more emphatically than *Britannia*. Insistence on the link also manifests itself in Weever's "neither any other seed-plots besides these." While Camden writes that "neither were there any other feed-gardens from whence," Weever more clearly articulates the role of monasteries in being "seed-plots" through his inclusion of the demonstrative "these"; its subject is, of course, monasteries. These slight syntactical alterations and additions make monasticism more consistently and conspicuously present. And finally, perhaps most significantly, Weever makes no qualification about his monastic praise by acknowledging the "weeds" that could grow rank. Instead of including such a qualification, more praise of building "sacred edifices" like monasteries ensues.¹⁴⁹ His is an unqualified encomium of English monasticism evidenced by (and in) the changes he makes to Camden's text.

Consider how sharply this encomium contrasts with the attitude towards monastic dissolution in *A briefe description of the whole world* (1636) by George Abbot, the Calvinist

¹⁴⁷ William Camden, *Britannia* (London, 1610), unfol. ("To the Reader").

¹⁴⁸ See Robert J. Mayhew, "'Geography is Twinned with Divinity': The Laudian Geography of Peter Heylyn," *Geographical Review* 90 (2000), 18-34, for a discussion of the Laudian appropriation of Camden.

¹⁴⁹ John Weever, *Ancient funerall monuments*, sig. A1^v.

whom James I appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1611.¹⁵⁰ Abbot argues that the external beauty and “fairenesse” of “Abbeyes” and “Religious Houses” before the dissolution were but an excremental whiteness:

Whereof there were a very great number in this Kingdome [of abbeyes and religious houses], which did eate up much of the wealth of the Land; but especially those which lived there, giving themselves to much filthinesse, and divers sorts of uncleannesse, did so draw downe the vengeance of God upon those places, that they were not only dissolved, but almost utterly defaced by King *Henry* the eight.¹⁵¹

With a definite irony, whereas previously the monasteries’ exterior fairness had hid interior corruption, after the dissolution their outward disfigurement (defacement) now corresponds to their inward deformity. The irony exhibits the collocation between appraisal (or condemnation) of monastic piety and attitude towards dissolution, sacrilege, and impropriations we are tracing. In contrast to the criticism of dissolution/impropriation and emphasis on monastic piety found in Weever, Abbot argues that monastic dissolution was divine retribution for flagitious living. The impropriations and sacrilege that resulted—and that furthered the monasteries’ defacement—were brought on the monks by themselves. This reasoning helps us understand how praise of monasticism connects to the anti-sacrilege argument of *Ancient funerall monuments*.

Emphasizing the holiness of monastic life underscores the impious spoliation the church has endured; making monasticism more respectable makes lay seizure of monastic lands all the more

¹⁵⁰ It was first published in 1599, but I am quoting from its 1636 edition because of its contemporaneity with the Laudian ascendancy.

¹⁵¹ George Abbot, *A briefe description of the whole world* (London, 1636), 204-5. Cf. William Prynne, *An exact chronological history and full display of popes intollgrable usurpations* (London, 1666), 293.

disreputable. Or, in the words of Queen Margaret from Shakespeare's *Richard III*, "Bett'ring thy loss makes the bad causer worse."¹⁵² *Ancient funerall monuments* demonstrates, then, the vested interest anti-sacrilege arguments have in monastic appreciation. It could only make them stronger and further their clericalist ends.

The number of tracts in the 1640s that connect the Laudian Church to England's monastic past are responding (partly) to the Laudian valorization of monastic piety.¹⁵³ The most virulent response to that valorization could take the form of imputing uncleanness to Laud and his church. The consummate example of the imputation is William Prynne's *A Breviate*. The *Breviate* was assembled in 1644 while Prynne was prosecuting Laud for high treason in Parliament, and it consists of selections from Laud's diary that Prynne adduces (and alters) as indicative of Laud's treasonous popery.

Among Prynne's many accusations, he suggests Laud's sexual immorality. Prynne makes the suggestion by employing this 1609 entry from Laud's diary: "my next unfortunateness was with E.M."¹⁵⁴ He then claims this entry proves that Laud "fell into another greivious sinne (perchance uncleannesse) with E. M." How "my next unfortunateness was with E.M." adds up to sodomy is never explained. Nonetheless, Prynne assuredly corroborates Laud's uncleanness by repeating the charge on the next page. This time it is with E.B. (perhaps Laud had a weakness for initials), and he presents a later event as divine vengeance for these unclean lapses. Prynne writes, "September 16, 1617. He was very likely to have been burnt by fier in St. John's Colledge in Oxford, for his sinnes."¹⁵⁵ Few readers, I think, would fail to notice that Laud's

¹⁵² William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, ed. Mark Eccles (London, 1964), 4.4.122.

¹⁵³ See Richard Culmer, *Cathedrall newes from Canterbury* (London, 1644), 1; Henry Burton, *The grand imposter vnmasked* (London, 1644), 10; Joshua Hoyle, *Jehojadas justice against Mattan, Baals priest* (London, 1645), 7; *The Arminian Nunnery* (London, 1641).

¹⁵⁴ Laud, *Works*, 3.134.

¹⁵⁵ William Prynne, *A breviat of the life, of VVilliam Laud* (London, 1644), 29-30.

death by fire after committing the sin of sodomy corresponds to the Levitical injunction (20:13) that all engaged in same-sex partnership should be put to death.¹⁵⁶ In fact, in *Diotrephes Catechized* (1646), Prynne lists “burning” as one of the possible punishments for sodomy.¹⁵⁷ Fortuitously for Prynne, he can present the fire as divine recompense for Laud’s heinous sexuality, even though the fire and unfortunateness are treated as unrelated by Laud, eight years separate them, and their relation occurs in separate places in the diary.

These accusations of uncleanness indirectly reference Laudian asceticism. From Prynne’s other writings, it is clear he believed the Laudian Church favorably disposed towards monastic life, and he refers to Laud as a “votary” in the *Breviate*.¹⁵⁸ Further, Prynne argues that “the frequent Sodomitically wickednesses” of monasticism are “the unchaste fruits of... vowed and much-admired chastity.”¹⁵⁹ The *Breviate*’s insinuations of sodomy may be the un-chaste fruits that monasticism’s vowed-virginity bears or that a favorable disposition towards it could produce. Seeing monasteries as dens of sodomitical wickedness contrasts sharply with the piety and propagation of Christianity with which Weever credits them.

Weever’s praise of monasticism may include an implicit approval of monastic life’s vowed-virginity. The Laudian William Strode, whose work we will discuss at length in the next chapter, definitively endorses vowed-and-bodily-virginity in a 1633 Norfolk sermon. Through exegesis of Psalms 76:11 (“promise to the Lord, and keep it, all ye that be round about him”), the sermon exhorts its audience to consider the praiseworthiness of vows: “the acts which I shall inculcate are properly Vows; and therefore I plainly pronounce, That Vows are also laudable.”

¹⁵⁶ All references are to *King James Study Bible*, ed. Kenneth Barker (Michigan, 2002).

¹⁵⁷ William Prynne, *Diotrephes catechized* (London, 1646), 4.

¹⁵⁸ William Prynne, *A breviat of the life, of VVilliam Laud*, 13. See also William Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, 212, 325.

¹⁵⁹ William Prynne, *Histriomastix* (London, 1633), 213-4.

Flouting the Protestant antipathy for monastic vows,¹⁶⁰ Strode praises vows of virginity: “When St. Paul commends Virginity, he doth not commend it to all, he doth not impose it on any: True; yet whatsoever is not necessary for all, is not therefore unlawfull for some; but rather laudable, for such as can and will.” This is a vow of corporal virginity, for it is one of a number that would “dedicate our Goods, our Bodies, our Souls, or our Service” to God. Strode regards such vows as laudable because their votaries approach the possibility of perfection: “he hath left his Rule under a seeming imperfection, that we might appear before him the more perfect, and receive the reward of diligent servants, apt to understand his silent intimation, and doing things reducible to his Command, though not commanded.”¹⁶¹ While we have observed throughout this essay the divergence of Laudian asceticism from Calvinist orthodoxy, Strode’s argument here nicely evinces a latent anti-Calvinism. In his sermon on Galatians, Calvin draws the completely opposite conclusion about doing that which God has not commanded. For Calvin, “workes of supererogation (that is to saye, workes of ouerplus that men do more than God commaundeth them)” are not labors of diligence and perfection-in-the-making. Rather, they are contrary to God’s will, for God “vtterly misliketh all that is of our owne inuention.”¹⁶² Sharing the same premise with Calvin (doing what God has not commanded), Strode draws a diametrically opposite—an un/anti-Calvinist—conclusion. Moreover, Strode’s argument contains two particularly controversial claims that Laudian detractors contest: one, that an act like virginity can increase one’s holiness (perfection-in-the-making); and two, that virginity should be a perpetual spiritual and physical condition.

¹⁶⁰ See Martin Luther, *A commentarie vpon the fiftene Psalmes* (London, 1577), 23; John Calvin, *A harmonie vpon the the three Euangelists* (London, 1584), 422.

¹⁶¹ William Strode, *A sermon preached at a visitation held at Lin in Norfolk* (London, 1660), 4-7.

¹⁶² John Calvin, *Sermons vpon the Epistle of Sainte Paule to the Galathians* (London, 1574), 82.

Claims like the first of these would lead Robert Baillie to reject the Laudian valorization of supererogatory ascetic vows and the perfection they suppose in *Ladensium Autokatakrisis* (1641). Baillie describes the Laudians as believing, “that not onely many doe fulfill the Law without all mortall sinne, but sundry also doe supererogat by doing more then is commanded, by performing the counsels of perfection, of chastity, poverty and obedience... That our obeying the counsels of perfection doe purchase a degree of glory above the ordinary happinesse.”¹⁶³ Baillie’s contempt for this obedience is evident in “purchase.” The word rings with the gross materiality of Catholic idolatry in the selling of indulgences; these supererogators objectify glory so much as to buy it. What’s more, the purchasers arrogate to themselves what depraved humanity does not deserve: perfection and “glory above the ordinary happinesse.” Thus, Baillie’s Calvinism rejects supererogatory works for the perfection they presume and the glory they idolatrously acquire.¹⁶⁴

William Prynne’s *Canterburies Doome* impugns the kind of bodily virginity that Strode’s sermon recommends. Prynne condemns the Laudian belief “that vowed Poverty, Virginitie, a Monasticall life, and Monasteries, are lawfull, usefull.”¹⁶⁵ He then adduces Anthony Stafford’s *The Femall Glory* (1635) as representing the belief. The work could be seen as representative because Stafford’s defense of *The Femall Glory* was dedicated to Bishops Juxon and Laud. Prynne focuses on these lines from Stafford: “You who have vow’d virginity mentall, and corporall, you shall not onely have ingresse here, but welcome. Approach with Comfort, and kneele downe before the Grand white Immaculate Abbess of your snowy Nunneries.”¹⁶⁶ It is

¹⁶³ Robert Baillie, *Ladensium Autokatakrisis*, 71.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Henry Burton, *A full and satisfactorie answwere to the Arch-bishop of Cantervries speech* (London, 1645), 22; Zacharias Ursinus, *The summe of Christian religion* (London, 1645), 511.

¹⁶⁵ William Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, 212.

¹⁶⁶ Anthony Stafford, *The Femall Glory* (London, 1635), 148.

justifiable for Prynne to regard the Laudian emphasis on bodily virginity as innovative with respect to the Jacobean Church. He exaggeratedly claims, though, that it as one of a number of doctrines that “never durst appeare in any of our Impressions from the infancy of Reformation, till this Arch-Prelate became their Patriot” (188). James I exhibits Calvinist unease with bodily virginity, anxious not to too highly—and therefore idolatrously—value the works of the body. In his commentary on Revelation, James interprets “not defiled with women” of Revelation 14:4 as not “guilty of fpirituall adulterie.”¹⁶⁷ In a sermon from 1623, John Donne similarly argues that those “not defiled with women” stand for God’s saints, “for every holy soule is a virgin.”¹⁶⁸ Exegeses by Donne and James I contrast with that of Jeremy Taylor, Laud’s former chaplain. In *The rule and exercises of holy living* (1650), Taylor defines virginity as corporal by equating it with abstinence and literally interpreting “not defiled with women.” Abstinent individuals, not every holy soul, are exclusively admitted into the rewards of Revelation 14:4: “and just so is to expect that little coronet or special reward which God hath prepared (extraordinary and besides the great Crown of all faithful souls) for those who have not defiled themselves with women.”¹⁶⁹ Almost controverting Donne’s interpretation, Taylor describes the rewards of those undefiled with women as more than those “of all faithful souls,” or “every holy soule.” The Laudian valuation of physical virginity (evident in Strode, Stafford, and Taylor) does not suggest continuity with the Jacobean Church.¹⁷⁰

Having examined the three components of Laudian asceticism, I’d now like to consider how that asceticism could result in devaluing marriage. Often the devaluing results from

¹⁶⁷ James I, *Workes* (London, 1616), 44.

¹⁶⁸ John Donne, *The Sermons of John Donne*, 10 vols., ed. Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter (California, 1953-62), 10.43. Cf. James Ussher, *A body of divinitie*, (London, 1645), 277.

¹⁶⁹ Jeremy Taylor, *The rule and exercises of holy living* (London, 1650), 81-3.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Henry Hammond, *An account of Mr. Cawdry's triplex diatribe* (London, 1655), 124.

Laudians highly valuing virginity or canonical hours rather than derogating marriage. The qualified position makes sense considering the place of the Laudian Church in the midst of a court culture so invested in the fecundity of chaste conjugality. In fact, Ann Coiro argues that a “highly sexual, prolific marriage” was at the center of Caroline culture.¹⁷¹ And yet, paradoxically, the culture was not hostile to virginity. Queen Henrietta Maria (a Catholic) was often depicted as the Virgin Mary, Capuchin spirituality flourished in her court circle, and Charles I believed in clerical celibacy.¹⁷²

A devaluing of marriage is found in Bishop of Durham John Cosin’s *Devotions* (1627). The work is modeled on books of hours and attempts to “restore the old canonical hours into the pattern of English worship.”¹⁷³ In it, Cosin argues that during certain periods of the liturgical calendar marriages should not be solemnized: “some of these being Times of solemne Fasting and Abstinence; some of Holy Festivity and Ioy; both fit to be spent in such sacred Exercises, without other Avocations.”¹⁷⁴ The word that gets Cosin into particular trouble is “avocations.” Though “avocation” can indicate being called away to an event of equal importance as that which one was engaged in, it would be hard to sustain that meaning in Cosin’s text. The “sacred Exercises” are clearly not of equal sacredness with the avocations. The result is a diminishment in the holiness of marriage.

Henry Burton’s *A tryall of priuate deuotions* (1628) resists the diminishing.¹⁷⁵ Burton claims that solemnity and sacredness are “somewhat to the purpose” of marriage for, contrary to

¹⁷¹ Anne Coiro, “‘A ball of strife’: Caroline Poetry and Royal Marriage,” in Thomas N. Corns (ed.), *The Royal Image: Representations of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1999), 26-46, 27.

¹⁷² See Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and court entertainments* (Cambridge, 1989), 103; Charles Carlton, *Archbishop William Laud*, 83.

¹⁷³ Graham Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour*, 115.

¹⁷⁴ John Cosin, *A collection of private deuotions* (London, 1627), sig. B10^v.

¹⁷⁵ John Bastwick, *The letany of John Bastvvick* (Leiden, 1637), sig. B2^r.

what Cosin may believe, it is holy. He asks, “Alas poore Marriage, art thou now become so vncleane, vnholly, as to be shut out from holy times?” Burton then proceeds to emphasize the holiness of marriage: “But Marriage (it seemeth) is an vnnecessarie auocation, as our Authour termes it. An vnnecessarie auocation? And is it not a necessarie vocation? How then an vnnecessarie auocation?”¹⁷⁶ The Calvinist conception of what constitutes a vocation informs Burton’s description of marriage as a “necessarie vocation.” In later sermons, Burton counts “vocation” among “all those saving Doctrines, of Election, Predestination, effectual vocation by grace, assurance, perseverance” that are necessary for salvation (*For God, and the King* 114).¹⁷⁷ The idea of a vocation, Burton contends, comprises a fundamental component of Calvinism. Max Weber’s lectures on Calvinism define vocation as “a command of God to an individual to work to His glory.”¹⁷⁸ One’s vocation is that to which God has called him or her. Labeling marriage a vocation surcharges it with the holiness—with the sense of a directive directly from God—that Burton finds woefully lacking in Cosin and, as evidenced by Burton’s later writings, in the Laudian Church.¹⁷⁹

The potential for devaluing marriage is also apparent in Laud’s own public statements and writings. Before the court at Woodstock in 1631, Laud expressed his desire to prefer unmarried versus married priests. Peter Heylyn, Laud’s apologist and biographer, justifies the statements in *Cyprianus Anglicus* (1668) explaining, Laud “was a single man himself, and wisht perhaps as St. Paul once did, That all men else (that is to say, all men in holy Orders) would remain so likewise.”¹⁸⁰ Laud also indicates a preference for single life in his *History of the*

¹⁷⁶ Henry Burton, *A tryall of priuate deuotions* (London, 1628), sigs. F1^{r-v}.

¹⁷⁷ Henry Burton, *For God, and the King* (Amsterdam, 1636), 114.

¹⁷⁸ Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures*, ed. David Owen and Tracy B. Strong (Indianapolis, 2004), xiii.

¹⁷⁹ See Henry Burton, *A replie to a relation* (London, 1640), 50.

¹⁸⁰ Peter Heylyn, *Cyprianus Anglicus* (London, 1668), 224. See also Arthur Christopher Benson, *William Laud Sometime Archbishop of Canterbury, A Study* (London, 1887), 186.

Troubles and Trial of Archbishop Laud (1644). In the seventh chapter, Laud addresses the Commons' charge that "he hath traitorously and wickedly endeavoured to reconcile the Church of England with the Church of Rome."¹⁸¹ In response, Laud notes that he would have received more welcome and honor from Roman Catholics than his own church, and yet he remained within it. The only explanation is the following: "And this being granted, I would fain know, what could stay me here, save only my conscience in and to the truth... Surely, not any care of wife and children, for I have them not; and as this storm drives upon me, I most humbly and heartily bless God for it, that I have not any of these clogs to hang about me."¹⁸² Laud appears thankful for not having wife or children out of the magnanimous desire of not wanting them to have to weather the same storm that drives upon him. But several aspects of these sentences complicate that conclusion, revealing the marital put-down behind the magnanimity. For one, Laud seems altogether *too* thankful for not having a wife and children ("I most humbly and heartily bless God for it"). Humbly and heartily; Laud doth protest too much methinks. Also, his description of wife and child as "clogs" is not especially flattering. He uses the word to mean "anything that impedes action or progress; an impediment, encumbrance, hindrance" (*OED*).¹⁸³ In Laud's case, marriage would impede ecclesiastical duties. What Burton asks of Cosin in *A tryall of private devotions*, then, could just as easily and damningly be asked of Laud: "Was the Marriage in Cana, whereat it pleased CHRIST himself to be present, any impediment, or auocation to him from working a gracious Miracle...?"¹⁸⁴ Laud refers to marriage in precisely the same terms that Burton finds so offensive in Cosin. This treatment of marriage as an

¹⁸¹ Laud, *Works*, 3.411.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 3.416.

¹⁸³ "clog, n.," *OED Online* (Oxford, 2013), [http://www.oed.com].

¹⁸⁴ Henry Burton, *A tryall of priuate devotions* (London, 1628), sig. F1^v.

impediment is symptomatic of Laud's preference for an unmarried clergy and the Laudian valorization of spiritual and bodily virginity.

As Burton's spirited enjoinder makes clear, puritans smartly felt the Laudian devaluing of marriage. The intense response to the Laudian Church is often attributed to a rejection of its theological and liturgical innovations. The intensity, and puritan radicalization it signifies, also reflect a rejection of Laudianism's ascetic practices. Laudian asceticism—with its emphasis on the solitariness of monasticism, the world-and-self-denying austerities of mortification, and the piety of bodily virginity—hit a nerve with a fundamental, culturally endemic aspect of post-Reformation Protestantism: the sanctity of marriage. As Levin Schücking maintains in his study of the puritan family, the Reformation ushered in a “more exalted” conception of marriage that considered matrimony not just a means for avoiding lust and procreation, but also an opportunity for mutual help and society.¹⁸⁵ Anthony Fletcher similarly argues that the Reformation “was a revolt against a tradition...which distrusted sex and enjoined its members not to marry.”¹⁸⁶ The revolt was particularly relevant to Calvinists. The emphasis on depravity in Reformed religion, Peter Marshall observes, suggests “celibacy [was] psychologically impossible for all except a small minority.”¹⁸⁷ To put it bluntly, Laudian asceticism harrowed post-Reformation Protestantism's conception of the centrality of marriage and procreation in Christian life. Reaffirmations of marital holiness during the period of Laudian ascendancy have been understood as countervailing the Neo-platonic chastity of the Caroline Court and its perceived

¹⁸⁵ Levin L. Schücking, *The Puritan Family: a social study from the literary sources* (New York, 1970), 22.

¹⁸⁶ Anthony Fletcher, “The Protestant Idea of Marriage in Early Modern England,” in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (ed.), *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain: Essays in Honour of Patrick Collinson* (Cambridge, 1994), 162.

¹⁸⁷ Peter Marshall, *The Catholic Priesthood and the English Reformation* (Oxford, 1994), 164. See also Roland Mushat Frye, “The Teachings of Classical Puritanism on Conjugal Love,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 2 (1955), 148-59, 154; William Haller and Malleville Haller, “The Puritan Art of Love,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 5 (1942), 235-272.

libertinism.¹⁸⁸ These reaffirmations, with their criticism of the single life and clerical celibacy, might also be understood as a response to Laudian asceticism.¹⁸⁹

For instance, Matthew Griffith, lecturer at St. Dunstan-in-the-West and former favorite of John Donne, declares in *Bethel* (1633), “Mariage [sic] is, in it selfe, a state farre more excellent than the single life.”¹⁹⁰ “Even among us Protestants,” though, he identifies certain “Male-contents” as claiming otherwise.¹⁹¹ While the malcontents remain anonymous, they do profess two views consistent with Laudian asceticism. One, similar to Strode’s Norfolk sermon, they embrace and encourage vowed-virginity (23-4). And two, the malcontents claim, “the state of single men is like to that of the Angels.”¹⁹² Comparing virgins and angels is a topos that Laudians frequently employ during valorizations of virginity.¹⁹³ As Jeremy Taylor declares, “*Virginity* is a life of Angels...the huge advantage of religion.”¹⁹⁴ Like Griffith’s privileging of marriage over virginity, the puritan Daniel Rogers asserts in *Matrimoniall Honour* (1642), “more especially, the Lord Iesus himselfe (when he needed it not) yet would grace it [marriage], by being the Sonne of a married Virgin, and choosing to be *Iosephs* reputed Sonne: not to speake of that honour he cast upon it, when he did yeelde to doe his first divine Miracle at a Marriage.”¹⁹⁵ Rogers’ assertion challenges the Laudian elevation of virginity at the cost of marriage. It is the kind of elevation that occurs, for instance, in *The Femall Glory* when Anthony Stafford

¹⁸⁸ See G.F. Sensabaugh, *The Tragic Muse of John Ford* (Stanford, 1944), 105-151.

¹⁸⁹ See also Bartholomew Parsons, *Boaz and Ruth blessed* (Oxford, 1633), 17-19; Andrew Ramsay, *A warning to come out of Babylon* (Edinburgh, 1638), 29; William Gouge, *Of domesticall duties eight treatises* (London, 1622), 211-213.

¹⁹⁰ Matthew Griffith, *Bethel* (London, 1633), 19.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 23-4, 27.

¹⁹³ See also William Austin, *Devotionis Augustinianae flamma* (London, 1635), 194; Richard Brathwaite, *The English gentlewoman* (London, 1631), 146-7; William Watts, *Mortification Apostolicall*, 6. For scholarly discussion, see Helen L. Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 2000), 166.

¹⁹⁴ Jeremy Taylor, *The rule and exercises of holy living*, 82.

¹⁹⁵ Daniel Rogers, *Matrimoniall honovr* (London, 1642), 6.

importunes virgins, “never thinke more of the Faecunditie of Wedlocke, since you see here that God himselfe is the fruit of Virginitie.” Illustrating the Laudian/Calvinist divide, Stafford adduces Mary’s virginity, Rogers her married virginity, as clinching their respective arguments. Finally, the honor done by Jesus to marriage leads *Matrimoniall Honour* to this breathless encomium of matrimony:

Marriage is the *Preservative of Chastity, the Seminary of the Common-wealth, seed-plot of the Church, pillar (under God) of the world, right-hand of providence, supporter of lawes, states, orders, offices, gifts and services: the glory of peace, the sinewes of warre, the maintenance of policy, the life of the dead, the solace of the living, the ambition of virginity, the foundation of Countries, Cities, Vniversities, succession of Families, Crownes and Kingdomes.*¹⁹⁶

Like other Calvinists, Rogers employs a word with monastic meaning (“seminaries”) to describe married life.¹⁹⁷ By comparison, while arguing that he finds nothing in the monastic life “contrarie to true Christianitie,” the Laudian Alexander Ross notes that “Monasteries were the seed-plots and seminaries of the Church” in apostolic times.¹⁹⁸ Two motives can be discerned in Rogers applying monastic terms to matrimony. One, the application instances the Calvinist view that virginity is not just a bodily condition. And two, Rogers’ re-application signifies a kind of discursive reset: he disabuses “seminaries” of their virginal, ascetic connotation by causing them

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 7.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. William Perkins, *Christian oeconomie* (London, 1609), 95; William Gouge, *Of domesticall duties eight treatises*, 17.

¹⁹⁸ Alexander Ross, *An exposition on the fourteene first chapters of Genesis* (London, 1626), 132.

to celebrate the procreative fecundity of marriage. In contrast to the papists and Laudians who might term monasteries “seminaries,” the word is no longer under the purview of monasticism. The contrast with Laudianism is thrown into further relief by Rogers’ use of “seed-plot.” Labeling marriage a “seed-plot of the Church” may respond to John Weever’s claim that monasteries are the “seed-plots” out of which “Christian Religion and good literature were propagated over this our Island.” Roger’s locating that germination in marriage as opposed to monasteries illustrates the disconnect between Calvinists and Laudian asceticism that this essay has described. Having offered this description, it remains to be considered, though, where this ascetic valorization comes from. In the introduction, we observed how closely intertwined aesthetics and asceticism could be. The remainder of this chapter will explore how the genuflections of religious ceremonialism and a new direction in patristic scholarship helped initiate and justify Anglican asceticism.

Ascetic Origins

At first glance, the Laudian emphasis on corporal severity may seem at odds with the voluptuousness of the beauty of holiness: the aesthetic does not readily suggest the ascetic. And yet, the way in which clerical celibacy makes the priesthood an especially unique and special order corresponds to how ceremonies magnify the importance of the celebrant during worship. Most fundamentally, the principle underlying ceremonial worship and austere asceticism is the same: the body can help dispose the mind towards—and through this austerity become a vessel of—piety. The physical genuflection that Laudians enjoined during religious service often led to—and were themselves supported by—ascetic valorization.

Foulke Robartes, a clergyman and close colleague of Matthew Wren, articulates the connection between asceticism and religious ceremonialism. In *Gods Holy House and Service* (1639), Robartes asserts the holiness of, and patristic precedent for, church consecration, ceremonial worship, and gesturing during services. In the ninth chapter, while discoursing on how “Gods worship is to be performed with outward expressions,” Robartes argues for mortifying practices that include, “long and frequent watchings, pronouncing of long and many prayers, lying on the cold ground, wearing haire cloth, and the like.”¹⁹⁹ The connection between this particular type of mortification and the general ceremonial argument of Robartes’ work lies in the following: “Yet are they [bodily exercises] not unprofitable for Christian men, who make the right use of them, either to tame the body and to bring it into subjection, by fasting, sackcloth and ashes and the like: or to make outward expression of inward devotion: as by bending the knee, bowing the body, lifting up the hands and eyes and such like gestures in Gods worship.”²⁰⁰ Ascetic practices (fasting, using sackcloth and ashes) and the physical gestures of the body during worship (bending the knee, bowing) fall under the same umbrella term: bodily exercise. They are a different iteration of a general concept, and thus mutually constitutive and reinforcing. Symptomatic of their concinnity, the phrase “and the like” is reiterated in “and such like.” In this way, a positive appraisal of austere ascetic practices finds its way into the Laudian program through the door of physical genuflection. The language of physical adoration lends itself to ascetic discourse, licensing asceticism by connecting it to a fundamental of the Laudian program.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Foulke Robartes, *Gods Holy House and Service, According to the primitive and most Christian forme thereof* (London, 1639), 60, 67.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.

²⁰¹ Cf. Samuel Hoard, *The Churches Authority Asserted* (London, 1637), 55-6; Robert Skinner, *A Sermon Preached Before the King at White-Hall* (London, 1634), 6. For a more oblique version of the connection, see John Swan, *Profano-Mastix* (London, 1639), 43.

Henry Mason's *Hearing and doing the ready way to blessednesse* (1635), dedicated to Bishop Juxon, posits a more oblique relation between physical genuflection and ascetic practice. Mason proposes methods to increase attentiveness when hearing God's word, adding, "they that are experienced in asceticall exercises, may perhaps adde more, and finde better."²⁰² The label of "asceticall exercises" is appropriate, for one of the rules Mason offers is modeled on John Cassian's *Institutes*. The *Institutes* were written between 415-425 C.E., after Cassian was commissioned by the Bishop of Apt "to describe the fundamental principles of monastic life."²⁰³ In the quotation that follows, Mason describes the monastic practice from which he derives the rule:

Thirdly, wee read of the ancient Monks in Egypt: (And the name of *Monks*, was then as honorable for their devotion, as now it is growen contemptible for the superstition of later times:) that they in their prayers did sometimes cast themselves downe upon the ground, and anone after, rose up againe, and praied standing, with their hands lifted up to heaven. And so, if in our hearing, wee finde that by long sitting at ease, wee grow heauiie and dull of hearing; wee should rise and stand up, to awaken our senses. And if by long standing wee finde our selves weary of our worke, wee may for a time seek some ease by sitting: and so still change the site of the body, and use such varietie in gestures, as for the present we finde most availeable to keep us in attention.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Henry Mason, *Hearing and doing the ready way to blessednesse* (London, 1635), 617.

²⁰³ Steven D. Driver, *John Cassian and the Reading of Egyptian Monastic Culture* (New York, 2002), 1.

²⁰⁴ Henry Mason, *Hearing and doing the ready way to blessednesse*, 623-5.

Mason's rendering of Cassian's "procumbentem" as "cast themselves downe upon the ground" supplies more force to the action than "procumbo" requires.²⁰⁵ In one current edition, the word is translated merely as "fall."²⁰⁶ Mason's commentary on the "Monks in Egypt" and the honor due to patristic monasticism, as opposed to its Romish corruption, betrays a certain defensiveness about the source of his rule. The need to justify presenting patristic monasticism as an exemplar for contemporary devotion indicates Mason's controversial and novel argumentation. Godly writers might not be favorably disposed towards using Cassian's monastic asceticism as exemplary.²⁰⁷ For instance, the expatriate Huguenot minister Pierre Allix uses Cassian's *Institutes* and *Conferences*, not to furnish examples of ascetic discipline worthy of imitation, but to adduce "several Instances of their [monks'] Folly and Pride."²⁰⁸ Despite these godly qualms, Mason relies on Cassian to support ritual worship. The concordance of Mason's rule with Laudian ceremonialism lies in its regulation of bodily posture during prayer. If sitting becomes tiring, one should stand; if standing becomes exhausting, then one should sit. Illustrating the connection between physical composure and mental disposition that religious ceremonialism is based upon, a "varietie in gestures" is employed to maintain attention and keep one in a prayerful, pious mindset. The Laudian attempt to promote reverence through the performance of physical genuflection—standing during the Gospel and at the Creed and *Gloria*, kneeling to receive communion, bowing at the name of Jesus, removing one's hat upon entering the church, etc.—finds corroboration in this variety.

²⁰⁵ John Cassian, *Institutis: Patrologia Latina*, vol. 49, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris, 1844-55), 2.7; find complete biblio. details. See *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P.G.W. Glare (Oxford, 1982; repr. 2006), 1470.

²⁰⁶ John Cassian, *The Institutes*, transl. Boniface Ramsey (New Jersey, 2000), page #.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Trapp *A commentary or exposition upon the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job and Psalms* (London, 1657), 574; William Brownsword, *The Quaker-Jesuite, or, Popery in Quakerisme* (London, 1660), 6-10.

²⁰⁸ Pierre Allix, *Remarks upon the ecclesiastical history of the antient churches of the Albigenses* (London, 1692), 43.

As Mason's use of Cassian illustrates, Laudians might employ controversial patristic sources to legitimate their ascetic ideas. Recently, Laudian patristicism has been the subject of much scholarly debate. Julian Davies has argued that Laudians ushered in a new wave of patristic scholarship.²⁰⁹ Charles W.A. Prior contends, however, that "patristic scholarship, and engagement with the Fathers permeated learned theological dispute, and was a tactic common to both defenders and critics of the Church" throughout the 16th-century.²¹⁰ Prior's claim has since been demonstrated by Jean Louis Quantin's *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*.²¹¹ Instead of a wholesale rediscovery of the Fathers, Quantin has noted a shift in patristic studies under the Laudian Church away from continental divines to the Latin (and especially Greek) Fathers.²¹² Quantin has successfully debunked the myth that conformist Anglicanism is synonymous with patristicism. Keeping in mind that the Laudian emphasis on patristic authority is not unique, there is—nevertheless—something novel about the relationship between Laudianism and austere forms of patristic asceticism. Celebrating the extreme austerity of Simeon Stylites, or embracing the virginal and monastic asceticism of Jerome, are not common features of Church of England patristic scholarship before the Laudian era. As the puritan William Charke's treatise against the Jesuit Robert Persons observes about patristic asceticism, "...notwithstanding the examples of the auncient godlie fathers, yet it is neither lawfull nor expedient, for a man with such rigour to handle his bodie, as it be not able to serue him in his calling."²¹³ "Notwithstanding" resounds with the defiant irreverence of "in spite of." Laudians

²⁰⁹ Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church*, 51-2

²¹⁰ Charles W.A. Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church: The Politics of Religious Controversy, 1603-1625* (Cambridge, 2005), 14.

²¹¹ Jean Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*, esp. 22-87

²¹² *Ibid.*, 170.

²¹³ William Charke and William Fulke, *A treatise against the Defense of the censure, giuen upon the bookes of W.Charke and Meredith Hanmer* (Cambridge, 1586), 174.

frequently maintain both the lawfulness and expediency of these rigours, reverencing the example and authority of the ancient fathers.

In a 1633 doctoral disputation published posthumously in 1660, Eleazar Duncon argues for the piety of reverencing the altar. Duncon enlists the help of Greek patristics to prove this point, including Theodoret of Cyrrhus' (393-c. 460 C.E.) description of Simeon Stylites' practice of bowing:

Theodor. who relating the history of Saint Simeon Styles, that miracle of Christian piety and patience after our Lord and Saviour, affirmes, that some Spectators from afar off beholding the bowing of the holy man, did also by their number, count the prayers which he constantly poured forth to be two hundred fourty and foure. Oh rare piety conjoined with reverence and humility; which if the forward Criticks of our dayes had beheld, they would without delay have accused of superstition, Idolatry, and madness.²¹⁴

Indeed, those critics might just have held Simeon's genuflections idolatrous. The puritan phobia of idolatry ran so deep that some regarded bowing at the name of Jesus a kind of "syllabical idolatry."²¹⁵ These sentences further evidence how religious ceremonialism and ascetic valorization are often intertwined, since Duncon calls on Simeon to testify on behalf of bowing. In his reference to Simeon, Duncon alludes to Theodoret's life of Simeon Stylites in the *Historia Religiosa* (c. 440-444 C.E.). Intertextuality with the *Historia* accords with the Laudian recovery of the Eastern Fathers, which culminated in Laud establishing a printing press for such works in

²¹⁴ Eleazar Duncon, *Of worshipping God towards the altar* (London, 1660), 31.

²¹⁵ Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement c. 1620-1643* (Cambridge, 1997), 163.

London in 1631 (another was projected for Oxford). An allusion to Theodoret is particularly *au courant* considering the press' publication of Theophylactus (Lindsell), the *Catena* (Young),²¹⁶ and its projected edition of the *Codex Alexandrinus*.²¹⁷ The *Historia* is a work that celebrates the lives of desert monks and nuns living in northern Syria. While marveling at how Simeon's remarkable piety is displayed in his bowing, Theodoret describes one instance in which, "many of those standing by count the number of these acts of worship. Once one of those with me counted one thousand two hundred and forty four of them, before slackening and giving up count."²¹⁸ Duncon's allusion to Theodoret is not exact—Theodoret recounts Simeon praying 1,244 times—but in no other work does Theodoret offer a "history" of Simeon's life, or discuss him at any length. Duncon's praise of Simeon is extravagant; it causes him to exclaim about the rarity of Simeon's piety, reverence, and humility. Most of all, as Duncon explains, Simeon's piety and patience are second only to those of Christ. Duncon's positive appraisal of this extreme self-denial contrasts with the Calvinist Joseph Hall's attitude towards Simeon in *Christian Moderation* (1640). Hall mentions Simeon in a chapter that discusses "some extremities in other vsages of the body."²¹⁹ Though Hall reserves his harshest criticism for flagellants and self-scourgers, he ultimately concludes the following about the mortification practiced by Simeon and his ilk: "Such hard usages have some zealous self-enemies put upon their bodies; no doubt in a mis-grounded conceit of greater holinesse, and higher acceptance at the hands of God; from whom they shall once heare that old question in the like case to the Jews,

²¹⁶ Augustine Lindsell, *Theophylaktou Archiepiskopou Boulgarias Exegesis ton Epistolon tou Hagiou Paulou* (London, 1636). Patrick Young, *Catena Graecorum patrum in beatum Iob collectore Niceta Heracleae* (London, 1637).

²¹⁷ See H.R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645*, 275

²¹⁸ Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *A History of the Monks of Syria*, 26.22

²¹⁹ Joseph Hall, *Christian moderation* (London, 1640), 21.

Who required this of you?”²²⁰ Hall’s use of the adjectives “mis-grounded” and “higher” are especially—and perhaps ironically—applicable to Simeon, since he did attempt to gain “higher acceptance” through actual physical elevation.

The embrace of patristic austerity that Duncon’s reference to Simeon exhibits is also apparent in John Browning’s *Publike-Prayer and the Fasts of the Church* (1636). In a sermon given in 1630, Browning impresses upon his audience the greater austerity of fasting in the primitive church. “They did fast a more vehement fast,” and yet, “our tender, loofe, nice, delicate times tremble to heare of this Diet.” To encourage and evidence these more vehement fasts, Browning cites Epiphanius: “Epiphanius fheweth as how. They did eat in Thefe Dayes, nothing but bread, water, and falt, a dry and drying Diet...They did lie upon the hardground: They did continue watching with all supplication and prayer. They did put on Sackcloth. They did by all meanes, abtaining from their owne lawfull wives, bring their flesh and body under.”²²¹ As we shall see in our discussion of Henry Mason’s *Christian Humiliation*, there is a discrepancy between the mortifying practices Browning advocates based on 1 Corinthians 9:27 (“bring their flesh and body under”) and those Calvinists find sanctioned in the passage. The severe mortification of rigorous fasting, lying on the bare ground, watching, and using sackcloth all find precedence in the *Panarion* (374-6 C.E.) of Epiphanius (c. 310/20-402 C.E.). Authors of all confessional stripe allude to Epiphanius’ work; he is often cited in disputes over vowing and Paul’s virginity.²²² The use of Epiphanius by an author who is a member of the Church of England to adjure austere ascetic practices is, however, much rarer. Moreover, Browning’s

²²⁰ Ibid., 26. Cf. Jeremy Taylor, *Antiquitates christianae* (London, 1675), iii. Though Taylor was a Laudian, his attitude towards the Fathers often diverges from that of other Laudians (see Quantin 242-7). For another approving attitude, see the Lutheran Athony Horneck, *The first fruits of reason* (London, 1686), 60.

²²¹ John Browning, *Concerning Publike-Prayer and the Fasts of the Church* (London, 1636), 175-6.

²²² For the former, see Morton *A Catholike Appeale* 88; for the latter, see Willet *Hexapla* 27.

allusion to Epiphanius' writings against the Arians may be intended to incite puritans. The sermon references puritan unease with austere, corporal mortification in "our tender, loose, nice, delicate times"; one of the definitions for the adjective "nice" is "precise," and puritans were ever-known as precisians.²²³ They could also be labeled Arians. In Oliver Ormerod's *The picture of a Puritane* (1605), he attaints puritans with the patristic heresy of Arianism, a criticism often levied at Protestants by Catholics for their objections to episcopacy. In one of the work's dialogues, "The Germaine" and "The Englishman" discuss how the faulty reasoning of the Anabaptist consists in devising rules that are "grounded neyther vpon authoritie, neyther yet vpon substantiall reason." The Englishman opines that this illogic defines the puritan, along with an untold number of early church heresies: "This fallacie hath also been the foundation of many both olde and new schismes: of olde, as of the *Arians*, who forsooke the Church, because therein were some thinges vsed, which Heritickes had abused: of new, as of the *Anabaptists*, *Brownists*, *Puritanes* and others."²²⁴ As if Browning's advocacy of the austere asceticism puritans reject weren't provocative enough, he finds a way to aim the patristic source upon which he bases the advocacy directly at puritans.

As we discussed above, few tracts promoting asceticism were more offensive to the godly than William Watts' *Mortification Apostolicall* (1637). The work is also the most comprehensive example of Laudian patristicism coinciding with asceticism. Watts considers patristic precedent a guide for how parishioners should conduct their own mortification. While proposing "two directions to the unexperienced: for their more methodicall going about their Mortifying," Watts offers "examples of good men," so that "by these Examples you may perceive, the zeale by some good men conceived against Sinne." The exemplars include

²²³ "nice, adj. and adv.". OED Online. June 2012. Oxford University Press. 15 July 2012 <<http://www.oed.com>.>

²²⁴ Oliver Ormerod, *The picture of a Puritane* (London, 1605), 37.

Gregory Nazianzen and Origen: “The holy Primitive Fathers, were great Professors of Chastity, in their owne bodies: which rather then the zealous Origen would corrupt; he protested himself (being put to one of them) willing rather to commit Idolatry, then fornication.”²²⁵ Watts’ approval of Origen’s severe form of mortification is illustrated by the use of “zeale” and “zealous.”²²⁶ The zealous action of Origen demonstrates the “zeale” of these “good men.” Origen’s zealotry does not often meet with general approbation. In *Christs victorie ouer Sathans tyrannie* (1615), John Foxe succinctly concludes, “and *Origen* mistooke himselfe when he gelded himselfe, that he might be chast for the kingdom of heauen.”²²⁷ Foxe criticizes not only Origen’s action, but the soteriology behind it; namely, the idea that a work like chastity can accrue one merit for salvation.²²⁸ In the margin adjacent to Watts’ remarks about Origen is the following encomium to virginity from Gregory Nazianzen: “Virinitie and single life, is a high matter: which rancks a man in equalitie with the Angels.”²²⁹ Such a quotation supplies a textual and visual ratification of the chastity Origen practices. The quotation is from Gregory’s funeral oration for Basil of Caesarea (c. 329-379 C.E.). In addition to praising virginity as angelic, the oration also argues that Christ gave single life the force of law: Christ, “having willed to be born for us who are born, was born of a virgin, giving the force of law to virginity to detach us from this life and cut off the world.”²³⁰ Few statements could be more inimical to the Protestant

²²⁵ William Watts, *Mortification Apostolicall*, 6-7.

²²⁶ For an overview of the patristic sources relating to Origen’s self-castration, and its treatment as dubious by some authors, see Jon F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen* (Georgia, 1988), 128-35.

²²⁷ John Foxe, *Christs victorie ouer Sathans tyrannie* (London, 1615), 387.

²²⁸ For another adverse reaction to Origen’s self-castration, see Joseph Hall, *Christian moderation* (London, 1640), 30; Meredith Hanmer (transl.), *The auncient ecclesiasticall histories of the first six hundred yeares after Christ, wrytten in the Greeke tongue by three learned historiographers* (London, 1577), n. 124.

²²⁹ William Watts, *Mortification Apostolicall*, 6. See also Joseph Beaumont’s poem on Gregory Nazianzen, “S. Gregorie Nazianzen.”

²³⁰ *The Fathers of the Church: St. Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose Funeral Orations*, transl. Leo P. McCauley, John J. Sullivan, Martin R.P. McGuire, Roy J. Deferrari (Washington, 1953; repr. 2004), para. 62.

conception of marriage's near-universal applicability. Gregory's praise of the ascetic life is often so pronounced that the Jesuit Girolamo Piatti cites him "formost" while offering "testimonies of the ancient fathers in commendation of a Religious Estate."²³¹ Perhaps it is Gregory's vaunted place among Catholic proponents of asceticism that leads the Calvinist Gervase Babington to accuse him and other Fathers of Manichaeism for their "misliking of ye ordinance of god against incontinency" and "ouer great opinion of single life."²³² Watts shows nothing but approval for that "ouer great opinion." Examples of positively appraising austere forms of patristic asceticism are legion throughout *Mortification Apostolicall*. But I'd like now to consider Laudians' recovery of the most controversial patristic exponent of asceticism: Jerome. After all Jerome was, in the words of Richard Montagu, "Monachus ipse, & magnus patronus Monachorum."²³³ Jerome (c. 340/2-420 C.E.) is often a lightning rod for Reformed critique of austere ascetic practices. In particular, his polemical works against Jovinian, Vigilantius, Helvidius, and his epistles to Eustochium, Paula, and Demetrias are often singled out for their strident advocacy of virginity, monasticism, mortification, and their sharp devaluing of marriage. Based on these ascetic writings, William Charke even limits the extent to which Jerome can be considered a member of the True Church: "although we cannot allow Saint Hierome, or any man, that by hurting his bodelie health, with immoderate rigour of austere life, bringeth his natural life in daunger: yet doe we imbrace S. Hierome, as a member of the true Church of Christ, whoe trusted not in any merite of such chaistisment, but onelie in the mercie of God by Iesus Christ."²³⁴ While the orthodoxy of his opinion on a certain issue(s) might be questioned, the membership of

²³¹ Girolamo Piatti, *The happines of a religious state* (Rouen, 1632), 1-2.

²³² Gervase Babington, *A very fruitfull exposition of the Commaundements* (London, 1583), 335.

²³³ Richard Montagu, *Theanthropikon*, 383.

²³⁴ William Charke, *A treatise against the Defense*, 173.

a Church Father within the True Church is not often qualified.²³⁵ Other writers display a similarly unfavorable attitude towards Jeromic asceticism, especially Jerome's devaluation of marriage. For instance, John Foxe avers, Jerome "did so much (but fasely) extoll virginity, that hee made this conclusion: it is good for a man to be without a Wife, therefore it is wicked to be married vnto a Wife, and that God promiseth heauen vnto Uirgines."²³⁶ Jerome's hostility towards matrimony leads Pierre Du Moulin to style him "a professed enemie of marriage."²³⁷ The harshness of Jerome's marital critique actually leads some to side with Jovinian against him. Anthony Wotton contends, "those Christian Fathers dealt vnchristianly with Iouinian, who ascribed as much to virginitie as our Sauour Christ" (500).²³⁸ That some writers would so openly defend a condemned heretic against a Church Father witnesses the animus which Jerome's ascetic thought could provoke. The animus is evident in detractors ironically representing Jerome's uncompromising asceticism as the product of intemperate infatuation. "Immoderate" is a word frequently employed when rejecting Jerome's ascetic viewpoint. Consider these examples: "Saint Hierome, that immoderate aduauncer of virginitie"; "Hierom immoderately extolled virginity aboue marriage"; "Ierome doth immoderately commend virginity"; and Jerome displays an "immoderate admiration of virginitie."²³⁹ Some writers take Jerome's immoderation even farther, depicting it as a kind of displaced romantic love. Andrew Willet criticizes Jerome's "passionate and too much loue of virginitie," and Thomas Hill

²³⁵ See Thomas Hill, *The good old vvay* (London, 1644), 13.

²³⁶ John Foxe, *Christs victorie ouer Sathans tyrannie*, 387.

²³⁷ Pierre du Moulin, *The accomplishment of the prophecies* (Oxford, 1613), 23.

²³⁸ Anthony Wotton, *A defence of M. Perkins booke, called A reformed Catholike* (London, 1606), 500. Cf. Richard Field, *Of the Church* (Oxford, 1628), 3.144; John Trapp, *A commentary or exposition upon all the Epistles, and the Revelation of John the Divine* (London, 1647), 79-80; Thomas Morton, *A catholike appeale for Protestants* (London, 1609), 88; John Calvin, *The Institution of Christian Religion* (London, 1561), fo. 83^v.

²³⁹ William Fulke, *A defense of the sincere and true translations of the holie Scriptures into the English tong* (London, 1583), 412; Thomas Wilson, *A commentarie vpon the most diuine Epistle of S. Paul to the Romanes* (London, 1614), 1120-21; Edward Leigh, *A systeme or body of diuinity consisting of ten books* (London, 1654), n. 743; Edward Bulkley, *An answer to tne friuolous and foolish reason* (London, 1588), 47.

concludes that “Jerome [sic], though learned to admiration, doted on the merit of virginity.”²⁴⁰ Passionate in his dotage, Jerome is portrayed as a dewy-eyed schoolgirl with a crush. Valid arguments for sexual abstinence do not usually proceed from immoderation. The applicability of Paul’s “it is better to marry than to burn” (1 Corinthians 7:9) to Jerome’s combustible advocacy of virginity—a passage Jerome interprets to marriage’s detriment in *Against Jovinian* (1.9)—may be another ironic consequence of depicting Jerome in this way. From these rebukes of Jerome’s asceticism, one might think that his principal ascetic writings are interdicted texts. Yet, puritan writers do make use of them. They rarely engage, however, the extremes of his ascetic doctrine with any kind of approval, preferring to employ Jerome’s uncharacteristically moderate statements about fasting (Downname), or unobjectionable material from the ascetic writings (Squier).²⁴¹ Many Laudians display no such squeamishness, engaging with the full variety and severity of Jeromic asceticism.²⁴²

For instance, in *Ten Sermons* (1636), Peter Hausted offers a ringing encomium to Jerome. While discussing how one can “be conversant in the businesse of the world, and not...have his heart taken up too much with them,” Hausted describes the method used by primitive ascetics:

So difficult a thing hath it seemed in all Ages, that many godly men were afraid to stand the danger of it, but fled some into Monasteries, some into Caves, some into the Wildernesse, turning Anchorites, & muring up themselves from the company of all men. Amongst which multitude I will onely name that worthy, learned, and devout Monk St.

²⁴⁰ Andrew Willet, *Hexapla* (S.l., 1611), 356; Thomas Hill, *The good old vvay, Gods vvay, to sovle-refressing rest*, 13. Cf. William Fulke, *D. Heskins, D. Sanders, and M. Rastel ouerthrowne* (London, 1579), 73.

²⁴¹ See George Downname, *The Christians sanctuarie* (London, 1604), 5; John Squier *A Thankesgiving for the Decreasing, and hope of the removing of the Plague* (London, 1637), 33.

²⁴² There are, of course, exceptions. See Alexander Ross, *Pansebeia* (London, 1655), 265; Peter Heylyn, *The parable of the tares expounded & applied* (London, 1659), 99.

Jerome, who durst not abide the eyes of the Romane Ladies, but (being a man of noble Parentage and Family) hid himself in the Wildernes from the allurements of the world. Nor yet was his Solitude nor Hermitage able quite to protect him; for (as he confesses himself) many times when he was in his Cell, having no other company with him save his owne betraying thoughts, his fancy would present unto him the beauties of Rome dancing before him. And if this to him, and to him in the Wildernesse, how would his minde have beene carried away, had he beene actually present to behold their ravishing and bewitching motions?²⁴³

In these sentences, Hausted paraphrases Jerome's description of his days as a desert monk in the epistle "To Eustochium." While explaining to Eustochium his own experience of dealing with unwanted sexual thoughts, Jerome exclaims, "Oh, how often, when I was living in the desert, in that lonely waste, scorched by the burning sun, which affords to hermits a savage dwelling place, how often did I fancy myself surrounded by the pleasures of Rome!"²⁴⁴ In fact, Hausted combines this exclamation with another memorable image from the paragraph to produce "his fancy would present unto him the beauties of Rome dancing before him." While in this state of sensual affliction, Jerome records, "I often found myself surrounded by bands of dancing girls." As Hausted's final question indicates, he considers Jerome's monastic life to have been prudently and correctly adopted; the "ravishing and bewitching motions" of city life are too formidable. As if to emphasize the redoubtable lubricity with which Jerome was contending, Hausted's splicing of Jerome's two descriptions of urban allurements makes the temptations even more tempting. Instead of just girls dancing, all the beauties ("deliciis") of Rome careen

²⁴³ Peter Hausted, *Ten Sermons* (London, 1636), 176-7.

²⁴⁴ Jerome, *Select Letters*, transl. F.A. Wright (Cambridge, MA, 1933), letter 22, para. 7.

before him. Who could resist becoming ensorcelled in the rhythmic sway of their exquisite dance? Since Hausted endorses Jerome's choice of monastic life to wrestle with tempting thoughts, he would also seem to endorse implicitly the other mortifying methods Jerome prescribes while relating how he struggled with temptation. In the paragraph to which Hausted alludes, Jerome advocates severe types of mortification, including wearing sackcloth, disfiguring mortification, inducing pain to prevent sleep, and extreme fasting. Hausted finding Jerome's monastic life and the mortifying methods used to maintain its severity commendable is in stark opposition with the viewpoint of George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury under James I: "S. Hierome who vppon some more then ordinary occasion with-drewe himselfe from Rome, and lived more privately in Palestina, grewe to be a hyperbolical commender of Heremites, monkes, and cloistered Virgins, which life he blazoneth so with his Rhetorical colours, that every man must confesse that his vvordes goe too farre if they be literarly taken."²⁴⁵ Hausted not only approves of, but he partakes in, Jerome's monastic blazon.

Laudians and other High Church sympathizers also employ and endorse Jerome's monastic writings, especially his *Life of Hilarion* (390 C.E.).²⁴⁶ Jerome's biography relates the ascetic existence of Hilarion (c. 291-371 C.E.), who devoted himself to a monastic life after being inspired by the example of Antony (251-356 C.E.). In the 1630s, the Jesuit Henry Hawkins employed the biography as Catholic propaganda. In his translation of the *Life of Hilarion* and other works, Hawkins makes the following appeal to the reader: "If when you read these Epistles and Liues," you find "that you haue been taught some doctrines otherwise; do but cast your mind vpon considering, that it is no lesse then S. *Hierome* who is speaking to you...it is

²⁴⁵ George Abbot, *The reasons vvhich Doctour Hill hath brought, for the vpholding of papistry* (Oxford, 1604), 408.

²⁴⁶ See esp. Thomas Heywood, *Gynaikeion* (London, 1624), 268-70.

fit that you should deferre much to him.”²⁴⁷ In other words, if you’re feeling Romish while reading, just go with it. Laudians evince no scruples about the extreme asceticism or Catholic connotation of Jerome’s text.

Henry Mason’s *Christian Humiliation* (1627), a compendious work on fasting influential among Laudians, alludes to Jerome’s monastic writings.²⁴⁸ In the work, Mason urges vigorous mortifying by interpreting Paul’s statement at 1 Corinthians 9:27 (“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection”) as a call for rigorous acts of mortification. “The meaning is,” Mason explains, “he used severe discipline toward himself, fasting, & watchings, and hard lodging, and rough clothing &c. by which he did afflict and macerate the flesh.” Mason compares Paul’s vigorous mortifying with those “nice and tender folkes now a dayes, who cannot endure fasting, because (forsooth) it breedeth winde in the body, and will make them faintish.”²⁴⁹ Those criticized are primarily effete dilettantes, unwilling to endure any gaseous discomfort on behalf of their religion. A subtle critique also seems to be levied at puritans. The appellation of “nice” to these tender folks suggests a fastidious moral scrupulosity consistent with the reputation of the Godly as “precise.” To further describe the robustly corporal mortifying that he ascribes to 1 Corinthians, Mason enlists the help of Jerome’s *Life of Hilarion*:

And to like purpose, Hilarion, a religious young man, when after much abstinence and course [sic] feeding (for barley-bread and water, with some rootes, was his vsuall food) he felt some pricking lusts in his flesh still, *he was angry with himself, and knocking his fist upon his brest, Thou beast, quoth hee, I will make thee leave kicking; nor will I feed*

²⁴⁷ Jerome, *Certaine selected epistles of S. Hierome as also the liues of Saint Paul the first hermite, of Saint Hilarion the first monke of Syria, and of S. Malchus*, transl. Henry Hawkins (Saint-Omer, 1630), sig. A3^v.

