

# A Mirror for Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Edited by Laura Aydelotte



*Ro. Vaughan sculp.*



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# A Mirror for Medieval and Early Modern Studies:

Selected Proceedings of the  
Newberry Center for Renaissance Studies  
2012 Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Conference

Edited by Laura Aydelotte

Contributing Editors:

Mary Channen Caldwell, Julia Finch, Anuradha Gobin, Kati Ihnat,  
Caryn O'Connell, Abigail Stahl, Jennifer Toms

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## Introduction

By Laura Aydelotte

The Newberry Center for Renaissance Studies Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Conference is an annual event that allows students from any of the forty-nine institutions that are members of the Center for Renaissance Studies consortium an opportunity to gather for a chance to formally present and hear new research across a range of disciplines, and to informally connect with and exchange ideas with fellow early period enthusiasts. The 2012 conference included graduate student participants from thirty-two consortium universities, and from thirteen US states, Canada, England and Scotland. There were sixty-four individual presenters in sixteen sessions across the three days, January 26-28, 2012.

Not only was the 2012 multidisciplinary conference an occasion for graduate students to share their work, but the event could not have taken place without the dedicated work of the seven graduate student organizers on the planning committee who, in the midst of their own research and teaching duties, selected papers, formed panels and, on the final day of the conference, chose the twelve papers contained in this collection to represent what they considered to be the very best work from the many excellent conference presentations. Over the course of the next several months these graduate student organizers became editors, each working with one or two authors to get the original conference papers in shape for publication.

The title of this collection of essays, *A Mirror for Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, is inspired by the numerous works across the medieval and early modern periods that presented themselves as a *speculum* or “mirror” for the reader. Vincent de Beauvais’ *Speculum Mains* is a fourteenth-century example of such a text, while *A Mirror for Magistrates* is one well-known title from sixteenth-century England. Containing a diverse assortment of stories, poems, theological works, natural history, and other assorted texts, such *speculae* or mirrors were intended to present the reader with a reflection of the world, and to cause the reader to engage in intellectual and spiritual reflection in turn. As work by new, upcoming scholars in the field from a variety of disciplines—art history, ecclesiastical history, English, history, medieval studies, music, philosophy—these articles present their reader with both a reflection of the field of early period studies as it stands today, and a chance to reflect upon what changes and new discoveries are beginning to arrive with the next generation of scholarship.

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## Turning “wyne into water” The Erasmian Reimagining of the Virgin Mary

By Stephen Bates

In 1535, Thomas Cromwell’s commissioners issued a set of Articles of Inquiry for the Augustinian monastery of Walsingham. They comprised a detailed list of questions relating to religious devotion at the famous Marian shrine: what relics were there and “what vertue was esteemed of the people to be in theym”? Why were they spread about the church rather than kept in one place? What was the annual value of the offerings to the Virgin and the relics? What miracles were claimed or preached? What proof was there that such miracles were carried out by the Virgin, or even her statue at Walsingham, rather than any other image, as opposed to the immediate help of God, or simply natural causes? The visitors expressed particular concern over “whether our Lady’s milke be liquid or no?” One enigmatic article asked specifically concerning “the house where the bere skynne is, and of the knyght.”<sup>1</sup> These were unmistakable references to the account given by Desiderius Erasmus (d. 1536) in one of his Colloquies relating his own pilgrimage to Walsingham, thinly veiled as a dialogue from which schoolboys might learn their Latin. Consequently, there is a historiographical assumption that Erasmian skepticism lay at the root of Thomas Cromwell’s assault on pilgrimages and devotion to the saints.<sup>2</sup> Yet the writings of Erasmus are not the work of an anti-Marian iconoclast; rather, they reveal the less polemical intention of recovering the place of the Virgin in popular piety. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to explore how, in engaging with England’s particular brand of late medieval devotion to the Virgin, the itinerant humanist reshaped his own Mariological understanding and unintentionally influenced that first wave of Henrician reform.

Erasmus added the *Pergrinatio Religionis Ergo* to the 1526 edition of his *Colloquia* and it would appear in English translation as *The Pilgrimage of Pure Devotion* in 1537: a timely fanfare preceding

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<sup>1</sup> BL, Harleian MS 791, fols 27r-28r; printed in John Gough Nichols, ed., *Pilgrimages to Saint Mary of Walsingham and Saint Thomas of Canterbury by Desiderius Erasmus* (Westminster: John Bowyer Nichols, 1849), 202-05..

<sup>2</sup> J. C. Dickinson, *The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 61.

the dissolution of the larger monasteries. One of its protagonists, Ogygius, relates how the Virgin of Walsingham had miraculously saved a knight on horseback, closely pursued by an enemy, by passing him through a “tiny door” into the churchyard just as he was about to be caught.<sup>3</sup> In intentionally fatuous manner, Ogygius is convinced of this intervention by a commemorative copper plate. Likewise, he gives credence to the authenticity and age of a small structure covering the shrine’s two wells by their being covered by “an old, worn-out bearskin.”<sup>4</sup> Writing in the 1950s, J. C. Dickinson criticized Erasmus’ remarks for “exaggeration” and “inaccuracy” and concluded that he had “grossly twisted the facts” concerning the shed over the wells. Yet Erasmus’ hyperbole was purposefully devised not just to expose avaricious monks exploiting the pious who desired to venerate saints and their relics, but to question the integrity of such praxis in the first place.<sup>5</sup> His concern was that contemporary Marian devotions were themselves an exaggeration and a gross twisting of facts. That it was the employment of, in Peter Marshall’s phrase, “the withering contempt of radical Erasmianism” rather than the iconoclasm of Andreas Karlstadt or Ulrich Zwingli, which characterized the early approach of Cromwell’s commissioners and the tone of the Walsingham articles, would have distressed the sensitive scholar.<sup>6</sup> Erasmus was no iconoclast and had been quick to leave Basel when images started being broken there. As Margaret Aston has helpfully observed, if he was misunderstood then he was a victim of the ambiguities inherent in his own caricatures: he “could not safely be read as the straightforward spokesman of anyone but himself.”<sup>7</sup> His use of satire, as opposed to more aggressive polemic, reflects his desire to recover spiritual authenticity in Marian piety rather than eliminate it altogether: a potential *via media* in Catholic Mariology had it not been for the trauma of the Reformation.<sup>8</sup>

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Virgin Mary had become one of, if not the most significant touchstone of orthodoxy in Christendom. Theologically, Mary’s position as *Theotokos*, Mother of God, affirmed Christ’s humanity, while the mystery of the incarnation buttressed by her perpetual virginity confirmed his divinity. She was without sin and, therefore, a repository of spiritual merit as a consequence of accepting her place as the vessel through which God came into the world, merit that she could bestow on her devotees to expedite them through

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<sup>3</sup> Craig R. Thompson, trans., *The Colloquies of Erasmus* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1965), 293-94.

<sup>4</sup> Thompson, *Colloquies of Erasmus*, 295.

<sup>5</sup> Dickinson, *Our Lady of Walsingham*, 54-5.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Marshall, “Forgery and Miracles in the Reign of Henry VIII”, *Past & Present* 178 (2003): 52.

<sup>7</sup> Margaret Aston, *England’s Iconoclasts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 200.

<sup>8</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, “Mary and Sixteenth-Century Protestants,” in *The Church and Mary: Papers Read at the 2001 Summer Meeting and the 2002 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. R. N. Swanson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 195.

Purgatory as the Mother of Mercy.<sup>9</sup> The image of Mary, whether holding the infant Jesus, suffering beneath the cross as *mater dolorosa*, or enthroned by God as, in the words of one fifteenth-century panegyric, “hie emperice or quene celestiall”, was to be found in every parish church or adorning civic buildings, a polyvalent totem connecting the community to a divine patron.<sup>10</sup> The Virgin’s ubiquitous presence extended even into the household, where figures of wood or alabaster were placed as luxury pieces. They were visible not only to guests, but also to the Holy Mother, inviting her intercession within the domestic setting. Private devotion to the Virgin represented orthopraxis, reflected in personal objects ranging from the rich illustrations of a Book of Hours containing the Little Office for the more literate, to an inexpensive set of Rosary beads made of wood, bone or, especially for children, coral, the red color evoking the metaphorical space of the rose garden that gave the practice its name, as well as the blood of Christ’s passion.<sup>11</sup> Conception and lactation were considered part of original sin, yet Mary had both conceived and lactated *incorruptus* and thereby became the preeminent saint of the childbed.<sup>12</sup> Hopeful parents turned to her for fecundity and protection during pregnancy and labor, wearing the girdle that she had dropped to the doubting St Thomas to demonstrate her Assumption; Cromwell’s agents would report dozens of such items in churches and monasteries throughout England during their survey for the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*.<sup>13</sup> Even Henry VIII made a pilgrimage of gratitude to Our Lady of Walsingham in January 1511 following the birth of the short-lived Prince of Cornwall, walking the last mile bare-footed to lay a necklace of great value as an offering upon the statue.<sup>14</sup>

At all levels, therefore, from theology to piety, from the hearth to the cathedral chapter, Mary represented a barometer of spiritual integrity in that most turbulent of centuries, such that Bridget Heal could characterize her as a “devotional lodestone.”<sup>15</sup> Lollards, for example, were frequently identified by their contempt for Marian piety and pilgrimages. In 1508, Elizabeth Sampson appeared before Bishop Richard Fitzjames of London having spoken against the images of the Virgin at Staninges, Crome, and Walsingham and having, evidently, attempted to

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<sup>9</sup> On the mercantile metaphor of the treasury of merit, see Robert W. Shaffern, “The Medieval Theology of Indulgences,” in *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits: Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. R. N. Swanson (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), 11-36.

<sup>10</sup> Bodleian MS Arch. Selden B. 24, fol. 137v, quoted in Carleton Brown, ed., *Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1939), 26.

<sup>11</sup> Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (London: Penguin, 2010), 491, n. 98.

<sup>12</sup> Donna Spivey Ellington, *From Sacred Body to Angelic Soul: Understanding Mary in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), 58.

<sup>13</sup> Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: traditional religion in England, 1400-1580* (2nd edn, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 384-85.

<sup>14</sup> Sir Henry Spelman, *The English Works of Sir Henry Spelman, Kt* (London: D. Browne, W. Mears, F. Clay, and Fletcher Gyles, 1723), 149-150.

<sup>15</sup> Bridget Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety 1500-1648* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 282.

cremate Our Lady of Willesden. She maintained that the statue “was a burnt ars elfe, and a burnt ars stocke,” a fairy queen made of lifeless wood that, had she really any power to work miracles over pilgrims visiting her shrine, would also have had the power to prevent Sampson’s arson and “would not haue suffred her taile to haue bene brent.”<sup>16</sup>

Heretical vituperations such as Sampson’s did little to enervate the orthodox sixteenth-century Mariological scene, which remained vivid and evolving. The Rosary, Our Lady’s Psalter, found fresh expression in the confraternities that grew rapidly after 1470 while associated primers offered diverse meditations to complement recitations of the *Ave Maria* prayer. The debate on the Immaculate Conception maintained a heated exchange, particularly between the Franciscans, who promoted the theology, and the Dominicans, who denigrated it. Increasingly during the fifteenth century Mary began to swoon at the foot of the cross. Whether her faint reflected her natural affection as a mother witnessing her child’s crucifixion, or her suffering reflected participation as co-redemptrix, remained contested even after Tomasso de Vio’s report to Pope Julius II in 1506 concluded the swoon was “contrary to the text of the gospel” and that “therefore it is not proper to attribute this to the Blessed Virgin.”<sup>17</sup> The motif was already well-entrenched in images accompanying English devotional literature, such as the *Vita Christi* of Pseudo-Bonaventure, published by Wynkyn de Worde in 1525 and 1530, which has the Mother of God collapsing during scenes of both the crucifixion and deposition.<sup>18</sup>

While Erasmus was an Augustinian canon in Steyn and subsequently a student at the Collège de Montaigu in Paris, there was little to distinguish his attitude to the Virgin from that of any other late medieval Christian other than his use of classical mythology to elaborate traditional praise of her in the new rhetorical style. He drew on the parallel associations with the moon and virginity found in the Roman goddess Diana, to describe her as the Queen of Heaven (Diana Luna), the humble handmaid of God in her earthly aspect, and Empress of Hell (Hecate).<sup>19</sup> In his *Paeon Virgini Matri* of 1499, Erasmus invoked “the true Diana, both origin and model of perpetual virginity,” “the deity of triple form who gave birth to the threefold giant, thrice-powerful, whom the rulers of the underworld dread, the heavenly powers revere, and this middle earth adores.” Mary is Lucina, goddess of childbirth, who brought forth the true light, “the true Jupiter.”<sup>20</sup> Even in his early works there was a tension between the pagan and the Christian, an

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<sup>16</sup> John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online*, 1563 edition (Sheffield: HRI Online Publications, 2011), 425, accessed March 31, 2012, <http://www.johnfoxe.org>.

<sup>17</sup> Harvey E. Hamburg, “The Problem of Lo Spasimo of the Virgin in Cinquecento Paintings,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 12 (1981): 46.

<sup>18</sup> John Bonaventure, *Vita Christi* (London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1525, 1530), sigs Y4v, Y8r.

<sup>19</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974-), Vol. 69, 45.

<sup>20</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 25.

attempt at syncretism he had defended in his apologia for classical learning, the *Antibarbari*.<sup>21</sup> This is evident in another prayer written while he stayed with his friend Jacob Batt at the chateau of Tournehem, the *Obsecratio ad Virginem Mariam*, in which the poet invokes the Mother of God as “my savior, my salvation, my sole and certain refuge”:

Since you are our Diana, powerful in triple majesty, and even rejoice in being importuned by humans in their prayers, why have I been soliciting you for so long now with holy supplications, as if with prayers of sorcery? Surely holiness carries weight with you, a true goddess, when superstition swayed a false one?<sup>22</sup>

Here, it was only the summoning of Mary through flattering titles that Erasmus considered “superstitious” behavior, while he was happy to regard her as a “true goddess.” While questioning the approach adopted by sinners, he nevertheless found the Virgin eager to receive their pleas. These early orations therefore sat comfortably with the contemporary hagiographical canon and its stories of the Virgin stepping in for the least deserving, irrespective of any evidence of true contrition other than the supplication to her *per se*.

The same is in evidence in the *Paeon Virgini Matri*, where Erasmus asked rhetorically “to whom can the wretched flee more securely than to the one who is most merciful?” He heaped praise on Mary, to whom criminals could turn, and in whom fugitives could find sanctuary.<sup>23</sup> Contextualized within the broader framework of Marian devotion, these words sound less like hyperbole about the condition of a remorseful sinner and more like conformity to popular patterns of piety. Mary is so patient that she is:

Never wearied by importunate requests of those in need; so forgiving and ready to be placated that no crimes on our part, however heinous, will deter you from coming to our aid; so generous that you allow no one to part from you unrewarded; so rich that your wealth can never be exhausted by your giving.<sup>24</sup>

The *Paeon*’s presentation of Mary not only encompassed her sympathetic benevolence, but her power as the “singular glory of heaven” and “earth’s surest safeguard.” Erasmus reinforced the image of the mother of mercy as a repository for the treasury of merits, “filled to superfluity with spiritual gifts, so that your surplus might overflow into our emptiness”; she was “the one whom God has made the keeper and distributor of his inexhaustible bounty.”<sup>25</sup> Conflating the image of the incarnation with the source of sanctification, he asserted that Christ did not

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<sup>21</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 23. Erasmus began writing the *Antibarbarorum liber* around 1488, though it remained unpublished until May 1520.

<sup>22</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 41, 45-6.

<sup>23</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 37.

<sup>24</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 23-4.

<sup>25</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 37.

“sprinkle your virginal soul with a few drops of grace but transferred the very source of all graces into your person, so that those four famous rivers might flow forth from you.”<sup>26</sup> In these early years, Erasmus was also content to draw on established typological images from the Old Testament to affirm that the virgin birth “was prefigured by the mystic bush that falsely seemed to Moses to be on fire” and that Mary herself is “a rose-bush of Jericho . . . a lily among brambles . . . the sealed fountain . . . the divinely protected garden”.<sup>27</sup> This allegorical approach was extended to the apocrypha and Revelation as he lauded, “the mirror of life, so polished and pure that the image of the Godhead could receive no clearer reflection” and described the Virgin’s snow-white brow adorned with a crown of stars woven from the virtues: “you are entirely clothed in the brightness of God’s sun, and you have set beneath your feet the moon.”<sup>28</sup>

Other work composed by Erasmus in this period, but not published until after his death, such as the paraphrase *Precatio “Salve, Regina”*, displayed his willingness to rehearse traditional Mariological motifs as well as Biblical typologies.<sup>29</sup> In attempting to demonstrate his ability to write classical meter, the young scholar found an outlet in the veneration of the saints; in this he was the product of his time. As early as 1491, he set his hand to write poetry in praise of the Virgin’s own mother, St Anne.<sup>30</sup> In January 1497, he wrote from Paris to his prior at Steyn narrating how he had recovered from a fever through the aid of St Geneviève, “the famous virgin, whose bones, preserved by the canons regular, daily radiate miracles and are revered.”<sup>31</sup> It was customary to process the saint from her shrine to Notre Dame when disaster imperiled the city and Léon Halkin suggests that Erasmus piously participated on this occasion.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, in 1500, he wrote from the French capital to Batt reiterating his faith in the aegis of Geneviève in the face of his own delicate health.<sup>33</sup> Content to invoke the saints for aid, Erasmus drew unflinchingly on the full range of contemporary topoi characterizing the adoration of their Queen when composing his *Paeon divae Mariae*. He extolled Mary as “the unique glory of the highest heavens” and proclaimed that “you alone, O divine lady, had the power to revenge our death and to claim redress for the life that was stolen from the whole world.”<sup>34</sup> This latter, characteristically Mariocentric assertion, while presumably intending to lay emphasis on the

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<sup>26</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 20.

<sup>27</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 27, 30.

<sup>28</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 31, 33; cf. Wisdom of Solomon 7:26.

<sup>29</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 85, 338.

<sup>30</sup> *Rhythmus iambicus in laudem Annae, aviae Iesu Christi. Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 85 p. 9

<sup>31</sup> Letter to Nicholas Werner in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 1, 105-06.

<sup>32</sup> L.E. Halkin, “Érasme pèlerin,” in *Scrinium Erasmanum*, ed. J. Coppens (Leiden: Brill, 1969), Vol. 2, p. 249. On the origins of the Sainte-Geneviève procession, see Moshe Sluhovskiy, *Patroness of Paris: Rituals of Devotion in Early Modern France* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 22-3.

<sup>33</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 1, 250.

<sup>34</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 85, 279.

handmaid's *fiat mihi*, remained ambivalent enough that it threatened to impinge on Christ's redemptive role. She was "the one who treads with white feet on the neck of the hissing serpent," the "thicket of the low bush, encompassed by a flame which did not burn," "the ark which enclosed the manna from heaven," and the "prophet's unopened gate" only to be entered by the king.<sup>35</sup> Erasmus affirmed the trope of Mary as the second Eve and placed into the mouth of Gabriel the well-worn metaphor for her postpartum virginity: "as a sun-ray penetrates clear glass without breaking it, so the Son will penetrate your womb, but he will not violate the gates of your exalted chastity."<sup>36</sup> Finally, he reasserted the Virgin's key intercessory role and the place of popular devotion to her:

Can your son, O mother, refuse you anything you ask for, and is there anything you can ask for that he does not have the power to provide for you, whom one so great has singled out and venerated with such a great honor? Therefore all mortals rightly wear you out with their complaints and prayers, whenever they are crushed by any kind of suffering, fearing the countenance of their terrible judge.<sup>37</sup>

These descriptions synthesized traditional devotional terms with mythological tropes from the classics, but otherwise lacked religious innovation; there is certainly nothing here of use to the agents of Henrician monastic reform. Only following his first sojourn in England, between May 1499 and January 1500, and after his first exposure to Neoplatonism, did Erasmus begin to reappraise his paradigm of piety through a fresh emphasis on the Pauline epistles. The initial impetus came from John Colet. Erasmus attended his series of lectures on Paul's letters given at St Mary's College in Oxford, which revealed a historical and literal interpretation of the scriptures, at the expense of the allegorical. In this, Colet was contributing to England's burgeoning humanist movement by following developments in northern Italy.<sup>38</sup> He had spent a period of study on the continent, during which he departed from the Aristotelianism of the schools to adopt the grammatical methodology established by Lorenzo Valla. This may well have laid a foundation for zeal in getting the Church to re-engage with the *fontes* of Christianity in their original context, but not, it would appear, in their original language. Colet did not pursue his study of Greek, a lacuna he belatedly sought to repair in his last years.<sup>39</sup> It is possible he disdained the language as being the patois of pagan philosophy toward which he was candid in

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<sup>35</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 85, 281.

<sup>36</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 85, 287, 293.

<sup>37</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 85, 299.

<sup>38</sup> Richard J. Schoeck, "Humanism in England," in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacy, Volume 2: Humanism Beyond Italy*, ed. Albert Rabil Jr. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 6-7.

<sup>39</sup> John B. Gleason, *John Colet* (London: University of California Press, 1989), 58-9; cf. Colet's letter to Erasmus of 20 June 1516 in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 3, 312-13, and Thomas More's letter to Erasmus of 22 September 1516 in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 4, 80.

his contempt: “If we seek to feed on the wisdom of the pagans, which is demonic, not of the Lord, we lose the principles [*rationem*] of the Lord.”<sup>40</sup> In the words of Jonathan Arnold, Colet remained “fundamentally anti-classical.”<sup>41</sup>

It is all the more significant then, that while in Italy, Colet embraced the Neoplatonism of the Florentines Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola as his philosophical foundation for approaching textual criticism, citing them approvingly in his writing. Indeed, they are the only contemporaries apart from Erasmus whom he quotes.<sup>42</sup> On his return to England, Colet even began a correspondence with Ficino. He found a shared emphasis in these two Italian humanists on the love of Christ as the fount of charity, on the divine nature of the soul, and in seeing orthopraxis rather than speculative theology as the essence of Christian faith.<sup>43</sup> However, where Ficino accepted humanity as the *imago Dei*, Colet developed a far more pessimistic, even misanthropic view, drawing on Augustine to emphasize man’s depravity and consequent reliance on God.<sup>44</sup> In his copy of Ficino’s *Epistolae*, where the Florentine writes that there is no escaping from sin except to the *summum bonum*, Colet’s marginalia reads “Human life is a tragedy . . . and it exhibits unhappiness whether one lives the life of contemplation, action or pleasure.”<sup>45</sup> Moreover, while preparing for his exposition on Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, Colet diverged from Ficino on the way the soul made its journey to God. Engaging with a well-established discourse in medieval theology in which the soul approaches salvation through the exercise of the human faculties, Colet followed Ficino in grouping will and love together. Whereas the Florentine privileged the intellect over both of these, however, Colet thought that love was the faculty which ultimately wrought perfection in the soul. He wrote, “It is not knowledge that leads to life, but love.”<sup>46</sup>

This metaphysical exploration, which culminated in Colet’s unpublished *De Caelesti Dionysii Hierarchia*, meant that his overarching concern became pastoral, steered by his desire to achieve a union between humanity and God, and it is this reorientation from intellect to will that accounts

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<sup>40</sup> John Colet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, trans. Bernard O’Kelly and Catherine A. L. Jarrott (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1985), 218-19; Albert Hyma, “The Continental Origins of English Humanism”, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 4 (1940): 12.

<sup>41</sup> Jonathan Arnold, *The Great Humanists: An Introduction* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 165.

<sup>42</sup> Gleason, *John Colet*, 46.

<sup>43</sup> P. Albert Duhamel, “The Oxford Lectures of John Colet: An Essay in Defining the English Renaissance”, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 14 (1953): 499.

<sup>44</sup> Leland Miles, *John Colet and the Platonic Tradition* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1961), 58-59, 89.

<sup>45</sup> Sears Jayne, *John Colet and Marsilio Ficino*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 118.

<sup>46</sup> “Scientia non ducit ad vitam sed charitas”; *De caelesti Dionysii hierarchia*, reprinted in *Ioannes Coletus super opera Dionysii: Two Treatises on the Hierarchies of Dionysius*, trans. J.H. Lupton (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869), 235.



for his subsequent fiery, reformist exhortations.<sup>47</sup> “Measure your conduct by love and charity for your neighbour, not by your own knowledge and power” he urges; “knowledge – however great—is condemned if it exists without the love of God.”<sup>48</sup> In this accentuation of lives imitating Christ, Colet was also drawing close to the broader trend of the *devotio moderna*.<sup>49</sup> However, his appropriation of Ficino and Pico meant that this stemmed less from the *Imitatio Christi* and more from the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius, whom Colet believed to be the Areopagite converted by St Paul.<sup>50</sup> Since he identified closely with the historical Paul, this attribution had significant consequences for the development of Colet’s theology. Both St Paul and Pseudo-Dionysius laid emphasis on faith in the person of Christ as essential for the soul’s justification. For Colet, justification was the commencement of a new life of ascent towards God, rather than a spiritual consummation, a point he makes repeatedly in his treatise on Corinthians.<sup>51</sup> In so doing, he was challenging mere compliance through outward observance and advocating spiritual integrity through an alignment of inner faith and outer purity.

The Neoplatonic and Pauline emphasis on interior devotion to the image of the perfected soul, exemplified in Christ, had the natural, though not deliberate consequence of marginalizing other religious foci and exterior forms of worship, including much Marian piety. There is sufficient of his writing extant to suggest that Colet was simply indifferent to traditional devotion to the Virgin, rather than set up in opposition to it.<sup>52</sup> It would be reasonable to assume that he preached on the Virgin on the appropriate dates of the liturgical year, but any original sermon material no longer survives. This apostrophe, however, penned in the margins of a copy of Ficino’s *Oratio ad deum theologica*, and evocative of the Bridgettine “Fifteen Oes,” reveals something of Colet’s Mariology:

O chosyn virgin, unto that grete and wonderos meracle  
to be the moder of Christ bothe god and man!

O mervelous moder and berer and brynger forthe of hym that browthe forth  
all others,

And made the also of nowt that thou shoulde conceive hym of sumwhat.

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<sup>47</sup> Jonathan Arnold, *Dean John Colet of St Paul’s: Humanism and Reform in Early Tudor England* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 26.

<sup>48</sup> Colet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, 202-03.

<sup>49</sup> Erika Rummel, *Erasmus* (London: Continuum, 2004), 73.

<sup>50</sup> Acts 17:34. Ironically, no less a figure than Valla had refuted the Dionysian commentaries on the Pauline epistles, dating them to the fifth or sixth century; yet while Erasmus (and William Grocyn) admitted this interpretation, Colet appears to have remained oblivious to it, accepting them as the work of the intimate and learned pupil of the apostle.

<sup>51</sup> C.A.L. Jarrott, “John Colet on Justification”, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 7, 1 (1976): 67.

<sup>52</sup> Gleason, *John Colet*, 61.

O dere dowter of good the wyche warte made the moders of Jesu Christ be the holy gost.

O clere growde of lyve. Of Christ howse of goodehe.

O comfrotable rooth of helth, of the sprange the gret phisicion,  
restorer and heler of man kynd.<sup>53</sup>

Christ is in all of these lines, such that Colet positions the praise of Mary wholly in the context of her role as a complicit object in the divine plan and not for any intrinsic merit. Her only acknowledged quality is her motherhood. Whatever challenge this presented to contemporary Marian devotional practice, however, it remained firmly situated within an orthodox context. As recent scholarship has argued, Colet was a reformer of late medieval Catholicism, but no proto-Protestant.<sup>54</sup> In the *Catechyzon*, the catechism he wrote for the school he founded at St Paul’s in 1509, Colet reflects this conventional attitude by including the *Ave Maria* and, among its “Preceptes of Lyuyng,” the instructions to “Byleue & trust in chryst Jesu. Worship hym and his moder Mary.” Moreover, the same text includes a supplication for the Mother of Jesus to bring her son that the boys might grow in him and, at length, become themselves perfect sons of God through him.<sup>55</sup> In this prayer, while Christ is the agent of transformation towards a Platonic reunification of the soul with the divine, it is the fact that Mary carries him that makes his presence possible; the oration is therefore part plea for intercession and part reminder of the reliance on Mary’s historic willingness to bring Christ to the world. As to the subsequent accusation by Bishop Fitzjames that Colet had preached against the worship of images, this fell short of a charge of heresy, suggesting he had done nothing more than restate the technical distinction between *latria*, adoration which was reserved for God, and *dulia*, veneration appropriate to the saints.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the request in Colet’s will concerning his room at the Charterhouse that “all paynted images upon the walls remayne to that lodgyng in perpetuum” is clear enough evidence that he was not averse to sacred iconography.<sup>57</sup> In his will, Colet commended his soul to God, his creator and saviour, “and to the blessed Mary, his mother.”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Jayne, *John Colet and Marsilio Ficino*, 10, 103.

<sup>54</sup> Gleason, *John Colet*, 266; Arnold, *Dean John Colet*, 11.

<sup>55</sup> Lupton, *Life of John Colet*, 289-90.

<sup>56</sup> Colet’s letter to Erasmus of 20 October 1514 offers a loose date for his troubles with Fitzjames: “He of London still plagues me. I think daily of retiring and taking refuge among the Carthusians.” *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 3, 48.

<sup>57</sup> Gleason, *John Colet*, 236.

<sup>58</sup> As did William Grocyn: Hyma, “Continental Origins of English Humanism,” 21-2.

Ultimately, Erasmus would have more influence on Colet than Colet had upon Erasmus. Yet while it would be difficult to maintain that the Englishman held any authority over his Dutch friend in the long-term, he certainly seems to have got Erasmus thinking in new ways.<sup>59</sup> Just as Colet drew on Ficino, without becoming his unqualified disciple, so Erasmus found inspiration in Colet. There is no evidence that he returned to the continent carrying copies of his new friends' writing, but Erasmus did leave Oxford with an eager interest in the Pauline epistles and, once he was back in Paris, he took up the study of Greek.<sup>60</sup> He was still working on the apostle's letters when, in 1501, he met another Neoplatonist with an enthusiasm for St. Paul, the Franciscan Jean Vitrier who, in impressing Erasmus with his uncompromising spiritual integrity, must have appeared as the living embodiment of Colet's pious soul.<sup>61</sup> Vitrier introduced Erasmus to Jerome and Origen, offering an alternative reading of St. Paul from the scholastics and profoundly influencing the course of his writing. In particular, Erasmus was attracted to the Neoplatonic distinction in Origen's commentary between the visible letter and the invisible spirit.<sup>62</sup> The proximity of these meetings reinforced the change of direction in his attitude to Christian piety.

Inspired by these new influences Erasmus set about writing the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, or Handbook of the Christian Soldier, published in 1503 and replete with both St Paul's disdain for ceremonial law and his emphasis on personal piety. Christ was the model for imitation and one should only emulate the saints to the extent that they themselves reflected Christ. This was true not only of St Paul himself, whom Erasmus regarded as the paragon of humility, but also of the Virgin, effectively demoted by this mimetic recalibration. Consequently, not long after the publication of the *Enchiridion*, he began to adopt a defensive attitude towards his early works of Marian veneration. Writing to Colet in 1504, he derided both the *Paeon* and the *Obsecratio* as "against the grain," obsequiously discharged only to satisfy the wishes of his friend Batt and in humble deference to the sentiments of his patron. In the same letter, Erasmus grandly anticipated that the *Enchiridion* would correct "the error of those who make religion in general consist in rituals and observances of an almost more than Jewish formality."<sup>63</sup> The cult of the saints had no place in his developing moral methodology. Instead, Erasmus places the alignment

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<sup>59</sup> Scholars continue to contest whether and how much influence Colet exercised over Erasmus: see the survey in Riemer A. Faber, "Desiderius Erasmus' Representation of Paul as Paragon of Learned Piety," in *A Companion to Paul in the Reformation*, ed. R. Ward Holder (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 44-5.

<sup>60</sup> Peter Iver Kaufman, "John Colet and Erasmus' "Enchiridion"," *Church History* 46 (1977): 306.

<sup>61</sup> When Justus Jonas wrote to Erasmus asking for a short life of Colet, he replied "I suspect you of seeking some outstanding example of piety which you can use as a model for your own way of life," and promptly gave him a biographical sketch of Vitrier: *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 8, 226.

<sup>62</sup> Faber, "Desiderius Erasmus' Representation of Paul as Paragon of Learned Piety," 45-6.

<sup>63</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 2, 87.

of the individual’s will with that of God and subsequent righteous living as the keys to moral regeneration by the Spirit:

You venerate the saints, and you take pleasure in touching their relics. But you disregard their greatest legacy, the example of a blameless life. No devotion is more pleasing to Mary than the imitation of Mary’s humility. No devotion is more acceptable and proper to the saints than striving to imitate their virtues.<sup>64</sup>

The *Enchiridion* was a work that initially attracted little interest, but subsequently proved a bestseller in its late medieval, Catholic context. It also served Protestantism for generations with its practical theology, especially in England.<sup>65</sup> Erasmus continued to reinforce the message that the Christian finds the true value of the saints in imitation, rather than selfish appeals for material intercession, in his subsequent works.<sup>66</sup> Following Origen, he emphasized the Pauline anthropology defined by a dichotomy of “flesh” and “spirit”, couched in the Neoplatonic terms of the inner “brute beast” struggling to contain the imprisoned soul; indeed, this is the conflict which gave the *Enchiridion* its title.<sup>67</sup> *His dualism forced him to see inner piety as conducive to spiritual development, while external ceremonies were material and largely ineffective. By redrawing the boundaries of worship using the language of “visible” and “invisible”, Erasmus essentially framed ritual as “flesh”; however, here he attempted to pull his punches by asserting that they are “imperfect or indifferent” rather than utterly worthless.*<sup>68</sup> In asking himself whether he forbade the veneration of the saints, Erasmus differentiated the “naïvely superstitious” from those exploiting the practice for gain. Nevertheless he concluded, “I do not entirely condemn.”<sup>69</sup> Consequently he affirmed that the Christian should not renounce corporal works, but should prefer those that are invisible.<sup>70</sup> The incongruity of principle and practice in the *Enchiridion* may reveal caution on the part of its author, aware that he was taking the reader into heterodox territory.

This desire to privilege the invisible over the visible provides the context in which Erasmus made his pilgrimage to Walsingham in 1512.<sup>71</sup> He bestowed as his offering to the Virgin a Greek poem in which he disparaged the gold bestowed by other devotees in the hope of riches, healthy children, or long life. “As for me, a poet well disposed though poor,” he concludes, “I beg you

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<sup>64</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 66, 71.

<sup>65</sup> James McConica, *Erasmus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 49.

<sup>66</sup> See for example the *Praise of Folly*, published in 1511, cf. *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 27, 120.

<sup>67</sup> Carlos Eire, *War Against the Idols: the Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge, 1989), 33-4; Daniel T. Lochman, “Colet and Erasmus: The *Disputatiuncula* and the Controversy of Letter and Spirit”, *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20, 1 (1989): 81-2.

<sup>68</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 66, 65.

<sup>69</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 66, 64.

<sup>70</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 66, 81.

<sup>71</sup> Dickinson, *Our Lady of Walsingham*, 47; he may have repeated the journey two years later.

for the greatest of boons: a devout heart, completely free for once of sin.”<sup>72</sup> Recovering this context demonstrates that far from condemning such practices entirely, Erasmus desired to restore true religion by challenging devotees to adopt his internalized form of piety: to absolve pilgrimages, relics and saints rather than abjure them. When, a decade later, he received an invitation to pen a mass in honor of Europe’s other great Marian shrine at Loreto, Erasmus consented all too willingly. Here was an opportunity to influence a significant pilgrimage center by setting the devotional agenda: contemplative piety and the purification of the soul through the imitation of the Virgin. When the Archbishop of Besançon subsequently granted an indulgence to those using the liturgy, Erasmus promptly enlarged it with a homily in a second edition published in 1525:

The cult of the most holy Virgin consists principally in four things – praise, honor, invocation and imitation. The final one is so superior that the others without it would be unfruitful, and this one also embraces the others in itself.<sup>73</sup>

The following February, Erasmus published his latest set of colloquies, including the *Peregrinatio*. Having previously satirized pilgrimages generally, for example in *Rash Vows* (1522), and devotion to the Virgin specifically, as in *The Shipwreck* (1523), this was not new territory for him. In the former, Erasmus had affirmed that it was Folly who inspired pilgrims to endure the hardships of travel and he derided ‘monuments of antiquity’ (such as the shed at Walsingham) as ‘faked and contrived for the purpose of deceiving naïve and credulous folk.’<sup>74</sup> In the latter he ridicules the sailors who respond to the impending disaster by singing the *Salve Regina* and ‘praying to the Virgin Mother, calling her Star of the Sea, Queen of Heaven, Mistress of the World, Port of Salvation, flattering her with many other titles the Sacred Scriptures nowhere assign her’. Since the Virgin never went sailing, he concludes that she has simply succeeded Venus, the former pagan custodian of sailors, in an act of social construction. ‘Many made vows. There was an Englishman who promised heaps of gold to the Virgin of Walsingham if he reached shore alive; and likewise others ‘to the Virgin Mary, who reigns in many places; and they think the vow worthless unless you specify the place.’<sup>75</sup> Some of the passengers had ‘queer beads, like charms, to ward off danger’.<sup>76</sup> As the ship breaks apart, ‘one man seized a wooden statue of the Virgin Mother, now rotten and mouse-eaten, and putting his arms around it, began to swim’.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 85, 121-23.

<sup>73</sup> *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 69, 92.