²⁴⁸ See Christopher Dow, *Innovations Unjustly charged upon the Present Church and State* (London, 1637), 148.

²⁴⁹ Henry Mason, *Christian Humiliation* (London, 1627), 29-30.

thee with barley, but with chaffe: I will pull thee downe with hunger and thirst; I will lade thee with heauy waight, and hunt thee through heat and cold, that thou maist mind meat rather then lust. This or such like was the Discipline that S. Paul vsed.²⁵⁰

Mason's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 9:27 conflicts with the Calvinist analysis of this passage.²⁵¹ In a sermon on self-denial, John Preston exhorts his readers to, "above all others, looke upon *Paul*," who "had a continuall strife with his heart, *to bring his body*, that is, the deeds of his body, into subjection, *I keepe under my body* (saith he) *and bring it into subjection.*" The acts of mortification that Preston prescribes based on this passage are the following: "Consider this, if a little diligence will not serve the turne, adde more; if prayer will not doe it, adde fasting to it."²⁵² Prayer and fasting are as mortifyingly far as Preston is willing to go. Like Preston, the non-conforming godly minister Arthur Hildersham cautiously interprets 1 Corinthians. In a sermon from 1625, Hildersham concludes that the passage shows how "we take revenge of our felves, which is a great helpe unto true repentance."²⁵³ It is doubtful that Hildersham would approve of any mortifying practices besides prayer and fasting. Throughout the sermon, he is skeptical of austere mortification, especially sackcloth. Rather, Hildersham advocates "godlineffe (whereof the inward afflicting of the foule, and mortifying of our lufts is a chief part)" over bodily exercises that "profiteth little."²⁵⁴ The prayer and fasting that Preston and Hildersham recommend based on 1 Corinthians are not as corporally austere as the mortification

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 30.

²⁵¹ The passage is also cited in controversies over perseverance. See John Heigham, *The touch-stone of the reformed Ghospell* (St. Omer, 1634), 101-2; William Prynne, *The perpetuitie of a regenerate mans estate* (London, 1626), 264.

²⁵² John Preston, *Foure godly and learned treatises* (London, 1633), 235-6.

²⁵³ Arthur Hildersham, *The Doctrine of Fasting and Praier, and Humiliation for Sinne* (London, 1633), 62.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 49-50; 58

Mason finds validated by the passage and illustrated in Jerome's *Hilarion*. *Christian Humiliation* embraces such austerity, as Mason cautions against those "who would be esteemed religious Christians, who conceit all such austerity to be Monkish, and superstitious and vngodly" (31).²⁵⁵ There is, of course, something logically inconsistent about trying to disabuse these practices of their exclusively monastic connotation after using the life of a monk to illustrate them. The self-contradiction may also bear witness to Mason's earnest—even bordering on self-contradictory—desire to legitimate these controversial practices.

Having detailed what Laudian asceticism is and where it comes from, we will now turn to its influence on the culture and literature of early modern England. The next chapter will consider the influence of asceticism on what, for many, may seem like a very unlikely place: the royal court of Charles I.

²⁵⁵ Henry Mason, *Christian Humiliation*, 31.

Chapter 2

Anglican Asceticism at the Caroline Court

I. *The Floating Island* and Carlo-Laudian Uniformity

To characterize the change in culture from the Jacobean to Caroline court, Kevin Sharpe offers this memorable example: “The mystique of divine monarchy was not fostered by a king who defecated in his trousers. Charles I, by contrast, was dignified, chaste and refined; his court was ceremonious, splendid and cultivated.” The contrast typifies how “the licentiousness, ribaldry and drunkenness of James I’s court were rapidly out of season. Charles’s personal style was strict and serious...he was chaste and even prudish.”²⁵⁶ Surely, in this atmosphere of restraint and abstemiousness, the ascetic predilections of Anglicans could find a home. As this chapter will document, William Strode’s play *The Floating Island* presents a general uniformity between Caroline and Laudian moral reform, restraint of the passions, and aversion to sacrilege. But a court culture favorable to asceticism was not only the product of Charles I’s personal style. The cult of Neoplatonic chastity that flourished at the Caroline Court, largely under the direction of Queen Henrietta Maria, was also amenable to Anglican asceticism. Erica Veevers has traced the French provenance of Caroline Neoplatonism, especially its relation to *préciosité* and the Devout Humanism of St. Francis de Sales.²⁵⁷ Before attributing ascetic language in Caroline drama to French Catholic sources, a closer and, in some ways, more pertinent Anglican source

²⁵⁶ Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The politics of literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1987), 5, 13. See also Kevin Sharpe, “Cavalier Critic? The Ethics and Politics of Thomas Carew’s Poetry,” in *Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley, 1987), ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker, 118-9.

²⁵⁷ Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and court entertainments* (Cambridge, 1989).

also deserves consideration. The second portion of this chapter attempts the consideration by proposing a correspondence between Caroline Neoplatonism's rejection of lust and carnality and Anglican ascetic practices.

The notion of a court culture in the 1630s (or, any court culture for that matter) favorable to asceticism may seem quite difficult to imagine. A teleological view from the Restoration, and the ribald merriness of the Merry Monarch and the Cavalier culture of the Interregnum, does not aid in the imagining. There were, no doubt, Caroline courtiers who were libertines (one thinks of that inimitable inventor of cribbage, Sir John Suckling) and dissolute persons associated with the court. But Caroline Court culture, as much as it emanated from the personal style of Charles I and the cult of Neoplatonic chastity, is not libertine.²⁵⁸ The representations of the court in the works we will examine describe it using monastic—not hedonistic—terms. Such a description, moreover, hardly seems self-serving. What could the court possibly have to gain by comparing itself to a sterile cloister in a rabidly anti-Catholic country? The notion of Caroline libertinism is also a puritan invention hatched out of the brains of malcontents like Henry Burton and William Prynne.²⁵⁹ Prynne's perspective on the 1630s was that "the lusts of a few corrupt, vicious, and voluptuous Courtiers and Parasites may domineer and order all things."²⁶⁰ Prynne famously impugns those lusts by using an interest in drama to suggest the court's corrupt morals. He cautions that "foolish Courtiers and companions" can make princes evil, holding up for particular admonishment the Roman Emperor Carinus (d. 285 C.E.) who "*filled his Court with Stage-*

²⁵⁸ See Joshua Scodel, *Excess and the Mean in Early Modern English Literature* (Princeton, 2002), 164-69, for a discussion of libertinism and the Caroline court.

²⁵⁹ Henry Burton, *A tryall of priuate deuotions* (London, 1628), sigs. B2^v-B3^r. See also Anon, *A mis-led King, and a memorable Parliament* (London, 1643), sig. A1^r. More oblique reference to general court corruption, though which must also have a contemporary relevance, can be found in Samuel Rutherford, *A peaceable and temperate plea for Pauls presbyterie in Scotland* (London, 1642), 306; John Trapp *A commentary or exposition upon the four Evangelists, and the Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1647), 408-9.

²⁶⁰ William Prynne, *The fourth part of The soveraigne povver of parliaments and kingdoms* (London, 1643), 53.

players, Harlots, Iesters, Singers, Bawdes.”²⁶¹ In addition to court entertainments, puritans blamed loose living on the feigning niceties of courtly manners. In John Rogers’ *A Treatise of Love* (1629), he writes about courtiers, “there be that pretend they loue, but alas! try, and you shall finde no such thing. A deale of Court-holy-water, congeyes, and crouchings, an handfull of true hearty loue, is worth ten arme-fuls of their congeyes downe to the ancles.”²⁶² Holy water, in its supposed possession of prophylactic power, serves as an apt symbol for the unctuous promiscuity—the indiscriminate seductions—of courtiers. It is, they are, an empty gesture. The “congeyes” (from the Old French “cungied”) that the courtiers perform insinuate Henrietta Maria’s importation of French foppery into the English Court.²⁶³ Anti-Catholic and French sentiment combine to form a powerful inducement for English (especially puritan) prejudice to regard the court as utterly corrupt.²⁶⁴ In the words of Richard Johnson, “vicious courtiers” live a life “which is no life, but rather a lingring death,” for their “soules [are] filled with sin.”²⁶⁵ The intensity of Johnson’s denunciation, the bias that informs court criticism, Burton and Prynne’s fanaticism, and the existing evidence about court reform and the cult of chastity indicate that Caroline libertinism might be approached with a degree of incredulity. This is not an apologia for Charles as King: he was a disastrous monarch. But the indulgent license with which he reveled in *jure divino* kingship does not make him a libidinous man.

Many studies use a love of ceremony and order as the primary conduits linking the Caroline Court and the Laudian Church.²⁶⁶ While discussing *The Temple of Love* (1634), Kevin

²⁶¹ William Prynne, *Histrio-mastix* (London, 1633), fo. 547^v.

²⁶² John Rogers, *A Treatise of Love* (London, 1629), 96.

²⁶³ “congee | congé, n.2,” *OED Online* (Oxford, 2013), <<http://www.oed.com>>

²⁶⁴ See also Malcolm Smuts, “Religion, European Politics and Henrietta Maria’s Circle, 1625–41,” in *Henrietta Maria: Piety, Politics and Patronage*, ed. Erin Griffey (Hampshire, 2008), 13.

²⁶⁵ Richard Johnson, *The pilgrimage of man* (London, 1635), sig. C1^v. For a more comprehensive discussion of the puritan response to Caroline libertinism, see G.F. Sensabaugh, *The Tragick Muse of John Ford* (Stanford, 1944), 140–51.

²⁶⁶ An exception is Karen Britland, *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria* (Cambridge, 2006), esp. 148.

Sharpe suggests, “it is tempting to speculate on the connections between the ideas of the masque and Charles’s emphasis upon ceremony and order in church services.”²⁶⁷ In this vein, Erica Veevers urges that *Tempe Restored* (1632) “be seen as a defence against the many people who resented the growing emphasis on visual forms, not only at court but in the Anglican Church.”²⁶⁸ Despite the plethora of scholars finding church and court correspondent in a love of ceremonial decorum, the means by which that correspondence exists still need, in Malcolm Smuts’ words, “closer examination.”²⁶⁹ An over-emphasis on aesthetics has obscured an acknowledgment of the extent to which asceticism also underwrote the connection between church and court. The two need not, as this study has argued, be mutually exclusive. The following pages, therefore, perform Smuts’ “closer examination” by showing how the spectacle of Caroline drama and the devotion to beauty in court Neoplatonism were also very capable of articulating ascetic severities.

William Strode’s *The Floating Island* was written to commemorate Charles I and Henrietta Maria’s visit to Oxford University from 29-31 August 1636. Strode, university orator and soon-to-be canon of Christ’s Church (1638), was probably commissioned by Laud, chancellor of Oxford from 1630-41, to write the play.²⁷⁰ The year of the play’s composition and performance, 1636, might well be regarded as the height of Laud’s influence at Oxford and as a

²⁶⁷ Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment*, 211.

²⁶⁸ Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion*, 174. See also Benedict S. Robinson, “The ‘Turks,’ Caroline Politics, and Philip Massinger’s *The Renegado*,” in *Localizing Caroline Drama: Politics and Economics of the Early Modern English Stage, 1625-1642*, ed. Adam Zucker and Alan B. Farmer (New York, 2006), 213-238, 229; Martin Butler, *The Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture* (Cambridge, 2008), 286; Kevin Sharpe, “Archbishop Laud and the University of Oxford,” in *History & Imagination: Essays in honor of H.R. Trevor-Roper*, ed. Hugh Lloyd-Jones, Valeria Pearl, and Blair Worden (New York, 1981), 76.

²⁶⁹ Malcolm Smuts, “Force, love and authority in Caroline political culture,” in *The 1630s: Interdisciplinary Essays on Culture and Politics in the Caroline Era*, ed. Ian Atherton and Julie Sanders (Manchester, 2006), 28-49, 35.

²⁷⁰ Margaret Forey, “Strode, William (1601?–1645),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) [http://www.oxforddnb.com.].

political advisor.²⁷¹ H.R. Trevor-Roper notes, “the Laudian statues, the Laudian chair of Arabic, and the building of Canterbury Quadrangle in St. John’s College...were all completed in the same summer of 1636.”²⁷² Accordingly, *The Floating Island* not only compliments Charles as a prudent, pious, and loving king, but it also celebrates Laudianism. It does so by representing a potent and intimate partnership between Charles and Laud. The play depicts King Prudentius’ deposition by, and eventual triumph over, the personified passions (Melancholico, Malevolo, Irato, Audax, Concupiscence, etc.). Prudentius escapes passionate, violent deposition by retreating to a cloister on the advice of his chief advisor, Intellectus Agens (i.e. Laud).²⁷³ Strode characterizes Prudentius as merciful and eminently wise, and Intellectus is indispensable to Prudentius in arriving at, and dispensing, his wise judgments. As we will discuss at length, Intellectus’ suggestion of a timely retreat to a cloister exemplifies his indispensability. Since the play is relatively unknown, I will begin with an overview of *The Floating Island’s* main themes. Then, we’ll consider how those themes depict the uniformity between Laudian and Caroline policies, and reform of Oxford and the court respectively.

Satirizing puritan (the play’s word) opposition to the Caroline polity and Laudian Church constitutes a major theme. For instance, describing what the reign of Prudentius restrains him from doing, the puritan Malevolo complains, “for my part, if I broach / Some biting Libel, venomous word or Book / Against some prosperous Object which I hate, / My Eares are questioned. Locks which I have scorn’d / Must hide my Eare stumps.”²⁷⁴ The lines make

²⁷¹ Laud was on an upswing. He had defeated the feoffees in 1632, Juxon had been placed as Lord Treasurer in 1635, and Laud had also won the right to visit the universities in June of 1636.

²⁷² H.R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645* (London, 1963), 278.

²⁷³ For brief discussion of the play, see Adam Smyth, “‘Art Reflexive’: The Poetry, Sermons, and Drama of William Strode (1601?-1645),” *Studies in Philology* 103 (2006), 436-64, esp. 460-63.

²⁷⁴ William Strode, *The Floating Island* (London, 1655), sig. B1^v.

reference to the famous mutilation of William Prynne in 1633 for *Histrio-mastix*.²⁷⁵ Deftly, Strode domesticates the mutilation. He personifies the ears of the one punished (“My Eares are questioned”), and the barbaric punishment seems almost farcical and ridiculous as a result. Questioning ears is significantly less violent than cutting parts of them off. The phrase “locks which I have scorn’d” alludes to the puritan fashion for plain dress and trim hair. A more particular resonance, though, can also be detected. The phrase refers to Prynne’s *The vnlonelinesse, of loue-lockes*, a 1628 tract against that scourge of irreligion, long hair (though Prynne is ever-the-champion of hair reform in later works as well).²⁷⁶ The capacity of the long hair that Prynne rails against to meliorate the unseemly, mutilated stumps creates a pointed irony that Strode exploits. Unpredictable and illogical, Prynne’s philippics—like a poisonous serpent (“biting,” “venomous”)—strike anything that moves. The play captures their indiscriminateness in the vague, unidentified “prosperous Object.” The good fortune of prosperity is all the provocation malevolence needs. Ironically, Strode may have found his depiction of non-conformists in the play affirmed by Henry Burton’s reaction to the drama. Perhaps with Malevolo-like malevolence, Burton’s *For God, and the King* (1636) criticizes the play as a “scurrilous Enterlude” performed “in stead of learned and Scholasticall disputations, or exercises intable to the condition of a learned Academy.”²⁷⁷ Burton obviously was not privy to the fact that—except for the king’s approval—the court found the play as dry as a scholastic

²⁷⁵ A later statement by Memor at 3.8—“This trick Malevolo / Was chiefly meant to you, because your pen / Hath scourg’d the Stage”—further identifies Malevolo as Prynne (sig. D3^v).

²⁷⁶ See also William Prynne, *Histrio-mastix* (London, 1633), sig. ***1^r.

²⁷⁷ Henry Burton, *For God, and the King* (Amsterdam, 1636), 49.

disputation.²⁷⁸ Apparently Lord Carnarvon regarded it “the worst play he had ever seen except for one at Cambridge.”²⁷⁹ (One can only wonder what abomination constituted the exception.) The central theme of the play—the victory of prudence over the passions and puritan malevolents like Burton and Prynne—would have had great contemporary appeal to Charles and Laud. It represents the destructive and rebellious nature of passion, while emphasizing the political expediency of prudent action. On 17 March 1628, Laud delivered a sermon at the opening of the third parliament of Charles’ reign. The dissolution of this parliament in March 1629 would lead to eleven years of personal rule. Laud’s text for the sermon was Ephesians 4:3 (“endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”).²⁸⁰ In the sermon, Laud cautions against the dangers of religious disunity. This disunity will have severe consequences for the state where “all breach of ‘unity’ is full of danger.” Laud locates the passions as prime agitators widening this breach: “all exhortation to recall a man’s passions to peace is very needful for the keeping of ‘unity.’”²⁸¹ When the passions are disquieted, unity falls apart. Such a statement could serve as an advertisement for *The Floating Island*.

Laud’s argument about passion leading to disunity anticipates Charles’ justification for dismissing parliament in 1629. In “His MAJESTIE’S Declaration to all His loving Subjects, of the Causes which moved Him to Dissolve the Parliament,” Charles depicts himself as prudent and reasonable, and his opposition as “distempered,” “ill-affected,” and passionate.²⁸² Describing the “so much heat and distemper in the House,” Charles claims, “seldom hath greater

²⁷⁸ William Laud, *The Works of the Most Reverent Father in God, William Laud, D.D.*, 7 vols., ed. James Bliss and William Scott (Oxford, 1847-1860; repr. New York, 1975), 5.149. All quotations of Laud’s works will be from this edition.

²⁷⁹ A.J. Taylor, “The Royal Visit to Oxford in 1636,” *Oxoniensia* 1 (1936), 151-8, 156.

²⁸⁰ *King James Study Bible*, ed. Kenneth Barker (Michigan, 2002).

²⁸¹ Laud, *Works*, 1.160, 1.174-5. See 1.14-15 for Laud also cautioning against intemperate passion.

²⁸² See L.J. Reeve, *Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule* (Cambridge, 1989), 58-99 for more on religion and the collapse of the third parliament.

passion been seen in that House upon the greatest occasions.” He then proceeds to argue that this heat and distemper were “hatched out of the passionate brains of a few particular persons.” Impassioned brains must be to blame for, Charles contends, “we could not think that any moderate and discreet man (upon composed thoughts, setting aside passion and distemper) could be against receiving of Tonnage and Poundage.” In contrast to the passionate rabidity of these few persons, Charles’ speeches and messages are “gracious and clear”; his proceedings are characterized by “sincerity and clearness”; and Charles’ language is rendered in “those clear and open terms that might have satisfied any moderate and well-disposed minds.”²⁸³ Charles’ clarity and graceful expression seem almost numinous and other-worldly against the turbidity and turbulence of these few members. Charles further discredits the dyspeptic MPs by describing them as a “wicked Shimei,” who “would make Us odious in the eyes of all Our people.”²⁸⁴ One Kings 2:36-46 is a potent, cautionary tale for those guilty of disobedience to their king. Laud, perhaps influenced by the King’s declaration, employs Shimei to caution against disobedience in a sermon preached at Paul’s Cross in 1631 commemorating Charles’ inauguration. Warning those who fall into the “sin of murmuring against the King,” Laud admonishes, “but I pray remember what Solomon the King’s Son did to Shimei; remember that, and if the memory of his punishment would affright other men from running into this blasphemous iniquity, all would soon be well.”²⁸⁵ Charles, represented by Laud as a latter-day Solomon, protects both himself and the Davidic James I from the iniquity of an impassioned Shimei.

While gratifying the Caroline and Laudian resistance to passion, *The Floating Island* also shows how Laud and Charles controlled passion through reform. In act one, the courtiers

²⁸³ For articulation of a similar point, see Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I*, 190-1.

²⁸⁴ Charles I, *Basiliká the works of King Charles the martyr* (London, 1687), 223-29.

²⁸⁵ Laud, *Works*, 1.191.

Amorous, Irato, Audax, and Malevolo describe what they find constraining about Prudentius' rule. The description refers to Charles I's reformation of the royal court, but also to Laud's Oxford reforms:

Am.

...O this frost of Reason

Hath numd my Joynts. I that with sprightly vigour

Dancing to please my Mistress, could have rose

To fetch her from the Moon (had she been there)

Or as she stood salute her, now have lost

Those active legs, and not by doing service

To any Creature but Prudentius.

I live a Hermite in the Court; to me

It seemes a Colledg or a Nunnery.

Ir.

To me a Prison.

Au.

A meer Schoole to me.

Mal.

To me an Inquisition: worse: a Hell.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁶ William Strode, *The Floating Island*, sig. B2^r.

Amorous' claim that he "could have rose / To fetch her from the Moon (had she been there)" appropriates the language with which Strode commends the royal couple at the play's opening. Comparing the couple to the sun and moon, Strode writes, "mine eyes / Behold a wonder: Blustering Tempests there, / Yet Sun and Moon fair shining both so neer."²⁸⁷ The lines, though, only parodically approach the earlier description of Charles and Henrietta Maria. Amorous rises to fetch his moon. But Amorous is not the sun; he only connotes it because of his rising. The mistress is not only *not* on the moon, but she doesn't embody it the way Henrietta does. The dissimilarities are very much the point. Amorous and his mistress counterfeit the unique roles reserved only for the royal couple. The dissimilarity provides an apt context in which to introduce the topic of Caroline reform. Amorous and his lusty paramour could only ever impersonate the magisterial chastity of Charles and his consort. During the personal rule, Charles reformed (or released new directives about) everything from courtly behavior, the royal wardrobe, soap monopolies, to the fens, royal forests, and royal finance.²⁸⁸ Courtiers were imprisoned in the Tower for adultery or banished from the privy chamber for swearing.²⁸⁹ Even Lucy Hutchinson applauded the reform of courtly manners: "The face of the court was much changed in the king, for King Charles was temperate, chaste and serious, so that the fools, and bawds, mimics and catamites of the former Court grew out of fashion."²⁹⁰ In light of this attitude towards illicit behavior, it is no wonder that Amorous' fiery passions would feel a chill at this monastically-inclined court.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., sig. A3^v.

²⁸⁸ See Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992; repr. 1995), 209-274; for a contrast between Charles and his father, see Sharpe, *Remapping Early Modern England: The culture of seventeenth-century politics* (Cambridge, 2000), 94-95.

²⁸⁹ See Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I*, 212. Charles' resolve to address problems of slander against nobles can also be seen in his use of the Court of Chivalry. See Richard Cust, *Charles I and the Aristocracy, 1625-1642* (Cambridge, 2013), 140-71.

²⁹⁰ Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, ed. N.H. Keeble (London, 1995), 67.

The allusion to Charles' reforms also reference Laud. Malevolo's statement that the court of Prudentius seems to him an "Inquisition" evokes the negative response to the Laudian Church. Laud's efforts to enforce conformity, and particularly his use of the ecclesiastical and prerogative courts of High Commission and Star Chamber in those efforts, are frequently labeled in contemporary tracts as an "Inquisition."²⁹¹ Strode mocks the idea of a Laudian inquisition as reactionary and groundless. If a reformation of morals—a tempering of rage, malevolence, licentiousness, and audacity—is regarded as an inquisition, then let the inquiry begin, the play suggests. The Laudian presence is also felt in Amorous' claim, "I live a Hermite in the Court; to me / It seems a Colledg or a Nunnery." Though "colledg" can refer to monastic life, the word also carries its contemporary meaning of "a society of scholars incorporated within, or in connection with, a University."²⁹² In light of this scholastic connotation, "colledg" may refer to the reforms at Oxford under Laud's chancellorship. The new university statutes having just been passed, Laud's beautification of St. John's just completed with the erection of the quadrangle, and the word being used in the midst of a reformatory context, all increase the plausibility of the reference.

The reforms that Laud imposed were indeed extensive.²⁹³ In an account of his chancellorship, Laud states, "I thought it my duty to reform the university, which was extremely sunk from all discipline, and fallen into all licentiousness; insomuch that divers of the governors there complained to me that if remedy were not applied in time there would scarce any face be left of a university. Hereupon I resolved with myself to set close to a reformation."²⁹⁴ For Laud,

²⁹¹ See John Lilburne, *A Worke of the Beast* (Amsterdam, 1638) 12; Robert Baillie, *The life of William now Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, examined* (London, 1643), sig. B4^r; William Laud (spurious), *The recantation of the prelate of Canterbury being his last advice to his brethren the bishops of England* (London, 1641), 7.

²⁹² "college, n.," *OED Online* (Oxford, 2013) [<http://www.oed.com>].

²⁹³ See Sharpe, "Archbishop Laud and the University of Oxford," *passim* for more on the reforms.

²⁹⁴ Laud, *Works*, 5.13.

nothing less than the fate of the university was contingent on this reformation. Laud considered the university corporally diseased, and the reforms he enacted (like those against drunkenness, long hair, spur-wearing, licentiousness) sought to discipline the student body. The play may directly reference one of those reforms in Amorous' statement to Hilario that the latter is never "check'd for drinking, for singing, or for playing the pranks" when Prudentius leaves the court.²⁹⁵ The statement could refer to Laudian Oxford, for curbing excessive drinking was a major aim of the reforms. Laud even tried to limit the number of licensed alehouses in Oxford to three (an estimated 300 were unlicensed). The measure, no doubt, further endeared him to the university's students. Vice-Chancellor John Coke, commenting on the new statutes in 1636, states, "scholars are no more found in taverns or houses of disorder, nor seen loitering in the streets, or other places of idleness or ill example."²⁹⁶ The discipline that this statement describes could apply to restraining the high-jinx of Hilario. The disorder of playing pranks and the ill-example of haunting taverns are quite extinct at Laudian Oxford and—considering his aversion to Jacobean misrule—at the court of Prudentius/Charles.

Thus, the strict discipline Prudentius imposes upon his court is compared to the discipline of Oxford under Chancellor Laud. That Amorous' speech should allude to Laud suggests the complementary relationship of Carlo-Laudian reform. One invokes the other. Their inextricability is especially apparent in the play's epilogues. Like the prologues, there are two epilogues, one addressed to the university and the other to the king. The prologues contain verbal and descriptive parallels, but not to the same degree and extensiveness as the epilogues. The epilogues' verbal correspondence, then, may be symptomatic of Carlo-Laudian uniformity (particularly in the area of reform) that the preceding play has outlined. Illustrating the

²⁹⁵ William Strode, *The Floating Island*, sig. B2^v.

²⁹⁶ Laud, *Works*, 5.130.

uniformity, whereas the prologues were addressed “To the King and Queenes Majesty” and “To the University,” the epilogues are addressed “To His Majesty” and “To the University”; that is, as we will see, to Charles and Laud.²⁹⁷

The epilogue “To the University” (hereafter epilogue 2) consists of six lines, three of which repeat almost verbatim statements from the epilogue “To His Majesty” (hereafter epilogue 1), and the other three lines contain more oblique reiterations. Epilogue 2 states,

The Isle is settled, Rage of Passions laid
Phancy to Prudence bowes. Let all be staid
In your Acceptance too, and then each breast
Will cease its Floating, and as firmly rest
As doth our Scene. One passion still would prove
An Actor when the scene is shut, Our Love.

The first three lines correspond to these from epilogue 1: “The Isle is settled, rage of Passions, laid, / And Phancy stoopes to Prudence. Things so staid, / Our Scene which was but Fiction now is true.” The exhortation “Let all be staid” differs in certainty from epilogue 1’s “Things so staid.” That higher degree of uncertainty compliments the imperium of Charles. Charles does not need acceptance the way Laud does. One does not accept the rule of a divinely appointed king. The phrase “In your Acceptance too” primarily refers to the university accepting fancy bowing to prudence just as the passions in the floating island have done. But “your Acceptance” could also refer to an acceptance of the reforms and new statutes implemented at the university

²⁹⁷ The epilogues are found on sig. F4^v.

by Laud; “your Acceptance” equals “Laud’s Acceptance.” Affirming the analogical relationship between Caroline and Laudian reform, accepting the rule of Prudentius—that is, the passions and fancy submitting to prudence—also accepts Laudian reform and statutes.

Reiteration and alteration are also apparent in what follows after an acceptance of Charles and Laud. Epilogue 2’s “And then each breast will cease its Floating, and as firmly rest / As doth our Scene” echoes this statement from epilogue 1: “Henceforth our hearts all motion shall forget / But yours.” Strode is careful to describe the positive benefits of an acceptance of Laud (i.e. “each breast will cease its Floating”) in terms that don’t outdo the benefits of Charles’ rule. Each breast stopping to float is not as exhaustive a victory for Laudian reform as hearts forgetting all motions and no longer being their owner’s. Further, confident certainty and resolution inform epilogue 1’s declaration that “henceforth our hearts all motion shall forget.” Epilogue 2’s “and then each breast will cease its Floating” replaces the proclamatory “shall” with the less decisive “will.” In the partnership of Caroline and Laudian moral reform, Laudianism is, of course, the junior partner.

This junior status is also expressed in the final echo between the epilogues. Epilogue 2 states, “One passion still would prove / An Actor when the Scene is shut, Our Love.” The statement corresponds to epilogue 1’s assurance, “And now / No souls so Passionate as we; that bow / Both with the weight of Duty and of Debt.” Duty and debt motivate the love of the passionate souls in the first epilogue. The internal rhyme of “we” / “Duty” outfits the duty compelling the passionate souls with sonority. There is an aural determinism (“we” cannot help but rhyme with “duty”) to one’s love for the King that accords with the Stuart conception of *jure divino* kingship. Further affirming this connotation, epilogue 1 describes the passionate souls’ dutiful love as virtuous: “That makes it Vertue, these will have it Love.” The same potent

accompaniment of duty and virtue does not compel and inform the “one passion” of epilogue 2. Nonetheless, the ways in which Strode differentiates the epilogues only serve to underscore their similarities. The similarities are indicative of the uniformity the play theorizes between Carolinian reform and church and state. Having examined the play’s major themes, we can now analyze the more particular example of how *The Floating Island* presents resistance to impropriations and sacrilege as a locus for this uniformity.

Individuals disaffected with the Carolinian Church often made use of impropriations to further their reforming efforts. In act three, while Malevolo and the lawyer/recorder Memor are trying to decide on laws that would be useful for Phancy’s reign, Memor proposes “Lawes worth millions to us, / By faire intrapping of the wealthy Clergy.” Malevolo then urges Phancy to pass this law by describing it as “an honest project / Thought on by Memor, out of love to Churches, / To buy back saleable impropriations / With charitable money.”²⁹⁸ Those defending the practice of impropriating often claimed charitable intention. An anonymous 1634 anti-episcopal tract adduces the bishops’ suppression of the practice of impropriating, which it calls “a most charitable, and usefull & hopefull business,” as indicative of the need for the bishops’ extirpation.²⁹⁹ Though no doubt many would sincerely have believed impropriations to be of charitable benefit to the church, the play depicts those impropriating as hypocritical and manipulative. The Carolinians in the audience would have bristled at Malevolo’s claim that sacrilege could somehow indicate love and piety for the church. To the Carolinian mind, nothing

²⁹⁸ William Strode, *The Floating Island*, sigs. C4^r; D1^v.

²⁹⁹ *Certaine arguments and motives of speciall moment propounded to the consideration of our most noble King and state tending to perswade them to abolish that unhappy and unhallowed government of our church by bishops, and in stead thereof to set up the government of the Lord Iesus Christ and his holy ordinances in their purity and power* (S.l., 1634), 12.

could seem more dishonest than this “honest project” that purports to uphold the church with the right hand while stripping it of its possessions with the left.

Laud opposed impropriations by attacking their financial source: the feoffees, a group of twelve individuals (four lawyers, four ministers, four citizens) who formed a corporation to buy impropriations.³⁰⁰ According to the antiquarian John Weever, in England in the early 1630s there were 9284 benefices, and 3845 became lay fees after the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536.³⁰¹ As a result, the feoffment had quite a lot to work with. Impropriations provided the feoffees with the privilege of appointing ministers, most of whom were not conformable. Thus, impropriations became a means for non-conformists to subvert Laudian supervision and innovations. As Melanholico comments, impropriations were distributed “the better part to us oppressed Brethren.”³⁰² Eventually, Laud prevailed against the feoffment. The feoffees were dissolved in 1632. In a dairy entry for February of that year, Laud records, “Wednesday, The feoffees, that pretended to buy in impropriations, were dissolved in the Chequer Chamber. They were the main instruments for the Puritan faction to undo the Church. The criminal part reserved.”³⁰³ Laud took evident satisfaction in their dissolution. A later diary entry, under the heading “things which I have projected to do, if God bless me in them,” includes this comment: “To overthrow the feoffment, dangerous both to Church and State, going under the specious pretence of buying in impropriations. Done.”³⁰⁴ As we see in his claim of danger to church and state, Laud’s triumph over the feoffment, and the Laudian resistance to impropriations and

³⁰⁰ A useful discussion of Laud and the feoffees can be found in John Parker Lawson, *The Life and Times of William Laud, D.D.*, 2 vols. (London, 1829), 1.549-555.

³⁰¹ John Weever, *Ancient funerall monuments* (London, 1631), 183.

³⁰² William Strode, *The Floating Island*, sig. D4^r.

³⁰³ Laud, *Works*, 3.216-7.

³⁰⁴ Laud, *Works*, 3.253. See also 4.302-3 for charges made against Laud at his trial for his role in dissolving impropriations.

sacrilege more generally, support the king's sovereignty. *The Floating Island* dramatizes this support.

During the rebellion by the passions, Laud's character (Intellectus Agens), saves Prudentius by guiding him to a cloister: "And I to serve you with Intelligence. / I'll guide you to some Cloyster."³⁰⁵ In these lines, Laudian land policy has a great political benefit for Prudentius/Charles. Put simply, Prudentius/Charles escapes to—and his return to power is engineered from—the monastic lands that impropriations and sacrilege would place outside of state and church control, and that the Laudian resistance to impropriations and sacrilege sought to protect and recover. Political sovereignty and spoliation are tightly connected; resistance to the latter helps maintain the former.

Charles understood this connection.³⁰⁶ His intense aversion to sacrilege is clear in *Apophthegmata aurea, regia, Carolina* (1649), a collection of moral maxims distilled from *Eikon Basilike* (1649). In the work, Charles declares, "I care not much to bee reckoned among the UNFORTUNATE, if I bee not in the Black List of IRRELIGIOUS and SACRILEGIOUS PRINCES."³⁰⁷ Such a statement provides evidence for John Morrill's contention that Charles had a "deep anxiety about the extent to which the Crown was answerable to God for its plunder of the church over the previous century."³⁰⁸ An aversion to sacrilege is also apparent in the life of Charles appended to his *Basilika*, where it is asserted that "He [Charles] had so perfect a Detestation of that Crime [sacrilege], that it is said He scarce ever mentioned Henry VIII.

³⁰⁵ William Strode, *The Floating Island*, sig. B4^v.

³⁰⁶ The following examples are from works authored by Charles or attributed to him.

³⁰⁷ Charles I, *Apophthegmata aurea, regia, Carolina* (London, 1649), 17.

³⁰⁸ John Morrill, "A British Patriarchy? Ecclesiastical imperialism under the early Stuarts," in *Religion, culture and society in early modern Britain: essays in honour of Patrick Collinson*, ed. Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (Cambridge, 1994), 209-237, 224.

without an Abhorrency of His Sacriledge.”³⁰⁹ This is a rather provocative position for the English monarch to take. In the 1630s, Girolamo Piatti’s *The happines of a religious state* (1632) also criticizes Henry VIII’s dissolution of the monasteries.³¹⁰ But Piatti’s work attempts to confute those who have written against Catholic monasticism, and Piatti is a Jesuit. Charles’ aversion to sacrilege does have an element of the superstitious. Richard Cust notes, as Charles “was preparing to abandon Oxford in April 1646 he made a vow that ‘if it shall please his divine Majestie...to re-establish mee on my throne, I will wholly give back to his Church all those impropriations which are now held by the crowne.””³¹¹ The idea that Charles’ current political woes are traceable to despoiling church lands is implicit in the vow he makes to restore the lay fees if his political fortunes change. On a more practical level, Charles’ aversion to sacrilege can also be explained because of the link he saw between sacrilege and civil rebellion. For instance, in a 1645 proclamation urging the use of the Book of Common Prayer, Charles concludes about those unwilling to use the book,

And observing likewise, that no reason is given for this alteration [i.e. not using the book of common prayer], but only Inconvenience alleadged in the Generall (and whether pride and Avarice be not the ground, whether Rebellion and destruction of Monarchy be not the intention of some, and Sacriledge and the Churches Possessions the aymes and hopes

³⁰⁹ Charles I, *Basiliká*, 62.

³¹⁰ Girolamo Piatti, *The happines of a religious state* (Rouen, 1623), “The Preface,” sig. q3^r.

³¹¹ Richard Cust, “Charles I and Providence,” in *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England: Essays in honour of Nicholas Tyacke* (Woodbridge, 2006), 193-208, 197. For more on church lands reverting back to the crown, see *Basilika* 679; see also Peter Heylyn, *The undeceiving of the people in the point of tithes* (London, 1647), 30.

of others, and these new Directories, the meanes to prepare and draw the people in for all,
We leave to him who searches and knowes the hearts of men.).³¹²

Pride and avarice, rebellion and the destruction of monarchy, and sacrilege form a kind of rising tricolon of heinous deeds, in which each successive transgression outdoes the previous in sheer flagitiousness.³¹³ In *Effata Regalia*, a collection of aphorisms very much similar to *Apophthegmata aurea, regia, Carolina*, Charles asserts, “Men of ambitious Covetousness and sacrilegious Cruelty, will torture with their King, both Church and State, in Civil dissensions, till (if he have not an invincible resolution) he shall not be forced to consent and declare, that he does approve what (God knowes) he utterly dislikes, and in his Soul abhors.” The torture that these men perform applies not only to the spoliation of church lands, but also to the extirpation of episcopacy, which Charles considered an act of sacrilege.³¹⁴ Charles interprets that extirpation as part of the reformation of the church that led to civil discord. As he succinctly asserts, “The Devil of Rebellion doth commonly turn himself into an Angel of Reformation.”³¹⁵ In *The Floating Island*, since impropriating church lands follows quickly on the heels of political revolt, rebellion does indeed turn into reformation.

One way to resist sacrilege is to recover impropriations. Another effective means is to make that which it despoils more sympathetic. *The Floating Island* exhibits this strategy, for Prudentius’ timely retreat to a cloister includes a valorization of monastic life. When the

³¹² Charles I, *By the King. A proclamation commanding the use of the Book of Common-Prayer according to law, notwithstanding the pretended ordinance for the new directory* (Oxford, 1645), sig. A2^r.

³¹³ Similarly, the biographer of Charles in the *Basilika* also connects sacrilege in Scotland to its revolt during the Bishops’ Wars: “His [Charles’] endeavours [against sacrilege] this way were so strong, that the Faction in Scotland found no Artifice able to divert them but by kindling the flame of a Civil War; the Criminals there seeking to adjust their Sacrilegious Acquisitions by Rebellious practices, and to destroy that Church by force which His Majesty would not suffer them to torture with famine” (62).

³¹⁴ Charles I, *Effata regalia* (London, 1661), 206.

³¹⁵ Charles I, *Apophthegmata*, 19.

passions inquire where Prudentius has been hidden, Intellectus answers, “Within a Sanctuary, where his thoughts / Are sequestred from earthly cares to heaven.”³¹⁶ The lines’ refer to the contemplative life of monasticism, as their correspondence to Protestant polemic against monasticism indicates.³¹⁷ For instance, Martin Luther concedes that, during apostolic times, virginity and “the contemplative life of Monkes and such other, vvwhich sequestred themselves from the vvorld and all vvorldly affaires” had a degree of holiness.³¹⁸ The contemplative life, Luther elaborates, has since been utterly corrupted by the practice of papists. Similarly, Calvin mocks those who “giue themselves (ye may be sure) to a contemplative life, and to the state of perfection.” Their perfection occurs in a “Cloyfter,” and yet “it is well known that all the Couentes of the Popedome are starke brothelhouses.”³¹⁹ The monastic connotations of Prudentius’ sequestration can also be more positively demonstrated through its affinity with the Laudian Peter Hausted and the Jesuit Girolamo Piatti’s comparison between those living monastic and secular lives. Hausted acknowledges that “it is not for all men to live fequeftred from the world.” And yet, he claims that those who live a “contemplative life” are “of all men...the moft happy, being voyde of cares, of ftifes, of envyings, of backbitings, (things which fuch men as are any whit verfed in the bufineffe of the world, doe find too frequent and troublefome).” These men are happiest because they “hath no employment, but onely to pray.”³²⁰

³¹⁶ William Strode, *The Floating Island*, sig. C3^v.

³¹⁷ In addition to that contained in the play, for positive Caroline and Laudian appraisals of the contemplative life see Jeremy Taylor, *Antiquitates christianae* (London, 1675), 78; Anthony Stafford, *The Femall Glory* (London, 1635), 240; Walter Montagu, *Miscellanea spiritualia* (London, 1648), 385; I.B., *Virginalia* (Rouen, 1632), 46.

³¹⁸ Martin Luther, *A commentarie of M. Doctor Martin Luther vpon the Epistle of S. Paul to the Galathians* (London, 1575), 220. See John Calvin, *A harmonie vpon the the three Euangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke with the commentarie of M. Iohn Caluine* (London, 1584), 371 for more on his views regarding the contemplative life, particularly how Martha and Mary are often seen as representing the active and contemplative lives respectively.

³¹⁹ John Calvin, *Sermons of M. Iohn Caluine vpon the Epistle of Saincte Paule to the Galathians* (London, 1574), 274-5. See also Theodore Beza, *Master Bezaes sermons vpon the three chapters of the cantic of canticles* (Oxford, 1587), 241-2; Anthony Burgess, *Spiritual refining* (London, 1652), 65; Samuel Rutherford, *Christ dying and drawing sinners to himself* (London, 1647), 352.

³²⁰ Peter Hausted, *Ten Sermons* (London, 1636), 177.

Like Prudentius, Hausted's contemplatives escape the cares of the world and focus their lives on prayer. For Piatti, secular people and those who "break forth into passion" are "tumbled vp and downe as in a tempestuous wind of earthlie cares and desires. In one of his Homilies vpon S. Matthew he sayth, that there is as much difference betwixt the most delightful life of a Monk (for so are his words) and the pleasures of Secular people, as betwixt a quiet hauen and a boisterous sea..."³²¹ The tempestuousness and martial violence ("break forth," "tumbled vp and downe") of the earthly cares and passions juxtaposed with the placidity of the monastic life epitomizes Prudentius' circumstances in act two.³²²

The correspondence of Prudentius' sequestration with a Roman Catholic description of monastic life suggests how his retreat to a cloister might be offensive to puritans. A latent anti-puritanism can also be derived from a somewhat unlikely source: sabbatarianism. There exists a suggestive similarity between the language depicting Prudentius' withdrawal and puritan tracts proclaiming the sanctity of the Lord's Day. The similarity is apparent in George Walker's *The Doctrine of the Sabbath* (1638). Walker (b. 1582?, d. 1651) had many clashes with the Caroline authorities, with Laud even labeling him "a disorderly and peevish man" (qtd. in Como). David R. Como describes *The Doctrine of the Sabbath* as a "work of sabbatarian extremism" that had to be "printed illicitly in Amsterdam."³²³ In the work, Walker advises how Sundays should be spent and the kind of prayerful attitude the godly individual should adopt:

³²¹ Piatti, *The happines of a religious state*, 728-9.

³²² "Break forth" is often used to describe the outbreak of war. See Edward Grimeston (transl.), *A general inuentorie of the history of France from the beginning of that monarchie, vnto the treatie of Veruins, in the year 1598* (London, 1607), 150.

³²³ David R. Como, "Walker, George (bap. 1582?, d. 1651)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com>.]

Fourthlie, they who are more spirituall and haue haue [sic] liuely hope of Heaven, and haue the spirit shed on them more abundantlie, they are more bound by Gods law to sequester themselves and withdraw their mindes from worldlie cares, and more to minde heavenlie things as at all other times, so on the Lords holie daie, which is consecrated to heavenly, spirituall and religious worship and seruice of God, & is a pledg to them of eternall rest with Christ in heaven.³²⁴

This language of sequestering from earthly cares is also employed in John Wade's *Redemption of time* (1683) where he asks, "Will you for the future sequester your selves from worldly Cares, Affections, Affairs, on this Day? and henceforth dedicate the Lord's-Day to the Honour of God and Christ?"³²⁵ The sequestration from earthly cares that Prudentius experiences in a cloister is, for Walker and Wade, the purpose of Sundays. The individual need not isolate himself in a cloister; rather, he creates a sense of monastic sequestration in his very soul. This also helps explain the godly outrage over the *Book of Sports* (first issued in 1618, but reissued in 1633). The recreations that the book prescribed for Sundays were not merely a way of profaning a holy day, but through them the world encroached on an otherwise otherworldly time, a day of monastic seclusion. As these sabbatarian tracts show, we have here two divergent notions of how to sequester one's thoughts from the world. A sequester that entails physical removal to a cloister idolatrizes (and, of course, grossly Romanizes) an interior, spiritual process. It presents the monastic life as particularly well-suited to care for the things of heaven despite the Lord's Day's equally strong claim for the cure of such things. Though Prudentius' retirement to a

³²⁴ George Walker, *The Doctrine of the Sabbath* (Amsterdam, 1638), 143.

³²⁵ John Wade, *Redemption of time, the duty and wisdom of Christians in evil days* (London, 1683), 70.

cloister is not anti-sabbatarian, the language of sabbatarianism further clarifies what would be offensive about his sequestration to puritans.

The Floating Island's coupling of resistance to impropriations and valorization of monastic life is also evident in the work of Laudian-sympathizing antiquarians Sir Henry Spelman, William Dugdale, and John Weever.³²⁶ All of them are highly critical of lay impropriations. For instance, in Spelman's *The larger treatise concerning tithes* (1647), he claims the impropriety of lay ownership of spiritual lands: "Spirituell things and spirituell men are correlatives, and cannot in reason be divorced: therefore was no man capable of Appropriations but spirituell persons before the laws of dissolution..."³²⁷ Spelman compares lay impropriations to Abimelech's wrongful seizure of Sarah (Genesis 20), thereby tainting lay ownership with an adulterous connotation. To impropriate is to seize another man's wife. The dissolution made such impiety possible.³²⁸ To further vilify these impious actions, Spelman emphasizes the holiness of what was despoiled. Discussing the dissolution, Spelman confesses, "the thing I lament is, that the Wheat perish'd with the Darnel, things of good and pious Institution, with those that abused and perverted them; by reason whereof the Service of God was not only grievously wounded, and bleedeth at this day, but infinite Works of Charity were utterly cut off and extinguish'd."³²⁹ Lamenting the dissolution of the monasteries, characterizing some of them as "good and pious Institution[s]," and claiming that they performed "infinite Works of

³²⁶ Laud indicated his approval of Spelman's project by making Jeremiah Stephens, an assistant to Spelman in his research, a prebend of Lincoln in 1639. See Stuart Handley, "Stephens, Jeremiah (1591–1665)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008), [http://www.oxforddnb.com]. Graham Parry notes that Dugdale was Spelman's "protégé." See Graham Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honour: The Arts of the Anglican Counter-Reformation* (Woodbridge, 2006), 175. For Weever's approving attitude towards Laud, see *Ancient funerall monuments*, sig. A^r.

³²⁷ Sir Henry Spelman, *The larger treatise concerning tithes* (London, 1647), 159.

³²⁸ See John Weever, *Ancient funerall monuments*, 183, 730; William Dugdale and Roger Dodsworth, *Monasticon anglicanum* (London, 1693), 3.

³²⁹ Sir Henry Spelman, *The larger treatise concerning tithes*, 227-8.

Charity” are rather provocative positions when we consider that Calvin refers to monasteries as “starke brothelhouses” (but didn’t he know about their charitable activities, one wonders). The 1693 version of Dugdale and Dodsworth’s *Monasticon Anglicanum* (first published in 1655) exhibits a similar approval of parts of monastic life, showing how these antiquarian works—often critical of sacrilege—could serve pro-monastic ends. Justifying the importance of their work to posterity, the authors claim, “It is also useful in History, giving us a lively Idea of the manner of our Forefathers way of Living, their Zeal for Gods Publick Worship, as then profest, and the Simplicity of their Devotions; and of the great Charity to the Poor, and Hospitality and Beneficence to all Comers, maintain'd and exercised in the Monasteries.”³³⁰ Far from renouncing England’s monastic past as wholly corrupt, the author (probably James Wright) subtly establishes the continuity between past and present in “Beneficence.” The word’s similarity (visual, aural, etymological) to “benefice” connects the current livings of ministers to the monastic practices on which they are (partly) modeled. *Monasticon Anglicanum* makes that continuity visible. In the sanctuary that the cloister provides Prudentius during the rebellion of the passions, *The Floating Island* also depicts the monasteries as most beneficent and hospitable places.

The Floating Island, then, can be situated within a broader antiquarian movement that sought to recover and reappraise England’s monastic past. As the play demonstrates, that recovery (in the form of impropriations) has a real political expediency. If, as Laud believed, impropriations were a way for puritan nonconformists and agitators to vex church and state, then the recovery of those lay fees made political sovereignty safer and more secure. *The Floating Island* makes that securing function quite clear. More largely, Prudentius’ retreat to an un-

³³⁰ William Dugdale and Roger Dodsworth, *Monasticon anglicanum*, sig. A3^v.

impropriated cloister is indicative of the supportive relationship between Charles and Laud that the play theorizes. As we have seen, Strode demonstrates how a reforming zeal and an aversion to passion and sacrilege enable a Carlo-Laudian meeting of the minds. In the next section, we will delve more deeply into the connection between the Neoplatonic reformation of court morality that Charles and Henrietta Maria oversaw and the austerity of Anglican asceticism.

II. Caroline Neoplatonism and Anglican Asceticism

The relationship between Caroline Neoplatonism and Anglican asceticism is, in some ways, contradictory and paradoxical. How does a Neoplatonic ethos that celebrates conjugal love find affirmation in an asceticism that often denigrates it?³³¹ For one, the Neoplatonic emphasis on contemplation had a ready parallel in the contemplative life that Laudian asceticism's monastic predilections favored. Similarly, the Neoplatonic embrace of perfection could also serve Anglican ends. As we have seen, some Anglicans—operating with a more optimistic and capacious sense of the will's efficacy—considered perfection possible in this life. That possibility imbued ascetic practice with a real urgency and potential. Caroline Neoplatonism's rejection of lust and carnality also encouraged austere ascetic practices. Scholars have long recorded the connection between taming the lusts of the body in (neo)Platonic doctrines—particularly in Plato's *Phaedo* and the *Enneads* of Plotinus—and the earliest forms of Christian asceticism.³³² The connection is especially visible in the writings of

³³¹ There are, too, some internal contradictions in Caroline Neoplatonism. It becomes one extended encomium to the royal marriage, and yet Neoplatonists—Plotinus especially—denigrated marriage as a submission to carnality.

³³² On Plato, see John M. Dillon, "Rejecting the Body, Refining the Body: Some Remarks on the Development of Platonist Asceticism," in *Asceticism*, ed. Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis (Oxford, 1998), 80-7. On Plotinus, see Joseph Ward Swain, *The Hellenic Origins of Christian Asceticism* (New York, 1916), 128-39.

Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Jewish thinker Philo.³³³ While Caroline Neoplatonists sought to transcend the body and Laodians attempted its subjection, the means to achieve that subjection and/or transcendence had a marked similarity. Namely, the chastening and disciplining—often by corporal means—of carnal lust. Moreover, the language of purification that pervades Caroline Neoplatonism reinforces the Anglican view of sacred space and, in turn, ascetic valorization. In *The Hellenic Origins of Christian Asceticism*, Joseph Swain demonstrates that the emphasis on purification in the Greek cults stemmed from a belief that cleansing was necessary before one could enter sacral space.³³⁴ In Platonic terms, spirit needs to be purified from materiality's dross. This necessity implicitly endorses distinctions between the sacral and profane that Anglicans punctiliously enforced. The spatial distinction could also be mapped onto the body, licensing ascetic practice. Virginity consecrates the body to God. As Swain observes about the self-castration performed by the Galli, disciples of Cybele, ““emasulation is here the supreme consecration.””³³⁵ Greek religion provides a means for understanding how the language of Neoplatonic purity, of separation between the sacred and profane, affirms the beauty of holiness and contains an intrinsic ascetic impulse. While the relationship between Caroline Neoplatonism and Anglican asceticism was by no means an easy one, there exist so many points of convergence between them that diffusion could not help but take place. In other words, placed into compulsory company at a dinner party, after a brief moment of awkwardness on (most probably) asceticism's part, the two could find much in common to talk about.

³³³ See Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988), 171-4, 300-1; Philo, *On the Contemplative Life*, transl. Gail Patterson Corrington, in *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook*, ed. Vincent L. Wimbush (Minneapolis, 1990), 134-55.

³³⁴ Joseph Ward Swain, *The Hellenic Origins of Christian Asceticism*, 25-6.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 73.

That commonalty is apparent in Thomas Carew's *Coelum Britannicum*, first performed at Whitehall on Shrove Tuesday in 1634. On a more general level, too, the masque emphasizes the supportive relationship between Anglicanism and Neoplatonism. Even the liturgical calendar aids in effecting the reformation of court morality that Neoplatonism promoted. While explaining how "the gods must keepe no Pages, nor Groomes of their Chamber under the age of 25," Momus details one exemplary instance of this new moral order: "*Uulcan* was brought to an Oretenus and fined, for driving in a plate of Iron into one of the Sunnes Chariot-wheeles and frost-nailing his horses upon the fifth of *November* last, for breach of a penall Statute prohibiting worke upon Holydayes, that being the annuall celebration of the Gygantomachy."³³⁶ To puritans, observance of holy days smacked of the Roman veneration of saints' days. Some puritans did not recognize Christmas as a holy day. Not observing 5 November, though, has even greater implications. It is tantamount to suggesting that the failure of Fawkes' attempted coup should not be celebrated. By applying the puritan scruple about holydays to that date, the masque verifies a suspicion that the Caroline government often harbored: puritanism was synonymous with political disloyalty. Nonconformity—even in a matter as seemingly innocuous as celebrating a holiday—presaged more dangerous political disaffection.³³⁷

The correspondence between church and state that this equation represents is also evident in the role religion plays in court reform. Jove, inspired by the example of the Caroline Court, institutes a moral reformation of his own house through the imposition of Neoplatonic philosophy. This Neoplatonism effects a complete extirpation of lust, wantonness, and licentious

³³⁶ Thomas Carew, *Coelum Britannicum* (London, 1634), 8.

³³⁷ See also Malcolm Smuts, "Force, love and authority in Caroline political culture," 44; R. Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, 1987), 238; Achsah Guiborry, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton: Literature, religion and cultural conflict in seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1998), 20-1.

behavior, emphasizing instead the pure and refining influence of “conjugall affection” devoid of carnality. The moral reformation of Jove’s court (again, modeled on the Caroline one) is partly achieved by means of religious institutions:

It is therefore by the authority aforesaid enacted, that this whole Army of Constellations be immediately disbanded and casheerd, so to remove all imputation of impiety from the Coelestiall Spirits, and all lustfull influences upon terrestriall bodies; and consequently that there be an Inquisition erected to expunge in the Ancient, and suppress in the moderne and succeeding Poems and Pamphlets, all past, present, and future mention of those abjur’d heresies, and to take particular notice of all ensuing incontinences, and punish them in their high Commission Court.³³⁸

In a formulation agreeable to Anglican proponents of asceticism, impiety and “lustfull influences” are closely connected. Further affirming their connection, an “Inquisition” and “high Commission Court” work together to extirpate all “abjur’d heresies” and “ensuing incontinences.” It is indicative of the Anglican preoccupation with asceticism that lust becomes impious and incontinence heretical. Only in a religious culture with a highly developed ascetic sensibility would carnality be branded “blasphemous.” The cooperation of an inquisitorial body with High Commission is certainly fitting. Often, under Archbishop Laud (as mentioned above), the ecclesiastical court was referred to as a kind of inquisition. Henry Burton, responding to Laud’s scaffold sermon, writes, “I am sure by his meanes the high Commission was little inferior ti [sic] the Spanish Inquisition for blood.”³³⁹ Notice, too, that Burton heightens the maliciousness of Laud’s machinations in High Commission by oblique reference to Alba’s

³³⁸ Ibid., 7.