<sup>74</sup> Thompson, *Colloquies of Erasmus*, 4-6; cf. ‘Praise of Folly’, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 27, 122, and the colloquy ‘Old Men’s Chat’, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 39, 458..

<sup>75</sup> Thompson, *Colloquies of Erasmus*, 141.

<sup>76</sup> Thompson, *Colloquies of Erasmus*, 142.

<sup>77</sup> Thompson, *Colloquies of Erasmus*, 144.

In the wake of the first wave of Protestant iconoclasm, however, the stinging critique of the *Peregrinatio* drew censure from the Sorbonne.<sup>78</sup> Erasmus wrote to its doyen, Noël Bédard, defending himself from charges of irreverence: ‘no one hates more than I those yapping critics who attack the Virgin’.<sup>79</sup> In June, he published a formal defense of the colloquies, denying outright that he had mocked the intercession of the Virgin and the saints; rather, he had targeted “those who seek from saints what they would not dare ask from a respectable man” and those who thought the saints could outperform Christ.<sup>80</sup> Ironically, he had also had to defend himself from the charge of insufficient reverence for the Virgin from none other than Martin Luther.<sup>81</sup> He failed to placate his critics. Yet the best evidence for the Erasmian vision of right Marian devotion remains within the *Peregrinatio*, through the rhetorical device of a letter written to Zwingli by the Blessed Virgin herself. She thanks the reformer for discouraging the invocation of saints, embarrassed as she was by the “shameless entreaties” of the people and bemused at their recalcitrance to approach her son, as though he were still a baby, “carved and painted as such at my bosom.” At the end, however, she adds a caution against his iconoclastic intentions: “Me, however defenseless, you shall not eject unless at the same time you eject my Son whom I hold in my arms.”<sup>82</sup>

The Virgin, therefore, had a place in the Erasmian devotional scheme, albeit a revised, subordinated position from that which she had occupied. Moreover, this was not an original vision, but drew on the cultural milieu of renaissance humanism with its suspicion of religious externals and fresh emphasis on seeking a relationship with God through contemplation and right living. Christians needed to focus on Christ, not on his mother. But while it was clear to Erasmus that the Church risked throwing out Christ if they threw out Mary, ultimately for Thomas Cromwell the worship of the son would demand that he cleanse the English devotional landscape of all traces of now idolatrous devotion to his mother. This suggests that, as a consequence of the Reformation, the cultural position of the Virgin ceased to be as malleable as it had been during the previous century and a half. However, it also invites a more nuanced image of English reformers endorsing iconoclasm only after considering the Erasmian vision of restoration. Writing towards the end of his life, Erasmus charged that those who had turned the hours of the passion to “the seruyce of our lady, though that they inuented a thing not vngodly, yet if a man myghte confesse the trouthe, they tourned wyne into water.”<sup>83</sup> Consequently, we

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<sup>78</sup> R.J. Schoeck, *Erasmus of Europe: The Prince of Humanists, 1501-1536* (Edinburgh, 1993), 319.

<sup>79</sup> Letter dated 13 March 1526, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 12, 91.

<sup>80</sup> Thompson, *Colloquies of Erasmus*, 365.

<sup>81</sup> A.G. Dickens and Whitney R.D. Jones, *Erasmus the Reformer* (London, 1994), 144.

<sup>82</sup> Thompson, *Colloquies of Erasmus*, 289-91.

<sup>83</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Preparation to Deathe*, (London, 1538), sigs D4v-D5r.

might yet construe the Walsingham articles, an explicitly “Erasmian” moment in the English Reformation, as an attempt to turn water back into wine.

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## Ordering Paradise: Structuring the Natural World in the Early Modern French Caribbean

By Andrew Dial

“Pigeon-holing is an exercise in power” argued Robert Darnton in his classic book *The Great Cat Massacre*.<sup>1</sup> In the past decade, scholars such as Daniel Headrick and Kenneth Banks have studied both pigeon-holing and power in the early modern France of which Darnton wrote. Indeed, the period from 1600-1800 offers many examples of power being displayed through the establishment of organizational paradigms, from Richelieu and Louis XIV’s restructuring of the French government to Pierre Bayle’s reimagining of man’s relationship to the heavens. This period also saw the advancement of French power in the Caribbean and a resulting growth in published descriptions depicting the newly French islands for European readers. In attempting to reproduce on paper the natural world that they encountered firsthand, early modern Caribbean authors exercised their power to not only pigeon-hole natural phenomena, but to extend European intellectual paradigms across the landscape which they described. During the seventeenth century, descriptions of the French Caribbean used hierarchical medieval methods of organization, such as the Great Chain of Being, but by the end of the eighteenth century new ways of conceptualizing the world stemming from the Enlightenment had resulted in new organizational paradigms which writers applied to the Caribbean. The works of three seventeenth- and eighteenth-century authors, Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre on the Windward Islands, Jean-Baptiste Thibault de Chanvalon on Martinique, and Médéric Louis Elie Moreau de Saint-Méry on Saint-Domingue, embody this change.

Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre’s four volume *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François* was one of the first, and most influential, descriptions of the French Caribbean. Published between 1667 and

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 192.

<sup>2</sup> Doris Garraway, *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press,



1671 by a Dominican priest who spent over seven years in the islands working with the Carib natives, the *Histoire générale* served as an exhaustive reference for the Caribbean world and its history well into the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The first, third, and fourth volumes are taken up entirely with a narrative of European settlement and warfare while the second provides a description of the islands themselves. This description is further divided into eight sections, the first two of which provide a tour of the islands and relate Du Tertre's personal travels in the region. This geographic tour is followed by a methodical enumeration of the climate, plants, fish, birds, beasts, inhabitants (which includes the French and the native Carib), and slaves, which is designed to both provide context for his historical narrative and familiarize those back home with the environment of the islands.

Two observations are necessary about the Du Tertre's description of the Caribbean islands in the *Histoire générale*. First, the categories in which he describes Caribbean flora and fauna and the order in which he describes them reflect the hierarchical ordering of the Great Chain of Being. This medieval construction of Greek and Christian thought organized the entire natural world in an ascending line of species extending from the most corporeal objects, rocks and minerals, through plants, fish, birds, terrestrial animals, and humans to the most spiritual beings, angels and God. In this system, man stands at the pinnacle of earthly beings, existing above the rest of the natural world but only slightly lower than the angels. Du Tertre's chapter arrangement mirrors this hierarchical organization, which was still in use during the seventeenth century. Although the lowermost (mineral) and uppermost (God and the angels) links have been removed, the middle section consisting of plants, fish, birds, terrestrial animals, and man remain in precisely the order that they occupy on the Great Chain.

Second, though Du Tertre maintains this hierarchy within each category, he uses usefulness as a measure of where each object belongs within that hierarchy. His section on plants and trees, for example, begins with those that are the smallest and least beneficial and ends with those that are the largest and most beneficial: "plants whose fruits are not important (*considerables*)", "plants that bear fruit", "wild (*sauvages*) trees without fruit", "woods for building", and "trees that bear edible fruit and are important."<sup>3</sup> This strategy of arranging natural phenomena by their usefulness represents a

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<sup>2</sup> Doris Garraway, *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005), 50.

<sup>3</sup>"Des plantes dont les fruits ne sont pas plus considerable, que les pois & les fèves", "Des plantes qui portent des fruits", "Des Arbres Sauvages, & sans fruit", "Des bois à bastir", and "De tous les arbres qui portent des fruicts tant ceux que l'on mange, que ceux qui sont un peu considerables". (Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.)

departure from the Great Chain of Being and predicts eighteenth-century forms of classification such as that of the Comte de Buffon, which utilized familiarity to Europeans as its organizing principle. Thus, the framework of DuTertre's *Histoire générale* indicates a close link to medieval intellectual structures through the Great Chain of Being yet breaks from that chain with its use of practicality as a dividing characteristic.

Both Chanvalon and Moreau de St. Mery's works represent the breakdown of this organizational strategy based around the Great Chain of Being and a change in man's relationship with the natural world. Jean-Baptiste Thibault de Chanvalon was a member of the Académie des Arts et Sciences at Bordeaux with ties to the Académie Royale in Paris who spent five years on Martinique between 1751 and 1755 taking meteorological measurements and observing the local flora and fauna.<sup>4</sup> Dedicated to the Minister of War and Marine in charge of the colonies, the Duc de Choiseul, the *Voyage à la Martinique, contenant diverses observations sur la physique, l'histoire naturelle, l'agriculture, les mœurs, & les usages de cette isle*, was published in 1763 and presented the results of that work to the French government and scientific community. Chanvalon's avowed goal for the project was not only to collect data on weather and plants, but "to bring together the different indications of nature under one point of view; to unite the history of the soil of Martinique with that of its climate; to place a table of climate variations and one of the natural production of all spices next to one another; to place in a state of comparison the influence of meteors, or the phenomena of the atmosphere, with all other phenomena."<sup>5</sup> Eighteenth-century intellectuals, as Paul Cheney has argued, considered the climate of a region to be a defining factor in its social manners (*mœurs*), laws, and, finances, to the point that they spoke of an "empire of climate" which encompassed all parts of the French nation.<sup>6</sup> Thus, Chanvalon's holistic approach to Martinique's ecosystem had the practical purpose of attempting to shape the laws by which metropolitan administrators ran France's Caribbean possessions.

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Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François* (Paris: Thomas Jolly, 1667-71). 1:83, 127, 141, 155, 173.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Cheney, *Revolutionary Commerce: Globalization and the French Monarchy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 93.

<sup>5</sup> "de rapprocher les différentes indications de la nature sous un même point de vue; de réunir l'histoire du sol de la Martinique à celle du climat; de placer le tableau des variations du tems à côté de celui des productions naturelles de toutes especes; de mettre en état de comparer l'influence des météores ou des phénomènes de l'atmosphère, sur tous les autres phénomènes." Jean-Baptiste Thibault de Chanvalon, *Voyage à la Martinique, contenant diverses observations sur la physique, l'histoire naturelle, l'agriculture, les mœurs, & les usages de cette isle* (Paris: J.B. Bauche, 1763), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Cheney, 93.

The body of the *Voyage à la Martinique* reflects this goal and reveals Chanvalon's interaction with Du Tertre's *Histoire Generale*, Chanvalon divides his study into three sections: the first describes the natural environment of the island, the second relates the conditions under which his meteorological observations took place, and the third provides a summary of said meteorological and biological observations. The first section or "Tableau of the diverse productions of Nature," is further divided into five "Récapitulations" of meteorology, minerals, vegetables, and animals, and is followed by a summative section of general observations.<sup>7</sup>

Several points of comparison between Chanvalon and Du Tertre are illuminating. First, the types of phenomena that Chanvalon includes differ from those of Du Tertre, marking the development of new fields of inquiry since the seventeenth century. His inclusion of meteorology alongside minerals and animals, for example, adds a category not found in Du Tertre and represents a break from the Great Chain of Being as a result of the Scientific Revolution. Second, where Du Tertre does not give any indication that the different types of life on the islands are linked in any significant way, Chanvalon not only sees them as connected but actively sets out to discover those links. His discussion of the human inhabitants of the island is placed within the "Récapitulation" on animals and is linked to the animals by a lengthy analysis of the effects of disease on the European and African populations. This discussion of disease and its effects does not appear in Du Tertre and marks an effort by Chanvalon to determine how people from different climates interacted with the same environment, thus probing the way in which the "empire of climate" affected the human population. Furthermore, the second section of the *Voyage à la Martinique* consists of a table enumerating each month's average barometric reading, temperature reading, wind directions, and rainfall compared to a list of the changes in animal and plant life that he observed during the same period. By discovering the links between the climate, animal, and plant life, Chanvalon hoped to synchronize the *mœurs* and laws of the island to fit its ecosystem so as to make the "empire of climate" work more efficiently. "The history of the laws of a country is related to the history of its inhabitants and this is always related to the history of the soil and climate" he states in his introduction.<sup>8</sup> This quantitative interlinking between the natural history and civil history of the island is not found in Du Tertre who never directly connects his description of the flora and fauna with the human narrative that comprises the rest of the *Histoire générale*. Instead, it stems from the

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<sup>7</sup> "Tableau des diverses productions de la Nature" Chanvalon, 9.

<sup>8</sup> "L'histoire des loix d'un pays tient à l'histoire de ses habitans, & celle-ci tient presque toujours à l'histoire du sol & du climat." Chanvalon, 3. Translation from Cheney, 94.

Enlightenment desire to explain and connect all parts of the natural world using logic and reason, a motivation that resulted in the famed *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and d'Alembert.

Finally, in order to make his data intelligible to those back in France, Chanvalon draws on new methods of classification that were being developed by eighteenth-century naturalists. At the end of the *Voyage à la Martinique* he includes two lengthy appendices listing the life expectancy of the European plants that he brought with him to the island and a daily log of meteorological events, which combined take up a third of the book's three hundred pages. The plants are listed alphabetically by their common French names, but Chanvalon also includes their Latin nomenclature according to a classification system that had been developed by Carl Linnaeus throughout the 1740s and 1750s. Linnaeus's system of classification did not place each plant along a linear hierarchy, as did the Great Chain of Being, but rather considered them all to be of equal importance. This equalization of information was enshrined in the *Encyclopédie* as well, whose articles Diderot and d'Alembert had arranged in alphabetical order rather than along a scale of inclining or declining importance. Thus, Chanvalon's *Voyage à la Martinique* shows a departure from Du Tertre's *Histoire générale* and embodies the Enlightenment desire to connect and describe all aspects of the natural world using quantifiable data and non-hierarchical systems of classification rather than a linear hierarchy such as the Great Chain of Being.

Médéric Louis Elie Moreau de Saint-Méry's *Description topographique, physique, civile, et historique de la partie française de l'isle Saint-Dominge* reveals the full extent to which colonial thinkers took those Enlightenment principles. A former lawyer and colonial delegate to the National Assembly, Moreau de Saint-Méry published the *Description* in 1797 while living as an expatriate in Philadelphia. Written to other members of the expatriate community and its supporters, the *Description* sought to provide this audience with an appreciation for what France was losing by portraying Saint-Domingue as a strong, vibrant colony integral to France's economic well-being.<sup>9</sup> His decision to locate his description in the year 1789 is a conscious one designed to place the colony at its height and instill the possibility of its return to that height after the upheavals of the French Revolution in the 1790s. According to Moreau de Saint-Méry, the *Description* is not a work of nostalgia, but instead an inventory of the colony's economic potential and near-metropolitan sophistication.

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<sup>9</sup> Médéric Louis Elie de Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'isle Saint-Domingue* (Philadelphia: published by the author, 1797), 1:5-6.

This goal is played out in the book's subject matter and organizational structure. Unlike both Du Tertre and Chanvalon, Moreau de Saint-Méry does not mention the flora or fauna of Saint-Domingue. Instead, the first third of the book is spent outlining an intensely detailed system of racial classification that catalogued eleven different variations of skin type between black and white along with their innumerable combinations. In this taxonomy, Moreau de Saint-Méry theorizes that a person's physical and reproductive prowess decrease as their bloodline becomes more mixed, creating a naturalistic defense for white fears that the colony would be overtaken by their mixed-race offspring.<sup>10</sup> Moreau de Saint-Méry's taxonomy recreates the hierarchy implicit in Du Tertre's *Histoire générale*, using skin color instead of spiritual essence but keeping the same focus on usefulness, since those of more pure racial stock were stronger than those with mixed blood. In addition, his desire to catalogue and classify people based on skin color represents the application of Enlightenment methodology to Caribbean social structure, but with an ironic twist. Where Chanvalon sees the relationship between human society and the natural world as being quantifiable, Moreau de Saint-Méry sees humans themselves as being genetically predetermined, allowing him to defend the racial prejudices of the island's white elites through the workings of human reproduction. By creating a racial taxonomy that placed those with mixed blood progressively closer to the bottom of the hierarchy, Moreau de Saint-Méry attempted to justify both the oppressive power structures that had existed on the island and the sexual exploitation of white and mixed race women by white colonial elites. Thus, his organization of racial categories in Saint-Domingue represents an attempt to order not only the natural world but society as well; even if that order existed only within the pages of the *Description*.

Following the treatise on race, the *Description* takes the reader on a parish by parish tour of the colony, paying particular attention to the physical and human geography of each region. Within this tour, he describes in greater detail the two major cities of Saint-Domingue: Cap Français and Port-au-Prince; focusing not just on their physical structures but on the structures that organized society. In the case of Cap Français, for example, he describes not just the layout of the town and its major buildings, but also the Chambers of Agriculture and Commerce, the local newspaper, and the types of books printed on the island. This focus on physical geography and societal organizations contrasts with the works of the earlier authors whose discussions of island society serve as context for the history of the islands, in the case of Du Tertre, or the constructive use of meteorological

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<sup>10</sup> For a further description of this classification scheme within its intellectual and colonial context see John Geggus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) and Garraway, 247-275.

data, in the case of Chanvalon. Both his efforts to classify humans based on racial characteristics and his step-by-step tour of Saint-Domingue represent a break from the organizational patterns of Du Tertre, and embody intellectual currents that would be brought forward in the nineteenth century with the development of scientific racism and statistical censuses.

Together, the organizational systems of Du Tertre's *Histoire générale*, Chanvalon's *Voyage à la Martinique*, and Moreau de Saint-Méry's *Description* display the changing intellectual currents in Europe and America which they project onto the French Caribbean. By arranging and categorizing the natural world of the islands, these authors integrated the flora and fauna of the islands into their own classification schemes. Thus, they not only made the unfamiliar world of the Caribbean manageable for their readers, but also, in the case of Chanvalon and Moreau de Saint-Méry, connected their perceived organization of the natural world to man-made power structures such as civic laws and racial stereotypes. In doing so, the tables of plant data and patterns of skin color that fill the pages of their books represent an effort to literally recreate the world in their own image, with new social structures matching their interpretation of the natural order. This desire to remake society according to natural laws was a key principle of the Enlightenment that came to the fore during the French Revolution, and irrevocably changed both the metropole and its Caribbean colonies. Hence, by pigeon-holing flora and fauna, these authors pigeon-holed themselves as well.

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*“E che giammai può far femmina imbelle?”*  
Gendered Politics in Francisco António de Almeida’s  
*La Giuditta*

By Danielle Kuntz

As one of the most common subjects for dramatic musical settings from the Renaissance through the nineteenth centuries, the story of Judith is well known to musicologists: Judith, the devout widow of Bethulia, becomes a heroine of the Jewish people when she successfully decapitates the Assyrian general Holofernes. Many studies have illuminated the particular depictions of this tale in musical settings and, above all, have proven that the Judith story never functions just as a simple retelling of a biblical account.<sup>1</sup> One Judith setting that has remained particularly obscure in musicological studies is the oratorio *La Giuditta* by Portuguese composer Francisco António de Almeida. When this oratorio was performed at the Chiesa Nuova in Rome in 1726, Almeida found himself nearing the end of a short period of musical study in the Papal City, under the patronage of Portuguese King João V, and he would soon return to Lisbon to work as a composer and organist at the Portuguese Royal and Patriarchal Chapel. The oratorio *La Giuditta* stands out as a vibrant artifact of Almeida’s career for very little of his music exists today, since both he and most of his work were likely victims of the 1755 Lisbon earthquake.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The literature is much too extensive to list here, but a useful introduction to Judith studies across the arts, with a section dedicated to settings of Judith in music and drama, is Kevin R. Brine, Elena Ciletti, and Henrike Lähnemann, eds., *The Sword of Judith: Judith Studies Across the Disciplines* (Cambridge: OpenBook Publishers, 2010). The most extensive studies on Judith settings from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are those dedicated to the Judith oratorios of Alessandro Scarlatti and Antonio Vivaldi, as well as wide variety of settings on a libretto of the Judith story produced by Pietro Metastasio. A brief discussion of all of these settings and others, can be found in David Marsh, “Judith in Baroque Oratorio,” in *The Sword of Judith*, 385-396. Kelley Harness’ chapter “Una forte, magnanima, e generosa vedova: Judith” from her *Echoes of Women’s Voices: Music, Art, and Female Patronage in Early Modern Florence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006) provides a recent study of the Judith story in the context of female patronage at the Medici court, as well as a useful early modern bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical details of Almeida’s life are generally drawn from the works of several early Portuguese historians; details on available biographical sources can be found in João Paulo Janeiro’s “Contributo para o Estudo da Música Religiosa



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*La Giuditta*—which survives only in a Roman copy of the score (Figure 1) and an anonymous printed libretto (Figure 2)—is a virtual study in early eighteenth-century Roman oratorio style, featuring a strict alternation of recitative and da capo arias over two structural parts, a complete eschewal of the chorus and narrator, and a three-part instrumental *introduzione*.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 1 Title page of the preserved manuscript copy of Almeida's *La Giuditta*.

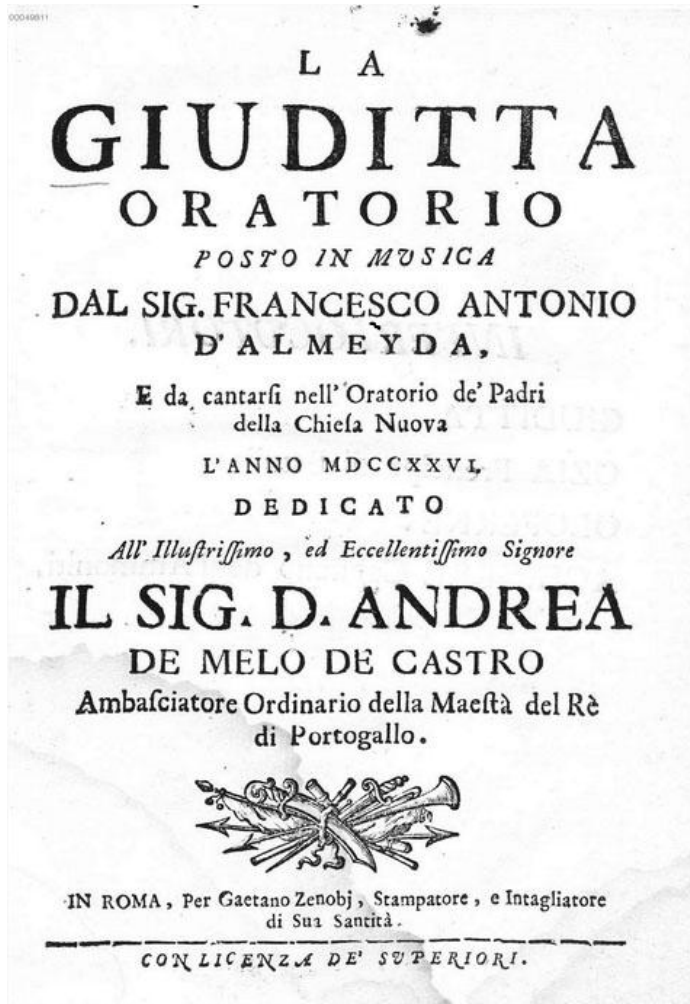
Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit  
de Francisco Antón Mendelssohn-Archiv.

questra,” (PhD  
diss., Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2004), ix-xiii; see also Manuel Carlos de Brito, “Um Retrato Inedito do Compositor Francisco António de Almeida,” in *Estudos de História de Música em Portugal* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1989), 123-126.

Among Almeida's surviving compositions are a small number of sacred and secular vocal works. Janeiro's “Contributo para o Estudo da Música Religiosa” is undoubtedly the most comprehensive introduction to Almeida's sacred work and is one of the few studies to apply thorough musical analysis to any portion of the composer's output. Regarding Almeida's secular music, a few studies have been dedicated to his comic opera *La Spinalba*, which also survives. Manuel Carlos de Brito's *Opera in Portugal during the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) and Luísa Cymbron's *Francisco António de Almeida e a Ópera Italiana na Corte de D. João V: La Spinalba* (Lisbon, 1990) discuss this opera and its relationship to the production of Italian opera in Portugal. Almeida's *La Giuditta* has received only minimal attention in musicological studies. See, for example, the work's treatment in Marsh, 393-395; and George J. Buelow, *A History of Baroque Music* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 389-390. To my knowledge, no in-depth study of the oratorio has been completed to date.

<sup>3</sup> The Roman copy of the Almeida's *La Giuditta* was made available to me on microfilm by the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung, where the document is held. The printed libretto of the work is preserved at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in München and is available in digital scans online through the library website at: <http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10578665-6> (accessed 28 March 2012). Of course, Almeida is not known to be the librettist of the work, but in the absence of a known librettist, I refer to both text and music in this paper as “Almeida's.” A modern edition of the work has been produced, but is commercially unavailable: Francisco António de Almeida, *La Giuditta*, ed. Jaime Mota, Fernando Bessa Valente, and Jorge Alexandre Costa (Oporto: Fermata, 2000). A fine recording of this work is widely available in a two compact disc set: Francisco António de Almeida, *La Giuditta: Oratorio*, dir. René Jacobs (Harmonia Mundi, 1992), HMC 901411 and HMC 901412.

For eighteenth-century Roman oratorio style, see Howard Smither, *The History of the Oratorio*, Vol. 1: “Oratorio in the Baroque Era: Italy, Vienna, Paris (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977); and Joyce Johnson, *Roman Oratorio, 1770–1800: The Repertory at Santa Maria in Vallicella* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987).



**Figure 2** Title page of the anonymous printed libretto of Almeida's *La Giuditta*. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Signatur: L.eleg.g. 3837.

On its musical surface, the work is Italian in style, and, indeed, one of Almeida's goals in Rome was to master the Italian musical genres that the Portuguese royal court sought so much to emulate in their own musical establishments.<sup>4</sup> It is my contention in this paper, however, that within its perfectly crafted Italian musical parts dwells a distinctly Portuguese socio-historical presence—a Judith who sings the circumstances that found her Portuguese composer in Rome in the first place.

Though Almeida's biographical and historical details are sparse, I will argue that it is possible to read Almeida's *La Giuditta* as an allegorical representation of the political relationship between Portugal and Rome during the early eighteenth century, in which the Portuguese defense of Christianity (specifically Roman Catholicism) is presented as a crucial factor in Rome's

contemporary political interests. Though Almeida himself never made this allegory explicit, I situate my reading in Portuguese and Roman artistic productions from the time, where a particular set of iconographical representations mythologize the city of Lisbon (and Portugal more generally) as powerful and militant female figure. Moreover, I posit that Almeida's *La Giuditta* is itself mapped

<sup>4</sup> On the Italian emphasis in Portuguese musical patronage, see, for instance: João Pedro de Alvarenga, "Domenico Scarlatti in the 1720s: Portugal, Travelling, and the Italianisation of the Portuguese Musical Scene," in *Domenico Scarlatti Adventures: Essays to Commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his Death*, ed. Massimiliano Sala and Dean Sutcliff (Bologna: Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2008), 17-68; Cristina Fernandes, "La fortuna del *Coro dos Italianos* della Cappella Reale e della Patriarcale di Lisbona nel secondo settecento," *Rivista Italiana di Musicologia* XLII/2 (2007): 233-266; and Rui Vieira Nery, "Italian Models and Problems of Periodization in Portuguese Baroque Music," in *Routes du Baroque: La Contribution du Baroque à la Pensée et à l'Art Européens* (Lisboa: Conselho da Europa/Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, 1990), 217-223.

onto this myth.<sup>5</sup> In order to accomplish this mapping, Almeida and his librettist appear to utilize Judith’s malleable gender roles in order to present an essentially masculine (dominant) position for Portugal despite a largely feminine iconographical tradition.

### Mythologizing Lisbon

From the beginning of his reign, João V (r. 1707–1750) set in motion an extensive royal agenda that sought to emulate the grandeur of the papal court—a city that at once represented João’s visions of prestige and a strict observance of the Catholic faith.<sup>6</sup> As part of this project, João increased Portuguese presence in Rome throughout this period, sending ambassadors, artists, and even musicians to the city to study the Roman models of their craft—of course, Almeida himself was in Rome from approximately 1722 to 1726 for this exact purpose. João also hired a large number of Italian artists and musicians to work at the Portuguese court. Though most of João’s wealth was spent on art and spectacle, he sought real goals through this presence and exchange, such as increased control over Lisbon’s religious institutions, and he also provided real financial and military support to Rome to achieve it. Particularly important in this regard, for instance, was the contribution of naval support to the Papal States, in order to help defend Italy against Turkish encroachment, especially on Venetian strongholds in the Mediterranean in 1716.<sup>7</sup> For this contribution, Pope Clement XI raised the Lisbon royal chapel to a cathedral and granted it the title and status of patriarchate. Thus, what was otherwise an Ottoman-Venetian conflict that lasted from 1714 to 1718 (the Second Ottoman-Venetian War) was also a major impetus in Portuguese-Roman affairs.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The idea of “mythologizing” a particular city as “feminine” draws on Wendy Heller’s similar use of the concept in her book *Emblems of Eloquence: Opera and Women’s Voices in Seventeenth-Century Venice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> My discussion in this section is derived from the work of several art historians that detail the reign of João V from the perspective of artistic patronage. These studies include: Angela Delaforce, *Art and Patronage in Eighteenth-Century Portugal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), especially chapters 2-6; Jay A. Levenson, ed., *The Age of Baroque in Portugal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), especially the chapters by A. Ayres de Carvalho, “Dom João V and the Artists of Papal Rome,” 31-48, and Angela Delaforce, “Lisbon, ‘This New Rome’: Dom João V of Portugal and Relations between Rome and Lisbon,” 49-79.

<sup>7</sup> For a general history of this period of Portuguese naval history, see Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Spain and Portugal*, Vol. 2 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973), 403-404. João’s naval support for the Papal States in this period is especially striking given that the country largely stayed out of continental conflicts after their involvement in the costly and largely unbeneficial War of Spanish Succession earlier in the century.

<sup>8</sup> Not coincidentally, the Venetian role in this conflict has been well-known in music through Vivaldi’s oratorio setting *Juditha triumphans* from 1716, which I will discuss briefly.

That same year, João sent another ambassador to the papal court, Dom Rodrigo Annes de Sà Almeida e Menezes, also known then as the Marquês de Fontes.<sup>9</sup> The entrance of this ambassador to Rome was marked by a particularly extravagant and meticulously well-planned envoy of four ornately decorated carriages or *coches*.<sup>10</sup> This moment, as has been well documented, remained in popular memory and marked a heightened moment of Portuguese self-mythologizing in Rome that would persist throughout João's reign, and it is the moment in which we can begin to understand Almeida's later *La Giuditta*. Though I do not have space to recount here the entire allegorical program portrayed in the Marquês' envoy (which he himself had a hand in designing), it will suffice to say that the three main carriages were heavily decorated in sculpture, which was based on the 1572 Portuguese epic poem *Os Lusíadas* by Luís de Camões, and served to both recall the golden age of Lusitanian conquest that Camões originally wrote about, as well as suggest its revival under João V. The rear of the first noble coach (Figure 3), known as "a Coroação de Lisboa" (the Coronation of Lisbon), is a useful starting point for understanding the mythologizing of Lisbon at this time. Paraphrasing Angela Delaforce, this set of sculptures features in the center a figure of the City of Lisbon wearing classical armor, the mantle of royalty, and carrying a scepter. She is flanked on her left by Abundance and on the right by Fame, who holds a turreted civic crown above Lisbon's head. At Lisbon's feet, a dragon—the symbol of the Portuguese House of Bragança from which João descended—tears apart an Ottoman crescent with its claws. Beneath, seated among scattered weapons and flanking the dragon are two figures of chained slaves, representing on her right an Ottoman Turk, and on her left, a Moor. Delaforce notes further that the "Turk looks down, as if unable to bear the light of the 'true faith' while a Moor gazes up as if illuminated by his conversion to Christianity."<sup>11</sup>

These sorts of imagery are by no means isolated, but nevertheless find a particularly clear representation here of several themes important from this moment forward in Portuguese mythologizing: an allegorical depiction of a female Lisbon (depicted elsewhere as Lusitania or Portugal), as well as images that convey Portugal's role in the Christianizing process, specifically through their triumphs over Islam and paganism—in this case, through the Moors, one of Portugal's many subjects of forced conversion, as well as Portugal's current missions against the Turks. This

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<sup>9</sup> His title would later change to Marquês de Fontes, by decree of João V, in 1718.

<sup>10</sup> Several of these coaches are preserved in the Museu Nacional dos Coches in Lisbon, Portugal. Images and details of the entirety of this envoy can be found in Marco Fabio Apolloni, "Wondrous Vehicles: the Coaches of the Embassy of the Marquês de Fontes," in *The Age of the Baroque in Portugal*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 89-102; and Delaforce, *Art and Patronage*, 135-149.

<sup>11</sup> Delaforce, *Art and Patronage*, 143.

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sort of imagery became widely associated with Portuguese imperialism and was intended to be “a powerful reminder of the evangelization with which Portugal’s missions were historically associated worldwide.”<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 3** The First Noble Coach of the Marquês de Fontes, 1716. Museu Nacional dos Coches, Lisbon.

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<sup>12</sup> Delaforce, *Art and Patronage*, 145.

Of course, it is by no means unique that Portugal is depicted as a female, as Rome and Venice usually are too, for example. However, it is important in that it allows Portugal to map its own myth onto tales of female warriors or heroines, such as Judith. Indeed, female figures of Lisbon and Rome together had been prominent beginning much earlier. In 1708, Italy had contributed to Lisbon a triumphal arch for João's marriage to Archduchess Maria Anna, which recalled the *Arco di Portogallo* that stood in Rome until 1662 to mark a former embassy to the city sent by Portuguese Dom Manuel I (r. 1495–1572). The new 1708 arch in Lisbon featured on one façade a female figure of the city of Lisbon beside a female statue of Rome wearing a papal mitre. An inscription, taken from Camões, was placed beneath the statue of Lisbon, reading: "Princess of Cities and emulator of Rome's greatness."<sup>13</sup> In the same year that this arch was erected, João began sending envoys to Rome to cultivate his imperial imagery in that city. It is perhaps unsurprising that his first ambassador to Rome to further these goals, André de Melo e Castro, sent in 1708, is the man to whom Almeida would later dedicate his *La Giuditta* (see Figure 2).

#### **Almeida's *La Giuditta*: The "femmina imbelle" and Vivaldi's *Juditha triumphans* (1716)**

Almeida's anonymous libretto follows the general outline of the apocryphal book of Judith, chapters four through sixteen, recounting the actions of the Jewish heroine (see Table 1 for an outline of the work). To summarize briefly, Judith is a devout and beautiful widow of the city of Bethulia—a city situated in a strategic mountain pass that awaits siege by an Assyrian army en route to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem. This army is led by the ruthless Holofernes, a devoted general of king Nebuchadnezzar. Early in the story, Holofernes is warned by an Ammonite in the army named Achior that the God of Israel will defend the Bethulians if they have not committed any sin. Achior is mocked by Holofernes and sent away to Bethulia, so that he will die with the Israelites in the siege. Meanwhile, Holofernes orders that the water supply to Bethulia be cut off in an effort to force the city into surrender, and indeed, as the days pass, Bethulia's leader, Uzziah, determines that if the God of Israel has not delivered them from the Assyrian army within five days, they will give in. Learning this, Judith confronts Uzziah, claiming that his plan is wrong in that it demands action of God, and she promptly tells him that she has some secret plan to save the people of Israel. In what follows, Judith uses her beauty and charm to infiltrate Holofernes' camp, where she manages to become close to the general, who is of course enamored of her. After some careful planning, Judith finds herself alone with a drunken and sleeping Holofernes, and she heroically cuts off his

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<sup>13</sup> "Princeza das Cidades, emula da grande Roma." Delaforce, *Art and Patronage*, 149.

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head. With head in hand, Judith returns to Bethulia, where the people of Israel rejoice, and, having witnessed firsthand the power of the God of Israel, Achior converts. The Assyrian army, meanwhile, discovers their leader slain and, in their panicked state, are easily defeated by the Israelites.<sup>14</sup>

Character(s)	Musical Style/Opening Text	Location of Action
<b>PARTE PRIMA</b>		
Giuditta	Recit: <i>Sventurata Giuditta</i>	Bethulia
	Aria: <i>Quella fiamma</i>	
Oloferne, Achiorre	Recit: <i>Qual mai gente superb</i>	Assyrian Camp
Oloferne	Aria: <i>Invitti miei guerrieri</i>	
Ozia	Recit: <i>Ove gli occhi raggiro</i>	Bethulia
	Aria: <i>Tortorella</i>	
Giuditta, Ozia	Recit: <i>Illustre prence</i>	Bethulia
Giuditta	Aria: <i>Saggio nocchiero</i>	
Ozia, Achiorre	Recit: <i>Ma quale ignoto duce</i>	
Achiorre	Aria: <i>La dolce speranza</i>	
Oloferne	Recit: <i>Ed orgogliosa</i>	Assyrian Camp
	Aria: <i>Dal mio brando fulminante</i>	

<sup>14</sup> My summary and interpretation of the Judith story is drawn from Carey A. Moore, *The Anchor Bible Judith: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1985), and Solomon Zeitlin, ed., *The Book of Judith*, trans. and with commentary by Morton S. Enslin (Leiden: Brill, 1975).

Achiorre	Recit: <i>Prence, già d'ogni intorno</i>	Bethulia
	Aria: <i>Pallida e scolorita</i>	
Ozia	Recit: <i>A tanto rio dolore</i>	
	Aria: <i>Giusto Dio</i>	
Ozia, Giuditta	Recit: <i>Dunque, con alma</i>	
Giuditta	Aria: <i>Sento che dice al cor</i>	
Ozia, Giuditta	Recit: <i>Ma qual vanno consiglio</i>	
	A due: <i>Vanne, addio</i>	
<b>PARTE SECONDA</b>		
Giuditta	Recit: <i>Alto Signore</i>	Bethulia
	Aria: <i>Dalla destra onnipotente</i>	
Achiorre, Ozia	Recit: <i>Oh, come lieta</i>	
Ozia	Aria: <i>Un'alma forte</i>	
Oloferne	Recit: <i>Quest'è il giorno fatale</i>	Assyrian Camp
	Aria: <i>Date, o trombe</i>	
Oloferne, Giuditta	Recit: <i>Ma quale io veggio</i>	
Giuditta	Aria: <i>Lo splendor</i>	
Oloferne, Giuditta	Recit: <i>Illustre pellegrina</i>	
Oloferne	Aria: <i>Cara, non paventar</i>	



Giuditta	Recit: <i>Giace dal sonno avvinto</i>	Bethulia
Ozia	Aria: <i>Mi sento nel petto</i>	
Achiorre, Ozia, Giuditta	Recit: <i>Tutta lieta e fastosa</i>	
Giuditta	Aria: <i>Godete, sì godete</i>	
Giuditta, Achiorre, Ozia	Recit: <i>Questa, voi la mirate</i>	
Achiorre	Aria: <i>Vengo a te</i>	
Ozia, Giuditta	Recit: <i>Ma come tant'ardire</i>	
	A due: <i>Quel diletto</i>	

**Table 1:** Outline of Almeida’s *La Giuditta*

Almeida’s anonymous libretto restricts the action to the four characters mentioned here—Judith, Uzziah, Holofernes, and Achior—though, in the apocryphal story, these four characters exist alongside several other minor characters not mentioned above.<sup>15</sup> In this section, I will argue that Almeida’s libretto and setting focus on these four characters (Judith, Holofernes, Ozia, Achior) in a way that can be read as allegorizing the relationship of Portuguese and Roman politics of the early eighteenth century. Almeida’s setting seems closely related to the imperial Portuguese iconography discussed above in “the Coronation of Lisbon” in that both the text and music appear to focus on conveying Almeida’s four characters as symbols of crusading, faith, the defeated Other, and the convert. Each symbol, so obvious on the Marquês de Fontes’ coach, relates closely to a character in Almeida’s setting, as I will demonstrate below. As such, Almeida’s *La Giuditta* might be read as an allegory aimed at commenting on the political relationship of Lisbon and Rome at the time that the

<sup>15</sup> Other contemporary musical settings, for instance, sometimes include Judith’s maid (called “Abra”), who accompanies Judith on her mission to Holofernes camp; others include an Assyrian official—named Bagoas in the biblical story—who is loyal to Holofernes and is the first to find and mourn over his decapitated body. Even Uzziah and Achior are sometimes left out, and the only two characters remaining are, of course, Judith and Holofernes. Eleanor Selfridge-Field’s “Juditha’ in Historical Perspective,” in *Vivaldi Veneziano Europeo*, ed. Francesco Degrada (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1980), 153, provides a table of characterizations for five contemporary Judith oratorios: Gasparini/Pamphili (1689); Scarlatti/Pamphili (c. 1695); Scarlatti/Ottoboni (c. 1700); Marcello/Marcello (1709); Vivaldi/Cassetti (1716). The characterizations of these oratorios range from three characters (Scarlatti/Pamphili) to seven characters (Marcello/Marcello), but none involve four characters as in Almeida’s anonymous libretto.

work was written; a relationship that recognized the benefit of mutual support, but a relationship, also, that the Lisbon monarchy was increasingly dissatisfied with assuming a subordinate role in<sup>16</sup>.

That the Judith story could function allegorically for the purposes of politics would perhaps not have been a completely novel concept for Almeida, since Vivaldi's oratorio *Juditha triumphans*, with a Latin libretto by Giacomo Casseti, was written in Venice for that express purpose in 1716, just ten years prior to Almeida's oratorio. In fact, Vivaldi's work was commissioned to commemorate the same Venetian triumphs against the Turks to which the Portuguese had contributed naval defense. Vivaldi's oratorio, of course, mentions nothing of this Portuguese role, but it does directly express the allegorical value of the Judith story in its representation of the struggles between the Ottomans and Venice. An allegorical poem, entitled "Carmen allegoricum," appended to Casseti's libretto, makes the symbolic value of the work's characters completely explicit. Summarizing from Michael Talbot's study of the oratorio, Judith is symbolic of Adria (another way to say "Venice"); her maid Abra stands for faith; the city of Bethulia represents the Church; Ozias symbolizes the Pope; the Assyrian Holofernes represents the Turkish sultan; and finally, Holofernes' servant Vagaus depicts the enemy commander, supposedly a eunuch, and possibly Ali Pasha, who was killed in an important battle against the Ottomans at Petrovaradin.<sup>17</sup>

While there is no direct evidence to prove that Almeida knew Vivaldi's work, it is at least clear that he was familiar with other Judith settings and libretti. He writes, in a dedication of the work to Portuguese ambassador Melo e Castro: "Before my departure from Rome for the Kingdom of Portugal, I have, among many other matters of merit to me, made my principal task the setting to music of the present Oratorio of *Giuditta*, which has already often been printed, but in this last printing is almost entirely renewed and adapted to the most modern taste."<sup>18</sup> In comparing the two works, an analysis of the textual and musical characterizations reveals that while Almeida's *Giuditta*

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<sup>16</sup> In the discussion that follows, I refer to the characters by the names that were used in the language of each setting: Almeida's in Italian and Vivaldi's in Latin. The common English versions of the character's names will be used to comment on literary or historical aspects of the characters from the apocryphal story.

<sup>17</sup> For a libretto and score of *Juditha triumphans*, see: Antonio Vivaldi, *Juditha triumphans*, ed. Alberto Zedda (Ricordi, 1971). Several musicological studies of this work and its allegorical implications have been completed. My discussion in this section is based on the following studies: Michael Talbot, *The Sacred Vocal Music of Antonio Vivaldi* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1995), 409-447; and Selfridge-Field, 135-153.

<sup>18</sup> "Prima della mia partenza da Roma per il Regno di Portogallo, essendo stato, fra molti soggetti di maggior vaglia di mè, prescelto a porre in Musica il presente Oratorio della Giuditta, già altrevolte Stampato, ma in questa ultima impressione quasi del tutto rinovato, ed all'ultima perfezione del gusto moderno ridotto . . ." Translation by Manuel Carlos de Brito, available in the liner notes to the recording of *La Giuditta*, dir. René Jacobs. Almeida's dedication to Melo e Castro was printed as part of the libretto, the original of which is available through the digital library of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in München, as cited above.

draws on the same militant themes as Vivaldi’s work, it eschews the more sexualized depictions of Vivaldi’s *Juditha*, in favor of a steadfast and imposing Judith who is contrasted with her weak male counterparts.

On the most basic level, both works focus on the martial drama at hand—not only in the text (discussed below), but also in the musical setting. In expressing musically the direct political allegory of his work, Vivaldi’s *Juditha triumphans* draws on a large orchestra accompaniment, including timpani and trumpets that lend the work a military tone. Vivaldi enjoyed access to a wide range of instruments for his setting, which was written for a performance by the girls at the Ospedale della Pietà—the institution where Vivaldi was employed at the time and which enjoyed abundant musical resources—and Vivaldi appears to have selected instruments that would highlight the military victories that the work was intended to commemorate. Though Almeida’s setting utilizes a much smaller orchestra, he too makes use of the *trombe da caccia*, a type of hunting trumpet, which underscores martial texts in the conflict between the Assyrians and Bethulians and frequently mimics trumpet calls, as in the opening of Oloferne’s aptly-titled aria *Date, o trombe* (Figure 4). The military tone of the work also appears evident on the title page of the libretto (see Figure 2), which displays an image, beneath the dedication to the Ambassador Melo e Castro, of various war emblems, including swords, arrows, flags, and a trumpet.

The image shows a musical score excerpt for the instrumental introduction to the aria "Date, o trombe". The score is written for eight instruments: Trombe da Caccia 1 and 2, Oboe 1 and 2, Violin I and II, Viola, and Bass. The music is in common time (C) and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The Trombe da Caccia parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the other instruments provide a harmonic accompaniment with various note values and rests.

**Figure 4** Excerpt of instrumental introduction to the aria, *Date, o trombe*, mm. 1-4. All transcriptions are by the author and were created from the manuscript, courtesy of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv.<sup>1</sup>

As a marker of her centrality to the work, Almeida's Giuditta is assigned six arias—more than any other character—and each of these six arias focus on faith and its defense. The work opens with Giuditta delivering an accompanied recitative (*Sventurata Giuditta*) in a brief moment of doubt—the only such moment in the work where she divulges fear. As the recitative opens, she laments her plight as a widow whose city and people are suffering, accompanied by held notes in the strings that modulate uncomfortably, withholding cadences throughout. Within several lines, however, she reaffirms her faith, and the strings adjust to her new confidence, accompanying her lines with increasingly frequent upward sixteenth note runs (see Figure 5), moving toward a final cadence in B minor:

<i>Ma dove son'? Che parlo?</i>	But where am I? What am I saying?
<i>Giuditta non son io, quella che ascose</i>	Am I not Judith, she who secretly
<i>portò sempre nel core</i>	Always bore within her heart
<i>di purissimo amore</i>	The sacred flames
<i>fiamme divine, e che lassù nel cielo</i>	Of the purest love, and to heaven above
<i>l'alte speranze sue tutte ripose?</i>	Entrusted all her highest hopes?
<i>Dunque, che temi? Ei da sì crudo e rio</i>	Then what do I fear? He from so cruel and
<i>destin ci toglierà. Non spera invano</i>	evil
<i>che ben confida in Dio.</i>	A fate will deliver us. He hopes not in vain
	Who fully trusts in God. <sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> All English translations of Almeida's anonymous libretto are by Derek Yeld and are available in the liner notes to the recording of *La Giuditta*, dir. René Jacobs.

“E che giammai può far femmina imbelle?”

The image shows a musical score excerpt for Almeida's *La Giuditta*. It consists of five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Giuditta (with lyrics), and Bass. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics for Giuditta are: [Quan-to in-fe-li-ce sei mi-se-ra oh quan-to? ma do-ve son? che par-lo? Giu-dit-ta non son io?]. The Bass staff includes figured bass notation: 5, b7/5, b, 6, #.

**Figure 5** Excerpt of Almeida's *La Giuditta*. Giuditta's opening recitative, *Sventurata Giuditta*, mm. 12-15.

Giuditta's profession of faith in the aria that follows (*Quella fiamma*) moves into the relative D Major, adding *trombe da caccia* to the accompaniment. Giuditta's succeeding arias uphold the heroine as the faithful core of the work, and she is even given two helmsman arias (*Saggio nocchiero* in part one, and *Godete, sì, godete* in part two), which use the metaphor of a helmsman guiding a ship through a storm to express her leading role in the work.

Though most of her arias are matter-of-fact statements of faith, Giuditta's devotion to the God of Israel receives heightened expression in the aria (*Dalla destra*), in which she contemplates God's desire to avenge the Bethulians. Having revealed at the end of part one that she, Giuditta, plans to save the Bethulians from the Assyrian army, this aria—the first aria of the second part—is Giuditta's first expression of the nature of the mission that she seeks to complete. The aria fixates on vengeance (*vendetta* or *vendicare*), a major theme throughout the work, and one that is found exclusively in texts for Giuditta and Oloferne.<sup>20</sup> The recitative that precedes this aria, and which opens the second part of the entire work, reveals a Giuditta who, unlike her character of the opening recitative, perceives the affliction of the Bethulians in the context of a powerful God—though she cannot understand God's will, her confidence in the coming defeat of the Assyrians is obvious:

<sup>20</sup> Marsh has already noted this theme in "Judith in Baroque Oratorio," 394. He explains the unique emphasis on vengeance in Almeida's work, when compared to the biblical story: "The only parallel in the Vulgate is Jdt 7:20, where the Bethulians call upon God to take pity or to *punish* their iniquities: 'Tu, quia pius es, miserere nostri, aut in tuo flagello *vindica* iniquitates nostras' (Because You are devout, have mercy on us, or with your scourge avenge our iniquities).

*Alto Signore, al cui sovrano potere  
invan forza mortal resister osa,  
tu gran Dio d'Israelle,  
fabbro di maraviglie e di portenti,  
dell'afflitte tue genti  
volgi, deh, volgi un guardo al gran  
dolore!  
Poi, con irato ciglio,  
mira l'empio furor  
di chi minaccia ai templi tuoi periglio.  
Ascolta mille cherni al tuo  
gran nome.  
Tu vedi il tutto, e come il soffri?  
E come?*

*Dalla destra onnipotente  
scenda un fulmine fremente  
tanti oltraggi a vendicar.  
S'armi il ciel contro  
quell'empio  
e nel suo crudele scempio  
senta omai quel grave sdegno  
ch'egli osò di provocar.  
Dalla...*

Exalted Lord whose sovereign power  
Mortal strength dares in vain to defy,  
Thou great God of Israel,  
Worker of miracles and portents,  
Turn, oh, pray, turn thy eyes  
Upon the great suffering of thy  
afflicted people!  
Then, with ireful frowns  
Behold the godless raging  
Of those who threaten danger to thy  
temples.  
Hear their thousandfold mockeries of  
thy great name.  
Thou seest all, and how dost thou  
endure it? How?

From the omnipotent hand  
A quivering lightning flash descends  
To avenge so many insults!  
Heaven arms itself against the  
heathen,  
And in his cruel slaughter  
He now feels the mighty wrath  
Of him whom he dared to provoke.  
From...

“E che giammai può far femmina imbelles?”

The music in this secco recitative speaks to Giuditta’s confidence with its stately and predictable movement—unlike her opening recitative, which moved fitfully through its modulations and utilized agitated string accompaniment to reflect her anxiety. In typical *aria di bravura* style, *Dalla destra* (Figure 6) expresses the vengeful anger of Giuditta’s text—which seems to speak for God himself—in an exaggerated B<sup>b</sup> major da capo aria, with the brazen text set as a brilliant and ornamented vocal melody. The string and oboe parts underscore this vocal melody with driving staccato sixteenth figurations, urging the text forward. Despite its over-the-top extravagance, the aria is granted a measure of composure in its tempo marking “Andante ma non presto” and through the logical harmonic and melodic movement of the work. Giuditta shows off here, perhaps, but she never loses control.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Oboe 1, Oboe 2, Viola, Giuditta (vocal), and Bass. The vocal line for Giuditta has the lyrics: "Dal - la des - tra om - ni - po - ten - te". The second system includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Oboe 1, Oboe 2, Viola, Giuditta (vocal), and Bass. The vocal line for Giuditta has the lyrics: "scen - daun ful - mi - ne fre - men -". The instrumental parts feature driving staccato sixteenth-note patterns. The score is in B-flat major and common time.

Figure 6 Excerpt of Almeida’s *La Giuditta*. Giuditta’s aria, *Dalla destra*, mm. 6-16.

Three of Oloferne's four arias contain themes of vengeance and are set in bold aria styles—fast tempos, ornamentation, and trombe da caccia abound throughout. Oloferne's *Invitti miei guerrieri*, for instance, is similar in musical style to Giuditta's *Dalla destra* (Figure 6). However, after Giuditta arrives at the camp, Oloferne suffers a swift downfall, and his final aria *Cara, non paventar* betrays his true character. This aria in C minor reveals that Oloferne is not at all the warrior he has proclaimed through this point in the work, but rather he is sensually excessive and easily overcome. The Roman copy of the score is marked in the beginning "Andante Amoroso" and the seductive nature of his text can be heard in the lingering downward calls of "Cara!" that punctuate the sensual triple meter movement in repetition:

<i>Cara, non paventar!</i>	My dear, fear not!
<i>Coi dardi</i>	With the darts
<i>de'tuoi sguardi</i>	Of your looks
<i>già mi piagasti il cor.</i>	You have already wounded my heart.
<i>Lascia di sospirar!</i>	Cease your sighs!
<i>In me già l'ire ha tolto</i>	The beguiling radiance
<i>del tuo leggiadro volto</i>	Of your comely face
<i>l'amabile splendor.</i>	Has already dispelled my anger.
<i>Cara...</i>	My dear...

Following this aria, a serene instrumental passage serves to impart a sense of Oloferne sleeping, breaking when Giuditta beheads him during a swift recitative.

In order to understand Giuditta's unique role in Almeida's work, it is useful to compare her setting in Almeida with that of Vivaldi's Juditha. Though Giuditta is the sole female character in Almeida's setting, Vivaldi and Cassetti also utilize the character of Abra, Juditha's nurse, who aids her as she manipulates the Assyrians. Abra's role mainly serves to amplify what is a notable theme in Cassetti's libretto: as Talbot puts it, the "'love-interest' of the story."<sup>21</sup> He writes further that Cassetti's focus on Juditha's beauty brings the work close to what would otherwise (minus the explicit allegorical nature of the work) be considered an *oratorio erotico*. Abra, for instance, instructs

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<sup>21</sup> Talbot, 415.



Juditha, to “love him, languish for him, [and] feign ardor for him” in order to seduce Holofernes.<sup>22</sup> It is of little surprise, then, that Cassetti’s Holofernes falls immediately in love with her. Almeida’s Giuditta, however, is virtually devoid of gendered features, and never appears to use her sex to gain Oloferne’s favor, despite the fact that he finds her to be beautiful and expresses some of his own lusty desires. Giuditta, in keeping with her character in the work, steadfastly declines.

In Almeida’s work, from the perspectives of musical and textual rhetoric, the supposedly “dominant” male characters (the leaders, Oloferne and Ozia) are the only ones that are ever portrayed as weak or feminized, most notably Oloferne in *Cara, non paventar*. Ozia also appears as weak when compared to Giuditta, as in the first part when he delivers a standard eighteenth-century “turtledove” aria that laments the suffering of the Bethulian people (*Tortorella*). Ozia’s aria is delivered in a lilting triple meter movement in a minor mode that clearly paints the sighing and weeping of the turtledove. Vivaldi’s *Juditha* also features a turtledove aria (*Veni, veni, me sequere fida*), although it is delivered by Judith herself and expresses the sorrow that both she and her nurse Abra suffer at the difficult task ahead of them. Throughout Almeida’s work, Ozia is characterized by his apparent “weakness” though he remains convinced of his faith, as his aria *Giusto Dio*, a serene, hymn-like statement, expresses. That Giuditta and Ozia are perceived as acting together, on some level, is clear in the duets that end both parts of the work, where both textually and musically they work together to convey their joy in the assurance of God’s protection. In the duet that ends the first part (*Vanne, addio*), for instance, Giuditta and Ozia alternate different textual and musical lines, but sing in unison the final line. However, in the closing duet of the entire work (*Quel diletto*), Giuditta and Ozia proclaim the exact same set of words in a more or less unified manner to express the dual fullness of their hearts and souls in God’s triumph. In both these cases, however, it is Giuditta’s recent action (in the first part, her decision to go to the Assyrian camp, and in the second, her recent slaying of Oloferne) that allows Ozia to remain faithful. Simply put, Ozia is reliant on Giuditta’s successful missions to maintain his strong faith.

Though Giuditta is undoubtedly the focus of Almeida’s work, and her character serves to highlight the faithful role of Ozia and the ultimately feminized downfall of Oloferne, one character—Achiorre—stands out as a somewhat separate presence in the work (though he too is portrayed as doubtful and weak in comparison to Giuditta). This character is notably omitted in the Vivaldi/Cassetti setting. As Talbot explains: “In the war between Ottomans and Venetians there was

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<sup>22</sup> “*Ama, langue, finge ardere*” (Vivaldi, *Juditha triumphans*; my translation)

no parallel crossing over of a military leader from one camp to the other, so the Ammonite (ideologically attractive as an example of a convert and usually retained in oratorio librettos on the Judith story) could not have been fitted satisfactorily into the allegorical framework.”<sup>23</sup> Rather than including Achiorre, Vivaldi and Cassetti amplify the character “Vagaus” (or Vagao, in the bible), who is endlessly obedient to the Assyrians and mourns terribly when Oloferne is found slain. Thus, Vivaldi and Cassetti’s setting appears to represent the Assyrians (or, allegorical Ottomans) as completely imperceptive to the ways of the God of the Bethulians, whereas Almeida’s focus on Achiorre’s conversion narrative stands out in comparison. It is even more striking when taking into consideration the end of Almeida’s dedication to ambassador Melo e Castro:

May it therefore please your Excellency to accept this humble token of my most respectful homage, which, although seeming indirectly to serve my own interests, will directly serve those of your glory, revealing to the world that Your Excellency, so loved, admired and venerated in this city, by the exalted prerogatives that you possess, deigns, like the sun, to communicate your rays to the most abject vapours and to render them luminous despite their innate darkness.<sup>24</sup>

Though Giuditta’s slaying of Oloferne is clearly the focal point of Almeida’s work, strikingly, its final ramification is Achiorre’s conversion. As Giuditta returns to the Bethulian camp with Oloferne’s head, Achiorre asks Giuditta what gave her hand so much strength as to carry out the slaying. When she reveals that it was God’s work, Achiorre suddenly exclaims:

*Oh nuovo ai giorni miei chiaro portento!  
L’alta virtù divina io ben comprendo,  
onde, dal sen togliendo quelle tenebre in cui  
giacqui sepolto,  
i falli miei detesto ed abbandono,  
e a te, gran Dio, tutto me stesso io dono.*

O, a new, bright wonder in my life!  
The exalted, divine power I now perceive;  
Hence, from my breast I wrench  
Out that darkness in which I was buried,  
Loathe my errors, and forsake them,  
And give myself, Great God, wholly to  
thee.

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<sup>23</sup> Talbot, 414-415.

<sup>24</sup> “Gradisca pertanto l’E.V., quest’umile attestato del mio riverentissimo ossequio, il quale benchè sembri indirettamente riguardare il mio proprio interesse, direttamente però non riguarda, che la sua Gloria, con palesare al Mondo, che l’E.V. tanto amata, ammirata, e venerata in questa Città, per l’Eccelse Prerogative, che l’accompagnano, sà, come il Sole comunicare i suoi Raggi alli vapori più vili, e renderli luminosi ad’onta delle native lor tenebre . . .” Translation by Manuel Carlos de Brito, available in the the liner notes to the recording of *La Giuditta*, dir. René Jacobs.

*“E che giammai può far femmina imbelles?”*

Achiorre then delivers his striking conversion aria *Vengo a te*, where he delivers a stately expression of his newfound faith. Achiorre’s conversion plays a significant role in the apocryphal story of Judith, as well, although it rarely figures so prominently in oratorio settings from the eighteenth century.

Against these three male characters, Giuditta stands out as the dominant, or even the most masculine character in the work, though her femaleness is not lost on the other characters. Oloferne is, through his own weakness of character, fixated on Giuditta’s literal female body. Her femaleness is noted also by Achiorre—in the only explicit reference to Giuditta’s gender in the work, Achiorre expresses doubt in Giuditta’s ability to fulfill her mission to the Assyrian camp. He asks Ozia, directly after Giuditta departs Bethulia, heading toward the Assyrian camp: “But whatever can a defenseless woman do? (*E che giammai può far femmina imbelles?*)” By the end of the work, the accomplishments of this defenseless woman are perfectly clear.

### **Giuditta as Lisbon**

I would like to return to the imagery of the Marquês de Fontes’ coach (see Figure 3) and suggest that Almeida’s setting pares the story of Judith down into the four main characters discussed here in ways that resonate strongly with Portuguese self-mythologizing in Rome at this time. First, Giuditta echoes the female Lisbon, as well as her crusading history and contemporary defense of the Papal States. Beside this dynamic figure of Giuditta, the Bethulian holy leader Ozia is comparable to the role of Rome at this time, in that he represents a deep faith that nonetheless relies on others for its defense. Oloferne appears representative in the defeated (but un-converted) pagan Other—in this case, the Ottoman Turks. Finally, Achiorre finds useful parallels in depictions of Moors or other historically-converted peoples under Portuguese rule. Aside each of these male characters, Giuditta appears much like the glorious rendering of Lisbon on the Marquês de Fontes’ coach—an emblem at the center of Portugal’s historical legacy, and yet crusader with much left to accomplish, surrounded by images that highlight her unique and continued success.

Somewhat problematically, since Judith is a Jewish creation, her character must literally be understood as such. However, Judith is, as Moore writes, a story of “intense Jewish nationalism and Pharisaic piety” that nonetheless has ironically been rejected in Jewish canonical traditions.<sup>25</sup> However, her importance in Christian and especially Roman Catholic narratives, and her ability to

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<sup>25</sup> Moore, 31. Moore also includes a discussion of Judith’s various levels of acceptance across Jewish and Christian traditions throughout history (86-93).

resonate as a “Christian” heroine is clear—in musical settings, the Judith story was nearly always set for performance in Christian contexts.<sup>26</sup> Elena Ciletti and Henrike Lähnemann have detailed the role of the Judith story in the Christian tradition and aptly summarize her importance from the time of Jerome, as a wealth of symbolic identities: “[A]s virtue personified, as type of the Church, and last but not least, as prefiguration of the Virgin Mary.”<sup>27</sup> Indeed, the apparent fictional or non-historical nature of the book, as often noted by biblical scholars, allows for a particularly complex heroine character, whose meaning has been manipulated across time and translations. As Carey Moore writes in his own commentary and translation of Judith:

In commenting on Judith’s character and conduct, scholars have often said, in effect, as much about themselves and their times as about Judith. . . . Just as the brilliance of a cut diamond is the result of many different facets, so the striking appeal of the book of Judith results from its many facets. The various interests and parochial assessments [throughout history] are not necessarily untrue or mutually exclusive. After all, by the standards of her day and her people, Judith *was* deeply religious; and by the standards of any time or place, she was courageous and clever. And by the standards of most people, except perhaps those whose lives depended upon her saving act, Judith was brutal. Last but not least, she does not fit nicely into our conventional molds of masculinity or femininity; but, as Montley rightly notes, Judith combines and transcends them.<sup>28</sup>

Almeida’s *La Giuditta*, indeed, carries on this tradition, taking the Judith story and manipulating it such that his *Giuditta* almost completely eschews the feminine aspects of her tale—so prominent in the biblical story, and even Vivaldi’s setting. Almeida appears to focus rather on crafting a militant Judith, who is put forward as the masculine force in the work in her own right, especially in contrast to the feminized male characters. Given the relationship of contemporary Portuguese mythologizing to João’s initiatives in Rome, Almeida’s *Giuditta* might have served to recall the Portuguese imperial iconography so explicitly rendered in the Marquês de Fontes’ embassy. This iconography thus would

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<sup>26</sup> See Kelley Harness’s chapter on Judith in relation to the Medici court, for instance (cited above).

<sup>27</sup> Elena Ciletti and Henrike Lähnemann, “Judith in the Christian Tradition,” in *The Sword of Judith*, 45. Judith’s role as a type of the Virgin Mary, and her possible relation to the female Lisbon depicted here, is particularly striking in the context of Almeida’s *La Giuditta*, when one notices the curious appropriation of Immaculate Conception imagery surrounding the female Lisbon, especially the dragon and crescent moon symbols (see, again, Figure 3), which by the eighteenth-century were common in depictions of the Immaculate Conception. Thanks to Anne Walter Robertson for bringing the Immaculate Conception iconography here to my attention. For a detailed study of the development of Immaculate Conception iconography, especially as it relates to the Iberian Peninsula, see: Suzanne L. Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). On Portugal’s unique connections to Immaculate Conception theology, see Paul Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary* (Gracewing: Hillebrand Books, 2004), the foreword of which was written by Dom Duarte, Duke of Bragança on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the definition of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

<sup>28</sup> Moore, 66-67 (original emphasis). Moore cites Patricia Montley’s “Judith in the Fine Arts: The Appeal of the Archetypal Androgyne,” *Anima* 4 (1978): 37-42.

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have continued to mark, through the symbols of the crusader, longstanding emblem of faith, defeated pagan Other, and convert, Portugal’s mythologized relationship to the Papal city, Catholicism, and the world. In 1726, in fact, tensions were growing increasingly high, as Rome continued to refuse favors to Portugal. Though this led eventually to the *rotura* of 1728–1732, in which João suspended Portuguese relations with the Roman Holy See, Almeida’s *La Giuditta* was written at a time when the composer might have seen good reason to revive his mythologized Lisbon—who was nothing of a “*femmina imbelles*”—once again.

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## Discerning Tears in Early Modern Catholicism

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In a well-known soliloquy, Hamlet laments,

Is it not monstrous that this Player here,  
But in a Fixion, in a dreame of Passion,  
Could force his soule so to his whole conceit,  
That from her working, all his visage warm'd;  
Teares in his eyes, distraction in's Aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole Function suiting  
With Formes, to his Conceit? And all for nothing?  
For Hecuba?  
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,  
That he should weepe for her? (*Hamlet*, II.ii.1591-1600)

Shakespeare here expresses a fear which scholars have argued was widespread in the early modern period: appearances do not always reflect reality. The insight that tears and other sorts of emotional states might be feigned predates the sixteenth century, but discussion of its consequences intensified, so Susan Schreiner argues, during and after the Reformation.<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare may be an exceptional literary witness, but he was not alone in recognizing that tears might not correspond to deeply-felt, interior dispositions. His contemporary, the French bishop and spiritual director François de Sales (d. 1622), wrote in his popular *Introduction to the Devout Life*, for example,

A child will weep tenderly when it sees its mother bled by the lancet, yet if the very mother for whom he is weeping asks for the apple or piece of candy he holds in his hand, he won't part with it. Such for the most part are our own tender devotions. . . . Devotion does not consist in sensible affections, for sometimes they issue from a soft nature susceptible to any impression we wish to stamp on it and sometimes

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Schreiner, *Are You Alone Wise? The Search for Certainty in the Early Modern Era* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 356-366, 391-392. See also Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); William J. Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance, 1550-1640* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 129-142; John Jeffries Martin, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 103-122; Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

from our enemy who, to lure us on, excites our imagination to conceive such effects.<sup>2</sup>

How are we to reconcile this caution with the emotional abandon of the preacher Pierre de Besse, whose treatise *L'Heraclite Chrestien* rhapsodized the efficacy of tears in purging sin from the human heart?<sup>3</sup> By examining several texts reflecting the perspectives and experiences of Catholic missionaries, both in France and in the East Indies, this paper will highlight the tension between increased awareness of the malleability of tears and the pervasiveness of tears not only as a symbol and a practice, but as proof of religious sincerity. I would like to highlight emotions among the things which needed to be discerned in the early modern period. *Discretio spirituum*, “discernment of spirits,” was a technical, theological process of separating divinely-inspired “internal spiritual motions” from those of potentially demonic origin. In its practical application to individual lives by inquisitors, confessors, and spiritual directors, particular sensations and emotional experiences could take on special significance.<sup>4</sup> Tears, I suggest, could be particularly troubling, a visible, tangible reality which, as Tom Lutz writes, “are so obviously *there*, and often so obviously significant, so clearly meant to communicate intense emotion, . . . tears demand a reaction.”<sup>5</sup> Whatever ambivalence early modern Catholics may have expressed about tears as a reliable sign of an interior state, they were too deeply ingrained in the religious imagination to be easily dismissed. A sign of penitence and devotion, tears served as a useful index of religious conversion, especially in the mission field, and were therefore integral in providing evidence for the successful propagation of the faith.

Ever since “Jesus wept” (John 11:35), tears were assured a role in Christian life as more than an indifferent, merely biological reality. In Luke’s Gospel, a woman often identified with Mary Magdalene approaches Jesus, bathes his feet with her tears, and wipes them dry with her hair. In response to her display, Jesus says, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace” (Lk 7:36-38).<sup>6</sup> Whether

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<sup>2</sup> Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life* [1609], trans. John K. Ryan (New York: Image Doubleday, 2003), 245-246.

<sup>3</sup> Pierre de Besse, *L'Heraclite Chrestien, c'est-à-dire les regrets et les larmes du pecheur penitent* (Paris: Nicolas du Fosse, 1615).

<sup>4</sup> Susan Schreiner lists, among others, the certainty of salvation, the working of the holy spirit, and the authority of individual experience; see *Are You Alone Wise?*, 262-321. On the concept of discernment and the procedures employed to “test spirits,” see Moshe Sluhovskiy, *Believe Not Every Spirit: Possession, Mysticism, and Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Tom Lutz, *Crying: The Natural and Cultural History of Tears* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), 19.

<sup>6</sup> The attribution of this act to Mary Magdalene is often traced to Gregory the Great, and it made her a powerful symbol of saintly repentance throughout the Middle Ages; see Katherine Ludwig Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 33, 207.

tears function here as a response to an infusion of grace, as some commentators would have it, or as part of the work of penitence, they are intertwined with the woman's salvation. The passage formed part of the basis for what we might call the theology of tears.<sup>7</sup> One of its formative articulations, central to both the Eastern and Western Christian traditions, was the *Ladder of Divine Ascent* of John Climacus, written in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The author spoke of the "gift of spiritual tears" which would wash away all one's sins committed after baptism. Yet he also warned against outward show, bemoaning "the ugly tears of vainglory," which had nothing to do with the tears of mourning and compunction which please God.<sup>8</sup> Weeping for weeping's sake was unacceptable. In the context of prayer and worship, however, tears offered most medieval preachers and theologians a more or less transparent sign of the interior state of the Christian. Jesus Christ, Peter, and Mary all shed tears in the Bible, offering several examples of weeping due to suffering, the death of loved ones, and sorrow for sin – all of which ought to be imitated by believers.<sup>9</sup> Pierre de Besse drew heavily on these images in the seventeenth century, and the preacher Etienne Molinier exhorted his audience in a sermon for the first Sunday of Lent: "To your tears, then, oh sinners."<sup>10</sup> Elsewhere, Molinier wrote that "the tears of repenting sinners are the wine of the Angels," echoing the twelfth-century sermons on the Song of Songs by Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>11</sup>

Yet beginning in the later Middle Ages, some instances of religious weeping received increased scrutiny, included among other physical manifestations of piety that some ecclesiastical leaders began to see as disordered and dangerous. Margery Kempe and other devout women were often confronted by their neighbors for their disruptive outbursts of weeping during prayer, and though some spiritual directors encouraged their piety, they were also subjected to tests of whether their "gift of tears" was indeed of divine origin. Women who wrote about their visionary experiences

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<sup>7</sup> See Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, "'Pray with Tears and your Request Will Find a Hearing:' On the Iconology of the Magdalene's Tears," in *Holy Tears: Weeping in the Religious Imagination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 205. For an overview of the role of tears and weeping in Christian spirituality, see Pierre Adnès, "Larmes," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, vol. 9 (Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1976), col. 287-303.

<sup>8</sup> John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, trans. Colm Luibheid and Norman Russell (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), 137, 139.

<sup>9</sup> See Lyn Blanchfield, "Prolegomenon: Considerations of Weeping and Sincerity in the Middle Ages," in *Crying in the Middle Ages: Tears of History*, ed. Elina Gertsman (New York: Routledge, 2012), xxi-xxx.

<sup>10</sup> Etienne Molinier, *Sermons pour toutes les feries et dimanches du caresme*, vol. I (Toulouse: Arnaud Colomiez, 1641), 2. Similar sentiments are present in the Lenten sermons of early modern German preachers such as Paul Wann (d. 1489), whose works are analyzed in Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions in Early Modern Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), esp. 19-23.

<sup>11</sup> Molinier, *Le bouquet de mirrbe de l'amante sacrée* (Toulouse: Arnaud Colomiez, 1637), 628; see Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 30:3, in *On the Song of Songs II*, trans. Killian Walsh (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1976), 114.



were especially likely to encounter significant resistance.<sup>12</sup> Jean Gerson (d. 1429) expressed succinctly the fear that weeping might be part of an unbalanced spiritual regimen: “There are, however, others who take delight in following their own opinions and walk in their own inventions. . . . They vex themselves beyond measure with fasts; they overextend their vigils; they tax and weaken their brains with excessive tears. . . . Of such persons I say that they will quickly fall for every demoniacal illusion.” This passage would be cited approvingly more than a century later by the Spanish theologian Juan de Avila (d. 1569), in his treatise *Listen, O Daughter!*<sup>13</sup> There, he acknowledged the potential for tears to be a beneficial part of the spiritual life, but he advised his readers to beware, much as John Climacus had centuries earlier, the sin of pride: “However good a thing that happens to you may appear (tears, or consolation, or knowledge of the things of God, or even that you have ascended to the third heaven), if your soul does not remain in profound humility, do not trust in or receive it.”<sup>14</sup>

Awareness of the multiple meanings of tears in Christian life may not have been anything new in the early modern period, but Europeans in the age that debated Machiavelli’s analysis of political power and Castiglione’s courtly ideal of *sprezzatura* seem to have been particularly attuned to the possibility of dissimulation.<sup>15</sup> For example, the radical French preacher Jean Boucher (d. 1644) expounded at length on the insincerity of the conversion to Catholicism of King Henry IV, whom he believed to be at heart nothing but an ambitious, Machiavellian politician. By contrast, Boucher thought the Spanish king Philip II a model of piety, demonstrated by his submissive gesture of devoutly touching a crucifix to his face during prayer “with a great effusion of tears.”<sup>16</sup> French political observer Pierre de L’Estoile (d. 1611) wrote in his journals that, after the assassination of

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<sup>12</sup> The rise of discernment as a repressive weapon aimed especially at female piety is described by Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); see also Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), esp. 134, 313. For Margery Kempe, see Santha Bhattacharji, “Tears and Screaming: Weeping in the Spirituality of Margery Kempe,” in *Holy Tears*, 236. On women, emotion, and tears, see also Elena Carrera, “The Spiritual Role of the Emotions in Mechthild of Magdeburg, Angela of Foligno, and Teresa of Avila,” in *The Representation of Women’s Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, ed. Lisa Perfetti (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 63-89; Heather Webb, “*Lacrime Cordiali*: Catherine of Siena on the Value of Tears,” in *A Companion to Catherine of Siena*, ed. Carolyn Muessig, George Ferzoco, and Beverly Mayne Kienzle (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 99-112.