³³⁹ Henry Burton, *A full and satisfactorie ansvvere to the Arch-bishop of Canterbvries speech* (London, 1645), 14.

Bloedraad (Council of Blood). One anti-Laudian polemic even places this boast in the mouth of Laud: “I rul’d the law, the law not me, / In my high inquisition Court.”³⁴⁰ Inquisition and High Commission are so intertwined that their concinnity is best expressed in the garbled hybrid of “high inquisition Court.” To detractors, the furious prosecutorial activity of High Commission under Laud began to feel like an inquisition, energizing anti-Laudianism with anti-Catholicism. Ultimately, the justice meted out by an ecclesiastical court like High Commission is integral to the work of moral reform that Jove effects. Under Archbishop Laud, ecclesiastical courts probably achieved their highest level of prosecutorial activity in English history.³⁴¹ As Tom Webster has shown with the case of Thomas Weld in Essex, the courts were also much more efficient and persistent (often maddeningly so for the godly).³⁴² It is, of course, this relentless productivity that allows *Coelum Britannicum* to present High Commission as such an effective engineer of social reform.

After detailing the way in which the example of Caroline Neoplatonism has inspired Jove to expunge incontinence, lust, and other heresies, Momus exclaims, “Heaven! Heaven is no more the place it was; a cloyster of Carthusians, a Monastery of converted Gods.”³⁴³ A similar statement is found in *The Floating Island*, but also in William Davenant’s *The Temple of Love* (1634) where “certain young Lords...are growne as good Platonicall Lovers / As are to be found in an Hermitage.”³⁴⁴ The negative, Romish connotations of cloisters, monasteries, and hermitages were all being reevaluated by Laudians in the 1630s. Illustrating how some of the new devotional forms introduced by Laudians were compatible with monasticism, Henry

³⁴⁰ Anon, *Canterburies conscience convicted* (S.l., 1641), broadside.

³⁴¹ See R.B. Outhwaite, *The Rise and Fall of the English Ecclesiastical Courts, 1500-1860* (Cambridge, 2006), 58.

³⁴² Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement c. 1620-1643* (Cambridge, 1997), 189.

³⁴³ Thomas Carew, *Coelum Britannicum*, 7.

³⁴⁴ William Davenant, *The temple of love* (London, 1634), sig. B2^v.

Burton's withering attack on the Laudian John Cosin's *Devotions* (1627) even asks, "Will the Author of this Booke make the Court a Monasterie, or Nunnerie?"³⁴⁵ "Yes," Momus might respond, Laudian Anglicanism coupled with Caroline Neoplatonism might do just that. In light of the participatory role religion plays in Neoplatonic court reform in *Coelum Britannicum*, the fact that the court now resembles a monastery indicates the special relevance Anglicanism's new ascetic revaluation has to Caroline court culture. Momus' labeling the court a monastery retroactively implicates asceticism as operative in the court's reform. Put another way, if the court began to resemble a monastery, then surely it found common ground with a religious culture that often praised monasticism.

Thomas Nabbes' play *Microcosmus*, first performed at Salisbury Court in 1637, also maps out this common ground. Nabbes (1604/5-1641) was, as David Kathman notes, often numbered among the sons of Ben, and he frequently wrote drama employing Neoplatonic themes.³⁴⁶ His work before *Microcosmus*, the tragedy of *Hannibal and Scipio* (1635), was produced by Queen Henrietta's Men. The play is largely a retelling of the Cupid and Psyche myth that found such currency in Caroline culture. In the play, Physander and Bellamina represent the two classical figures. When Physander marries Bellamina she is a "virgin white, / And joyn'd unto thee, that thou mayst enjoy / Knowledge and vertue, not thy sensuall pleasures." Distinct from most iterations of the myth, though, it is Physander, not Bellamina, who corrupts their love. When Love presents Bellamina to Physander, he urges the practice of Platonic love: "Fairest of all earthly things, / Mount thy thoughts upon the wings / Of contemplation, and aspire. / To reach at my supernall fire: / Whose heate shall purge thy spouse and thee / From all

³⁴⁵ Henry Burton, *A tryall of priuate deuotions* (London, 1628), sig. B2^v.

³⁴⁶ David Kathman, "Nabbes, Thomas (1604/5–1641)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com>.]

dregs of impurity.”³⁴⁷ Through a Platonic process of contemplation, the abstract forms are approached and carnality purified. Physander, though, cannot maintain the purity of this lifestyle. Inflamed by passion, he succumbs to the “bowre of Sensuality,” and the promise of “stranger love” that it contains.³⁴⁸ Afterwards, horrified by his sensual gluttony, Physander resolves to undergo a “reformation” and to adhere to a “strict course” of life. What results is a kind of temperate detox. Temperance, “the Physitian that doth moderate / Desire with reason, bridling appetite,” prescribes “a powerfull medicine” to effect Physander’s reformation. It consists of these mortifying exercises:

Let the earth be his bed; this rock his pillow;
His curteines heaven; the murmur of this water
Instead of musick charm him into sleep...
Let him eat sparingly of what the earth
Produceth freely or is [sic] where ‘tis barren
Enforc’t by industrie.³⁴⁹

These lines detail several practices that correspond to the harsh severities of patristic asceticism. For instance, to sustain Physander’s ascetic lifestyle, Temperance suggests a very sparing diet “of what the earth / Produceth freely” or what can be produced by Physander’s industry. Strict dietary restrictions and requirements of hard labor were often components of the ascetic lifestyle patristic writers outlined. Jerome, in Henry Hawkins’ 1630 translation of his letters, describes

³⁴⁷ Thomas Nabbes, *Microcosmus* (London, 1637), sigs. C3^v-C4^r.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, sigs. D2^r, C4^r.

³⁴⁹ Sigs. F1^{r-v}

Hilarion, a principal founder of Western monasticism, as “praying & singing often, & he would also be breaking the ground with a rake; that so the labour of his working, might ad to the trouble of his fasting.”³⁵⁰ Palladius’ *Lausiack History* (c. 420 C.E.) recounts the examples of various ascetics who conformed to extreme dietary measures or ate no cooked food.³⁵¹ Like severity of diet and hard labor, sleeping on the bare earth, with only a rock for a pillow, also has patristic precedent. In Jerome’s “Letter XXII: Ad Eustochium” (384 C.E.), he boasts, “tears and groans were every day my portion; and if sleep ever overcame my resistance and fell upon my eyes, I bruised my restless bones against the naked earth.”³⁵² Either sleep was prevented by this bruising or, illustrating the pervasiveness of Jerome’s asceticism, even sleep itself was bruising. Similar to Jerome, the ascetics in Theodoret’s *Historia Religiosa* make a common practice of sleeping on the ground.³⁵³ Though sleeping on the ground does not seem like an especially harsh form of asceticism, it often drew Protestant ire. John Jewel refers to it and other ascetic practices as “Superstitious Vanities.”³⁵⁴ In *Of free justification*, John Foxe asks, “But how do those superstitious Papists glory in the Lord, who trust to their own Works, whose rugged and burdensom Religion consists wholly in Watchings, Vows, Ordinances of Men, sleeping on the ground, and such like hardships, and an affected austerity of life.”³⁵⁵ The vanity that Jewel locates in sleeping on the ground is also evident in Foxe attributing to its practitioners an overconfidence in one’s own works and a veneer of mere affectation.

³⁵⁰ Henry Hawkins, *Certain selected epistles of S. Hierome* (Saint-Omer, 1630), 16-7 (Life of Hilarion); see also 43 (Jerome to Rusticus); nb. pagination not continuous.

³⁵¹ Palladius, *The Lausiack History*, transl. W.K. Lowther Clarke (New York, 1918), 11.4; 38.13. Cf. John Cassian, *The Conferences*, transl. Boniface Ramsey (New York, 1997), 2.23.2.

³⁵² Jerome, *Select Letters*, transl. F.A. Wright (Cambridge, 1933), sect. 7. Cf. Cassian *Conferences* 1.23.4.

³⁵³ Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *A History of the Monks of Syria*, transl. R.M. Price (Kalamazoo, 1985), 1.7; 10.2.

³⁵⁴ John Jewel, *A defence of the Apologie of the Church of Englande* (London, 1567), 67.

³⁵⁵ John Foxe, *Of free justification*. (London, 1694), 415.

Finally, the phrase “His curteines heaven” references the ascetic habit of living totally in the open-air.³⁵⁶ The phrase, in its suggestion of a connection to heaven, may also contain an implicit valuation of ascetic austerity. In his study of patristic asceticism, Peter Brown notes, “the ascetics were thought to have brought the vibrant energy of the angels through the half-translucent curtain that separated the unseen hosts of Heaven from the present world.”³⁵⁷ A direct connection to heaven may be suggested by the slight divergence of Nabbes’ “His curteines heaven” from its more customary usage. Commenting on Revelation 6:9, John Hacket (1592-1670), the Calvinist Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, claims that the verse’s revelatory content shows how God “hath opened the Curtains of Heaven, to let us see what the *blessed Saints* do.”³⁵⁸ In a 1637 sermon, Joseph Hall uses the occasion of “when the morning opens the curtaines of heaven, and shoves the rising Majesty of that great Ruler of the day” to wax about God’s omnipotence.³⁵⁹ The curtains of heaven, as both Hall and Hacket make clear, conceal the mystery and power of God. As opposed to curtains separating heaven from earth, Physander’s curtains are not *of* heaven, rather they *are* heaven. They are not intermediaries between heaven and earth, and thus do not mediate heaven in any way. This suggests an inwardness with, connection to, heavenly mystery and power that his extreme lifestyle enables. Through the severity of his ascetic acts, Physander has established an unmediated connection to heaven reminiscent of a translucent curtain. Asceticism brings Physander closer to heaven, to the energetic vibrancy of angels. Based on the corporal severity of the ascetic acts Physander performs and their drawing him heavenwards, it is not difficult to imagine Laudians’ approving attitude towards them, or how they might be consonant with Laudian Anglicanism. In works

³⁵⁶ Cf. Theodoret, *Historia Religiosa*, 21.3.

³⁵⁷ Peter Brown, *The Body and Society*, 331.

³⁵⁸ John Hacket, *A century of sermons* (London, 1675), 992.

³⁵⁹ Joseph Hall, *The remedy of prophanenesse* (London, 1637), 97.

praising asceticism, we have examined allusions by Laudians to the ascetic doctrines of Jerome (Peter Hausted), Palladius (William Watts), and Theodoret (Eleazor Duncon). In fact, we have even seen Laudians promote some of the kinds of ascetic deprivation Physander endures. For instance, William Watts endorses hard labor to ameliorate lust, Henry Mason urges a more austere form of fasting, and various Laudians valorize a monastic and/or eremitic life whose adherents would often have to sleep on the ground, pulling a curtain of heaven closely about them.

After Physander has undergone this ascetic process, Temperance recommends further measures to maintain a temperate lifestyle. “Philosophie,” she explains, “religious solitude / And labour waite on Temperance: in these / Desire is bounded; / they instruct the mindes / And bodies actions.” The solitude and labor that Temperance recommends conform to the asceticism Physander has previously undergone. In response to his new manner of living and stifling excessive sensuality, Physander states, “Let me digest my joys; I onely now / Begin to live: the former was not perfect.”³⁶⁰ Here, Physander suggests that the ascetic tempering he has undergone will lead to a life of perfection. This is, of course, a claim that contradicts the Calvinist emphasis on depravity and evinces an optimism towards the will’s potential that Reformed religion often balks at. Moreover, it expresses the Neoplatonic notion that through control of carnality perfection might be approached. The masque’s conclusion makes good on the promise of perfection, as Love inducts both Physander and Bellamina into “Elysium.”³⁶¹ Indicating how Anglican asceticism could support Caroline Neoplatonism, Physander attained this blessed Neoplatonic state through a rigorous ascetic process with Laudian connotations. In *Coelum Britannicum*, religious institutions aided in Neoplatonic court reform and the relevance

³⁶⁰ Thomas Nabbes, *Microcosmus*, sig. F2^v.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, sig. G4^v.

of ascetic principles could be inferred by the court's later labeling as a monastery. Here, no inference is needed. Asceticism directly serves as a means to a Neoplatonic end.

Caroline Neoplatonism was not, of course, the exclusive purview of court drama. Various religious works are also influenced by it and, in turn, exhibit the connection to asceticism we have been tracing. One of the works that became a *bête noire* for puritans in the 1630s was Anthony Stafford's *The Femall Glory* (1635), a prose treatise written in exalted praise of Mary and virginity more generally. Stafford (b. 1586/7, d. c. 1645) was a committed Laudian, dedicating his defense of *The Femall Glory* to both Laud and Juxon. In understanding this hugely controversial work, Stafford's biography can be instructive.³⁶² An interest in, or anxiety about, the topics of virginity and chastity can probably be traced to a personal tragedy that Stafford and his family suffered. In 1607, Stafford's eldest brother, Humphrey, was executed for the buggery of two teenaged boys. The events surrounding the trial and execution are related in *The Arraignement, Judgement, Confession and Execution of Humfrey Stafford* (1607). The tract describes a very poignant scene in which Humphrey takes "his last farewell of his brother...who much grieving for [Humphrey], and not able to endure to see him die, departed a little before his turning off [i.e. Humphrey's from the ladder from which he was hung]."³⁶³ The brother is not identified, and Humphrey did have four others, but it is certainly possible it could have been a young Anthony. The tract presents Humphrey as, at the hour of his death, repenting and exemplifying the godly process of mortification: "For a notorious general sinner dying...as soone as he heartily repents him of his sins, then he begins his life with God, when he proves a

³⁶² See also Arnold Hunt, "Stafford, Anthony (b. 1586/7, d. in or after 1645)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com>].

³⁶³ Anon, *The arraignement, iudgement, confession, and execution of Humfrey Stafford gentleman* (London, 1607), sig. C2^r.

dead man vnto the world, and vtterly mortifies all his filthie affections.”³⁶⁴ As we have seen, the spiritual mortifying that Humphrey exhibits is often the puritan version of the corporal mortification that Anglicans commend. On some level, the asceticism, monastic life, and chaste conjugality that *The Femall Glory* celebrates may caution against the kind of unmortified lust that led to Humphrey’s tragic end. In other words, just as *The Arraignement, Judgement, Confession and Execution of Humfrey Stafford* offers a negative exemplar of godly mortification, *The Femall Glory* adduces the Virgin Mary as a stunning example of Anglican asceticism.

Illustrating Stafford’s high praise of Mary, he even goes so far as to suggest a connection between a decline in devotion to her and “the late troubles and afflictions of the Protestant party in *Germany*.”³⁶⁵ As part of this praise, Stafford intently emphasizes Mary’s perpetual virginity, unconcerned (in a protestation of inviolability that seems ripe for psychoanalytic comment) “if my penne / Stabbe those presumptuous, and o’re curious men: / Whose bold Disputes dare into question call / What sonnes she had, and whether Christ was all.”³⁶⁶ Calvin, by contrast, is much more cautious in pronouncing about Mary’s perpetual virginity. Jerome’s strident defense of Mary’s inviolability in his tracts against Helvidius provides a dissuasive for such a bald declaration, and Calvin ultimately maintains, “let this one thing suffice vs, that it can be very fondly and il gathered out of the wordes of the Euangelist what became of her after that Christ was borne.”³⁶⁷ Stafford’s commitment to Mary’s perpetual virginity is indicative of the work’s commendation of bodily virginity and vows maintaining it. In a telling moment, Stafford describes Jesus entrusting Mary to the disciple John in the following way: “He gives

³⁶⁴ Ibid., sig. C2^v.

³⁶⁵ Anthony Stafford, *The Femall Glory*, sigs. C1^v-C2^r.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., unfoliated (see “A Panegyricke dedicated to the eternall Memory, and glorious Fame of the blessed Virgin Mary”).

³⁶⁷ John Calvin, *A harmonie vpon the the three Euangelists* (London, 1584), 68.

Temperancy the custody of Chastity, and commends these to each other who were resolved to live and dye Virgins.”³⁶⁸ Mary remaining a perpetual virgin is symptomatic of other austere ascetic practices she undertakes. Stafford describes Mary as a “holy Recluse” who “confined her body to this sacred solitude, and a spare diet, and warily kept her soule from the surfets to which carnall delights invite all things humane.” If these carnal delights were even given credence, Mary imposed a “strict pennance” upon herself.³⁶⁹ Mary’s investment in acts of strict penance and mortification reaches its extremity when she pledges to commemorate Christ’s death in the future with “Prayer, fasting, severity, of discipline, maceration of the flesh, and contrition of the spirit, as becomes thy mournfull Mother.”³⁷⁰ To gauge the controversy of the practices Stafford applauds, Thomas James, while distinguishing Anglican from Roman Catholic repentance, avers, “Their penance consisteth in outward affliction of the body, and maceration of the flesh: *our repentance is inward, and spirituall in the grace, and faith of Christ.*”³⁷¹ In Stafford’s presentation of Mary, no such distinction between outward and inward repentance is maintained. Contrition of the spirit and maceration of the flesh are both cooperative processes. Other Laudians are also equally impervious to the inward/outward distinction. Commenting on Paul’s statement in 1 Corinthians 9:27 “But I keep under my body,” Henry Mason contends in *Christian humiliation* (1625), “the meaning is, he vsed seuere discipline toward himselfe, fastings, and watchings, & hard lodging, and rough clothing, &c. by which hee did afflict and macerate the flesh.”³⁷²

³⁶⁸ Anthony Stafford, *The Femall Glory*, 175.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 23, 25.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 196.

³⁷¹ Thomas James, *A manuduction, or introduction vnto diuinitie containing a confutation of papists by papists, throughout the important articles of our religion* (London, 1625), 84. Cf. George Abbot, *An exposition vpon the prophet Ionah Contained in certaine sermons* (London, 1600), 457.

³⁷² Henry Mason, *Christian humiliation* (London, 1625), 27.

These harsh ascetic practices are also apparent in what Stafford considers the clearest indication of Mary's sanctity; namely, her communion with God:

Great is the vigour and force of the Spirit, when all things else set apart it is wholly intentive on the Meditation of its Creatour. When by contemplation it is separated from the body, it thinkes onely on him, lives onely to him, and is (as it were drown'd) in an inundation of his love. When it hath extinguisht the scorching lawlesse desires of the flesh, and kindled the holy ones of the Spirit; the body rebels no longer, but becomes obedient to it in all things...Of those who live in Wedlocke, it is said that they are two in one flesh; and why may it not be said of Christ and the Soule wedded to him, that they are two in one Spirit? And if ever it might be reported of any, surely of this Holy Virgin, who (though she was devided from her Redeemer in Body) yet in soule she was united to him.³⁷³

A version of kenosis, or self-emptying, characterizes this mystical experience. The self is wholly swallowed up (drowned) in an inundation of divine love as it becomes increasingly estranged from the body. In a substitution incident to Christian mysticism, the Platonic contemplation of beauty is replaced with contemplation of God ("Creatour"). An extirpation of lust facilitates the intensity of this contemplative experience; desires are extinguished, and the body's rebellion crushed. Previously, we noted the "strict pennance" that was descriptive of Mary's ascetic rigor and that might be enjoined for carnal thoughts. As Stafford notes, Mary's "soule gave laws to

³⁷³ Anthony Stafford, *The Femall Glory*, 201-2.

her body, which it could not infringe without the injunction of a strict penance.”³⁷⁴ Complete victory over the rebel body and its carnal infringements alludes to this earlier metaphor. In so doing, it implicates a strict injunction indeed during Mary’s contemplation. The passage culminates, of course, in Mary’s union with God that parallels the union described between the soul and Christ in The Song of Solomon. Mary’s dramatic union with Christ, and the Platonic terms in which it is depicted, are perhaps most evident when Mary later becomes a Platonic form herself. The union is so intense that she begins to resemble the kind of absolute form she is joined to. She is “a Type, or an Idea of an Accomplisht piety.”³⁷⁵ Biblical typology and Platonic philosophy are both employed to capture Mary’s excellence. As the resumption of the body-as-rebel metaphor indicates, integral to Mary’s ideational transformation is an ascetic process that entails corporal severity. Asceticism and Neoplatonism are highly inextricable in *The Femall Glory*. In *Microcosmus*, which provides the closest parallel, Neoplatonic ascent is also facilitated by ascetic practice. But Physander undergoes a rare instance of ascetic severity, whereas Mary’s entire life consists of harshly mortifying practices. The sheer profusion of asceticism in *The Femall Glory* renders its Neoplatonic philosophy more amenable to the strictness it prescribes. Mary is an “Idea of an Accomplisht piety,” and, since her pious living is so informed by strict penance, asceticism helps accomplish that piety.

More largely, *The Femall Glory* provides a model for how an asceticism that prizes virginity could be compatible with a cult of conjugal chastity. As Stafford often reiterates, “Who will beleeve the wonder I have said? / *Mary* a husband tooke, to live a Maide”; and “Yet let her not be barren, but bring forth / Zeale to each eare she strikes, so shall her worth / Shine like the

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 25.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 219.

Saint she sings of, wonders doe, / And be as she a Maide, and Mother too.”³⁷⁶ Mary is wife and maid, mother and maid. In her very person, Mary embodies how virginal asceticism and chaste conjugality could be reconciled. “Yet let her not be barren” triumphantly proclaims this. We might also be able to detect in its hortatory mood a certain giddy delight in the author’s own ingenuity at discovering the perfect vessel through which, and in which, the paradox might be contained. Mary represents a kind of pan-sexual purity; she can encompass chaste conjugality and virginity. In the Virgin, then, Stafford found not only a means to reconcile potentially divergent court discourses, but the perfect anodyne (the ultimate kryptonite, if you will) to unmortified lusts.

A seamless connection between Anglican asceticism and Caroline Neoplatonism is also evident in Robert Crofts’ *The Lover; or, Nuptiall love* (1638). No entry for Crofts appears in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. He published three other works (of which I am aware) in addition to *The Lover*, including *The terrestriall paradise, or, Happinesse on earth* (1639), *Paradise within us; or, The happie mind* (1640) and *The way to happinesse on earth concerning riches, honour, conjugall love, eating, drinking* (1641). As the titles suggest, the works are largely derivative of each other and quite repetitive. In *The Tragic Muse of John Ford* (1944), G. F. Sensabaugh speculates that Crofts may have been a puritan. Grouping *The Lover* with tracts impugning licentious court culture, Sensabaugh argues that Crofts connects the puritan “attack upon worship of beauty in woman with devotees of the Queen’s cult of love.”³⁷⁷ To many puritans in the 1630s, Caroline Neoplatonism was simply adultery masquerading (pun intended) as recondite philosophy. In contrast with Sensabaugh, Reid Barbour finds in *The*

³⁷⁶ Ibid., sig. C1^v; unfoliated.

³⁷⁷ G.F. Sensabaugh, *The Tragic Muse of John Ford*, 144.

terrestriall paradise a rebuke of puritan stoicism.³⁷⁸ As I hope to show, Crofts' views of marriage, virginity, and mystical union with God are not suggestive of puritanism. A clue to Crofts' connection to court culture may also be supplied by William Marshall (fl. 1617-1649), the engraver of *The Lover*. Marshall benefitted greatly from the patronage of Charles I, and engraved the famous frontispiece to the *Eikon basilike* (1649). Peter M. Daly and Mary V. Silcox have analyzed the royalism of Marshall's work and his association with royalists.³⁷⁹ In addition to its connection with Marshall, the royalist connotations of *The Lover* are apparent in Crofts' opening description of his subject, nuptial love: "the bravest, the most noble, generous, and gallant spirits, are commonly most and best taken and possest with this Love: wherefore it is called Heroicall Love."³⁸⁰ In the phrase "Heroicall Love," Crofts alludes to the frequent labeling of Charles and Henrietta Maria's relationship—and the Neoplatonic chastity it symbolized—with a similar term. For instance, in *Loues triumph through Callipolis* (1631), Ben Jonson admiringly references "the dignity of that heroique loue, and regall respect borne by [Charles] to his vnmatchable Lady, and Spouse, the Queenes Maiesty."³⁸¹ In a similar phrase, Aurelian Townshend's *Tempe restord* (1632) celebrates "Heroicke Vertue," or "that kind / Of Beautie, that attracts the mind, / And men should most implore."³⁸² This virtue is, in other words, preparative for Platonic love. For Crofts, the heroism of Caroline Neoplatonism derives from its privileging of a non-corporeal love at a time of rampant sensuality, when "the land is full of adulterers."³⁸³ Rather than seeing Neoplatonism as symptomatic of sensuality, it serves as a

³⁷⁸ Reid Barbour, *English Epicures and Stoics: Ancient Legacies in Early Stuart Culture* (Massachusetts, 1998), 107.

³⁷⁹ Peter M. Daly and Mary V. Silcox, "William Marshall's *Emblems* (1650) Rediscovered," *English Literary Renaissance* 19 (1989): 346-374, 373.

³⁸⁰ Robert Crofts, *The Lover; or, Nuptiall love* (London, 1638), sig. A7^r.

³⁸¹ Ben Jonson, *Loues triumph through Callipolis* (London, 1631), 1.

³⁸² Aurelian Townshend, *Tempe restord* (London, 1632), 13.

³⁸³ Robert Crofts, *The way to happinesse on earth* (London, 1641), 257.

corrective to it. Crofts' adoption of the trope of Neoplatonism as "heroic" and his connection to William Marshall indicate *The Lover's* place within—not alienation from—Caroline Court culture.

Rather than decrying Caroline Neoplatonism, the Platonic connotations of this "Heroicall Love" become quickly apparent in *The Lover*. Crofts exhorts his readers,

let us not then bee so sensuall, as to love onely the corps, but looke higher, and see something in our lovers of an Angelicall nature; That is, a free vertuous and gracious mind, which to an understanding man appeares to bee a divine essence, and to which he mingles his soule in love, which (if truely thought on) will appeare to bee a farre more excellent and permanent love then that of the body, and consequently more pleasant.³⁸⁴

Crofts employs "mingle" (in "mingles his soule in love") with a knowing irony. The word has a definite sexual connotation and is often a euphemism for sex.³⁸⁵ In John Donne's "The Flea," for instance, the speaker declares, "me it sucked first, and now sucks thee, / And in this flea, our two bloods mingled be" (3-4) as he pleads with his lover for consummation of their love.³⁸⁶ Whereas in "The Flea" "mingle" might be used to intimate sexual innuendo, in *The Lover* it insinuates chastity. Put another way, Crofts invites a comparison with carpe diem love lyrics and other illicit users of "mingle" by including the word, but he cleans it up: he ironically uses "mingle" un-ironically. There is nothing libidinous about Crofts "mingle," and he means for you to know

³⁸⁴ Robert Crofts, *The Lover*, sigs. B1^v-B2^r.

³⁸⁵ "mingle, v.," *OED Online* (Oxford, 2013), [<http://www.oed.com>].

³⁸⁶ John Donne: *The Complete English Poems*, ed. A.J. Smith (London, 1971; repr. 1986), 58.

it: 1) that the word has a loose meaning, and 2) that he has prudently/prudishly avoided it.

Though puritans criticized Caroline Neoplatonism for its supposed libertinism, these passages in *The Lover* are consistent with a belief puritans often espoused. As we will see in a later chapter on Bunyan, puritans also advocate loving a “divine essence” in their beloved; namely, not loving her or him, but God *in* him and her. Those who are capable of loving this divine essence “by the eye of Contemplation, see one another, in respect of their minds, like Angels, Divine creatures, and so love one another with a heavenly, as well as earthly love.”³⁸⁷ Crofts compares this kind of love to that which the bridegroom expresses for his beloved in The Song of Solomon, and he encourages the use of religious terms and imagery in romantic love as a way of elevating it to this divine prospect.

While discussing the importation of religious imagery into romantic discourse, *The Lover* proposes a combination of extemporaneous and set forms, so that “a man may bee furnisht with continuall abilities of discourse in an extemporeall method (as I may say) or a sudden and well composed manner.”³⁸⁸ This union of “extemporeall” and “well composed” seems a conciliatory way of splitting the difference between the Anglican emphasis on set forms of prayer and the value puritans placed on extemporaneous inspirations of the Spirit. In other instances, though, Crofts adopts a less-than-conciliatory tone in advocating Platonic love. “And I know there bee many in our times,” he writes, “so Stoicall, and Rigid, as they will scarce allow moderate and lawfull Recreations...And they esteeme honest, and harmlesse Love sports, pleasures, and discourses (though in the way of marriage) prophanenesse.”³⁸⁹ As Reid Barbour has observed, “stoicall” is a term of opprobrium often used against puritans.³⁹⁰ They might also be labeled as

³⁸⁷ Ibid., sig. C4^v.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., sig. B5^v.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., sig. C6^{r-v}.

³⁹⁰ Reid Barbour, *English Epicures and Stoics*, 107.

“rigid,” an adjective consistent with their appellation as “precise” or “nice.” For instance, at one point in *Athenæ Oxonienses* (1691-2), Anthony á Wood refers to Northamptonshire as a “nest of rigid Puritans and Schismaticks.”³⁹¹ In Crofts imputing to these individuals a disesteem for harmless love sports, we can glimpse the puritan sensitivity towards anything that might seem to detract from marriage’s sanctity. Against these trifling diversions is levied the weighty charge of profanity. Implicit in Crofts’ discussion of “lawfull Recreations” is the controversy over the Book of Sports. The attribution of profaneness to the “lawfull Recreations” and “harmlesse...sports” identifies the controversy as informing Crofts’ defense of recreations. Puritans often claimed that such sports profaned the Lord’s Day. An accident that befalls “sundry youths playing at Catt” on a Sunday causes Henry Burton to admonish his listeners “to take heed how they so profane the Lords day.”³⁹² As well as providing clues to Crofts’ moderate Anglicanism, references to extemporaneous preaching and sabbatarianism evince how imbricated Laudianism is with Crofts’ advocacy of Neoplatonic love. That involution is further demonstrated by the topic to which *The Lover* turns next: virginity.

In a tract on nuptial love, it may seem peculiar to devote much attention to virginity. But, as we have seen in puritan works on marriage, virginity is often mentioned while asserting matrimony’s claim to equal (usually superior) sanctity. What is peculiar, though, and what contrasts with puritan tracts that mention virginity, is that Crofts privileges the single life above marriage while emphasizing its potential for greater holiness. The discussion of virginity begins about two-thirds of the way through *The Lover*, when Crofts turns to the topic “Remedies,

³⁹¹ Anthony a Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses* (London, 1691-2), 229.

³⁹² Henry Burton, *A divine tragedie lately acted* (Amsterdam, 1636), 23. Cf. Calybutte Downing, *The cleere antithesis, or, diametrall [sic] opposition betweene presbytery and prelacy* (London, 1644), 11. Downing began as a Laudian but, as Barbara Donagan notes, he had become staunchly Presbyterian by 1641-2. Barbara Donagan, “Downing, Calybutte (1606–1644),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online edn, Jan 2010) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com>.]

against the Losse of Love.”³⁹³ Of course, the ultimate remedy against losing love is abstinence, as Crofts implies by quoting Paul’s teachings on virginity (1 Corinthians 7): “Saint Paul, preferres a Single life before marriage, and I hope you will beleeeve him.” There is no temporizing in this assertion: that is, attributing (as puritans were wont) Paul’s preference to a particular historical context or avoiding an interpretation of the preference as a maxim. Such an interpretation fits right into an Anglican culture in which Laud advocated priestly celibacy in 1631. Moreover, in a defense of Laud’s unguarded statement in *Cyprianus Anglicus*, Peter Heylyn presents the very same Pauline precedent as possible justification.³⁹⁴ *The Lover* recommends various remedies to maintain the single life, including “a moderate spare coole, and dry kind of dyet, and other Physicall Remedies, to allay the fire of lust.” These remedies may be effective in certain circumstances, though they are no guarantee of remaining virginal. In contrast, “the most excellent Remedy is, Divine Contemplation; for certainly those Spirits which are truely rayseed to the knowledge of divine things, and doe well know the Art of heavenly Contemplation, are elevated above all the pleasures of the earth; in as much as Eternity is above time, and infinite felicities above vanities.” Those who are capable of this elevation “tread vnder foot all the pleasures of the Earth, while their soules are in such contemplations.” They experience “Extasies.” And if married men “did but truly know the Excellency of such a contemplative heavenly life, and did seriously consider how freely and ioyfully wee Batchellors may live; They would even runne through fire and water to bee so happy.”³⁹⁵ In Crofts’ assertion of the contemplative life’s potential for freedom and association with eternity, he emphasizes two points that other authors writing about contemplation also stress. Julianus

³⁹³ Robert Crofts, *The Lover*, sig. C8^r.

³⁹⁴ Peter Heylyn, *Cyprianus anglicus* (London, 1668), 224.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, sigs. D1^v-D3^r.

Pomerius (d. c. 490 C.E.), the rhetor of Gaul who supposedly taught Caesarius of Arles, writes in *The Contemplative Life* that it affords “freedom from all occupations of the world.”³⁹⁶ In the *Summa Theologiæ*, Aquinas similarly asserts this potential for freedom and a connection to eternity (while also synthesizing previous commentary on the topic):

The contemplative life consists in a certain liberty of spirit. Thus Gregory says that *the contemplative life produces a certain freedom of mind, because it considers eternal things, not temporal things*. And Boëthius says, *Men’s souls are necessarily more free as long as they hold to the contemplation of the divine mind, but less so when they descend to corporeal things*.³⁹⁷

The freedom that Boëthius espouses is evident in the liberation Crofts’ contemplative must feel as he disdainfully kicks at the earth with his heel. The consideration of eternity is not as blatant in *The Lover*, though, as Aquinas’ quotation of Gregory might suggest. Only through analogical implication can one be said to contemplate eternity. As Crofts argues, knowledge of divine things is to earthly pleasures as eternity is above time. There is something eternal to this knowledge, but it is insinuated through analogy. This analogical vagary reflects what Crofts often maintains about divine contemplation. Namely, that it is beyond words: “It is impossible to expresse the pleasures of a heavenly Soule...Its Extasies and Ravishments cannot bee vttered.”³⁹⁸ In light of this inexpressibility, it is fitting that divine love’s eternal component can

³⁹⁶ Julianus Pomerius, *The Contemplative Life*, transl. Mary Josephine Suelzer (New York, 1947), 34.

³⁹⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ*, ed. Jordan Aumann, gen. ed. Thomas Gilby, 60 vols., (London, 1966; repr. Cambridge, 2006), 2a2æ. 182, 1.

³⁹⁸ Robert Crofts, *The Lover*, sig. F3^v.

only be approximated through analogy, can only be defined by reference to something else, but never truly signified *per se*.

Even if there is something about it beyond words, Crofts' depiction of divine love demonstrates how *The Lover* imports Neoplatonic language into an advocacy of virginal asceticism. For instance, ascent is available to both virgins and Platonic lovers. Crofts describes virginal contemplatives as "rayseed to the knowledge of divine things"; they "are elevated above all the pleasures of the earth." Earlier, Platonic lovers were said to have minds "raised to the knowledge of supernaturall, and heavenly things," and "Elevated to a supernaturall, and divine temper."³⁹⁹ Remaining virginal and loving Platonically also both require subordination of the body. When virginal contemplatives "are in these divine Extasies, their Spirits are so strong, as they doe overcome their bodies, so heavenly, as they doe then esteeme the chieftest pleasures of the body (as this of carnall desire and love) but as dung and drosse in comparison of those more heavenly pleasures which they enjoy in their soules." A similar boycotting of bodily pleasure is, of course, enjoined to Platonic lovers: "Then, though their Beauty and Bodies should decay and become infirme, yet their very Soules may bee in Love with one another, which is farre more excellent then bodily love."⁴⁰⁰ The subjection of the body that a life of divine contemplation entails is also practiced by those in love with their beloved's soul. In each example, the body does not come out very favorably. The pleasures of the body being "dung and drosse" and soul-love being "farre more excellent then bodily love" even denote a certain disgust for the body. Loving another's soul was earlier depicted as a mingling of divine essences/souls. The Neoplatonic mingling of souls is also possible for virginal contemplatives who, instead of communing with their beloved's soul, are actually joined to God. *The Lover* urges divine

³⁹⁹ Ibid., sigs. C4^{r-v}.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., sigs. D2^v, E3^r.

contemplators, “let us powre forth our soules into God, and In-soule our selves into him.”⁴⁰¹

Crofts employs the language of self-denial here, though the means for attaining it are corporal (i.e. virginity). The in-souling of the contemplative with God recalls this representation of Neoplatonic union: “So then let us spheare our loves, and seeke beauty rather in a mind then in a countenance.”⁴⁰² Two spheres that combine to form a concentric circle is slightly different from the melting, dissolution, and liquidity that in-souling produces. In the former, the original shapes are still maintained, but their center is now each other; in the latter, the human soul collapses into, and is engulfed by, God. The slight deviation is an appropriate deference to an omnipotent deity, but, nonetheless, both images signify coalescence. The events that are the culmination of Neoplatonic union and a divine contemplator’s communion with God employ starkly similar imagery. We have also seen that similarity in virginal contemplatives and Neoplatonic lovers sharing experiences of ascent, heavenly knowledge, and the body’s subjection. The shared experiences are indicative of how *The Lover* imports the language of Neoplatonism into ascetic discourse consonant with Laudianism.

Crofts addresses the relationship between ascetic contemplation and Neoplatonism towards the end of *The Lover*:

The Principall good use of this Love [nuptial love] and the felicities thereof, which I shall now insist upon, is; That by viewing and enjoying such pleasures and felicities of the Earth, wee may looke higher to their Fountaine; Contemplating the Love, Lovelinesse,

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., sig. E7^v.

⁴⁰² Ibid., sig. B2^r.

Beauty, Sweetnesse, and Excellency of the Creator, who is infinitely more excelling. And so conclude, with a briefe Discourse of Divine Love.⁴⁰³

Neoplatonic love is a means to “looke higher” at the divine contemplation that those who devote themselves to a single life might experience. It is simply a means to an end. It is the earthly and lower equivalent of the heavenly life virginal contemplatives choose. The privileging of ascetic contemplation over Platonic love—in a tract ostensibly about Platonic love—is unique in the texts we have examined. In *Microcosmus*, asceticism was a means-to-an-end by which Neoplatonic love could be realized; here, the opposite is true. And while the level of integration between Neoplatonism and asceticism in *The Lover* (i.e. using Neoplatonic language to depict ascetic contemplation) is tantamount to that found in *The Femall Glory*, there was no question about the parity between the two in the latter. Crofts privileging of contemplation over Platonic love is equally as clear.

At its most basic, the relationship between asceticism and Neoplatonism consisted of labeling Neoplatonic chastity with an ascetic term (*Coelum Britannicum*, *The Temple of Love*). We saw the relationship progress to greater intimacy in asceticism being a means to attain Neoplatonic love (*Microcosmus*) and a certain indissolubility existing between the two (*The Femall Glory*). In *The Lover*, the eclipse of Caroline Neoplatonism by Laudian asceticism occurs. Whereas previously ascetic language was appropriated for Neoplatonic purposes, the case of *The Lover* shows how ascetic discourse consistent with Laudian Anglicanism could also coopt Caroline Neoplatonism. That one could so effectively adopt the other demonstrates how seamless their interconnection might be. In *The Floating Island*, a similarly intimate connection between church and court was established through Charles and Laud’s aversion to sacrilege and

⁴⁰³ Ibid., sig. E5^v.

commitment to reform. Asceticism—operative in a denunciation of spoliation that prizes what was despoiled and Neoplatonic reform that rejects carnality—strongly informs this connectedness. A love of decorous ceremony only goes so far in accounting for the intensity and complexity of cooperation between church and court. Its beauties were only skin deep, containing a wealth of ascetic meanings just beneath the surface.

Chapter 3

Beyond Binaries: Asceticism and the Poetry of Doctrinal Heterogeneity

In the previous chapters, valorizations of asceticism often diverged from Calvinism. They constituted hardline, even anti-Calvinist, advocacies of mortification, monasticism, and virginity. The works in this chapter paint a more complex portrait of asceticism's relationship to Anglicanism, Calvinism, and Catholicism. We will concentrate on ascetic thought in the work of unknown and/or minor poets such as Robert Gomersall, Rowland Watkyns, and "Eliza," the anonymous author of *Eliza's Babes*. In this poetry, an uneasy (and often confused) combination of Calvinist, Catholic, and Laudian doctrine exists. More often than not, doctrinal extremes violently collide as opposed to being carefully mediated. It is the task of this chapter, then, to describe the violence of that collision and the doctrinal miscellany that results.

By examining this doctrinal heterogeneity, the chapter also seeks to push beyond the doctrinaire binary of puritan vs. Laudian, Catholic vs. Protestant. The two dominant theories of religious poetry in this period, as innovative as each of them is in their own right, have, I think, often served to perpetuate and reify these binaries. Louis L. Martz's *The Poetry of Meditation*, and R.V. Young's more recent articulation of a similar argument, contend that English Protestant poetry is largely influenced by continental, Catholic devotional forms.⁴⁰⁴ By contrast, Barbara Lewalski, in *Protestant Poetics*, claims the Protestant provenance of these forms.⁴⁰⁵ Concerned

⁴⁰⁴ Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven, 1954). R.V. Young, *Doctrine and Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Poetry: Studies in Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan* (Cambridge, 2000). For another articulation of Young's argument, see also R.V. Young, "Crashaw and Biblical Poetics," in John R. Roberts (ed.), *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw* (Columbia, MO, 1990), 30-48.

⁴⁰⁵ Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton, 1979). See also Annabel Patterson, "Bermudas and the Coronet: Marvell's Protestant Poetics," *ELH* 44 (1977), 478-99.

to demonstrate the Catholic or Protestant identity of English religious poetry, each theory is largely uninterested in how the various doctrinal pressures exerted on that poetry—Catholic, Protestant, *intra*-Protestant (Anglican, puritan)—might result in a highly muddled doctrinal identity.⁴⁰⁶ Or, to put it more positively, those pressures could cause the poetry to cleave, making strange new doctrinal compounds whose intricacy cannot be adequately ascribed to either Protestant or Catholic. Though a brilliant study in many ways, the ability of Lewalski's *Protestant Poetics* to account for that complexity is particularly limited because the Protestant lens through which she interprets poetic data is avowedly Calvinist.⁴⁰⁷ That leaves high-and-dry pretty much the entirety of the Anglican poetry examined in this study, for a problematic relationship with Calvinism is, of course, characteristic of Laudian Anglicanism.

Recently, Nicholas McDowell, in an essay on Milton's "Lycidas," has usefully questioned what we normally take to be some of the "markers" of Laudian doctrinal affiliation. He shows how a determination of puritanism or Anglicanism based upon these markers (e.g. poems on the liturgical calendar) is often not faithful to the complexity of the religious situation on the ground, so to speak.⁴⁰⁸ And that situation could often be enormously complex, even fickle. Switching doctrinal affiliation (often, multiple times) is not so much the exception in Stuart England as the rule. Peter Heylyn, a polemicist for Laudianism in the 1630s, started out

⁴⁰⁶ For further application and discussion of Martz and Lewalski's theories, as well as their limited applicability, see Karen E. Rowe, *Saint and Singer: Edward Taylor's Typology and the Poetics of Meditation* (Cambridge, 1986), xiv-xv; Arthur L. Clements, *Poetry of Contemplation: John Donne, George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, and the Modern Period* (New York, 1990); Kimberly Anne Coles, *Religion, Reform, and Women's Writing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2008), esp. chp. 3; Stephen Hamrick, *The Catholic Imaginary and the Cults of Elizabeth, 1558-1582* (Surrey, 2009), 2-3; Molly Murray, *The Poetics of Conversation in Early Modern English Literature: Verse and Change from Donne to Dryden* (Cambridge, 2009), 4-5.

⁴⁰⁷ See also Janel M. Mueller, "Gifts of Grace: Lewalski on English Protestant Poetics," *The Journal of Religion* 61 (1981), 81-87, 82 for further discussion of the limited applicability of Lewalski's study.

⁴⁰⁸ Nicholas McDowell, "How Laudian was the Young Milton?" *Milton Studies* 52 (2011), 3-33, 9.

with conventional sympathies of moderate, Jacobean Calvinism.⁴⁰⁹ Lancelot Andrewes, that scion of avant-garde conformity (the great light of the Christian world, in Laud's estimation), may also have had (or, at least, was *thought* to have had) Calvinist leanings. While at Pembroke College, Cambridge, he was, after all, in a bible study group with Laurence Chaderton. We will come to the complex doctrinal identity of John Milton in a later chapter, and another poet in our study, Andrew Marvell, certainly exemplifies it. In *Sacramental Poetics*, Regina Schwartz has also begun to chip away at ossified doctrinal binaries by showing how Eucharistic theology and mysticism could transcend them.⁴¹⁰ The project of this chapter, documenting how asceticism both contributes to and is itself a locus of doctrinal heterogeneity, is informed by the insight of McDowell and *Sacramental Poetics*.

In a sense, then, this project wants to have things both ways. There are instances, and chapter one largely detailed them, where a clear division between Laudian Anglicanism and Jacobean Calvinism obtains. But we must also, I think, be alert to where those divisions do not obtain, obtain only partially, are readily accepted at certain moments but not at others, or where a strange admixture of the previous possibilities is achieved. Detailing that admixture is the work of the following pages. Often, the hard and fast distinctions between a Protestant and meditative poetics have been made on the basis of canonical poetry. To some extent, this chapter's aim of refining our conception of doctrinal complexity in early modern poetry will also be a work of recovery. "Eliza," the anonymous female author of *Eliza's Babes* has garnered more attention recently, but two of the poets considered here—Gomersall and Watkyns—are unknown.

⁴⁰⁹ See Anthony Milton, *Laudian and royalist polemic in seventeenth-century England: The career and writings of Peter Heylyn* (Manchester, 2007), 15-6.

⁴¹⁰ Regina Schwartz, *Sacramental Poetics at the Dawn of Secularism: When God Left the World* (Stanford, 2008). See also Ryan Netzley, *Reading, Desire, and the Eucharist in Early Modern Religious Poetry* (Toronto, 2011), 14-16.

Complicating these devotional models by recovering the work of unknown and minor authors will, I hope, be a doubly salutary project.

We can begin with Robert Gomersall's "An Elegie upon the Noble Merchant Mr. FISHBORNE" (hereafter "An Elegie"), which appears in his 1633 *Poems*.⁴¹¹ Gomersall (b. 1602, d. 1643/4) was a vicar of Thorncombe whose property was sequestered by parliament at his death, probably for his royalist politics and religious Laudianism.⁴¹² Gomersall's *Poems* are thematically diverse, containing verses to other clerics, his play *The Tragedie of Lodovick Sforza*, and elegies on King James and Gustavus Adolphus. Gomersall's elegy on Adolphus provides an introduction to the complex negotiation of doctrinal identity this chapter documents. While sympathy for Adolphus was often characteristic of puritanism, celebrating the King of Sweden's role in The Thirty Years' War did not always conflict with Laudianism.⁴¹³ In the Royalist and moderate Laudian Thomas Fuller's *The holy state* (1642), Fuller claims that the king's "piety to God was exemplary" and attributes "his victories to this Kings piety, wisdom, valour, and other virtues."⁴¹⁴ Even the Laudian William Watts, whose ascetic opinions greatly offended puritans, praised Adolphus as "that Caesar and Alexander of our times."⁴¹⁵ Far from being only a disposition of militant or ardent Calvinists,⁴¹⁶ a favorable attitude towards the Swedish King could overleap the Anglican-puritan divide.

Gomersall's *Sermons on St. Peter* (1634), however, would most assuredly widen it. These sermons advance some of the most cringing and obsequious arguments in favor of civil

⁴¹¹ Robert Gomersall, *Poems* (London, 1633). Subsequent references to page numbers will be made in the text.

⁴¹² See David Kathman, "Gomersall, Robert (bap. 1602, d. 1643/4)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

⁴¹³ See Anthony Milton, "'The Unchanged Peacemaker?' John Dury and the politics of irenicism in England, 1628-1643," in Mark Greengrass, Michael Leslie, and Timothy Raylor (eds.), *Samuel Hartlib & Universal Reformation: Studies in Intellectual Communication* (Cambridge, 1994), 95-136, 99-100.

⁴¹⁴ Thomas Fuller, *The holy state* (Cambridge, 1642), 331.

⁴¹⁵ Jason Mc Elligott, "Watts, William (c.1590-1649)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004).

⁴¹⁶ See Alexander Gill, *The new starre of the north* (London, 1631).

and ecclesiastical authority that the 1630s must have seen. In one instance, Gomersall even adopts an approving attitude towards deification of rulers: “Besides, even the Heathens themselves may be our Leaders here, and teach us our duty of subjection: in the East Country they alwaies esteemed their Princes to bee Gods, and their commands as Oracles.”⁴¹⁷ Accordingly, Gomersall “strongly conclude[s]” against resistance to even “wicked Princes,” citing the “Papist” and “the more reformed Protestants” as authorizing such resistance.⁴¹⁸ Furthering his attack on Calvinism (i.e. “the more reformed Protestants”), Gomersall is openly critical of “those pretended brethren of ours” who hold that a “Prince may be put downe by subordinate Magistrates.”⁴¹⁹ Here, Gomersall criticizes Bezan Calvinism with its support of magistrates’ roles in rebelling against ungodly rulers.⁴²⁰ Finally, *Sermons on St. Peter* aims its criticism of puritans closer to home, bemoaning sermon gadders and “Judaizing Sabbatarians.”⁴²¹ The unflinching obedience to ecclesiastical and civil authority in the sermons, along with their vehement criticism of Calvinism, indicate Gomersall’s Laudianism.

“An Elegie” indicates its potential Laudian sympathies by endorsing resistance to sacrilege and impropriation of tithes. Though resisting sacrilege was not at all a purely Laudian phenomenon, the Laudian Church did make the recovery of alienated lands a signal administrative policy.⁴²² Further, the language the poem uses to depict Fishborne’s aversion to sacrilege recalls Laudian anti-sacrilege tracts. The poem describes Fishborne’s piety in these terms: “By his wise zeale the Churches the Priests are, / And they have now the meanes, who

⁴¹⁷ Robert Gomersall, *Sermons on St. Peter* (London, 1634), 5-6.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁴²⁰ See R.B. Wernham (ed.), *The New Cambridge Modern History: The Counter-Reformation and Price Revolution, 1559-1610* (Cambridge, 1968; repr. 1990), 97.

⁴²¹ Robert Gomersall, *Sermons on St. Peter*, 47, 128.

⁴²² See George Abbot, *An exposition vpon the prophet Ionah* (London, 1600), 166; Robert Abbot, *The exaltation of the kingdome and priesthood of Christ* (London, 1601), 40. For a more qualified late-Elizabethan view of sacrilege, see William Perkins, *A godlie and learned exposition vpon the whole epistle of Iude* (London, 1606), 101-2.

had the care; / Nor doe they longer finde, to breed despair, / The tythe another's, when the Pulpit's theirs" (13). The line, "By his wise zeale the Churches the Priests are," establishes a connection between sacrilege and zeal. In Fishborne's case, resistance to lay impropriation of church lands and tithes manifests his zeal. This is an interesting formulation considering the use of its obverse in Laudian tracts contesting the alienation of church lands. In Laurence Thomas' sermon on Exodus 20:21—published with another sermon preached during Laud's metropolitanical visitation in 1634—he also connects sacrilege to zeal. Comparing the church to Jerusalem, Thomas equates the laity's encroachment on clerical duties with the Edomites hatred of Israel (Psalms 137:7), calling both the product of "Sacrilegious zeale."⁴²³ Whereas Gomersall praises Fishborne's zeal as preventing sacrilege, Thomas argues that the zeal of impropiators and lay divines can be sacrilegious. Locating Fishborne's zeal in a resistance to sacrilege may be an implicit commentary on puritans' dislocated (and misguided) sacrilegious zeal. Most similar to Fishborne's aversion to sacrilege is that which the Laudian Jeremiah Stephens attributes to Christ. In his address "To the Reader" in Sir Henry Spelman's *The larger treatise concerning tithes* (1647), Stephens argues that Christ's abhorrence of sacrilege, his "zeal against sacrilege," is illustrated by tossing the money-changers out of the temple. The expulsion of the money-changers, Stephens claims, is the only instance when Christ not only reprov'd but also punished a sin.⁴²⁴ Christ's anti-sacrilegious zeal helps to authorize the tract's larger argument against the alienation of church lands. It is an argument that Laudians frequently made, and Gomersall's recounting of Fishborne's "wise zeale" is a potential version of it.

⁴²³ Laurence Thomas, *Two sermons* (Oxford, 1635), 23. See also John Gauden, *Hiera dakrya, Ecclesiae anglicanae suspiria* (London, 1659), 362.

⁴²⁴ Sir Henry Spelman, *The larger treatise concerning tithes* (London, 1647), sig. B4^v.

The piety that Fishborne's "wise zeale" evinces is on even greater display in his ascetic lifestyle: "Piety we see / Will not afford us an Aeternity, / And hence we may collect the reason why / So few are studious of Piety, / So few are like to him: whom shall we see / His holy rivall in Virginitie? / Whom shall we finde, that in an active life / Like his, injoy'd the meanes, without the wife?" (10-11). The pious virginity that Gomersall praises in Fishborne is bodily; he is without a wife. The triple rhyme of "Aeternity" / "Piety" / "Virginitie" makes Fishborne's peerless and holy asceticism especially clear—aurally sonorous, and visually conspicuous. Such a rhyme would almost seem to defy the short span that the lines attribute to Fishborne's life; piety and virginity form a treble union with eternity. The piety of Fishborne's virginity is magnified when we consider that he chooses to embrace it. He defies loose thoughts, shuns sinful lust, and "he might have made...His lust as famous as his continence" (11). As the agency ("defies," "shuns") and potentiality ("might have made") of these verbs indicate, ascetic lifestyle is a choice that Fishborne makes. If continence can be chosen, it is in every individual's power to choose it. This is a recurrent refrain in Catholic tracts on asceticism. The Jesuit Girolamo Piatti argues that virginity is "free and voluntarie, and in euerie bodies power to practise, or not to practise it."⁴²⁵ In contrast, most Protestants rejected this idea, almost universally extending marriage's applicability and/or limiting those capable of containing to a tiny minority who are inspired by God's grace (recall Marshall from chapter one). As we've seen, Henry Burton describes marriage as a necessity (a "necessarie vocation"). Similarly, Nicholas Byfield asserts "the necessitie of marriage," and John Donne argues, "Till the Resurrection they doe, they may, they shall mary. Nay, in Gods first purpose and institute, They must."⁴²⁶ Also locating an

⁴²⁵ Girolamo Piatti, *The happines of a religious state* (Rouen, 1632), 523.

⁴²⁶ Nicholas Byfield, *Sermons upon the ten first verses of the third chapter of the first Epistle of S. Peter* (London, 1626), 44; John Donne, *Fifty sermons* (London, 1649), 4.

imperative in the first institute, Martin Luther describes Genesis 1:28 as “more than a command, namely, a divine ordinance which it is not our prerogative to hinder or ignore.”⁴²⁷ Gomersall may ironically glance at this exalted view of marriage in the rhyme of “life” / “wife.” By equating “life” and “wife,” such a rhyme suggests how totalizing Protestant conceptions of matrimony’s necessity could be.