<sup>13</sup> Jean Gerson, “On Distinguishing True from False Revelations,” in *Early Works*, trans. Brian Patrick McGuire (New York: Paulist Press, 1998), 343; John of Avila, *Audi, filia-Listen, O Daughter*, trans. Joan Frances Gormley (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 165.

<sup>14</sup> John of Avila, *Audi, filia*, 163.

<sup>15</sup> See most recently Jon R. Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 1-26.

<sup>16</sup> Jean Boucher, *Sermons de la simulée conversion . . . de Henry de Bourbon* (Paris: Guillaume Chaudière et al, 1594); Boucher, *Oraison funebre sur le trespas . . . de Philippe Second* (Anvers: Jean Moretus, 1600), 26.

King Henry IV in 1610, the royal confessor Pierre Coton and other Jesuits “composed their faces with tears” and paid their respects in a truly “courtisanesque” and, of course, “Jesuitical” way.<sup>17</sup> In certain situations, the political stakes involved in emotional sincerity could be quite high, and the accusation of insincerity could be used to cut down an opponent.<sup>18</sup>

François de Sales’ skepticism, like Jean Gerson and Juan de Avila before him, came from acknowledgment both of the fickleness of human nature and its susceptibility to demonic influence, rather than any political score he had to settle. Teresa of Avila (d. 1582), in the *Interior Castle* also spoke of the possibility that tears, visions, and bodily ecstasy might “equally well come from the devil or from one’s own imagination” and not from God.<sup>19</sup> For all these writers, those given to tears might remain wrapped up in the physicality of their tears and never deepen their devotion to God. Pride could then become the gateway to the hypocritical performance of weeping. In a play written by the German Jesuit Jacob Bidermann (d. 1627), the central character, a kind of Faustian rationalist, breaks down in tears during his last confession as death approaches, hoping to demonstrate to God and those present that his repentance is sincere. Christ, however, is not deceived and denies the pardon, illustrating for the play’s audience the ultimate futility of empty, feigned tears.<sup>20</sup>

Temperament could also play a role. The seventeenth-century French Jesuit François Guilleré devoted a significant part of his *Secrets of the Spiritual Life* to what he called the “illusion” of tears, arguing that *every* state of the soul had its proper tears, including love, contrition, and religious zeal.<sup>21</sup> Guilleré echoed both medical treatises and theorists of the passions who attributed tears to a particularly “humid” temperament and contemporary moralists such as Blaise Pascal who decried in particular the *amour propre* they diagnosed in French society.<sup>22</sup> Consoling his interlocutor about an apparent lack of the gift of tears, he opined, “Oh, don’t think those who weep any holier for it, and don’t look to tears as proof of their exalted virtue. No, it is not the force of the object that pulls the tears from their eyes; it is only a certain natural facility for being moved. For people of this sort,

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<sup>17</sup> G. Brunt, ed., *Mémoires-journaux de Pierre de L’Estoile*, Vol. 10 (Paris: Librairie de Bibliophiles, 1881), 227.

<sup>18</sup> The problem of emotional sincerity in politics has not gone away. Recently, North Korea has been seeking to prosecute those it believes mourned Kim Jong-Il insincerely; see [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/13/north-korea-punish-mourners-insincere-kim-jong-il\\_n\\_1204377.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/13/north-korea-punish-mourners-insincere-kim-jong-il_n_1204377.html).

<sup>19</sup> Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle*, trans. E. Allison Peers (New York: Image Doubleday, 1961), 140.

<sup>20</sup> Karant-Nunn, *Reformation of Feeling*, 41.

<sup>21</sup> François Guilleré, *Les secrets de la vie spirituelle, qui en découvrent les illusions* (Paris: Estienne Michalet, 1673), 589.

<sup>22</sup> For a contemporary symposium on the nature of tears, see [Eusèbe Renaudot], *Recueil general des questions traitées dans les conférences du Bureau d’Adresse*, vol. 1 (Paris: Jean Baptiste Loyson, 1666), 479-488. The classic work on theories of the passions in early modern France, still largely unsurpassed, is Antony Levi, *French Moralists: The Theory of the Passions, 1585 to 1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964). For a brief overview of medical discourse on the emotions, see Ulinka Rublack, “Fluxes: The Early Modern Body and the Emotions,” *History Workshop Journal* 53 (Spring 2002): 1-16.

weeping and talking are almost the same thing.”<sup>23</sup> Those particularly given to compassion, he continued, “often just as well pour out tears for the miseries of some great criminal as for those of a suffering God.”<sup>24</sup> Echoing François de Sales, Guilloché went on to criticize those who swing from the depths of weeping to the height of laughter; if they possessed sincere devotion, they would not so easily open their hearts to joy when contemplating great suffering and loss, especially Christ’s Passion.

Guilloché admitted that tears *could* still be evidence of sincere devotion, but he cautioned that one had to guard against taking pleasure in tears or working specifically to bring them about. As a good Jesuit, he could not but allow for tears to play a role in the spiritual life. His order’s founder, Ignatius Loyola (d. 1556), had placed enormous faith in tears and had instructed his followers to seek guidance in the interior consolations that God offered during prayer. In his *Spiritual Diary*, Ignatius noted in every entry whether and to what extent he experienced tears during his prayers, but when he believed he was seeking tears rather than “submission and reverence,” he asked God to stop their flow. “[A]s for visitations and tears, I prayed they might not be given me, if it were equally to the service of His Divine Majesty, or, if they were given, that I might enjoy them with purity of intention – without self-interest.”<sup>25</sup> For Ignatius, tears could be a clear sign of true penitence as well as divine favor, but one needed always to determine whether they were sought as an end in themselves. This ethos of constant discernment pervaded the *Spiritual Exercises*, which in turn formed the foundation of Jesuit spirituality and missionary impulses during the early modern period.<sup>26</sup> One can observe, however, that it was the exaltation of tears rather than their careful discernment which was most often evident in seventeenth-century French religious writing.<sup>27</sup> For example, Pierre de Bérulle (d. 1629) lamented, “The state to which we have been reduced by the sin of our first father [Adam] is so deplorable that we have greater need of tears than words, and of a continual abasement of our souls before God rather than speeches and profane thoughts.”<sup>28</sup> Likewise Guilloché’s contemporary, the Capuchin friar Louis-François d’Argentan, paraphrased the Old Testament prophets: “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening; but speak loudly into the ear of my heart, for I know that it is harder,

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<sup>23</sup> Guilloché, *Secrets*, 591.

<sup>24</sup> Guilloché, *Secrets*, 593.

<sup>25</sup> Ignatius Loyola, *Personal Writings*, trans. Joseph Munitiz and Philip Endean (Penguin, 2004), 100.

<sup>26</sup> For the importance of the *Exercises* for the early Jesuits, see John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), esp. 37-50.

<sup>27</sup> Sheila Page Bayne, *Tears and Weeping: An Aspect of Emotional Climate Reflected in Seventeenth-Century French Literature* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1981), 34-43.

<sup>28</sup> Pierre de Bérulle, *Oeuvres de piété* (Lyon: Claude de La Roche, 1666), 80.

deaf, more insensible than a rock. But speak to this rock, and it will give you waters; its tears will signal its obedience.”<sup>29</sup> Both Bérulle and d’Argentan emphasized the humility and submissiveness which weeping manifests, a quality greatly prized by missionaries in their roles both as caretakers of souls and as agents of elite, European civilization. Yet absent in these encomia for weeping are the sense that tears might have multiple meanings and the fear of excess that we saw in Gerson, Juan de Avila, or Ignatius. The rest of this essay will offer a few examples of the ways in which the discourse of tears as unambiguous sign of devotion proved irresistible even to authors who would have been familiar with the ideal of discernment in Ignatius’ thought.

The Jesuit Alexandre de Rhodes (d. 1660), well-known for having produced one of the first dictionaries of the Vietnamese language, published accounts of his missions in India and Southeast Asia, which appeared both in French and in Latin during his lifetime.<sup>30</sup> Among the many proofs he offered of the deep faith of his converts in Vietnam (the Kingdom of Tonkin), he related that “I never showed them the holy Crucifix without seeing them collapse into tears.”<sup>31</sup> When he and his companions are forced to leave Tonkin for China, the Vietnamese Christian converts demonstrate their obedience and faith by embracing the Jesuits, soaking their clothes with tears to the point that the Jesuits themselves break down crying, and chasing after the boats out into waist-deep water.<sup>32</sup> A similar example is offered by the Portuguese Jesuit missionary Antonio Francisco Cardim, who wrote in his account of the mission in Japan that the converted Christians demonstrated the sincerity of their faith with their copious tears and, facing intense persecution, wept profusely when the Jesuits were forced to leave the community.<sup>33</sup> When Rhodes left the region of Cochinchine, he put in charge ten native catechists, commissioning them in a ceremony held on the feast of St. Ignatius. They took an oath to obey the Jesuit fathers, to serve the Church, and to remain celibate. To this the ten converts swore with such devotion and so many tears that the entire congregation was enraptured and broke into tears. Rhodes himself was so moved by their manifest sincerity that he too began to weep profusely. Everyone present was “transported” in joyful weeping.<sup>34</sup> Finally,

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<sup>29</sup> Louis-François d’Argentan, *Conférences théologiques et spirituelles du chrétien intérieur sur les grandeurs de Dieu* (Paris: Edme Martin & Jean Boudot, 1685), 150.

<sup>30</sup> See Peter C. Phan, *Mission and Catechesis: Alexandre de Rhodes and Inculturation in Seventeenth-Century Vietnam* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998).

<sup>31</sup> Alexandre de Rhodes, *Divers voyages du Père Alexandre de Rhodes en Chine, et autres royaumes de l’Orient* (Paris: Sebastian Mabre-Cramoisy, 1666), 96.

<sup>32</sup> Rhodes, *Divers voyages*, 106.

<sup>33</sup> Antonio Francisco Cardim, *Relation de la province du Japon*, trans. François Lahier (Tournai: Adrien Quinque, 1645), 130, 150.

<sup>34</sup> Rhodes, *Divers voyages*, 153.

during Holy Week in the province of Cham, Rhodes related explicitly that he had never seen piety like that of his converts in all of Europe. They praised God and wept for Christ's Passion so much that, Rhodes said, "God . . . would have to have a heart of stone not to be moved on that occasion." When he washed their feet on Holy Thursday, they wept profusely, but on Good Friday, when he showed them the Crucifix for adoration, they kissed it, sang lamentations in their native language, and "it was then that their tears of devotion, running from their eyes like little torrents, served to wash away their sins and as a drink for all the Angels."<sup>35</sup>

This last echo of Bernard of Clairvaux offers a clue to how one might understand the discourse of tears in Alexandre de Rhodes' accounts. One could dismiss them as mere exaggeration, but while it is dangerous to take missionary reportage at face value, in this case it is likely that one of the primary purposes of the text was to fulfill audience expectations regarding religious devotion and conversion in the missions. An astute, educated member of the clergy reading the *Diverses voyages* might notice the paraphrase of Bernard. As Sheila Page Bayne has noted, seventeenth century writers placed tears at the center of their accounts of conversion. Augustine's conversion, in which his torrents of tears are deemed a "sacrifice" acceptable to God, became a particularly salient model for understanding how one might be moved to greater devotion through God's grace.<sup>36</sup> With this in mind, Rhodes could have sent the wrong message if his account of the piety of his newly baptized converts in Asia did not conform in some measure to the models best known to his European readers. Their tears, both as gestures and as windows into their inner emotional lives, demonstrated their submissiveness to Jesuit authority and to the doctrines of the Catholic Church. For Rhodes, Cardim, and other missionaries, the tears of penitence, sadness, or joy wept by their converts were an indication that the Jesuits were doing their job well, a visible proof that they had effected a transformation in the "pagan" peoples they encountered. Since books like these were intended not only as sources of religious devotion for their readers, but also to attract continued interest in and financial support of the missions, Rhodes had to make sure that the depth and sincerity of the faith of the converts was unambiguous in the text. In a religious culture where one of the central images of religious weeping included Christ saying, "Your faith has saved you," Rhodes seemed not to imagine that any suspension of disbelief would be necessary.

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<sup>35</sup> Rhodes, *Divers voyages*, 164-165.

<sup>36</sup> Sheila Page Bayne, "Le rôle des larmes dans le discours sur la conversion," in *La conversion au XVIIe siècle. Actes du colloque de Marseille (janvier 1982)*, ed. Roger Duchene (Marseille: Centre Méridional de Rencontres sur le XVIIe siècle, 1983), 417-427. The account of Augustine's conversion can be found in *Confessions*, VIII. xii (28); see Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, Oxford World Classics (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 152.

The same was true of accounts of missions within Europe's borders, which increased greatly in scope during the seventeenth century.<sup>37</sup> Let me offer a pair of examples from the French region of Brittany, which though closer geographically to Paris was nevertheless quite distant from the capital in cultural and economic terms. The missionary Michel de Nobletz (d. 1652) became famous for his emphasis on rigorous, physically-demanding piety, as well as for his theatrical preaching, which was said to be so intense that Breton Christians wept at the mere memory of one of Nobletz's sermons some forty years later. He was so persuasive, his biographer recounts, that if he himself wept in the pulpit, his entire audience immediately wept with him. On one noteworthy occasion, Nobletz went out in a boat to preach to the fishermen in the islands off the coast of Brittany, which he did "with such vigor, and presented to them so strongly the suffering of the Son of God, the enormity of sin, and the necessity of penitence, that you could see them all break down in tears and even grab the ropes of their boats to chastise themselves and satisfy by this penance the justice of God."<sup>38</sup> Another missionary to Brittany, the Jesuit Julien Maunoir (d. 1683), likewise drew many tears from his audience, ending up like Alexandre de Rhodes in tear-soaked vestments. One account included by his biographer is the conversion of a woman said to have had a taste for worldly pleasures, who came to hear Maunoir preach more from curiosity than piety. Before he could even conclude his sermon, she stood up in the middle of the audience, burst into tears, and "dove into the confessional like it was a healing bath which would take care of all wounds."<sup>39</sup> In both cases, the intensity of the audience reactions to the sermons is denoted by profuse weeping and grand gestures of repentance. For Jean Delumeau, these are two extreme examples of the general trend in early modern Christianity toward what he calls *culpabilisation*, the creation of a culture of fear and guilt through the propagation of medieval monastic ideas about sin and the body.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, sin and fear are the central themes of Christian life for both preachers, but tears and weeping in these accounts are not merely the responses of a frightful audience. Rather, the authors of these two hagiographies cast the tears as evidence of God's action among those people and through the words and deeds of the Nobletz and Maunoir. The Breton people wept because weeping was a necessary part of penance, to which they had been led successfully by the expertise of the missionaries.

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<sup>37</sup> See Louis Châtellier, *The Religion of the Poor: Rural Missions in Europe and the Formation of Modern Catholicism, c. 1500-1800*, trans. Brian Pearce (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>38</sup> Antoine de Saint-André, *La vie de Monsieur Le Nobletz, prestre et missionnaire de Bretagne* (Paris: F. Muguet, 1666), 133-134.

<sup>39</sup> P. Boschet, *Le parfait missionnaire, ou la vie du R. P. Julien Maunoir* (Paris: Jean Anisson, 1697), 153, 184.

<sup>40</sup> Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture, 13th-18th Centuries*, trans. Eric Nicholson (New York: St. Martin's, 1990).

The accounts of Nobletz and Maunoir share with the narratives written by Rhodes and Cardim an apparent lack of discernment when they discuss tears. In the case of the Asian missions, we might ask ourselves why the Jesuits were not more skeptical of the emotional responses of peoples they had only recently met. Among other things, they might have questioned whether tears meant something slightly different in the ritual and gestural codes of the people of Vietnam, India, and Japan, onto which Christianity was grafted. In the case of the Breton missionaries, we might ask to what extent the people gave Nobletz and Maunoir what they wanted, resentful of the Jesuit presence in their land and aware that tears might suggest that a change of heart had already taken place. Certainly the interaction between preacher and people created a context within which weeping often took place, and instruction in Christian worship and doctrine over time would likely have transmitted to those audiences a sense of the prevailing emotional codes understood by the Jesuits. The texts themselves do not offer much in the way of clues as to *how* this might have happened, however, and thus they can only take us so far toward historicizing the meanings of different sorts of ritualized weeping, as several scholars have recently attempted.<sup>41</sup> As narratives, all four were constructed to offer their readers evidence of successful missions and models for what future missionaries ought to do. They depend for their impact on the reader's expectations that repentance and conversion, long associated with tears in the Christian imagination, would have a physical and emotional component that reflected the disposition of one's soul.

Finally, then, where is the discourse of discernment so central to Ignatius Loyola's life and work and so clearly observable in the spiritual guidebooks of Juan de Avila, François de Sales, and François Guilloché? I would argue that in the missionary accounts, the author and the narrative structure of the text take on the role of spiritual judge. Susan Schreiner and others have shown that discernment only increases in importance from the late medieval into the early modern period. Growing anxiety about new religious orders and practices after the Council of Trent, particularly among women, also contributed to the elaboration of new processes of spiritual testing.<sup>42</sup> If possession, visions, and ecstasies were met with a newfound skepticism, so too were the tears which very often accompanied them – hence Teresa of Avila's care in noting that not all bodily ecstasies

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<sup>41</sup> William A. Christian, Jr., "Provoked Religious Weeping in Early Modern Spain," in *Religion and Emotion: Approaches and Interpretations*, ed. John Corrigan (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 33-50; Lyn A. Blanchfield, "Tears That Tell: The Ritualistic Uses of Weeping by Participants of Late Medieval Florentine Sermons," (Ph.D. diss., Binghamton University, State University of New York, 2003); Gary L. Ebersole, "The Function of Ritual Weeping Revisited: Affective Expression and Moral Discourse," *History of Religions* 39. 3 (2000): 211-246.

<sup>42</sup> See Sluhovský, *Believe Not Every Spirit*, and Andrew W. Keitt, *Inventing the Sacred: Imposture, Inquisition, and the Boundaries of the Supernatural in Golden Age Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

were of divine origin. When Alexandre de Rhodes and the other missionary authors insisted on the congruence of their converts' inward states and outward tears, they themselves took responsibility for the sincerity of tears of repentance which they recounted. They offered their own experience and expertise as the criterion of truth. The discernment of tears is perhaps most indicative of the trend – admittedly contested among scholars – toward a “disciplining” of religious impulses in the post-Reformation era.<sup>43</sup> At the risk of oversimplifying, it is clerical authority which *makes* the tears true, at least in the telling of the tale or the writing of the spiritual handbook.<sup>44</sup> The missionaries and their readers were not necessarily naïve nor particularly credulous; Boschet mentions in his account of the life of Maunoir that he has rejected several stories of “miraculous” conversions because the superstitions of the rural Bretons are not always to be trusted.<sup>45</sup> Further comparative work will need to be done to establish further distinctions in the reporting of tears along lines of gender and geography; indeed, a paper of this length inevitably raises more questions than it can answer. I hope at least to have cast doubt on the observation of an early twentieth-century philosopher, Emil Cioran, who remarked with skepticism, “When it runs out of arguments, religion finds recourse in tears.”<sup>46</sup> The evidence from early modern Catholicism suggests strongly, on the contrary, that tears themselves could *be* an argument.

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<sup>43</sup> For example, Karant-Nunn, *Reformation of Feeling*.

<sup>44</sup> On the authority claimed by missionaries in their narratives, particularly among the Franciscans, see Megan C. Armstrong, “The Missionary Reporter,” *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* 34 no. 1-2 (Winter-Spring 2011): 127-158.

<sup>45</sup> Boschet, *Le parfait missionnaire*, 183.

<sup>46</sup> E. M. Cioran, *Tears and Saints* [1937], trans. Ilinca Zarifopol-Johnston (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 73.





## To Persuade and Connect: Mary Sidney's Essential Role in Henry Sidney's Irish Rule

By Catherine Medici

Henry Sidney is widely regarded as the inventor of the English system of colonization, and his rule of Ireland as Lord Deputy during the 1560s and 70s has been fairly well documented. However, the role played by his wife, Mary Dudley Sidney has so far been overlooked. Mary was an important part of her husband's rule, both while in Ireland with him, and back in England. In Ireland, she participated in political negotiations and influenced her husband's decisions behind the scenes during his first term as Lord Deputy. Upon returning to England, Mary supported her husband by managing the family finances but more importantly by cultivating the Sidneys' patronage and favor networks. Through careful use of her court and family connections, Mary gained essential support for her husband's Irish rule.

Mary Sidney's role in English exploration has been suggested before. In her chapter on Mary Dudley Sidney in *Ten Remarkable Women of the Tudor Courts and Their Influence in Founding the New World, 1530-1630*, Elizabeth Darracott Wheeler contends that Mary Dudley Sidney was important in the history of exploration and colonization because she was the wife and mother of men influential in these areas. Many of Wheeler's assertions are highly speculative, but she does contend that Mary Sidney's presence in Ireland was significant, the only source to even mention this.<sup>1</sup> Additionally her argument that Mary Sidney's management of the family estate and finances during Henry's frequent absences begins to show her importance and highlights the need for a better source on the topic.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Darracott Wheeler, *Ten Remarkable Women of the Tudor Courts and Their Influence in Founding the New World, 1530-1630* (Lewiston, ME: E. Mellen Press, 2000), 64. Wheeler's assertion that while fighting in Dublin was ongoing, "Mary depended upon God's direction to show her the best place to live inexpensively" exemplifies her speculative claims.

<sup>2</sup> Wheeler, 57, 61.

Mary Sidney's involvement in English exploration has also been suggested by other scholars, like E. R. G. Taylor and Rodger Kuin, but without support from the primary sources.<sup>3</sup>

Mary Sidney's presence or participation in Ireland is rarely mentioned in secondary sources which have focused on Henry Sidney's Irish rule. This is a rather significant, conspicuous oversight, considering her presence is noted in many primary sources. Additionally, the importance of the Dudley connection for support of Henry Sidney's mission in Ireland and Dudley patronage for Irish colonization is well remarked on in the literature by scholars like Michael Brennan and Nicholas Canny, but Mary Sidney's place in that patronage and support network is missing.<sup>4</sup> Mary Sidney tied her husband to the Dudley brothers and sources show how central she was to maintaining the relationship, yet her role is consistently overlooked.

By examining the role of Mary Dudley Sidney in her husband's rule of Ireland, this paper recovers a part of Irish history. But more importantly, it locates the role of women in the narrative of English exploration and expansion. In both primary and secondary literature on English colonization and discovery in Ireland and the New World, women's voices, experiences, and roles are often found only in descriptions of the encountered, leaving out the role played by European women in such colonial projects. Mary Sidney's experience and participation in Ireland thus offers us an important window into the ways that English women participated in colonial rule.

### **Mary Dudley Sidney's Upbringing and Education**

Mary Dudley Sidney's upbringing and family background would have prepared her to be involved in English exploration and expansion. She was born to John and Jane Dudley between 1530 and 1535 and was one of five daughters and eight sons. Mary was a well-educated woman, as all the Dudley children were educated at home in the humanist tradition, learning French, Latin, writing, and natural philosophy.<sup>5</sup> But there was an interesting twist to the Dudley education. Because the Dudleys were great patrons of explorers and had naval interests, it included an emphasis on cosmography, geography and astrology. John Dee was one of the explorers who influenced the Dudley children's education in navigation, through his association with John Dudley and presence at

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<sup>3</sup> E. R. G. Taylor, *Tudor Geography, 1485-1583* (London: Methuen and Company, 1930); Rodger Kuin, "Querre-Muhau: Sir Philip Sidney and the New World," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 51, no. 2 (Summer, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> Michael G. Brennan, *The Sidneys of Penshurst and the Monarchy, 1500-1700* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006); Nicholas P. Canny, *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: a Pattern Established, 1565-76* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1976).

<sup>5</sup> Margaret P. Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 4.

the Dudley home.<sup>6</sup> Scholars argue that the boys of the Dudley family were heavily influenced by John Dudley's interest in New World exploration.<sup>7</sup> Due to the family's co-education of their children, one could assume that an interest in exploration was also passed on to Mary. Mary's education would have prepared her to be involved in many aspects of English expansions and exploration. It would have given connections to important figures and the specialized knowledge that was essential to colonization.

With her 1550 marriage to Henry Sidney, Mary Sidney's connection to exploration was maintained, as the Sidneys were also great supporters of exploration. Henry Sidney was the dedicatee or patron of many books on exploration, including a work on Antarctica and a tract on the rules of geography.<sup>8</sup> The young Sidneys supported one of John Dee's students, Richard Chancellor, who made astronomical studies to find the Northwest Passage.<sup>9</sup> Men who had studied under Dee, including Humphrey Gilbert and Martin Frobisher, led many of the New World explorations that the Sidneys heavily funded.<sup>10</sup> Theodore Rabb's quantitative history *Enterprise & Empire; Merchant and Gentry Investment in the Expansion of England, 1575-1630*, shows that the Sidneys almost exclusively invested in the same ventures as the Dudleys.<sup>11</sup> This suggests that Mary's education alongside her brother influenced her exploration investments.

Mary's education and both her natal and marital family's interest and involvement in English discovery allowed her a deep understanding of the theories and topics circulating on English exploration and expansion, which in turn permitted her to play a role in it, particularly during her husband's rule in Ireland.

### **Mary Sidney Goes to Ireland**

In 1565, Queen Elizabeth I chose Henry Sidney as her new Lord Deputy of Ireland. This seemed like a logical choice, as Henry had served under his brother-in-law Thomas Radcliffe, Earl of

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<sup>6</sup> Taylor, 73.

<sup>7</sup> G. V. Scammall, "Shipowning in the Economy and Politics of Early Modern England," *The Historical Journal* 15, no. 3 (September, 1972), 392-393; Kuin, 566; David M. Loades, *John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland: 1504-1553* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); C. Raymond Beazley, "Exploration Under Elizabeth, 1558-1603," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, New Series* 9 (1895), 119-165.

<sup>8</sup> Taylor, 29, 34; Kuin, 551.

<sup>9</sup> Taylor, 73.

<sup>10</sup> Taylor, 76; Theodore K. Rabb, *Enterprise & Empire; Merchant and Gentry Investment in the Expansion of England, 1575-1630* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 283.

<sup>11</sup> Rabb, 283.

Sussex, as treasurer in Ireland and acted in Radcliffe's place during his frequent absences. At the time, Henry was also serving as Lord Deputy of England's other territory, Wales.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the honor of the posting, Henry Sidney was reluctant to take on Irish rule. He participated in long negotiations with the Queen and her council beginning in May of 1565. One of his terms was that his wife and children would accompany him. A look back at Henry's previous service to the state shows that though this may have been an unusual request from other men, it was common from him. During Henry's time serving as vice-treasurer of Ireland in 1556, Mary traveled to be with him. She intended to make a home there, as many of her belongings and furnishings accompanied her.<sup>13</sup> In 1559, Henry told the Spanish Ambassador Alvero de Quadra that if the Queen sent him to France on a diplomatic mission, he would require that his wife accompany him.<sup>14</sup> When he took on the role of Lord Deputy of the Welsh Marches in 1560, the entire Sidney Family relocated to Ludlow Castle.<sup>15</sup> In May of 1570, after four years of service in Ireland, Henry requested that the Privy Council recall him to England or "have his wife sent over."<sup>16</sup> Clearly Mary Sidney's presence was important to her husband during his political and diplomatic assignments.

Mary Sidney's influence on her husband is easily understood in an era of personal politics. The dependence of the government on unpaid aristocracy allowed women, through the men in their families, to exert political influence. As women were trusted partners in running estates and maintaining families, it would not be too surprising if men also viewed their wives as helpmates in their political careers.

Mary was one of a few women noted for her impressive intelligence in Elizabethan England, as well as her political skill and persuasiveness. In 1586, Thomas Moffett characterized Mary Dudley Sidney as, "surpassing her sex and her generation in excellence of wit and of skill in arts;...she charmed the minds and ears of conversants and to a degree appeared to be the very goddess of

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<sup>12</sup> Arthur Collins, *Letters and Memorials of State: in the reigns of Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, King James, King Charles the First, part of the reign of King Charles the Second, and Oliver's Usurpation / Written and Collected by Sir Henry Sydney* (London: T. Osborne, 1746), 85, 86.

<sup>13</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de l'Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place, Vol. 1*, (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1925), 380.

<sup>14</sup> Alvero de Quadra, "The Bishop of Aquila to the Count de Feria 27 Dec 1559," in *Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs [of the Reign of Elizabeth] Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas*, trans. Martin Andrew Hume (London: H. M. Stationery Off., 1892), 119.

<sup>15</sup> *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de l'Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place*, 321.

<sup>16</sup> Henry Sidney, "Lord Deputy Sydney to the Privy Council May 4 1570," in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, 1509-[1603]. Vol. 1. : 1509-1573*, 430.

Persuasion.”<sup>17</sup> Like Moffett, *Holinshed's Chronicle* remarks on Mary Sidney's skill of lobbying, stating, “she used such godlie, earnest and effectuall persuasions to all those around her.”<sup>18</sup> Fulke Greville referred to Mary Sidney as holding “ingenious sensibleness.”<sup>19</sup> When understanding this in the seventeenth century context it indicates that Greville found her to be intelligent, clever, and in possession of genius. He also felt that she was able to express her intelligence and knowledge to others, as in the mid-seventeenth century sensible indicated that one's intellect could be understood.<sup>20</sup> Because of her reputation for intelligence and being politically astute, Henry surely involved her in conversations on Irish policies. Perhaps Henry's insistence on Mary accompanying him on his government missions was based on a dependence on her advice.

Upon his arrival in Ireland, Henry was immediately met with a difficult state of affairs. In a letter to his brother-in-law, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Henry Sidney presented the situation in Ireland that greeted the Sidneys as grim:

The English Pale spoiled daily, and in utter poverty. Kilkenny and all Minister spoiled. The Earls cannot attend the Queen's service, as formerly. One may ride 30 miles and not see one house left standing, where Sydney has known it as well inhabited as in many counties of England.... Shane O'Neill the only strong and rich man in Ireland. He is able to burn and spoil to Dublin gates and go away unfought.<sup>21</sup>

Since the reign of Henry VIII the Tudor monarchs had been attempting to bring the Irish Lords under English control. The strongest among the Lords was Shane O'Neill, who entered into discussion with the Scottish Rebels, and Spanish and French, all enemies of Elizabeth's rule and fought weaker Irish Lords to control an increasingly large swath of Ireland.<sup>22</sup> As Henry's letter shows, English influence on the Irish Lords was utterly lacking at the beginning of his rule.

In addition to the complete lack of control over the Irish lords, Sidney was immediately met with issues of debt and lack of funding. In his efforts to regain English control of the Irish lords,

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<sup>17</sup> Thomas Moffett, *Nobilis; or, A View of the Life and Death of a Sidney, and Lessus lugubris*, trans. Virgil B. Heltzel and Hoyt H. Hudson (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1940), 86.

<sup>18</sup> Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande* (London: Henry Denham, 1587), 1553.

<sup>19</sup> Fulke Greville, Baron Brooke, *Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney* (London: Henry Seile, 1652), 5.

<sup>20</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 1989), s.v. “Sensible,” [http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50219874?single=1&query\\_type=word&queryword=sensible&first=1&max\\_to\\_show=10](http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50219874?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=sensible&first=1&max_to_show=10) (accessed November 20, 2010); *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 1989), s.v. “Ingenious,” [http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50219874?single=1&query\\_type=word&queryword=ingenious&first=1&max\\_to\\_show=10](http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50219874?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=ingenious&first=1&max_to_show=10) (accessed November 20, 2010).

<sup>21</sup> Henry Sidney, “Lord Deputy Sydney to the Earl of Leicester March 1, 1566,” in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, 1509-[1603]. Vol. 1:1509-1573*, 289.

<sup>22</sup> Mike Cronin, *History of Ireland* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 51.

Henry Sidney entered into negotiations with them to establish their support for English rule and as allies of the Queen. In *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: a Pattern Established, 1565-76*, Canny studies Ireland during a time when Henry Sidney ruled as Lord Deputy and deeply impacted Elizabethan Irish policy. Canny details Sidney's new plan for Irish control, involving reform of the feudal system of the island, which entailed heavy negotiations with the Irish lords.<sup>23</sup>

Mary was involved in at least one of the negotiations. Testimony of one Englishman, Randal Kelly, suggests that Mary Sidney played a direct role in one of the negotiations. He stated that "Sir Henry Sidney's wife" had "labored Captain Warren, Lady Brabazon, Mr King, and others" to persuade her husband towards an agreement with an unnamed earl.<sup>24</sup> Kelly's testimony shows that Mary was acknowledged as influencing her husband's political actions in Ireland. The importance of wives' political influence and usefulness was highly valued by the Irish lords. The Earl of Desmond deployed his wife to participate in negotiations with the English and the English acknowledged her as acting for her husband. In a proclamation against the Earl, the Lord Deputy stated, "he made offer by the countess, his wife, to yield to the articles"; the Lord Deputy saw the Countess of Desmond's agreement as central to his agreement that the Earl of Desmond reneged on his agreement.<sup>25</sup> Because of the importance of their wives in the Irish Lords' rule, they understood Mary Sidney to be a significant part of her husband's Irish administration. Mary Sidney's explicit role in negotiations and her behind the scenes influence on her husband in Ireland were important in shaping his Irish rule.

### **Mary Sidney's Role in Ireland From England**

Mary Sidney not only played an active role in her husband's administration while in Ireland, but her husband's almost constant absence gave her more responsibilities and additional significance. She maintained the family's estate and dwindling finances, and more importantly the family's favor at court. These aspects of Mary's role in Henry Sidney's reign in Ireland have been generally unexplored, but an examination of her fulfillment in these roles shows that she was crucial to Henry's Irish rule.

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<sup>23</sup> Canny, 51.

<sup>24</sup> Randal Kelly, "Testimony of Richard Morris, John Morgan, Richard Blake, Randal Kelly as to the Appointment of Clerk of the Ordnance, 1572," in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1509-1585*, Rev. ed., ed. Mary O'Dowd (Kew, UK: Public Record Office Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2000), 366.

<sup>25</sup> "Proclamation Against Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Desmond by Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam and Council, 1 August 1574," in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1509-1585*, Rev. ed., Vol. 1.:1571-1575, 673.

Noble women were instrumental to their husbands' political power because while men were away at court or overseas serving the monarch, wives kept the estate running. There were many times when Mary took over in Henry's absence during his various postings to Ireland, the Welsh Marches, and France. Mary detailed her accounts related to running the estate in her *Ladies Book*, and the accounts of the family estate, *Penshurst*, show money was paid to her to pay the estate's employees.<sup>26</sup> Mary's careful maintenance of the family estate allowed her husband's reputation and incomes to be unaffected by his frequent absences.

The financial accounts of the Sidney family indicate that Henry Sidney funded much of his rule of Ireland out of his own pocket and then had to hope for the Queen to reimburse him. The Sidney's finances were not always adequate and Henry Sidney had to accept loans from other nobles to fund Elizabeth's policies.<sup>27</sup> When Henry took over as Lord Deputy again in 1575, he was immediately met with the need to get loans to fulfill the Queen's policies; he borrowed £55 in just a few months time.<sup>28</sup>

Due to the Queen's lack of funding for her Irish policies, when Henry Sidney left his post as Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1571 he was owed £369 by the government just for his pension, not including the money he had spent in his governmental role. When he left Ireland for the second time in 1579, he owed £400 to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, among others, for their loans to assist his running of Ireland.<sup>29</sup> Though it was a great honor for Henry Sidney to serve as Lord Deputy of Ireland, one he fought for a second time, his rule of Ireland almost bankrupted the Sidneys and made Mary's careful management of the finances at home even more important. In light of the family's financial situation, Mary Sidney's careful management and charge of the family finances gains particular significance.

Mary Sidney's role in maintaining the family's patronage networks and favor at court was essential to the success of Henry's Irish rule. The politics of early modern England were governed by a system of personal politics and patronage, making women's networks of kin and friends an essential part of political influence and involvement. In 1574, when Henry was in the midst of campaigning against the Earl of Essex to be renamed Lord Deputy of Ireland, Mary planned to use

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<sup>26</sup> *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de l'Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst*, 260.

<sup>27</sup> *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de l'Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst*, 402.

<sup>28</sup> *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de l'Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst*, 427.

<sup>29</sup> *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de l'Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst*, 440.



her influence and connections at court towards “some good resolution.”<sup>30</sup> In a letter to her husband’s secretary, Edmond Mollineux, she acknowledged the importance of getting Henry favor at court, noting she could “advise you to no better course, then my lord hath written to his friends.” While she did not want to diminish the importance of her husband’s efforts, Mary Sidney knew the power of her court connections. Despite her ill health and difficulty traveling she offered, “to be at the Court, to stand my dear Lord in what steed, my duty and being there with her Majesty, and my Friends, might do.” There is no record of whether Mary went to court to lobby for her husband’s cause, but her offer suggests that she thought that the best way to gain support for her husband’s Irish rule was her personal presence and persuasion at court. Almost a year later, in 1575, Henry was again named Lord Deputy of Ireland.