Whether one can choose to remain virginal cuts to the core of Protestant/Catholic debate over free will. Residual traces left by this fundamental divergence inform the poem. Continuing praise of Fishborne’s virginity, Gomersall states, “but his minde, as free / From the tyrannicall necessity, / As from the vice; he therefore liv’d not well / Because he did not know the way to hell” (11).⁴²⁸ Fishborne’s mind is free; he has the capacity to choose a virginal state. And yet, it is free from a “tyrannicall necessity.” How can freedom exist from something that is necessary? The paradox of a free necessary acknowledges the contradictory irreconcilability of the Catholic/Protestant divide on elective asceticism: can one freely choose virginity, or is matrimony—because of lust’s pervasive presence in our lives, matrimony’s inherent holiness, and humanity’s concupiscent depravity—simply a necessity? A free necessary does not answer this question but unifies the contradictory arguments in an anxious paradox.

Though the paradox may entertain the idea of marriage’s necessity, it is doubtful that Gomersall would subscribe to it considering his view of matrimony. Despite not having a wife, Fishborne is not without nuptial fecundity. The poem praises Fishborne’s procreative charity: “How few there are that looser thoughts defie! / And onely in good deeds doe multiply” (11). The lines evince a witty play on the command of Genesis 1:28 to “Be fruitful, and multiply.”

⁴²⁷ S.C. Karant-Nunn and M.E. Wiesner Hanks (eds), *Luther on Women: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge, 2003), 100.

⁴²⁸ The poem also alludes to 1 Corinthians 7:9 in Fishborne not suffering from any “want of Fire.” All quotations of the bible are from *King James Study Bible*, ed. Kenneth Barker (Michigan, 2002).

Fishborne has found a way to fulfill that command (via charity) without any need for marriage. Almost as a rejoinder to those charging virginity with barrenness, virginity also multiplies: it is pregnant with good deeds. By implication, those who do not multiply only in good deeds are not defying looser thoughts. Such multipliers are the married, as allusion to Genesis suggests. Gomersall imputes lust, then, even to sex for procreation within marriage: only those who multiply in charitable good deeds (not children) truly defy lust. This imputation is similar to Jerome's assertion in *Ad Jovinian* that "all sexual intercourse is unclean."⁴²⁹ To illustrate the severity of Jerome's viewpoint, Augustine, while still elevating virginity above marriage, ultimately concludes that "in marriage, intercourse for the purpose of generation has no fault attached to it."⁴³⁰ The poem's endorsement of a harder-line, Jeromic interpretation of procreative sex in marriage is representative of its concerted effort to elevate virginity at the cost of marriage. The effort does not belong to a Reformed tradition where William Whately regarded procreative sex in marriage as "sanctified" and abstaining from it as a "grievous sinne," and William Gouge encouraged married couples to "delight each in other."⁴³¹ Gomersall's devaluation of marriage, though, fits neatly within a Laudian context where John Cosin restricted the times at which marriages could be solemnized and Laud himself referred to wife and child as "clogs."

These ascetic views make the poem's embrace of the Calvinist doctrine of the perseverance of the elect slightly mystifying. While describing Fishborne's singularly wonderful friendship with Browne, the poem offers this exclamatory depiction: "O what an heate! what

⁴²⁹ Philip Schaff (ed.), *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series Volume VI—Jerome: Letters and Select Works* (New York, 1893; repr., 2007), 1.20.

⁴³⁰ Elizabeth Ann Clark (ed.), *St. Augustine on Marriage and Sexuality* (Washington, D.C., 1996), 48.

⁴³¹ William Whately, *A Bride-Bush* (London, 1619), 18, 14; William Gouge, *Of domesticall duties* (London, 1622), 221. See also Daniel Doriani, "The Puritans, Sex, and Pleasure," in Adrian Thatcher and Elizabeth Stuart (eds.), *Christian Perspectives on Sexuality and Gender* (Herefordshire, 1996), 33-52, esp. 38-9.

constancy was there! / How did their love teach them how to persevere / In holy duties! as if they had ment / By such an exquisite astonishment / To shew there was no difference in effect / Between the Friendly man and the Elect” (12). The effect of Fishborne and Browne’s friendship is perseverance in holy duties. With such a pious effect, Gomersall analogizes their friendship to election, whose effect is also perseverance in holy duties. The perseverance of the elect/saints is, of course, one of the five points of Calvinism. In Thomas Tuke’s prefatory letter to his translation of William Perkins’ *De praedestinationis modo et ordine* (1606), he argues, “it is not possible that any of the Elect should be damned, or that any of them being soundly conuerted, should wholly for a time (much lesse for euer) fall away from God and perish. For Gods decree of Election is constant, and his counsell shall stand.”⁴³² Illustrating dissension over the issue, Tuke’s insistence on the perseverance of the Elect—and, by implication, the unconditionality of election and the irresistibility of grace—is soundly controverted by the Laudian Richard Montagu. In *A gagg for the new Gospell?* (1624), Montagu argues against unconditional, persevering election by rejecting its constraint of free will, denying “insomuch that *Peter* could not perish, though he would; nor *Iudas* be saued, doo what he could.” Montagu contends that this doctrine of predestination is “not the doctrine of the Protestants: the Lutherans in *Germany* detest and abhorre it. It is the priuate fansie of some men.” Finally, and most tellingly, Montagu regards Protestantism as riven on this issue: “In the point of Election for Life, and Reprobation unto Death, Protestants and Papists are many wayes at oddes in opposition, and each diuided at home amongst themselues; not for the *Thing*, which all resolute, but for the *Manner*, in which

⁴³² William Perkins, *A C[hristian] and [plain]e treatise of the manner and order of predestination and of the largenes of Gods grace* (London, 1606), sig. E2^r.

they differ; agreeing in the Main, that *It is so*; disagreeing on the By, How it cometh so?”⁴³³

Were he simply presenting election rather than, as Montagu might say, “How it cometh so” (i.e. perseverance), Gomersall’s poem would be less doctrinally risqué—in regards, that is, to his Laudianism.

In addition to employing this controversial doctrine, Gomersall observes a particularly deliberate chronology between election and perseverance, and election and the performance of good works (i.e. holy duties). Perseverance is an “effect” (here, Gomersall’s use of this word is significant) of election. This is precisely how the Presbyterian Anthony Burgess describes the effectual relationship between perseverance and election: “so that their Perseverance is not a merit, or reward of their former holinesse, but it's a free gift of God, and an effect of Election, as their effectual Vocation was.”⁴³⁴ Further, perseverance in, performance of, holy duties is described as an effect of friendship/election; holy duties do not precede (or cause) election, but are symptomatic of it. As the Heidelberg Calvinist Jacobus Kimedoncius maintains, whose work was licensed by Bishop Bancroft in 1598, “Moreover it sufficiently appeareth that good works themselves are the effect of election, therefore they cannot be the cause of it: because one & the same thing cannot be the cause and the effect of it selfe.”⁴³⁵ Analogizing Browne and Fishborne’s friendship with the perseverance of the elect could surely seem presumptuous to Calvinists. It might also, though, reflect a deep and abiding respect for the doctrine considering that the central relationship in Fishborne’s life (he has no wife) is modeled after it. Further, the

⁴³³ Richard Montagu, *A gagg for the new Gospell?* (London, 1624), 178-9. Cf. Thomas Taylor, *The progresse of saints to full holinesse* (London, 1630), 385; William Perkins *A godlie and learned exposition upon the whole epistle of Iude* (London, 1606), 11.

⁴³⁴ Anthony Burgess, *CXLV expository sermons upon the whole 17th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John* (London, 1656), 345.

⁴³⁵ Jacobus Kimedoncius, *Of the redemption of mankind* (London, 1598), 273. See Nicholas Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c. 1530-1700* (Manchester, 2001), 161-2.

observance of the strict chronology between perseverance/good works and election suggests a carefulness—perhaps a respectfulness—in the handling of Calvinist doctrine. Were this a satiric burlesque of Calvinism, we would expect some intentional mishandling of Calvinist theology, not its mindful observance.

Despite this Calvinist interlude, the poem's conclusion strikes a discordantly un-Calvinist note by describing virginity's soteriological significance. In a final address commending Fishborne's charitable works, Gomersall writes, "Thou gatherst with much conscience, and then / With greater goodnesse do'st disperse agen, / That this praise to thy memory may be giv'n / Here lies the merchant which hath purchas'd heav'n" (14). Fishborne purchasing heaven is intended to be a clever commentary on his mercantile activities. But the wittiness does not mitigate the seriousness of the claim or its seriously provocative implications. Though the accuracy of the argument is highly questionable,⁴³⁶ Protestants frequently inveigh against the Catholic doctrine of works by arguing that it attempts to purchase heaven.⁴³⁷ Often, Protestants ascribe the erroneous belief in purchasing heaven to the Catholic overvaluation of supererogatory works. For example, condemning the Catholic belief in supererogation, Calvin argues,

For the wretched folke are so puffed vp with pryde, as they weene themselues able to purchase Paradise. And if they do amisse in anye poynt, they haue meanes of theyr owne too recompence God, they haue their satisfactions, and they haue theyr woorkes of

⁴³⁶ See Cristobal de Fonseca, *Deuout contemplations* (London, 1629), 391.

⁴³⁷ See Richard Crakanthorpe, *A sermon of sanctification* (London, 1608), 31; Arthur Dent, *The opening of heauen gates* (London, 1607), 116; Richard Rogers, *Certaine sermons preached and penned by Richard Rogers* (London, 1612), 99.

ouerplusse or supererogation as they terme them: and all these are payments too
discharge themselues with against God.⁴³⁸

As we've seen, Robert Baillie extends this criticism of supererogatory works and their capacity to buy heaven to the Laudian Church. Baillie attributes to Laudianism the belief "that not onely many doe fulfill the Law without all mortall sinne, but sundry also doe supererogat by doing more then is commanded, by performing the counsels of perfection, of chastity, poverty and obedience... That our obeying the counsels of perfection doe purchase a degree of glory above the ordinary happinesse."⁴³⁹ Baillie shows how purchasing heaven, works of supererogation, and claiming virginity's soteriological significance are conjoined. Implicit, then, in Fishborne buying heaven is an affirmation of his virginity's soteriological efficacy. Remaining virginal is the work of supererogation—the counsel of perfection—that allows Fishborne to purchase heaven. Moreover, an inherent responson exists between the poem's Calvinism and Fishborne's purchasing power. In Gomersall's depiction of the perseverance of the elect, a very particular chronology was maintained between election and good works; those works did not cause, but were themselves caused by, election. A purchase of heaven contravenes that chronology; Fishborne's charity causes (buys) his salvation. In an overvaluation of works and the individual will that effects them, Fishborne's virginity and charity are soteriologically consequential. The responson that results is certainly not productive of an Anglican *via media*. The poem adopts the Calvinist doctrine of perseverance and then appraises the salvific importance of Fishborne's

⁴³⁸ John Calvin, *Sermons of Master Iohn Caluin, vpon the booke of Iob* (London, 1574), 189. Cf. Edward Bulkley, *An apologie for religion* (London, 1602), 111.

⁴³⁹ Robert Baillie, *Ladensium Autokatakrisis* (London, 1641), 71.

virginity with a “popish” idea that outrages Reformed soteriology. It produces doctrinal heterogeneity that is divided against itself.

A similar complexity obtains in *Eliza’s Babes* (1652), written by an anonymous female author (hereafter, “Eliza”). As we will see, scholars have often debated Eliza’s doctrinal affiliations. While the following paragraphs will not claim her as a card-carrying Laudian, I do hope to show that her views on asceticism are—at times—assimilable by Laudianism. Accordingly, I will have recourse to challenge the view of her as uncomplicatedly Presbyterian, or even a puritan radical.

An important articulation of Eliza’s ascetic views occurs in the poem “Luke 20.36. *In that world they shall be equall to the Angels.*” This poem discusses the Sadducees well-known questioning of Christ about a woman who had seven husbands who all predeceased her.⁴⁴⁰ “Therefore in the resurrection,” the Sadducees ask, “whose wife of them is she?” (Luke 20:33). Jesus responds, “The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection” (Luke 20: 34-36).⁴⁴¹ In the poem, Eliza anticipates the angelic condition by importuning, “Here like the Angels let me be, / And as those blessed spirits free: / From vaine engagements let me bide, / And as they with thee still reside” (1-4). According to the verses from Luke, being like the angels entails not dying, yes, but also not marrying. The angelic freedom that Eliza desires, then, refers to an unattached—unmarried—earthly condition. Understanding these lines as being about marriage paints a rather

⁴⁴⁰ All quotations of Eliza’s poetry are from L.E. Semler (ed.), *Eliza’s Babes: or The Virgin’s Offering* (Madison, 2001). In-text references are to line numbers.

⁴⁴¹ Also repeated at Mark 12:25 and Matthew 22:30

unflattering portrait of the nuptial state: “From vaine engagements let me bide.” Reference to these engagements at the poem’s end also helps to clarify how indifferently they should be treated: “So shall my soul such sweet joys find, / That earthly things I shall not minde” (11-12). The dual connotation of “minde” summarizes the poem’s attitude towards earthly things; they will be tolerated or paid no mind to. Both attitudes continue the diminution of matrimonial honor begun in equating it with “vaine engagements.”⁴⁴² The equation does not correspond to the grand encomiums to marriage we’ve seen in Calvinist and puritans writers such as Daniel Rogers, Matthew Griffith, and William Gouge.

Marriage being the referent of these “vaine engagements” may be further implied by Eliza’s use of “bide”; that verb is suggestive of matrimony through its visual similarity to, evocation of, “bride.” The use of the verb also picks up where the previous poem left off. In “Earths honour slighted,” Eliza declares, “Tis heavenly honour I esteem, / All earthly honour vain I deem: / The one is made to fall and dye, / I love what bides eternally” (5-8). Celebrating the abiding permanence of heavenly honor and not abiding earth’s “vaine engagements” are two sides of the same coin, so to speak. Reading the poems sequentially, with an alertness to how “Luke 20.36” extends conclusions drawn in “Earths honour slighted,” serves to make the “vaine engagements” appear ever more hollow and, consequently, marriage as well. What also compounds marital devaluing is the prospect the poem hints at of erotic union with God: “Like them I’m made, by my new birth, / But I’m still wrapt in robes of earth. / Through a darke mantle I thee see, / But oh that I unwrap may be” (5-8). The erotic potential of Eliza’s denuding is made more plausible by the “such sweet joys” the end of the poem relishes (11) and the “oh” that punctuates her utterance. It is the poem’s only interjection and as such represents a break

⁴⁴² See also Erica Longfellow, *Women and Religious Writing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2004), 144 for further discussion of Eliza’s views of marriage.

with the measured, equanimous language employed throughout. This “oh” could denote an expression of pleasure or the desirous intensity of erotic longing. What increases the plausibility of this conclusion is the poem “The Dart”—four poems after “Luke 20.36”—that does imagine an erotic union with God.⁴⁴³ Were some allusion to this union present in “Luke 20.36,” the implications of its presence would be this: how could any “vaine engagement” (i.e. marriage) compare to erotic union with God?

As I’ve suggested, Eliza’s poem “Luke 20.36” uses the scriptural passage of its title to devalue marriage and—implicitly—elevate virginity. But it is important not to overstate the case. Eliza doesn’t. She never mentions marriage or virginity directly; any criticism of the former or praise of the latter is indirect. That indirectness does not take the sting out of the tail of the criticisms, but it is an important rhetorical affectation that helps situate Eliza’s exegesis of Luke 20:36 among Catholic, Laudian, and Calvinist interpretations of similar biblical passages. To begin, we can consider Joseph Beaumont’s interpretation of “angels neither marry” in the poem “Virginitiee.” One of the striking features of the poem is its sharp devaluation of marriage. While describing the angels’ adoption of a virginal lifestyle (the “fair Flowre”), the poem relates,

The yeouthfull beauteous *Spirits* above

With this fair Flowre fell All in love.

No marrying there

As Wee have here;

But they

All say,

⁴⁴³ Helen Wilcox, “‘My Hart Is Full, My Soul Dos Ouer Flow’: Women’s Devotional Poetry in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 63 (2000), 447-466, 460.

Let dirty wormes below goe wed; whilst Wee

Copie our *VIRGIN MASTERS* Puritie.⁴⁴⁴

“Let dirty wormes below goe wed” is an especially harsh indictment of matrimony. Angels not marrying, and the scriptural precedent for it, legitimate the indictment.⁴⁴⁵ The poem uses the scriptural precedent, then, to assert virginity’s heavenly institution and to elevate it above marriage. That usage most clearly corresponds to Catholic exegesis. For instance, the Jesuit Leonardus Lessius commends the virginal life because “it is an imitation of Angelicall life, as holy Fathers every where do deliver, out of the opinion of our Lord *Matt.* 22. Because as Angells marry not, nor are troubled with carnall concupiscence, but are ever attent to divine matters, & entertaine themselves alwayes in them.”⁴⁴⁶ Lessius intends this observation of virginity’s angelic status to be universally applicable. He earlier states, “wheresoever holy Scripture commendeth Virginitie, it speaketh in generall; neither is it to be restrained unto those alone, who live in Monasteries.”⁴⁴⁷ Beaumont makes a similar assertion of virginity’s applicability by celebrating those “Faithfull Voluntiers” who have devoted themselves to it.⁴⁴⁸ Their voluntary effort suggests that only the will—not some exceedingly rare gift from God—is required for leading a virginal life.

In contrast with Beaumont, other Laudians are less militant in mobilizing Luke 20 to praise virginity or detract from marital sanctity. For instance, in *Devotionis Augustinianae*

⁴⁴⁴ Joseph Beaumont, *The Minor Poems of Joseph Beaumont, D.D. 1616-1699*, ed. Eloise Robinson (Boston, 1914), 40. For other poems praising virginity, see “S. Gregorie Nazianzen,” “S. Joseph,” and “Annunciatio B.V.”

⁴⁴⁵ See also Beaumont’s “S. Joseph” for another allusion to this scriptural passage.

⁴⁴⁶ Leonardus Lessius, *The treasure of vowed chastity in secular persons* (Saint-Omer, 1621), 87.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 26. Cf. Girolamo Piatti, *The happines of a religious state*, 466. Cyprian, in his *Three Books of Testimonies against the Jews*, also adduces to the passage to commend virginity (3.32).

⁴⁴⁸ Joseph Beaumont, *The Minor Poems of Joseph Beaumont, D.D. 1616-1699*, 42.

flamma (1635), William Austin uses Luke 20:35 as evidence of John the Baptist's angelical existence: "For, *Angels* neither *Mary*, nor are given in *Marriage*: and such an *Angelical* Virgins-life, Saint *Iohn* is reported, to have *lived*." John the Baptist practicing an angelical virgin's-life can only increase virginity's holy status; as Austin later observes, John "was so great, that all men wondred, if he were not the Christ."⁴⁴⁹ Austin does not use this passage, however, as an opportunity to criticize marriage or universally recommend virginity. The same is true of his later reference to "angels neither marry" in *Haec Homo* (1637), where he simply states, marriage "is an estate but for *this life*: for in the life to come, they neither marrie, nor are given in marriage."⁴⁵⁰ As we shall see, what is noteworthy about Austin's references to "angels neither marry" is that he does not try to qualify the devaluation of marriage that the passage contains. By not qualifying the passage, he tacitly assents to its contents' deleterious implications for matrimony. But Laudians could also employ "angels neither marry" to offer less tacitly critical commentary on matrimony. In *Theologia veterum* (1654), Peter Heylyn describes marriage as a "*Seminal* or *Carnal* way of Propagation; For in the Resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage." In the Resurrection, "the *Saints* of God should be like the *Angels*, discharged from all relations incident to flesh and blood, exempt from all humane affections of what sort soever." These comments are meant to demonstrate the error of the Pharisees anticipating a resurrection in the "Animal and Carnal sense."⁴⁵¹ Using the absence of marriage to demonstrate a lack of carnality and animality in the Resurrection results in a dim, unflattering view of matrimony. It would be hard to imagine Gouge et al assenting to an

⁴⁴⁹ William Austin, *Devotionis Augustinianae flamma* (London, 1635), 194, 198.

⁴⁵⁰ William Austin, *Haec Homo* (London, 1637), 181. Cf. Edward Kellett, *A returne from Argier A sermon preached at Minhead in the county of Somerset the 16. of March, 1627* (London, 1628), 13-14. Kellett does not explicitly use Mark 12:25 to support virginity, but he does connect them in describing the good that has come from Adam's fall.

⁴⁵¹ Peter Heylyn, *Theologia veterum* (London, 1654), 479-80.

equation of marriage with simply a “*Seminal or Carnal way of Propagation*.” Heylyn does not adduce “angels neither marry” to elevate virginity above marriage, but with such an impoverished view of matrimony, that elevation takes place nonetheless.

Calvinist exegesis of “angels neither marry,” however, resists any devaluation of marriage. In his sermon on Matthew 22:30, Donne carefully handles this passage’s clear valorization of virginity. For one, he simply counteracts it by offering several encomiums to marriage, contesting patristic devaluing of matrimony, and even adopting an approving attitude towards the emperor Augustus’ institution of fines for the unmarried.⁴⁵² Donne is also quite ingenious in mitigating any negative connotation that could result from marriage’s absence in heaven. While explaining why marriage would not be instituted in heaven, he argues, “they shall not mary, because they shall have none of the uses of marriage...not as mariage is ordained for *mutuall helpe* of one another; for God himself shall be intirely in every soul.”⁴⁵³ In such extremely blissful circumstances as God entirely inhabiting every soul, of course one would have no need of marriage. By emphasizing the exceptionalness of heaven, Donne effectively deemphasizes any negative implications of matrimony’s absence there. Because of heaven’s superlative uniqueness, what is or isn’t instituted there does not necessarily comment on its inherent value. And yet, despite marriage’s clear scriptural absence in heaven, Donne keeps slipping it in through the back door. He admits, “a Resurrection there shall be: In the Resurrection there shall be no *Mariage*, because it conduces to no end; but, if it conduce to Gods glory, and my happinesse, (as it may piously be beleevd it does) to know them there, whom I knew here, I shall *know* them.”⁴⁵⁴ But will Donne know them in heaven the way in which he

⁴⁵² John Donne, *Fifty sermons*, 4-5.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

knew them on earth? The answer must be yes. If not, how would Donne recognize those he knew here from a hole in the ground there? He could not know them there whom he knew here without knowing them as he knew them, to put it rather tortuously. Therefore in heaven, Donne will still know that his wife was his wife. Though this may not be called marriage, the relationship will still be understood through the lens of the earthly institution. Some trace of marriage still remains if relationships in heaven are to be understood by reference to it. Similar to Donne, Henry Burton defends against any derogation of matrimony implied in “angels neither marry” by touting marriage’s holiness. Describing the union between Christ and believers, Burton writes, “this vnion betweene Christ and the Beleeuer is not a coniugall vnion, such as is betweene a man and his wife; although this be a mysticall resemblance, whereby Christ setteth forth his vnion with vs.” It cannot be conjugal because “the marriage band is but during this life, it holds not in heauen; for there they neither marry, nor are giuen in marriage.”⁴⁵⁵ Marriage mystically prefigures—it is a preparative for and precursor of—the believer’s divine union with Christ in which “we are made Kings and Priests to God his Father” and “wee put on Christ.”⁴⁵⁶ Illustrating the divergence in Laudian and Calvinist exegesis, previously the virginal John the Baptist was compared to Christ, and this invariably redounded to virginity’s credit. Here, matrimonial bonds simulate a putting on of Christ, and marriage benefits from a similar redounding. In other words, Christ singularly honors marriage by using it to anticipate his relationship with individual believers. Though marriage may be absent in heaven, Burton and Donne have some way of finding it out or minimizing the implications of its absence.

We have seen how various writers interpret “angels neither marry” in relation to marriage and virginity. In Beaumont and Catholic exegetes, the passage provides the opportunity to

⁴⁵⁵ Henry Burton, *The Christians bulwarke, against Satans battery* (London, 1632), 113.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 114.

recommend—sometimes universally—virginity’s holiness and denigrate marriage. Calvinists like Burton and Donne, though, manage to wrest “angels neither marry” from its valorization of virginity by deflecting any denigration of marriage. Meanwhile the Laudians Austin and Heylyn are quite comfortable with devaluing marriage, but do not explicitly commend virginity.

Viewing exegesis of “angels neither marry” on a spectrum—with Beaumont and Lessius the most pro-virginity and anti-marriage, Donne and Burton the most pro-marriage, and Austin and Heylyn somewhere in the middle, neither guardedly defensive of marriage’s honor nor vehement in virginity’s praise—where does Eliza fit in? In offering criticism of marriage but not using Luke 20:36 to editorialize about the holiness of virginity, she fits most comfortably with Austin and Heylyn (really, with Austin). In Eliza and the Laudians, valorization of virginity is implicit, yes, but it is not flagrant or unduly provocative, and no attempt is made to protect marriage from any seeming diminution.

This is not to say, though, that Eliza is incapable of such provocation à la Beaumont and, to a lesser degree, Heylyn. In the poem “The Bride,” she writes, “Sith you me ask, Why borne was I? / I’le tell you; twas to heaven to fly, / Not here to live a slavish life, / By being to the world a wife” (1-4). The phrase “by being to the world a wife” could mean that Eliza rejects living a life of worldliness as the world’s spouse; or it could mean that she rejects being considered by the world and those in it a wife. She refuses not only being the wife of a particular individual, but more generally the prospect of being a wife; the latter indicates a systemic critique of the institution of marriage not that dissimilar from Beaumont. Eliza’s fitting in

among these Laudians would, I think, surprise those scholars who regard her theology as firmly within a Calvinist tradition.⁴⁵⁷

And yet, beginning with the poem “On marriage,” Eliza describes how she came to be married. As she recounts in “The change,” “Great God! / How hast thou chang’d my thoughts in me, / For when I thought to be a wife, / I then did think troubled to be, / Because I saw most live in strife” (1-4). These poems, however, do not contain any extended encomiums to marriage. Eliza’s tepidly positive attitude towards matrimony never quite counterbalances the negativity of her earlier marital critique. Claiming that marriage is not strife-filled does not exactly represent high praise, nor does it signify a renunciation of her earlier views of marriage. What about marriage’s vanity, its slavery, its dissimilarity with the life of angels? Further, Eliza’s elective view of matrimony is not consistent with the conception of marriage’s necessity we have observed in Luther, Donne, and Burton. For Eliza, there seems to be no inherent contradiction in a collection of poems that devalues marriage, implicitly commends virginity, and then offers some praise of the marital state. That she finds nothing logically inconsistent about this progression suggests a far less exalted view of matrimony than most Protestants—Calvinists and puritans especially—held.

Also challenging the view of Eliza’s Calvinism or Presbyterian radicalism is the poem “Gods Commands easie.” In this poem, Eliza exclaims, “My Lord! how easie is thy will / Do, as I would be done unto. / Thy holy Law I then fulfill, / And give the Lord his praises due.” The exclamation is almost giddy in its allusion to Matthew 7:12 (cf. also Galatians 6:2, Romans 13:10): “There all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to

⁴⁵⁷ See L.E. Semler, “Who is the Mother of ‘Eliza’s Babes’ (1652)? ‘Eliza,’ George Wither, and Elizabeth Emerson,” *JEGP* 99 (2000), 513-36, 516; L.E. Semler, “The Creed of Eliza’s Babes (1652): Nakedness, Adam, and Divinity,” *Albion* 33 (2001), 185-217.

them: for this is the law and the prophets.” Such claims of fulfilling the law have a definite Catholic connotation. While discoursing on love in Romans 13:10, Cardinal Bellarmine avers, “for it [love] disposeth a man to behave himselfe well, both to *God* and towards his *neighbour*, and thereby *fulfilleth* the whole Lawe.”⁴⁵⁸ A similar claim is found in *The audi filia* (1620) of St. John of Avila.⁴⁵⁹ In addition to Catholic advocates of man’s potential for fulfilling the law, Jeremy Taylor, Laud’s former chaplain, assents to both the potential and its culmination in perfection: “Let it be remembred that charity is the fulfilling the Law, and by the degrees of it a man tends to perfection.”⁴⁶⁰ In contrast, the idea of fulfilling the law in this life is antithetical to Calvinist depravity. Calvinist claims of this fulfillment are rare indeed, and they contain the important qualification that it is only through Christ’s obedience—not, say, a performance of the Golden Rule—that fulfillment can take place.⁴⁶¹ Most often, though, Calvinists reject outright the possibility of fulfilling the law.

Responding to the prospect of keeping the law by loving one’s neighbor, Andrew Willet argues, “but perfectly in the highest decree of charitie, no man can keepe the lawe, for the Apostle saith, *In many things we offend all*, Jam. 3.11. then no man can perfectly fulfill the lawe in this life.”⁴⁶² William Perkins also rejects the claim that loving one’s neighbor can lead to the law’s fulfillment: “*Obiect. VII. Rom. 13. 8. Loue is the fulfilling of the law:* and the regenerate love their neighbours. *Ans.* If we could love our neighbour as our selves, perfectly, we should then fulfill the whole law. But our love is imperfect.”⁴⁶³ Fulfilling the law is also connected to

⁴⁵⁸ St. Roberto Francesco Romolo Bellarmino, *Iacob's ladder* (London, 1638), 387.

⁴⁵⁹ St. John of Avila, *The audi filia* (Saint-Omer, 1620), 254.

⁴⁶⁰ Jeremy Taylor, *Ductor dubitantium* (London, 1660), 215.

⁴⁶¹ See George Downname, *A treatise of iustification* (London, 1633), 28-9; William Perkins, *A golden chaine* (Cambridge, 1600), 981.

⁴⁶² Andrew Willet, *Hexapla* (S.I., 1611), 620.

⁴⁶³ William Perkins, *A commentarie or exposition, vpon the fiue first chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians* (Cambridge, 1604), 190. Cf. William Perkins, *Lectures vpon the three first chapters of the Reuelation* (London, 1604), 124-5.

asceticism through works of supererogation such as performing evangelical councils of perfection (vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience). Often, fulfilling the law and supererogating are mentioned together in Protestant discourse. For instance, Perkins argues that Papists “blasphemously teach, that a man after justification, may fulfill the law in this life: that a man may for a time be without all sinne: that works of the regenerate are perfect, and may be opposed to the iudgement of God: that men may supererrogate, and doe more then the law requires.”⁴⁶⁴ We have also seen Robert Baillie connect the law’s fulfillment with supererogation while attributing to the Laudian Church the belief “that not onely many doe fulfill the Law without all mortall sinne, but sundry also doe supererogat.” In this way, Eliza’s fulfillment of the law has implications for the asceticism outlined in *Eliza’s Babes*: it actuates her commitment to virginity with supererogatory and perfecting potential.

We have now documented where Eliza’s asceticism conflicts with Calvinist doctrine; namely, in ascribing to the will a potential for fulfilling the law, and a perfection attainable by works of supererogation like remaining virginal. Her prose meditations, on the other hand, often exhibit a theology consistent with Calvinism. In the meditations, she emphasizes her own depravity (107 [nb. references are to page numbers]) and God’s omnipotence (117), and she inveighs against an Arminian view of the relationship between salvation and works (123). Most interestingly, an inherent rejection of her earlier view of fulfilling the law is found in her denying a concept often associated with it: that perfection is possible in this life. William Perkins illustrates the association (we have also seen it in Taylor’s *Ductor dubitantium*) while contrasting the Protestant view of perfection with the Catholic one: “But we on the contrarie teach, that albeit we are to striue to a perfection as much as we can, yet no man can fulfill the lawe of God

⁴⁶⁴ William Perkins, *A commentarie or exposition, vpon the fiue first chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians*, 188. Cf. Edward Bulkley, *An apologie for religion*, 117.

in this life: much lesse do works of supererogation.”⁴⁶⁵ Thus, when Eliza asserts in her prose meditation “My Contract” that perfection is “not to bee obtain’d in this world” (110), she inevitably contradicts her earlier claim that fulfilling the law is possible. Essentially, Eliza adopts a Calvinist view of fulfilling the law in the later prose meditation that points up the anti-Calvinism of “Gods Commands easie.” Whether intentional or not, the later redaction in “My Contract” does respond to the flagrant popery of “Gods Commands easie” because of both prose and poem’s commentary on fulfilling the law. The presence of any qualification to Eliza’s Calvinism—even (paradoxically) if it takes the form of espousing a more orthodox Calvinist viewpoint—disassociates her (at the very least) from militant Calvinism. Such qualification does not accord with the dichotomy between true and false religion often rigidly drawn by Calvinists. As Anthony Milton explains, “the indivisibility of the one true religion—a concept inherent in the doctrine of the ‘Two Churches’ and also common to most Calvinist writers—meant that Protestants could not be in a position to compromise on any points.”⁴⁶⁶ Eliza’s doctrinal compromises render her Calvinist identity complicated.

Similar complications are found in Rowland Watkyns’ collection of poems, *Flamma sine Fumo* (1662).⁴⁶⁷ On the surface of things, Watkyns’ doctrinal affiliations are quite clear. As Alan Rudrum notes, “the poems reveal a Laudian Anglican contemptuous of Presbyterians, of ‘the New Illiterate lay-Teachers’, and of ‘the common people.’”⁴⁶⁸ The view of Calvinism in the poem “Grace” is consistent with this contempt.⁴⁶⁹ In “Grace,” Watkyns bemoans the following:

⁴⁶⁵ William Perkins, *A golden chaine*, 982. Cf. Zacharias Ursinus, *The summe of Christian religion* (London, 1645), 511.

⁴⁶⁶ Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), 346.

⁴⁶⁷ R.W., *Flamma sine fumo* (London, 1662). In-text references are to page numbers.

⁴⁶⁸ Alan Rudrum, “Watkyns, Rowland (c.1614–1664),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. also the clericalism of “The Priesthood” (91).

“Men dig the bowels of the earth for gold...Few care / To get the pearl of Grace” (32-33). As a result of few caring to “dig” for grace, Watkyns exhorts, “But tafte the food of Grace, and thou fhalt find / It yields a better relifh to thy mind” (33). This is a much more cooperative view of grace than Calvin’s irresistible grace admits. One can dig or not dig; taste or not taste. This emphasis on agency in obtaining grace contradicts the Reformed emphasis on God’s absolute omnipotence and man’s total depravity. What’s more, the poem does not limit those capable of finding saving grace: “But taste the food of Grace, and thou shalt find...” ; this “thou” is rather capacious. The poem’s epigram from the Latin Vulgate Bible, “Qui quaerit, invenit” (“Whoever shall seek, will find”) also suggests its capacity, and with it unlimited atonement (32). In the poem’s statement that grace makes “the bondman free,” however, it does correspond with Calvinist doctrine. In *The Institutes*, Calvin assents to Augustine’s proposition that “mans will obteyneth not grace by libertie, but libertie by grace.”⁴⁷⁰ Liberty attends grace, not the other way around; or, in Watkyns’ formulation, grace makes the bondman free. And yet, any correspondence with Calvinism is undermined at the poem’s conclusion. It describes grace as “Like some pure incense, and pereserves thy store” (33). This depiction of grace portrays it with a Laudian connotation. In anti-Laudian polemic in the 1640s, the use of incense was regarded as a popish, Laudian innovation.⁴⁷¹ The equation of grace with a trifling appurtenance of religious ceremonialism would surely be galling to any Calvinist.

Despite this un-Calvinist view of grace, the collection does contain one poem that flatly endorses the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. That Watkyns even discourses on the subject is inconsistent with his Laudian sensibilities. Anglicans had, of course, tried to prohibit

⁴⁷⁰ John Calvin, *The institution of Christian religion* (London, 1561), 2.3. fo. 24’.

⁴⁷¹ See Robert Baillie, *The life of William now Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, examined* (London, 1643), 86; William Laud (spurious), *The recantation of the prelate of Canterbury* (London, 1641), 22; William Prynne, *A quench-coale* (Amsterdam, 1637), 92.

discussion of the subject in the 1630s. It was very much an interdicted topic. As Laud related in a letter to Dr. Samuel Brooke about his (Brooke's) intent to write a tract on predestination, "Nevertheless I am yet where I was, that somewhat about these controversies is unmasterable in this life."⁴⁷² The opening of "Predestination" almost seems to flout that interdict: "Dispute not why some Angels stood.../ Dispute not, wherefore God doth take and chuse / Some to his grace, and others doth refuse" (109). In contrast with Laud's agnosticism, or with Richard Montagu's outright denial of the Calvinist tenet, Watkyns defiant "dispute not; dispute not" treats predestination as simply settled fact. What's more, "Predestination" adopts and endorses the much more controversial position of double predestination ("Some to his grace, and others doth refuse"); namely, that God predestined some to election and others to reprobation. The un-Laudian attitude towards predestination is also apparent in the scriptural passages Watkyns adduces to illustrate it. Watkyns writes, "The potter doth of the same lump of clay / Make vessels some more base, and some more gay; / And shall we question Gods most secret will, / Why his own creatures he doth save or kill?" (109). Alluding to Romans 9:20-21, the poem stresses the clay's powerless dependence on the omnipotent potter. In so doing, its exegesis of the passage is similar to Calvin's in *The Institutes*. While responding to those who find predestination unfair and evidence that God "doth so cruelly mocke his creatures," Calvin asks, "Hath not the potter power to make of the same lumpe one vessel to honor, & an other to dishonor?"⁴⁷³ Suggesting further agreement with Calvin, as we have seen Watkyns uses the example of the fallen angels to declare, "Dispute not why some Angels stood, / And others fell, which were by nature good...And shall we question Gods most secret will" (109). Calvin also

⁴⁷² William Laud, *Works*, 7 vols. (Oxford, 1847-1860; repr. New York, 1975), 6.292. See also Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge, 1992; repr. 2002), 299.

⁴⁷³ John Calvin, *The institution of Christian religion*, 2.23. fo. 249^v.

uses the angels as illustrative of predestination: “The Angels which stooode still in their vprightnesse, Paul calleth elect. If their stedfastnesse was groundeed vpon the good pleasure of God, the falling away of the other proueth that they were forsaken: Of which thing there can no other cause be alleged than reprobation, which is hidden in the secret counsell of God.”⁴⁷⁴ The fall of the angels provides an apt example of the futility of disputing the particulars of election. For Calvin, those particulars are “hidden in the secret counsell of God”; and for Watkyns, in “Gods most secret will.” The poem’s final resonance with Calvinist soteriology occurs when Watkyns explains what constitutes evidence of election: “The signs or symptoms which Election prove, / Are lively faith, and undefiled love” (109). Using “lively faith” as a barometric of eternal life accords with Calvin’s own use of the term in *The Institutes*: “Now whersoever this liuely faith shalbe, it can not be possible but y^t it hathe with it y^t hope of eternal saluation.”⁴⁷⁵ Thus, the poem’s Calvinism is evident in its exegesis of Romans, use of the fallen angels to caution against inquiring too closely into election, and how the speaker interprets the symptoms of his own election. It is Calvinist through-and-through.

This Calvinism starkly contrasts with the praise of monasticism and allusions to Catholic mysticism in “The Holy Maid,” a poem that appears three pages before “Predestination.” Monastic praise in “The Holy Maid” is quite pronounced. For instance, the poem’s Latin epigram announces the holiness of virginity: “Dum fugio homines, invenio angelos; / numquam minus sola quam cum sola” (104). (“When I flee men, I find angels; I am never less alone than when I am alone”). In this epigram, the poem celebrates bodily virginity by invoking the comparison of virgins and angels. As we’ve seen, this is a comparison Laudians (Brathwaite,

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 2.23. fo. 249^v.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., 3.2. fo. 125^v. Cf. John Calvin, *A harmonie vpon the the three Euangelists* (London, 1584), 411; Theodore Beza, *Propositions and principles of diuinitie* (Edinburgh, 1591), 134.

Austin, Taylor) frequently employ when valorizing virginity. Complementing the poem's elevated view of angelic virginity is the rather dim view of marriage it articulates in the opening lines:

I am resolv'd, no fond desire
Shall kindle in me Cupids fire:
No amorous toyes, no wanton kiss
Shall rob me of eternal bliss,
I'll write, I'll read, I'll spin, I'll pray,
To drive vain thoughts of Love away.
A silent Cloyster, which free
From change and chance, best pleaseth me:
When I do not converse with men,
I speak with God, and Angels then. (104-5)

The maid's resolution recalls the first line of Watkyns' poem "A Wife." That poem begins by asking "ART thou resolv'd for Marriage?" (85). The question would seem to be an innocuous one. But, as we've previously observed, it controverts the Reformed treatment of marriage as necessary. Consistent with this rejection of necessary marriage is the poem's less-than-complimentary view of matrimony. The poem depicts male-female companionship as amounting to Cupid's fire, "amorous toyes," and a "wanton kiss." This is not to say that these components of male-female companionship do not have their own meretricious allure. In fact, the poem goes out of its way to depict them as such. Cupid's fire is made more tempting by

rhyme and the verse's visual presentation: "defire" / "fire." Restored to the spelling that appears in Watkyns' original, "defire" burns with, and is nearly consumed by, the fire that Cupid kindles. Yet no matter how tempting the attractions, they will always pale in comparison to "eternal bliss." The juxtaposition of "converse" and "speak" demonstrates the comparison: "When I do not converse with men, / I speak with God, and Angels then" (105). Here, "converse" can mean to "have sexual intercourse or intimacy" (*OED*).⁴⁷⁶ Having sex with men cannot compete with the sublimity of celestial experience, of speaking with angels and God. By describing male-female companionship in such limited terms—wantonness, amorous playthings, sex as opposed to angelic disquisition—marriage must be, then, only a curative for lust. This definition accords with the Pauline view of marriage; namely, that it is "better to marry than to burn" (1 Corinthians 7:9). But there are other scriptural precedents for marriage besides presenting it as a curative for lust (e.g. procreation of children, chance for mutual help and society).⁴⁷⁷ Conceiving of marriage as more capacious and holy than remedying lust, early reformers emphasized these other scriptural precedents in addition to the Pauline one. Heinrich Bullinger, Zwingli's successor in Zurich, refers to marriage as a state in which "vertue is mayntayned, vice is excewed, houses are replenished, cities are inhabited, the ground is tilled, scienses are practised, kyngdoms florysh, amite is preserued...and the glory of GOD hyghely auaunced."⁴⁷⁸ Bullinger does allude to the Pauline remedy ("vice is excewed"), but he mainly focuses on the procreative potential of marriage ("houses are replenished, cities are inhabited, kyngdoms florysh"), how its holiness redounds to God's glory ("glory of GOD hyghely auaunced"), and he obliquely references matrimony's promotion of mutual help and society ("amite is preserued"). By simply equating

⁴⁷⁶ "Conversation, n.," *OED Online* (Oxford, 2012), <<http://www.oed.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu>>.

⁴⁷⁷ Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: 1300-1840* (Oxford, 1986), 151.

⁴⁷⁸ Heinrich Bullinger, *The golde[n] boke of christen matrimony* (London, 1543), sig. A4^v.

marriage with curing lust, Watkyns offers a much more limited view than Bullinger and, indeed, than Reformed Protestantism's exaltation of matrimony advanced.

Though she eschews earthly conversation, the maid's monastic life is not without an erotic reward. The poem soon becomes quite erotic with God figured as the beloved. The maid asserts, "And yet I am in love: but where? / My love ascends a higher sphere; / Where honor, beauty, pleasures be / Inthron'd, and full of constancie" (105). A sense of Platonic ascent informs these lines, with the speaker inching ever closer towards the abstracted forms of beauty and pleasure and away from the dross of corporality. During the description of the maid's beloved that follows, the lines constantly allude to the *The Song of Solomon*: "My Beloved's white and ruddy" (cf. *The Song of Solomon* 5:10); "His head is like fine gold" (cf. 5:11); "His gracious eyes are like Doves eyes" (cf. 5:12); "And in his cheeks composed lies / A bed of spices and flowers sweet" (cf. 5:13) (105). Using the *The Song of Solomon* to depict an erotic relationship between the individual and God is characteristic of Christian mysticism.⁴⁷⁹ We can observe several parallels between Catholic mystics' commentaries and sermons on the *The Song of Solomon* and "The Holy Maid."

During her ascension ("My love ascends a higher sphere"), the maid twice refers to Christ as "my Beloved": "My Beloved's white and ruddy"; "But see, where my Beloved lies" (105). The maid's intimacy with God occurring simultaneously with her ascension to a higher sphere corresponds to the 12th-century mystic Bernard of Clairvaux's similar correlation of intimacy, ascent, and calling God "beloved." In sermons on the *The Song of Solomon*, Bernard writes, "Now, consider the greatness and high elevation of a soul which claims the right to call Him, who is the Lord of the whole world, her Beloved. Assuredly this Vision of Christ must be

⁴⁷⁹ For the foundational example, see, of course, Origen's commentary and homilies on the *The Song of Solomon*. Origen, *The Songs of Songs Commentary and Homilies*, transl. R.P. Lawson (New York, 1956).

august and privileged.”⁴⁸⁰ For Bernard, this august privilege culminates in kissing Christ’s mouth. One begins by kissing Christ’s feet, which is a way of lamenting “the faults and sins which we ourselves have committed”; then proceeds to kissing Christ’s hand, which helps “to strengthen our feeble knees that we may stand upright”; and finally, “at length perhaps venture to lift our eyes to that Countenance full of glory and majesty, for the purpose not only to adore, but (I say it with fear and trembling) to kiss.” Bernard speaks so tremulously about the kiss because it is of ineffable sweetness, experienced only by those who are “perfect,” and in it “we are by His marvellous condescension made to be one spirit with Him.”⁴⁸¹ In “The Holy Maid,” the speaker’s intimacy with Christ also leads to such a kiss: “His mouth breathes roses: and no bliss / Can equal his delicious kiss” (105). These lines recall the maid’s earlier rejection of male companionship: “No amorous toyes, no wanton kiss / Shall rob me of eternal bliss.” Implicit here is a comparison of a “wanton kiss” and “eternal bliss”; no kiss is worth being robbed of eternal bliss. The later repetition of this phrase, however, reverses the reasoning: no bliss is the equal of Christ’s kiss. The poem’s reversal of its earlier logic is a performative contradiction. It illustrates the potency of that kiss and the speaker’s entry into a rapturous state of divine love. Both exceed, and cannot be measured by, the poem’s earlier descriptive parameters. Those parameters were earthly; this is something divine.

More intimacy between the soul and Christ follows the ecstatic kiss: “He spreads his arm me to embrace; / Who would not love so sweet a face” (105). In her commentary on the *The Song of Solomon*, the Carmelite nun Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) finds God’s embrace of the soul to be evidence of “a kind of divine Ebriety,” in which the soul “knows not any thing of

⁴⁸⁰ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Cantica Canticorum: Eight-six Sermons on the Song of Solomon*, ed. and transl. Samuel J. Eales (London, 1895), 278.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 20-1.

herself.” In this state of divine inebriation, the “Soul seems to herself to be suspended in those divine Armes” and God “converts” her “into himself.”⁴⁸² This process of conversion helps to explain the conclusion of “The Holy Maid.” The poem ends, in seeming incongruity with the rapt delight that precedes it, with the speaker contemplating Christ’s suffering: “Rich drops of blood, like rubies fall, / To ransom my poor soul from thrall: / The Cross my pillow, and my bed / Shall be his Grave to rest my head” (106). A cross as a pillow, a grave as a bed, it would seem the poem has completely left blissful kisses behind as the maid places herself in the moment of Christ’s suffering. And yet, this exposure to Christ’s pain constitutes for Teresa the “Highest Degree of the Love of God.”⁴⁸³ In this state of divine love, the soul yearns to know suffering: “Give me, Lord, troubles and persecutions: and indeed she really desires them, and thrives well with them: for (since she now aims not at her own content, but the pleasing of God) her delight is in something to imitate the most painfull life of Jesus Christ.”⁴⁸⁴ It is definitely unexpected that the erotic intensity of the poem is displaced by images of death, persecution, and suffering. What’s even harder to grasp is the paradox that the tortured suffering is an extension of the intense eroticism; that, as Teresa explains, “delight” follows from this pain. The maid’s blissful kiss with Christ and the abrupt shift to contemplating his crucifixion belong within the Catholic mystical tradition of which Teresa and Bernard are integral parts.

How the ascetic lifestyle the maid adopts culminates in this mysterious knowledge of Christ and his suffering seems at odds with the soteriology outlined in “Predestination,” which appears a few pages after “The Holy Maid.” To put the question cynically, why engage in all

⁴⁸² Teresa of Avila, *The second part of the works of St. Teresa of Jesus foundress of the reformation of the discalced Carmelites*, transl. Abraham Woodhead (S.I., 1675), 309, 310. Cf. the speaker being “drunk with that celestial Wine” (322).

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, 320.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 323.

these acts of supererogation—why make this monastic resolution, forswear sexual relations, and live an eremitic life—if the outcome of one’s salvation is already decided? This is not to deny the necessity of good works but, as Calvinists argued, they do not increase one’s holiness or estimation in the sight of God in any way. These supererogatory acts resulting in a mystical revelation of Christ would smack to Calvinists of trying to merit holiness, thereby reducing the imponderable magnanimity of a free gift of God’s grace and, more troubling still, rendering predestination more determinable.

Watkins does not resolve these questions, but rather leaves the reader right in the thick of them, illustrating the doctrinal heterogeneity asceticism could create. In the previous examples, heterogeneity resulted from the more capacious sense of the will’s efficacy in Laudian-Anglican/Catholic asceticism coming into conflict with Calvinism’s denial of it. Examining this heterogeneity can be especially salutary, for it helps us understand how early modern men and women negotiated the complex boundaries of doctrinal identity and, as we have seen, even rendered some of them permeable. In the next chapter, we will see how John Milton’s “Lycidas” similarly collapses the rigid fixities of puritan and Anglican.

Chapter 4

“Lycidas” and Laud

A major debate in Milton scholarship concerns the religious identity of the young Milton. On the one hand, scholars maintain a belief in the relative continuity of Milton’s radical puritanism throughout his long life and career (1608-74).⁴⁸⁵ And on the other, an attempt has been made to revise the old truism of the “puritan Milton.”⁴⁸⁶ Though I have presented these two sides as somehow equally influential, the preponderance of the former needs emphasis. In his recent argument for a puritan Milton, Nicholas McDowell points out that the very idea of Milton’s sympathies being otherwise “would have been regarded as at best facetious, at worst ignorant” until very recently.⁴⁸⁷ Among a host of issues, the two sides disagree about the religion of the young Milton’s relations (e.g. William Chappell, Thomas Young, Nathaniel Tovey, Joseph Mede, John Milton Sr.), Milton’s attitude towards the Book of Sports and religious ceremony, and the soteriology of the early poems. Both sides generally agree, though, that the 1637 composition of “Lycidas” is a moment of signal importance for deciphering

⁴⁸⁵ See Christopher Hill *Milton and the English Revolution* (New York, 1978); David Norbrook “The Politics of Milton’s Early Poetry” in *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, rev. edn (Oxford, 1984), 224-69; Barbara Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton* (Oxford, 2000); Barbara Lewalski, “How Radical Was the Young Milton?” in John Rumrich and Steven Dobranski (eds.), *Milton and Heresy* (Cambridge, 1998), 49-72 ; Leah Marcus, “Milton’s Anti-Laudian Masque” in *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell, and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago, 1989), 169-212; Neil Forsyth, “‘Lycidas’: A Wolf in Saint’s Clothing,” *Critical Inquiry* 35 (2009), 684-702; Achsah Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton: Literature, religion and cultural conflict in seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1998), 161; Cedric C. Brown, *John Milton’s aristocratic entertainments* (Cambridge, 1985); Maryann Cale McGuire *Milton’s Puritan Masque* (Athens, 1983); John Leonard, “‘Trembling Ears’: The Historical Moment of *Lycidas*,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21 (1991), 59-81; Jeffrey Alan Miller “Milton and the Conformable Puritanism of Richard Stock and Thomas Young,” in Edward Jones (ed.), *Milton: The Emerging Author, 1620-1642* (Oxford, 2013), 72-106.

⁴⁸⁶ Catherine Gimelli Martin, *Milton among the Puritans: The Case for Historical Revisionism* (Surrey, 2010). Gordon Campbell and Thomas N. Corns, *John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought* (Oxford, 2008). Recently, and in an important divergence from the two camps, Deborah Shuger has argued that Milton’s early works exhibit a “deep alienation from the cultural universe of the early Stuart clergy: right, left, and center.” Deborah Shuger, “Milton’s Religion: The Early Years,” *Milton Quarterly* 46 (2012), 137-53, 149.

⁴⁸⁷ Nicholas McDowell, “How Laudian was the Young Milton?” *Milton Studies* 52 (2011), 3-33, 3.

Milton's religious identity. In the words of Jeffrey Alan Miller, "scholars have often identified 1637 as a watershed year in terms of Milton's relation to the English Church."⁴⁸⁸ To those who posit a puritan Milton, the poem's criticism of the clergy evinces godly leanings and/or a deepening commitment to them. One of Milton's eighteenth-century editors, Thomas Warton, observes the "violent invective against the Church of England" in the St. Peter verse paragraph.⁴⁸⁹ To this notion of radicalism, modern criticism has readily assented. John N. King locates a "radical ecclesiology" in the poem; David Loewenstein finds that "Lycidas" "gives the language of politics and religion a strikingly new radical and prophetic inflection"; and, about St. Peter's speech, Paul Alpers asserts, "there is no denying the radical tone of the passage."⁴⁹⁰ Arguing from a different basis but coming to the same conclusion, scholars who claim Milton's Laudian sympathies mark "Lycidas" as their end. For instance, Thomas N. Corns entitles a groundbreaking essay challenging Milton's puritanism, "Milton before 'Lycidas.'"⁴⁹¹ In other words, even those scholars favorably disposed towards a non-puritan Milton identify 1637 as the date when the process of radicalization must have begun.

This present essay, therefore, embarks on a difficult task. I find no evidence of early radicalism in "Lycidas." Interpretations of the poem stressing its radicalism have ignored the strong, Anglican connotations of its religious sentiments. This essay recovers them by examining an unacknowledged depiction of religious ceremony (rogation) in the poem; how the St. Peter verse paragraph voices policies consistent with Laudianism; and how the attitude

⁴⁸⁸ Miller, "Milton and the Conformable Puritanism of Richard Stock and Thomas Young," 90.

⁴⁸⁹ Milton, *Poems*, ed. Thomas Warton (?), 23.

⁴⁹⁰ John N. King, "Milton and the Bishops: Ecclesiastical Controversy and the Early Poems," in Daniel W. Doerksen and Christopher Hodgkins (eds.), *Centered on the Word: Literature, Scripture, and the Tudor-Stuart Middle Way* (New Jersey, 2004), 293; David Loewenstein, "Politics and religion," in Thomas N. Corns (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to English Poetry: Donne to Marvell* (Cambridge, 1993), 23; Paul Alpers, "The Lives of *Lycidas*," in Angelica Duran (ed.), *A Concise Companion to Milton* (Oxford, 2007), 100.

⁴⁹¹ Thomas N. Corns, "Milton before 'Lycidas,'" in Graham Parry and Joad Raymond (eds.), *Milton and the Terms of Liberty* (Cambridge, 2002), 23-36.

towards virginity in “Lycidas” accords with Laudian asceticism. This is not to suggest that “Lycidas” is a Laudian poem or to lose sight of how it could be adapted to a more oppositional agenda in 1645. In recovering the Anglican meanings, I want to show how they exist in, at times, a tense simultaneity with oppositional ones. These two, seemingly contradictory meanings, do not cancel each other out in a demonstration of their mutual exclusivity, nor is a perfect harmony ever achieved between them. Rather, very much like the poem’s promiscuous intermingling of classical and Christian sources, the puritan and Anglican persist in a state of weird, frictious combination. The uneasy integration represents Milton’s own conflictedness about his religious affiliation in the 1630s. He is still working things out, and, in the way it negotiates the reformist/conformist fissure in contemporary religion, “Lycidas” reflects that. Its studied ambivalence is indicative of an individual trying to find his place in an increasingly polarized religious and political climate. The “Lycidas” of this essay could not be farther from the notion of an entrenched radicalism, a doctrinaire puritanism, for which the young poet and poem have often been taken.

The audacity of such a reading of “Lycidas” is, of course, that it directly contradicts how Milton later celebrates the poem as a prophetic foretelling of the Anglican clergy’s ruin: “In this Monody the Author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drown’d in his Passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637. And by occasion fortels the ruine of our corrupted Clergy then in their height.”⁴⁹² But Milton is not always reliable in headnotes or assessments of his own work. After all, he did prefer *Paradise Regained* to *Paradise Lost* (though few readers have ever confirmed his preference), and the argument/headnote for book 12 of *Paradise Lost* misrepresents the plot.