In another important instance of Mary Sidney’s use of her court connections to assist her husband she saved his honor and the family finances. Mary Sidney’s political involvement during Elizabeth’s reign also included lobbying the Queen directly for her husband while he was serving the Queen far from court as Lord Deputy of Ireland and President of the Councils of the Welsh Marches. She consistently argued for the Queen to repay him money spent in government service, echoing his many letters to Elizabeth, William Cecil, and the Privy Council. The Sidneys’ accounts show the immense debt that they accrued during Henry Sidney’s tenure as Lord Deputy. Despite their political influence and the important offices they held, Henry and Mary Sidney never gained a title. The disadvantages of the Sidney’s loyal service to the Queen appear in Mary Sidney’s 1572 note to William Cecil, the Queen’s Secretary. She wrote:

Her Majesty’s pleasure for my husband who I find greatly dismayed at being called to be a baron. Our ill ability to maintain a higher title than we now possess. Since titles of great calling cannot be well held but with some amendment at the prince’s hand, of a ‘ruinated’ start, or else to his discredit greatly that must take them upon him.... My humble request is that you will stand so much his good lord that the motion be no further offered unto him.... Stay the motion of this new title to be any further offered him.<sup>31</sup>

Mary Sidney wrote to William Cecil while at court to stop proceedings to offer Henry a baronage so that he would not be dishonored by having to turn it down. Due to the massive debt the Sidneys

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<sup>30</sup> Mary Sidney, “Lady Mary Sidney to Edmond Mollineux, Esq; Secretary to Sir Henry Sidney; from Chifwyke, 1<sup>st</sup> of Sept. 1574,” in Collins, *Letters and Memorials*, 67; Wallace T. MacCaffrey, “Sidney, Sir Henry (1529–1586),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25520> (accessed April 27, 2011).

<sup>31</sup> Mary Sidney, “Mary, Lady Sidney to Burghley, 2 May 1572,” in *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1509-1585*, Rev. ed., ed. Mary O’Dowd (Kew, UK: Public Record Office Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2000), 160.

took on to fund the English mission in Ireland, they could not afford to support the title. Henry Sidney's loyalty to the Queen and years of service had cost the Sidney family much of their fortune. Mary used her court connections to aid her husband to both gain honors and offices and to avoid actions that would lead to his dishonor.

Because of the importance of patronage and favor at Elizabeth's court, even when she was away Mary remained active in advancing the family's interest through her connections. She emphasized the importance of maintaining her connections to the other women of the court, asking Mollineaux to "inquire for Mistress Edmonds, of the Privy Chamber ...and make most hearty commendations unto her; and also to Mistress Skudamore, of the Privy Chamber."<sup>32</sup> These women would be close to the Queen and other significant members of court and could influence decisions important to the Sidneys. The women of the Privy Chamber also promoted the suits and interests of various men, usually kin but also other members of the court, to the Queen.<sup>33</sup> Mary Sidney's concern for remaining in favor with those in her patronage networks at court was most pronounced with the members of the Dudley family. Mary highlighted the importance of the Dudley connection to the Sidney's political and monetary fortunes when she wrote to her husband's secretary in London and asked him to "go often in my name, to inquire how my deare Brothers do."<sup>34</sup>

In studying Henry's Irish rule, many scholars, like Brennan and Canny, note the importance of the Dudley family, as Dudley patronage and connection was essential to Henry's rule of Ireland. But they often overlook that this made Mary, as a facilitator of this patronage, an important part of Henry's Irish governance. Studies of patronage show that natal kin was important to women's networks and this is true for Mary Sidney.<sup>35</sup> Women who made relationships between their brothers and their husbands had increased importance in their families, which certainly seems to be the case with Mary.<sup>36</sup> The relationship between Mary, her husband and her brothers gave her importance in family politics, as her support was essential for Henry's participation in the Dudley family political machine.

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<sup>32</sup> Mary Sidney, "Lady Mary Sidney to Edmond Mollineaux, Esq; Secretary to Sir Henry Sidney; from Chifwyke, 1<sup>st</sup> of Sept. 1574," in Collins, *Letters and Memorials*, 66-67.

<sup>33</sup> Pam Wright, "A Change in Direction: the Ramifications of a Female Household, 1558-1603," in *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, by David Starkey et al. (New York: Longman, 1987), 161.

<sup>34</sup> Mary Sidney, "Lady Mary Sidney to Edmond Mollineaux, Esq; Secretary to Sir Henry Sidney; from Chifwyke, 1<sup>st</sup> of Sept. 1574," 67.

<sup>35</sup> Barbara Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 175.

<sup>36</sup> Harris, 184.

Henry Sidney frequently used Robert Dudley as his intermediary with the Queen; he often wrote to him of the challenges he faced in Ireland. Henry clearly saw Robert as his best chance to bring Ireland to the Queen's attention. But, Mary Sidney's careful cultivation of her family alliances were more important. She told Mollineaux of his role in maintaining strong relationships on her behalf with influential members of the court. When Henry was facing criticism for his Irish policies, Mary told Mollineaux, she had "sent letters to my Lords my Brothers" so that "some good resolution were towards my Lord, either for an honorable voyage or a contentfull aboud at home."<sup>37</sup> Mary's letters to her brothers were particularly significant in this instance because Henry could have easily written the letters himself. Mary noted that it was at Henry's request that she wrote her brothers asking for their support.<sup>38</sup> Henry must have asked Mary to write to because he thought her request for support would be more effective. Because Mary tied her husband to her brothers, Henry's frequent dependence on Robert Dudley to bring the situation in Ireland to Elizabeth's attention and gain support for his policies increased Mary Sidney's significance.

Mary's efforts from England to assist her husband in his role as Lord Deputy of Ireland were crucial to his rule. The political system which depended on personal politics, patronage and favor made Mary Sidney's efforts to gain patronage and favor for her husband from her court connections, kin and otherwise, crucial for maintaining support for his Irish rule. Mary Sidney participated in English expansion through her involvement and support of her husband's rule as Lord Deputy of Ireland from 1565 to 1571 and 1575 to 1579. Mary's education and family background would have allowed her to understand and be involved in her family's and husband's exploration and expansion ventures. By accompanying Henry to Ireland, Mary participated in colonization by getting involved in political negotiations and through her presence and unseen influence in his first term as Lord Deputy. When she was not in Ireland, Mary supported her husband's role in colonization by managing the family finances but more importantly by managing the Sidney's patronage and favor networks. Mary Sidney's greatest contribution to Henry's Irish rule was her use of her court and family connections to gain essential support.

Mary Sidney's participation in English colonial ventures in Ireland is significant in and of itself. But it is equally, if not more valuable to see her as an example of the ways women were involved in early modern English exploration and expansion. Perhaps by looking for women who were educated

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<sup>37</sup>Henry Sidney, "Lord Deputy Sydney to the Earl of Leicester, March 1, 1566," 289.

<sup>38</sup>Henry Sidney, "Lord Deputy Sydney to the Earl of Leicester, March 1, 1566," 289.

in topics tied to exploration or more fully examining women whose families are associated with discovery and colonization we will find evidence of women's influence and participation in a historical process usually treated as the preserve of men. We should also look for women like Mary Sidney who accompanied their male kin on colonization missions. Additionally, integrating the ideas of personal politics, patronage, and favor will help us find the ways that women's influence involved them. We should look for women's financial and political patronage of exploration and colonization. The example of Mary Sidney shows that by looking for the way women could influence and support men clearly involved in discovery and colonization, women's role in the narrative can continue to be uncovered.

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## Freedom in Determinism: An Argument against Reading Spinoza as a Hard Determinist

By Nick Nash

Many scholars within the contemporary free will debate hold Benedict de Spinoza to be a historical example of a hard determinist.<sup>1</sup> Hard determinism is the view that because determinism is true, we have no free will and so cannot be held morally responsible for our actions.<sup>2</sup> There are a number of elements of Spinoza's philosophy that could lead one to this classification. However, this overlooks a number of important nuances of Spinoza's philosophical system. In this paper I argue that Spinoza is distinct from the hard determinist in three related and important ways.

In the first part of this paper, I outline the hard determinist position and explain why Spinoza could be misunderstood as a hard determinist. In parts two through four, I show how he differs from the hard determinist with his account of the will, his *conatus* doctrine, and his account of active emotions, and argue that he is not a hard determinist. Finally, I introduce a particular account of soft determinism and show the difference between this account and his account of moral responsibility. This leaves the possibility of a different account of soft determinism not focused on moral responsibility.

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<sup>1</sup> Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau, introduction to "Part IV: Determinism, Free Will, and Responsibility," in *Reason and Responsibility: Readings in Some Basic Problems of Philosophy*, ed. Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education, 2002), 459; Shaun Nichols, "The Rise of Compatibilism: A Case Study in the Quantitative History of Philosophy," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* XXXI (2007): 266-268; Derk Pereboom, *Living Without Free Will* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2001), xx, xxv, 129, 142, 207-208; Derk Pereboom, "Hard Incompatibilism," in *Four Views on Free Will*, John Martin Fischer et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 85, 100, 113, 198; Derk Pereboom, "Determinism al Dente," *Noûs* 29, no. 1 (1995): 42n1; and Tamler Sommers, "More Work for Hard Incompatibilism," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* LXXIX, no. 3 (2009): 511.

<sup>2</sup> The doctrines of hard determinism and soft determinism are related to the doctrines of compatibilism and incompatibilism. Hard and soft determinism are doctrines about the truth of the relationship between determinism and free will while compatibilism and incompatibilism are doctrines about the logical relation between determinism and free will. For clarity within this paper, I will only use hard determinism and soft determinism.

Hard determinism is the philosophical position that holds that determinism is true and that determinism is incompatible with free will. In this context, determinism is defined as every event having a cause. Expanding on this notion, this cause is related to the event in such a way that it would break the laws of nature for the cause to happen and not to be followed by the event.<sup>3</sup> For the hard determinist, because every event is determined by some prior cause, humans do not have free will, which is the capacity to choose a particular action from a list of possible actions.<sup>4</sup> This rejection of free will entails a rejection of moral responsibility. Moral responsibility comes from praise and reward or blame and punishment being deserved in response to an action.<sup>5</sup> A person should be held morally responsible for an action only if they could have avoided it. Because determinism is true, however, we cannot avoid our actions, and so we cannot be held morally responsible for them.<sup>6</sup> A hard determinist's views about free will and moral responsibility follow from their view of determinism. Because every event has a cause, every action is determined by a previous event. With this unbreakable causal chain, we have no opportunity to act other than we are determined to act and so we have no free will. With no free will, we can only do what we are determined to do and so have no moral responsibility.

It is not difficult to find textual evidence in support of the interpretation of Spinoza as a hard determinist. Near the end of Book I of his work *The Ethics*, Spinoza argues for determinism.<sup>7</sup> He does this at 1p33<sup>8</sup> by saying, "Things could have been produced by God in no other way, and in no other order than they have been produced."<sup>9</sup> Spinoza also appears to reject free will. The first rejection of free will comes just before his argument for determinism at 1p32 when he says, "The

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<sup>3</sup> Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 102-103.

<sup>4</sup> Timothy O'Connor, "Free Will," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2010 edition, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2010/entries/freewill/>.

<sup>5</sup> Feinberg and Shafer-Landau, 457.

<sup>6</sup> This final point of moral responsibility is the focus of much of the contemporary debate on free will. An argument for skepticism about moral responsibility follows, in the same order as this introduction, from the claim that our actions are the result of events beyond our control. For example see Sommers, 511-512.

<sup>7</sup> There is much debate about how to understand Spinoza's determinism. For a clear explanation of the two sides of this debate see Don Garrett, "Spinoza's Necessitarianism," in *God and Nature: Spinoza's Metaphysics*, ed. Yirmiyahu Yovel (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1991), 191-218; and Edwin Curley and Gregory Walski, "Spinoza's Necessitarianism Reconsidered," in *New Essays on the Rationalists*, ed. Rocco J. Gennaro and Charles Huenemann, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 224-240.

<sup>8</sup> Citations from *The Ethics* follow the format: 1p7s. The first number represents the book. For the letter following, d = definition, a = axiom, and p = proposition. The second number is the number of the definition, axiom, or proposition. If a second letter follows, s = scholium and c = corollary. So, 1p7s is the scholium to the seventh proposition of the first book. Benedict de Spinoza, *The Ethics*, trans. Edwin Curley (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994). All citations from *The Ethics* refer to his edition.

<sup>9</sup> Spinoza draws support for his determinism from general facts about the nature of the universe which he has used to create a metaphysical system in which everything follows necessarily from God's nature (1p16) and in which nothing is contingent (1p29) as noted in Derk Pereboom, "Hard Incompatibilism," 85.

will cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary one.”<sup>10</sup> At first glance it is easy to see why Spinoza might be classified as a hard determinist. He believes that determinism is true and, like the hard determinist, argues that we do not have free will. However, the hard determinist moves from their view of determinism, to a rejection of moral responsibility. Spinoza, on the other hand, gives an ethical account in Book IV, and a positive account of human freedom in Book V. If he was simply a hard determinist this makes little sense. In the rest of this paper I will differentiate Spinoza’s view from that of the hard determinist. This will bring to the surface some important nuances of his account.

One important difference between Spinoza and the hard determinist is their differing accounts of the will. Under one popular version of hard determinism, the will is defined as the faculty of our mind that is responsible for our actions.<sup>11</sup> An example of this is when Paul Holbach defines the will as “a modification of the brain, by which it is disposed to action.”<sup>12</sup> With every action determined no action is free. Or as Holbach puts it, “[We are] not master of the thought presented to [our] mind, which determines [our] will; this thought is excited by some cause independent of [us].”<sup>13</sup> The will is simply the faculty of our mind responsible for our actions. So, if every action is determined, the will is just these actions being determined.

Spinoza also believes that the reasons for our actions are determined. But although he also believes that the will is determined, when Spinoza refers to the will, and later makes the claim that it is not free, he is not simply saying that the faculty of our mind that is the reason for our actions is not free. For Spinoza, the reason for our actions is not the will but a combination of being conscious of our striving to exist, and outside influences, which he calls the effects. As explained above, Spinoza rejects the concept of free will, instead placing the will, just like everything else, under the control of determinism.

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<sup>10</sup> Importantly, Spinoza argues against free will while placing the will within the causal chain of determinism at 2p48 by claiming, “In the mind there is no absolute, or free, will, but the mind is determined to will this or that by a cause which is also determined by another and this again by another, and so on to infinity.”

<sup>11</sup> I recognize that it is possible that not all hard determinists define the will this way. However, due to the constraints here, this is the definition on which this paper will focus.

<sup>12</sup> Paul Holbach is also (and perhaps better) known as Paul Henri Thiry, Baron d’Holbach. He was a philosopher, translator, and prominent social figure of the French Enlightenment. Paul Holbach “The Illusion of Free Will,” in *Reason and Responsibility: Readings in Some Basic Problems of Philosophy*, ed. Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau (Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education, 2002), 462.

<sup>13</sup> Holbach, 465. (Brackets indicate where the original quote has been changed in favor of gender-neutral language.)



Spinoza defines the will at 2p48s as a faculty of the mind that can affirm or deny something to be true or false and not as “the desire by which the mind wants a thing or avoids it.” He next, at 2p49, sets up a system in which acts of will and ideas, though both in the mind, are separate. This is the basis for Spinoza’s account of human judgment and choice. In this account, an idea is presented to the will for consideration and then the will affirms or denies it. Spinoza’s final step in his account of the will is to claim at 2p49c that, “the will and the intellect are one and the same.” This is to say that both the will and the intellect are ideas, with the will being the active element of an idea by which it is affirmed or denied. So, to have an idea of x is to make some kind of affirmation or negation about x. For Spinoza, because these acts of will are ideas they are also controlled by determinism.<sup>14</sup>

It could be objected that this distinction between the hard determinists’ definition of will and Spinoza’s is no distinction at all, since both accounts of the faculty of our mind that is responsible for our actions involve determinism. Just because the hard determinist calls the account the will and Spinoza uses another term and instead calls something else the will does not mean that there is a distinction between the two views. Spinoza’s account of the faculty of our mind that is responsible for our actions will be investigated next and the response to this objection will become clear.

The basis of Spinoza’s account of the reason for our action is known as the *conatus* doctrine. He presents this doctrine at 3p6 by claiming that “Each thing, as far as it can by its own power, strives to persevere in its being.” Later in the same proposition, he says that when this striving relates only to the mind it is called the will but when it is related to both the mind and the body it is called appetite. Appetite becomes desire once we become conscious of it. Using an example of a thirsty person standing at a fountain, Holbach, gives a hard determinist account of the will as nothing more than our desire to continue to exist and suggests that we are entirely under the effect of things outside our control. In his example, this person will drink the water unless they are given reason to believe that not drinking the water will give them a better chance of surviving. The latter would occur in the case in which the thirsty person discovered that the water was poison. This same thirsty person could be driven to drink the water even if it is poison if they thought drinking the poison water gave them a better chance of survival than not drinking it.<sup>15</sup> Holbach gives an account of

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<sup>14</sup> Steven Nadler, *Spinoza’s Ethics: An Introduction*, (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 188.

<sup>15</sup> Holbach, 463.

humans as completely passive and trapped by their desire to continue to exist in an environment that, because it is completely determined, is outside of their control.

These two explanations of the will appear to be different only in name. But, to conclude this is to overlook the other elements of Spinoza's account. For Spinoza, the *conatus* is just one of three basic emotions. The other two are joy and sadness. Joy increases our power of acting while sadness decreases it. From these three emotions, compounded with other ideas, Spinoza is able to deduce an entire account of human emotions<sup>16</sup>. Perhaps most importantly however, Spinoza does not see humans as simply passive receivers of emotion. Instead, he gives an account of active emotions that come directly from reason. This active element is tied to the active element in his positive account of the will and its active element of affirming or denying ideas.

Nothing in Holbach's hard determinist account compares to Spinoza's active emotions or his claim that our power of acting can be increased or decreased. For the hard determinist, no part of the human mind is active. There is no power to be increased or decreased. There is only determinism. Holbach confirms this when he says, "[we ourselves are] purely passive in the motion [we] receive. [Are we] the master of desiring or not desiring an object that appears desirable to [us]? Without a doubt it will be answered, no."<sup>17</sup> Next I will show that because of our active emotions, Spinoza believes that we can have control over our desires, or perhaps better stated, we can have control over how we react to them.

Before Spinoza's account of the active emotions called actions, he gives an account of passive emotions called effects. For him, all of the effects are derived from some combination of the *conatus*, joy, and sadness. Beginning with these three elements, he gives an account of many other possible emotions. The effects are these emotions when they are outside of our control. An additional way that Spinoza explains our mind being active or passive is if it has adequate ideas or not. An adequate idea is related to Spinoza's epistemology. For Spinoza, an idea can only be adequate if it is known through reason (or from effect to cause) or through the adequate knowledge of God's essence (from cause to effect). Inadequate ideas, which include the effects, come from outside of us and include knowledge from our senses. So, sometimes the mind is active, and sometimes it is passive. This is presented at 3p1. We act insofar as we have adequate ideas and we are passive insofar as we have

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<sup>16</sup> Charles Jarrett, *Spinoza: A Guide for the Perplexed*. (London: Continuum, 2007), 99.

<sup>17</sup> Holbach, 464. (Quote changed in favor of gender-neutral language.)

inadequate ideas. At 3p3 the claim is made that actions come only from adequate ideas and passions (passive states) come only from inadequate ideas.<sup>18</sup>

In the last two propositions of part III, Spinoza gives his account of the active emotions. For him, the only two active emotions are joy and desire. This, at first, may seem confusing since joy and desire also make up two-thirds of the basis for the effects, which are passive emotions. The first step to understanding this claim is to remember that our desire is our will as it relates to our mind and body. Our will is our ability to affirm ideas insofar as they are ideas. The will can affirm adequate or inadequate ideas, which thus sets up a situation in which our will, and so also our desire, is at its best when it can affirm adequate ideas. A person is active insofar as their states follow from their desire to exist, or their *conatus*, rather than from the way that they are affected by external things.<sup>19</sup> The striving of the *conatus* can also involve inadequate ideas and in the case of the effects, it is related to inadequate ideas that necessarily come from outside of us. The mind is active, or has an increased power to act, when its desire is guided not by the effects, which are outside its control, but instead by understanding.<sup>20</sup> The joy that the effects can bring still increases our power to act, but it is not a consistent increase like joy that is generated internally from adequate ideas. It is because of determinism that we need to find joy from the *conatus* because every other source of joy is outside of our control. For the hard determinist, everything is outside of our control. Holbach, for example, claims that our passions are a necessary consequence of our temperament, our received ideas, and our notions of happiness and that all of these are controlled by determinism. For him, any joy that we do feel is just a result of our place in the web of determinism and any belief otherwise is just an illusion.<sup>21</sup>

For Spinoza, the will is our intellect affirming or denying an idea insofar as it is an idea and so has an active element of affirming or denying that the hard determinist account does not have. In the hard determinist account, there is no room for activity as everything can only be determined. The effects cannot be affirmed or denied by our will because they are outside of us.<sup>22</sup> What does answer to our will is our ability to affirm an idea insofar as it is an idea. Even under this account, Spinoza recognizes that we cannot eliminate the effects nor even completely dominate them. It is possible, however to get to a place where we can have the “power...to moderate and restrain” them

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<sup>18</sup> Jarrett, 100.

<sup>19</sup> Nadler, 210.

<sup>20</sup> Nadler, 211.

<sup>21</sup> Holbach, 464.

<sup>22</sup> Nadler, 212.

(3p56s).<sup>23</sup> It is the active emotions and their power to moderate and restrain the effects that form Spinoza's positive ethical account and his account of freedom. This account of the active emotions and their power to moderate and restrain the effects is the key difference between the hard determinist and Spinoza. Under hard determinism the effects cannot be moderated or restrained, only determined.

I have argued that Spinoza differs from the hard determinist because they have different positive accounts of the will. For the hard determinist, the will is a faculty of our mind that is responsible for our actions. For Spinoza, our will is the active element of an idea being affirmed or denied. I then argued that although both Spinoza and the hard determinist have an account of our striving to exist, the place of this account within each system is different. For the hard determinist, our striving to exist is just an extension of the reason for our actions while for Spinoza, our striving to exist, the basis of which is or our *conatus*, is just one of the three basic emotions. Finally, I have argued that Spinoza differs from the hard determinist because of his account of the active emotions. For the hard determinist, we can only be passive in response to determinism. For Spinoza, however, the active emotions form the basis of a positive ethical account and an account of freedom even under determinism. With these differences, Spinoza cannot be classified as a hard determinist. In the final part of this paper I will consider a particular version of soft determinism and compare it to Spinoza's account.

The other view within the free will debate that holds determinism to be true is called soft determinism. Under this view, determinism is true and some sense of freedom and moral responsibility are possible. This difference comes from the soft determinist's answer to the question of avoidability.<sup>24</sup> In his book *Think*, Simon Blackburn claims that for the soft determinist, we would have done otherwise if we had chosen differently and under the effect of other thoughts that were true, we would have chosen differently. According to Blackburn, true thoughts are thoughts that accurately represent our situation and that we could be reasonably expected to have.<sup>25</sup> To say that we would have done differently if we had chosen differently is simply to say that *if* we had chosen differently then we would have obtained a different outcome. It does not make any claim about

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<sup>23</sup> Nadler, 212.

<sup>24</sup> See also A. J. Ayer, "Freedom and Necessity," in *Reason and Responsibility: Readings in Some Basic Problems of Philosophy*, ed. Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau (Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education, 2002), 481-486; and, John Martin Fischer, "Compatibilism," in *Four Views on Free Will*, John Martin Fischer et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 44-84.

<sup>25</sup> Simon Blackburn, *Think: A Compelling Introduction to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 102.

being able to *actually* choose differently. From this, it is reasonable to make Blackburn's next claim, that if we would have had true thoughts that accurately represented our situation and that we could be reasonably expected to have, then we would have chosen differently. For Blackburn, having the opportunity to have had a different outcome if only we had acted differently is enough for moral responsibility.

Blackburn places the soft determinist within the causal chain of determinism and recognizes that within the causal chain, freedom comes from the way that our intellect processes information. The more true information that our intellect has access to, the better our action now, and so the better the outcome of our actions in the future. To explain what control of the future from inside a causal chain might look like, Blackburn uses the image of a thermostat. A thermostat turned up in the present affects the future by increasing the temperature in a room. So, our intellect processing true information in the present is the thermostat being turned up, which has the affect on the future of warming up the room or with providing us with more true information to process.

To see how this particular definition of soft determinism applies to Spinoza is not difficult. The first part of the claim, that we would do differently if we chose differently, naturally follows from determinism. Within the causal chain of determinism where every event has a cause, if a cause is different, an event necessarily also has to be different. Since Spinoza argues for determinism, it is reasonable that his system would accept that given a different set of causes there would be a different set of events. It is important to keep in mind on what level of abstraction this causal chain is being considered. It could be objected that if I decide to start a fire with a blue-tipped match or a red-tipped match, if the fire starts, then the outcome is the same with two different causes causing the same event. However, although the event of the fire is the same, strictly speaking they are not the same fire because one was started with a blue-tipped match and the other with a red.

The notion of knowledge having a possible effect on our decision making process comes straight out of Spinoza. Blackburn in fact cites Spinoza's claim that freedom is associated with increased knowledge and understanding as influencing his definition. Blackburn does not claim that Spinoza is a soft determinist; however, I claim that Blackburn's version of soft determinism is a better fit for Spinoza than the label hard determinism. For Spinoza, the will is the active element that affirms our ideas insofar as they are ideas. If we affirm ideas that are adequate and that follow from our *conatus* we increase our power of acting. When our power of acting is increased, we are more under the control of our reason and less under the control of the effects that are outside of us.

Having our power of acting increased is akin to turning up a thermostat in that it is an act that, even in a determined world, will have affect on the future. Spinoza's account differs from the hard determinist because he has the notion of the intellect that, even in a completely determined world, can actively process information that can have an effect on the future.

Even though I have argued that Blackburn's version of soft determinism is close to what Spinoza argues for in his work, *The Ethics*, they are not identical. At least part of Blackburn's intent for arguing for soft determinism is to rescue moral responsibility from determinism. Spinoza, however, does not share this interest. Spinoza, like the hard determinist, rejects moral responsibility in terms of praise and blame received for an action. Unlike the hard determinist, however, Spinoza does not reject praise and blame strictly in response to determinism. For Spinoza, another reason that we are not deserving of praise or blame is because praise and blame are effects. Spinoza defines praise at 3p29s as "the joy with which we imagine the action of another by which he has striven to please us" and then defines blame as the "sadness with which we are adverse to that action." As effects they are of course under the control of determinism, but also as effects, insofar as they interact with a mind, they are ideas that can be confirmed or denied insofar as they are ideas and are therefore under the control of the will and the intellect.

Under Spinoza's system, a person who is wholly rational is an ideal that we *should* strive for. It is from this *should* that the soft determinist draws their account of moral responsibility. To make Spinoza into this kind of soft determinist would be to say that we are worthy of praise insofar as we get closer to the ideal of a wholly rational being and that to do this is right. We are worthy of blame insofar as we get farther away from the ideal and to do this is wrong. But Spinoza is not interested in this kind of moral responsibility and sense of right and wrong. For him, praise and blame are effects, and right and wrong only have their place within a civil state. Right and wrong should only exist in a civil state so that people who are not wholly rational do not harm others because they fear a greater harm to themselves as punishment. With this Spinoza sets aside the moral concepts of right and wrong, instead creating a legal definition.<sup>26</sup> Outside of the civil state, however, right and wrong are replaced with the ideal of a wholly rational being that we should strive for.

Because of this different view of the source and application of praise and blame, as well as right and wrong, this version of soft determinism is not a perfect fit for Spinoza. However, because of the

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<sup>26</sup> Jarrett, 137-138.

difference between the two accounts, it does bring to light the possibility of a form of soft determinism that rejects both praise and blame as well as right and wrong as grounds for moral responsibility while also holding a robust account of human freedom. In order to clarify this position it will be necessary to further differentiate between the advantages of personal freedom over the good of the state and also to give a more complete account of the function of the active emotions.

## **Conclusion**

Many scholars claim that Spinoza is a historical example of a hard determinist and there are a number of elements of his philosophy that can seem to reinforce this classification. However, this overlooks a number of important nuances of his philosophy. In this paper I have argued that Spinoza is not a hard determinist. Then, I argued that a particular version of soft determinism is closer to his philosophy. However, there are also differences between this version of soft determinism and Spinoza's philosophy but these differences create the possibility of a different version of soft determinism. These concerns form the basis for future work in this area.<sup>27</sup>

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## Gospel Family Order, Honourable Marriages, and Slavery in Barbados: George Fox's Response to Quaker Slave Owners and the Question of Marriage among Slaves

By Kristianna Polder

On the island of Barbados in the seventeenth century, there were a great many plantation owners who were Quakers. These Quakers, like their fellow plantation owners, bought and sold slaves and relied on slave labour. Most early Quakers were not against the institution of slavery, but some, including George Fox, asserted the inherent humanity of slaves as people who could convert to Christianity, worship, and participate in the practices of the Quaker community including monogamous, and endogamous, marriages. This article explores the relationship between Fox's understanding of Quaker marriage, community and Barbadian slavery. What arises is a striking paradox between the slaves' identification with the inward presence of the light of Christ and the Quaker community, and their continued enslaved status, a paradox that is particularly striking within the context of the marriage union. This analysis will begin with a brief outline of the development of Quakerism and Fox's leadership role within the movement, followed by an explanation of the marriage approbation process practiced by early Quakers, including its spiritual and conceptual foundations, laying the context for its place in Barbadian plantation culture.

In mid-seventeenth-century England, the social upheaval of the English Civil War led a number of people to question the authority of the established church. With the overthrow of the monarchy and the execution of King Charles the first, some saw their era as the beginning of the end of the world and anticipated the imminent second coming of Christ. Various groups emerged voicing warnings of God's judgment and the arrival of a new, true Christianity. The most enduring sect to emerge during this time was the Society of Friends. Friends were also known as the Quakers, due to their unusual physical trembling during worship. The Quakers experienced spiritual conversions as awe inspiring inward encounters with the purifying and judging light of the divine. Considering



themselves to be the True Church, Friends called the Church of England the *False Church*, and the whore of Babylon. They believed the established church was unfaithful to Christ, her bridegroom, through its popish mandatory tithes, ministers made by men, and empty ceremonies. The Quakers identified themselves as the faithful bride, who experienced the first fruits of the return of Christ through the inward light. Renewed into the image of Christ, Quakers believed they were now Friends with God, living in the Restored Garden of Eden, and enjoying direct, divine revelation. By 1660, their numbers grew to approximately 60,000, making them the largest dissenting sect at the time.<sup>1</sup>

While it is difficult to pinpoint the exact origins of the early Quaker movement as a unique entity amongst other dissenters, most Quaker historians have generally attributed its foundation and the formation of its theology around 1646-47 with the work, visions and proclamations of George Fox.<sup>2</sup> The Quaker historian Rosemary Moore acknowledges that ‘proto-Quaker groups’ may even have existed within England before the first preaching of George Fox.<sup>3</sup> Another historian, Barry Reay, suggests the movement’s origin is more accurately found in the organic merging of a variety of groups, with common religious convictions, which already existed in the late 1640s and subsequent Interregnum.<sup>4</sup> For example, some Diggers and Fifth Monarchists, particularly after the restoration of the monarchy, would join the Quakers after their hopes had failed to be realised.<sup>5</sup> Other individuals seeking deeper forms of spirituality throughout rural Northern England, including Richard Farnworth, Richard Hubberthorne, Francis Howgill, Edward Burrough, William Dewsbury, and James Nayler, were already meeting with other separatists in an informal worship style of silent meetings, fasting, and prayer, all forms of worship which would later be adopted by the Friends and eventually become the trademarks of their spirituality.<sup>6</sup> As these various separatists began to emerge and gather, equally and independently frustrated with orthodox Puritanism, or failed political triumphs, many would eventually be united under the banner of the Society of Friends. Though

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<sup>1</sup> Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1994), 1; Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2005), 12; Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (New York: St. Martins, 1985), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Rosemary Moore, *The Light in their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain, 1646-1666* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), xii; Pink Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 14-22.

<sup>3</sup> Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (New York: St. Martins, 1985), 8.

<sup>5</sup> Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, 41.

<sup>6</sup> Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, 41. James Nayler was an early Quaker seen by some as a co-leader to Fox (Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, 15). Nayler met an early demise in his leadership. See William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism to 1660* (Cambridge: University Press, 1955), 247, 252-253.

other prominent figures were initially involved in the leadership of the early movement, many did not live long enough to see its fruition by 1660. As Reay suggests, Fox became the Quakers' central leader by outliving them.<sup>7</sup>

Fox was born in July 1624 at Drayton-in-the-Clay in Leicestershire to Christopher Fox, a weaver, and Mary Lago.<sup>8</sup> Similar to other spiritual seekers during the English Civil War and Interregnum, Fox was not university educated. He rejected the notion that academia had the authority to make ministers, but rather believed only God could raise up a prophet and train one to preach. Fox perceived himself as the forerunning prophet who proclaimed the inward presence of the light of Christ, a sign of the dawn of the True Church's return.<sup>9</sup> While some followers of Fox believed he possessed the presence of the divine within him, their exaltations of Fox as a prophet were not necessarily declarations of Fox being the second appearance of Christ or one who should be exalted above everyone else.<sup>10</sup> Fox's self-perception of having the light of Christ within him was an expectation and hope he had for all Quakers.<sup>11</sup>

George Fox worked with other early Quaker leaders to organize and structure the Quaker meeting system.<sup>12</sup> The Quaker meeting was a place of worship, but was also a place to do business. Through a curious blend of spirituality and bureaucracy, they kept tabs on the purity and 'orderly walking' of the True Church. If a member of the Quaker community was reported to be walking in a disorderly manner, such as partaking of too much drink or lying, it would be reported to the meeting by a fellow Quaker. The report was followed up by a gentle admonition from two Quakers, who

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<sup>7</sup> Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, 41.

<sup>8</sup> George Fox, *A Journal of the Life, Travels, Sufferings, Christian Experiences, and Labour of Love of George Fox: Sixth Edition. In Two Volumes* (Leeds: Anthony Pickard, 1836), Volume One, 83.

<sup>9</sup> For a full discussion of Fox's self-perception in relation to the divine, see Kristianna K. Polder, *Matrimony in the True Church: The practical and theological foundations of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Quaker marriage approbation discipline evinced in early Quaker practice and in the works and marriage of George Fox and Margaret Fell* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2011), 228-240.

<sup>10</sup> Carole Dale Spencer, 'Early Quakers and Divine Liberation from the Universal Power of Sin', in Jackie Leach Scully & Pink Dandelion (Eds.), *Good and Evil: Quaker perspectives* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2007), 43-58; 50. 'He [Fox] never claimed to be equal to Christ, though he and other Quakers were accused of blasphemy by the civil authorities'.

<sup>11</sup> Spencer, *Good and Evil*. 'Fox never exalted his mystical raptures'.

<sup>12</sup> Fox's most influential and close partner in forming the doctrine and practice of early Quakerism was a gentry woman from Lancashire called Margaret Fell. Margaret Fell has often been described as the 'mother of Quakerism' within Quaker tradition and scholarship. See Isabel Ross, *Margaret Fell: Mother of Quakerism* (York: William Sessions Book Trust, 1996). First Published in 1949.<sup>12</sup> An early convert of Fox, Fell would become a forerunning architect of early Quaker spirituality and organisation. Her intellectual prowess, particularly in spiritual and theological matters, as well as through her social status as a gentry woman married to a local barrister equipped her with both legal and theological knowledge valuable to shaping the early movement (Sally Bruyneel, *Margaret Fell and the End of Time: The Theology of the Mother of Quakerism* [Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010], 13). Margaret Fell was married first to Judge Thomas Fell of Ulverston.

were assigned to make a visit to the offender. In more extreme cases, someone might be excommunicated from the Quaker fold, particularly if the offender did not show signs of repentance.

The issue which by and large preoccupied the vast majority of the Quaker meeting was marriage. All Friends were prohibited from exogamy, or marrying a non-Quaker. If one pursued marriage with a member of the False Church, it meant disunity within the True Church, both spiritually and physically, and could result in being disowned from the Quaker community. The Quaker marriage approbation discipline quickly became a crucial tool to identify members of the True Church. The inward spirituality of their marriage approbation process relied heavily on direct revelation from God both individually and communally. Their belief that not just the institution of marriage, but each individual marriage, was initiated and ordained by God made all Quaker marriages honourable. Marriages pursued with worldly motivations, such as inheritance or physical attraction, were deemed dishonourable.

The Quaker marriage itself was also an important social structure which reflected in microcosm the macrocosmic family of the True Church. The 'true Marriage' for Fox, the marriage between Christ and his True Church, embodied both spiritual and physical freedom for all, whilst marriages between Friends encouraged and strengthened righteousness within families and unity between all members of the family of God. The spiritual household, both in the home and in the Meetings, was the foundation of the True Church. Quakers marrying Quakers ensured unity and the perpetuation of the True Church through child bearing and child rearing. Quoting the book of Revelations, Fox elaborated on his vision of the Quaker community as a spiritual household:

They are living members, living stones, built up a spiritual household, children of the promise, and of the Seed and flesh of Christ; and as the apostle saith, 'Flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone'...They sit together in heavenly places in Christ, are clothed with the Sun of Righteousness, Christ Jesus, and have the moon under their feet, as Rev xii. ...And they that are quickened by Christ, are the living stones, living members, and spiritual household and church, or congregation of Christ, who is the living head and husband.<sup>13</sup>

In explaining his perception of the family as a cornerstone of the Quaker community, Fox frequently referenced Genesis 17, the Old Testament narrative which tells of God making a covenant with Abraham. God promises Abraham that he will be an ancestor of many nations and

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<sup>13</sup> Fox, *Journal Vol 2* (1836), 387, 393.

his succeeding generations will follow God. As God commanded Abraham to order families, so too was God commanding the Quakers to order their families by Quaker disciplines and spirituality. Upon the biblical precedence of Abraham propagating his 'seed', the Quakers tendered the spiritual seed of Christ within each member of the family. Quakers were in the New Covenant, demarcating members of the True Church apart from the false church, just as Israel was set apart from other tribes in the Old Covenant. This familial framework was described by Fox as Gospel Family Order.<sup>14</sup>

The early Friends soon established their meetings, their marriage approbation discipline, and their notion of Gospel Family Order in other parts of the world. Following the migration patterns of their fellow Brits, Friends went where there was a profit, including the plantations of Barbados. The historian Hilary Beckles notes that by 1680, Barbados was 'generally recognised as the richest colony in the English New World Empire'.<sup>15</sup> Quakers began arriving as early as the 1650's. Some were on missionary journeys to confront and to challenge the False Church of England, which had also been established in Barbados. Others came to make a profit from sugar plantations, an agricultural economy built upon the backs of enslaved Africans. By 1684, there were an estimated 46,602 African slaves on the island, compared to only 19,568 whites.<sup>16</sup>

Between the years 1700-1760, 180,000 Africans were imported, with 50,000 estimated deaths.<sup>17</sup> It was generally expected that about a third of imported slaves would die within the first three years in Barbados. In 1694, Captain Phillips of a Royal African Company Ship explained that as they left for Barbados with Africans, the slaves themselves were so 'loth to leave their own country' that they leapt from the ship and 'kept under water til they were drowned to avoid being taken up and saved by our boats'. He concluded, '...they have a more dreadful apprehension of Barbados that we have of hell...for tis belief that when they die, they return home to their own country and friends again'.<sup>18</sup>

Organized slave revolts occurred three times in the latter half of the seventeenth century, all of which were aborted and resulted in the execution of many slaves.<sup>19</sup> Fears ran high that violent slave

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<sup>14</sup> George Fox, *Gospel Family-Order, Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families, both Whites, Blacks, and Indians* (London, 1676), 5.

<sup>15</sup> Hilary McD. Beckles, *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados: 1627-1715* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 4.

<sup>16</sup> Beckles, *White Servitude*, 4.

<sup>17</sup> Beckles, *White Servitude*, 23.

<sup>18</sup> Hilary McD. Beckles, *Afro-Caribbean Women and Resistance to Slavery* (London: Karnack House, 1988), 35. From *Voyage of the Hannibal* (E. Donnan, Ed., *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade* [Washington: 1930, Vol 2], 403).

<sup>19</sup> Beckles, *White Servitude*, 5.

revolts would occur again, particularly in light of the fact that whites were heavily outnumbered. The planters' response was to beef up the military presence, refrain from educating slaves, and prevent their greatest fear of all - the slave who converted to Christianity. An Englishman who lived in Barbados called Richard Ligon, made a telling observation regarding planter opposition to slave conversions. When a slave had approached Ligon for help in converting to Christianity, Ligon spoke with the slave's owner. The planter explained if he had permitted the slave to convert, he could no longer keep him enslaved, because the Laws of England forbade the enslavement of Christians. Planters repeatedly made this argument, even after the Bishop of London in 1680 declared slaves who were Christians could indeed still be enslaved.

By the year of the Bishop's decree, there were 120 Quaker planters in Barbados.<sup>20</sup> The wealthiest among them averaged 223 acres and 113 slaves.<sup>21</sup> When Fox arrived in Barbados in 1671, he stayed his first week with one of the most powerful planters on the island, a Quaker called Lewis Morris, whose holdings reached 400 acres and 200 slaves.<sup>22</sup> It may strike some as curious that the early Quakers owned slaves. As we will see in further detail, most early Quakers were not abolitionists. Upon his arrival in Barbados, Fox did not challenge slavery nor did he advocate slaves rebelling against their masters or running away.<sup>23</sup>

However, Fox did make a number of criticisms against the Barbadian Quaker masters. First, Fox accused the masters of not including slaves as members of the True Church and the household of God. When he visited the local Men's Meeting in Barbados, Fox explicitly stated to them, [you]

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<sup>20</sup> This number is out of two thousand five hundred and ninety three (2593) property holders in Barbados.

<sup>21</sup> Larry Gragg, *The Quaker Community on Barbados: Challenging the Culture of the Planter Class* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2009), 64. Gragg explains, 'While they had substantial acreage and many slaves, the Quakers may not have been as affluent as the other "big planters". Still, they were men of great substance'.

<sup>22</sup> Gragg, *Quaker Community on Barbados*, 65-66.

<sup>23</sup> There is some argument about the extent of Fox's anti-slavery sentiment amongst Quaker scholars. In 1947, Herbert Aptheker acknowledged that while Fox had advocated the education of slaves as early as 1657 in his letter 'To Friends beyond the sea that have Blacks and Indian Slaves', the first reference to slavery from a Quaker, he laments the letter 'is not antislavery but merely maintains that since God made all the nations of the earth one blood, all are entitled to hear his message. Fox therefore asks that the slaves' religious instruction should not be neglected' (Herbert Aptheker, 'The Quakers and Negro Slavery'. *The Journal of Negro History*, 26 no 3 [July 1940]: 331-362; p. 333). Aptheker argues in his article that while Quakers have, as a body, historically been seen as a force for the abolition of slavery, the process of developing anti-slavery sentiment amongst Quakers was slow. In more recent scholarship, the sentiment is generally the same, if not a little more gracious to Fox in acknowledging he was at least ambiguous about anti-slavery. The Quaker historian J. William Frost wrote in 1991 that while Fox's contributions to anti-slavery are embarrassingly scant, and that he never 'addressed the morality of slavery, *per se*', Fox did 'advocate the humane treatment of slaves, [and] proclaimed that Christ died for all people- whites, blacks, and Indians', making his attitudes 'appear very progressive as compared to virtually all other Quaker and non-Quaker visitors to the West Indies' (J. William Frost, 'George Fox's Ambiguous Anti-slavery Legacy'. Michael Mullett [Ed.], *New Light on George Fox, A Collection of Essay* [York: William Sessions Limited - The Ebor Press, 1991], 69-70).

should teach the 'Way of the Lord, and the New Covenant' to [your] families and children, *as well as* to 'those you bought with Moneys'.<sup>24</sup> According to Fox, Gospel Family Order necessitated the inclusion of slaves as members of the True Church. Fox supported his view through exhorting Quaker families to embrace God's covenant of maintaining and governing families through the inclusion of slaves in the household, as well as through regular worship and meetings amongst the slaves. In a 1672 letter from Maryland to Barbados, entitled 'Touching the Government of Families' Fox again exhorted masters and mistresses:

And in all your Family Meetings be not negligent among your whites and Negroes, but do your Diligence and Duty to God and them, which you will not neglect, if you keep the faith of Abraham.<sup>25</sup>

While it is unclear how the slaves received this order, there is evidence some slaves at least attended Quaker meetings and engaged in dialogue with Fox and other Quakers. During his trip to Barbados in 1671, Fox spent a great deal of time amongst the slaves in the plantations. A Friend called John Stubbs wrote to Fell from Barbados, explaining Fox's preaching and teaching with the local slaves, and the legacy of which was picked up by Stubbs and a man called Solomon.<sup>26</sup>

The Truth is freely preached, both to white people and black people. Solomon and I have had several meetings among negroes in several plantations, and it's like must have more yet. But thy husband, it's like, hath had more than any of us; we feel the Lord's presence and power in that service, as well as when we speak among the white people, and that's enough. Thy husband had the first meeting with them, and then after a while, it fell upon me and Solomon.<sup>27</sup>

The legacy of including slaves in Meetings, education and worship left by Fox encouraged Friends to appreciate that 'the power of God' could equally be felt amongst both the slaves as well as the white Friends of Barbados, as all were equally spiritually restored and under Christ's order and government in the True Church. This legacy apparently remained after Fox's departure from the island. In 1677,

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<sup>24</sup> Fox, *Gospel Family-Order, Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families, both Whites, Blacks, and Indians* (1676), 5.

<sup>25</sup> Fox, *Letter from Maryland, the 4<sup>th</sup> Day of the 12<sup>th</sup> Month*, 1671. (Fox, *Gospel Family-Order, Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families, both Whites, Blacks, and Indians* [1676], 20).

<sup>26</sup> Fox, *Gospel Family-Order*, 20. It is not clear from the text, but it is possible Solomon was a slave.

<sup>27</sup> John Stubbs to Margaret Fox, Barbados: 2<sup>nd</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> mo. [Dec.], 1671. Reprinted in Fox, *Journal* (1952), 601-602.

a wealthy Quaker planter, Richard Sutton, was arrested in Barbados for allowing thirty black slaves to be present at a Meeting.<sup>28</sup>

Fox's paternalistic vision of an Abrahamic family unit as a vehicle for the perpetuation of the True Church stood in stark contrast to the practices of most planters and masters in Barbados at the time. Beckles asserts: Barbadian planters had abandoned the 'traditional values and ideologies of paternalistic master-servant relations', and thus did not 'conceive of their servants socially and emotionally as integral parts of the family or household, but instead viewed them as an alienated commodity which could be recruited and exploited'.<sup>29</sup> The planters' agenda regarding slaves was to keep their slaves from being Christians and from being a part of the family – both of which would in essence affirm the slaves' humanity, making their enslavement problematic.

Fox also criticized the masters for letting their slaves have more than one sexual partner and not encouraging them to marry. Like their fellow planters, the early Quakers did not allow their slaves to pursue monogamous relations in marriage. Beckles explains why most Barbadian planters discouraged monogamous relations between slaves:

The planters believed that the stabilization of family and sexual relations, with the support of religious dogma, interfered with their objective of reproducing an efficient, obedient labour force. Furthermore, it was felt that the emotional ties resulting from family relations diminished servants' ability to accept a subordinate position.<sup>30</sup>

Keeping slaves apart from familial ties and marital unions was a contrived tool used by masters in an attempt to control their slaves, to keep them in the category of beast in order to justify their enslavement, and to discourage attachments which may encourage slaves to assist their loved ones to run away. Such evidence suggests that Barbadian planters were aware that marriage was an empowering social structure which could threaten their ability and rationale to keep Africans enslaved.

Masters encouraged polygamous relations between slaves. Male slaves were typically expected to have sexual relations with more than one woman in order to reproduce a slave labour force. The

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<sup>28</sup> Herbert Aptheker, 'The Quakers and Negro Slavery', *The Journal of Negro History*, 26 no 3 (July 1940), 334; Gragg, *The Quaker Community on Barbados*, 138; Norman Penney (Ed.), *The Short Journal and Itinerary Journals of George Fox* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 346 and 187.

<sup>29</sup> Hillary McD. Beckles, *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados, 1627-1715* (Knoxville, Tennessee: The University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 5.

<sup>30</sup> Beckles, *White Servitude*, 5.

planters likewise attempted to manipulate and control the enslaved woman's sexuality and motherhood. It can be argued that women experienced unique burdens as slaves, as they carried the same work load as the men in the sugar plantations when pregnant and nursing.<sup>31</sup> They were also assaulted sexually by their white owners. Women slaves faced losses of freedom in both maternity and sexuality while they carried physical burdens as child bearers and labourers. Enslaved women and men were thus not perceived by plantation owners as wives and husbands, or mothers and fathers, but rather as commodities to be manipulated, reproduced, and used for profit.

At a time when both male and female slaves were discouraged from forming marital and familial bonds, Fox's encouragement for the enslaved to marry is noteworthy. Fox warned the Quaker masters:

[Those] you have bought with Money, suffer them not...to take Husbands and Wives at their Pleasure, and then leave them again when they please... this is not well; this may bring judgment of God upon you... this manifests your Families to be unclean and adulterous.<sup>32</sup>

The 'Law of God', according to Fox, applied to slaves as well as to masters, because slaves were not just property, but human beings and Christians. Fox instructed that all slaves who desired to marry were required to 'take one another before Witnesses in the presence of God and the Masters of the Families, in the Name of Jesus, the Restorer of all Things'.<sup>33</sup>

As Fox considered slaves to be members of the Abrahamic household, he also saw them, by extension, as members of the spiritual household within Gospel Family Order. Slaves were then, as members of both the physical master's household and God's spiritual household, able to be married to a physical partner, and also married to Christ in the 'true marriage' as a member of the 'True Church'. Fox concluded his remarks to the Men's Meeting in Barbados:

And so I leave these Things to your serious consideration...for indeed when any shall marry into your Family...then you may admonish them all of God and of Christ, and know the true Marriage ...for Marriage is of God, and so honoured by him.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Beckles, *White Servitude*, 14.

<sup>32</sup> Beckles, *White Servitude*, 17.

<sup>33</sup> Fox, *Gospel Family-Order, Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families, both Whites, Blacks, and Indians* (1676), 17-18.

<sup>34</sup> Fox, *Gospel Family-Order*, 19.



Though Fox affirmed slaves were Christian human beings worthy of marriage, rather than ‘beasts’ to be bought, sexually exploited and manipulated, he still stopped short of addressing the inherent immorality of slavery or of encouraging slaves to run away and to rebel. Rather, he placed the institution of slavery within the framework of his Gospel Family Order. He encouraged slaves to accept their enslavement, to serve and to love their masters, with the hope they may be treated kindly by their masters. Therein lay the dissonance in Fox’s rationale.

The dissonance is evident in Fox’s response to the fears raised as Quaker plantation owners started holding Quaker meetings for their slaves in their households. Friends became increasingly susceptible to scrutiny and to criticism from the other masters on the island. Fears abounded amongst planters that Quaker slaves would stir the pot, causing other slaves to rebel, escape, and run away from the island.<sup>35</sup> They accused the Quakers directly that they were encouraging slaves to run away. Fox and fellow friends responded by writing a paper to the Governor and Assembly in Barbados in which they defended themselves from what they called the ‘slander and lie’ that they were teaching ‘the negro to rebel’. They declared to the Governor, ‘such a thing we do utterly abhor and detest in ... our hearts’. The Quakers explained:<sup>36</sup>

For that which we have spoken and declared to [Quaker masters] is to exhort and admonish [their slaves] to be sober and to fear God, and to love their masters and mistresses, and to be faithful and diligent in their masters’ service...and that their masters and overseers will love them and deal kindly and gently with them ... it’s no transgression for a master of a family to instruct his family.<sup>37</sup>

Interestingly, while Fox never directed or encouraged slaves to rebel, he did harbour hope that Quaker masters would eventually free their slaves. Fox explicitly exhorted masters to set the slaves free after a period of years of service. He wrote to the planters:

Let me tell you, it will be doubtless very acceptable to the Lord, if... Masters of Families ... would deal so with their Servants, the Negroes and Blacks, whom they have bought with their Money, to let them go free after a considerable Term of Years, if they have served them faithfully: and when they go, and are made free, let them not go away empty handed<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Beckles, *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados: 1627-1715*, 83.

<sup>36</sup> Fox, *To the Governor and Assembly at Barbados* (1671). Reprinted in John Nickalls, Ed. *The Journal of George Fox: A Revised Edition by John Nickalls* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 604.

<sup>37</sup> Nickalls, *Journal of George Fox*, 604..

<sup>38</sup> Fox, *Gospel Family-Order, Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families, both Whites, Blacks, and Indians* (1676), 16. This is a possible reference to Leviticus 25.

Fox then challenged the masters to put themselves in the position of the slaves and consider their plight:

If you were in the same Condition as the Blacks are ...who came as Strangers to you, and were sold to you as Slaves; now I say, if this should be the Condition of you and yours, you would think it hard Measure... and a very great Bondage and Cruelty.<sup>39</sup>

From this passage, it appears that Fox did at least have an awareness of the difficult plight of the enslaved, and hoped that perhaps Masters would indeed let them go free. In 1673, two years after his visit to Barbados, Fox exhorted his fellow Quakers:

Dear Friends, keep your meetings, and your Men's and Women's, and your Fortnights Meetings among your Blacks, and train them up in the fear of the Lord, and spread the Truth abroad, and instruct your Families, as Abraham did.<sup>40</sup>

On the one hand, Fox was not an abolitionist. He promoted an Abrahamic paternalistic vision of family that incorporated, rather than eliminated, slavery. It is clear, however, that he did advocate the religious education of slaves and that as members of the True Church slaves could and should be in monogamous, marital relationships. For Fox, each person, slave or free, was identified as a member of the True Church and the household of God, spiritually equal, and available to God's direct revelation. In the end, Fox's encouragement of slaves to marry and to build both religious and familial bonds were just early steps in the very slow evolution from slave owner to abolitionist for most Quakers throughout the Atlantic world.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Fox, *Gospel Family-Order*, 18.

<sup>40</sup> Fox, *Letter from London, the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> Month*, 1673. (Fox, *Gospel Family-Order, Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families, both Whites, Blacks, and Indians* [1676], 21).

<sup>41</sup> Gragg, *The Quaker Community on Barbados: Challenging the Culture of the Planter Class*, 121.



## Property and Freedom in the English Revolution

By Lorenzo Sabbadini

To refer to the crisis of the mid-seventeenth century as the “English Revolution” has become, since the rise of revisionism in the 1970s, highly unfashionable. If the association of this label with Marxist historiography was reason enough to discard it, its suggestion that the civil war and Interregnum constituted a single event with some kind of overarching unity made this all the more necessary.<sup>1</sup> Those who took up arms against the king in 1642, it is generally agreed, did so not in order to oppose the institution of monarchy but to defend it. The language to which they, no less than their opponents, appealed was that of the ancient constitution, an idealized vision of the English body politic as one that had, since time immemorial, achieved a unique balance between the prerogative of the crown and the liberties of the subject.<sup>2</sup> That the civil war resulted in a constitutional revolution was, it is argued, the result of various contingent factors at play in the later 1640s: Charles’s intransigence after losing the first civil war and his decision to end negotiations by bringing about the second civil war; the lack of a viable pretender to the throne; the divisions between the Army and Parliament and, within Parliament, between Presbyterians and Independents. The republican ideology that developed in the wake of the regicide could therefore only be understood as a post-hoc justification for an event that virtually nobody had desired. It was “sudden creation,” as Blair Worden has described it, without any roots in the opposition ideology of the 1640s.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Conrad Russell, ed., *The Origins of the English Civil War* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1973); Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Anthony Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War* (London: Edward Arnold, 1981); John Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution: Essays by John Morrill* (London: Longman, 1993); John Morrill, *Revolt in the Provinces: The English People and the Tragedies of War, 1634-48* (London: Longman, 1999); Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain, 1603-1714* (London: Penguin, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> See in particular J. G. A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: A Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> Blair Worden, “Marchamont Nedham and the Beginnings of English Republicanism, 1649-1656,” in *Republicanism, Liberty and Commercial Society, 1649-1776*, ed. David Wootton (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1994). See also

My aim in this article will not be to question the general thrust of the revisionist and post-revisionist interpretation but to challenge the neat distinction that it underpins between the “ancient constitutionalism” of the civil war and the “classical republicanism” of the Interregnum. I will do so by foregrounding the issue of property, which emerged in the early seventeenth century as a major locus of friction between the Stuart kings and their parliaments. The crown’s use of extra-parliamentary levies such as impositions, tonnage and poundage, and – most controversially of all – ship money was condemned by opposition MPs and their supporters as undermining the liberty of the subject and therefore overturning the ancient constitution. From 1642, I shall argue, a new way of connecting property-holding and liberty was developed that appealed not to the ancient constitution but to the idea of popular sovereignty, according to which a free people was one that had a property in itself and therefore also in external goods. I shall conclude by arguing that this association between freedom and property, particularly as it was formulated from 1642, became central to the republican ideology that emerged after the regicide.

One of the earliest and most eloquent expressions of the ancient constitutionalist argument that prevailed prior to the 1640s is to be found in Sir Thomas Hedley’s great speech in the Parliament of 1610 against impositions.<sup>4</sup> Hedley recognized that the king’s prerogative and subjects’ liberties were comprised of a number of elements. But, he argued, “not to engulf in so uncertain swelling and vast an ocean, I will reduce both to that point wherein I take them chiefly to consist. The sovereignty of the king hath his existence principally in matter of honor or government, the liberty of the subject in matter of profit or property.”<sup>5</sup> The reason why Hedley views the various rights held by the subject under the ancient constitution as boiling down to the right to property is that it is this and this alone that distinguishes the freeman from the slave. In the Magna Carta, Hedley claims, “the quality of the *liber homo* is plainly described and differenced from the *nativus*, and that only or especially in matter of profit and property, for in other things the bound and freemen are almost alike.”<sup>6</sup> The king does not have the right arbitrarily to kill or maim a bondman any more than he does a freeman. Nor can the bondman be imprisoned without charge. But, Hedley argues, “in point of profit or property of lands

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Blair Worden, *The Rump Parliament, 1648-1653* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974); Blair Worden, “English Republicanism,” in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, ed. J. H. Burns and Mark Goldie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Blair Worden, “Republicanism, Regicide and Republic: the English Experience,” in *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, ed. Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), vol. 1. For a notable challenge to this orthodoxy, see David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1527-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> For a perceptive analysis of this speech that highlights its classical humanist qualities, see Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 220-8.

<sup>5</sup> *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Elizabeth Read Foster (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, (1966), vol. 2, 191.

<sup>6</sup> *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, 191.

and goods, there is a great difference betwixt the king's free subjects and his bondmen; for the king may by commission at his pleasure seize the lands or goods of his *villain*, but so can he not of his free subjects."<sup>7</sup> The resounding conclusion that Hedley draws is: "take away the liberty of the subject in his profit or property and you make a promiscuous confusion of a freeman and a bound slave, which slavery is as repugnant to the nature of an Englishman as allegiance and due subjection is to his own proper and peculiar."<sup>8</sup> Hedley's anxiety is, then, not that impositions were eroding one of the subject's liberties. Rather, his fear was that they were reducing him to such a condition that it was simply impossible for him to enjoy any of the rights supposedly guaranteed by the ancient constitution.

This argument remained virtually unchanged from 1610 to 1628, when Sir Edward Coke became the leading opposition figure in Parliament. Speaking out against the forced loan, Coke declared: "Loans against the will of the subject are against reason and the franchises of the land, and they desire restitution. What a word is that 'franchise'. Villeins *in nativo habendo*, their lord may tax them high or low, but this is against the franchise of the land for freemen. 'Franchise' is a French word, and in Latin it is liberty."<sup>9</sup> Coke's argument, like Hedley's, was that, if the English people could be taxed arbitrarily, they were no better off than villeins and therefore wholly bereft of their liberty. To allow the king to raise the forced loan would render meaningless any further attempt to limit the royal prerogative by appealing to the subject's liberty and would therefore overthrow the ancient constitution.

The radicalism of the 1628 Parliament and in particular its issuing of the Petition of Right resulted in an eleven-year period of Personal Rule, in which Charles dispensed with Parliament altogether. He was able to do so by raising a range of extra-parliamentary levies, most notably – from 1634 – ship money. This was a levy traditionally raised on coastal towns in times of war in lieu of providing ships that Charles had transformed into, in effect, an annual tax on the whole population. What this seemed to confirm to Charles's opponents was that, if the king was able to control the purse-strings of his population, there would be no reason for him to call Parliament, and thus the subject lost together with his property the defence against arbitrary power on which his freedom depended.

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<sup>7</sup> *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, 192.

<sup>8</sup> *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, 192.

<sup>9</sup> *Commons Debates 1628*, vol. 2: *17 March – 19 April 1628*, ed. Robert C. Johnson and Maija Jansson Cole (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977), 64. Coke develops this theme in the *Institutes*. See in particular Sir Edward Coke, *The First Part of the Institutes of the Lawes of England. Or, a Commentarie upon Littleton* (London, 1628), 116.

In the absence of Parliament, the vehicle through which the king's detractors hoped to vindicate the ancient constitution was, appropriately enough, the court of law. From 1636, several prominent figures refused to pay ship money in order to provoke a test case. The man eventually chosen by the crown was John Hampden, a Buckinghamshire landowner and future MP, whose case was heard in 1637 before all twelve judges of the Court of Exchequer Chamber. The argument put forward by Oliver St John, Hampden's defence lawyer, rested on the by-now-familiar claim that ship money undermined the principle of private property on which the subject's liberty depended. What worried St John was not the specific amount of money subjects were being asked to part with but the precedent it set:

If his majesty, as in the writ, may without parliament lay 20*s.* upon the Defendant's goods, I shall humbly submit it to your lordships, why by the same reason of law it might not have been 20*l.* And so *ad infinitum*, whereby it would come to pass, that if the subject hath any thing at all, he is not beholden to the law for it, but is left entirely in the mercy and goodness of the king.<sup>10</sup>

To grant the king the right to levy ship money on this occasion would be to grant him the right to interfere with his subjects' property entirely at will. The consequence would be that the subject would be no better off than a slave or a villein, that is, one who could be taxed "de haut et de bas" by his master.<sup>11</sup> Lacking the buttress of private property, the subject had nothing with which to defend himself from the potential tyranny of his rulers.

Although several of the judges shared St John's worries, they eventually voted by the slimmest possible majority of 7-5 in favour of ship money. The royalist judges proved themselves no less adept at exploiting the language of the ancient constitution than their opponents, arguing for example that "the subjects are not prejudiced by it, either in their dignities, or properties in their goods: the king's prerogatives protect the people's liberties, and the subject's liberty the king's prerogative."<sup>12</sup> By declaring ship money to be legal, the judges ultimately demonstrated the inadequacy of the ancient constitution as an instrument to defend the subject's liberty.

If the outcome of the ship-money case pointed to the need for an alternative line of argument, this was not supplied until several years later, when the complete breakdown in relations between the king and Parliament began to place still greater strains on the language of the ancient constitution. Parliament's seizure of the Hull arsenal in early 1642 in particular led the Royalists to

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<sup>10</sup> *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, ed. Thomas Bayly Howell (London: R. Bagshaw, 1809), vol. 3, col. 886.

<sup>11</sup> *A Complete Collection*, col. 871.

<sup>12</sup> *A Complete Collection*, col. 1127.

accuse Parliament of hypocrisy: its interference with the king's property, they claimed, set a dangerous precedent that would eventually undermine also the property of subjects.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, as Parliament began to prepare for war, it would need to explain why it was justified in raising taxes to fund its campaign when the king was not.

It was in this context that Henry Parker wrote his *Observations upon some of His Majesties late Answers and Expresses* (1642), which became the most influential pamphlet of the period leading up to the civil war. Parker's radical argument is that "Power is originally inherent in the people, and it is nothing else but that might and vigour which such or such a societie of men contains in it selfe."<sup>14</sup> The power of the king was held by way of "*Trust*" and was therefore "not absolute, or by a meere donation of the people, but in part conditionate and fiduciary."<sup>15</sup> The king's power is limited not because it is balanced against the liberties of subjects but as a result of its popular origins. It was, Parker declared, simply unnatural for a people to "give away its owne proprietie in it selfe absolutely and to subject it selfe to a condition of servilitie below men."<sup>16</sup>

Although the significance of Parker's theory has partly been recognized, what has not been sufficiently emphasized is the extent to which it was framed in the language of property. For Parker, to say that the people are sovereign is to say that they have a property in themselves. This self-ownership in turn grounds the right to private property and enables Parker to denounce measures such as ship money as illegitimate:

if our Kings receive all royalty from the people and for the behoofe of the people, and that by a speciall *trust* of safety and libertie expressly by the people limited, and by their owne grants and oaths ratified, then our Kings cannot be sayd to have so unconditionate and high a proprietie in all our lives, liberties and possessions, or in any thing else to the Crowne appertayning, as we have in their dignity, or in our selves."<sup>17</sup>

Parker's theory of popular sovereignty might, then, be redescribed as a theory of popular self-ownership. This property right serves as the basis for and is superior to any possible property right that the king might claim in his subjects or in their possessions. For the king to attempt to deprive

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<sup>13</sup> This charge is made, for example, in Dudley Digges, *An Answer to a Printed Book, Intituled, Observations upon Some of His Majesties Late Answers and Expresses* (Oxford, 1642); John Bramhall, *The Serpent Salve, Or, A Remedy For the Biting of an Aspe* (n.p., 1643).

<sup>14</sup> Henry Parker, *Observations upon some of His Majesties late Answers and Expresses* (London, 1642), 1.

<sup>15</sup> Parker, *Observations*, 4.

<sup>16</sup> Parker, *Observations*, 20.

<sup>17</sup> Parker, *Observations*, 5.



his subjects of their property would not merely be to undermine the ancient constitution but to go against the very principles upon which political power was established.

All of this may have provided a strong theoretical defence against measures such as ship money, but the problem still remained of what the people could do in practice when their property rights were violated. Parker's solution is to turn to Parliament. In doing so, he appears at first glance to be following the French monarchomachs, who had restricted the right to resist tyranny to inferior magistrates. But for Parker there was an almost mystical association between Parliament and the people, in which the people are not merely the "Author" but "the essence it selfe of Parliaments."<sup>18</sup> Or, as he puts it in *Jus Populi* (1644), Parliament is "nothing else, but the very people it self artificially congregated."<sup>19</sup> Parliament is, in short, the institution by which a sovereign people exercises its innate power in the political arena and so demonstrates its self-ownership.

To those who would retort that Parker's theory served merely to place arbitrary power in new hands, with no great benefit to the subject, Parker had a clear response:

That there is an Arbitrary power in every State somewhere tis true, tis necessary, and no inconvenience follows upon it; every man has an absolute power over himself; but because no man can hate himself, this power is not dangerous, nor need to be restrayned: So every State has an Arbitrary power over it self, and there is no danger for the same reason. If the State intrusts this to one man, or few, there may be danger in it; but the Parliament is neither one nor few, it is indeed the State it self.<sup>20</sup>

It was on these grounds that Parker was able to respond to the Royalists' charge that Parliament's seizure of the arsenal in Hull violated the king's property rights. Parliament was in no way denying the king "a true reall Interest in any thing held by him" but acting on the basis that "in the same thing the State hath an Interest Paramount in cases of publique extremity; by vertue whereof it may justly seize, and use the same for its own necessary preservation."<sup>21</sup> It was also on these grounds that Parker could argue that, whereas the king's attempt to raise levies without obtaining the consent of the people amounted to plunder, Parliament was entirely justified in doing whatever might be necessary to fund its campaign against the king. As he put it in *The Contra-Replicant* (1643), Parliament had "an absolute power at all times to dispose of the treasure of the Kingdom; and where they give away one subsidy, they may give 20 and where they give £50,000 at one subsidy they may give fifty

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<sup>18</sup> Parker, *Observations*, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Henry Parker, *Jus Populi* (London, 1644), 18.

<sup>20</sup> Parker, *Observations*, 34.

<sup>21</sup> Parker, *Observations*, 33.

times so much, and all this whether war or peace be.”<sup>22</sup> What Parker appears to be granting Parliament is precisely the power of arbitrary taxation that had so alarmed Oliver St John when exercised by the king. But, as an embodiment of the people, Parliament’s absolute control of property served not to undermine, but rather to confirm, the people’s ownership of itself. The conflation of people, state and Parliament enabled Parker to offer a defence of Parliament’s increasingly assertive actions that did not rely on the worn-out language of the ancient constitution. No balancing act had to be achieved, for prerogative and liberty were brought together within the institution of Parliament.

The arguments that Parker made on behalf of Parliament had the potential to travel in directions that could not have been anticipated in 1642. From the mid-1640s the idea of popular sovereignty was taken up by the Levellers not to defend Parliament but to mount an attack on what they regarded as the new tyranny that Parliament was seeking to erect.<sup>23</sup> After the regicide, it was deployed – and in the process substantially modified – by the defenders of the new regime. In the republican literature of the Interregnum, Parliament lost its privileged status as the institution by which a sovereign people could secure its self-ownership within the state. Focusing on two of the leading exponents of English republicanism, John Milton and James Harrington, I will show how the notion that the people were the property of themselves was instead incorporated into the ideal of the Commonwealth.

In *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, published in February 1649, Milton argues, in Parkerian terms, that “the power of Kings and Magistrates is nothing else, but what is only derivative, transferr’d and committed to them in trust from the People.”<sup>24</sup> But whereas Parker had bestowed ultimate power in the hands of Parliament, including the power to remove kings who had acted contrary to their trust, in Milton’s theory the people fulfil this role directly, without the mediation of Parliament, which, indeed, goes unmentioned in the *Tenure*. Milton’s radical position is that, if “the King or Magistrate hold his autoritie of the people,” then the people retained the right at all times to

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<sup>22</sup>Henry Parker, *The Contra-Replicant, His Complaint To His Majestie* (n.p., 1643), 29-30.

<sup>23</sup>Lilburne expressly acknowledges the influence of Parker’s *Observations* in his *Innocency and Truth Justified* (London, 1646), 57. The work that is most explicit in turning the theory of popular sovereignty against Parliament is Richard Overton’s *A Remonstrance of Many Thousand Citizens* (London, 1646).

<sup>24</sup>John Milton, “The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates,” in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, vol. 3, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962), 202.

“choose him or reject him, retaine him or depose him though no Tyrant, merely by the liberty and right of free born Men, to be govern’d as seems to them best.”<sup>25</sup>

What is striking is the economic language in which Milton discusses this power. Those who claim to be a free people but are without it “may please thir fancy with a ridiculous and painted freedom, fit to coz’n babies; but are indeed under tyranny and servitude,” for what they lack is “that power, which is the root and source of all liberty, to dispose and *oeconomize* in the Land which God hath giv’n them, as Maisters of Family in thir own house and free inheritance.” Such a people, deprived of this “natural and essential power of a free Nation,” are, Milton concludes, “no better then slaves and vassals born, in the tenure and occupation of another inheriting Lord.”<sup>26</sup> For Milton, as for Parker, freedom is to be promoted not by defending the subject’s property against his ruler but by ensuring that a free people was able to exercise its absolute property rights through its participation, whether direct or mediated, in the political process.

It was precisely on these grounds that Milton sought to explain to his readers why it was that the new regime had a unique claim to be a “free state.” In *Eikonoklastes*, also published in 1649, Milton defines a “Common-wealth” – in Aristotelian terms – as “a societie sufficient of it self, in all things conducible to well being and commodious life.” If this society depended on “the gift and favour of a single person” for the “requisit things..., it cannot be thought sufficient of it self, and by consequence no Common-wealth, nor free; but a multitude of Vassalls in the Possession and domaine of one absolute Lord; and wholly obnoxious to his will.”<sup>27</sup> A society could be called a commonwealth only to the extent that it was a common wealth. Its property had, in other words, to be common, or owned by the people as a whole; where instead citizens depended for their wellbeing on the will of an excessively powerful individual, they constituted a society of slaves. For Milton, it was not merely that such a society could not be described as free but that it did not constitute a political society at all.

James Harrington also drew a connection between property and liberty but reversed the relationship between the two. The people’s ownership of themselves was not a premise but a conclusion that followed from Harrington’s analysis of the foundations of political power. His purpose was not to present self-ownership as the natural condition of man but to explain why the

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<sup>25</sup> Milton, “The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates,” 204.

<sup>26</sup> Milton, “The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates,” 236-7.

<sup>27</sup> John Milton, “Eikonoklastes,” in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, vol. 3, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962), 458.

particular circumstances of mid-seventeenth century England were uniquely favourable to its development. In *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656), which offers a fictionalized account of English history up to the civil war and a utopian vision of what it might become under Cromwell's leadership, Harrington argued that political power was, or ought to be, tied to what he called the "balance," that is, the distribution of landed property. The person or group that possessed the balance could exploit their wealth to command the loyalty of the rest of the population, either directly, by supplying their material needs, or by paying an army to subjugate them. If the balance was held by an individual, there would be a monarchy; if it was in the hands of the few, there would be an aristocracy; and, as Harrington put it, "if the whole people be landlords... the empire (without the imposition of force) is a commonwealth."<sup>28</sup>

Having established this argument in the first part of the Preliminaries, Harrington then goes on in the second part to offer a historical account of the emergence of the popular balance in England. He initially presents himself in the guise of a dispassionate economic historian, merely explaining why shifts in patterns of landownership over the course of the centuries had created the conditions for a commonwealth to be established. But it is clear that the popular balance was viewed by Harrington as not merely a historical reality in England; it was viewed as something highly desirable that should be actively promoted through an agrarian law designed to prevent individuals from amassing excessive amounts of property.

The reason why Harrington thought it so important that the balance reside with the people was that their ownership of the land enabled them to ensure that they did not themselves become the property of a single individual or group, either within the state or from abroad. When Harrington came to the defence of the people of Lucca, who had recently been ridiculed in Hobbes's *Leviathan* for writing the word *Libertas* on their city's turrets, it was precisely this argument that he invoked. Hobbes was wrong to claim that there was no more freedom in Lucca than in Constantinople, because, Harrington insisted, "whereas the greatest bashaw is a tenant, as well of his head as of his estate, at the will of his lord, the meanest Lucchese that hath land is a freeholder of both, and not to be controlled but by the law."<sup>29</sup> Although it was true that the people of a commonwealth such as Lucca had no more protection from their laws than the people of an absolutist monarchy such as

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<sup>28</sup> James Harrington, "The Commonwealth of Oceana," in *The Political Works of James Harrington*, ed. J. G. A. Pocock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 164.