⁴⁹² Quotations of Milton’s poems are from *John Milton: Complete Shorter Poems*, ed. Stella Revard (West Sussex, 2009).

But if “Lycidas” is really a conflicted work that often bridges doctrinal divides, how can Milton celebrate the poem as puritan prophecy in 1645?

I do not believe one can emphasize too strongly the effect the headnote has on readers. Reader response theory has made it abundantly clear that one’s expectations about *what* she reads indelibly influence *how* she reads it.⁴⁹³ In an act of brilliant ingenuity, Milton imposes a hermeneutic straitjacket on all subsequent readers of “Lycidas,” eliciting the response he intends by foreclosing a reader’s horizon of expectations (to borrow Jauss’ phrase). Milton can celebrate the poem as puritan prophecy in 1645 by the headnote’s privileging one set of oppositional meanings that were previously held in tense, paradoxical suspension with conformist ones. In a sense, the headnote breaks the tie—the complex neutrality—that “Lycidas” had previously exhibited by deciding in favor of a puritan reading.

The headnote also says just as much about Milton’s careful self-presentation and embroilment in the tense polemical wars of the 1640s as it does about “Lycidas.” In “foretells,” the note helps accomplish his self-fashioning as a prophet. The title page of *Poems 1645* makes a forceful claim for Milton’s prophetic identity through its use of “vates.” Moreover, the phrase “corrupt clergie” also foists the corruptness for which Milton’s view of divorce was accused onto that handiest and oft-used scapegoat of the 1640s: the Anglican clergy.⁴⁹⁴ The headnote’s immersion in the polemical debates of the 1640s does not invalidate it as literary criticism, but it does at least suggest that literary criticism may not have been all that the headnote was about. Literary studies is often wary of authors’ appraisals of their own work, particularly when those appraisals have an ulterior, polemical motive. For some reason, the headnote of “Lycidas” has not been met with the same skepticism. One of the aims of this essay, then, is to abandon the

⁴⁹³ See Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 1997; repr. 2011), 63-4.

⁴⁹⁴ *An Answer to a book intituled, The doctrine and discipline of divorce* (London, 1644), 27.

kind of teleological reading of the poem that Milton invites; namely, seeing “Lycidas” from the vantage point of a fully-fledged, anti-episcopal radicalism of the 1640s.

I. Rogation

As far as I can tell, the only instance when a depiction of rogation has been claimed to occur in “Lycidas” is in the 1855 first volume of Anne Pratt’s massive, five volume *The Flowering Plants of Great Britain*. During her discussion of Milkwort, the official rogation flower that can come in a purple color, Pratt quotes (somewhat inaccurately) a famous imperative from the flower catalog in “Lycidas.” She writes, “our milkwort is little heeded now by any but the lovers of wild flowers; but few of these would pass it without a thought of praise for its beauty, as they see it among the short grass of the hill-side, where it ‘Purples [sic] all the ground with vernal flowers.’”⁴⁹⁵ Pratt makes no explicit argument about the poem, only correlating Milkwort with the vernal flowers’ purpling. There remains, though, evidence to support her intimation and reading rogation into “Lycidas.” As the following paragraphs document, the trespassing of boundaries, anxiety about disease, perambulating bones, and an ascendant apotheosis (among other things) suggest the presence of rogation in verse paragraphs 8-10. The presence is important because the depiction of a highly sanctified rogation could locate “Lycidas” on one side of the puritan/Anglican divide over this religious ceremony. Before turning to rogation in the poem, providing some introduction to this somewhat obscure (at least, from a literary studies standpoint) ritual will be helpful. I want to do this in two ways.

⁴⁹⁵ Anne Pratt, *The Flowering Plants of Great Britain*, (London, 1855), i. 195.

First, I'll offer a brief reading of rogation and allusions to "Lycidas" in Andrew Marvell's "The Loyal Scot," and then the essay will consider the religious conflict rogation could produce.

In "The Loyal Scot" (1667-73), while arguing that the policies of the Anglican bishops have divided Scotland from England, Marvell uses rogation's demarcation of borders to both signify, and symbolically enact, that division:

Who sermons e'er can pacify, and prayers?

Or to the joint-stools reconcile the chairs?

The kingdoms join, yet church will kirk oppose:

The mitre still divides, the crown does close.

As in Rogation Week they whisper round

To keep in mind the Scotch and English bound,

What th' ocean binds is by the bishops rent,

Their seas make islands in our continent. (102-09)⁴⁹⁶

There is something secretive and sinister about the bishops employing rogation to "whisper" of Scotch and English bounds. The lines are filled with paradoxical images of capacious enclosure thwarted by divisive isolation. The crown enclosing, the mitre separating; episcopal "seas" forming isolated islands in an expansive ocean; and rogation's capacity for comprehension being corrupted by the bishops to a mere expression of territoriality. As we shall see, unlike in "Lycidas," where rogation unifies Scotland and England, and at a time when such unity was being sought by the Anglican Church, here it divides it. The particular way in which rogation in

⁴⁹⁶ I am adopting Nigel Smith's dating, and all quotations of the poem are from *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Nigel Smith (London, 2003; rev. 2007). References are to line numbers.

“The Loyal Scot” is conversant—indeed, serves as a kind of *contrapposto* to—its depiction in “Lycidas” may just be coincidence. Marvell’s poem contains, however, many allusions to “Lycidas,” and its treatment of rogation may be yet another. In other words, “The Loyal Scot” has something to teach us about “Lycidas.” This is not surprising for, as Nicholas von Maltzahn notes, “early and late [Marvell’s] poetry reflects a long regard for Milton’s *Lycidas*. Of Milton’s works, this is the one to which Marvell alludes most often. It is also the one that he comes variously to rewrite.”⁴⁹⁷

Reflecting this regard, allusions to Milton’s pastoral elegy occur throughout Marvell’s account of Captain Archibald Douglas’s death. At one point, the poem imagines Douglas while “the fatal bark him boards with grappling fire” (35). In “Lycidas,” Edward King famously embarks on that “fatall and perfidious bark / Built in th’eclipse, and rigg’d with curses dark” (100-1). These lines (also found in “The Last Instructions to a Painter”) contain several playful resonances with “Lycidas.” Marvell twice refers to Douglas’ “locks”: “His shady locks curl back themselves to seek,” and “his burning locks adorn his face divine” (19, 50). Lycidas is compared to the sun that “Flames in the forehead of the morning sky” as he “With Nectar pure his oozy Lock’s he laves” (171-75). In a slightly parodic way, the locks that Lycidas so fastidiously laves perform the same preciously self-reflexive action in Marvell’s poem. Or, rather, the preciously self-reflexive way in which Marvell depicts Douglas’ locks suggests the potential for Lycid’s laving to be satirically read as a bit of foppish primping. His is a truly otherworldly perm. In a similarly ludic reworking, before Douglas boards the fatal bark, the poem imagines some rather solicitous nymphs who “Among the reeds, to be espied by him, / The nymphs would rustle; he would forward swim” (23-4). These nymphs, attentively enamored

⁴⁹⁷ Nicholas von Maltzahn, “Death by Drowning: Marvell’s *Lycidas*,” *Milton Studies* 48 (2008), 38-52, 38.

with Douglas, are quite the ironic opposite of those found in Milton's poem, as the speaker accusingly asks, "Where were ye Nymphs when the remorseless deep / Clos'd o're the head of your lov'd Lycidas" (50-1). In their dotage, the nymphs in "The Loyal Scot" provide the perfect counterpart to their absentee relatives in "Lycidas."

After recounting the death of Douglas, the poem begins a vituperative attack on the Anglican bishops. Several times Marvell accuses them, and Archbishop of Canterbury Gilbert Sheldon (1598-1677) in particular, of sexual impropriety and/or sodomy: "Who views but Gilbert's toils will reason find / Neither before to trust him nor behind" (174-75).⁴⁹⁸ In "The Loyal Scot," and as we have seen so often in anti-Laudian polemic, ascetic commitments are presented as occasioning these unclean lapses: "'Tis necessary Lambeth never wed, / Indifferent to have a wench in bed" (234-5). Indeed, the specter of Laud haunts the poem's anti-episcopal polemic and is especially visible in the following: "The juggling prelate on his hocus calls, / Shows you first one, then makes that one two balls" (120-1). Laud's indefatigable energy, and the officiousness with which it was exercised, earned him the nickname of "the Little Hocus Pocus." An allusion to Laud invokes the historical moment of "Lycidas."

What's more, similar to the depiction of Douglas' death, some of the anti-episcopal language in "The Loyal Scot" recalls clerical criticism in "Lycidas." (As I will discuss at length, though, whether that criticism represents a break with Laudian policy or, indeed, conflicts with at all, is another story.) In Marvell's poem, "Where foxes dung, their earths the badgers yield, / At bishops' musk, ev'n foxes quit the field. / Their rank ambition all this heat has stirred: / A bishop's rennet makes the strongest curd" (126-29). The puckery astringence of the bishops corresponds to clerical association with noisome odors and vapors in "Lycidas," where "The

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. 240-43.

hungry Sheep look up, and are not fed, / But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw, / Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread” (125-27). The “rank mist” and “rank ambition” have a galling and noxious influence in both poems. Like the time-serving clerics in “Lycidas,” the bishops in Marvell’s poem are ravenous, ambitious, and clangorous.⁴⁹⁹ While Milton describes self-interested clerics whose “lean and flashy songs / Grate on their scrannel Pipes of wretched straw” (123-24), in “The Loyal Scot” dissonant episcopacy resounds throughout the underworld: “Hark, though at such a distance, what a noise / Shatt’ring the silent air disturbs our joys: / The mitred hubbub against Pluto moot, / The cloven head must govern cloven foot” (216-7). Here, Marvell draws on this image of the pastoral world from “Lycidas”: “Mean while the Rural ditties were not mute, / Temper’d to th’Oaten Flute, / Rough Satrys danc’d, and Fauns with clov’n heel, / From the glad sound would not be absent long” (32-5).⁵⁰⁰ Ingeniously, Marvell accomplishes a kind of burlesque transvaluation of this passage from “Lycidas.” The “mitred hubbub,” also described as “clam’rous” and wrangling (220-21), disrupts the pastoral euphony of “Rural ditties.” While in “Lycidas” the “Rural ditties were not mute,” in “The Loyal Scot” the hubbub is “against Pluto moot”; that is, it “murmurs” against him.⁵⁰¹ In a cheekily brilliant and somewhat irreverent (that is to say, in a typically “Marvellian”) commentary on “Lycidas,” Marvell delights in discovering an alternate—and perhaps unintentional—meaning in Milton’s line. Based on the homonym of moot/mute, did Milton know he was divesting his archetypal scene of pastoral mirth from one of pastoral’s favorite descriptors: murmuring brook, murmuring stream, murmuring wood? In *As you like it*, when describing to Oliver their rural pastoral retreat, Celia locates it, “West of this place, down in the neighbor bottom / The ranke of

⁴⁹⁹ See 141-2, 157-8, 171, 181, 188-9.

⁵⁰⁰ Marvell may also have in mind Milton’s placement of the bishops in hell at the end of *Of Reformation*.

⁵⁰¹ See Smith 410n.

Oziers, by the murmuring streame / Left on your right hand, brings you to the place.”⁵⁰² In “moot,” Marvell needles Milton about having omitted pastoral murmurs or, perhaps even more likely, having conceived of rural harmony without them. Whereas absence from the enticing merriment of the ditties’ “glad sound” is difficult in “Lycidas,” a shattering noise “disturbs our joys” in “The Loyal Scot.” Finally, the cloven mitre of the bishops governing the “cloven foot” of the devils reimagines Milton’s dancing satyrs and “Fauns with clov’n heel.” Ultimately, allusions to pastoral harmony in “Lycidas” while representing “mitred hubbub” in “The Loyal Scot” extenuate and aggravate episcopal discordance in the latter. Is it not singularly ironic to put these passages into conversation and does it not exacerbate the discord Marvell’s bishops cause? How Marvell takes this depiction of harmonious pastoral mirth from “Lycidas” and repurposes it—or how he depicts absentee nymphs as fully attentive, or draws out the potential foppery of laving locks or the irony of “not mute”—all serve, I think, as an apt demonstration of how rogation is similarly transformed. It is one of a number of High Church Anglican rituals in “The Loyal Scot” that antagonize Scottish Calvinism and, more largely, exemplify Anglican divisiveness. In “Lycidas,” as I hope to show, Milton’s treatment of the ritual is far less hostile: it accommodates the Anglican/puritan views regarding it and, rather than alienating Scotland, rogation brings it within the Anglican fold. In other words, we can read back from Marvell to authenticate the presence and function of rogation in “Lycidas.” The same resposion that exists between “mitred hubbub” and “rural ditties”—as well as locks and nymphs—obtains to rogation in both poems. As von Maltzahn aptly notes, “The Loyal Scot” gave “Marvell a chance to rewrite *Lycidas* in a key at once satiric and heroic.”⁵⁰³ Marvell’s re-writing helps illuminate

⁵⁰² William Shakespeare, *Mr. VVilliam Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies* (London, 1623), 203. Cf. Joseph Hall, *Virgidemiarum* (London, 1598), sig. A5^r; Lady Mary Wroth, *The Countesse of Mountgomerie Urania* (London, 1621), 3.363

⁵⁰³ Nicholas von Maltzahn, “Death by Drowning: Marvell’s *Lycidas*,” 46.

what was written in the first place. Before we turn to rogation in “Lycidas,” however, we must understand something of the controversy it provoked.

In particular, a tendency exists in religious historiography to emphasize the continuities between Anglican and puritan views of rogation. To some extent, as we will see, this is warranted. But one of the purposes of this introduction is also to throw the considerable discrepancy between the Anglican and puritan conception of rogation’s sanctifying function into further relief. Alexandra Walsham’s magisterial *The Reformation of the Landscape* reflects this tendency, offering the following caveat about the ritual: “Henry Burton’s genial sponsorship of the custom [rogation] in London should warn us against mapping these conflicts too neatly onto the tensions between the Caroline regime and its critics.”⁵⁰⁴ Laudians, though, put that genial sponsorship to the test. In an attempt to reinvigorate a fully sacralized rogation, the Laudian church abandoned many of the anti-Catholic caveats associated with the ritual’s post-Reformation practice. It is telling that, because of its Catholic connotations, rogation was largely discontinued under the Protectorate of Somerset.⁵⁰⁵ When it was allowed again, defensive anti-papery informed Elizabethan and Jacobean visitation articles about the ritual. John Jewel’s *Iniunctions* (1569) for the see of Salisbury stipulate that rogation should be performed by a minister without surplice and “without carying of banners, staying at crosses, or vsing anye other superstitious ceremonies in any of your perambulations.”⁵⁰⁶ Bancroft’s 1604 visitation articles

⁵⁰⁴ Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, & Memory in Early Modern Britain & Ireland* (Oxford, 2011), 260. See also Henry Burton, *A tryall of priuate deuotions* (London, 1628), sig. E4^r, where Burton adopts an implicitly more negative attitude towards rogation.

⁵⁰⁵ For more on its Catholic connotations, see John Foxe, *Actes and monuments* (London, 1583), 29; John Canne, *A necessitie of separation from the Church of England, prooved by the nonconformists principles* (Amsterdam, 1634), 111; William Perkins, *A treatise vnto a declaration whether a man be in the estate of damnation or in the estate of grace* (London, 1590), 314. See Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England*, 85.

⁵⁰⁶ John Jewel, *Iniunctions giuen by the Reuerend Father in Christ John by Gods prouidence, Bishop of Sarisburie* (London, 1569), sig. B4^r. See also Herbert Westfaling, *Articles ecclesiasticall* (Oxford, 1592), sig. Aiii^v; John Parkhurst, *Iniunctions* (London, 1569), sig. Aii^r.

for London advise that ministers conduct rogation “without addition of any superstitious ceremonie heretofore vsed.”⁵⁰⁷ Bishop Miles Smith, who famously clashed with Laud when the latter was Dean of Gloucester, clarifies what these superstitious ceremonies are in Gloucester visitation articles (1622). Perambulation should proceed “without wearing any surplesse, or carrying of banners, or handbells, or making any stay at crosses, or such like popish observations.”⁵⁰⁸ Laud’s visitation articles for London and Canterbury, however, do not evince any defensive anti-popery. Admonitions to avoid superstitious ceremonies or perform perambulation without banners, surplices, hand-bells, crosses, and other popish devices are wholly absent from them.⁵⁰⁹ More generally, Laudian visitation articles are simply silent when it comes to warning against popish connotations of rogation.⁵¹⁰

While clergy in the Laudian era were not presented for including “popish” practices during rogation, they could be presented for omitting them.⁵¹¹ As Margaret Stieg documents, William Clifford’s parishioners at Yarlinton presented him for not perambulating in 1629. Clifford’s “parishioners had refused to consent to no prayers and no psalms on the occasion and Mr. Clifford had claimed that it was superstitious and papistical to use prayers or sing psalms in the fields.”⁵¹² Indeed, we can gauge just how far Laudians had come in celebrating rogation, and restoring it to some of its pre-Reformation ceremonial grandeur, in the writing of the Laudians

⁵⁰⁷ Richard Bancroft, *Articles, to be enquired of vvithin the dioces of London* (London, 1604), sig. A3^r.

⁵⁰⁸ Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church*, (Suffolk, 1994; repr. 1998), i. 209.

⁵⁰⁹ See William Laud, *Articles to be inquired of in the metropolitically visitation* (London, 1635), sig. A4^v; William Laud, *Articles to be inquired of in the first trienniall visitation of the most reverend father VVilliam* (London, 1637), sig. A5^v; William Laud, *Articles to be enquired of vvithin the dioces of London* (London, 1631), sig. A3^v; William Laud, *Articles to be enquired of in the metropolitically visitation of the most reverend father, VVilliam* (London, 1633), sig. A4^v.

⁵¹⁰ See Fincham, *Visitations Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church*, vol. 2.

⁵¹¹ See Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*, 263.

⁵¹² Margaret Stieg, *Laud’s Laboratory: The Diocese of Bath and Wells in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Lewisburg, 1982), 195.

Henry Mason and Edmund Reeve.⁵¹³ In *The Christian divinitie* (1631), Reeve encourages participants in rogation to make the sign of the cross: “concerning peoples making the signe of the Crosse at such places, where it is to be knowne that their parish bounds doe end; what marke or signe is so fit to be made?”⁵¹⁴ Existing and newly erected crosses were used during rogation as means of demarcating boundaries. Steve Hindle records a case in Bedfordshire where a parishioner recalled that those perambulating “always ‘made four crosses’ at decisive points on the circuit.”⁵¹⁵ Reeve’s advocacy of making the mark of the cross conflicts with Elizabethan and Jacobean injunctions to the contrary, and shows no compunction about invoking a component of rogation’s pre-Reformation institution to re-sanctify it. In *The epicures fast* (1626), Henry Mason urges a more robust conception of the austerity of rogation fasts. Mason bemoans the fact that the Roman Church has become “very liberal of their Dispensations...euen in the holy and strict time of Lent.” In particular, Mason criticizes the Roman Church because it “hath abrogated the Fast of the Rogation weeke, which was commanded by the Canon Law: as also the Wednesday and Fryday Fast, which, as they say, was enioyned by Precept euer since the Apostles time.”⁵¹⁶ In contrast, William Prynne’s *A briefe suruay and censure of Mr Cozens his couzening deuotions* (1628) responds to Cosin’s claim that “Rogation dayes” are “Apostolicall Praecepts and Constitutins” by arguing for their “Politically” significance. These days are “prescribed and enioyned by the State for Politique endes: As the increase of Cattell, the maintaining of Ships, and Marriners, and the incouragement of Fishermen: (in which respect our Church doth principally obserue these dayes: not as Fasting dayes, or dayes of Deuotion to be spent in Prayer and Fasting: but rather, yea chiefly, as Fish-dayes, for the aduancement of

⁵¹³ See also Godfrey Goodman, *The two great mysteries* (London, 1653), sig. A4^v.

⁵¹⁴ Edmund Reeve, *The Christian divinitie* (London, 1631), 229.

⁵¹⁵ Hindle, “Beating the Bounds of the Parish,” 219.

⁵¹⁶ Henry Mason, *The epicures fast* (London, 1626), 48.

Fishing, and sparing of young Cattle: not as dayes enioyned by the Churches but designed by the States Authority.”⁵¹⁷ Prynne finds that the Anglican interpretation of rogation has too much abstinence in it; Mason argues that Roman rogation is not nearly abstinent enough. In sum, then, while acceptance of rogation cannot be used to determine whether one was a puritan or Laudian, the way in which rogation was performed can aid in that determination. Puritans balked at rogation’s Roman Catholic connotation, they favored a minimal use of ceremony during the ritual, and, finally, many puritans wanted to see rogation divested of any religious and sanctifying power. But what about rogation in “Lycidas”?

A depiction of rogation is implied in these lines of the ninth verse paragraph:

Ay me! Whilst thee the shores, and sounding Seas
Wash far away, where ere thy bones are hurld,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit’st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou to our moist vows deny’st,
Sleep’st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded Mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona’s hold;
Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth.
And, O ye Dolphins, waft the haples youth. (154-164)

⁵¹⁷ William Prynne, *A briefe suruay and censure of Mr Cozens his couzening deuotions* (London, 1628), 16. See also Allegra di Bonaventura, “Beating the Bounds: Property and Perambulation in Early New England,” 19 *Yale Journal of Law & the Humanities* 115 (2007), 115-148, 122.

About the geographic expansiveness of these lines, Joad Raymond notes, “Michael’s boundaries in ‘Lycidas’ include the shores of Britain, extending into the Irish Sea.”⁵¹⁸ The circuit that the bones travel—from the extreme Hebrides in the north to land’s end in the south—is reminiscent of rogation’s perambulation of parochial borders. Out of those borders, community forms. Scotland remains very much a part of the large, parochial community that “Lycidas” describes. The inclusion of Scotland within this community, at a time when the Scots were agitating against the imposition of the English Prayer Book upon the Kirk (the St. Giles Cathedral riot of 23 July 1637 had recently occurred), cannot be read as politically neutral. The breadth of rogation’s encompassing bounds could provide tacit approval for the Anglican efforts to make Scotland tractable in conformity. In contrast with “The Loyal Scot,” Anglican ritual is a means of unification and not division. In the frequency of the geographic references, the lines exhibit what Walsham describes as rogation’s “reanimation” of “collective cartographic memory.”⁵¹⁹ Milton’s cartography demarcates confessional boundaries. St. Michael maintains a vigilant watch over Catholic Spain. In its preoccupation with local borders, rogation could inspire reflection on larger ones. For example, George Wither uses his poem on rogation in *The hymnes and songs of the Church* (1623) to ask God for the following: “Domesticke Brawles expell thou farre, / And be thou pleasd our Coast to guard, / The dreadfull sounds of in-brought Warre, / Within our Confines be not heard: / Continue also here thy word, / And make vs thankefull (we thee pray) / The Pestilence, Dearth, and the Sword / Haue beene so long with-held away.”⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁸ Joad Raymond, *Milton’s Angels: The Early-Modern Imagination* (Oxford, 2010), 242.

⁵¹⁹ Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*, 252-53.

⁵²⁰ George Wither, *The hymnes and songs of the Church* (London, 1623), 191-92.

Rogation preventing “in-brought Warre” by guarding the coast is similar to the function of the “guarded Mount” that Milton envisions.

The following details, however, may seem very unlike rogation rituals: Edward King’s bones are performing a circuit of these boundaries, with some uncertainty as to their whereabouts and lack of human agency; pain and monstrosity are such prevalent parts of the ritual; and finally, perhaps most pressingly, rogation occurs at sea. Rogation could, and did, take place at sea. The famous Venetian ritual, the Marriage of the Sea, described in Samuel Purchas’ 1625 *Purchas his pilgrimes*, was preceded by perambulating boats.⁵²¹ (Milton would later travel to Venice during Easter-time in April of 1639.) Rogation was also a ritual with strong associations of pain and the monstrous. In “Lycidas,” a sensation of pain is the unavoidable consequence of depicting bones washed far away, tossed about in stormy seas, overwhelmed by whelming tides, and “hurld.” Edward King’s bones are, to a large degree, pulverized. But pain and rogation do go hand-in-hand. In his study of rogation and the formation of community, Steve Hindle writes, “the recollections of old men about the precise locations of mere-stones, boundary streams, or decisive trees are replete with references to being bumped, ducked, or beaten at the appropriate point.”⁵²² To borrow Walsham’s formulation, pain animates collective cartographic memory. It has always been an unfortunately reliable mnemonic aid.

Closely allied to the pain invoked is the reference to monstrosity: “Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide / Visit’st the bottom of the monstrous world.” The reference to monsters may be inspired by rogation’s exorcising function. It was often believed to purge evil,

⁵²¹ Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his pilgrims* (London, 1625), 1274. See also Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton, 1981), 119-134.

⁵²² Steve Hindle, “Beating the Bounds of the Parish: Order, Memory, and Identity in the English Local Community, c. 1500-1700,” in Michael J. Halvorson and Karen E. Spierling (eds.), *Defining Community in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2008), 205-228, 219.

demonic spirits and purify the fields as a result. Additionally, “monsters,” in the form of dragons, were a part of rogation processions: “as a visual symbol, the dragon seems first to have been used during Rogation processions at Vienne, under bishop Mamertus, and to have spread from there... Yet by the twelfth century practically every major town in Gaul could boast a dragon-taming saint, and mounted Rogation Festivals with processional dragons.”⁵²³ The practice of exhibiting dragons on banners during Rogationtide was also common in England. As Eamon Duffy observes, the dragon would have “a long cloth tail before the procession on the first two of these ‘Cross-days’ or ‘gang-days’, and carried, shorn of its tail, after the procession on the last day, as a symbol of the Devil’s overthrow.”⁵²⁴ There may be something reassuring, and anticipatory of the poem’s consolatory end, about Edward King’s bones traveling this terrifying circuit: they both harrow and hallow all the monstrous ends of the earth. They help to shear that fearful dragon’s tail.

Bones could have this sanctifying power in rogation rituals because saints’ bones were often employed during them and, as we shall see, King is described as a saint through scriptural allusion in the next verse paragraph.⁵²⁵ Again, Hindle: “the Rogationtide festivities in St Newlyn (Cornwall) in the 1520s involved the parishioners of four adjacent parishes processing behind the bones of four local saints.”⁵²⁶ Ronald Hutton elaborates that it was probably during the Henrician reforms of 1538 that these “four villages besides the dunes and cliffs of north Cornwall lost the major part of their Rogation week rites, which had consisted of exhibiting the bones and crosses of their patron saints upon four raised stones in the chapel yard at St Newlyn

⁵²³ Felice Lifshitz, *The Norman Conquest of Pious Neustria* (Toronto, 1995), 153.

⁵²⁴ Eamon Duffy *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c. 1400-c.1580* (New Haven, 1992), 279.

⁵²⁵ See also *Treves endt* (Netherlands, 1621), title page; Duffy *The Stripping of the Altars*, 136.

⁵²⁶ Steve Hindle, “Beating the Bounds of the Parish: Order, Memory, and Identity in the English Local Community, c. 1500-1700,” 222.

East.”⁵²⁷ Though Milton may not have known of this Cornish practice, a reference to Cornwall (i.e. Michael’s Mount) coinciding with a depiction of King’s perambulating bones seems especially appropriate and redolent with the potential for local meaning.⁵²⁸

It is true, however, that the lines seem uncertain about the exact location of King’s bones (though, despite that uncertainty, no lack of geographical specificity exists). In a modification of rogation related to this uncertainty, human agency does not drive the ritual. To some degree, though, beating the bounds is a ritual fundamentally about the uncertainty of human agency. The word comes from the Latin verb “rogare” meaning “to ask” and “to beseech.” One pleadingly asks a question, of course, when uncertainty prevails. Rogation is a time to ask for God’s blessing. The etymology provides evidence for how the ritual could serve as a fitting culmination of the poem’s incessant interrogatives: “Where were ye nymphs” (50); “He ask’d the Waves, and ask’d the Fellon winds, / What hard mishap hath doom’d this gentle swain?” (91-2); “Ah! Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?” (107); “How well could I have spar’d for thee young swain, / Anow of such as for their bellies sake, / Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold?” (113-15); “What recks it them? What need they?” (122). All the poem’s inquisitorial energy, interrogating nymphs and waves and winds, is collected here and redirected towards the only interlocutor that really matters. Up to this point, the poem has only asked questions that sought to blame. Even St. Peter’s question casts an accusing glance at those whose only fault has been to still draw breath. Instead of questions that are explicitly loaded with blame and

⁵²⁷ Ronald Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Year 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1994), 75.

⁵²⁸ Pilgrimage to the Mount during Rogationtide was a frequent pre-Reformation custom. See Nicholas Orme, *The Saints of Cornwall* (Oxford, 2000), 194. Milton would not have known the primary historical source for the ritual (Nicholas Roscarrock’s *Lives of Saints*). But local studies of Cornwall did exist and, judging from how rarefied Milton’s allusion to the “vision of the guarded Mount” is, he might well have had a strong interest in Cornwall lore. See Raymond, *Milton’s Angels*, 231; Robert Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1989; repr. 1991), 239; Richard Carew, *The survey of Cornwall* (London, 1602).

accusation, the implicit question in the poem's depiction of rogation seeks for God's blessing. In that transformation, from explicitly accusatory to implicitly pleading, a certain acceptance of fate, unfortunateness, God's will is evident. Implicitly suing for God's blessing represents some reconciliation with the reality of King's hard mishap. The finger-pointing interrogatives have stopped, and a more meditative and prayerful internalization of questioning signals a greater acceptance of the tragedy the poem narrates. That acceptance is a prerequisite for the consolation of "Weep no more." Finally, by diminishing the human agency involved (i.e. this is *not* a rogation powered by parishioners perambulating), the lines studiously avoid any superstitious understanding of the beseeching as meritoriously obtaining God's blessing. This is not a ceremonious ritual that, through the mere perfunctory performance of it, obtains what it asks. In the words of its godly detractors, saying some psalms to the fields does not a good harvest guarantee. As we shall see, the dubiety over human agency is a significant alteration that helps accomplish the poem's de-ceremonializing of the ritual.

Having hopefully addressed the most obvious objections to finding rogation in "Lycidas," I'd like now to consider some positive evidence for the ritual's presence. A famous classical allusion in the paragraph's final line suggests rogation: "And, O ye Dolphins, waft the haples youth" (164). Here, Milton alludes to the poet Arion of Methymna. In *The Histories*, Herodotus relates that, in addition to being carried safely to Taenarum by dolphins, Arion invented the dithyramb at Corinth.⁵²⁹ The dithyramb is a hymn in honor of Bacchus. Structurally and tonally, this allusion to Bacchus is an important moment in the poem: it (along with asking for God's blessing) initiates the celebratory consolation of the penultimate verse paragraph. The wafting of Lycidas repairs the damage done by the maenads (the "rout that made the hideous roar" [61]) in

⁵²⁹ Herodotus, *Histories I*, rev. edn, ed. J.H. Sleeman (London, 1909; rev. 2002), 1.23.

the fifth verse paragraph. Whereas previously Bacchus' worshippers were a destructive and dismembering force, here the dolphins sacred to the god provide aid, collecting King and/or his remains.⁵³⁰ Additionally, a composed dithyrambic hymn supplants the Bacchantes' frenzied ululations. Like the dithyramb, the Roman festival of Ambarvalia was also in honor of Bacchus. The ritual took place each year on 29 May, and both Tibullus and (possibly) Virgil attest to Bacchus' role in the ceremony.⁵³¹ The importance of Ambarvalia and, by extension, an allusion to Bacchus at this moment in "Lycidas" is apparent in Lancelot Andrewes' *A learned discourse of ceremonies retained and used in Christian churches* (1653): "And as for the bounding of the Meares of Parishes, our Clergy-Priests on their Rogation week go on Procession. So likewise did the Heathen, their perambulations for this purpose were called Ambarvalia."⁵³² The German theologian David Pareus makes the connection among Bacchus, Ambarvalia, and rogation even clearer: "And as the heathens had their feasts of Baccus, Ceres, Pan: so these [Catholics] keep shrovetide, Rogation weeke, & such like festivities, having altered onely the names thereof."⁵³³ While depicting rogation, "Lycidas" alludes, via Arion, to the god who was honored during the pagan festival upon which rogation was based.

The allusion to Bacchus is one of a number of references that subtly aid in deciphering the presence of rogation. Important details preceding lines 154-164 anticipate, and create a context predisposed towards, the ritual. For example, rogation was a way to maintain parochial distinctions and guard against the kind of creeping intrusiveness St. Peter describes in the eighth

⁵³⁰ See Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*, transl. Peter Bing (Berkeley, 1983), 199-200.

⁵³¹ See *Virgil: Georgics I and IV*, 3rd ed., ed. H.H. Huxley (Norfolk, 1963; repr. 1965, 1967), 1.338-50; see *The Elegies of Albius Tibullus*, ed. Kirby Flower Smith (New York, 1913), 2.1.1-4.

⁵³² Lancelot Andrewes, *A learned discourse of ceremonies retained and used in Christian churches* (London, 1653), 59.

⁵³³ David Pareus, *A commentary upon the divine Revelation of the apostle and evangelist, Iohn* (Amsterdam, 1644), 215.

verse paragraph (115). It may be significant that it is St. Peter who draws attention to this threat, since one tradition attributes the ritual's founding to him.⁵³⁴ The most dramatic expression of invasiveness in the paragraph comes at the hands of the "grim Woolf": "Besides what the grim Woolf with privy paw / Daily devours apace" (128-9). The rapacity of the "Blind mouthes!" is matched only by the hunger of a ravening wolf. The grim wolf evokes rogation not only because of the trespass the image symbolizes, but also because it is a wolf that trespasses. Rogation was originally instituted to ask for God's protection against wolves. Alexander Ross explains in the *Pansebeia* (1655) that the rogation litany was "invented by Mamertus Bishop of Vienna [A.D. 452],⁵³⁵ in a time when Wolves and other wild Beasts had broke out of the woods, and killed divers people."⁵³⁶ The wolves are not only a physical reality, but can also represent a spiritual menace. Arthur Hopton's *A concordancy of yeares* (1612) describes rogation as offering "praiera as well against the bodily Woolues, such as late were in France, as also against the spirituall Woolues."⁵³⁷ In the eighth verse paragraph, menace also comes in the form of disease: "The hungry Sheep look up, and are not fed, / But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw, / Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread" (125-7). One of the functions of rogation rituals was to beseech God to protect individuals, but especially the flocks and fields, from disease and intemperate weather. The spreading contagion that "Lycidas" depicts recurs in discussions of rogation. Like Hopton, Richard Taverner (1505?-1575), the great English translator of Erasmus, defines the menace spiritually, projecting the natural world onto the interior, spiritual landscape

⁵³⁴ See M. Bradford Bedingfield, *The Dramatic Liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England* (Suffolk, 2002), 200.

⁵³⁵ *The Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, ed. John Henry Blunt (London, 1907), 297. Rogation was instituted in England slightly later, at the Council of Cloveshoo in 747.

⁵³⁶ Alexander Ross, *Pansebeia* (London, 1655), 463. See also Alexander Ross, *The history of the world the second part in six book* (London, 1652), sig. Mmmm1^r. See also John Merbecke, *A booke of notes and common places* (London, 1581), 622.

⁵³⁷ Arthur Hopton, *A concordancy of yeares* (London, 1612), 149.

of each individual believer. According to Taverner, rogation is a time to pray that “God woll vouchsaue to blesse hys creatures not only (as before is sayd) for the commoditie of oure bodyes, but also for our soules helth, lest our miserable soules do herby catche vnto themselues pestiferous infection and damnable contagion.”⁵³⁸ In Wither’s poem on rogation in *The hymnes and songs of the Church*, he asks “Let not the Seasons of this yeare.../ Engender those Contagions here.../ Let not the Summer wormes impaire / Those bloomings of the Earth we see; / Nor Blastings, or distemper’d Ayre / Destroy those Fruits that hopefull be.”⁵³⁹ Contagion in the form of worms is also a concern in “Lycidas.” In the fourth verse paragraph, the speaker bemoans the effect of Lycid’s death on the natural world as being “As killing as the Canker to the Rose, / Or Taint-worm to the weanling Herds that graze, / Or Frost to Flowers” (45-7). The final ways in which the poem anticipates rogation are found in the ninth verse paragraph, when the speaker importunes, “...call the Vales, and bid them hither cast / Their Bels, and Flourets of a thousand hues” (134-5). Small hand-bells were a common feature in rogation rituals, though following the Reformation most Protestants rejected them as popish.⁵⁴⁰ Hereford visitation articles from 1592 define the carrying of hand-bells as “such like popish ceremonies” that must be avoided; similarly, Jacobean articles from 1621 prohibit the use of hand-bells during rogation and “such like Popish obseruations.”⁵⁴¹ Translating the hand-bell into the image of a flower with a bell-shaped blossom (possibly a blue-bell) ingeniously rethinks rogation ritual. Nature is responsive to Rogationtide, supplying the bells that were previously carried, and synchronous with the rhythms of the liturgical calendar. The bell-flowers also revise rogation in

⁵³⁸ Richard Taverner, *The Epistles and Gospelles with a brief postil vpon the same from after Easter tyll Aduent* (London, 1540), xxxiii^v.

⁵³⁹ Wither, *The hymnes and songs of the Church*, 191.

⁵⁴⁰ See Thomas North, *The Church Bells of Northamptonshire* (Leicester, 1878), 140.

⁵⁴¹ Church of England, *Articles ecclesiasticall to be inquired of by the churchwardens and the sworne-men within the dioces of Hereforde* (Oxford, 1592), sig. Aiii^v. Church of England, *Articles ecclesiastical* (London, 1621), sig. B3^r.

the direction of less ceremony (popish ceremony at least) by pointing to the redundancy of ceremonies that duplicate what nature has already provided. Nature assuming—almost reabsorbing—some of rogation’s ritual is apparent when the speaker directs the valleys, “and purple all the ground with vernal flowres” (141). The traditional color associated with rogation is purple. Celebrants would wear purple vestments during masses in Rogationtide, and the color was also used because of the general Lenten, penitential theme. Threats of trespassing parochial boundaries and a diseased natural world, along with details about hand-bells and the color purple, create a context conducive to rogation’s depiction. The ritual included, or was intended to prevent, all of the above.

The depiction culminates in the penultimate verse paragraph in ascent: “So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high” (172). Rogationtide was, of course, the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday immediately preceding Ascension Thursday. Though rogation prepares for the ascension of Christ (Acts 1:1-14), participants are also affected by ascendancy. Godfrey Goodman (1583-1656) describes this relationship between rogation and ascension: “Thus we continue to the Ascension of Christ, before which we have a Rogation-week, that so our prayers, and we our selves in heart and affection, may together ascend with Christ.” Rogation enables this ascension; it is when the individual believer “might rise together with him [Christ]”.⁵⁴² The ascendance that rogation initiates is, in many ways, the perfect counterpoint to Edward King’s perambulating bones. The ponderous weight and density of “the whelming tide”⁵⁴³ and “the bottom of the monstrous world” dissipate in Lycid’s buoyant ascent. Accompanying this ascent is King’s institution as a local saint, the “Genius of the shore” who “shalt be good / To all

⁵⁴² Godfrey Goodman, *Bishop Goodman his proposition in discharge of his own dutie and conscience both to God and man* (London, 1650), sig. D1^r.

⁵⁴³ In the 1638 version, “whelming” is “humming,” but the ponderousness is still supplied by visiting the bottom of the world. *Justa Edouardo King Naufrago* (Cambridge, 1638), 24.

that wander in that perilous flood” (183-5). King assumes the sanctifying, prophylactic power consistent with the belief that rogation “conferred some benediction upon the community” and would “protect the crops and community from natural misfortunes.”⁵⁴⁴ Sanctification—in the protective presence of King’s genius—is precisely what occurs in “Lycidas,” and precisely what puritans rejected in the ritual. King becomes a kind of tutelary deity, providing the “succour of God and of his Saints” that rogation could supply.⁵⁴⁵ Saintliness is clear for, just as the saints in Revelation 7:17 have the tears wiped away from their eyes, so too are the tears wiped from King’s eyes in line 181.⁵⁴⁶ He is also associated with the 144,000 of Revelation 14:4; it is an exegetical commonplace to interpret those not defiled with women as saints.⁵⁴⁷ This connection among saints, genius, and protective aid does not have a puritan connotation.

The Catholic controversialist John Sergeant (1622-1707) urges believers to apply and invoke a saint so that they “shall at length be wrought up (an endeavour to imitate him going along) into the very genius of that Saint.”⁵⁴⁸ Puritans rejected the kind of specificity in person (those wandering the flood) and need (safe passage) that Milton represents King as responsive to. George Downname (Downham d. 1634) argues, “It may well be supposed that the Saints departed do pray in common for the faithfull upon the earth, as fellow-members of the same bodie. But they are not acquainted with particular persons, or their particular wants or desires.”⁵⁴⁹

Downname asserts that the saints cannot offer aid “nor have promised to heare and help us, as

⁵⁴⁴ See Ronald Hutton, *The Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain* (Oxford, 2001), 286; Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 2005), 73.

⁵⁴⁵ Steve Hindle, “Beating the Bounds of the Parish,” 225-26.

⁵⁴⁶ For a description of those in Revelation 7:17 as saints, see Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses, the booke of the Psalmes, and the Song of Songs, or, Canticles* (London, 1627), 103.

⁵⁴⁷ See William Troughton, *The mystery of the marriage song and mutuall spirituall embraces between Christ & his spouse opened* (London, 1656), 77.

⁵⁴⁸ John Sergeant, *Of devotion* (London, 1678), 131-32. Cf. Stephen Crisp, *The truth and excellence of the Christian religion* (London, 1685), 67.

⁵⁴⁹ George Downname, *A godly and learned treatise of prayer* (London, 1640), 64. See also Ephraim Pagitt, *Heresiography* (London, 1645), 148.

having no such power, yea are so farre from hearing and helping that they neither know us nor our desires.”⁵⁵⁰ Downname and other puritans dispute the capacity of saints to hear prayers and provide aid because it detracts from the omnipotence of Christ. In *Canterburies Doome* (1646), when William Prynne objects to what he perceives as Laud and his church favoring the intercession of saints, he does so primarily on the grounds that intercession is a “horrible sacrilege”; it “rob[s] Christ of his right; he is our Intercessor; if not, yet blasphemy to disable him, he belike is insufficient, they put into his office the Saints, as Coadjutors.”⁵⁵¹ To disassociate “Lycidas” from any taint of this heterodox (to puritanism) opinion, Neil Forsyth claims, “the boldness of that pagan (and pastoral) idea, that if pursued very far smacks of the detested Roman Catholic belief in the efficacy of saints, is decidedly unsettling and is immediately undermined in the poem: ‘flood’ is the last word spoken by the figure who is immediately identified in the next line as an ‘uncouth swain.’” This undermining leaves behind “those potential delusions about saints.”⁵⁵² If “thus sang the uncouth swain” really does expose the preceding content as delusional, then what limits the performance only to line 183 (“the genius of the shore”)? “Thus sang the uncouth swain” cannot have the precision of a line-item veto; “thus” refers to the entirety of the preceding poem. It seems curious to write 185 lines of poetry—commonly regarded as the greatest short poem in the language—only to undermine the effort as delusional and “childish” in the last eight lines.⁵⁵³ As Annabel Patterson has argued, uncouthness is not entirely left behind in “Lycidas”: “Milton’s *uncouth*, with Spenser as its genius, remained with him throughout his polemical career, eventually to be subsumed, perhaps,

⁵⁵⁰ Downname, *A godly and learned treatise of prayer*, 62.

⁵⁵¹ William Prynne, *Canterburies doome* (London, 1646), 328-29. See also Nicholas Byfield, *A commentary upon the three first chapters of the first Epistle generall of St. Peter* (London, 1637), 298.

⁵⁵² Forsyth, “‘Lycidas’: A Wolf in Saint’s Clothing,” 700-1.

⁵⁵³ Forsyth, “‘Lycidas’: A Wolf in Saint’s Clothing,” 702.

by the sublime.”⁵⁵⁴ In order to sanitize the penultimate verse paragraph from content inimical to Milton’s puritanism, Forsyth abrogates all of “Lycidas.” The case, as this essay argues, is much more complex than that. Illustrating this complexity, while the depiction of saintly Edward King might detract from God’s omnipotence, we have seen the poem studiously avoid any such detraction by deemphasizing human agency in the ritual of rogation. The conflictedness that results—avoiding detraction in one instance while detracting in another—is representative of how Milton’s own internal contradictions get figured into “Lycidas.” Radical puritanism is simply not descriptive of the poem’s conflicted complexity.

One is struck, I think, by the thoroughness of Milton’s engagement with rogation. No major component of the ritual, from its historical institution (guarding against beasts, pestilence, intemperate air, Ambarvalia) to its habitual practice (purple, hand-bells, saints’ bones, placement before Ascension on the liturgical calendar), goes unaccounted for. Were a puritan revision of rogation intended, the fidelity of Milton’s depiction to details of its historical origin and practical implementation would be much more in question. There are peculiarities, no doubt, about rogation in “Lycidas.” Parishioners do not beat the bounds, it occurs at sea, and hand-bells and purple are supplied by flowers. But these oddities—and the variable customs they produce—are found by Edward Muir to be characteristic of rogation ritual: “Rogation Days could be adapted to a wide variety of local conditions, which meant that its significance was highly pliable.”⁵⁵⁵ The way in which the particular (perhaps local) conditions of the ninth verse paragraph inflect rogation’s depiction could, in fact, confirm it. Though some alterations are apparent, Milton’s

⁵⁵⁴ Annabel Patterson, “Couples, Canons, and the Uncouth: Spenser-and-Milton in Educational Theory,” *Critical Inquiry* 16 (1990): 773-793, 793.

⁵⁵⁵ Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, 73.

re-imagining does not exact such drastic revisions as to meet the puritan threshold of completely secularizing the ritual or simply rejecting it out-of-hand as too popish to handle.

This is the religious affiliation we can derive from the engagement of “Lycidas” with the historical details and tradition—the content—of rogation. The expression of that content in allusion and structural organization—the form—of the poem, yields a different impression. While “Lycidas” engages in painstakingly close detail with the facts about rogation, their depiction is formally inconspicuous. The number of components that evoke rogation are extensive, but they are spread over three verse paragraphs. Like the allusion to Bacchus-via-Arion-via-dolphins, there is an obliquity to their reference. The purple, bells, and wolves all have strong alternate meanings (the color of flowers, the shape of a blossom, Jesuits). As we saw, the lack of human agency and the purple and bell-blossoms subtly agitate against ceremonialism, the latter two by suggesting its redundancy. Ceremonialism often finds an ally, not a neutralizing and vitiating force, in form. Invisibility—reflected in the critical silence on rogation in “Lycidas”—is not the highly ceremonial and ornately ritual impression that Laudian advocates of sanctified rogation sought to convey with their surplices, Psalms, bells, and failure to restrict popish implements. In its formal depiction, rogation in “Lycidas” is diminutive bordering on disappearing. Unlike puritans, then, “Lycidas” does not de-sanctify rogation; it holds that sanctification very much intact. Unlike Anglicans, the poem does not apparel rogation in the overriding quality of its ceremonial ritualism: conspicuousness; decorativeness; form. Highly stylized form is simply ritual in action. When Laudians bedecked the content (i.e. liturgy) of church services with the beauty of holiness, it was at the level of external form (ceremony) that it was felt: surplices, altar rails, music, incense, rood screens, cassocks, etc. And yet, the ceremonialism of Laudian rogation remains unaided by the poem’s diffuse and

unremarkable formal depiction of the ritual. The result of placing the conflicting puritan and Anglican conceptions of rogation in conversation with each other—itsself a result of Milton’s own conflictedness at this stage about his Anglican or puritan doctrinal leanings—is rogation in “Lycidas” that is fully sanctified but largely de-ceremonialized.

II. St. Peter

A similar combination of exclusivities is achieved in the St. Peter verse paragraph. Perhaps more than any other moment in the poem, though, these lines have been cited as indicative of anti-Laudianism.⁵⁵⁶ This is particularly strange since, during his denunciation of false shepherds, St. Peter articulates ecclesiastical policies in agreement with those of the Laudian Church. The simony, clerical incompetence, and disregard for the poor that St. Peter criticizes were also focal points of Laudian reform.⁵⁵⁷ Laud counteracted clerical corruption by enforcing residency requirements, punctiliously supervising clerical adherence through visitation articles, and punishing offenses in ecclesiastical courts. These courts were a primary means of enforcing clerical and lay morality. Under Archbishop Laud, the courts probably attained to their highest level of activity. As R.B. Outhwaite records, “certainly in many jurisdictions the volume of corrective activity seems to have increased between 1530 and 1640, perhaps reaching its apogee in the later 1630s, when the see of Canterbury was occupied by William Laud.”⁵⁵⁸ Similar reforming zeal is apparent in visitation articles. Charles Carlton observes about Laud’s engagement with the reports derived from these articles, “the archbishop took the composition of

⁵⁵⁶ See Merritt Y. Hughes (ed.), *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose* (1957; repr. Indianapolis, 2003), 117; Barbara Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton: A Critical Biography* (Oxford, 2000; repr. 2003), 84; Andrew Escobedo, “The Invisible Nation: Church, State, and Schism in Milton’s England,” in David Loewenstein and Paul Stevens (eds.), *Early Modern Nationalism and Milton’s England* (Toronto, 2008), 173-204, 180.

⁵⁵⁷ See also Campbell and Corns, *John Milton*, 99.

⁵⁵⁸ R.B. Outhwaite, *The Rise and Fall of the English Ecclesiastical Courts, 1500-1860* (Cambridge, 2006), 58.

these reports seriously; his were far more detailed than were, for instance, Abbot's, or even Neile's from York."⁵⁵⁹ There was also a degree of even-handedness in the justice Laud meted out. As Kevin Sharpe notes, "In 1628 [sic; 1638] Laud wrote sharply to George Coke, bishop of Hereford, upbraiding him for using 'bishopric timber' for his own household purposes and for using his office to promote his son."⁵⁶⁰ Coke was translated to both Bristol and Hereford (in 1636) with Laud's support (*ODNB*).⁵⁶¹ Does this image of Laud, chastising a friendly bishop for nepotism and profiteering, correspond to the gross self-interestedness of the incompetent shepherd described by St. Peter? Were we to interpret the St. Peter passage as anti-Laudian, then there would be something peculiarly obscure and uninformed about criticism of the church in "Lycidas." Laudianism was repressive, not unprincipled. Laud was a fastidious administrator, not an absentee profiteer. He may have been a terrible Archbishop of Canterbury—high-handed in the extreme—but Laud was scrupulously uncorrupt.

Clericalism, the organizing principle of all Laudian innovations, does not produce incompetent prelates, but a caste of highly-trained clergy. Laud's overhaul of the educational statutes at Oxford in 1636 made receiving a divinity degree more, not less, difficult. The statutes introduced the novel change of requiring examination before the awarding of a degree which, as H.R. Trevor-Roper no doubt recounts with some satisfaction, resulted in "a regular flight of students to Cambridge to avoid its operation."⁵⁶² Finally, even a commentator as hostile to Laud as Trevor-Roper recognizes that his policies did promote "the endowment and support of charitable institutions," and he labored "in securing employment for the poor": "By defending

⁵⁵⁹ Charles Carlton, *Archbishop William Laud* (London, 1987), 105.

⁵⁶⁰ Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992), 291.

⁵⁶¹ Ian Atherton, 'Coke, George (1570–1646)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/5827, accessed 23 Feb 2013]

⁵⁶² H.R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645* (London, 1940; repr. 1963), 279.

the credit of the Church, the wealth of the Church, and the rights of the poor, therefore, Laud hoped to re-establish the ancient social harmony which seemed to have existed before all collapsed in the Reformation, with its victory of individual appetites over social solidarity.”⁵⁶³ Laud was the redoubtable enemy of enclosure at a time when many acquisitive nobles based their fortunes upon it. The coherence of St. Peter’s message and Laud’s policies suggests how the 1637 poem can be viewed as consistent with, not combative to, Laudianism. For St. Peter’s speech to be read as anti-Laudian, it would need to advocate policies inconsistent with the Laudian Church. St. Peter could be finding fault with the Laudian enforcement of these ecclesiastical principles; that is, not enough has been done to promote them. But that would be criticism in fundamental agreement with the basic clericalist principles of that which it criticizes. In this reading, St. Peter would urge a deepening commitment to—not an abandonment of—Laudian reform.

Some have found, though, that the paragraph criticizes Laudian relations with Rome. John Leonard and John N. King argue that the grim wolf imagery opposes the lax Laudian policy towards Catholicism. In fact, the lines seem quite consistent with that policy.⁵⁶⁴ In *A replie to Iesuit Fishers answere* (1624), Francis White contests the perpetual visibility of the true church by asserting, “it is possible, that the greater Prelates, to wit, Popes, Cardinals, mitred Bishops, and Abbots...shall bee reprobates, blinde guides, a generation of vipers, wolues in sheepes cloathing, and such as being armed with the title of the Church, persecute the true Church.”⁵⁶⁵ Christ is not with the visible church when it “gather[s] endlesse Riches, by selling Pardons, and preaching Purgatorie,” for the true church is not found with “ambitious and oppressing Tyrants,

⁵⁶³ H.R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645*, 381, 166.

⁵⁶⁴ See Leonard, “Trembling Ears,” 79; John N. King, *Milton and Religious Controversy: satire and polemic in Paradise Lost* (Cambridge, 2000; repr. 2001), 33.

⁵⁶⁵ Francis White and William Laud, *A replie to Iesuit Fishers answere* (London, 1624), 57.

which stiled themselues Pastors, and were rauening Wolues.”⁵⁶⁶ White describes the Roman Church in terms quite similar to Milton. Blind guides (blind mouths) abound, wolfish characteristics are displayed, and lupine appetite is nothing less than ravenous (devouring). White, a protégé of Richard Neile and licenser of Richard Montagu’s *Appello Caesarem* (1625), is a Laudian through-and-through. Moreover, *A replie to Iesuit Fishers answere* has another author: William Laud. Added to White’s reply is *AN ANSVVERE TO Mr FISHERS Relation of a Third Conference* by Laud himself. The grim wolf passage in “Lycidas” could be interpreted, then, as adopting the very language of anti-Catholic polemic previously employed by Laudians. Though Laudians may have rejected the notion of the pope as anti-Christ, that does not entail a rejection of anti-Catholicism.

The final ways in which the eighth verse paragraph corresponds to Anglicanism are through its justification of apostolic succession and depiction of St. Peter. Arguments for apostolic succession sought to illustrate the continuity of episcopacy from St. Peter, the first bishop and an apostle, to the present day. Potential justification of apostolic succession in “Lycidas” is found in the detail of St. Peter’s miter. Barbara Lewalski has argued that “it is not clear whether this passage supports the prelatists’ view that the apostles’ ruling power derives to bishops, or the Presbyterian view that such power pertained only to the apostles.”⁵⁶⁷ But by anachronistically outfitting an apostle with the implements of a bishop, that derivation becomes clear. Western Bishops did not begin consistently wearing miters until the 11th-century, and yet the 1st-century Peter gravely shakes his “Miter’d locks” (112).⁵⁶⁸ If the passage does suggest that ruling power pertained only to the apostles, why is one of the symbols of St. Peter’s authority

⁵⁶⁶ White and Laud, *A replie to Iesuit Fishers answere*, 97.

⁵⁶⁷ Barbara Lewalski, “How radical was the young Milton?”, 58.

⁵⁶⁸ See Herbert Norris, *Church Vestments: Their Origin and Development* (London, 1949), 99.

taken from a much later time? Puritans were skeptical of ecclesiastical dress like the miter, and it figures largely in anti-Laudian polemic of the 1640s. One tract even concludes by imagining Laud vomiting the miter up.⁵⁶⁹ As E.S. de Beer noted, “In seventeenth-century Protestant art St. Peter apparently never has a miter (see for example the engraved title of the 1611 Bible).”⁵⁷⁰ Milton would, of course, later heap scorn and derision on these “geometricall rhomboids” in *Of Reformation*, and the prelates’ “forked Miters, the badge of schisme or the stampe of his cloven foot whom they serve” in *The Reason of Church-Government*.⁵⁷¹ But in “Lycidas,” by retrofitting St. Peter with a miter, the poem shows the applicability of contemporary episcopal practice to St. Peter, thereby demonstrating episcopal continuity and apostolic succession.⁵⁷² It is an exceedingly subtle validation of this succession considering that temporal continuity is demonstrated through temporally discontinuous means. In other words, one paradoxical result of temporal continuity is anachronism. The anachronism has Anglican implications.

Proponents of episcopacy frequently employed apostolic succession to validate it. As John Yates argues, “that feate is not fure, nor Ordination iuftifiable, that is not by a Bifhop, who is able to derive his fuceffion in that refpect from the Apoftles.”⁵⁷³ St. Peter was often central to these arguments. In *Sunday no Sabbath* (1636), John Pocklington attests, “For we are able lineally to set down the fucceffion of our Bifhops from St. Peter to S. Gregorie, and from him to our first Archbishop St. Austin, our English Apoftle as Bifhop Godwin calls him, downeward to

⁵⁶⁹ *The Bifhops potion* (London?, 1641), 4.

⁵⁷⁰ de Beer, E.S., “St. Peter in ‘Lycidas,’” *The Review of English Studies* 23 (1947): 60-63, 61.

⁵⁷¹ Don M. Wolfe (ed.), *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (New Haven, 1953), 1.612, 1.790 (hereafter CPW). See also the miter described as “the meere mettle and horn-work of Papall iurisdiction” in *An Apology against a Pamphlet* (CPW 1.953).

⁵⁷² Cf. Milton’s arguments against apostolic succession in *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*, *Animadversions*, and *The Reason of Church-Government* (CPW 1.648; 1.674; 1.760).

⁵⁷³ John Yates, *A treatise of the honor of Gods house* (London, 1637), 22. See also Joseph Hall, *Certaine irrefragable propositions worthy of serious consideration* (London, 1639), 6.

his Grace that now sits in his chaire, Primate of all England, and Metropolitane [i.e. Laud].”⁵⁷⁴

In fact, John Howson (1556/7-1632), in *Certaine sermons made in Oxford* (1622), employs the same scriptural verse to which Milton alludes in “metals twain” and “Miter’d locks” ([110-12] Mathew 16: 18-19) to prove apostolic succession.⁵⁷⁵ Contrarily, puritans were much less comfortable with the succession, finding it popish and providing no precedent for consistorial church-government.⁵⁷⁶ The way in which “Lycidas” justifies apostolic succession (St. Peter wearing a miter) is exactly the kind of anachronism that puritan, anti-Catholic polemic often bristled at. Thomas Morton (bap. 1564, d. 1659), the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield and representative (along with John Preston) of Calvinists at the York House Conference, adamantly denies the possibility of St. Peter wearing a miter in order to guard against ceding any special priority to the Roman see. In *The grand imposture of the (now) Church of Rome* (1626), Morton argues that Peter did not have “any expression of any of those Notes of *Catholike Iurisdiction*...Not the *Crowne vpon his head, to shew his Empire*: nor the *Miter, to shew his Pastorall Dominion* ouer the other Apostles.”⁵⁷⁷ Though Milton is not approving papal supremacy, outfitting St. Peter with a miter is an unguarded statement. It does not exhibit the kind of ingrained, anti-Catholic reflex (hysteria) puritans often display, anxiously defending their remarks against any construal towards Catholic ends.

The paragraph also diverges from puritanism in its exposition of Matthew 16:18-19. In the face of Matthew 16 and its potential for asserting Roman primacy, Protestants often felt

⁵⁷⁴ John Pocklington, *Sunday no Sabbath* (London, 1636), 48.

⁵⁷⁵ See John Howson, *Certaine sermons made in Oxford* (London, 1622), 134-35.

⁵⁷⁶ See also John Bastwick, *The answer of John Bastvvick, Doctor of Phisicke, to the information of Sir Iohn Bancks Knight* (Leiden, 1637), 19-20; Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), 461-66.

⁵⁷⁷ Thomas Morton, *The grand imposture of the (now) Church of Rome* (London, 1626), 45. See also Thomas Cole, *The old apostolical way of preaching* (London, 1676), 17. For a reply to Morton, see John Price, *Anti-Mortonus* (St. Omer, 1640), 98.

cagey, defensive, even hostile towards St. Peter. To erode the legitimacy of Peter as a foundation for the church, some Protestant writers engage in a kind of Petrine character assassination. In a controversy with Bellarmine, the puritan Francis Bunny urges in *A suruey of the Popes sumpremacie* (1595), “I would on the other side wish him to consider how weake a foundation he and his fellowes doe builde vpon. For Peter did not only by euill counsell, seeke to hinder his master Christ in the worke of our redemption, for which hee was bitterly reprocued, go behinde me Sathan... but also afterwarde denie his master Christ, and that with cursing and swearing.”⁵⁷⁸ Expounding the same passage, John Panke argues in *The fal of Babel* (1608) that Christ’s rebuke of Peter (Matthew 16:23) should “preiudice the former grant” of the keys to the kingdom of heaven at Matthew 16:18-19.⁵⁷⁹ No prejudice inhibits Peter from holding his “massy keys” in “Lycidas.” In addition to impugning the character of Peter, some writers also widely disperse the apostolic authority found at Matthew 16:18-19 as a way of diffusing it. In *A catholike and ecclesiasticall exposition of the holy Gospell after S. Mathewe* (1570), the continental reformer Austin Marlorat simply asserts, “nothings was spoken to Peter which pertaineth not to the rest of the Apostels also.”⁵⁸⁰ Similarly, Sir Christopher Sibthorp’s *A friendly advertisement to the pretended Catholickes of Ireland* (1622) maintains, “the Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven, and the power of binding and loosing of sinnes, bee there promised to be given to *Peter*, not as to him alone, but to him as bearing and representing at that time the person of them [apostles] all.”⁵⁸¹ Just as “Lycidas” eschews the Petrine moral lapses that puritan and anti-Catholic polemic delight in seizing upon, so too does it reject corporate ownership of

⁵⁷⁸ Francis Bunny, *A suruey of the Popes supremacie* (London, 1595), 19.

⁵⁷⁹ John Panke, *The fal of Babel* (Oxford, 1608), 121.

⁵⁸⁰ Austin Marlorat, *A catholike and ecclesiasticall exposition of the holy Gospell after S. Mathewe* (London, 1570), fol. 365

⁵⁸¹ Sir Christopher Sibthorp, *A friendly advertisement to the pretended Catholickes of Ireland* (Dublin, 1622), 292

the implements of apostolic rule. They are Peter's keys, and his alone. As the arbiter of priestly quality, the authority of the church rests solely with him. Peter is foundational. Finally, the representation of St. Peter strongly contrasts with Milton's later interpretation of Matthew 16 in *De doctrina Christiana*: "The administration of discipline is called *the power of the keys*. This power is not committed only to Peter or to any particular pastor in his name, but to every particular church as a totality, however few its members."⁵⁸² No indication of this collective ownership emerges in "Lycidas." The poem offers a very conservative view of Peter, one that resists puritanism but, in its assent to Petrine authority and apostolic succession, conforms to Anglicanism.

Were we to stop here we might conclude that St. Peter makes an aggressively Anglican argument. In part, I have emphasized the Anglican connotations so strenuously because the verse paragraph has only ever been interpreted as anti-Laudian and anti-Anglican. That seems to me, of course, an oversimplification of the passage's complex imagery and, to that end, its complex intertextuality. Counterbalancing the Anglican connotations of St. Peter's message is the doctrinal malleability of the scriptural intertext he employs: John 10. St. Peter's speech is, in many ways, a paraphrase of John 10.⁵⁸³ The influence of the passage is apparent throughout the speech: "bellies sake" (cf. John 10:12); "Blind mouthes! that scarce themselves know how to hold / A Sheep-hook" (cf. John 10:5; i.e. the blind mouths are imposters and strangers); "creep and intrude, and climb into the fold" (cf. John 10:1); "And when they list, their lean and flashy songs / Grate on their scrannel Pipes of wretched straw / The hungry Sheep look up, and are not fed" (cf. John 10:9); "But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw, / Rot inwardly, and foul

⁵⁸² Wolfe (ed.), *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 6.609.

⁵⁸³ See Stella P. Revard, "'Lycidas,'" in Thomas N. Corns (ed.), *A Companion to Milton* (Oxford, 2001), 254, for discussion of Ezekiel 34 and the passage.

contagion spread” (cf. John 10:10; the idea of the sheep not recognizing the stranger’s voice and not receiving nourishment at his hands are evoked); and “Besides what the grim Woolf with privy paw / Daily devours apace” ([“Lycidas” 114-129] cf. John 10:12). An intertextual relationship with John 10 is integral to the passage’s meaning. This is a text, however, that can easily countenance various and contradicting meanings because of its deployment by both Laudians and their detractors. Many scriptural texts have, of course, some claim to being deployed by Laudians and their critics and the potential, therefore, for both Laudian and anti-Laudian meaning. But John 10 can make this claim more confidently than most, owing to its frequent and high profile deployment by prominent Anglicans and puritan objectors. John Lilburne, William Prynne, John Owen, and Henry Burton all employ John 10 during their critiques of the Laudian Church.⁵⁸⁴ In fact, John 10: 27 serves as the epigram for Lilburne’s *Come out of her my people* (1639). On the Laudian side, Roger L’Estrange, Stephen Denison,⁵⁸⁵ and Walter Balcanquhall find in John 10 the resources to resist puritanism.⁵⁸⁶ Even Laud himself, in *A relation of the conference between William Lavvd...and Mr. Fisher the Jesuite* (1639), employs John 10 for an anti-puritan purpose. In *A relation*, Laud contests the view of tradition “That the Iesuite in the Church of Rome, and the Precise party in the Reformed Churches” hold; namely, “the one in magnifying it, and exalting it into Divine Authority; The

⁵⁸⁴ See Prynne, *A briefe suruay and censure of Mr Cozens his couzening deuotions*, 69-72; William Prynne, *A looking-glass for all lordly prelates* (London?, 1636), 78-9; John Owen, *The duty of pastors and people distinguished* (London, 1644), 45; Henry Burton, *A replie to a relation, of the conference between William Laude and Mr. Fisher the Jesuite* (Amsterdam, 1640), 49-50; John Lilburne, *Come out of her my people* (Amsterdam, 1639), title page.

⁵⁸⁵ See Stephen Denison, *The white wolfe* (London, 1627), 14. This sermon dates from Denison’s conformist phase, when he was an enthusiastic persecutor of perceived heresy among London puritans. Denison’s clash with the Laudian authorities can be dated from a 1631 sermon preached at St Katharine Cree (with Laud in attendance) critical of Laudian restorations (ODNB). Anna Bayman, “Denison, Stephen (d. 1649),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford, 2005), 16 Feb. 2013 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/65829>>.

⁵⁸⁶ See Sir Roger L’Estrange, *The relaps’d apostate* (London, 1641), 22; Walter Balcanquhall, *The honour of Christian churches* (London, 1633), 18.

other vilifying, and depressing it almost beneath Humane.” As an alternative to these erroneous views of tradition, Laud proposes this principle of scriptural exegesis: “The Key, that lets men in to the Scriptures, even to this knowledge of them, That they are the Word of God, is the Tradition of the Church: but when they are in, They heare Christ himself immediately speaking in Scripture to the Faithfull. And his Sheepe doe not onely heare, but know his voice [Note in marg: S. Iohn 10.4].”⁵⁸⁷ For Laud, both tradition and an individual’s faith (à la John 10) authenticate scripture. In the contrast between Lilburne’s use of John 10 to reject church authority and Laud’s to vindicate it, the contest for competing meanings of this scriptural passage becomes apparent.

One text in particular dramatizes the contest especially well. Lancelot Andrewes’ *The pattern of catechistical doctrine at large* (1650) contains an extended treatment of the parable of John 10. While discussing “The duties of Pastors and people,” Andrewes begins by noting the difficulty of the pastor’s task in preaching to those who have “become without understanding, that they know no other good but *bonum sensibile*, their bellies, tables, furniture for their houses” (366).⁵⁸⁸ Corresponding to the parishioners who are focused on their own comfort is the pastor who “thrust[s] himself into the ministry” (366). The “two ways whereby such men creep in” and climb into the fold are for favor or gain (*per gratiam* and *per munus* [367]). Andrewes compares them to priests in the Old Testament who “draw neer to the Ark for the Corban, for the offering box; they cared not what became of the law, so the corban sped well” (368). What recks it them, what need they, as long as their cupidity is satisfied. These hirelings are merely time-servers, and they “have no care of feeding the flock.” Their incompetence results from their ignorance of

⁵⁸⁷ William Laud, *A relation of the conference betweene William Lavvd...and Mr. Fisher the Jesuite* (London, 1639), 100, 102.

⁵⁸⁸ Lancelot Andrewes, *The pattern of catechistical doctrine at large* (London, 1650). Citation of Andrewes can be found in the text; most spellings have been modernized.

the sheep hook and the herdsman's art, for their instruments "are as the prophet calls them, *instrumenta paftoris ftulti*, the instruments of a foolish shepherd" (368). Instead of nourishing the flock, they "poifon them with heresies and errours contrary to the received doctrine of the Church" (368). While the hungry sheep look up and rot inwardly, the hirelings become "grievous wolves...not sparing the flock" (368). Ultimately, "whether he be for his belly, as the firft, or degenerate to a wolf, as the last, they are both distinguifhed from the good shepherd" (368). In addition to criticizing those who enter the ministry for their bellies sake, Andrewes outlines what constitutes a nourishing ministry. The minister "must have a perspicuous and methodical way, an orderly delivery...like a cunning workman, rightly dividing the word, which as the Apostle faith, is like a two-edged sword. Preaching must have two edges" (371). If preaching is dull, parishioners may develop "a desire to hear a declamation out of a Pulpit, to hear a sermon with fine phrase, pleasing the ear, but doing the soul no good" (370). The attractive but hollow sermons are "the froth of seeming good language, and little substance," though they are especially dangerous because they seduce the flock to "sectaries and schismaticks" (372). In Andrewes' formulation, the two-handed engine helps protect the sheep. It is the hollow sermon, the lean and flashy song with an attractive veneer, that endangers them. Andrewes' two-edged sword alludes to Augustine's exegesis of Psalms 129. As Andrewes notes, "preaching must have two edges; for it was a fault complained of by S. Augustine, against Preachers of his time, their preaching had but one edge, and the back did as much harm as the edge did good" (371). In his exposition on the psalm, Augustine explains that the sword is double-edged "because it speaks of temporal matters, and it speaks of the things of eternity. It vindicates its statements about both, and it cuts free from the world everyone whom it smites."⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁹ Augustine, *Exposition of the Psalms*, transl. Maria Boulding (New York, 2004), 501.

Applying Augustine's exegesis to "Lycidas," those being smited are not the Jesuits/wolf with privy paw who "Daily devours apace" (128-9). Rather, those smited are the sheep who are starved for spiritual nourishment from their shepherds, to be cut free from the dross of this world, but they receive only "lean and flashy songs" (123). In Augustine's interpretation, the smited find a "promise concerning both the present and the future life, a promise of the consolation of temporal things and the blissful enjoyment of those of eternity."⁵⁹⁰ The two temporalities to which the two-edged sword of God's word provides its wielders access may help explain Milton's description of the engine that "Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more." The sword smiting once represents temporal matters; it is "ready," expectant, waiting and available for use, very much in time. The sword smiting no more indicates the believers/wielders' induction into the "blissful enjoyment of eternity," where time is inapplicable. It may seem strange for "no more" to denote timelessness, but the phrase is often employed in early modern descriptions of eternity. In an oft-used definition, Gilbert Burnet maintains, "Eternity [is] when time shall be no more."⁵⁹¹ Moreover, Richard Baxter provides this description for the "blessed day, when I shall rest with God": "Here shall I be incircled with Eternity, and come forth no more: here shall I live and ever live; and praise my Lord, and ever, ever, ever praise him."⁵⁹² There is a peculiar conjunction of the seeming finality of "no more," the futurity of "shall," and the elongated perpetuity of "ever, ever, ever" that denotes the capacity of eternity to comprehend—and in so doing obviate—all temporality. Reading Augustinian eternity into Milton's "no more" points up the contrast that is being drawn between those wielding the two-handed engine of God's word and a mere grating of "lean and flashy songs." In addition to a

⁵⁹⁰ Augustine, *Exposition of the Psalms*, 501.

⁵⁹¹ Gilbert Burnet, *A sermon preached at the funeral of Mr. James Houblon* (London, 1682), 29.

⁵⁹² Richard Baxter, *The saints everlasting rest* (London, 1650), 791-94.

connotation of vapid, “flashy” can also mean “lasting only for a flash, transitory, momentary.”⁵⁹³ Thus, Milton contrasts the ephemera of the scrannel pipes with the eternally relevant preaching of the two-handed engine. The applicability of Augustine to both Andrewes and Milton demonstrates the correspondence between *The pattern of catechistical doctrine at large* and the St. Peter verse paragraph. The texts’ deployment of John 10 have distinct descriptive similarities. While we have seen how John 10 in “Lycidas” could serve a Laudian agenda in addition to the puritan one Milton claims, the same is true for *The pattern of catechistical doctrine at large*.

Andrewes’ catechetical lectures were composed when he was appointed college catechist in 1578 for Pembroke College, Cambridge, and were never published in his lifetime. But as P.E. McCullough notes, the lectures “circulated widely from the 1580s to the 1650s, were highly sought after by divinity students and godly laymen, and, even though unprinted, were cited in theological controversies” (*ODNB*).⁵⁹⁴ I have been quoting from the 1650 Laudian edition of *The pattern of catechistical doctrine at large*, but puritans first started to mobilize the early Andrewes for their cause beginning with an unauthorized edition in 1630. The puritan appropriation of the catechetical lectures culminated in Thomas Jackson’s 1642 *The morall law expounded*. Whether the Andrewes of the catechetical lectures can even be regarded as puritan remains an open question. Though the lectures express some sabbatarian views, a Calvinist attitude towards perseverance, and, while at Cambridge, Andrewes was a member of a bible study group that included Laurence Chaderton, Nicholas Tyacke ultimately cautions, “how far

⁵⁹³ “flashy, adj.”, *OED Online*. (Oxford, 2012), 4 March 2013

<<http://www.oed.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/Entry/71155?redirectedFrom=flashy>>.

⁵⁹⁴ P. E. McCullough, “Andrewes, Lancelot (1555–1626),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004; online edn, Jan 2008), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/520>, accessed 19 March 2013]

Andrewes had ever belonged to the puritan camp remains unclear.”⁵⁹⁵ Andrewes’ *bona fides* as the leader of the late-Elizabethan, Stuart avant-garde conformity that paved the way for Laudianism have never been in doubt. No better example exists than Laud and Buckeridge’s 1629 edition of Andrewes post-1595 sermons, *XCVI Sermons*. The edition makes a forceful claim for the Laudian Andrewes, even going so far as to organize the sermons, not in chronological order, but according to the liturgical year. This is a subtle subjugation of the sermonic form, so integral to puritans, to the liturgical rhythms of the church year. What is most important about Andrewes’ lectures, and the interpretation of John 10 they contain, is that they could be mobilized for both a puritan and Laudian agenda. The deployment of John 10 by both Laudians and their detractors—epitomized in the contest over Andrewes’ catechetical lectures—makes it a text of some hermeneutic variability. Milton chooses this text as the basis for St. Peter’s criticism. I can scarcely think of a better intertextual enactment of internal conflictedness.

III. Asceticism and Censorship

The final way in which Anglican sympathies are evident in “Lycidas” is through the asceticism the poem positively appraises. In the penultimate verse paragraph, Lycidas is described in the following way: “With Nectar pure his oozy Lock’s he laves, / And hears the unexpressive nuptiall Song, / In the blest Kingdoms meek of joy and love” (175-77). The lines allude to Revelation 14:3-4: “And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and

⁵⁹⁵ Nicholas Tyacke, “Lancelot Andrewes and the Myth of Anglicanism,” in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660* (Suffolk, 2000), 5-33, 10.

four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.”⁵⁹⁶ The allusion to Revelation 14 is clear in “unexpressive,” which corresponds to the ineffability of a song that “no man could learn.” The allusion also conforms to a literal, Laudian exegesis of the passage.

In its positive appraisal of bodily virginity and the heavenly rewards it could bring, this is a scriptural text that can support Laudian asceticism’s celebration of corporal virginity. For instance Anthony Stafford, whose *The Femall Glory* (1635) would become a *bête noire* for anti-Laudians in the 1630s, argues in *Staffords Niobe* (1611) that the Church Fathers “thought the same difference to bee between matrimonie, and virginity, that is betwixt to sin, and not to sinne, good, and better.” To prove this argument, Stafford presents various scriptural passages (e.g. 1 Corinthians 7:1, 1 Kings 2, etc.) but emphasizes, “amongst all these places, this one in the Reuelation is most of all to be noted.” A quotation of Revelation 14:3-4 follows with Stafford concluding, “these are words that would inforce any sober soule to imbrace that single, simple, and sincere kinde of life.”⁵⁹⁷ Jeremy Taylor, Laud’s former chaplain, also uses Revelation 14 in *The rule and exercises of holy living* (1650) to account for the holiness of “chosen and voluntary” virginity. Virgins should “expect that little coronet or special reward which God hath prepared (extraordinary and besides the great Crown of all faithful souls) for those who have not defiled themselves with women.”⁵⁹⁸ Taylor’s careful distinction between virgins and “all faithful souls” resists the puritan application of the passage to all the Elect,⁵⁹⁹ eschewing of bodily

⁵⁹⁶ Kenneth Barker (ed.), *King James Study Bible* (Michigan, 2002).

⁵⁹⁷ Anthony Stafford, *Staffords Niobe* (London, 1611), 77-78.

⁵⁹⁸ Jeremy Taylor, *The rule and exercises of holy living* (London, 1650), 82-83.

⁵⁹⁹ See William Fulke, *Praelections vpon the sacred and holy Reuelation of S. Iohn* (London, 1573), 92; see also Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter (eds.), *The Sermons of John Donne*, (California, 1953-62), x. 43.

virginity, or equation of virginity with those who reject idolatry.⁶⁰⁰ The reason that Edward King's participation in the "unexpressive nuptiall song" conforms to a literal, Laudian interpretation of Revelation 14 lies in an important fact of King's biography: he died unmarried. In light of this fact, how can we not interpret his being undefiled with women as a reference to bodily virginity?

Other poems in *Justa Edouardo King naufrago* (1638) allude to King's virginity and, at the same time, Revelation 14:4.⁶⁰¹ For instance, the prefatory poem in the *Justa* states, "Virgin-killing Thetis (the sea), there had fallen slain by your betraying hand that head dear to Apollo and the Muses [i.e. King]." ⁶⁰² In the original Latin poem, Thetis is given the epithet "virgin-killing" through the Greek adjective "παρθενοκτόνος."⁶⁰³ The use of a Greek word in a Latin poem, and the root of the Greek adjective itself, "παρθένος" ("virgin/maiden"), are both important. "Παρθένος" most often means a "maiden," and one cannot make sense of its application to Edward King without recourse to Revelation.⁶⁰⁴ Out of the fourteen usages of "παρθένος" in the Greek New Testament, the only time the word refers exclusively to male virgins is in Revelation 14:4: "παρθένοι γάρ εἰσιν" ("for they are virgins").⁶⁰⁵ The meaning of "παρθενοκτόνος" in the *Justa* is mediated through Revelation 14:4; the latter supplies the most significant precedent for applying "παρθένος" to a male virgin. Moreover, "παρθενοκτόνος"

⁶⁰⁰ See Thomas Wilson, *A Christian dictionarie* (London, 1612), 158; Richard Sibbes, *Bovvels opened* (London, 1639), 192; Lucas Osiander, *A manuell or briefe volume of controuersies of religion betweene the Protestants and the Papists* (London, 1606), 429-30; George Lawson, *Theo-politica* (London, 1659), 165. One of the reasons Protestants, and especially Calvinists, are so interested in distributing the rewards of Revelation 14 to all holy souls is the frequency with which Catholics use the passage to support their claims for the holiness of virginity, and, by extension, the carnality towards which Protestantism tends. See Bellarmine, *Iacob's ladder* (London, 1638), 136-7; James Sharpe, *The triall of the protestant priuate spirit* (Saint-Omer, 1630), 329-30.

⁶⁰¹ See "Translations: Obsequies for Edward King," *Milton Quarterly* 35 (2001), 198-217, 211.

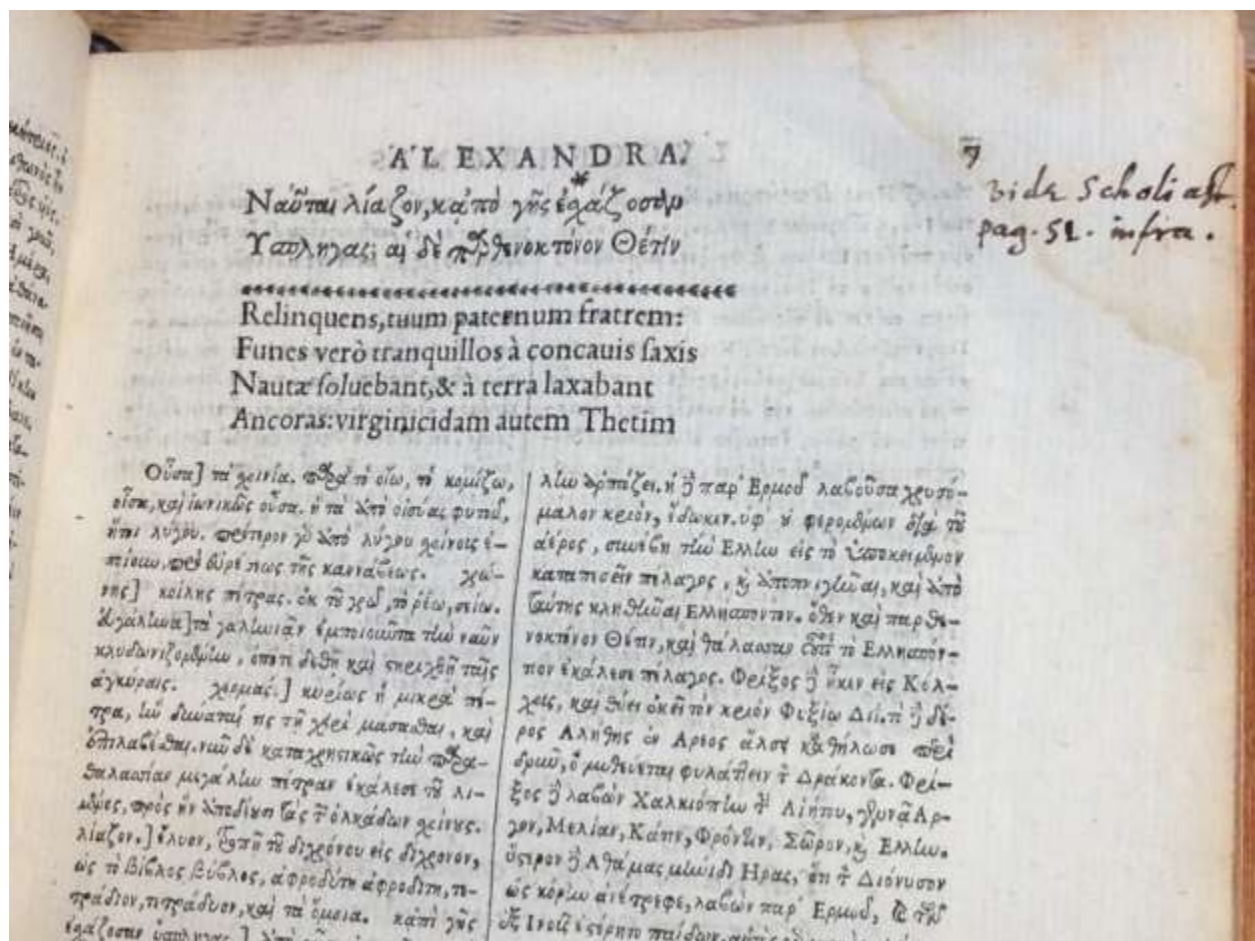
⁶⁰² "Translations: Obsequies for Edward King," *Milton Quarterly*, 200.

⁶⁰³ *Justa Edouardo King Naufrago*, sig. A4^v.

⁶⁰⁴ Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, (Oxford, 1845; rev. 1996), 1339.

⁶⁰⁵ It is used at Matthew 1:23; Matthew 25:1, 25:7, 25:11; Luke 1:27; Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 7:25, 7:28, 7:34, 7:36-8; 2 Corinthians 11:2.

would have been of particular interest to Milton if, as some have conjectured, contributors to the *Justa* read other's poems before publication.⁶⁰⁶ Describing Thetis as “παρθενοκτόνος” alludes to the *Alexandra* of Lycophron (b. c. 330-325 B.C.E.), where this epithet occurs: “παρθενοκτόνον Θέτιν” (“virgin-killing Thetis”).⁶⁰⁷ In 1634, Milton purchased his own edition of the *Alexandra*. Interestingly enough, in the copy of Milton's Lycophron found at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Library, Milton stars a word in line 21 and includes a marginal note next to it, referencing Tzetztes' scholia: “παρθενοκτόνον Θέτιν” occurs at line 22 (see figure 1).⁶⁰⁸



⁶⁰⁶ See Michael Lloyd, “Justa Edouardo King,” *NQ* 5 (1958), 432-4.

⁶⁰⁷ L. Mascialino, *Lycophronis Alexandra* (Leipzig, 1964).

⁶⁰⁸ See also Harris Francis Fletcher, “John Milton’s Copy of Lycophron’s *Alexandra* in the Library of the University of Illinois,” *Milton Quarterly* 23 (1989), 129-58, 141.

(FIG. 1. Isaac Tzetzes, *Lycophronos tou Chalkideōs Alexandra* (Geneva, 1601).

The use of “παρθένος” in the *Justa*, and in such a form that would have piqued Milton’s intellectual interest, indicates that “Lycidas” is not alone in coordinating King’s unmarried state with Revelation 14:4. That coordination privileges a literal interpretation of the scriptural text. What’s more, the two poems accomplish this coordination through similar means. In an intertextual enactment of what the process of coterie reading and manuscript circulation entails, both poems coordinate through a process of extra-textual supplementation: the fact of King’s biography and the precedent for applying “παρθένος” to a male must be supplied by the reader to make full sense of the allusion (the one, to Revelation; the other, to Lycophron). That another poem in the *Justa* connects King’s virginity with Revelation 14:4, and that it uses a similar methodology to do so, provides corroboration for Milton’s own literal exposition of the passage. We are provided with corroboration, but not confirmation. The “unexpressive nuptiall song” does not allude only to Revelation 14. The line also alludes, as various commentators have recorded, to Revelation 19.⁶⁰⁹ “Nuptiall” refers to the marriage supper of the Lamb in Revelation 19:7-9; the fourteenth chapter contains no reference to marriage. The “song” in “nuptiall song” must still reference Revelation 14 (the “new song,” though also found at 5:9), since no mention is made of any song in chapter nineteen.⁶¹⁰ Milton’s conflation of Revelation 14 and 19 seems rather unique.⁶¹¹ Ultimately, it is of signal importance because it provides the poem with an alternative to a literal interpretation of “not defiled with women.” In Revelation

⁶⁰⁹ See J. Martin Evans, *The Miltonic Moment* (Lexington, 1998), 148.

⁶¹⁰ I have found only one commentator who interprets the “voice of a great multitude” in Revelation 19:6 as a “song.” See I.F., *A sober inquiry* (London, 1660), 84.

⁶¹¹ For another instance of the conflation, see John Reeve *Hymnes and spiritual songs extracted from Scripture* (London, 1682), 72.

14, the condition of one's admittance to heavenly joys is physical virginity; in Revelation 19, no such condition is a prerequisite for being "called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

An additional intertext is also at play in these lines, one that is not often observed. The 144,000 in Revelation 14 "learn" a "new song," those in Revelation 19 are "called" to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and yet Lycidas "hears" the nuptial song. This is a more active and intimate engagement with the nuptial song than those in Revelation 14 or 19 experience. The closer engagement could possibly denote the individual believer's communion with the Bridegroom of The Song of Solomon.⁶¹² In The Song of Solomon, the beloved does yearn to hear the Bridegroom's voice (2:14), and expositors of The Song of Solomon often refer to the book as a "nuptial song."⁶¹³ Admittedly, there is a difference between hearing the "unexpressive nuptial song" and hearing the Bridegroom's voice, but the tendency to treat The Song of Solomon in synecdochal form as a "nuptial song" could accommodate such an elision; it could interpolate Lycidas as an interlocutor in The Song of Solomon. With such an interpolation, these lines would describe a mystical experience of the individual believer's communion with, espousal to, Christ. Allegorical readings of The Song of Solomon, in which the relationship between the bride and bridegroom represents relations between Christ and the church and/or Christ and the individual believer, were common.⁶¹⁴ What's more, typological readings, in which The Song of Solomon anticipates the book of Revelation, were also frequent. In the words of Thomas Brightman, "This Prophetie [i.e. The Song of Solomon] following agreeth well neere in all things with that of Saint Iohn in the Revelation. They fore-shew the same events in

⁶¹² See also M.H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York, 1971; repr. 1973), 46

⁶¹³ See Théodore de Bèze, *Master Bezaes sermons vpon the three chapters of the canticle of canticles* (Oxford, 1587), sig. ¶12^v.

⁶¹⁴ See William Baldwin, *The canticles or balades of Salomon* (London, 1549), Sig. A1^v.

the like times. And either of them directeth his course to the same marke.”⁶¹⁵ The allusion has the effect of counterbalancing—even more directly than Revelation 19—a literal interpretation of Revelation 14. The Song of Solomon anticipates the believer’s union with Christ by using marriage as a metaphor for it. This could, in the words of Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., redound to marriage’s credit: “thus was marriage not only a type of mystical union but was sanctified by virtue of its typological significance.”⁶¹⁶ But there is a rival, patristic interpretive tradition to locating praise of marriage in The Song of Solomon. In Ambrose’s *Concerning Virgins*, The Song of Solomon is used to support arguments for virginity.⁶¹⁷ As Elizabeth A. Clark notes, “verses from the The Song of Solomon that our contemporaries take as sexually charged could be read by the church fathers [including Jerome and Gregory of Nyssa] as portending ‘something else,’ namely, counsel for the celibate.”⁶¹⁸ Intertextuality with The Song of Solomon could be read as supporting a literal interpretation of Revelation 14, especially in the poem’s original publication context; or, it could be read as countervailing that interpretation (similar to Revelation 19) with an approving reference to earthly marriage through biblical typology. Unlike what we observed in the St. Peter verse paragraph, where one scriptural passage could accommodate conflicting arguments, here the puritan and Anglican are accommodated by allusion to no less than three scriptural passages. The result is an allowance for alternate interpretations. While allusions to Revelation 14, 19, and The Song of Solomon collaborate and/or conflict when trying to determine if the lines privilege ascetic valorization, they do work in magnificent concert when depicting the profundity of King’s heavenly joys. He is one of the

⁶¹⁵ Thomas Brightman, *A commentary on the Canticles or the Song of Salomon* (London, 1644), 981.

⁶¹⁶ Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., *Shapers of English Calvinism, 1660-1714: Variety, Persistence, and Transformation* (Oxford, 2011), 68.

⁶¹⁷ Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds. and transls.), *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Volume X: St. Ambrose Select Works and Letters* (New York, 1896), 1.8-9.

⁶¹⁸ Elizabeth A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, 1999), 88.

144,000 (Revelation 14), a “blessed” invitee to the Lamb’s marriage (Revelation 19), and, in a fitting culmination of his exclusive sacrality, he experiences mystical communion with Christ (The Song of Solomon). Though it seems nearly impossible to harmonize these various scriptural references into one coherent view of asceticism, they do cooperate in magnifying King’s apotheosis. It is more difficult still to derive from their variety a stable religious affiliation.

The allowance for alternate interpretations raises a question that is also applicable to previous discussions of rogation and the St. Peter verse paragraph. Is the counterbalancing of Anglican and puritan connotations the product of writing under conditions of censorship? The theme of asceticism provides an opportunity to answer this question because, though Milton abandons a literal interpretation of Revelation 14:4 in *An Apology for Smectymnuus* (1642), “Epitaphium Damonis” (1639) wholeheartedly embraces it.⁶¹⁹ If Anglican sympathies persist beyond 1637, then this calls into question 1) the anti-Laudianism of “Lycidas” and 2) why Milton need fear Anglican censorship in 1637.

In “Epitaphium Damonis,” virginal honors are reserved for Damon, (“En etiam tibi virginei servantur honores” [214]), and he experiences chaste, Bacchic orgies: “and under Sion’s thyrsus the Orgies revel on” (“Festa Sionaeo bacchantur & Orgia Thyrsos” [219]). It is only because of the following that the honors and orgies are his to enjoy: “since you did not taste marriage’s pleasures” (“quod nulla tori libata voluptas” [213]). Damon’s virginity primarily consists, not in some holiness of soul or not committing idolatry, but in not having had marital intercourse. Arguments have been advanced to separate “tori” from marriage.⁶²⁰ In Coverdale’s

⁶¹⁹ Wolfe (ed.), *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, i. 892-3.

⁶²⁰ See John Leonard, “Milton’s Vow of Celibacy: A Reconsideration of the Evidence,” in P.G. Stanwood (ed.), *Of Poetry and Politics: New Essays on Milton and His World* (Binghamton, 1995), 187-202, 199.

1538 edition of the Vulgate, though, these famous lines from Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews occur: "Honorabile connubium in o[mni]bus, & torus immaculatus" (13:4).⁶²¹ ("Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled.") That a text of the Vulgate's canonicity treats "torus" as a "marriage bed" renders dubious any attempt to disassociate the word from its marital connotation. Milton's later allusions to the Vulgate in *Paradise Lost*—documented by Thomas Newton—indicate the influence this text exerted on him.⁶²² At a time in his life when he was less ideologically restricted, that influence may have been even greater.

In addition to a literal interpretation of Revelation 14:4, the Anglican connotation of virginity in "Epitaphium Damonis" is also derived from intertextuality with patristic asceticism. Laudians often enlisted patristics to validate their own ascetic predilections. Milton may similarly validate Damon's strange, orgiastic virginity by allusion to the *Symposium* of Methodius of Olympus (260-312 C.E.). The *Symposium*, probably written between 270-290 C.E., heavily borrows from Plato's work, except that the symposiasts are women who have devoted themselves to virginal lives, and their speeches consist of encomiums to virginity.⁶²³ During the virgin Agathe's encomium, she exclaims, "These, my fair maidens, are the secret rites of our mysteries, the mystical rites of initiation into virginity; these are the rewards of undefiled conflicts of chastity."⁶²⁴ The Greek word that Agathe uses for "secret rites" is "τὰ ὄργια" ("orgies").⁶²⁵ The Latin equivalent of "τὰ ὄργια" is Milton's "orgia." Like Damon, Agathe experiences the orgies as a reward ("honores virginei") for her ascetic lifestyle. Christ's

⁶²¹ Miles Coverdale, *The newe testamente both Latine and Englyshe ech correspondent to the other after the vulgare texte, communely called S. Ieroms* (Southwarke, 1538). See also Richard Crashaw, *Epigrammatum sacrorum liber* (Cambridge, 1634), 14.

⁶²² Newton observes that Milton follows the Vulgate with place names (224-225n). Thomas Newton (ed.), *Paradise Lost*, 2 vols., (London, 1749; repr. 1757).

⁶²³ Methodius of Olympus, *The Symposium*, ed. and transl. H. Musurillo (New York, 1958), 12.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁶²⁵ *Méthode d'Olympe. Le banquet*, ed. V.H. Debidour and H. Musurillo, *Sources chrétiennes* 95 (Paris, 1963).

munificence in bestowing them prompts Agathe to refer to Him as “Christ my Rewarder.”⁶²⁶ As intertextuality with Methodius suggests, Damon’s virginity is of soteriological significance. Another patristic source may also be behind the verb Milton uses to describe Damon’s experience of the orgies. In “bacchantur,” Milton probably alludes to the *Historia Religiosa* (440 C.E.) of Theodoret of Cyrrhus (393- c.460 C.E.). In the *Historia*, Theodoret states that two virgins’ love of God “drove them into a Bacchic frenzy” (“ἐξεβάκχευσε”).⁶²⁷ In this verb, we find an antecedent for Milton’s “bacchantur.” The Greek verb, like its Latin counterpart in Damon’s elegy, is rather conspicuously Bacchic. Also, the words’ meanings are nearly the same. “βάκχεύω” means to celebrate the mysteries of Bacchus, or to act like a frenzied Bacchic celebrant.⁶²⁸ *The Oxford Latin Dictionary* defines “bacchor” as “to celebrate the rites of Bacchus” and “to rage.”⁶²⁹ In this way, the Bacchic frenzy that Theodoret’s virgins experience as a result of their chastity informs Damon’s Bacchic exultation. Intertextuality with the *Historia* and *Symposium* accords with the Laudian recovery of the Eastern Fathers, which culminated in Laud establishing a printing press for such works in London in 1631 (another was projected for Oxford).⁶³⁰ An allusion to Theodoret and Methodius is particularly *au courant* considering the press’ publication of Theophylactus (Lindsell), the *Catena* (Young),⁶³¹ and its projected edition of the *Codex Alexandrinus*.⁶³² In a 1633 doctoral disputation published

⁶²⁶ Methodius of Olympus, *The Symposium*, 95.

⁶²⁷ See P. Canivet and A. Leroy-Molinghen (eds.), *Théodoret de Cyr. L’histoire des moines de Syrie*, 2 vols., (Paris, 1:1977; 2:1979), “vita xxix.” For translation, see *A History of the Monks of Syria*, transl. R.M. Price (Michigan, 1985), 185.

⁶²⁸ Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 303. See also G.W.H. Lampe (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, (Oxford, 1961), 282.

⁶²⁹ P.G.W. Glare (ed.), *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (London, 2006), 223.

⁶³⁰ See Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church: Charles I and the Remoulding of Anglicanism 1625-1641* (Oxford, 1992), 52.

⁶³¹ Augustine Lindsell, *Theophylaktou Archiepiskopou Boulgarias Exegesis ton Epistolon tou Hagiau Paulou* (London, 1636). Patrick Young, *Catena Graecorum patrum in beatum Iob collectore Niceta Heracleae* (London, 1637).

⁶³² See Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud*, 275.

posthumously in 1660, Eleazar Duncon actually alludes to the extreme austerity of Simeon Stylites in the *Historia Religiosa* while arguing for the piety of reverencing the altar.⁶³³ Placed within this context, Milton's allusion to Greek patristics is quite modishly Laudian. As the example of "Epitaphium Damonis" indicates, potential Anglican sympathies post-date "Lycidas," calling into question why Milton would fear the censor in 1637.

The strongest case for finding an anxiety about censorship in "Lycidas" has been made by John Leonard. Leonard connects the rhyme of "sheares" / "eares" (75-7) with Laud and the smiting of the "two-handed engine" (130) arguing, "one possibility is that Milton is covertly threatening to crop Laud's ears as Laud had cropped those of Bastwick, Burton, and Prynne."⁶³⁴ Earlier in the essay Leonard justifies Milton's coded anti-Laudianism in "Lycidas" by observing, "Laud was in no mood to tolerate any criticism so soon after making an example of Bastwick, Burton, and Prynne."⁶³⁵ According to Leonard, Laud made an example of Burton, Bastwick, and Prynne and was directly responsible for having their ears cropped ("Laud had cropped..."). Is it not significant, though, that Laud recused himself from voting during the sentencing of the three in Star Chamber? That fact would seem to mitigate the ease with which Leonard places the person of Laud behind the shearing of ears in "Lycidas." Not only does Leonard overstate the case, but he adopts the Whig anachronism of celebrating the three as Foxeian martyrs despite recent historical evidence complicating that view.⁶³⁶ As Charles Carlton observes, "hindsight may have exaggerated the importance of Prynne, Burton and Bastwick as martyrs."⁶³⁷ Because of that exaggeration, reaction to the punishment has been regarded as a litmus test of political

⁶³³ Eleazar Duncon, *Of worshipping God towards the altar* (London, 1660), 31.

⁶³⁴ John Leonard, "'Trembling Ears,'" 76. See also Neil Forsyth, *John Milton: A Biography* (Oxford, 2008), 57.

⁶³⁵ "'Trembling Ears,'" 66.

⁶³⁶ See Barry Coward, *The Stuart Age: England, 1603-1714* (London, 1980; repr. 1994), 176n.

⁶³⁷ Carlton, *Archbishop William Laud*, 124.

and religious affiliation. And yet, as Kevin Sharpe has demonstrated, “many, and even those of godly sympathies, were appalled at the vitriol of these pamphlets [i.e. Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick’s].”⁶³⁸ Sir Robert Phelips (1586?-1638), an important colleague of Eliot and Wentworth in parliamentary opposition to Caroline rule (*ODNB*), referred to Burton, Bastwick, and Prynne as “lunatics.”⁶³⁹ Phelips’ reaction gives credence to the Venetian envoy’s remark that “the wisest were disgusted” at the “brazen audacity” of the three. While the envoy concludes that “the senseless people...had compassion on them,” it does raise the question of whether Milton—who had such a profound aversion to the “rabble”—would have shared the sentiment.⁶⁴⁰ It is also worth pointing out that death is a repeat offender when it comes to ear-violence in “Lycidas”: “As killing as the Canker to the Rose.../ Such, Lycidas, thy loss to Shepherds ear” (45-49). The fact that ear-violence has the generality of a topos obscures (though does not prohibit) its ability to clearly signify one, particular historical incident. Ultimately, though, I agree with Leonard that Laud’s church must be somewhere behind the shearing of ears in “Lycidas.” Milton would probably have objected to the use of violence or that three highly regarded professions were degraded in the persons of Prynne (a lawyer), Burton (a clergyman), and Bastwick (a physician). In that opinion, though, and illustrating how scruples about the punishment need not denote anti-Anglicanism, Milton would be similar to the later feelings of Laud’s own chaplain, Peter Heylyn.⁶⁴¹

More largely, if we consider expressions of Anglicanism in “Lycidas,” they do not seem intended to evade censorship by means of subterfuge and misdirection. Concealing anti-

⁶³⁸ Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I*, 759.

⁶³⁹ Carlton, *Archbishop William Laud*, 124. Thomas G. Barries, “Phelips, Sir Robert (1586?-1638).” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford, 2004), online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, 22 Feb. 2013 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/22090>>.

⁶⁴⁰ Sharpe, *The Personal Rule*, 762-3. See, for instance, “Ad Patrem” 103-4.

⁶⁴¹ Peter Heylyn, *Cyprianus Anglicus* (London, 1668), 334.

Laudianism by validating apostolic succession is an entirely Pyrrhic victory. It seems a bit self-defeating to land a blow against the Laudian Church by having to justify that church's *raison d'être*. Freud describes the author writing under conditions of censorship as needing to adopt an "innocent disguise" for his/her objectionable statements.⁶⁴² The representation of St. Peter, and the view of apostolic succession it contains, makes for a rather complicit disguise—guilty, that is, of a too ready sympathy with that which it is supposed to impugn.

Coda: An Ending with a Future

"Lycidas" concludes with these famous—and famously enigmatic—lines, written in perfect *ottava rima*:

Thus sang the uncouth Swain to th'Okes and rills;
While the still morn went out with Sandals gray,
He touch'd the tender stops of various Quills,
With eager thought warbling his Dorick lay:
And now the Sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the Western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his Mantle blew:
To morrow to fresh Woods, and Pastures new.

These lines are framed by "thus" and "new," combining a strong sense of finality, of completed action, with a definite futurity. Informing this sense of futurity is allusion to the poem's third

⁶⁴² Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (London, 1954; repr. 1971), 142.

verse paragraph (“Together both, ere the high Lawns appear’d” [25]). The “still morn” recalls the “opening eye-lids of the morn,” while the solitariness of the swain contrasts with the companionship emphasized in “Together both...both together.” Other echoes in the lines suggest allusion.⁶⁴³ The third verse paragraph presents the exemplary image of pastoral companionship. It is also the first in which the body of the poem begins, following the introductory paragraph and an invocation to the muses. There is a definite irony in alluding to this inceptive verse paragraph at the poem’s end. The allusion confirms the forward momentum of the last eight lines by emphasizing that nostalgic remembrance, as wistful and moving as it may be, has been supplanted by the potentiality of present and future. “Fresh Woods, and Pastures new” recall, but in so doing also supersede, the earlier “high Lawns.” New prospects await. With its original spelling (rarely reproduced in modern editions), “To morrow” opens expansively onto that prospect. This spelling, creating two words out of one, slows down the reading process, occasioning a full consideration of the word’s power. It is not one to be cursorily passed over. Further protracting one’s reading, the poem plays on the anagrammatical quality of “To morrow to” (“m” is an upside down “w,” and vice versa). Futurity proliferates, reflecting (and refracting) itself. Finally, the spelling also reduces any tendency to skip over the second “to” and not give the word its iambic stress. The stress is important because it highlights the internal rhyme of “to” and “new.” “To” points, both grammatically and aurally, towards the newness that is its object. The poem’s complex manipulation of temporality is also evident in the finality of “thus,” the futurity of “new,” and the insistent present of “And now,” “And now.” This emphasis on tomorrow (i.e. spelling, anagram, rhyme) and its contemporaneous present

⁶⁴³ Consider, for instance, the following parallels: “What time the *Gray-fly* winds her sultry horn” and “Sandals *gray*.” “Oft till the Star that *rose*, at Ev’ning bright / Toward Heav’ns descent had slop’d his *westering wheel*,” and “And now was dropt into the *Western bay*,” “At last he *rose*.” “Rural ditties” and “Dorick lay.” “Temper’d to *th’Oaten Flute*,” and “He touch’d the tender stops of *various Quills*.”

seems especially salutary considering the “yet once more” that begins the poem, trapping the reader and speaker in the dreadful perpetuity of a repetitive grief. In the previous verse paragraph, “Weep no more, woful Shepherds weep no more” initiated the end of that repetition. The proposal of a viable present and future completes it.

That is largely, I think, what these final eight lines provide: re-orientation towards present and future. I have often wondered what “Lycidas” would be like without these eight lines. In other words, what comes after a transcendent apotheosis? But what *can* come after this transcendence besides the mundane inanities of daily life, besides pulling a garment close for want of warmth? Here, we might contrast the plebeian twitching of a “mantle blew” with the otherworldly nectar with which Lycid laves his locks. Milton brings us back down to earth in these lines by considering the day after. It is not an entirely smooth landing. Some temporal and narrative violence characterize it. The poem shifts temporal contexts (cf. “thou art” and “thus sang”), and a first-person narrator is replaced with a third-person omniscient one, fragmenting the monodic voice. “Twitch’d” is an apt verb for this jarring process of re-acclimation. In addition to its connotation of tightly pulling, it also means “to give a sudden abrupt pull at; to pluck; to jerk; to pluck (a person) by some part of the body or dress.”⁶⁴⁴ After the dazzling sublimity of Lycid’s ascension, the flaming of the morning sky in “new-spangled Ore,” re-entry into the atmosphere of ordinariness can be quite jerking and abrupt. And even though it is a quiet ending, it is also enormously disquieting. “To morrow to fresh Woods, and Pastures new” sounds a quietly diminutive note similar to “hand in hand with wandring steps and slow.”⁶⁴⁵ In the phrases’ diminution, all the world stands—like a gaping challenge—before Adam and Eve and this uncouth swain. Reflecting the paradox of quiet disquiet, of an ending that begins, the

⁶⁴⁴ “twitch, v.1”. OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com>. (accessed May 28, 2013).

⁶⁴⁵ *The Riverside Milton*, ed. Roy Flannagan (Boston, 1998).

poem variously lurches (i.e. recalling its previous language) and then explodes (And *now*...and *now*; *new*) towards now and tomorrow. This serene conclusion clamors with a jactitating imminence. The urgency calls for some resolution of the systemic indecisiveness that pervades the poem. It would take the Bishops' Wars, the calling of the Long Parliament (November 1640), the impeachment of Laud (December 1640)—in other words, the complete dissolution of the Caroline polity—to rudely force Milton's left hand and construe that indecisiveness into decisive radicalism with *Of Reformation* (May 1641).

The conflictedness of "Lycidas" contrasts sharply with Andrew Marvell's "Upon Appleton House." As the next chapter will argue, a strong sense of anti-Laudianism informs Marvell's narration of the religious history of Nun Appleton. The narrative of the religious house culminates, finally, in depiction of Laud as the anti-Christian beast of Revelation.

Chapter 5

A Religious House: Marvell's "Upon Appleton House," Laudianism, and Exodus

In his recent edition of the poems of Andrew Marvell (1621-78), Nigel Smith writes, "despite its length and its centrality in M[arvell's] canon, *Upon Appleton House* has not occasioned the critical debate that surrounds M.'s most famous lyrics."⁶⁴⁶ More and more, though, scholars are turning their attention to this complex and brilliant poem. Recent studies have focused on how "Upon Appleton House" (1651) responds to early modern political events, military theory, literary networks, and environmental issues.⁶⁴⁷ Scholarship on religion and "Upon Appleton House" has illuminated the poem's engagement with anti-Catholic polemic, the Catholic history of the Fairfax family, and Protestant views of sacrilege.⁶⁴⁸ An account of how the poem responds to the religious upheavals of the 1640s, however, remains lacking. This essay provides such an account by showing how "Upon Appleton House" prosecutes a subtle and devastating critique of Archbishop William Laud (1573-1645) and the policies of High Church Anglicanism. In the end, it is the triumph over a Laudian anti-Christ that determines how

⁶⁴⁶ Andrew Marvell, *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Nigel Smith (London: Longman, 2003; rev. 2007), 215. All quotations of Marvell's poetry are from this edition.

⁶⁴⁷ For military and political, see Katherine O. Acheson, "Military Illustration, Garden Design, and Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House,'" *English Literary Renaissance* 41 (2011): 146-188; Julianne Werlin, "Marvell and the Strategic Imagination: Fortification in *Upon Appleton House*," *Review of English Studies* 63 (2012): 370-87; Derek Hirst and Steven Zwicker, "High Summer at Nun Appleton, 1651: Andrew Marvell and Lord Fairfax's Occasion," *The Historical Journal* 36 (1993): 247-269; for literary networks, see Nicholas McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance in the English Civil Wars: Marvell and the Cause of Wit* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 226-8; for environmental issues, see Robert Markley, "'Gulfes, Deserts, Precipices, Stone': Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House' and the contradictions of nature," in *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550-1850*, ed. Gerald MacLean, Donna Landry, and Joseph P. Ward (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 89-105; Jeffrey S. Theis, *Writing the Forest in Early Modern England* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2009), 193-202; Nicholas A. Salerno, "Marvell and the Furor Hortensis," *SEL* 8 (1968): 103-120; Diane Kelsey McColley, *Poetry and Ecology in the Age of Milton and Marvell* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), 13-42.

⁶⁴⁸ See Patsy Griffin, "'Twas No Religious House till Now': Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House,'" *SEL* 28 (1988): 61-76; Anne Cotterill, "Marvell's Watery Maze: Digression and Discovery at Nun Appleton," *ELH* 69 (2002): 103-132; Gary D. Hamilton, "Marvell, Sacrilege, and Protestant Historiography: Contextualizing 'Upon Appleton House,'" in *Religion, Literature, and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688*, ed. Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 161-186.

Marvell depicts the controversial resignation of his patron, Thomas Fairfax, as commander-in-chief of the Parliamentary forces in 1650. Examining the poem's anti-Laudianism also makes visible a neglected component of the Laudian movement: asceticism.⁶⁴⁹ In the monastery narrative (stanzas 11-35), the poem refutes not just Roman Catholic monasticism, but also the Laudian valuation of monastic life, mortification, and physical virginity.⁶⁵⁰ By situating "Upon Appleton House" within a context of anti-Laudianism, this essay offers a new interpretation of the poem and the cultural history of the Laudian Church.