<sup>29</sup> Harrington, "The Commonwealth of Oceana," 170.

Constantinople, their possession of the balance ensured that they could not become subject to the arbitrary will of their rulers but were always ruled by the laws.

The reason for this is that, by possessing the balance, the people are able to form themselves into a citizens' militia. Inspired by the Machiavellian ideal of the *poplo armato*, Harrington believed that "the tillage, bringing up a good soldiery, bringeth up a good commonwealth... for where the owner of the plough comes to have the sword too, he will use it in defence of his own, whence it hath happened that the people of Oceana, in proportion to their property, have been always free."<sup>30</sup> Being their own paymasters, the citizen-soldiers of Oceana could not be hired as mercenaries by others but instead fought for their own liberty. Moreover, as Machiavelli had stressed, the militia served the crucial function of enabling the commonwealth to expand, and "If your liberty be not a root that grows, it will be a branch that withers."<sup>31</sup> For Harrington, then, economic independence acts as a bulwark against those who would use their natural superiority to interfere arbitrarily in the lives of the rest of the population. Placing the balance in the hands of the people was Harrington's device for ensuring that they could not become economically dependent on anybody else and so be treated by them as a form of property.

What I hope to have shown in this article is that the concern with property that emerged in the early seventeenth century in response to the Stuart kings' arbitrary levies was a major theme also of the writings of the Interregnum. Seen from this perspective, the most significant shift turns out to be not so much the articulation of a specifically republican ideology after the regicide as the development of the theory of popular sovereignty in 1642. I would not go so far as to claim that a commitment to republican forms of government was inherent in the Parkerian theory, still less that this *caused* the regicide in any direct sense. But when the need arose to legitimate the post-regicide republican regime, the theory of popular self-ownership was already available and provided a powerful means to do so.

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<sup>30</sup> Harrington, "The Commonwealth of Oceana," 158.

<sup>31</sup> Harrington, "The Commonwealth of Oceana," 324.

## Decoding the Florentine Codex: Cultural Negotiation through Image in Sixteenth-Century Mexico

By Jennifer Saracino

From the moment of Spain's conquest of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan, the Spanish Crown endeavored to save the pagan souls of the indigenous people. Spain chose the Franciscan friars as their principal religious emissaries to New Spain. In order to communicate effectively with the natives, some of the first friars learned Nahuatl and other indigenous languages. To hasten the process of conversion, the friars, supported by the Spanish Crown, decided to establish various schools for young native children. Encouraged by his observations of both the academic performance of the indigenous people and the objects they produced, Bishop Fray Juan de Zumárraga stated that he found the native students, "with great ability, liveliness of wit, and a ready power of memory" and that they "had the capacity to study grammar and other subjects."<sup>1</sup> In 1534, New Spain's most influential religious leaders, Sebastián Ramírez de Fuenleal, Bishop of Santo Domingo and president of the Second Audiencia; Juan de Zumárraga, first Bishop of Mexico; and Antonio de Mendoza, the first viceroy, together ordered the foundation of the Colegio de Santa Cruz in nearby Tlatelolco.<sup>2</sup> Through the foundation of the Colegio, they sought to create an institution of higher education for the continuing advancement of their star pupils. The Franciscans also aspired to create a class of indigenous clergymen.

Before Spanish conquest, the Nahuas did not possess a written language. Instead, the Aztec pictorial system consisted of glyphs, symbols, and images that carried information. Instruction in this pictorial writing system was exclusive to indigenous nobility and select non-nobles. Certain

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<sup>1</sup> Luis Nicolau D'Oliver, *Fray Bernardino de Sahagún 1499-1599* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 14.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth H. Boone, "The Multilingual Bivisual World of Sahagún's Mexico" in *Sahagún at 500: Essays on the Quincentenary of the Birth of Fr. Bernardino de Sahagún*, ed. John Frederick Schwaller (Berkeley, California: Academy of American Franciscan History, 2003), 141.

individuals learned the art of reading the images and relaying the information to others in their society. The individuals who possessed the knowledge of reading and writing were known as *tlacuilos*, or scribes. The students selected for the Colegio came from this culture of the intellectual elite and, from the outset of their colonial education, began to learn European languages, alphabetic writing, and new modes of pictorial representation.

By examining the highly intellectualized and privileged background of the Colegio's noble indigenous students, I plan to provide a firm framework upon which to discuss a more profound reading of the *General History of Things in New Spain*, also known as the *Florentine Codex*, created by the students of the Colegio under the direction of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún. The *General History* is a cultural encyclopedia compiled by Bernardino de Sahagún over approximately forty years with the immense help of a team of indigenous informants, translators, and artists. This essay is devoted to a discussion of the complex historical context of the Colegio and the Franciscan's political contentions with the Spanish Crown as well as the relationship between Sahagún and his team of indigenous collaborators, whose years of dedication and unique bicultural knowledge proved absolutely integral to the creation of the *General History*. If we regard the images and texts produced by the Colegio's students as derivations of European models, then we simultaneously dismiss the idea that indigenous students made deliberate and conscious decisions about how to render images. By synthesizing the analysis of several of these images, I attempt to demonstrate the possible intentions and claims made by the indigenous artists of the images that fill the document.

### **Situating Bernardino de Sahagún in the Colonial Project**

After finishing his education at the University of Salamanca in Spain, Bernardino de Sahagún came to New Spain in 1529 and worked in the company of Fray Arnaud de Bassac, Andrés de Olmos, and Juan de Gaona as a Franciscan missionary. Sahagún not only devoted himself to missionary duties and acquisition of the native language, but from the moment he set foot on foreign soil, he embarked on an exhaustive study of Nahua history, religion, and customs. Sahagún began his tenure as an educator from the outset of the Colegio's opening and remained at the institution for four years. On the progress of the indigenous students, Sahagún remarked, "...after our working with them for two or three years, they came to understand all the topics of the art of grammar, to speak and understand Latin and to write it, even to the point of composing heroic

verse.”<sup>3</sup> Sahagún’s statements suggest that the indigenous students had advanced quickly and made astonishing progress in their curriculum in this relatively brief amount of time. Sahagún left the Colegio of Santa Cruz in 1540 to focus on missionary duties in the Valley of Puebla.<sup>4</sup>

Early conquistadores and Spanish authorities zealously destroyed visual evidence of indigenous culture in the early years after the conquest, including pre-Hispanic documents and monuments. The Spanish authorities and friars alike soon realized, however, that they needed to understand indigenous beliefs in order to erase them effectively. This resulted in hurried attempts to recover the memory of indigenous culture. In 1553, the president of the *Audiencia*, Don Sebastián Ramírez de Fuenleal, and the head, or *custodio*,<sup>5</sup> of the Franciscan order in Mexico, Fray Martín de Valencia, ordered Fray Andrés de Olmos to document the native culture and compile it in a book “so that some record could be had of them and so that what was evil and unreasonable could be better refuted.”<sup>6</sup> This book was written in Spanish, and Sahagún lamented that the book would be more accurate if expressed in the native language of the informants.

### **The beginning of Sahagún’s ethnographic project**

After Provincial Toral ordered Sahagún to document native culture, the friar left to collect information in the nearby village of Tepepulco. Authorities selected the site for Sahagún’s investigation because of its rich pre-Hispanic heritage. The native lord of Tepepulco was married to the daughter of the former ruler of Tetzco. When she moved to Tepepulco, she brought with her several prominent elders, or *tlamatinime*, knowledgeable of their people’s history and traditions.<sup>7</sup> Sahagún prepared a series of questionnaires to collect information about Aztec culture from these elders. The subjects included: “divine things”—gods, heaven, the underworld—“human things”, and information about “rulership.” He also inquired about plants, animals, and natural history of the indigenous land.<sup>8</sup> The elders answered the questionnaires with pictures and allegedly, after Sahagún gained their trust, granted him access to look at their pre-Columbian sacred books.<sup>9</sup> The trilinguals

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<sup>3</sup> D’Olwer, *Fray Bernardino de Sahagún*, 18.

<sup>4</sup> D’Olwer, *Fray Bernardino de Sahagún*, 20.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Ricard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico: an Essay on the Apostolate and the Evangelizing Methods of the Mendicant Orders in New Spain, 1523-1572*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 22.

<sup>6</sup> Ricard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*, 29.

<sup>7</sup> Joaquín García Icazbalceta and Agustín Millares Carlo, *Bibliografía mexicana del siglo XVI* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1954) , 345.

<sup>8</sup> Miguel León-Portilla, *Bernardino de Sahagún, First Anthropologist* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 139.

<sup>9</sup> León-Portilla, *Bernardino de Sahagún, First Anthropologist*, 144. The author supports this assertion with evidence of copied pre-Columbian glyphs and images that Sahagún made during his stay in Tepepulco.



trained at the Colegio de Santa Cruz served as invaluable assistants from the outset of Sahagún's project. They translated images into words for a European audience. They not only translated the Nahuatl, but also wrote additional explanations in Spanish, in effect performing a double translation.

The first version of these efforts culminated in the *Primeros Memoriales* and covered themes pertaining to divine, human, and natural things. The majority of the accompanying text was written in Nahuatl. Although Toral wanted thorough documentation of indigenous life and religion with the goal of extirpating idolatry, the work demonstrates an obvious interest on Sahagún's part in ethnological, historical, philological, and linguistic aspects of Nahuatl culture.<sup>10</sup> The themes, content, and organization of the *Primeros Memoriales* served as an earlier model for the *General History* that Sahagún began upon his return to Mexico-Tenochtitlan.

### **The Creation of the Florentine Codex**

For three years (1565-1568) Sahagún retreated to the Monastery of San Francisco in Mexico-Tenochtitlan for further review of his life's work. At San Francisco, Sahagún decided to include all of the testimonies and information collected since 1547 and organized his project into twelve books. The books are listed as follows<sup>11</sup>:

1. The gods worshipped by the Mexicans
2. The feasts and sacrifices to the gods every twenty days, with the transcription of twenty sacred hymns
3. The origin of the gods, with appendices on the different fates after death and on education
4. The book of the *tonalpohualli*, or count of 260 days
5. Auguries and superstitions
6. The book of the *Huebuetlahhtolli*, testimonies of the Ancient Word
7. The sun, the moon, the stars, and the "binding of the years"
8. Kings and nobles, the forms of government, elections of the rulers, and their manner of life
9. The merchants, officials for gold and precious stones, and featherworking
10. The virtues and vices of the people, parts of the human body, disease, and medicine
11. Nature, animals, trees, plants, metals, and diverse stones
12. The Conquest of Mexico as told from the indigenous perspective

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<sup>10</sup> León-Portilla, *Bernardino de Sabagun, First Anthropologist*, 161.

<sup>11</sup> León-Portilla, *Bernardino de Sabagun, First Anthropologist*, 175-176.

In the final version of the text, that is, the *Florentine Codex*, each page is divided into two columns. The left column contains the Nahuatl text, and the right column is dedicated to the Spanish translation. It is accompanied by 1,855 illustrations, many of which are in color.

Donald Robertson has argued that Sahagún's format borrowed from the tradition of European medieval encyclopedias. Isidore de Seville first used these chapter divisions in his encyclopedia on the liberal arts created in A.D. 622-633, and Bartholomaeus Anglicus adapted the same format in the encyclopedia he created in the thirteenth century. Scholars generally accept Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum* and Pliny's *Natural History* as the direct models for Sahagún's codex.<sup>12</sup> There is no conclusive proof that Sahagún had in his possession either the *Proprietatibus Rerum* or the *Natural History*, although its widespread publication before 1500 and enduring popularity, as well as the fact that Anglicus was a renowned Franciscan, make a strong case for its presence in the library of the Colegio de Santa Cruz.<sup>13</sup>

After his sojourn at the Convento de San Francisco, Sahagún returned to Tlatelolco around 1570 to continue the refinement of his project. Although the organization of the book reflected the influence of European medieval encyclopedias, much of the content pertaining to pre-Hispanic customs and religion borrowed directly from pre-Hispanic sources. For example, the first chapter dealing with the gods reiterates phrases that would have been commonly spoken by the *tonalpouhqui*, or astrologer.<sup>14</sup> The texts in book three include speeches similar to the *hnehuetlahotli*.<sup>15</sup>

Pre-hispanic medicine and healing philosophy also influenced the content of Book Ten. One chapter refers to illness and maladies and includes prescriptive directions on how to cure them. Native physicians provided Sahagún with this information as well as further information on the native plants, animals, and minerals found in Book Eleven. Book Eleven is the most extensive of the codex and includes descriptive information on all aspects of indigenous natural history.

Indigenous collaborators played a more active role in the act of translation, writing, and creating illustrations. For the final version of the *Florentine Codex*, the information was presented in both Nahuatl and Latin and accompanied by an abundance of illustrations that reflect the work of at least

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<sup>12</sup> Donald Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period: the Metropolitan Schools* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 170-171.

<sup>13</sup> Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period*, 171.

<sup>14</sup> León-Portilla, *Bernardino de Sahagún: First Anthropologist*, 176.

<sup>15</sup> León-Portilla, *Bernardino de Sahagún: First Anthropologist*, 177.

five individual artists. Sahagún's work would have been impossible without the collaboration of his indigenous students. Sahagún stated in the prologue of the *Florentine Codex*:

principal and wisest one was Antonio Valeriano, a native of Azcapotzalco; another, a little less so, was Alonso Vegerano, a native of Quautitlan. Another was Martín Jacobita, of whom I made mention above; another was Pedro de San Buenaventura, a native of Quautitlan. All were expert in three languages: Latin, Spanish, and Indian. The scribes who copied all of the works in a good hand were: Diego de Grado...Bonifacio Maximiliano . . . Mateo Severiano, from Xochimilco, from the Utlac district.<sup>16</sup>

Why did Sahagún spend almost half of his life on the continual revision of the *General History*? How did forty years of revisions and additions transform his perspective and the nature of the work itself? How did the passage of time affect the language and visual conventions employed in each draft of the project? With a comprehension now of the extensive revision process, this paper now turns to close analysis of some of the illustrations included in the final draft of Sahagún's project the *Florentine Codex* in an attempt to address some of the aforementioned questions.

### **The illustrations in the Florentine Codex**

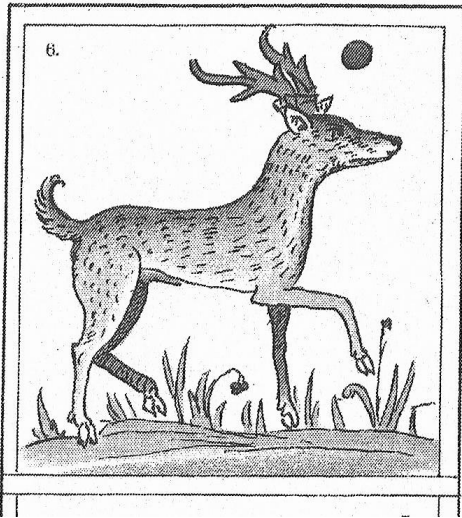
The illustrations in the *Florentine Codex* can be considered a fourth carrier of information in addition to the glosses in Nahuatl, Spanish, and Latin. For the Nahua, images had always been containers of information.<sup>17</sup> As art historian Elizabeth Boone has noted, indigenous artists continued to use Aztec pictorial convention as it applied in the colonial context. Spanish authorities accepted tribute lists and other pictorial documents as evidence in court cases. Conversely, indigenous artists incorporated European pictorial conventions to convey concepts with no pre-Hispanic visual precedent. By the time of the creation of the *Florentine Codex*, indigenous artists possessed an education dominated by Western theology, philosophy, rhetoric, and even artistic production. The persistence of native pictorial style has thus long puzzled art historians. Robertson suggested that the presence and persistence of pre-Hispanic visual forms indicated a conscious Aztec Revival Style.<sup>18</sup> He suggested that the pro-Indian attitude of friars like Sahagún affected the pictorial style of artists who sought to recover the remnants of a pre-Hispanic visual tradition. More recently, Jeanette Favrot Peterson has disagreed with this interpretation, suggesting that the nuanced and highly

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<sup>16</sup> Bernardino de Sahagún, Arthur J. O. Anderson, and Charles E. Dibble. *General History of the Things of New Spain: Florentine Codex, Prologue*. (Santa Fe, N.M.: School of American Research, 1950), 55.

<sup>17</sup> Boone, "The Multilingual Bivisual World of Sahagún's Mexico," 165.

<sup>18</sup> Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period*, 176-177.



**Figure 1** *La Historia General de las Cosas de Nueva Espana*, Biblioteca Medicea-Lorenziana Palatina. Manuscript number 218-220. Vol. 1 – 251 v.

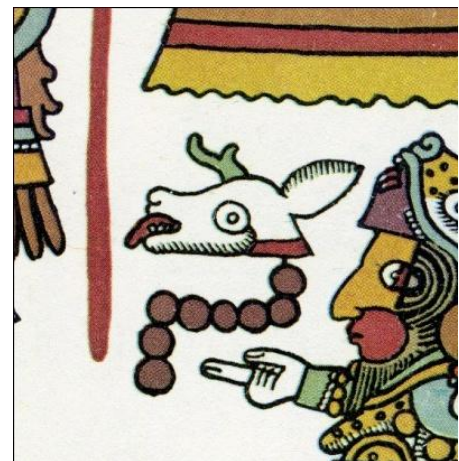
Reproduced from: Arthur J.O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, *Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain, Book 4*. Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1954.

esoteric meaning of some of the glyphs suggest a conscious continuity with the pre-Hispanic occupation of the *tlacuilo*, or painter-scribe.<sup>19</sup>

Eloise Quiñones Keber has argued that the increased Europeanization of forms, particularly those accompanying ethnographic descriptions of Aztec life, could be attributed to the artists' freedom to copy European models found in their libraries since no pre-Hispanic model existed to portray these kinds of activities.<sup>20</sup> The artists of the Colegio de Santa Cruz, familiar with both European and pre-Hispanic systems of visual representation, drew on both sources of knowledge to fill in the gaps of both systems. In other cases, given the artistic freedom, they may have chosen certain conventions to exhibit both their facility with European modes of

representation and advanced skill in copying these forms.

For example, in pre-Hispanic date glyphs of book four (the Soothsayers), the animals are drawn in a three-dimensional style bearing more likeness to European renditions of animals than to conventional pre-Hispanic number signs. (Fig. 1) Book four recounts the auguries of Aztec soothsayers that predict one's fortune based on the day on which they are born. The third chapter of the book "telletth of the third sign, named One Deer; and the good fortune which those then born – men or women – merited. And if it



**Figure 2** Mixtec day glyph deer sign, from the *Codex Nuttall*, British Museum, MS 39671

<sup>19</sup> Jeanette Favrot Peterson, "The Florentine Codex Imagery and the Colonial Tlacuilo" in *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Aztec Mexico*, ed. J. Jorge Klor de Alva, H.B. Nicholson, and Eloise Quiñones Keber, (Albany, N.Y.: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies, University at Albany, State University of New York, 1988), 290.

<sup>20</sup> Eloise Quiñones Keber, "Reading Images: The Making and Meaning of the Sahaguntine Illustrations," in *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Aztec Mexico*, Jorge Klor de Alva, *et al.*, ed. (Albany: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies, 1988), 207.

were not realized, these lost it through laziness.”<sup>21</sup> The illustration follows the pre-Hispanic convention of One Deer in which the deer is accompanied by a circular dot indicating the number one. In pre-Hispanic stylistic convention, however, typically the head of the deer is drawn in a pictographic representation of a deer but does not attempt to depict it in naturalistic detail as the figure in Sahagún’s *Florentine Codex*. For example, in surviving pre-Hispanic documents, such as the Mixtec *Codex Nuttall*, the artist only rendered the profile of the head of the deer (Fig. 2).<sup>22</sup> One ear and eye are depicted in profile accompanied by a stylized rendering of an antler. The deer’s tongue protrudes from his mouth, and his eye (as well as the eyes of all animal day glyph signs) is drawn as two concentric circles.

The deer in Sahagún’s version is drawn in full profile with antlers and two legs lifted as if the deer is walking. Lines are sketched on the deer’s body to indicate fur, and shading gives the illusion of depth and volume. Finally, the deer is drawn with a horizon line indicating that it is standing on solid ground. Although the content of this chapter is pre-Hispanic beliefs, the animals in this chapter are drawn in this European tradition. Given the advanced nature of their education and their familiarity with the potential impact of Sahagún’s project, I suggest the artists attempted to demonstrate fluency in not only multiple written languages but also two distinct visual languages. In the re-invention of these image glyphs, the artists were demonstrating their advanced technical skill afforded by the opportunity of their unique educational opportunities.

Art historians have cited imported European prints as the sources for classicized façades, arches, and temple-like structures. In many of the images, architectural embellishments are added to the background of images that most likely did not exist in pre-Conquest Mexico. For example, in an illustration of the Toltec city of Tula from book 8 (Kings and Nobles) (Fig. 3), the artist depicts Tula as a city in ruins with stone arches and columns in the tradition of Greek and Roman antiquity. The frontispiece of book three on antiquities of Sebastiano Serlio’s architectural treatise most likely served as the source.<sup>23</sup> (Fig. 4) The classicized façade serves to create a recognizable visual form for

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<sup>21</sup> Sahagún, Anderson and Dibble, *Book IV: The Florentine Codex*, 9.

<sup>22</sup> No extant pre-conquest Nāhua manuscripts survive, and the main existing source of manuscripts is from the Mixtec School produced in the Mixtec city-states in the present-day State of Oaxaca in southern Mexico. Through visual analysis, Donald Robertson has demonstrated a close stylistic relationship between the Mixtec and Nāhua schools, and for this reason, I use a Mixtec day glyph to make a point about pre-Hispanic pictorial convention here. Robertson, *Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period*, 12-14.

<sup>23</sup> Jeanette Favrot Peterson, “Crafting the Self: Identity and the Mimetic Tradition in the *Florentine Codex*” in *Sahagun at 500: Essays on the Quincentenary of the Birth of Fr. Bernardino de Sahagun*, ed. John Schwaller, (Berkeley, Calif: Academy of American Franciscan History, 2003), 246, n74. Peterson credits Ellen Baird as the person who identified the Serlio as the possible source for this image.

Western audiences and simultaneously equates the ancient past of the Aztecs to the illustrious ancient past of Western society. The artist is creating a visual analogy to help readers understand the importance of Tula in indigenous culture. He or she may have also selected these conventions to



**Figure 1** The Toltec city of Tula from the *General History of the Things of New Spain, Book 8—Kings and Lords*, by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún. Reproduced from Anderson and Dibble (see Figure 2 above).

liken the ancient capital to that of the ancient city of Jerusalem in order to promote the idea of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, the Christianized capital of New Spain, as a New Jerusalem.

Many historians have discussed the initial period of Franciscan evangelization as one defined by a

zealous millenarianism. Christian missionaries, friars and Spanish settlers believed that the Second Coming of Christ was nigh.<sup>24</sup> Believing New Spain to be a New Jerusalem in which mass amounts of conversion would take place to usher in the impending arrival of Christ, many early Franciscans sought to emulate early Christian basilica plans and architectural styles. The native scribes trained under the tutelage of the Franciscans may have internalized similar ideas of the capital's importance to the Christian mission, and the selection of Classic architectural traits may have been deliberate choices to recall these analogies to the New Jerusalem. These visual cues reiterated New Spain's importance to the Spanish Christian empire and the impending Second Coming.

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<sup>24</sup> Jaime Lara, *City, Temple, Stage: Eschatological Architecture and Liturgical Theatrics in New Spain* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 148.

Jeanette Favrot Peterson interprets other assertions of legitimacy in the same image, although these are claims on the status of the indigenous scribe. In this image, a frieze decorated with concentric circles crowns the Classic columns. In pre-Hispanic times, these circles marked the ruler's palace or *tecpan* and denoted indigenous authority. As James Kiracofe has noted, the concentric circles of the *tecpan* are a known signifier of indigenous authority that persisted throughout the earlier colonial period.<sup>25</sup> Peterson claims that this convention would have passed down through generations of native-scribes, or *tlacuilos*, who had been taught the specialized language. Thus, the artist has argued for his elite and esteemed position within colonial society by using symbols of legitimacy co-opted from both Western Classical and indigenous elite visual culture. By incorporating these important

visual cues from both traditions, the artist alluded to his rightful place as both a Christianized indigenous person and an intellectual artist in his colonial milieu. This example illustrates both the agency and creative liberty the colonial native artist could exercise independently of the accompanying text. This then leads us to consider why these claims of legitimacy may have been so important to the artists of the *Florentine Codex*.

### Adversity and the confiscation of the Florentine Codex

Sahagún witnessed the foundation of the Colegio de Santa Cruz and assisted in the academic formation of its first generation of students. Throughout his lifetime, he trained them into teachers

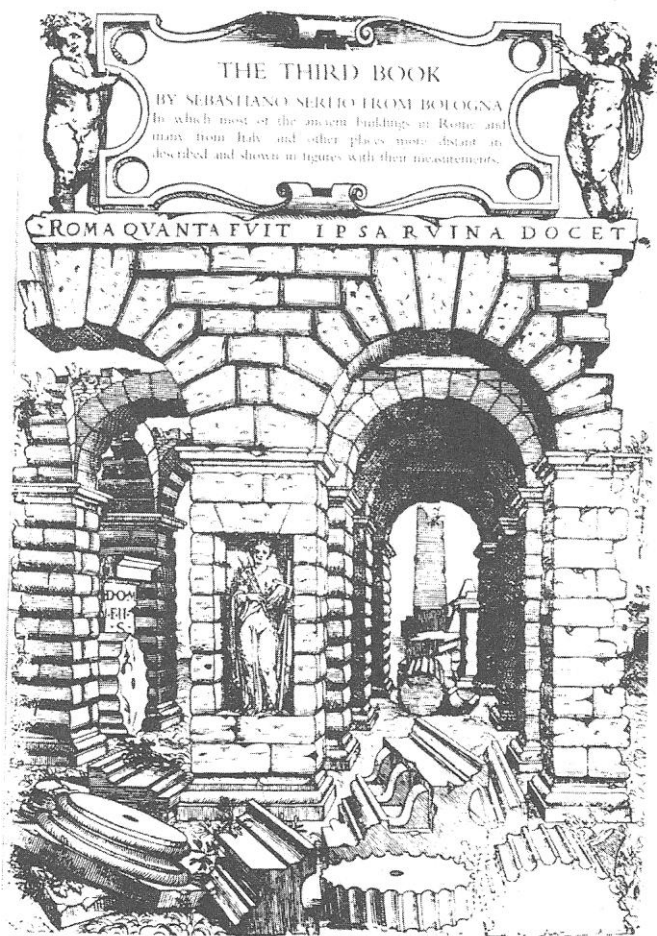


Figure 4 Sebastian Serlio, *The first booke of architecture*, Book 3 (London: Printed for Robert Peake, 1611). Newberry Library, Case folio W 2 .805 The image is the same as that in the 1547 Italian edition of Serlio's *Tutte l'opere d'architettura* which the Tula image may be based on.

<sup>25</sup> James B. Kiracofe, "Architectural Fusion and Indigenous Ideology in Early Colonial Teposcolula," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* 66 (1995): 45-84 as cited in Peterson, "Crafting the Self: Identity and the Mimetic Tradition in the *Florentine Codex*", 247.

who took over administrative duties and led the Colegio as the Christianized noble elite leaders of the community. The florescence of the Franciscan's ethnographic research and the output of their collaborative projects with their indigenous students reached its height with the maturation of the Colegio's first generation of students. In sum, the first Franciscan friars' dreams of training a noble elite clergy were materializing before their very eyes. During the period of the *General History's* production, however, escalating adversity threatened the work of the Franciscans and their students. The Colegio de Santa Cruz, with its close proximity to the viceregal capital and the controversial nature of its documentary projects, faced potential closure throughout the entirety of its operation. Critics began to oppose the formation of a native clergy as well as the preservation and dissemination of genres documenting pre-Hispanic rites and customs. They consistently intimated that these humanistic collaborations were heretical or subversive in nature, and the inception of the *Florentine Codex* coincided with the end of the Crown's tolerance of the missions and their schools for the indigenous.

The artists who collaborated on the *Florentine Codex* were most likely aware of the threats to the Colegio. Thus, what originated as a book to document the rites, religion, and daily life of the pre-Hispanic Aztecs transformed into a subtle plea for recognition and legitimacy from the Spanish Crown. While some scholars attribute increased Europeanization of forms as evidence of acculturation into Western pictorial representation, I propose that these willful adaptations also demonstrate the artists' understanding of their audience and the present political adversities facing the project, the artist, and the Colegio. As Peterson and others have argued, familiarity with pre-Hispanic visual cues had not yet faded from indigenous memory at this point. Indigenous artists still used these conventions to convey their privileged and unique position within a socio-cultural context that still employed both pre-Hispanic and European systems of representation. Although Sahagún claimed to investigate native culture for its ultimate destruction, these claims also served as his defense in the face of an imposing and threatening Spanish Catholic adversary. His life dedicated to ethnographic research and painstaking revision demonstrated a passion for preserving and understanding indigenous culture. The *Florentine Codex* is not only a testament to Sahagún's intellectual capacity but to his legacy as a missionary and teacher. To convey that to the Spanish crown, he continually felt the need to incorporate the astounding contributions of his indigenous team of translators, scribes, collaborators, and informants. His lifelong collaborators, equally



dedicated to the friars and the Colegio, most likely discarded many pre-Hispanic conventions in order to communicate more effectively with their European audiences.

Unfortunately, the *Florentine Codex* did not come into the hands of those who wished to promote the objectives of the friars and their mission. In 1577, Viceroy Don Martín Enríquez issued an order in which Philip II commanded Sahagún to send all his Nahuatl texts back to Spain. Mistaking this order as interest in the project, Sahagún sent them. The Crown, however, suspecting that they were idolatrous, confiscated the documents.

Although the Colegio de Santa Cruz crumbled amidst a barrage of adversities, the fortunate survival of the *Florentine Codex* distills a clear moment in the Colegio's history where we can see both the success of the friars' vision for their indigenous students and the extraordinary output of their collaborations. The *Florentine Codex*, while demonstrating increased Europeanization of images from earlier versions, also affords viewers the glimpse of a moment when both students and teachers demonstrated an acute awareness of their threatened position. The Franciscans support of indigenous education allowed the highly educated noble classes of indigenous society to gain an advanced Western education. This act granted a select number of indigenous people a privileged position in colonial society. By learning Latin and Spanish, the indigenous people could communicate more effectively with those who dictated their quality of life. The indigenous students of the Colegio came from a cultural heritage that valued written word and image. The Western humanist education imposed upon them at the Colegio de Santa Cruz only reified the understanding that certain arts were fundamental to the education of an elite intellectual. The act of copying, an important method of learning at the Colegio, helped the indigenous artists advance their understanding of Western visual tradition and their own technical skill. Documents with illustrations thus became a vehicle for the learned indigenous to communicate with Spanish authorities and display the fruits of their education. At the Colegio, the indigenous not only had the opportunity to learn Western knowledge, but they interacted with a number of Europeans who expressed interest in their pre-Hispanic culture. The Colegio subsequently served as a forum in which certain familiar aspects of pre-Hispanic culture could survive albeit influenced and transformed by European pedagogy and Christian religion.

Under these circumstances, the *Florentine Codex* was not merely an ethnographic project, but a legitimizing claim made on behalf of those fluent in multiple languages and systems of<sup>26</sup> visual representation. A close analysis of its creators and contributors, their texts and image, reveals an ambitious and highly intellectualized pursuit to convey their understanding and mediation of these cultures and justify the legitimacy of the Colegio de Santa Cruz to the colonial enterprise.

*Jennifer Saracino is a master's student in art history at Tulane University. Anuradha Gobin, a PhD candidate in art history at McGill University, edited this paper.*



## Fidelity and the Politics of Appropriation in Sidney Lumet's *The Deadly Affair*

By Elizabeth Tavares

In the discourse of adaptation, Shakespeare on film is a central battleground for examining textual fidelity. To what degree does it behoove a film to remain loyal to its source? Typically, these dramatic adaptations are relatively conservative in their execution, depending on the weight of strict literariness rather than the allure of novelty to carry the box office receipts. That said, many Shakespearean films have indeed taken a radical approach to presentation but remained conservative in their treatment of the hypotext.<sup>1</sup> In Baz Luhrman's *Romeo + Juliet*, guns are substituted in duels, but still have the word "sword" itself etched onto the barrel. This suggests a desire to privilege the source materials despite their new packaging. This anxiety over textual reverence is echoed too in English early modern studies, where Shakespeare dominates the conversation about cinematic adaptation. For example, as one of the largest publishers of critical editions and monographs, W.W. Norton and Company routinely advertises Samuel Crowl's *Shakespeare and Film: A Norton Guide* as a general class text for studying theories of adaptation. Yet, if we are invested in the exceptionality of the works of Shakespeare, it seems methodologically problematic to use those texts and their adaptive afterlives to prove the rule.

Dovetailing the moderate success of films that trace their sources to Shakespeare, however, has been the emergence of a "twenty-first-century (non) Shakespeare industry"<sup>2</sup> that deploys irreverence, disjunction, and anachronism as narrative tools. Derek Jarmin's 1991 cinematic reimagining of Christopher Marlowe's 1592 play, *Edward II*, is the most famous of these—an enigmatic example of

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<sup>1</sup> Julie Sanders' term "hypotext" refers to source material that is stable from which an adaptation draws, but does not use language that implies that one text is necessarily derivative from another on account of culturally-inscribed merit or historical place. For more, please see in the introductory materials in *Adaptation and Appropriation* from *The New Critical Idiom* series (New York: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Pascale Aebischer, "Shakespearean Heritage and the Preposterous 'Contemporary Jacobean' Film: Mike Figgis's *Hotel*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2009): 208.

the politics of textual appropriation within the context of power and gender relations.<sup>3</sup> What has been lost under the weight of attention given to Jarman's film<sup>4</sup> is an earlier use of the same English playtext in Sidney Lumet's 1966 British spy thriller, *The Deadly Affair*. In this loose adaptation of the 1961 novel, *Call for the Dead*, by John le Carré, the capture of a malignant double agent hinges on a performance of Marlowe's play. The film poses "the moral problem of how far you can go to preserve a society without destroying the very values you are trying to defend"<sup>5</sup> by appropriating both Marlovian political ambivalence and the ambiguous ethics of the espionage genre.<sup>6</sup>

The language of intrigue that frames criticism concerning espionage fiction and its ambiguous ethics is useful in this case because these texts are linked by the premise of spying. Intrigue specifically references "the underhanded machinations of the state" as well as "the fundamental obscurity of identity in relation to convictions, belonging, citizenship, and agency," according to Allan Hepburn.<sup>7</sup> These central interests in the arrangements between the subject and state allow for "speculations on the duties of citizenship" and the "testing of laws to prove their worthiness or unworthiness, their contextual and universal applicability."<sup>8</sup> It is perhaps unsurprising then that novels of intrigue—with their explicit interest in the trope of loyalty—make for potent film adaptations. If, as Hepburn suggests, "the spy emblemizes disagreement with ideology"<sup>9</sup>—an

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<sup>3</sup> For example, Deborah Willis makes much of the Lumet film in the introduction to her article, "Marlowe Our Contemporary: *Edward II* on Stage and Screen" in *Criticism* 40, no. 4 (1998). She does so only insofar as to "remind us that these films emerge out of a twentieth century stage history in which Marlowe's *Edward II* has been frequently performed and also revised" (599). The rest of her argument focuses on a comparative reading of Jarman to Bertolt Brecht in relation to Walter Benjamin's concept of "epic theatre." There is a large amount of scholarship especially in the discourse of gender and sexuality studies surrounding Jarman's adaptation, of which the following is but a helpful sampling: Pascale Aebischer's "Shakespearean Heritage and the Preposterous 'Contemporary Jacobean' Film: Mike Figgis's *Hotel*" in *Shakespeare Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2009); Patrick Cheney's "Marlowe in theatre and film" in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Michael D. Friedman's "Horror, Homosexuality and Homiciphilia in McKellen's *Richard III* and Jarman's *Edward II*" in *Shakespeare Bulletin* 27, no. 4 (2009); David Fuller's "Love or Politics: the Man or the King? *Edward II* in Modern Performance" in *Shakespeare Bulletin* 27, no. 1 (2009); Joan Parks' "History, Tragedy, and Truth in Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*" in *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 39, no. 2 (1999).

<sup>4</sup> As David Fuller explains, "Love or politics; the man or the king: these are the polarities of choice for a director of *Edward II*. The individual tragedy of love, with politics only the politics of sex, is the emphasis of the most widely-known modern production, Derek Jarman's film adaptation. The range of focuses with which the play can be staged admits of not simple summary" since "Marlowe invites a range of responses to and judgments about Edward" (81–2). For more on the dynamism of instability at the heart of Marlowe's play, see Fuller's "Love or Politics: The Man or the King? *Edward II* in Modern Performance" in *Shakespeare Bulletin* 27, no. 1 (2009).

<sup>5</sup> Peter Elfred Lewis, "A Far from Saintly George: *Call for the Dead* (1961)," *Recognitions: John le Carré* (New York, NY: Ungar Publishing Company, 1985), 24.

<sup>6</sup> Myron Joel Aronoff, "Ambiguous Moralism: Loyalty and Betrayal," *The Spy Novels of John le Carré: Balancing Ethics and Politics* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 58.

<sup>7</sup> Allan Hepburn, *Intrigue: Espionage and Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Allan Hepburn, *Intrigue: Espionage and Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 5.

<sup>9</sup> Allan Hepburn, *Intrigue: Espionage and Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 8.

ideology, that is, within a given narrative—then espionage as a genre shares a kinship with adaptation as models for cultural production.