Why, though, would "Upon Appleton House" make such extensive allusions to Laud and his innovations some six years after the Archbishop's execution? Later, we shall see how Laud's depiction as anti-Christ endows him with a certain threatening immortality, an undying malevolence, that is timeless. But the same question might be asked about the poem's narration of Catholic monastic life some 115 years after the monasteries' dissolution. And yet, Catholic monasticism helps shape the later godliness of the Fairfaxes. In so far as the poem relates the history (religious and otherwise) of the Fairfax family, and is itself informed by the experiences of Marvell's family, Laudian Anglicanism is similarly relevant. To that end, the biographies of

⁶⁴⁹ For selected history of the Laudian movement, see H.R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573-1645* (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1963); Robert S. Boshier, *The Making of the Restoration Settlement: The Influence of the Laudians 1649-1662* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951); Charles Carlton, *Archbishop William Laud* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987); Graham Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honor: The Arts of the Anglican Counter-Reformation* (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2006); L.J. Reeve, *Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule* (Cambridge University Press, 1989); Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church: Charles I and the Remoulding of Anglicanism 1625-1641* (Oxford University Press, 1992); Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1600-1640* (Cambridge University Press, 1995); Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford University Press, 2009); Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Kenneth Fincham, *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-42* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1993) (and Lake and White in the same volume); Achsah Guibbory, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton: Literature, Religion, and Cultural Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge University Press, 1998); and Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), and *Remapping Early Modern England: The Culture of Seventeenth-Century Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁶⁵⁰ For a full treatment of the topic of Laudian asceticism, see Patrick J. McGrath, "Reconsidering Laud: Puritans and Anglican Asceticism," *Prose Studies* 34.1 (2012): 32-49.

Andrew Marvell and Thomas Fairfax (1612-71) illustrate the relevance of the poem's Laudian critique.

The poet's father, Andrew Marvell Sr. (1584-1641), lecturer at Holy Trinity Church in Hull, was harried by Laudian authorities at the end of his career. On 14 August 1639, Marvell Sr. was ordered "to reade the later part of the prayers or divine service mencioned and expressed in the book of Common prayer in manner and forme as therein is prescribed, in his hood and surplize upon Wednesdays being lecture dayes and sundayes and at other tymes when he used to preach at the said Chappell."⁶⁵¹ The surplice was often especially objectionable to puritans, due in part to its association with priestly celibacy.⁶⁵² In the 1630s, William Laud made a controversial, public declaration in favor of clerical celibacy.⁶⁵³ Thus, when Andrew Marvell rejects the nuns' vowed-virginity in "Upon Appleton House" as corrupt, a complex web of association may intertwine that rejection with his father's coerced surplice-wearing by the Laudian authorities. The coercive orders were repeated on 12 October 1639, and again on 14 December and 31 January 1640, identifying Marvell Sr. as a non-conformist.⁶⁵⁴ The Reverend Marvell's godly leanings are also suggested by his marriage to Lucy Harries (née Alured) in 1638 after his first wife (the poet's mother) died. As Pauline Burdon has documented, the Alureds were long-committed Hull puritans and soon-to-be parliamentarians during the civil war.⁶⁵⁵ In *The Rehearsall Transpros'd* (1672), however, Marvell contends that his father was "a

⁶⁵¹ Ronald A. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York, 1560-1642* (London: Longmans, 1960), 262. See also *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Marvell, Andrew (c.1584-1641)," by W.H. Kelliher, accessed 1 November 2012, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.

⁶⁵² See Prynne *A short sober pacific examination of some exuberances in, and ceremonial appurtenances to the Common prayer* (London, 1661), 89-91.

⁶⁵³ See Peter Heylyn, *Cyprianus anglicus* (London, 1668), 224; Arthur Christopher Benson, *William Laud Sometime Archbishop of Canterbury, A Study* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1887), 186.

⁶⁵⁴ Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts*, 262. See also Nicholas von Maltzahn, *An Andrew Marvell Chronology* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 25-26; Andrew Marvell, *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, 4 vols. (London: Robson and Sons, Printers, 1872), xxv.

⁶⁵⁵ Pauline Burdon, "The Second Mrs Marvell," *Notes & Queries* 227 (1982): 33-44.

Conformist to the established Rites of the Church of England, though I confess none of the most over-running or eager in them.”⁶⁵⁶ But many puritans defended their opposition to Laudianism by claiming conformity to the “established Rites of the Church of England.” The question becomes to which rites one refers: those established in the Laudian/Caroline period, or the late Elizabethan/Jacobean? A rejection of Laudian ceremonial appurtenances, and neglecting the Book of Common Prayer by presumably focusing on preaching, suggest Andrew Marvell Sr.’s comfortable place within the Jacobean Church.

The Fairfax family had a similarly negative experience with Laudian pertinacity. Many of the old truisms about Thomas Fairfax—that he was politically disengaged and religiously a moderate puritan—are now being challenged. If we read backwards from Fairfax’s 1663 labeling as a dissenting non-communicant, a consistent pattern of participating in and patronizing religious non-conformity emerges. Andrew Hopper identifies the Fairfaxes as leading supporters and defenders of West Riding puritans against the “Caroline church authorities.”⁶⁵⁷ In a 1633 letter to the first Lord Fairfax (Thomas’ grandfather), the puritan Robert More complains of “some malignant spirits” who “till now very lately...have blown up some sparks of contention” into the church. More concludes by asking for Fairfax’s “gracious assistance herein, for the glory of God and the peaceable state of the Church.”⁶⁵⁸ The Fairfaxes’ defense of the godly led to an inevitable conflict with Richard Neile, the Archbishop of York (1632-40), and scion of the Laudian movement. Ferdinando Fairfax (Thomas’ father) took offense at Neile meddling in

⁶⁵⁶ Andrew Marvell, *The Prose Works of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Annabel Patterson, Martin Dzelzainis, N.H. Keeble, and Nicholas von Maltzahn, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 1.289. See also Nigel Smith, *Andrew Marvell: The Chameleon* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 20; von Maltzahn, *Chronology*, 92. All quotations of Marvell’s prose are from the Yale edition.

⁶⁵⁷ Andrew Hopper, *‘Black Tom’: Sir Thomas Fairfax and the English Revolution* (Manchester University Press, 2007), 154.

⁶⁵⁸ George W. Johnson (ed.), *The Fairfax Correspondence*, 2 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, 1848), 1.335-6.

Otley grammar school appointments.⁶⁵⁹ For Laudians, controlling appointments and suppressing lectureships were primary means of combating puritanism. As a result of this combat, some of the puritan ministers the Fairfaxes patronized in Yorkshire suffered at the hands of the Laudian authorities.⁶⁶⁰ For example, Richard Clarkson was called before the Chancery Court on 23 November 1638 for failure “to certify obedience to monition to Cs [chapels] Halifax to read prayers before their sermons.”⁶⁶¹ Samuel Winter was brought before Chancery on 23 February 1637/8 for a panoply of offenses: he was “ordered to read service in Rowley church on Sundays and Holy Days, their Eves. and Weds. and Fris. according to B.C.P. without addition or diminution, wearing a surplice.”⁶⁶² Like Andrew Marvell Sr., Winter was forced to read more of the prayer book and adhere to the requirements for ecclesiastical dress. Faced with the strictures of observing liturgical feasts, conforming to the Book of Common Prayer (B.C.P.), and doing all this while invested with a surplice, Winter chose to resign his curacy. To the Fairfaxes, the resignation must have symbolized the loss of another able and pious minister to the pettiness of Laudian policy. In addition to their love of poetry and scripture, Andrew Marvell and Thomas Fairfax shared an understanding of just how divisive Laudianism could be. Let us now consider how anti-Laudianism in “Upon Appleton House” reflects this commonalty.

⁶⁵⁹ Hopper, *‘Black Tom,’* 154.

⁶⁶⁰ See Hopper, *‘Black Tom,’* 154.

⁶⁶¹ Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts*, 239.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, 293.

I. Laudian Sacral Space and “Upon Appleton House”

Many commentators have documented how “Upon Appleton House” opposes the superstitious avoidance of sacrilege associated with the Laudian Church.⁶⁶³ How such opposition also entails opposing the Laudian valuation of sacral space has not been as readily observed. The entailment is natural. The Laudian Church’s view of sacral space motivates its vigorous resistance to spoliation.⁶⁶⁴ An example of what constitutes the Laudian view can be found in Lancelot Andrewes’ *XCVI sermons* (1629). Laud and Buckeridge edited the sermons and, as Peter McCullough has shown, used them as a “proof-text” for their “reconstruction of the church in the 1630s.”⁶⁶⁵ Commenting on the Benedictus of Zechariah (Luke 1:74-75), Andrewes warns, “our holinesse is growen too familiar, and fellow-like.”⁶⁶⁶ To remedy this familiarity, he urges, “when we come, before the presence of the Lord...worship Him *in decore Sancto*, in a holy kind of decencie, or (as we read it) in the beautie of holinesse.”⁶⁶⁷ Andrewes’ sermon articulates two central tenets of the Laudian view of sacral space: the unfamiliarity of secular and sacral space, and that holiness demands—and is magnified by—beauty. The Laudian treatment of sacral space—consecrations, railed communion tables, altar-wise placement of those tables—finds antecedence in these general principles. “Upon Appleton House” contests them.

⁶⁶³ See Griffin, “‘Twas No,’” 61; Brian Patton, “Preserving Property: History, Genealogy, and Inheritance in ‘Upon Appleton House,’” *Renaissance Quarterly* 49 (1996): 837; Douglas D.C. Chambers, “‘To the Abyss’: Gothic as a Metaphor for the Argument about Art and Nature in ‘Upon Appleton House,’” in *On the Celebrated and Neglected Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 139-153, 146.

⁶⁶⁴ See Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honor*, 171-187.

⁶⁶⁵ Peter McCullough, “Making Dead Men Speak: Laudianism, Print, and the Works of Lancelot Andrewes, 1626-1642,” *The Historical Journal* 41 (1998): 402.

⁶⁶⁶ Lancelot Andrewes, *XCVI Sermons* (London, 1629), 983.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 990.

The poem contrasts the gaudy ornamentation of Laudian repairs with the “sober frame” (1.1) of Appleton House in stanza three: “But he, superfluously spread, / Demands more room alive than dead. / And in his hollow palace goes.../ What need of all this marble crust / T’impark the wanton mote of dust, / That thinks by breadth the world t’ unite / Though the first builders failed in height” (3.17-24).⁶⁶⁸ The attribution of sentience (“thinks”) to the “marble crust” satirizes the immodest ambition of the builders and palatial residents. Under the influence of their arrogance, they arrogate to the marble qualities that it does not—cannot—possess: rational decision-making and uniting all the world. Many of Laud’s architectural improvements made use of marble. Richard Neile’s Durham Cathedral—one of the models for Laudian innovations—included a marble altar. During his chancellorship of Oxford (1630-41), Laud’s renovations of ecclesiastical buildings often used marble.⁶⁶⁹ Trinity College, Cambridge, which Marvell attended beginning in 1633, may even have prepared for Laud’s projected 1636 visit by constructing a marble floor for its chancel.⁶⁷⁰ More generally, Laud and Lambeth Palace—especially its chapel—were frequently criticized for the kind of superfluity, splendor, and vainglory that this “hollow palace” exhibits.⁶⁷¹

A subtle allusion in the stanza’s last two lines (23-24) also identifies Laudianism as a referent of the dust’s imparking. The lines describe those who ambitiously construct edifices like those “first builders” of the Tower of Babel who “failed in height.” Some of the most vociferous and prominent critics of Laudianism derogated its innovations as Babylonian and an

⁶⁶⁸ See Donald M. Friedman, *Marvell’s Pastoral Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 212-3, for discussion of these lines and Jonson’s “To Penshurst.”

⁶⁶⁹ See C.H. Simpkinson, *Life and Times of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1894), 168.

⁶⁷⁰ Parry, *Glory, Laud and Honor*, 83. See also Parry’s discussion of Sir John Scudamore’s discovery and use of the original marble altar at Abbey Dore (37-8).

⁶⁷¹ See Prynne *Canterburies Doome* (London, 1646), 65-6; John Browne, *A discovery of the notorious proceedings of William Lavd Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1641), sig. A3^r; William Laud (spurious), *The recantation of the prelate of Canterbury* (London, 1641), 6.

attempt to re-construct the Tower of Babel in England. Henry Burton, William Prynne, and John Lilburne all use the image of the Tower of Babel to describe the Laudian Church, though it also appears in the work of less outspoken critics of Laudianism such as William Jones.⁶⁷² Burton, the most frequent user of the image, criticizes the Laudian Church's Romish innovations in *For God, and the King* (1636): "And me thinkes I see the issue of their building in that of the Tower of Babell...Even so our new Babel-builders upon a strong combination and faction against Christ and his Kingdome, have begun to build a Tower reaching to heaven in their high imagination, as if they would (as the Giants of old) pull Christ out of his Throne..."⁶⁷³ These Babel-builders work not only in brick and stone, but they vault their imaginations with delusions of grandeur. To express their overreaching, Burton uses the ingenious image of the prelates deposing Christ as the Titans sought to oust the Olympians; or, in a meaning that Burton's syntax allows, as the giants sought to depose Christ. Mingling sacred and profane sources, Burton creates a confused miscellany that enacts the incoherence of babbling Babel.

Criticism of the Titanic aspirations of Babel-builders continues in stanza eight of "Upon Appleton House": "Height with a certain grace does bend, / But low things clownishly ascend" (8.59-60). Such clownish ascension by low things may satirically implicate Laud. The archbishop was frequently derided in pamphlets with the sobriquet "Little Laud," a play on the cleric's short stature but rarely diminutive presence. In *Mercuries message, or, The copping of a letter sent to William Laud, late Archbishop of Canterbury, now prisoner in the Tower* (1641), the author mocks Laud, declaring "but when such Pigmy Lords as you will cherish / Ambitious

⁶⁷² See William Jones, *A commentary vpon the Epistles of Saint Paul to Philemon, and to the Hebrewes* (London, 1635), 438; Prynne, *Lord bishops, none of the Lords Bishops* (Amsterdam, 1640), sigs. J2^v–K1^r; John Lilburne, *An Answer to nine arguments* (London, 1645), 43.

⁶⁷³ *For God, and the King* (Amsterdam, 1636), 32-3. See also Burton, *Israels fast* (London, 1628), 31.

great desires, both lightly perish.”⁶⁷⁴ Here, “lightly” primarily means “with little weight,” but a secondary connotation of “slighting,” or ridiculously, is implicit.⁶⁷⁵ The pun draws further attention to Laud’s littleness and the comedy that results when he strains towards greater, weightier things. Marvell’s use of “clownishly” may also refer to Laud’s quarrel with the court jester Archibald Armstrong. The jester infamously pronounced grace once, with Laud in attendance, by exclaiming, “great praise be to God, and little laud to the Devil.”⁶⁷⁶ Never able to take a joke (especially one at his own expense), Laud had Archie banished from the court. Armstrong, though, would have the last laugh. He published *Archys Dream, sometimes Jester to his Majeftie; but exiled the Court by Canterburies malice* (1641), in which he accused Laud of foolishness, pomposity (perhaps clownish ascension), and declared that “little Laud” now wore his jester’s attire.⁶⁷⁷ Criticism of clownish ascension, marble-crusted buildings, and an allusion to the Tower of Babel indicates that Marvell’s valuation of humble designs in the opening stanzas of “Upon Appleton House” aims itself at the beauty of holiness.

II. The Monastery Narrative and Laudianism

The poem delivers an even more trenchant rebuke of the Laudian Church during the monastery narrative. The abrupt transition from the first ten stanzas to the narrative could be symptomatic of the lack of organization many readers have found to plague “Upon Appleton

⁶⁷⁴ Anon, *Mercuries message, or, The copy of a letter sent to William Laud, late Archbishop of Canterbury, now prisoner in the Tower* (London, 1641), sig. A3^r.

⁶⁷⁵ *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. “lightly, adv.,” accessed 19 November 2012, <http://www.oed.com>.

⁶⁷⁶ Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud*, 364. Carlton differs on the reason of Archie’s expulsion (*Archbishop William Laud* 154-5).

⁶⁷⁷ Archie Armstrong, *Archys Dream* (London, 1641).

House.”⁶⁷⁸ But understanding these stanzas as a continuation of initial Laudian critique supplies them with a definite structural rationale. Similarity between the monasticism of the nuns and Laudian asceticism is apparent in stanza 21, when the nun offers Isabel a chance to attain to a nearer degree of perfection: “Your voice, the sweetest of the choir, / Shall draw heav’n nearer, raise us higher. / And your example, if our head, / Will soon us to perfection lead” (21.161-64). Since Laudians viewed good works as soteriologically significant, they could embrace the prospect of attaining perfection. For instance, in *Five Pious and Learned Discourses* (1635), Robert Shelford claims that not only is the law able to be fulfilled in this life, but its fulfillment endues man with “our first perfection and heavens felicities.”⁶⁷⁹ In a 1633 sermon, William Strode argues that votaries of vowed-virginity (such as the nun in “Upon Appleton House”) have the potential to “appear before him [God] the more perfect.”⁶⁸⁰ Perfection-via-virginity is also a recurrent theme in the many Laudian comparisons of virgins and angels.⁶⁸¹ Perfection and humanity becoming angelic are both inimical to the Calvinist emphasis on total depravity. This emphasis informs Robert Baillie’s discussion of the Laudian view of supererogatory vows and perfection in *Ladensium Autokatakrisis* (1641). Baillie offers this summary of the Laudian position: “That not onely many doe fulfill the Law without all mortall sinne, but sundry also doe supererogat by doing more then is commanded, by performing the counsels of perfection, of chastity, poverty and obedience... That our obeying the counsels of perfection doe purchase a

⁶⁷⁸ See David Evett, “‘Paradice’s Only Map’: The ‘Topos’ of the ‘Locus Amoenus’ and the Structure of Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House,’” *PMLA* 85 (1970): 504-5; Sarah Monette, “Speaking and Silent Women in ‘Upon Appleton House,’” *SEL* 42 (2002): 156.

⁶⁷⁹ Robert Shelford, *Five Pious and Learned Discourses* (Cambridge, 1635), 124.

⁶⁸⁰ William Strode, *A sermon preached at a visitation held at Lin in Norfolk, June the 24th anno 1633* (London, 1660), 7.

⁶⁸¹ See Richard Braithwaite, *The English gentlewoman* (London, 1631), 146-7; William Austin, *Devotionis Augustinianae flamma* (London, 1635), 194; Jeremy Taylor, *Holy living in which are described the means and instruments of obtaining every virtue* (London, 1656), sig. E7^v. For the pre-Reformation occurrence of the comparison, see Helen L. Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2000), 166.

degree of glory above the ordinary happinesse...”⁶⁸² The nun’s belief in attaining perfection corresponds to Baillie’s argument that monastic practitioners of chastity believe themselves to “purchase a degree of glory above the ordinary happinesse.” More largely, Baillie’s imputation to the Laudian Church of valuing works of supererogation recurs throughout anti-Laudian discourse and illustrates how the nun’s claims of perfection can be situated within it.⁶⁸³ While Baillie and others reject the Laudian belief in perfection, what is the attitude of “Upon Appleton House” towards the nun’s perfecting monasticism?

The clearest ways in which the poem discredits the monastic practices of the nunnery—and with them, hope of achieving perfection—are through charges of witchery and insinuations of sexual immorality. For instance, William Fairfax refers to the nuns as witches: “Hypocrite witches, hence avaunt, / Who though in prison yet enchant!” (26.205-6). William’s exclamation reflects a common association in anti-Catholic polemic between witchcraft and monasticism. John Gaule’s *Select cases of conscience touching vvitches and vvitchcrafts* (1646) claims, “witches are to be found in some Religions, more than others.” He then concludes, “there has been, are, and are likely still to bee, more Witches under the Popish; then in the Protestant Religion. For not only their Popes, Priests, Fryers, Nuns, (many of them) have been notorious Witches: but their praestigious miracles, & superstitious rites little better then kindes of Witchcrafts.”⁶⁸⁴ The nuns’ witchcraft is apparent in “Upon Appleton House,” for after Fairfax rescues Isabel, the nunnery vanishes like an illusion: “Thenceforth (as when th’enchantment ends, / The castle vanishes or rends)” (34.269-70). Though William’s allegations of witchery may seem

⁶⁸² Robert Baillie, *Ladensium Autokatakrisis* (London, 1641), 71. For an earlier refutation of such counsels of perfection, see Richard Field, *Of the Church five books* (London, 1628), 331.

⁶⁸³ See Burton, *A full and satisfactorie ansvere to the Arch-bishop of Canterbvries speech* (London, 1645), 22; Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, 209-10; Zacharias Ursinus, *The summe of Christian religion* (London, 1645), 511 (the work was printed partly to contest Arminianism).

⁶⁸⁴ John Gaule, *Select cases of conscience touching vvitches and vvitchcrafts* (London, 1646), 16-7.

fantastically scurrilous, it is essential that he articulate them. Since William participated in the Pilgrimage of Grace—Yorkshire uprisings in 1536 protesting Henrician religious and economic reform—Marvell carefully advertises and affirms his anti-Catholic credentials.⁶⁸⁵

In addition to the influence of anti-Catholic polemic, Edward Fairfax's *Daemonologia: A Discourse on Witchcraft* may also inform the poem's depiction of the nun-witches. Edward Fairfax (1568-1635?) was Lord General Thomas's uncle, and the natural son of Sir Thomas Fairfax of Denton. Edward's *Daemonologia* was written in 1621 and, though intended for publication, only circulated in manuscript. The work relates the tormenting of Edward's daughters, Elizabeth and Ellen, by witches. In the *Daemonologia*, the witches have a singular ability to change shape at will. They appear as cats, dogs, calves, and even horned beasts like anti-Christ while goading the little girls to kill themselves or perform some other malignant act. Often, though, the witches array themselves in pleasant shapes to accomplish their temptations. At one point, Ellen rebukes a shape-shifting witch by asserting, "for as God will not let thee deceive me with pretty shapes, so thou canst not slay me with thy ill-favoured ones, for thou art still but the same."⁶⁸⁶ In "Upon Appleton House," the nun-witches also possess an uncanny ability to seduce through dissimulation. The sisters are described as "subtle" (12.94), and the nun who speaks to Isabel displays considerable verbal cunning. The poem prefaces her comments with, "Whence in these words one to her weaved, / (As / 'twere by chance) thoughts long conceived" (12.95-6). Aptly expressing the woven intricacy of the nun's verbal dissembling, the monosyllabic rhymes of the stanza culminate in the interlocking polysyllables of "weaved / conceived," and a chiasmus forms through the slant rhyme of "whence" / "chance."

⁶⁸⁵ I owe this observation to Dr. Catharine Gray.

⁶⁸⁶ Edward Fairfax, *Daemonologia: A Discourse on Witchcraft*, ed. William Grainge (Harrogate: R. Ackrill, Printer and Publisher, Herald Office, 1882), 41.

It is easy to get caught in her knotty web of verbal casuistry. This is especially apparent in the nun's arguments to persuade Isabel to join the priory. She uses flattery (stanza 19), makes extravagant promises (20), and evinces startling hypocrisy (22). She will go to any length and betray any principle she claims to value if only Isabel will become one of them. Though these nuns may not change shapes, their casuistical arguments are still able to assume any form.

Like charges of sorcery, insinuations of sexual impropriety also discredit the nuns' asceticism: "Each night among us to your side / Appoint a fresh and virgin bride; / Whom if our Lord at midnight find, / Yet neither should be left behind. / Where you may lie as chaste in bed, / As pearls together billeted" (24.185-90). Other commentators have usefully documented the same-sex eroticism that informs these lines, but little has been made of the relation between Fairfax family history and monastic sexual impropriety.⁶⁸⁷ Yet, the poem uses this impropriety as a way of distancing the junior branch of the Fairfax family from a sordid event in the annals of the more senior branch's history. While the junior branch lived near Bolton Percy (and included the Lord General), the more senior Yorkshire Fairfaxes were based around Walton and Gilling Castle. The Walton Fairfaxes claimed a member who had succumbed to monastic life's unnatural temptations. Jane Fairfax, who lived at Nun Appleton Priory from 1536 until its dissolution in 1539, committed incest with Guy Fairfax.⁶⁸⁸ On 10 May 1555, Jane not only confessed her incest in the Chancery court, but she also admitted that she had had a child with Guy. Adding to the ignominy of the affair, Jane was forced to do public penance for her crimes in Stonegrave parish. And yet, truly proving that *omnia vincit amor*, the couple remained

⁶⁸⁷ See James Holstun, "'Will you Rent our Ancient Love Asunder': Lesbian Elegy in Donne, Marvell, and Milton," *ELH* 54 (1987): 847-851 for same sex eroticism; for mention of the impropriety, see Smith, *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 222.

⁶⁸⁸ Claire Cross and Noreen Vickers, *Monks, Friars and Nuns in Sixteenth Century Yorkshire* (The Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1995), 587.

obstinate, and Jane and Guy were hauled into court at least four more times for their continued offenses. The court would probably not have been so patient, as A.G. Dickens concludes, “had persons of less consequence than Fairfaxes been convicted.”⁶⁸⁹ The affair with Jane illustrates what anti-Catholic polemic always maintained: monastic asceticism could result in sexual perversion.⁶⁹⁰ In “Upon Appleton House,” however, Isabel resists such perversity, and William denounces it (28.219). When these scions of the junior branch of the Fairfax family condemn the nuns’ having illegitimate children and/or resist allurements of sexual perversity, the poem effectively disassociates the Bolton Percy Fairfaxes from the blot of sexual impropriety that stained their relatives at Walton.

The nun’s description of same-sex intimacy also relates to more contemporary Fairfax family history during the civil wars. The primary meaning of “billeted” at 24.190 is “furnished with billets or strips of metal.”⁶⁹¹ But the martial connotation of “billeted”—that is, for soldiers to be forcibly lodged in civilian quarters—is implicit. In fact, as Andrew Hopper notes, during the first civil war, “when the Yorkshire gentry petitioned Parliament against forced billeting... Sir Thomas and Sir William Fairfax were among the leading petitioners.”⁶⁹² By perversely causing the domestic and martial spheres to collide, billeting could lead to horrifying consequences. A tract from 1642 relates “a most cruell and horrid murther committed by one of the cavaliers, on a woman in Leicester, billeted in her house: who was shot into the back, being within five weeks of the time of her delivery.”⁶⁹³ Sexual perversity (disordering the usual relations between men

⁶⁸⁹ A.G. Dickens, *Reformation Studies* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1982), 147.

⁶⁹⁰ See John Bale, *The apology of Iohan Bale agaynste a ranke papyst* (London, 1550), xliiii.

⁶⁹¹ *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. “billeted, adj.,” accessed 19 November 2012, <http://www.oed.com>.

⁶⁹² ‘*Black Tom*,’ 132.

⁶⁹³ Anon, *An exact and true relation of a most cruell and horrid murther committed by one of the cavaliers, on a woman in Leicester, billeted in her house* (London, 1642), title page. See also Anon, *A True relation of certaine speciall and remarkable passages from both Houses of Parliament, since Monday the 15. of August till Friday the nineteenth 1642* (London, 1647), 6.

and women and violating norms of sexual conduct) fits neatly within this context of violated and disordered domesticity. While the nun uses “billeted” to express the cozy snugness Isabel will experience with her fellow sisters as a young novice, the word—restored to its post-civil war context—betrays her: like so much of what she says, her “billeted” carries an opposite, contradictory connotation.

Monasticism’s sexual impropriety in “Upon Appleton House” should be partly understood as motivated by anti-Catholicism. The discourse of impropriety returns, though, and with especial force, in anti-Laudian polemic of the 1640s. William Prynne’s *A Breviate* (1644) is the consummate example.⁶⁹⁴ The *Breviate* was assembled while Prynne was prosecuting Laud for high treason in Parliament, and it consists of selections from Laud’s diary that Prynne adduces as indicative of the Archbishop’s treasonous popery. Among Prynne’s accusations, he also suggests Laud’s sexual immorality. That immorality indirectly references Laudian asceticism. From Prynne’s other writings, it is clear he believed that the Laudian Church valorized monastic asceticism, and he refers to Laud as a “votary” in the *Breviate*.⁶⁹⁵ In *Histrio-mastix*, “the frequent Sodomitically wickednesses” of monasticism are “the unchaste fruits of... vowed and much-admired chastity.”⁶⁹⁶ Thus, the *Breviate*’s insinuations of sodomy may be the un-chaste fruits of Laudian monastic valuation. Prynne makes the insinuation with this 1609 entry from Laud’s diary: “my next unfortunateness was with E.M.”⁶⁹⁷ He interprets the entry as proving Laud “fell into another greivous sinne (perchance uncleannesse) with E. M.”⁶⁹⁸ How

⁶⁹⁴ See also *The Arminian Nunnery* (London, 1641), 9.

⁶⁹⁵ *A breviat of the life, of VVilliam Laud Arch-Bishop of Canterbury* (London, 1644), 13. See also Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, 212, 325.

⁶⁹⁶ *Histrio-mastix* (London, 1633), 213-4. See also *An exact chronological history and full display of popes intollerable usurpations* (London, 1666), 293.

⁶⁹⁷ William Laud, *Works*, 7 vols. (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1847-1860; repr., New York: AMS, 1975), 3.134.

⁶⁹⁸ *Breviate*, 29.

“my next unfortunateness was with E.M.” adds up to sodomy is never explained. Nonetheless, Prynne assuredly corroborates Laud’s uncleanness by repeating the charge on the next page (though this time it is with E.B), and presenting a later event as divine retribution for it. Prynne writes, “September 16, 1617. He was very likely to have been burnt by fier in St. John’s Colledge in Oxford, for his sinnes.”⁶⁹⁹ Few readers would fail to notice that Laud’s death by fire after committing sodomy corresponds to the Levitical injunction (20:13) that all engaged in same-sex partnership should be put to death.⁷⁰⁰ In fact, in *Diotrephes Catechized* (1646), Prynne lists “burning” as one of the possible punishments for sodomy.⁷⁰¹ Prynne depicts the fire as divine vengeance for Laud’s heinous sexuality, even though the fire and unfortunateness are treated as unrelated by Laud, eight years separate them, and their relation occurs in separate places in the diary. Though perhaps entirely false, charges of sexual impropriety in the *Breviate* suggest the relevance of anti-Laudian polemic to the nuns’ uncleanness in “Upon Appleton House.”

Finally, the nun’s ascetic practice can be interpolated into the discourse of (anti)Laudian asceticism through her valorization of non-corporal virginity. In stanza 35, during the poem’s concluding reflection on the nunnery, the speaker writes, “And what both nuns and founders willed / ’Tis likely better thus fulfilled. / For if the virgin proved not their’s, / The cloister yet remained her’s. / Though many a nun there made her vow, / ’Twas no religious house till now” (35.273-280). The lines “For if the virgin proved not their’s, / The cloister yet remained her’s” depict the literal reality of the demolishing: the lands of the cloister have passed to Isabel and William and their heirs. But the cloister remaining such even after the virgin nuns have been

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., 30.

⁷⁰⁰ Quotations of, references to, the Bible are from *King James Study Bible*, ed. Kenneth Barker (Michigan: Zondervan, 2002).

⁷⁰¹ *Diotrephes catechized* (London, 1646), 4.

dispossessed and, presumably, the married Isabel is no longer physically a virgin reflects the Calvinist view of virginity; namely, that it is a spiritual—not an exclusively physical—state. This version of virginity opposes the Catholic view, but it also inveighs against the Laudian valorization of physical and spiritual virginity.

The valuation occurs in Anthony Stafford's *The Femall Glory* (1635), Stafford's defense of which is dedicated to both Laud and Juxon. Inspired by the promise of Isaiah 7:14 ("That a Virgin should bring forth a sonne"), Stafford enters into this spirited encomium of virginity and monastic life: "You who ply your sacred Arithmeticke, and have thoughts cold, and cleare as the Christall beads you pray by: You who have vow'd virginity mentall, and corporall, you shall not onely have ingresse here, but welcome. Approach with Comfort, and kneele downe before the Grand white Immaculate Abbess of your snowy Nunneries [the Virgin Mary]."⁷⁰² Much in these lines corresponds to monastic life in "Upon Appleton House": constant and ritual prayer (cf. with "Upon Appleton House" 24.185); religious ceremonialism, particularly the use of rosary beads (32.255); and glorification of the Virgin (17.131). Stafford insists on both spiritual and physical virginity ("mentall" and "coporall"). The "amiable pale" on the virgin's cheeks manifests virginity's corporeality, as chastity inheres in her physical countenance. The bloom of virginity recurs often in patristic ascetic literature. In his letter to a fallen virgin, Basil of Caesarea bemoans the former virgin's loss of her "beautiful blush of modesty," and during Thekla's encomium to virginity in Methodius of Olympus' *Symposium*, "her face [was] growing red with a modest blush."⁷⁰³ Intertextuality with patristic asceticism ratifies Stafford's emphasis

⁷⁰² Anthony Stafford, *The femall glory* (London, 1635), 148-9.

⁷⁰³ Basil of Caesarea, "Letter 46," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, 10 vols. (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1896; repr., Cosimo, 2007), 46.2. Methodius of Olympus, *The Symposium*, trans. Herbert Musurillo (New York: Newman Press, 1958), 8.17. Similarly, a virgin's lips are also the sign of her virginity; see Ambrose of Milan, "Concerning Virginity," in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, 10 vols. (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1896), 1.8.

on bodily virginity. It is an emphasis—along with other content in the above lines—that outrages Prynne. In *Canterburies Doome* (1646), he quotes Stafford to prove Laudians believe “that vowed Poverty, Virginitie, a Monasticall life, and Monasteries, are lawfull, usefull: Popish Votaries, Saints, Orders to be imitated, applauded.”⁷⁰⁴ Prynne could regard the Laudian emphasis on bodily virginity as innovative with respect to the Jacobean Church, though he exaggeratedly claims it as one of a number of doctrines that “never durst appeare in any of our Impressions from the infancy of Reformation, till this Arch-Prelate became their Patriot.”⁷⁰⁵ The head of that church, James I, exhibits a Calvinist unease with virginity, anxious about works of merit and idolatrizing the body. In his commentary on Revelation (1616), James interprets “not defiled with women” of Revelation 14:4 as not “guilty of spirituall adulterie.”⁷⁰⁶ By regarding true virginity as a spiritual condition, “Upon Appleton House” conforms to Jacobean Calvinism. In that conformity, as Prynne illustrates, lies an implicit rejection of Laudian innovation. While we have documented the poem’s serious disagreement with High Church Anglicanism, the critique takes a more playful turn, becoming a kind of Laudian burlesque, during the speaker’s retreat into the wood.

III. Retreat and Parody

Stanzas 61-65 reprise and seemingly correct many of the wrong ideas about sacral space in stanza three. Stanza 61 describes the speaker taking sanctuary in the wood: “And, while it

⁷⁰⁴ *Canterburies Doome*, 212.

⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 188.

⁷⁰⁶ James I, *The Workes of the Most High and Mightie Prince, James* (London, 1616), 44. See also John Donne, *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter, 10 vols. (University of California Press, 1953-62), 10.43.

lasts, myself embark / In this yet green, yet growing ark; / Where the first carpenter might best / Fit timber for his keel have pressed” (61.483-86). The arrogant and presumptive “first builders” of stanza three, those constructing the Tower of Babel, are replaced with a far more pious “first carpenter.” What’s more, the imparking of the “wanton mote of dust” to which the labors of the Babel builders are compared has progressed into the speaker’s “embarking” (pun and all) in an Ark of sorts. The poem’s original spelling of “embarking” (i.e. “imbarking”) makes the comparison visually clearer.⁷⁰⁷

Stanza 64 continues allusion to earlier statements by adopting the without/within construction the poem previously employs (e.g. in stanza one): “Dark all without it knits; within / It opens passable and thin” (64.505-6). The wood of the within/without construction contrasts with a similar phrase used to depict the nuns’ living conditions. Within their holy leisure, “These walls restrain the world without, / But hedge our liberty about.” Instead of hedging liberty—a contradiction that undermines the nun’s claims of personal freedom—the wood the speaker describes hedges night about: “And stretches still so closely wedged / As if the night within were hedged” (63.503-4). Echoing stanza four’s praise of Appleton House where “all things are composed here / Like Nature, orderly and near” (4.26), the hedging of night and containing of darkness result in the wood exhibiting a loose orderliness (64.507). A passage that opens “passable and thin” is also reminiscent of stanza four’s entrance that can only be accessed through a narrow loop. The poem then juxtaposes the wood with the vaulting brain of the foreign architect in stanza one. The architect’s arching brows homonymically transform into the wood’s “arching boughs”; the columns that contend with height itself are now the “columns of the temple green” (64.510).

⁷⁰⁷ See Andrew Marvell, *Miscellaneous Poems* (London, 1681), 93.

The arching boughs and columns do not represent a continuation of, but rather corrective to, the extravagant insobriety stanzas 1-11 criticize. The nightingale's inhabitation of the wood exemplifies the humility of design the poem earlier praises: "Low shrubs she sits in, and adorns / With music high the squatted thorns. / But highest oaks stoop down to hear, / And list'ning elders prick the ear" (65.515-518). These lines recall the dimensions stanza four uses to define the sober age: "In which we the dimensions find / Of that more sober age and mind, / When larger-sized men did stoop / To enter at a narrow loop" (4.27-30). Similar to the men who are the avatars of the "more sober age and mind," the highest oak "stoop[s] down to hear."⁷⁰⁸ Height does not disdain lowness. The nightingale's habitation of "low shrubs" while singing "music high" also recalls the humility of design that stanza six outlines, where "things greater are in less contained" (6.44). Further, like the adornment of poor that signifies the "mark of grace" of the Fairfax estate (9.66), the nightingale's high song "adorns" this "temple green" (65.515). In a brilliantly inventive and subtly allusive way, the first six stanzas of the speaker's retreat put into practice some of the conclusions that the preceding parts of the poem have drawn. This manner of sophisticated self-referentiality is consistent with the poetic ethos of a work in which a character comments on one of the poem's more outlandish, perhaps preciously metaphysical, comparisons ("He called us Israelites" [51.406]).⁷⁰⁹

The seriousness with which we are to take this enactment, though, is soon called into question. Not long after the speaker attempts to enact the architectural and moral principles, things go wrong. "Wrong," though, may be too severe a word and assumes a seriousness towards its subject that the speaker insouciantly relinquishes. Indications of the parodic first

⁷⁰⁸ Cf. McColley, *Poetry and Ecology*, 32.

⁷⁰⁹ See Frank J. Warnke, "The meadow-sequence in 'Upon Appleton House': Questions of tone and meaning," in *Approaches to Marvell: The York Tercentenary Lectures*, ed. C.A. Patrides (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 234-250, 238 for a discussion of the disruption.

become apparent when the speaker describes himself as “careless”: “Then as I careless on the bed / Of gelid strawberries do tread” (67.529). “Careless” probably modifies “tread,” but it could also modify “I” as a result of its adjectival form. The speaker’s carelessness compares with the merry frivolity of the “careless victors” who “danc[e] the triumphs of the hay” (54.425-6). Then, in what M.J.K. O’Loughlin finds indicative of his “metamorphic high jinks,” the speaker calls himself an “easy philosopher” (71.561).⁷¹⁰ Performing with little effort that which requires arduous mental exertion surely is careless, and the phrase seems to me symptomatic of the ludic tone the poem now employs.

The climax of this parodic episode occurs when a comic inversion takes place. The speaker comes to resemble that which he has defined himself staunchly against: “The oak leaves me embroider all... / And ivy, with familiar trails, / Me licks, and clasps, and curls, and haies, / Under this antic cope I move / Like some great prelate of the grove” (74.587-592). Arrayed in all the accoutrements of his great prelacy, the speaker resembles that prelate (possibly Richard Neile) who inhabited “proud Cawood Castle” (46.363). Eroticism informs the ivy’s sinuous envelopment of the speaker, as it licks and clasps onto him like an intertwining lover.⁷¹¹ As Gary D. Hamilton has remarked, the sensuousness of the speaker’s relation to the natural world has connotations of Laudianism.⁷¹² Carnality was a charge often levied against the Laudian Church. Critics decried Laud as a “carnall man,” and Laudian ceremonialism and support for the Book of Sports were thought to encourage carnal behavior.⁷¹³ A Laudian connotation can also

⁷¹⁰ M.J.K. O’Loughlin, “This Sober Frame: A Reading of ‘Upon Appleton House,’” in *Andrew Marvell: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. George de Forest Lord (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), 120-142, 134.

⁷¹¹ See M.C. Bradbrook, “Marvell and the Poetry of Rural Solitude,” *RES* 17 (1941): 39.

⁷¹² “Marvell, Sacrilege, and Protestant Historiography,” 177.

⁷¹³ See Anon, *A prophecie of the life, reigne, and death of VVilliam Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1644), 4; see Burton, *For God, and the King*, 156; John Bastwick, *The answer of John Bastvvick, Doctor of Phisicke, to the information of Sir Iohn Bancks Knight* (Leiden, 1637), 14.

be derived from the “antic cope” that the speaker furls about himself. Complaints about the cope and depictions of Anglicans wearing it figure largely into anti-Laudian polemic. For instance, in Peter Smart’s 1640 petition to the Long Parliament, he offers this criticism of Richard Neile’s governance of Durham Cathedral: “And they bought...another cope which cost about ten groats, which had been a long time used by the youth of Durham in their sports and May games, a very fool’s coat.”⁷¹⁴ Smart portrays the prebends as particularly desperate for copes in their willingness to use discarded sports jerseys and maypole streamers to assemble one.

Summarizing Laudian “inventions” in *The Rehearsall Transpros’d*, Marvell lists “Candles, Crucifixes, Paintings, Images, Copes” among other innovations.⁷¹⁵ The recurrence of complaints against the cope in anti-Laudian literature suggests the unhappiness with this innovation, and how the speaker’s “antic cope” has Laudian connotations.⁷¹⁶ The cope, an ornamental adornment signifying clericalism and separation between clergy and laity, represents the self-indulgent pomposity of this retreat. In his own mind, and bedecked in affirming garb, the speaker truly has become “great.” Then, with the help of his technicolor dreamcope, he dissolves further into the monastic solitude of retreat before lapsing into the sexual impropriety the nuns practiced and Laud was accused of: “Hide trifling youth thy pleasures slight. / ‘Twere shame that such judicious eyes / Should with such toys a man surprise” (82.652-654).⁷¹⁷

Brilliantly expressing the result of his carnal ritualism and self-indulgent solipsism, the speaker’s retreat into the wood becomes simply masturbatory.

⁷¹⁴ Peter Smart, *Canterburies crueltie* (London, 1643), 1-2.

⁷¹⁵ 1.188-9.

⁷¹⁶ See Richard Culmer, *Cathedrall Newes* (London, 1644), 22; Hamon L’Estrange, *The reign of King Charles an history* (London, 1655), 217 (not an anti-Laudian polemic, but it relates the controversy over the cope); Prynne, *A quench-coale* (Amsterdam, 1637), 108.

⁷¹⁷ See Hirst and Zwicker, “High Summer,” 267 for the lines’ “inescapably sexual” meaning; see also Cotterill, “Marvell’s Watery Maze,” 104.

Behind this languishing, we can discern a distinct structural rationale. The speaker's fall into Laudianism, into the easy inducements of a sensual and ritualistic worship, will emphasize Maria and Fairfax's overcoming it. His defeat will further magnify their victory. In this sense, the sacrificial persona the speaker adopts in stanza 77, while certainly melodramatic, is not inaccurate. Derek Hirst and Steven Zwicker contend that the poet "serves as surrogate, scapegoat" for the idleness of solipsistic retreat.⁷¹⁸ The brambles that chain and the briars that nail offer up the immolation of the speaker that prepares for the greatest encomium to the Fairfaxian oak.

IV. Engagement and Exodus

The entrance of Maria consummately dispels any lapse into Laudian ceremonialism, sensuality, and self-importance: "Maria such, and so doth hush / The world... / No new-born comet such a train / Draws through the sky, nor star new-slain. / For straight those giddy rockets fail, / Which from the putrid earth exhale, / But by her flames, in heaven tried, / Nature is wholly vitrified" (86.681-688). In a somewhat unsettling way, Maria is such a potent figure that her existence overwhelms the processes of life. Birth and death, the recently born ("new-born") and recently dead ("new-slain"), both cease.⁷¹⁹ Similar to the effect the halcyon has on the air, all things are suspended in the placid viscosity of her presence. Reflecting this suspension, the final two lines of the stanza allude to the sea of glass of Revelation 4:6 and, primarily, 15:2: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea

⁷¹⁸ "High Summer," 257.

⁷¹⁹ See Evett "Paradise's Only Map," 512 for more on the stanza.

of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God...”

(Revelation 15:1-3).⁷²⁰ Maria is placed among those victors whose association with the sea of glass indicates their victory over the beast. She is representative, though, of Thomas Fairfax, and it is his presence that is most strongly felt in the allusion.⁷²¹

The Lord General’s presence can be derived from the poem’s original circulation context. Fairfax’s own poetry influenced Marvell’s “Upon Appleton House,” and allusions to the sea of glass may be another manifestation of that influence. Fairfax’s manuscript poetry contains poetic renderings of the “Songs of the Old & New Testament,” including “Moses Songe: Exodus 15.” Typological readings of Exodus 15, in which the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites prefigures the Saints standing on the sea of glass, were common. In Henry More’s *The two last dialogues treating of the kingdome of God within us and without us* (1668), Philopolis asks whether the Red Sea is present in Revelation 15:2, to which Philotheus replies confidently, “yes, manifestly.” “It is said,” he explains, “in that Song of Moses which the Israelites sung, The flouds stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the midst of the Sea; that is to say, the Red Sea became as Ice, for its fixedness and transparency. And here it is called a Sea of Glass for the same reason. Are these Metaphors so different?” (105).⁷²² Thomas Fairfax’s description of the congealed depths in “Moses Songe: Exodus 15” gives a sense of this lack of difference by highlighting the deeps’ glassy solidity: “Thy Nosthrills wth a blast haue layde / The liquid Seas on solid heapes / The floating waues ther wth were stay’d / As Ice Congealed in the

⁷²⁰ See Margarita Stocker, *Apocalyptic Marvell: The Second Coming in Seventeenth Century Poetry* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1986), 60 for her discussion of the allusion to Revelation; see Vitaliy Eyber, *Andrew Marvell’s “Upon Appleton House”: An Analytic Commentary* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), 228-9 for the lines’ neo-Platonic connotations.

⁷²¹ See Diane Purkiss, “Marvell, Boys, Girls, and Men: Should We Worry?” in *Gender and Early Modern Constructions of Childhood*, ed. Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2011), 181-92, 183 for a similar point.

⁷²² Henry More, *The two last dialogues treating of the kingdome of God within us and without us* (London, 1668), 105.

depths.”⁷²³ Fairfax captures the fixity that More argues connects the glass and Red seas by describing an abrupt cessation of movement—laying the liquid seas and staying the waves. While an intertextual dialogue between poet and patron implicates Fairfax in the sea of glass image, he is also present because he has previously been likened to Moses and the forests of Appleton House to the Red Sea: “Here in the morning tie my chain, / Where the two woods have made a lane; / While, like a guard on either side, / The trees before their Lord divide” (78.617-620). Frederic H. Roth, Jr. refers to Fairfax in these lines as a “modern-day Moses.”⁷²⁴ As Peter Schwenger notes, the lines recall the reference to Moses and the Red Sea during the mower episode: “The tawny mowers enter next; / Who seem like Israelites to be, / Walking on foot through a green sea. / To them the grassy deeps divide, / And crowd a lane on either side” (49.388-392).⁷²⁵ The trees “divide” before Fairfax as the grassy deeps divided before the mowers; the woods make the kind of “lane” that the grassy deeps crowded on each side. Through allusion to his manuscript poetry and the poem’s likening of him to Moses, Thomas Fairfax also stands on that sea of glass in triumph over anti-Christ. One of the beast’s identities is, of course, the Roman anti-Christ. But Laud and his Church represent equally tenable possibilities.

⁷²³ Edward Bliss Reed, “The Poems of Thomas Third Lord Fairfax,” *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* 14 (1909): 255.

⁷²⁴ Frederic H. Roth, Jr., “Marvell’s ‘Upon Appleton House’: A Study in Perspective,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 14 (1972): 279. The Mosaic persona complements the speaker’s earlier reference to Fairfax’s interest in Hermetic philosophy. For fuller discussions of the lines and/or Hermeticism, see Charles Molesworth, “‘Upon Appleton house’: The Persona as Historian, Philosopher, and Priest,” *SEL* 13 (1973): 149-162; Warren L. Chernaik, *The Poet’s Time: Politics and Religion in the Work of Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge University Press, 1983), 36-37; and especially Maren-Sofie Røstvig, “‘Upon Appleton House,’” in *Marvell: Modern Judgments*, ed. Michael Wilding (London: Macmillan, 1969), 215-232.

⁷²⁵ Peter Schwenger, “‘To Make His Saying True’: Deceit in ‘Appleton House,’” *Studies in Philology* 77 (1980): 84-104.

In the 1640s, polemical depictions of Laud as the beast and those successfully resistant to him as standing on the sea of glass were quite frequent.⁷²⁶ In the 1641 anti-episcopal tract *A complaint of the false prophets mariners*, John de la Marche describes those passing through the “sea of glasse mingled with fire” as having “gotten the victorie of the beast, and of his image,” which he associates with “new erected Altars,” “Idols & Crucifixes,” and “will worship & superstitious ceremonies.”⁷²⁷ Though those passing over the sea of glass have achieved victory over the beast, De la Marche’s sea is not placid, but mingled with the fire of persecution. To end this persecution, the tract urges root and branch extirpation of episcopacy. An implicit juxtaposition of saints on the sea of glass with persecuting Laudianism also occurs in the millenarian John Archer’s *The Personall Reigne of Christ upon Earth* (1642). In the tract, Archer envisions the triumph of the godly: “the Saints...seene on a glassie Sea, with Moses song, because as then all the Aegyptians were drowned in the Red Sea; so now, all the wicked are slain, for before Christs coming the wicked shall weare out the Saints.”⁷²⁸ Laud’s reputation as persecutor of the Saints *par excellence* makes him an implicit referent of Archer’s “wicked.”⁷²⁹ Finally, an anonymous 1644 tract maintains “the Parliament are fitly called a Sea of glasse.” Despite their saintly status, the tract relates how “the Beast of England and his fellow-Prelats; having joyned with the Beast of Rome, have raised war against the Parliament.” The author is nonetheless confident of the following: “we shall see that the Parliament are Them that have gotten the victory over the Beast.”⁷³⁰ With his role in the battle of Marston Moor in

⁷²⁶ For other examples, see John Bewick, *Confiding England vnder conflicts, triumphing in the midst of her terrors* (London, 1644), sig. A2^v; Stephen Marshall, *The song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lambe* (London, 1643), 5-8; Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, 279; Nathanael Homes, *The new world, or, the new reformed church* (London, 1641), 43-4.

⁷²⁷ John De la Marche, *A complaint of the false prophets mariners upon the drying up of their hierarchicall Euphrates* (London, 1641), 20-1.

⁷²⁸ John Archer, *The personall reigne of Christ upon earth* (London, 1642), 20.

⁷²⁹ See Henry Burton, *The grand imposter vnmasked* (London, 1644), 7.

⁷³⁰ *A prophetic of the life, reigne, and death of VVilliam Laud*, 5.

1644, and his appointment in 1645 as commander-in-chief of the Parliamentary forces, no one would be more central to the achievement of that victory than Thomas Fairfax. The applicability of the millenarian image from anti-Laudian polemic to Marvell's depiction of Fairfax indicates the poem's interpolation within—and responsiveness to—that polemical context.

The polemical discourse representing Laud as anti-Christ also indicates why “Upon Appleton House” would, to put it crudely, dig the Archbishop up six years after his death just to beat him up some more. Depicting Laud as the anti-Christ accrues to him a certain immortality. In Revelation 13:5, anti-Christ is said to reign for 42 months. But this number was remarkably fungible. As Edward Haughton maintains in *The rise, growth, and fall of Antichrist together with the reign of Christ* (1652), “these 42. months, or three years and a half, cannot be taken strictly for 42. of our months, or three of our years and a half.”⁷³¹ Christopher Ness confesses in *A compleat and compendious church-history* (1680), “Tis True, *Antichrists* Lease is much longer than Five Months, (even Forty-Two Months, *Rev.* 13. 5.) and his *beastly biting* hath lasted much longer.”⁷³² Since scripture is so exact about the reign of anti-Christ, Protestants who wanted to equate the pope with him had to play fast and loose with these numbers, changing the months to years,⁷³³ or making increasingly elaborate distinctions between the *rise* of anti-Christ and his *reign*.⁷³⁴ Anti-Catholicism, then, provides a strong inducement for elongating anti-Christ's reign. Otherwise, Catholics could disprove the pope's identity as the Beast by pointing to the long duration of his rule. Protestants had to find a way to make anti-Christ endure. For instance, in George Downname's *A treatise concerning Antichrist* (1603), he maintains, “and

⁷³¹ Edward Haughton, *The rise, growth, and fall of Antichrist together with the reign of Christ* (London, 1652), 108.

⁷³² Christopher Ness, *A compleat and compendious church-history* (London, 1680), 445.

⁷³³ Edmund Hall, *Manus testium movens* (London, 1651), 68; J.N., *The plain mans defence against popery* (London, 1675), 8.

⁷³⁴ Henry More, *Paralipomena prophetica* (London, 1685), 250; Edward Haughton, *The rise, growth, and fall of Antichrist together with the reign of Christ*, 108-10.

therefore when we proued that Antichrist is not any one man alone, but a whole state and succession of men, we proued this by consequence, that his raigne was not to continue only three yeers and a halfe.”⁷³⁵ There is a certain deathless permanence to anti-Christ that makes Fairfax’s victory over its Laudian incarnation at once glorious, but also a reminder that the Beast will only ever be permanently destroyed at the Second Coming. The latter explains why depicting triumph over a Laudian Beast would still have exigence in 1651.

In addition to anti-Laudian polemic, Marvell’s placement of Fairfax on the sea of glass has an extensive connection to the martial millenarianism Fairfax was associated with in the 1640s. As the rider on the white horse (Revelation 19:11), Fairfax was often depicted as an Elect warrior combating anti-Christ.⁷³⁶ After Fairfax’s stunning victory over Goring at Wakefield in 1643, Francis Cheynell prefaces his sermon to the House of Commons with a quotation of Revelation 19:19-20: “And I saw the Beast and the Kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together, to make war against him that sate on the Horse, and against his army. And the Beast was taken, and with him the false Prophet.---These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”⁷³⁷ The Leveller prophet George Foster, in *The Sounding of the Last Trumpet* (1650), relates how a vision was revealed to him of “a white horse and one upon him with a sword in his hand ready drawn.”⁷³⁸ Foster inquires, “what is this Generals name? and the Lord said, his name is Fairfax” (19). The rider of the white horse helps defeat the persecutors of God’s saints by throwing them “into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone”: “for this lake of fire, is my wrath (saith God) into which I have judged and sentenced proud flesh (that opposes

⁷³⁵ George Downname, *A treatise concerning Antichrist* (London, 1603), 78.

⁷³⁶ See Hopper, ‘*Black Tom*,’ 173-89. Hopper also cites these sermons, though he is using them to discuss Fairfax’s biography and not Marvell’s poem.

⁷³⁷ Francis Cheynell, *Sions memento, and Gods alarum* (London, 1643), title page.

⁷³⁸ George Foster, *The Sounding of the Last Trumpet* (London, 1650), 17. Subsequent references to this work’s page numbers appear in parentheses.

me.)” (22). In the same way that Revelation 15 recalls the song of Moses in Exodus, commentators conflate the “lake of fire burning with brimstone” of Revelation 19 with the “sea of glass mingled with fire” of Revelation 15.⁷³⁹ Illustrating the conflation, Nathaniel Crouch writes, “and Death and Hell was cast into the Lake of fire, and a Seal was set on the power thereof...and all forms of Nature shined out of the Glassy Sea, (on which the redeemed of God stood Harping and Singing, and Praying God) which was sparkling like fire.”⁷⁴⁰ The conflation of the lake of fire and sea of glass reveals how a martial connotation is available in Marvell’s depiction of Fairfax standing on the glassy sea. At Nun Appleton in 1651, this availability is of contemporary significance.⁷⁴¹ When Marvell likely wrote “Upon Appleton House” (late June-August 1651), calls for Fairfax’s return to the battlefield were insistent. The Scots were already in Lancashire when the Council of State pleaded with Fairfax to help defend from invasion. Fairfax eventually raised the Yorkshire militia and briefly united with Cromwell in military endeavors.⁷⁴² Should Fairfax choose to participate in the political crisis of the summer of 1651, then the poem stands poised to license such engagement. License, but not adjure, for the image cuts another way as well.

Though the sea of glass is rife with martial connotations, it also alludes to Fairfax’s pious occupation in his retirement. Earlier in the poem, Marvell praises Fairfax for cultivating the kind of conscience “that in the crowns of saints do shine” (45.360). In the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation, the saints who sit before the sea of glass “had on their heads crowns of

⁷³⁹ See also Thomas Burnet, *The theory of the earth* (London, 1697), 54.

⁷⁴⁰ Nathaniel Crouch (R.B.), *The Revelation of God & his glory sounded forth* (London, 1665), 257-8.

⁷⁴¹ The best account of the proximity remains Hirst and Zwicker’s “High Summer.”

⁷⁴² See Hopper, *‘Black Tom,’* 116.

gold” (4:4).⁷⁴³ Viewed against the backdrop of Fairfax tilling conscience, the image of the sea of glass affirms the pious pursuits of retired life at Nun Appleton. The most innovative way the image supports Fairfax’s retirement, though, is by redefining it as an exodus. The redefinition is possible because Fairfax’s depiction as Moses in stanza 78 culminates in his glorious crossing of the sea of glass in stanza 86. As we have seen, Moses’ parting of the Red Sea and the deliverance of the Israelites were read typologically as prefiguring the saints passing over the sea of glass. In David Pareus’ formulation, the saints are “brought thorow the vast sea of this world” as the Israelites were brought out of “Egyptian servitude.”⁷⁴⁴ By defining Fairfax’s life at Nun Appleton as an exodus, the poem argues that it is not a withdrawal, surrender, abandonment, or capitulation. Exodus can be a coming into, as Donne’s commentary on Exodus in *Essayes in divinity* (1651) makes clear: “In this book our entrance is a going out: for Exodus is Excitus.”⁷⁴⁵ The summons (“excitus”) that Donne attributes to exodus is based on the words’ lexical similarity, but also God’s deliverance of His chosen people out of the hands of their oppressors. As the Hebraic scholar Henry Ainsworth posits in *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses* (1627), the summons testifies to the presence of regenerative grace: “In Exodus, is the type of our regeneration...”⁷⁴⁶ Through recurrent allusions to the Red Sea narrative and the final allusion to Revelation 15, the poem valorizes Fairfax’s retirement as an exodus; that is, a heroic victory for the godly over the forces of bestial persecution, an entrance not an exit, and a sign of regenerative grace. In so doing, it responds to those critical of Fairfax’s resignation. Many felt

⁷⁴³ For equating of the “four and twenty elders” of Revelation 4:4 with the saints, see William Alleine, *The mystery of the temple and city described in the nine last chapters of Ezekiel* (London, 1679), 82; Thomas Wilson, *A complete Christian dictionary* (London, 1661), 188.

⁷⁴⁴ David Pareus, *A commentary upon the divine Revelation of the apostle and evangelist, Iohn* (Amsterdam, 1644), 368-9.

⁷⁴⁵ John Donne, *Essayes in divinity*, (London, 1651), 81.

⁷⁴⁶ Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses, the booke of the Psalmes, and the Song of Songs, or, Canticles* (London, 1627), sig. A4^r. Francis Roberts includes Ainsworth’s interpretation in *Clavis Bibliorum* (London, 1648), 6.

like Lucy Hutchinson when she bemoaned that Fairfax “threw up his commission at such a time, when it could not have been done more spitefully and ruinously to the whole parliament interest.”⁷⁴⁷ Redefining withdrawal from public life as an exodus not only answers critics of Fairfax’s retirement, but it also supplies him with justification to persist in it, should he so choose. Ingeniously, then, the sea of glass can accommodate and support both options Lord Fairfax was faced with in the summer of 1651: engagement or exodus.

While scholars have proposed various arguments about how Marvell endorses or criticizes Fairfax’s retirement,⁷⁴⁸ and some have even come to a similar conclusion as this essay regarding the poem’s non-committal answer to the question of Fairfax’s engagement,⁷⁴⁹ how anti-Laudian discourse provides the terms (i.e. sea of glass/triumph over anti-Christ) in which that answer is voiced remains unacknowledged. More largely, we have seen anti-Laudianism in “Upon Appleton House” take the following forms: the opening stanzas contrast the humble design of Nun Appleton with the beauty of holiness’ palatial superfluity; the monastery narrative refutes not only Catholic, but also Laudian, ascetic practice; the height of parody during the speaker’s retreat into the wood occurs when he resembles the empty ritualism and carnality of an Anglican prelate. Finally, illustrating Laudianism’s integral place in “Upon Appleton House,”

⁷⁴⁷ Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, ed. Julius Hutchinson; rev. C.H. Firth (London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1906), 278.

⁷⁴⁸ See John Rogers, *The Matter of Revolution: Science, Poetry, and Politics in the Age of Milton* (Cornell University Press, 1996), 86; Rosalie L. Colie, “My Echoing Song”: *Andrew Marvell’s Poetry of Criticism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970), 225; David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics 1627-1660* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 289-292; Andrew Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics, & Literature in the Age of Milton: War and Peace Reconciled* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 51-52; Marshall Grossman, *The Story of All Things: Writing the Self in English Renaissance Narrative Poetry* (Duke University Press, 1998), 213; Diane Purkiss, “Thinking of Gender” in *The Cambridge Companion to Andrew Marvell*, ed. Derek Hirst and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 68-86, 76-77; Leah S. Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell, and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (The University of Chicago Press, 1986), 262; R.I.V. Hodge, *Foreshortened Time: Andrew Marvell and Seventeenth-Century Revolutions* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1978), 145 (among many examples).

⁷⁴⁹ See Hirst and Zwicker, “High Summer,” 263-4.

the poem's conclusion shows how Fairfax's presence among the saints is predicated on triumph over a Laudian anti-Christ.

As an explanation of the negative reaction to Laudian asceticism and, more largely, Laudian Anglicanism, this chapter uses Marvell to provide, I think, a fairly complete account. However, what's still very much needed in this study is a positive articulation of puritan asceticism rather than its definition by negation. This is the goal of the following chapter, as we turn to consider self-denial in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Chapter 6

Leaving It All: *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Puritan Self-Denial

John Bunyan and his work have often been read as illustrating the new importance that interiority and the individual came to have in early modern England. Stuart Sim definitively asserts, “*The Pilgrim's Progress* is very much a celebration of individualism.”⁷⁵⁰ Roger Lundin also stresses the allegory's capacity to affirm individuality: “John Bunyan was one of those ‘ordinary English men’ who possessed an extraordinary gift for giving voice to what Charles Taylor has called that ‘inexhaustible inner domain’ of the self that was discovered in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.”⁷⁵¹ Bunyan has also been connected to the way in which Reformation practices helped facilitate the discovery of this inner domain. By placing biblical interpretation into the hands of each individual believer and decreasing mediation between him and God, some argue that the Reformation helped to champion a new sense of self. “Protestants in general,” David L. Jeffrey maintains, “have usually presented individualism—even in biblical interpretation—as pretty much an unmitigated good.”⁷⁵² Jeffrey then adduces Bunyan's comments about interpreting the Bible as exemplary of this good. Despite the ways in which Bunyan has been seen to reflect the individualistic Protestant self, there have been critiques of too closely associating him with it. For instance, J.C. Davis contends that in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666) an autonomous subject is difficult to find, and Roger Pooley posits that subjection, as opposed to the subject, is an apt term to describe identity in the autobiography.⁷⁵³ Thomas H. Luxon offers a subtle and complex account of how Bunyan and

⁷⁵⁰ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Hertfordshire, 1996), xii.

⁷⁵¹ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (New York, 1964; rev. 2002), xiv.

⁷⁵² David L. Jeffrey, *House of the Interpreter: Reading Scripture, Reading Culture* (Waco, 2003), 6.

⁷⁵³ J.C. Davis, “Living with the Living God: Radical Religion and the English Revolution,” in Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (eds.), *Religion in Revolutionary England* (Manchester, 2006), 19-41, 31-5; Roger Pooley, “Grace

Reformed Christianity are “incessantly about the business of othering” and that they even other the self.⁷⁵⁴ This chapter contributes to the work of Davis, Pooley, and Luxon in problematizing the notion of Bunyan and individualism by proposing the integral importance of self-denial to *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.

To illustrate the problematic Protestant relationship to the self, the interpretive power that scriptural exegesis gave to Protestants, and which Jeffrey finds to foster individuality, could also be understood as self-diminishing. In William Tyndale’s 1531 exposition of the first epistle of St. John, he asserts that scripture

can corrupt no man that commeth therto with a meke sprite, sekyng there onely to fashion him selfe lyke Christ, accordyng to the profession and vowe of our Baptisme. But contrarywise, hee shall there finde the myghtie power of GOD, to alter hym, and chaunge hym in the inner man a litle and litle in processe vntill he be full shappen after the image of our Sauour.⁷⁵⁵

Tyndale describes a process of self-diminution that will progress, slowly chipping away at the self, until God be all in all. In *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, that diminution turns into outright denial. This does not mean, though, that the self is unimportant to Bunyan, and puritanism more generally. A process of self-denial that attempts to extirpate subjectivity cannot help but manifest an avid interest in the self, intensely scrutinizing every instance of interiority. But the

Abounding and the New Sense of Self,” in Anne Laurence, W.R. Owens, and Stuart Sim (eds.), *John Bunyan and His England, 1628-88* (London, 1990), 105-14, 106.

⁷⁵⁴ Thomas H. Luxon, *Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation* (Chicago, 1995), 26.

⁷⁵⁵ William Tyndale, *The vvhole workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes* (London, 1573), 389. Cf. Thomas Cranmer, *Certayne sermons* (London, 1547), sig. B1^v.

consequence of that interest is not a celebration of the individual. The importance of the self deriving from a desire to obliterate it stands in stark contrast to the unabashed individualism so often found in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Bunyan's allegory advocates this obliteration for, as we shall see, his ascetic thought consists of a particularly acute form of self-denial.

Before considering self-denial in Bunyan, it will be useful to begin by showing where his thinking maps onto the puritan/Anglican and spiritual/corporal ascetic divide we have been examining. Not surprisingly, we find in *The Pilgrim's Progress* some disregard for ascetic practices often associated with Catholicism or, as I have argued, Laudian Anglicanism. Bunyan takes a negative view of corporal ascetic acts in *A treatise of the fear of God* (1679), arguing about Catholic asceticism,

How has it wrakt and tortered [sic] the Papists for hundreds of years together, for what else is the cause but this ungodly fear, at least in the most simple and harmless of them, of their penances, as creeping to the Cross, going barefoot on pilgrimage, whipping themselves, wearing of sackcloth, saying so many paternosters, so many avemaries, making so many confessions to the Priest, giving so much money for pardons, and abundance of other the like, but this ungodly fear of God?⁷⁵⁶

It is ironic that ungodly fear, rather than acts of physical severity, is what really wracks and tortures Catholics. By applying the language of physical austerity to ungodliness, Bunyan effectively undermines the whole Catholic system of asceticism. A critique of merit further accomplishes the undermining. Catholics attempt to ingratiate themselves with God through the sheer number of their severe acts. "So many," "so many," "so many," "so much," and

⁷⁵⁶ John Bunyan, *A treatise of the fear of God* (London, 1679), 47.

“abundance” reflect the Roman location of pious observance in quantity, rather than quality. These “inventions” and “performances” ultimately manifest a lack of belief in the doctrine of justification: “for could they be brought to believe this Doctrine, that Christ was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, and to apply it by faith with Godly boldness to their own souls, this fear would vanish, and so consequently all those things with which they so needlessly and unprofitably afflicted themselves.”⁷⁵⁷ Like many Protestants, Bunyan reorients a Catholic salvific economy based upon works towards one based upon faith. Opposing justification to asceticism, Bunyan claims that the latter denies imputed righteousness by trying to supplant it with a supererogatory (“so many...so many”) fulfillment of the Law.

Bunyan’s unease with Catholic asceticism, and the theology behind it, is articulated in the attitude towards virginity in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. This attitude is apparent in interpretations of Revelation 14:4. In this passage, the 144,000 are able to learn the “new song,” since “these are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins” (Revelation 14:3-4).⁷⁵⁸ As we have seen, a literal interpretation of the text was often used to privilege virginity over marriage. In part I, while relating to Pliable what awaits them at their journey’s end, Christian states, “there we shall see the Holy Virgins with their Golden Harps.”⁷⁵⁹ Virginity is clearly privileged here, but what kind? In order to understand the view of virginity articulated in this merely passing reference, we need to consider allusion to Revelation 14:4 in part II. During Christiana’s dream, she sees this vision of “Christian her Husband in a place of Bliss among many Immortals, with an Harp in his Hand”: “Then shouted a Company of them that stood round about, and harped with their Harps: but no man living could tell what they said, but Christian and his Companions”

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid., 46-7.

⁷⁵⁸ *King James Study Bible*, ed. Kenneth Barker (Michigan, 2002).

⁷⁵⁹ All quotations of Bunyan are from John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, ed. James Blanton Wharey, rev. Roger Sharrock (Oxford, 1928; rev. 1960), 13. Future references to page numbers will be made in the text.

(179). In Revelation 14:4, those who can hear the new song are “not defiled with women; for they are virgins.” The fact that Christian can hear the song, and some of his pilgrim companions, indicates a non-literal interpretation of the passage. The married, parental Christian is obviously not a virgin. His virginity consists in marital chastity and a spiritual condition, not bodily inviolability. Bunyan, therefore, proffers a more inclusive interpretation of Revelation. Or, more accurately, inclusive with respect to the bodily virginity stipulated by Revelation, but certainly still exclusive with respect to piety; there is no doubt that those hearing the song are the Elect. Inclusion is also evident in a subtle elision of the 144,000 and those playing the harps in the passages from parts I and II. Revelation does not make it clear whether the harpers playing the new song and the virgins who can learn that song are the same. The harpers might be an angelic host, whereas the 144,000 are those “redeemed from the earth” (Revelation 14:3). In this reading, the distinction between playing the new song and learning it is maintained such that the exclusivity—and the condition upon which that exclusivity is based (i.e. virginity)—of the 144,000 receives emphasis. As two categories (harpers and 144,000) become one, the foundation upon which one category’s exclusivity was based is called into question. The foundation should not be sought, *The Pilgrim’s Progress* subtly urges, in a literal interpretation of “not defiled with women.” Mercie’s commentary on the prospect of dying unmarried confirms this view of virginity. After Mercie’s meeting with Mr. Brisk, she resolves, “if no body will have me, I will dye a Maid, or my Conditions shall be to me as a Husband” (228). In contrast with the maid in Rowland Watkyns’ poem “The Holy Maid,” Mercie does not resolve to remain unmarried because of virginity’s superior holiness to marriage; or, as Watkyns’ maid avers, because of its greater opportunity for conversing with God. Mercie does not value virginity in and of itself; it is not a desired choice, but an unavoidable eventuality. The less-than-

prized-status of virginity is also apparent in the phrase “I will dye a Maid.” This is a slighting, colloquial, and mildly derogatory way in which to refer to a condition exalted by some for its unparalleled piety. For instance, in the ballad “The love-sick maid,” the author cautions, “If twenty years be come and gone, / then mark what here is said, / Be constant to your first true Love, / for fear you dye a maid.”⁷⁶⁰ Dying a maid is something to be fearfully avoided.

Overall, however, though the reference to virginity may be slighting, Bunyan represents a more moderate view of marriage and virginity’s comparative holiness. He does allow for the single life to be a viable possibility. It is hard to imagine Heinrich Bullinger, Matthew Griffith, or Henry Burton, whose extravagant encomiums to marriage as a vocation and the ideal state we have examined, making such an allowance. If, as C. Newstead claims, “a man is neuer perfect until he be married,” then the effects of the single life on women—a much more imperfect being—could be deleterious indeed.⁷⁶¹ Though Watkyns and Bunyan may be quite far apart in some ways, Mercie’s decision that “my Conditions shall be to me as a Husband” may—accidentally—bring them into closer proximity. The holy maid and Mercie both “resolve” to remain virginal; the maid declares “I am resolved” and, in the margin, Bunyan refers to Mercie’s statements as her “resolution” (228).⁷⁶² The adoption of the verb is important, for both Bunyan and Watkyns eschew the much more charged, and laden with Roman Catholic connotations, “vow.” Additionally, with her “conditions”—that is to say, her life as a Christian and, synecdochally, Christ—serving as spouse, Mercie is not that different from Watkyns’ maid. She too was betrothed to Christ, and it was virginity that made the betrothal possible. Mercie may not seek virginity for that reason, but the text can sustain such a conclusion. Bunyan does not

⁷⁶⁰ Anon, *The love-sick maid quickly revived* (London, 1670-1696), broadside.

⁷⁶¹ C.N., *An Apology for Women* (London, 1620), 47.

⁷⁶² Rowland Watkyns, *Flamma sine Fumo* (London, 1662), 104.

elevate marriage to such a height that the virginal life cannot also be countenanced in certain—albeit unavoidable—circumstances. More largely, putting Bunyan’s animus towards physical asceticism in *A treatise of the fear of God* in perspective, even when denouncing it he is still able to express sympathy with the “most simple and harmless” of its adherents. In other words, the performance of acts of physical asceticism is not so deplorably impious as to preclude a sympathetic response.

Thomas H. Luxon has, I think, persuasively shown how “much of what Haller regarded as the best features of the ‘Puritan Art of Love’ have no place in Bunyan’s advice to Christian men and women.”⁷⁶³ The flip-side of the inapplicability of the puritan art of love is a relative openness, and some receptivity, to ascetic practices inimical to marriage and/or reflective of Anglo-Catholic, corporal asceticism. As one last example of this openness, in a lost edition of *Grace Abounding*, Bunyan claims, “it is a rare thing to see me carry it pleasant towards a Woman; the common salutation of a woman I abhor, ’tis odious to me in whosoever I see it. Their Company alone, I cannot away with. I seldom so much as touch a Womans Hand, for I think these things are not so becoming me.”⁷⁶⁴ Notice the potential disdain in which Bunyan holds women: “these things.” Probably the phrase refers to touching a woman’s hand. Each description of potential interaction is followed by a repudiation of it: “Their Company alone, I cannot away with.” But the numerical disagreement between the singular action of touching a woman’s hand and the plural “these things” also conscripts women as the referent. No other construction (description and repudiation) contains a similar incongruity, and women are, after all, the nearest plural subject (i.e. “Their Company”). Women are so objectionable that they

⁷⁶³ Thomas H. Luxon, “One Soul Versus One Flesh: Friendship, Marriage, and the Puritan Self,” in Vera J. Camden (ed.) *Trauma and Transformation: The Political Progress of John Bunyan* (Stanford, 2008), 81-99, 85.

⁷⁶⁴ John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, ed. Roger Sharrock (Oxford, 1962), para. 315.

cannot be named, and the derogatory tone of “these things” is positively misogynistic as a result. The concerted effort Bunyan makes to be frigid and unpleasant towards women, to regard them as deplorable, to avoid their company and, at all costs, coming into contact with one, is quite similar to the remedy that the Laudian William Watts prescribes for those afflicted with lust: “thus if a man finds himselfe prone to lust; Gods spirit bids him not come among women. They make sore his eyes, said Alexander. Tis as safe looking against the Sunne, as against beautie.”⁷⁶⁵ In order to mortify lust, one should consider women as painfully unpleasant as looking into the sun and isolate oneself accordingly. Both Watts and Bunyan find remedy for lust in a studied avoidance of, and manifesting a certain odium towards, women. As his similarity with the Anglican Watts portends, Bunyan’s ascetic thought is often more eclectic and flexible—able to, at times, overlap with the Anglican emphasis on corporal acts—than we have yet encountered. What makes him so interesting is that he is able to display that flexibility while still privileging the uniquely puritan austerity of self-denial throughout *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.

Perhaps the most memorable example of that self-denial is Christian leaving his family. At the beginning of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, Christian is exposed to scripture and the advice of Evangelist. What happens next is a result of that exposure. Bunyan depicts a remarkable scene of Christian running away from his family towards the Wicket-Gate:

So I saw in my Dream, that the Man began to run; Now he had not run far from his own door, but his Wife and Children perceiving it, began to cry after him to return: but the Man put his fingers in his Ears, and ran on crying, Life, Life, Eternal Life: so he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the Plain. (10)

⁷⁶⁵ William Watts, *Mortification Apostolicall* (London, 1637), 24.

What makes these lines so remarkable is how they effortlessly hold such violently contrasting meanings in suspension, animating the scene with a palpable dramatic tension. On the one hand, Christian seems like a deadbeat dad, deserting his wife and children in a spectacular display of selfishness. But contrasting with Christian's putative self-absorption and narcissism is the denial of self that pervades his flight. In the detail of Christian not looking behind him, Bunyan alludes to Lot's wife (Genesis 19:17) being turned to a pillar of salt for looking back at the destruction of Sodom. Bunyan's catechetical *Instruction for the ignorant* (1675) discusses Lot's wife in the section on self-denial. When asked to provide examples of individuals who "have not denied themselves when called thereto," the interlocutor cites "Lot's wife for but looking behind her towards Sodom when God called her from it...therefore remember Lots Wife, Gen.19.17.26."⁷⁶⁶ Though it does not seem like a selfless action, Christian looking behind him at the miserable family he is deserting would signify an indulgence of self consonant with the disobedience of Lot's wife.

The great interpretive challenge of this moment in *The Pilgrim's Progress* is that it requires a total transvaluation of what we would normally call selflessness. Christian's indifference, his blatant disregard for the ones he loves, witnesses self-denial. As Christian explains to Obstinate's disbelief at the prospect of leaving "our Friends, and our Comforts" behind, "that all, which you shall forsake, is not worthy to be compared with a little of that that I am seeking to enjoy" (11). Indicating the faultiness of Obstinate's thinking, Christian remarks that "for there where I go, is enough, and to spare" (11). What Obstinate regards as "all" is not at all comprehensive; its supposed extensiveness cannot touch—cannot even begin to grasp—the enormity of what Christian seeks. The totality that Obstinate so highly values cannot enclose

⁷⁶⁶ John Bunyan, *Instruction for the ignorant* (London, 1675), 62.

where Christian is going. If it were truly “all,” then there would not be “enough, and to spare” remaining. Moreover, the repetition of “that” may also point to the puny misguidedness of Obstinate’s reasoning. “*That* all” does not compare to “that that I am seeking.” Christian’s “that” proliferates; it is 100% larger than that which Obstinate finds to be encompassing. Whereas the “that” of “that all” is terse and compact, the subordinate clause of “that I am seeking to enjoy” extenuates Christian’s “that,” extending its reach, prolonging its expression, and making it more capacious. A demonstrative adjective, Obstinate’s “that” merely modifies, while Christian’s pronominal “that” actually signifies. The various ways in which Christian derogates Obstinate’s “all” suggest almost a disdain for the friends and comforts Obstinate is so solicitous about. In *Vindiciae redemptionis* (1647), the ejected minister John Stalham (d. 1667) describes the impetus for this disdain while discussing self-denial: “as for relative engagements to friends, parents, children, wives, husbands, kinred [sic], house and family; these are set by, and not known in Christs cause; yea, there is a kinde of comparative hatred of them, in respect of the Pearl and Treasure.”⁷⁶⁷ The “comparative hatred” that Stalham urges to self-deniers also informs Christian’s observation that friends and comforts—what Obstinate finds to be all—are “not worthy to be compared” with the kingdom of heaven. Bunyan is certainly more subtle about advocating the difficult doctrine of this hatred than Stalham. It is nonetheless evident in Christian’s use of the comparative construction, his denigration of Obstinate’s all, and in Christian’s dramatic enactment of self-denial in deserting his family.

In other details, too, Bunyan places concerted emphasis on Christian’s self-denying mindset. For instance, Christian perfectly illustrates Bunyan’s description of self-denial in *The resurrection of the dead and eternall judgement* (1665). To gauge whether one’s name is written

⁷⁶⁷ John Stalham, *Vindiciae redemptionis* (London, 1647), 155.

in the Book of Life, Bunyan asks, “What acts of self-denial, hast thou done for the name of the Lord Jesus, among the Sons of men? I say, what house, what friend, what Wife, what Children, and the like, hast thou lost, or left, for the Word of God, and the Testimony of his truth in the World.”⁷⁶⁸ In “lost, or left,” Bunyan’s deferral of the second term probably reflects its greater degree of difficulty. There is a considerable difference between losing one’s family for “the name of the Lord Jesus” and leaving it. Losing implies that family has been taken, perhaps in a time of persecution; leaving does not carry the same connotation of external circumstances compelling the action. Christian’s adoption of the latter reflects the severity of his self-denial.

The severity is also apparent in his cries of “Life, Life, Eternal Life.” In *Grace abounding to the chief of sinners* (1666), Bunyan’s spiritual autobiography, he writes about his endurance of affliction during imprisonment,

that Saying 2 Cor. 1.9. was of great use unto me, But we had the sentence of death in our selves, that we might not trust in our selves, but in God that raiseth the dead: by this Scripture I was made to see that if ever I would suffer rightly, I must first pass a sentence of death upon every thing that can properly be called a thing of this life, even to reckon my Self, my Wife, my Children, my health, my enjoyments and all, as dead to me, & my self as dead to them.⁷⁶⁹

An acknowledgment of a sentence of death in oneself allows for faith in resurrection, in a life beyond death and in “God that raiseth the dead.” Becoming dead to self, wife, and children manifests this life. Self-denial figures importantly in the vivification. While explaining self-denial, *Instruction for the Ignorant* counsels, “He that will save his life shall lose it, but he that

⁷⁶⁸ John Bunyan, *The resurrection of the dead and eternall judgement* (London, 1665), 160.

⁷⁶⁹ John Bunyan, *Grace abounding to the chief of sinners* (London, 1666), 89.

will lose his life for my sake, saith Christ, shall save it unto life Eternal.”⁷⁷⁰ By losing one’s life, eternal life is gained. Thomas Manton (bap. 1620, d. 1677), a leading Restoration non-conformist, expresses this paradox clearly in *One hundred and ninety sermons on the hundred and nineteenth Psalm* (1681): “Self-denial, when upon Hopes of the World to come, they grow dead to present Interests, and can hazard them for God, and can forsake all for a naked Christ, the World thinketh this humorous Folly.”⁷⁷¹ Christian’s actions are certainly labeled as “humorous Folly” (and worse) by Obstinate, who compares the pilgrim to “Craz’d-headed Coxcombs” (11). As Manton flatly declares, hope of life in the world to come causes deadness in this one. One must evince a kind of zombie-like indifference towards the things of this world to truly care about those of the next; he must disdainfully dismiss Obstinate’s “all” and, what’s more, even hate it. Christian’s desertion, therefore, and his cries of “Life, Life, Eternal Life” are indicative of becoming dead to present interests. Paradoxically, death signifies life. Previously, selfishness actually represented self-denial; now, a mortifying self-denial is actually vivifying. This thoroughly unsettling moment challenges the reader in its brilliant capacity to hold contradictory meanings in paradoxical suspension. This is also evident in Christian’s very gestures.

One of the remarkable aspects of Christian’s flight is the action of putting his fingers in his ears. Like his refusal to turn around, the gesture indicates Christian’s obstinate determination to remain implacably unmoved to his family’s cries. Though I have not found evidence that it has been interpreted in this way, Christian’s gesture alludes to Mark 7:32-4. In this passage, Jesus cures a blind and deaf man by placing his fingers into his ears and spitting on his tongue: “And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they

⁷⁷⁰ John Bunyan, *Instruction for the Ignorant*, 57.

⁷⁷¹ Thomas Manton, *One hundred and ninety sermons on the hundred and nineteenth Psalm* (London, 1681), 337.

beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.” Erasmus’ discussion of Mark 7:33 in the *Paraphrases* (1548) is particularly applicable to Christian’s experience:

As Christe did, so in manour doe the teachers of the gospel. They take men and leade them away from the multitude, when they call them backe from the brode way (by the which very many walke vnto damnacion) to the felowship of the litle flocke of true Christians. They put their fingers, into theyr eares, when perswadinge them to put no trust in thinges transitorie, they styrrre and exhorte them to embrace the heauenly doctrine.⁷⁷²

By leaving the world behind, Christian accomplishes one of the primary meanings Erasmus attributes to this passage; namely, drawing believers away from the multitude.⁷⁷³ Erasmus’ warnings about the “brode way” are also repeated to Christian: “Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, Do you see yonder Wicket-gate?” (10). The wicket-gate that lies across the wide field, and the “litle flocke” that congregate away from the “brode way,” both allude to Matthew 7:13-14 and its depiction of the narrow way. Moreover, Erasmus interprets the gospel teacher as simulating Christ’s insertion of his fingers into the deaf man’s ears. Exposure to the gospel (8-10) enabling this ear-clearing is a chronology that also obtains in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. Christian’s gesture signifies the effect the gospel has had on him: it has broken through a previous deafness to enliven his ears and heart with hearing. Interestingly

⁷⁷² Erasmus, *The first tome or volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Newe Testamente* (London, 1548), fo. liii^v.

⁷⁷³ Cf. N.B., *A journal of meditations for every day in the year gathered out of divers authors* (S.l., 1669), 410; George Petter, *A learned, pious, and practical commentary, upon the Gospel according to St. Mark* (London, 1661), 459.

enough, Erasmus also claims that those with open ears often exhibit the self-denying behavior Christian adopts. Those who “forsoke all that euer they had and folowed him” had their ears open.⁷⁷⁴ This is, of course, a key passage for those advocating self-denial, and (as we will see) the allegory later describes Christian as having achieved this degree of denial. Thus, Christian’s flight may be symptomatic of the effects Erasmus attributes ear-opening to have on believers. Paradoxically, Christian putting his fingers into his ears, while it does have the effect of drowning out the cries of his family, ultimately indicates the aural (really, spiritual) sensitivity of his newfound hearing to gospel truth. Thomas Watson, the Marian Bishop of Lincoln, expresses the paradox in a sermon on baptism. Watson discusses how the ritual of the priest placing his fingers into the child’s ears imitates “Christe when he healed the deafe and dombe manne.” Only now “the Priest in the persone of Christe doth open the eares and touche the nose of the childe that is borne spiritually deafe and dombe, that he shoulde nowe begynne to heare the voyce and woorde of GOD.”⁷⁷⁵ The action that impairs hearing actually represents its increased sensitivity.

The fingering of ears during baptismal ceremony and the widespread use of Mark 7:33 to validate the ritual suggest how Christian’s gesture might also be interpreted as a kind of baptism. Bunyan was, as Richard L. Greaves observes, an “open-membership, open communion Baptist with Reformed predestinarian views.”⁷⁷⁶ As he argues (based on Mark 1:8) in *A Confession of my Faith* (1672) and *Differences in Judgment about Water-Baptism, No Bar to Communion* (1673), true baptism is performed by the Spirit and the ritual is only a perfunctory, exterior sign.

⁷⁷⁴ Erasmus, *The first tome or volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Newe Testamente*, fo. liiii^r.

⁷⁷⁵ Thomas Watson, *Holsome and catholyke doctryne concerninge the seuen Sacramentes of Chrystes Church* (London, 1558), fo. xx^v.

⁷⁷⁶ Richard L. Greaves, “Bunyan, John (bap. 1628, d. 1688),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/3949>, accessed 9 July 2013].

Bunyan elaborates on this view in *A Confession of my Faith*: “now I say, he that believeth in Jesus Christ; that richer and better then that, viz. is dead to sin, and that lives to God by him, he hath the heart, power and doctrine of Baptism.”⁷⁷⁷ The heart and power of it mainly consist in the baptized knowing “that they have professed themselves, dead, and buried, and risen with him to newness of life.”⁷⁷⁸ Since Bunyan believed that the newness of life conferred in baptism is accomplished by the Spirit, Mark 7:33 provides an effective means for articulating the belief. Christ’s finger in Mark 7:33 is often interpreted as representing the Holy Spirit. The Danish Lutheran Niels Hemmingsen equates the two, noting, “God’s woorde can neither be heard nor vnderstood, vnlesse our eares be opened by Chrystes finger, that is too say, vnlesse the holy Ghoste doo open the eares of our hart.”⁷⁷⁹ Christian performing a common baptismal gesture, the ability of the allusion behind that gesture to express Bunyan’s own baptismal views about the Spirit, and Christian’s profession of baptismal regeneration (“Life, Life, Life Eternal”) demonstrates his undergoing baptism.

Christian’s baptism is an even more un-ceremonial event than Christiana and Mercie’s dip into Bath Sanctification in part II (207). In its lack of ceremonial fanfare, it exemplifies a theme that Kathleen M. Swaim finds integral to Bunyan’s baptismal views: “in the allegory as in the tracts, Bunyan privileges the spirit behind the practice, in effect deritualizing the church rites he represents or desymbolizing their data and action.”⁷⁸⁰ Christian’s performance of a priestly gesture that represents his own baptism certainly accomplishes the goal of church deritualization. It is also fitting to connect baptism and self-denial. R.J., in *Compunction or pricking of heart* (1648), observes a fundamental connection between the two: “Now Baptisme is a note of

⁷⁷⁷ John Bunyan, *A confession of my faith* (London, 1672), 87-8.

⁷⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 76-7.

⁷⁷⁹ Niels Hemmingsen, *A Postill, or, Exposition of the Gospels* (London, 1569), fo. 250^r.

⁷⁸⁰ Kathleen M. Swaim, *Pilgrim’s Progress, Puritan Progress: Discourses and Contexts* (Urbana, 1993), 211.

Christian profession, whereby we give our names, yea our selves to Christ, which I dare say it, none can ever truly do unless he deny himself; I speak of a powerfull profession, and such as in life answers that verbal profession made in our baptisme.”⁷⁸¹ Giving oneself over to Christ in self-denial is answerable to baptismal re-birth. The presence of baptism empowers this moment with even more self-denying potential. As R.J. notes, it is a “powerfull profession.” Christian does not simply deny himself. Rather, he dies to that self after being reborn in the newness of life.

The severe form of self-denial that characterizes Christian’s flight is found throughout part I. Referencing the indifference (even hatred) one must manifest towards his relations, at one point Christian responds to Mr. Worldly-Wiseman’s question of “hast thou a Wife and Children” by flatly declaring “I am as if I had none” (17). However, when Christian relates his conversation with Worldly-Wiseman to Evangelist, he says, “he asked me if I had a Family, and I told him: but, said I, I am so loaden with the burden that is on my back, that I cannot take pleasure in them as formerly” (21). This answer is quite different than Christian’s response to Worldly-Wiseman. Not taking pleasure in family members ameliorates the intensity of declaring oneself without them. Evangelist notices the lessening severity of Christian’s self-denial, of completely extricating himself from worldly entanglements, reminding him, “Thou must abhor his laboring to render the Cross odious unto thee.” To impress this upon Christian, Evangelist quotes Luke 14:26: “he that comes after him, and hates not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple” (23). The comparative disdain/hatred evident in Christian’s earlier explanation to Obstinate that his

⁷⁸¹ R.J., *Compunction or pricking of heart* (London, 1648), 316.

“all” cannot be compared to the “enough” of heaven is expressed even more directly in Evangelist’s counsel.

Self-denial also has a role in the climactic moment of the allegory. When Christian approaches the gate with other pilgrims, the “shining Ones” relate “these are the men that have loved our Lord, when they were in the World, and that have left all for his holy name” (160). In Bunyan’s definition of self-denial in *Instruction for the Ignorant*, he states, “it is for a man to forsake his All, for the sake of Jesus Christ.”⁷⁸² Indicating the integral role self-denial has played in his pilgrimage, the shining ones first describe the pilgrims to the heavenly host as self-deniers: that is how the pilgrims are introduced and what first testifies to their piety. Despite part I’s constant affirmation of self-denial, Christian still acknowledges the arduous difficulty of the doctrine. In response to Ignorance’s assertion that he has left all, Christian observes, “That I doubt, for leaving of all, is an hard matter, yea a harder matter then many are aware of” (145). In *A holy life* (1684), Bunyan draws a similar conclusion about the practices associated with self-denial, arguing about 1 Corinthians 6:12, “but this is a hard lesson, and impossible to be done except thou art addicted to self-denial.”⁷⁸³ Ultimately, it is acknowledgments like these that most clearly evince Bunyan’s genius for presenting the hardest of Christian truths in accessible forms. In *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, the rigors of self-denial are enjoined with a degree of empathy; they are not just dictated with the unfeeling coldness of one who has never experienced—and perhaps even failed at—the challenge they pose.

Part II is no less committed to an austere form of self-denial. This is apparent in the figure who is presented as an exemplar of it. When Prudence shows Christiana and her family the place of Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac, they exclaim, “Oh! What a man, for love to his Master

⁷⁸² John Bunyan, *Instruction for the Ignorant*, 54.

⁷⁸³ John Bunyan, *A holy life, the beauty of Christianity* (London, 1684), 152.

and for denial to himself, was Abraham” (233). To commemorate the occasion, Prudence even composes a short song on the virginals: “Eve’s apple we have shewed you, / Of that be you aware: / You have seen Jacobs Ladder too, / Upon which Angels are. / An Anchor you received have; / But let not these suffice, / Until with Abra’m you have gave, / Your best, a Sacrifice” (234). Adding theological heft to these seemingly plain lines, “suffice” probably glances at the Calvinist distinction between sufficient and effectual grace. The presence of effectual, not just sufficient, grace would be manifest in an act like self-denial. The apposition of “Your best, a Sacrifice” ingeniously expresses the potential difficulty of self-denial. “You have gave, / Your best” could mean giving one’s all; that is, exerting oneself to the limit. Or, “you have gave, / Your best” could mean giving the best offering (i.e. possession, object, or, even, child and family) as a sacrifice. In the duality of “your best,” the hardship of self-denial is subtly enclosed. Abraham is also a fitting exemplar for this hardship; his sacrifice of Isaac represents an extreme form of self-denial.⁷⁸⁴

Acknowledging the hardship, in *A treatise of self-denial* (1675), Richard Baxter concedes that flesh and blood will “make much resistance” and “many a striving thought there may be” at performing a sacrifice like Abraham’s. Despite this resistance, Baxter is adamant about the price true self-denial requires; namely, “there is nothing in this world so dear to you, but on deliberation you would leave it for God.”⁷⁸⁵ Francis Roberts (1609-1675), the Presbyterian who worked with Robert Baillie to advocate Presbyterianism in the 1640s, vividly captures the difficulty of Abraham’s denial in *Mysterium & medulla Bibliorum* (1657):

⁷⁸⁴ Cf. Samuel Smith, *The character of a weaned Christian* (London, 1675), 8-9; Ezekiel Hopkins, *The fourth (and last) volume of discourses, or sermons, on several scriptures* (London, 1696), 148-49. Of course, not only the godly observe the difficulty of Abraham’s sacrifice. See Obadiah Walker, *Of the benefits of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, to mankind* (Oxford, 1680), 223.

⁷⁸⁵ Richard Baxter, *A treatise of self-denial* (London, 1675), 81.

This was a stupendious undertaking indeed. What Faith: What love of God: What fear of the Lord: What Self-denial did shine forth in this obedient act! Behold, Abraham must kill, cut in pieces, and offer for a Burnt-offering, his own son, his only son Isaac...How many reasonings and objections against this, might have risen up in Abraham's Heart? Must I kill and Sacrifice mine Isaac? How shall a fathers hand be imbrued in such a childs blood? What will Sarah say; how will she weep, wring her hands, and refuse to be comforted, when she shall know it? What will all the Enemies of God say, when they shall hear of this Fact? This is Abraham: This is his Religion; he hath murdered his own child.⁷⁸⁶

Making the difficulty of Abraham's act real, Roberts graphically imagines—with an almost forensic accuracy—the various components of the sacrifice. The killing is bad enough, but having to dismember and dispose of the body in a ritual holocaust exacerbates the act's awfulness: it prolongs the contact—through interaction with the corpse—with the devastating reality of parricide. But the genius of Roberts' consideration of the sacrifice's aftermath can be found in his inclusion of Sarah. “What will Sarah say; how will she weep, wring her hands, and refuse to be comforted, when she shall know it?” In other words, how does Abraham (or, for that matter, *any* parent) tell his wife that he has just killed their beloved son? Beyond all the complex abstractions of faith, the love of God, godly-fear, and self-denial lie the mundane, real-life consequences of Abraham's action. How does he explain it, what will Sarah say, and what might be the disposition of her hands? The consequences take on almost a banal connotation in Roberts pondering even the motions of Sarah's hands. Within the “stupendious” obedience of Abraham's esoteric sacrifice (it is beyond reason), the simple facts of a life taken, and how to

⁷⁸⁶ Francis Roberts, *Mysterium & medulla Biblicorum* (London, 1657), 329.

explain its taking, are insistently present. The act will have, as Roberts notes, a kind of terrible definitiveness: “This *is* Abraham.” Like the holocaust that Abraham will make of Isaac, his whole existence will be consumed by this one action; he will become the sacrifice. Similar to Roberts exclamatory reflections on Abraham—“What love of God...What Self-denial did shine forth in this obedient act!”—Christiana and her family also express their admiration in exclamation: “Oh! What a man, for love to his Master and for denial to himself, was Abraham.” Reflection on the severity of Abraham’s self-denial is certainly not as prolonged or graphic in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. But, as we have seen, the duality of “your best” does capture something of the preciousness of what must be denied (not to mention, of course, Christian’s ear-plugging in part I). More largely, that Abraham is held up as an exemplar of denying oneself in the allegory suggests—based upon evidence from Baxter, Roberts, et al—the hardness of the self-denial *The Pilgrim’s Progress* valorizes.

The pilgrims’ journey to the Valley of Humiliation a few pages later complements this depiction of self-denial; indeed, it is an extension of it. Humiliation and self-denial are often discussed as working in conjunction. As Baxter succinctly concludes, “the most self-denying humiliation is the nearest way to heaven, and the most self-exalting Pride is the surest and nearest way to hell.”⁷⁸⁷ R.J. similarly connects the two, concluding, “self-humbling requires much self-denial.”⁷⁸⁸ Based on this connection, it is reasonable to view humiliation as an extension of self-denial and, therefore, a similarly ascetic phenomenon.

More specifically, humiliation is a godly sorrow and contrition for one’s sins that precipitates the sinner’s search for God. As Jeremiah Burroughs asks, did God “first prepare thy

⁷⁸⁷ Richard Baxter, *A treatise of self-denial*, 102.

⁷⁸⁸ R.J., *Compunction or pricking of heart*, 318.

heart, by a work of humiliation to seek him, and make up thy peace with him?”⁷⁸⁹ The sinner endeavors to make peace because humiliation causes “the meditation of mans alienation from Christ in his naturall estate.”⁷⁹⁰ Humiliation, though, is also an on-going process that does not stop after justification. Anthony Burgess, ejected for non-conformity in 1662 and erstwhile friend and critic of Richard Baxter, describes this as “an Humiliation of heart, and brokenness of soul for sin, arising from the apprehension of Gods love in pardoning.”⁷⁹¹ Mercie’s account of what one may experience in the valley stresses the benefit of humiliation: “Here one may think, and break at Heart, and melt in ones Spirit, until ones Eyes become like the Fish Pools of Heshbon” (239).⁷⁹² In commentary on 2 Corinthians, Burgess uses similar language to detail the effects of humiliation:

First, That spiritual humiliation and brokennesse of heart which thou hast found, may be very powerfull to perswade others of the bitternesse of sinne. Say with meltings of thy soul to them, Oh, if thou hadst known, if thou hadst ever felt what God hath made me feel, what wonderfull changes would be in thee immediately!⁷⁹³

In both Bunyan and Burgess, humiliation results in breaking one’s heart (“break at Heart” and “brokennesse of heart”), and it causes the soul or spirit to melt. That melting reflects the intensity of the godly sorrow that the humiliated undergoes. Samuel Slater (1629?-1704), an ejected minister who was also prosecuted in 1681 under the Five Mile Act, claims that if there

⁷⁸⁹ Jeremiah Burroughs, *The excellency of holy courage in evil times* (London, 1661), 153. See also Beth Lynch, *John Bunyan and the Language of Conviction* (Suffolk, 2004), 69.

⁷⁹⁰ Alexander Grosse, *Svveet and soule-perswading inducements leading unto Christ* (London, 1642), 312.

⁷⁹¹ Anthony Burgess, *The true doctrine of justification* (London, 1651), 267.

⁷⁹² Anthony Burgess associates breaking a hard heart, melting, and crying tears “like the Fish-pools of Heshbon” with a “detestation of sin” during the process of conversion. Anthony Burgess, *Spiritual refining* (London, 1652), 487.

⁷⁹³ Anthony Burgess, *An expository comment, doctrinal, controversial, and practical upon the whole first chapter to the second epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (London, 1661), 180.

were more repentance and knowledge of Christ, “there would be more soul meltings, and heart-breakings.”⁷⁹⁴ Transformation is also wrought in the believer as a consequence of this humiliation. For Burgess, “wonderfull changes” transform the sinner, and the wonderfully expressive “Eyes become like the Fish Pools of Heshbon” are indicative of a similar change in Bunyan. On the hand, this reference to The Song of Solomon 7:4 might denote a sorrow consonant with spirit-melting and heart-breaking. For instance, while outlining what comprises godly sorrow, Thomas Watson contends, “how few know what it is to be in an Agony for sin, or what a broken heart means; their eyes are not like the Fish-pools of Heshbon, full of water.”⁷⁹⁵ In addition to sorrow, if The Song of Solomon were understood allegorically as a dialogue between the individual believer and Christ, analogy with the fish pools could denote the sinner’s increasing pulchritude to the Bridegroom. In his commentary on The Song of Solomon, John Robotham (d. 1664), an army chaplain in the 1650s, paraphrases these verses as “in summe, her beauty is wonderfull in all parts, she is comely throughout... she is beautifull in every part, she is wholly delectable and full of glory.”⁷⁹⁶ In Beaumont’s poetry, asceticism made the individual believer more “delicious” to Christ; here, a similar delectability results. The example of Robotham demonstrates how Bunyan’s allusion to The Song of Solomon 7:4 entails a similar beautifying. Thus, the ascetic process of humiliation and self-denial (we have seen how interconnected the two are) that the sinner undergoes beautifies her.

The humiliation that Bunyan depicts also corresponds to the Anglican asceticism that we have examined in an even more unique way. The delights that the Valley of Humiliation affords are similar to those offered by monastic life. About them, Mr. Great-heart says, “here a man

⁷⁹⁴ Samuel Slater, *A treatise of growth in grace in sundry sermons* (London, 1671), 210.

⁷⁹⁵ Thomas Watson, *The godly mans picture drawn with a scripture-pensil* (London, 1666), 75.

⁷⁹⁶ John Robotham, *An exposition on the whole booke of Solomons song* (London, 1651), 692.

shall be free from the Noise, and from the hurryings of this life; all States are full of Noise and Confusion, only the Valley of Humiliation is that empty and Solitary Place. Here a man shall not be so let and hindred in his Contemplation, as in other places he is apt to be” (238). The contemplative life is, of course, shorthand for monasticism. Great-heart’s conclusion about how the world interferes with contemplation resonates with the Jesuit Girolamo Piatti’s observation about that interference in *The happines of a religious state* (1632). Piatti claims that “the quiet of a Religious life” allows for “the studie of heauenlie knowledge,” “for as no man can attentiuely think of anie thing in the midst of a great hurrie and noise, but in the dead of the night, or in a solitarie place, that verie silence and solitude doth inuite a man to contemplation.”⁷⁹⁷ For Piatti, the great hurry and noise dissipate in the silence, solitude, and contemplation of the religious life. In the Valley of Humiliation, the same dissipation occurs. Piatti also claims the unique capacity of a religious life for “the voluntarie humiliation of ourselues.”⁷⁹⁸

Descriptions of monastic life that depict it in terms similar to the Valley of Humiliation—that is, as solitary, affording time for contemplation, and escaping the noise of the world—are frequent. For instance, in Francis Godwin’s *The succession of the bishops of England* (1625?), Cardinal Pole’s “onely desire was to lead his life in quiet contemplation,” and so he retired to a monastery in Verona.⁷⁹⁹ Also emphasizing the monastic life’s potential for quiet escape from the noise of the world, a 1676 history of France recounts a courtier’s wish “to reside out of the noise of Troubles in a Monastery of Nuns.”⁸⁰⁰ Two antiquarian works illustrate the conjunction between monastic life and solitude. For instance, Serenus Cressy records St. Winnebald as “attending in the solitude of his Monastery to Prayer and Contemplation,” and Thomas Fuller

⁷⁹⁷ Girolamo Piatti, *The happines of a religious state* (Rouen, 1632), 96.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 578.

⁷⁹⁹ Francis Godwin, *The succession of the bishops of England* (London, 1625?), 173.

⁸⁰⁰ Galeazzo Gualdo Priorato, *The history of France* (London, 1676), 531.

documents how St. Edwold declined worldly honors “preferring rather a solitary life and heavenly contemplation.”⁸⁰¹ Based on this intertextuality, it is clear that Bunyan employs monastic terminology when describing the Valley of Humiliation, and that the impetus behind retirement to the Valley is consonant with monasticism. *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, then, locates the monastic ideal within the puritan practice of humiliation. It internalizes the otherworldliness of monasticism in this godly activity. The withdrawal central to monastic practice has been appropriated and transformed; it does not entail physical dislocation, but a relocation of a solitary, otherworldly life within the soul of each individual believer and, therefore, within the world. To exhibit such sympathy with the monastic ideal is, I think, quite remarkable considering the intensity of the puritan self-denial the allegory celebrated just a few paragraphs earlier, proffering Abraham as its exemplar. Humiliation is, of course, continuous with self-denial, but, in a signal innovation, Bunyan depicts that humiliation using terms and concepts continuous with monasticism. Finding continuity between the austerities of puritan self-denial and the eremitic life of contemplative monasticism is an imaginative achievement, especially in light of how often we have seen puritan and Anglican asceticism jam at loggerheads.

More largely, Bunyan provides an excellent, cumulative place to end this study. *The Pilgrim’s Progress* exemplifies, on the one hand, an extremely rigorous form of puritan self-denial. But despite its vigorous commitment to puritan asceticism, other forms of austerity characteristic of Anglican asceticism are also represented. The single life is countenanced (though not very favorably), the potential for asceticism to beautify is expressed, and a process of godly humiliation consistent with monastic withdrawal is even imagined. At the beginning of this chapter, we noted how Bunyan’s depiction of Christian’s desertion of his family brilliantly

⁸⁰¹ Serenus Cressy, *The church-history of Brittany* (Rouen, 1668), 632; Thomas Fuller, *The history of the worthies of England* (London, 1662), 331.

holds opposite—and even violently contradictory—meanings in tense suspension. The continuity that Bunyan imagines between puritan and Anglican asceticism is also symptomatic of that brilliance. Bunyan helps demarcate the distinct contours of the two asceticisms, but also—despite how much their differences animated religious tension—where they overlap. Some documentation of that complexity, as well as its relation to literature and culture, is precisely what this study has attempted.

Epilogue

The purpose of this dissertation has been to document a movement in the Church of England that positively appraised ascetic acts of corporal severity, and to trace the impact of that appraisal on early modern culture. We have seen the influence of Anglican asceticism on major authors such as John Milton, Andrew Marvell, and John Bunyan; the Caroline Court and dramatists such as Thomas Carew, Ben Jonson, and Thomas Nabbes; and religious discourse, including the works of Anthony Stafford, the sermons of John Donne, and the writings of numerous minor figures.

While the preceding pages have mainly focused on Anglicanism, it has only been possible to understand Anglican asceticism in contrast, overlap, and comparison with its puritan counterpart: self-denial. To a large extent, puritan self-denial and Anglican asceticism are two different responses to a Roman Catholic inheritance and the corporal austerity it prescribed. The puritan relationship with the body is a problematic one. A fear of idolatry and superstitious papistry pervades puritanism, and it can be seen in a nearly virtual—that is to say, largely unembodied—conception of asceticism. This is not to argue that puritans did not care about the body (they were not Ranters, after all), but it was not a preoccupation. Virginity was primarily a spiritual state, and fasting was an abstinence from sin. Very few Anglicans would assent to these positions, not because they deemed the body more important than the soul, but because they believed in a relationship between the two whereby the disciplining of the body was always necessary for the pious disposition of the soul. For Anglicans, the body was the whetstone of the soul; puritans sought to become all spirit, but just not through bodily means.

How ascetic valorization found affirmation in the larger Anglican programme supplied it with the right conditions for growth. Though Jean Louis Quantin has rightly emphasized that the

Anglican “discovery” of the church fathers has been exaggerated, this study has argued that there was still something novel about the Laudian recovery of patristic writings relating to severe asceticism. Jerome typifies this. His writings were often treated by most Protestants—and the godly in particular—as popish and his ascetic doctrines (especially in polemical works like *In Jovinian* or his famous letter “Ad Eustochium”) as extreme. Laudians evince no qualms about pillaging Jerome’s ascetic doctrine (and that of other fathers like Epiphanius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Theodoret of Cyrrhus) to provide precedent for the rigorous practices they were advocating. In other words, the extravagant encomiums to virginity in Jerome’s withering attack on Jovinian were treated with greater respectability by Laudian Anglicans than they had yet received in a post-Reformation England. Jerome’s severe ascetic thought was brought into the fold by Anglicans. While it is true that Anglicans did not begin using the church fathers when no one else would, it is also true that a discomfort with patristic authority still existed for many Protestants (increasing in intensity the hotter one’s doctrinal commitments)—a residual vestige, still lodged in the cultural memory of early modern England, of the fierce Reformation debates over scripture or the church’s precedence. The Anglican use of Jerome as a key poster boy for their new brand of austere devotions cannot help but have tapped into that endemic discomfort.

One of the main ways in which asceticism flourished under Laudian Anglicanism is, as I have stressed at length, a product of the connection between the beauty of holiness and severe bodily discipline. The ceremonial expression of the beauty of holiness sought the same subjection of the body that ascetic practices did. During religious ceremony, the body needed to be controlled and, in some sense, overcome for piety’s sake. What is asceticism besides an extreme expression of the desire for complete corporeal control, even to the point of escaping embodiment? Additionally, asceticism has long relied on a belief that the soul’s beauty was

marred by carnality. To liberate that beauty, the body needed to be brought down; in the body's descent—its keeping under—lay the soul's ascent. Not only does this idea provide a rationale for the contortions and humiliation of the body that ceremonial worship requires, but it also implicitly affirms a link between holiness and beauty. Precisely because the body is beaten, torn, macerated, degraded is the soul's beauty more illuminated. The sumptuous ritual of Anglicanism is, paradoxically, intimately connected to the gaunt form of an emaciated ascetic.

What happens to Anglican asceticism? Its legacy and influence, to a certain extent, endure. We saw encomiums to virginity in the poems of Rowland Watkyns (1662), Marvell derides the ascetic commitments of the Anglican clergy as unclean in "The Loyal Scot," and a positive regard for asceticism survives in the writings of Laudians like Jeremy Taylor. More largely, asceticism would become important to Protestant movements in the next century. In 1681, the Lutheran Anthony Horneck publishes *The happy ascetick*, a work that advocates many severe ascetic practices of which Laudians would approve. Horneck's thinking would be central to the Pietism of the 18th century. But Anglican asceticism is no longer of great cultural moment. For one, it loses its most prominent proponent. Laud cared about asceticism, not because he found something beautiful in Simeon Stylites' atrophying foot, but because it enabled him to articulate an aggressively clericalist agenda. There was never any clearer sign of the distinction between priest and layperson in pre-Reformation England than the former's vow of virginity. Moreover, if more Anglican clergymen died unmarried, that meant the potential for their bequests to come into church hands—not those of a greedy widow or, even worse, acquisitive children. There is also no court culture with an affinity towards asceticism during the reign of Charles II. That statement will seem to be facetious, no doubt, and it is a testament to the Merry Monarch's gratuitous excess that it would be interpreted as such. The austere formality of the

Caroline Court in the 1620s and '30s, conducive to ascetic valorization, was replaced by, in the famous words of John Evelyn, “inexpressible luxury and profanity,” while Charles II dandled his mistress on his lap.⁸⁰²

The largest claim of this dissertation is to argue for the relevance of asceticism to our understanding of early modern culture. Much attention has been paid to early modern sexuality and, more recently, alternate sexualities. But the most alternative sexuality—the complete denial of it—remains largely unexamined. This study has hopefully, in a small way, helped to rectify that.

THE END

⁸⁰² John Evelyn, *Memoirs of John Evelyn*, ed. William Bray (London, 1870), 467.

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