Adaptation is contingent on this same notion of resisting authority in order to serve its intents.<sup>10</sup> Part of the pleasure of adaptation, Linda Hutcheon explains, derives from the quality of “repetition with variation, from the comfort of ritual combined with the piquancy of surprise.”<sup>11</sup> Pleasure is not derived, then, from audiences recognizing moments of loyalty but rather disloyalty to a hypotext. In terms of genre, film and theatre are kin particularly where the aural, the oral, and spectacle vie for attention. In the case of *The Deadly Affair*, the novel and the play overlay each other in terms of resistance ideology and plot to generate a “multilaminated” narrative. As Linda Hutcheon describes it, this is the mosaic of citations that are visible and invisible, heard and silent, layered and fused onto one another; these are the texts that when blended are circumscribed within a larger narrative. Marlowe and le Carré are, in this sense, central components undergirding but not wholly constituting Lumet’s script, presenting us with a multiplicity of tensions. For the purposes of this argument, the stakes of disloyalty to a textual source is conflated with treason—insomuch, even, that we might consider the work of adaptation as productive textual resistance.

Building on these critical reappraisals of adaptation, this paper aims to address the ways in which *The Deadly Affair* thematizes the paradox of institutional fidelity in its uses of le Carré and Marlowe. I was initially led to this project through my own attempts to appraise Marlowe’s brand of deep rhetorical and political ambivalence; however, the larger consideration has become the methodological implications of assessing intertextuality beyond mere quotation. In order to revitalize adaptation study, we need to operate under a different methodological assumption, according to Thomas Leitch: “source texts must be rewritten; we cannot help rewriting them.”<sup>12</sup>

### **Dumb Shows and Green Screens**

He was a man apart, a man you remember, a man who strikes a chord deep in your experience, a man with the gift of universal familiarity:... he was a living component

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<sup>10</sup> As an early modernist, it is funny to think of Shakespeare as a standard rather than the exception considering his own axioms of virtuous disobedience and improper loyalty. Richard Strier, in his essay “Faithful Servants: Shakespeare’s Praise of Disobedience” in *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988), argues that Shakespeare “consistently dramatized and espoused the most radical of these ideas and placed them in a purely secular context” (111), such as that in *King Lear* and *Othello*.

<sup>11</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 4.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: from Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), Kindle edition, 264–5.

of all our romantic dreams, he stood at the mast with Conrad, sought the lost Greece with Byron, and with Goethe visited the shades of classical and medieval hells.<sup>13</sup>

The villain of le Carré's novel described here appears as a literary and historical bricolage. Dangerous yet attractive, he is cobbled together from a cache of English literariness; His deportment is its own kind of cultural code. The imperialistic references to Conrad and Byron appeal to the Cold War-era British nostalgia for power. On the other hand, the characterization is unmistakably that of the double agent, uniquely singular as a man apart and yet universally familiar: an Everyman. The double agent is a threat because he (paradoxically) maintains individualism while (seemingly) serving a national interest. In the spy thriller, the Establishment—and the sacrifice of individualism it demands—belies the instability of the state to which the agent is a threat. This *chiaroscuro* characterization of a man inhabiting both the light and dark sides of things, both native and foreign, both transparent and covert, implies that the threat to Mother England comes not from without but from within. Film of the Cold War period—haunted as it is by these kinds of faceless *chiaroscuro* men fueling the panic of McCarthyism in America and the censorship debates in Britain—seem to have particular purchase in fictions where resistance could be coded as acts of loyalty or betrayal. Like the double agent, adaptations collaborate with—and sometimes even trade on—the past.

Spies are emblems of the contradictory pull of individuality and sociability, and so leave us with an ideological gap for an ethic of loyal rebellion—political and textual. What I mean by this ethic is the degree of “concern for the original author” is “actually a concern for the adaptation's prospective audience.”<sup>14</sup> By grafting bits and shreds of Marlowe and le Carré, Lumet displays in his film a very small degree of concern for the original authors while emphasizing the interpretive capabilities of his audiences.<sup>15</sup> For example, Lumet's film was noted for its groundbreaking manipulation of light and color.<sup>16</sup> The goal was to recreate the “dinginess of decisions” not

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<sup>13</sup> John le Carré, *Call for the Dead* (London, UK: Gollancz, 1961), 118.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Leitch, “The Ethics of Infidelity” in *Adaptation Studies: New Approaches* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2010): 70.

<sup>15</sup> As Allan Hepburn points out in *Intrigue: Espionage and Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), “as coded books, spy thrillers suggest that true interpretation is a deviation from standard or word-for-word interpretive practices” (54).

<sup>16</sup> Lumet is often referred to as the “actor's director” because of his conscientious method and attention to performance. This also extends to his attention to technical detail; Lumet has had a long-standing partnership with photography director Freddie Young. Together they developed a technique of pre-exposing the color film negative to a controlled amount of light to create a muted color palette. This method of “pre-fogging” film, first used in *The Deadly Affair*, proved influential and was immediately put to use by other major cinematographers.

necessarily small but “taken in small rooms,” as le Carré describes it.<sup>17</sup> Lumet did borrow le Carré’s method of climax to invoke a dramatic juxtaposition for the concluding ordeal in his film.<sup>18</sup> In *The Deadly Affair*, Charles Dobbs is our hero of a sort. Rather than pursue the spy and her Russian handler, Dobbs (often referred to as the anti-James Bond) instead sets a trap.<sup>19</sup> Shrouding our hero in greys and half-light not unlike the double agent he pursues, the film assumes that audiences can discern between their moral codes despite the spectacle of quotidian obstructions.

In *The Deadly Affair*, the role of Dobbs (played by James Mason) is essentially that of an institutional censor. He is a low-level Home Office agent, responsible for dealing with the Gaveston-types, those “undesirable aliens who have overstayed their welcome,” he explains.<sup>20</sup> The action is sparked when the loyal-to-a-fault Dobbs is implicated in the suicide of a fellow employee—Elsa’s husband—after clearing him of past Communist affiliations to help secure a promotion. The suicide note reasons that living under the weight of suspected disloyalty is too much to bear. Dobbs scents a rat but is sent to clean up his mess anyway and so interviews the widow. When she accuses Dobbs of driving her husband to suicide, Dobbs defends himself by stating, simply, “I was only doing my duty.” Elsa then asks, “To whom?” and Dobbs answers, ambivalently, “We had to check.” Dobbs’ response is that of a man with undecided feeling, and it smacks of the “royal We” used patently by any messenger. He defends the hand-me-down script of “suicide”; a defense of this text, after all, is a defense of England. After the interview, however, Dobbs is only more uncertain of his role. In an act of virtuous disobedience, he resigns from the Home Office to pursue the case on his own terms. In effect, he serves as an emblem for the ethical paradox of personal conscience versus the national cause that the Cold War sought to subsume. In this light, infidelity can be read as a kind of censorship.<sup>21</sup> The act of selecting (upon which the creative activity that defines adaptation, choice,

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<sup>17</sup> Michael Dean, “John le Carré: The Writer Who Came in From the Cold,” in *Conversations with John le Carré*, eds. Matthew J. Bruccoli and Judith S. Baughman (Jackson, MS: The University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 29. The Marlovian reference to “small rooms,” also quoted by Shakespeare in *As You Like It*, does not go unnoticed here.

<sup>18</sup> As Tony Barley argues in his chapter “Contexts: Genre and Ideology, Persons and Politics” in *Taking Sides: The Fiction of John le Carré* (Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press, 1986), the concluding ordeal is an important genre element to spy thrillers, “carefully separated from the general body of the story” and “appearing as a heightened and comparatively stylized set-piece” (5).

<sup>19</sup> For criticism specific to readings of the relationship between le Carré’s work and Ian Fleming’s James Bond series, see Lars Ole Sauerberg’s *Secret Agents in Fiction: Ian Fleming, John le Carré, and Len Deighton* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1984), Peter Alfred Lewis’ *Recognitions: John le Carré* (New York, NY: Ungar Publishing Company, 1985), Tony Barley’s *Taking Sides: The Fiction of John le Carré* (Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press, 1986), John L. Cobbs’ *Understanding John le Carré* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), and Myron Joel Aronoff’s *The Spy Novels of John le Carré: Balancing Ethics and Politics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998).

<sup>20</sup> *The Deadly Affair*, directed by Sidney Lumet (1966; Los Angeles, CA: Columbia Pictures, 2006), DVD.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Leitch, “The Ethics of Infidelity,” in *Adaptation Studies: New Approaches* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2010): 74.



is predicated) has the capacity to draw attention to radical aspects of a text as much as to disguise them.

During performances at the Royal Shakespeare Company Theatre, the handler and his spy exchange music cases filled with secret documents. The very real 1965 production of *Edward II*, directed by Peter Hall, is Dobbs' mousetrap—not to reveal the conscience of a king but rather that of his authorized minions. The injection of the very first and last scenes of Hall's production of *Edward II* into the film narrative is a device borrowed from le Carré's plotting but greatly expanded by Lumet. The play acts as a psychological backdrop, a green screen if you will: the novel's plot and the play's text are layered onto each other, projecting anxieties of national stability and a nostalgia for cohesion. "Narratives of nostalgia," argues Andrew Higson, "will very often return to a moment of stability and tranquility as they themselves chart the process of decay, the fall from [a] utopian ideal."<sup>22</sup> Consequently, "we are thus presented with both a narrative of loss, charting an imaginary historical trajectory from stability to instability, and at the same time a narrative of recovery, projecting the subject back into a comfortably closed past."<sup>23</sup> This nostalgic stability is represented by the physical space of the Royal Shakespeare Company Theatre, pointedly located in the London neighborhood of Victoria. The theatre is itself a cipher for Shakespeare: contemporary of Marlowe and emblematic of English-ness.

It is in the theatrical space where the double agent is exposed for his treason—the theatre is the scene of the crime. The theatre marquee serves as the backdrop for three distinct shots in front of which we witness the mechanics of espionage: a coded postcard being sent. The camera frame slowly pans downward, contextualizing the marquee in dingy afternoon light. The banner demarcating a space for spectacle and performative monitoring is jarringly couched within the ordinary and the everyday. As Elsa walks into the theatre to buy her tickets, she is framed within twin luxuriant staircases, yet foregrounded by a threadbare carpet. Her white sneakers are worn from walking, and her demeanor is hurried yet casual. The dramatic juxtapositions between the quotidian and the exceptional reinforce the ordinariness of Elsa herself, and the direct relationship the everyday has with geopolitical instability. It isn't until we see her drop the postcard into the letterbox that our suspicions are confirmed: we know then as much as Dobbs knows, that Elsa, the Holocaust

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<sup>22</sup> Andrew Higson, *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama Since 1980* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83.

<sup>23</sup> Higson, *English Heritage, English Cinema*, 83.

victim, is the spy. The film presents its audience with an empathetic paradox: to side with Elsa's ordinariness, or Dobbs' intellect.

In the first case, the audience is in part violated by the cooptation of a culturally monolithic symbol for covert purposes, but also sympathetic for Elsa as the "designated victim."<sup>24</sup> She has not only penetrated but also corrupted the seminal English institution of Shakespearean theatre, appropriating the cultural space for the exchange of misbegotten information.<sup>25</sup> To whom is Elsa being loyal? To her murdered husband, who died trying to reveal her? To her new Swiss handlers? Is her espionage identity instead fueled as a political act of contestation against her Nazi persecutors? In her first interview with Dobbs, the lens provides a glimpse of her arm; she is herself codified by a violent national history, marked by numbers that distill her down to one among millions. Is she perhaps equally a victim of her new handlers, one of the foot soldiers against English imperialism? Elsa is marked as a code, a necessary number among many that is unintelligible until the space of the theatre provides the translational key to her motives—despite the subjection of her individualism for those ends.

Dobbs' relationship to the state is paradoxical, too, namely in that he comes to represent an ethos conflating loyalties private and public that tends to be a cause for both admiration and disgust. For example, he refuses to give up on Elsa's case even after leaving his position at the Home Office. This seeming empathetic dissonance echoes a similar paradoxical quality in Marlowe's linguistic combinations. We see it in the knotted language both politic and amorous indicative of King Edward II's favorite, Gaveston, who openly proclaims of his love:

Him I hold so dear, —  
The king, upon whose bosom let me lie,  
And with the world be still at enmity.<sup>26</sup>

To him, the king is a lover and a toy both, a subject to valorize and manipulate. Edward is named in both his political state as "king" but also in a private state as "dear." That Gaveston desires to be

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<sup>24</sup> This is a theme le Carré has confessed to obsessing over in his Smiley series, e.g., Véra Volmane, "John le Carré: The Writer, like the Spy, Is an Illusionist," in *Conversations with John le Carré*, eds. Matthew J. Bruccoli and Judith S. Baughman (Jackson, MS: The University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 5.

<sup>25</sup> On this point I think Sauerberg rightly argues that the heroes actions "are vital, but the heroes as individuals are dispensable" to ensure "the national cause is successfully defended" (95–96).

<sup>26</sup> Marlowe, "Edward II," l.i.13–15. Curtis Perry makes a particularly useful argument for the purposes of understanding the implication of exchanges of power within this play: namely, that the monarch's personal favorites were the most important unofficial political power brokers at court in early modern England. For more on the issues and implications of political favoritism, see Perry's monograph *Literature and Favoritism in Early Modern England* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

within the space of his bosom, on his chest and closest to the literal heart of Edward, reinforces the claims to personal intimacy here. However, the syntactic structure of the last two lines displaces the active verb to the last: “enmity.” It is within the private space of the king’s favor that Gaveston will be protected in order to be openly hostile to everyone in rages private and politic. The impulses of private and public are enjambed in these lines to suggest the problematic quality of “fidelity,” a concept anchoring both Marlowe’s play and so likewise Lumet’s film. It encompasses both a sense of intimate faithfulness to a person and public allegiance to a party—fealty, even. It signifies a degree of political obedience that ranges to the extreme of amorous attachment. In the film, for Elsa it is difficult to separate her political motives as a WWII victim from that of revenge for her husband. For Dobbs, is it his frustrations with his wife’s infidelities or the Home Office’s unwillingness to represent the needs of one of its citizens even after death that drive him into his obsessive pursuit of the double agent? By muddying the relationship between political and personal fidelity, the film seems to suggest that national loyalties are inherently tied to our more individual ones.

The sequence of reiterations of this particular paradox, one present in both Marlowe and le Carré intertexts, in effect thematizes fidelity and quibbles with the loyalty and stability of these hypotexts and the sense of English heritage they evoke. This thematization in part stems from the contested nature of its own historical context: no aspect of Marlowe’s biography is more debated than his alleged spy career and its contribution to his death; le Carré published with Gollancz, a notably left-inclined publishing house that supported socialist movements; and while Lumet’s films evade any distinct style aside from one that consistently betrays its predecessor, he can best be categorized by his general “liberal critique of America.”<sup>27</sup> All three auteurs are marked, then, by a quality of infidelity and contestability. The repetition reorients the issue of fidelity as the central theme around which the three texts—le Carré, Marlowe, and Lumet—constellate.

The film doesn’t just use Marlowe as a figurative reference to these anxieties; it literally stages the ideological ambiguity of infidelity by using both the text and the play as a vessel for catharsis. Dobbs’ off-handed quoting of Goethe does not operate with the same magnitude as actually nesting a staging of Marlowe’s play within the film’s narrative. The theatrical set piece has the same dramatic effect as *Hamlet’s* play-within-a-play that we call a “dumb show”: the theatrical convention whereby

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<sup>27</sup> Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents*, 4184.

a part of a play was acted in pantomime to comment on the main action.<sup>28</sup> The dumb show distills the action into its most basic components and is utterly devoid of the rhetorical ambiguities of text or speech. The play going on behind the main action is the primary text available to an audience, briefly interpolated by the characters of the espionage narrative. The intertext (i.e., the Marlovian play script) becomes the only text upon which the audience can depend.

For means of dramatic exposition, Marlowe is appropriated in two ways: first, to interpret the actions of the victimizer, and second, to express the interiority of the victim. The victimizer in this story is the Russian spy handler, Dieter Frey. We come to discover that not only did Dobbs operate with him in Zurich during the war, not only are they close friends, but Frey has also started an affair with Dobbs' wife as a means to spy. This betrayal is intimate and an issue of national security. As soon as Frey takes his seat next to Elsa during the *Edward II* performance, her confused expression and the barest flash of the planted postcard confirms his suspicions that they have been set up. No words are exchanged; rather, the voices of the un-credited actors playing King Edward and his executioner, Lightborn, envelop the conspirators. Frey reaches behind Elsa's shoulder lovingly to adjust her coat. As the camera closes in on Elsa's face, we hear King Edward say:

Something still buzzeth in mine ears,  
And tells me, if I sleep, I never wake:  
This fear is that which makes me tremble thus;  
And therefore tell me, wherefore art thou come?<sup>29</sup>

Coming from a king under duress, one would assume the speaker would assert his political authority linguistically if he could not physically. These lines refer not only to the intimate spaces of the bedroom and bed itself, but also use the idiomatically informal and personal "thou." In the early modern period, this was the more intimate version of our "you" rarely used between royal spouses, let alone to their captors. This linguistic closeness, even if a ploy to trick or appeal to his captor's empathy, dissimulates the victimization of servants like Dobbs and Elsa in an effect perhaps more ideologically unsettling than any overt subjection. The scene cuts to Frey's face as we hear Lightborn call out: "To rid thee of thy life!"<sup>30</sup> We hear the screams and cries of the king as Lightborn executes his sodomitical regicide. Lumet was not able to film the insertion of the hot spit, the censor office of

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<sup>28</sup> "dumb show, n." *OED Online*. December 2011. Oxford University Press.  
<http://www.oed.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/Entry/58396?redirectedFrom=dumb%20show> (accessed December 17, 2011).

<sup>29</sup> Christopher Marlowe, "Edward II" in *Renaissance English Drama: A Norton Anthology*, eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maud, Eric Rasmussen (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2002), V.v.102–5.

<sup>30</sup> Marlowe, "Edward II," V.v.105.

the Lord Chamberlain still being active in 1966 (it was abolished two years later). He uses this limitation, however, to an interpretive advantage. The camera jumps briefly to Frey's face, which trembles (we assume) in disgust from the violence on stage. The player's speech is very much in the aural foreground, mediating the expressions and gestures of Frey and Elsa.

Not until the final bows do we discover that his trembling was actually from the exertion of silently piercing Elsa's throat to kill her (a technique with which Lightborn, too, is familiar).<sup>31</sup> If Edward's death by means of artifice represents the state's appropriate and orderly progression,<sup>32</sup> than the death of a spy by her own handler is all the more unsettling. The covert execution in a public space by political kin suggests that threats to the nation can come not only from within the Establishment but also from the Establishment itself. As Frey slinks away through the crowd, pleased with his escape, the lines that follow him are a comfort to attentive audiences. Lightborn turns to his henchmen and asks, "Tell me, sirs, was it not bravely done?" One responds, "Excellent well: take this for thy reward," and kills him. "Come, let us cast the body in the moat": if we read this code aright, we are assured that the denouement of this act concludes with Frey in a watery grave. Here, the play (and not merely its text) is appropriated for a different kind of meaning making. We, too, are implicated in the morality of Frey, Elsa, and Dobbs in our attempt to decode Marlowe's lines from these characters' perspectives.<sup>33</sup> The film's medley of outsourced history enacts a sophisticated kind of dumb show, distilling the notion of infidelity to its fundamental implications. To what extent can, should, and does our personal morality conspire with our political ideology? Onto such a theme any, and in the case of this film, many historicized moments might easily project.

### **Some Conclusions**

A central component to decoding the multilaminar quality of *The Deadly Affair* is accounting for the violated intimacies, inner treasons, and rewarded resistance at work. The film assesses the efficacy of resistance in rhetorics of institutional loyalty; however, its use of multiple intertexts promotes ideological ambiguity.<sup>34</sup> This is compounded by the film's overarching genre of intrigue,

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<sup>31</sup> "To pierce the wind pipe with a needle's point," from Marlowe's "Edward II," V.iv.33.

<sup>32</sup> Joan Parks, "History, Tragedy, and Truth in Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*," *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 39, no. 2 (1999): 275.

<sup>33</sup> Henry Jenkins refers to a similar kind of meaning-making process in his discussion of collaborative cultural production in his monograph, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2008, Kindle edition): "each of us constructs our own personal mythology from bits and fragments of information extracted from the media flow and transformed into resources through which we make sense of our everyday lives" (195).

<sup>34</sup> There are several references in adaptation criticism to this idea that many texts promote ideological ambiguity (Leitch, Sanders, Hutcheon, etc.), but I think Jenkins makes the point best in his example of the Wachowski brothers' *Matrix*

the topicality of which also fosters a moral haze. But ambiguity by definition refers to an unfixed ethic, and the multilaminated texts only further the film's vacillation. By having multiple moralities at play, equally, the film lacks an ethical center. The film anticipates—perhaps necessitates—a heightened watchfulness by audiences in order to decode motives and to assemble the pieces in an arrangement of individual moral choosing.

While not wishing to make broad and sweeping claims about how theories of political subjectivity get voiced in art, I think it is interesting how debates over republicanism and mixed polity in the early modern period echo the ways in which ideas of an informed citizenry were beginning to change in the 1960s. What constitutes political speech? From whom? For this particular play, Marlowe's vision of fidelity—an obedience that is political to an intimate degree, suggesting the personal—appeals to our notion of an informed citizenry, one that is monitorial rather than absentee and challenges “more traditional notions of citizenship that deferred to the expertise of aristocrats or political parties.”<sup>35</sup> Lumet's decision to film the climax from theatre stalls F12 and F13, the vantage of the transgressors, these duped villains, becomes significant in this light. In film and theatre studies, there is a tendency to homogenize our conception of “audience,” often implying that spectators abandon their subjectivity when in a group. Multilaminated adaptations, on the other hand, liberate their hypotexts of culturally constructed expectations by way of formal ambiguity, while at the same time appealing to our individual interpretive capacities.

If the film is making claims and appealing to this capability, this does open up for us a series of problems considering audiences. In a genre where knowledge and identity are locked up in codes, does an audience's ability to recognize the presence of intertexts within the film—even without having specific knowledge of those hypotexts—provide some sense of individual liberation? If so, to what effect? The term “audiences” allows one to account for a plurality of interpretations based on individual selection rather than ascribing a singular herd mentality to cinema consumers. Appropriations that predicate intertextuality have to assume recognition by audiences to a certain degree, in part counter intuitively undermining the plurality that the technique of borrowing seems to assert. The most significant difference between film and theatre, the camera lens, with its ability

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trilogy, where they used “intertexts to create a much more emotionally nuanced and morally complicated story” (2318). He argues “we are seeing the emergence of new story structures, which create complexity by expanding the range of narrative possibility” (2324). For more on convergence culture and its effects on narrative, see chapter three and six in Jenkins' *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2008, Kindle edition).

<sup>35</sup> Jenkins in *Convergence Culture*, (Kindle edition) 4881.

to zoom and focus, crop and distort, might be said to have a more authoritarian approach than the stage space, which is demarcated by the proscenium and thrust and yet capacious by its lack of fixed directionality.

Accounting for the historical conditions and interpretive potentials of multilaminated adaptations reveal other potential critical avenues. One way to expand these arguments would be to consider the ways in which not only the collusion, but the fracturing of multiple borrowed materials for an adaptation changes its political potential. Tomas Alfredson's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* (2011)—which began showing the same week this paper was given at the Newberry Library conference in Chicago—may be one such text. This film, too, plays with time and the particular cultural associations with geography in terms of British history and the Cold War. The difference here is the conscious layering of the many versions and interpretations of Smiley by both actors and directions, and the film's awareness of the many cinematic and televised versions of the hypotext. To what extent do those iterations become multilaminated? It would be interesting to consider the accretion of Smileys as a kind of homogenized multilaminated narrative. Similarly, the abolition of the censor office of the Lord Chamberlain under the 1968 Theatre Act, mentioned earlier, seems to me a watershed moment. It may prove useful to track how that change might have predicated the rise in radical stagings of both Shakespeare and other early modern playtexts, or proved significant to filmmaking in both England and the United States.

We might see the texts at work in the film competing with each other for the moral and interpretive high ground, begging the question: to which does Lumet most closely adhere? I invite you to recall Leitch's opening appeal to consider texts as compositionally unstable, that they must be rewritten.<sup>36</sup> Grafting sixteenth-century words onto a twentieth-century context revises the potential meanings of both. Alone, the Marlovian playtext might simply provide an anachronistic lens through which to read Cold War geopolitics. Alone, le Carré might serve as a dystopian "dramatizer" of "lost national purpose."<sup>37</sup> Together, Lumet's rendering evades such simple cinematic devices by instead fragmenting the theme of fidelity in both form and ideology. In this recast frame of plurality, *The Deadly Affair* displays all the contradictory ethical potentials of le Carré, Marlowe, and Lumet. It seems productive to adaptation studies, then, that rather than disregard fidelity and (as Marlowe

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<sup>36</sup> Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents*, 264–5.

<sup>37</sup> Barley, *Taking Sides*, 2.

would say) its “unnatural revolt”<sup>38</sup> as an interpretive tool, we begin to consider films that betray their progenitors as sites of textual liberation worth investigating.

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<sup>38</sup> Marlowe, “Edward II,” IV.vi.9







Harmless Silence?  
Subjective Agency in Confession and Revenge  
in *The Spanish Tragedy*

By Jane Wanninger

At the end of Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1592), Hieronimo, a bereaved father and erstwhile agent of the Spanish court, achieves in spectacular fashion the revenge he has been seeking throughout the play. His son, Horatio, has been murdered by Lorenzo and Balthazar, both of whom are associated with royal houses. In the climactic final scene, Hieronimo directs his son's killers, along with his co-conspirator Bel-Imperia, in a short play of his own invention before the court, which includes the fathers of his targets. In the play-within-the-play, Balthazar and Lorenzo are transformed from "authors" of murder to hapless targets of another's revenge, killed onstage in a performance that collapses mimetic representation and real violence. When the King, Duke, and Viceroy, the chief audience for this spectacle, demand a comprehensible explanation for the horror they have witnessed, Hieronimo refuses, biting out his own tongue rather than completing the ritual of confession. Both through his murderous playlet and through his dramatic autoglossotomy, Hieronimo subverts the conventional dynamics of confession in a display of violent inarticulacy. Earlier in the play, in the immediate wake of Hortatio's death, the dead man's mother Isabella gave voice to a version of a common Elizabethan trope: *veritas filia temporis*, or "truth is the daughter of time", when she emphasized that "time will bring this treachery to light" (2.5.58).<sup>1</sup> This assertion, born out in Hieronimo's subsequent actions, is reflective of a persistent interest running throughout the play in the spectacular revelation of guilt. In this essay, I argue that both the confessional ritual and blood revenge seem imbued with the potential to satisfy that personal and narrative desire. In

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<sup>1</sup> All citations from the text are from Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. J. R. Mulryne (London: A&C Black, 2009).

pursuing his revenge, however, Hieronimo seeks a performative mode that thwarts the reassertion of normative power structures tied to conventional confessional scripts.

*The Spanish Tragedy* is simultaneously preoccupied by the subjective status of the revenger and the capacity of that subject to articulate himself in language. In what follows, I trace the relationship between these two thematic threads to argue that, as the play's final scene illustrates, the subjective state offered by the revenge plot evades meaningful communication in extant language systems. Confessions are discursive sites—ideological power, interpersonal pressure, and personal feeling and experience come together in the form of verbal narrative or dialogue. Their ritualized role in the wake of social transgressions is intended to reassert the power of the confessor while opening up a theoretical space of self-expression for the confessant. This play demonstrates, however, that confession does not always succeed as a stable site at which conventional hierarchies can be predictably reasserted, subject as they are to the authorial wills of their participants. Hieronimo's appropriation of power over the exercise of justice and the regulation of language in the final scene demonstrates how the competing drives for confession and for revenge expose a fundamentally uncontrollable linguistic agency. In her reading of *The Spanish Tragedy*, Carla Mazzio argues that the chaos which characterizes articulation in the play "thwarts community altogether," and indeed, the revenge plot ushers Hieronimo into a transgressive subject position that exists in defiance of communal articulations of power and justice.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the ritual of confession, with its attendant promise of narrative closure through the performative reaffirmation of community, is deferred in a way that undermines the conventionally attributed capacity of confession to contain transgression. This obviation highlights the fissures always already present in the social landscape that organizes these characters and their performances.

In order to frame the social and linguistic role of confessional exchanges in the culmination of the revenge plot, I will begin by situating the ritual in a more general cultural context. Private, auricular confession to a priest was, from the Middle Ages onward, a mandatory part of Catholic doctrine, annually required of the faithful. As a cultural practice, this kind of confession is explicitly performative—a structured expression of one's interiority that requires an interlocutor to work. Auricular confession carries with it the promise of reconciliation; in theory, the divulging of secrets to the proper authorities brings relief to the penitent. At the same time, it reinforces the social and

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<sup>2</sup> Carla Mazzio, *The Inarticulate Renaissance: Language Trouble in an Age of Eloquence* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 94.

institutional power of those who demand and hear the confession.<sup>3</sup> Though this form of disclosure, tied as it is to subjectivity and repentance, was originally structured through the Church, I contend that confession was and remains an ubiquitous social ritual, one that instantiates subjects in everyday life, outside the confessional.<sup>4</sup> By the time this play was written, the Reformation had eliminated the religious institutional role of sacramental confession. However, as theatrical renderings and popular pamphlets alike make clear, in post-Reformation England, the language patterns and social expectations of confession help shape the interpersonal responses to transgression even after spiritual mandate was eliminated. Confession traditionally was, and continues to be, a scripted process, one reliant on a familiar pattern of words and behaviors tethered to conventional social and spiritual outcomes.<sup>5</sup> Despite this *pro forma* element, the power of confessional language derives in part from the “special stamp of authenticity” with which it is associated.<sup>6</sup> This sense of meaningful authenticity comes from the theoretical potential of confession to serve as a powerful form of narrative self-expression, one that posits a subject who can experience things and interpret them, who can understand social mores and knowingly violate them. In other words, the capacity to confess—to be subjected to ideology and to experience that subjection interpersonally in language—is closely tied to an evolving conception of subjectivity.

The ritual of confession is by its very nature predicated on both the violation of expected or acceptable behaviors and on the belief that the revelation of resulting personal guilt will have an ameliorative affect. A successful confession theoretically offers social and spiritual relief for the confessant, but this comfort is contingent on his or her submission to the ideological and regulatory

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<sup>3</sup> For his incredibly influential articulation of the social dynamics of confession, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge* (London: Penguin Group, 2008), 57–65.

<sup>4</sup> Foucault notes the ways in which confession has become increasingly important to modern society. In law, we demand the confession of criminals; in literature, we relish self-conscious confession; in philosophy, we have increasingly come to see truth as something to be dug out of our own consciousness. Now that confession has become an omnipresent aspect of our daily lives, we no longer think of the power pushing us toward confession as a constraint placed upon us. On the contrary, we have come to think of confession as a way of finding truth, a form of liberation from repressive powers that try to silence us. Foucault writes that we have become “subjects in both senses of the word”: we are subjected to powers that draw confessions from us, and through confession we come to see ourselves as thinking subjects, the subject of confession (60).

<sup>5</sup> The *Book of Common Prayer* offered a set script for communal confession, and popular pamphlet accounts of transgression and repentance demonstrate the *pro forma* aspect to the deployment of common confessional tropes.

<sup>6</sup> See Peter Brooks, *Troubling Confessions: Speaking Guilt in Law & Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 9. In his wide-ranging exploration of the legal, literary, and philosophical dynamics of confession, Brooks examines the tension between the problem of the false confession with this association with authenticity, noting that confession was, from the Middle Ages onward, often known as the “queen of proofs” in legal contexts for this very reason.

powers that be, as embodied in the confessor.<sup>7</sup> As such, confession upholds the power structures that help delineate social norms, while also providing a means to heal the wounds to extant social systems that have been inflicted on those structures by transgressions. Ideally, such ruptures can be contained in it through language, and convention can thus be reasserted. In *The Spanish Tragedy*, Kyd offers a character who over the course of the play functions as an emblem of, and then a challenge to, that system. As Knight Marshall of the Spanish Court, Hieronimo has spent his career charged with upholding the justice system as embodied in the King. Midway through the play, Hieronimo appears in this conventional role, which serves to reinforce the stakes of his subsequent rejection of its terms. As the scaffold is prepared for the execution of Pedringano for the murder of Serberine, a deputy reminds Hieronimo: “your office asks/A care to punish such as do transgress” (3.6.11-12). He is charged with reinforcing the order of the state through the orchestration of corporal punishment.<sup>8</sup> With this duty comes that of acting as the gallows confessor to the condemned. Accordingly, Hieronimo exhorts Pedringano publicly to “confess thy folly and repent thy fault” (3.6.26). Pedringano does so with alacrity—though at this point he believes that he will be pardoned, so his confession is perfunctory. Still, for official purposes, it does what it is supposed to do: though his tone is perhaps a bit tongue-in-cheek, he tells his confessor, Hieronimo, “First I confess, nor fear I death therefore,/I am the man, ‘twas I slew Serberine” (3.6.29-30). As a confessant, he makes a direct connection between the verbalization of guilt to the proper authority and salvation. In addition, this declaration of guilt confirms the charges of which he has been convicted and is tied up on the process of execution, framing and justifying the killing for, as Hieronimo himself declares, “the satisfaction of the world” (3.6.25). Confession, then, seems to afford a satisfying resolution to social disruption—for the confessant, insofar as it offers some measure of spiritual and social recuperation, and for the confessor (and the audience allied with him), insofar as the confession confirms the ideological power of a threatened system.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> See Thomas N. Tentler, *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 9–12. Tentler observes a tendency that Foucault would also more generally express: that rituals of confession were as much about producing anxiety in the confessant as relief—in manipulating the relationship between the two, those in power could reinforce existing ideological hierarchies. Though the term has multiple applications, I use “confessor” to refer to the figure hearing or eliciting the confession and “confessant” to refer to the figure who utters it.

<sup>8</sup> For more on the links between spectacles of the scaffold and the stage, see Molly Easo Smith, “The Theatre as Scaffold: Death as Spectacle in *The Spanish Tragedy*,” in *Revenge Tragedy: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Stevie Simkin (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 71–87.

<sup>9</sup> I am interested in considering confessional language in terms of the patterns—linguistic, performative, and social—associated with it. In doing so, I neither intend to tie this kind of theatrical treatment of it to a particular institution, nor to suggest that confessions always work the same way or always involve the same power dynamics.

Regulated punishment, with its emphasis on a verbalized self-expression of guilt, offers the potential for social amelioration, but only within the bounds of conventional power systems. For Hieronimo, his exercise of state authority only serves to underscore his own inability to personally punish his son's as yet unknown killers. He explicitly connects the two when he complains, "So is't my duty to regard his death/Who when he lived deserved my dearest blood?" (3.6.13-14), suggesting that his commitment to the *pro forma* rituals of punishment are giving way to a desire to be an actor in a far more personal mission. In seeking out a private plot of revenge, he acts in opposition to the structures of justice he has been charged with upholding, and which in turn are intended to preserve social order.<sup>10</sup> He still undertakes to "punish such as do transgress," but he does so in a manner that circumvents the judicial hierarchy he once helped embody. The revenge plot—frequently explored in early modern drama—offers a narrative and generic structure that challenges the normative claims made in the regulatory confessional ritual. The desire for revelation that drives the drama forward—both for the characters within the play and the audience watching it—is focalized in the goals of the would-be confessor and the would-be revenger. Both are invested in the production of a meaningful narrative in the wake of transgression, but the revenger does so in a manner that imagines an autonomous, private justificatory system.<sup>11</sup> The spectacular production of revenge outlined in *The Spanish Tragedy*, like the public confession, offers a space for the wronged party to assume a position of power over those who have wronged them. Whereas the telos of revenge is punishment, and not moral restitution, confession at least putatively offers its salvific potential to the transgressor, and comes with the expectation of forgiveness.

The pursuit of revenge is closely tied to the desire for an appropriate punishment intended specifically to provide some form of satisfaction to the revenger.<sup>12</sup> This satisfaction, as Hieronimo

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<sup>10</sup> Ronald Broude's "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy in Renaissance England," *Renaissance Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (April 1, 1975): 38-58, has traced the evolving conceptualization of revenge in the early modern period, associating it with corresponding sociolegal changes. Revenge, especially relative to associated words like retribution or vengeance, was, he argues, especially associated with a personal pursuit of extralegal justice, "without the intervention of any civil authority" (41).

<sup>11</sup> For more on the relationship between revenge and narrative shape, see the seminal work by Charles A. and Elaine S. Hallett, *The Revenger's Madness: A Study of Revenge Tragedy Motifs* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980). Hallett and Hallett offer a definition of "delay" which is key to the way guilt might be understood relative to the genre: delay stems from the "revenger's need to construct his world-within-a-world, that private, self-justifying world which will foster the act the external world would never sanction"; in other words, a rationalization of guilt is built into the play for the character as well as for an audience (10).

<sup>12</sup>The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "revenge" as, among other nuanced meanings, the "satisfaction obtained by repaying an injury or wrong." *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "revenge, n." <http://www.oed.com./view/Entry/164716?rkey=snV5vc&result=1&isAdvanced=false> (accessed March 28, 2012). In a 1625 essay, Sir Francis Bacon gives voice to a powerful thread of early modern thinking about revenge, noting: "revenge is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the

makes clear, is inherently personal; whereas his role as Knight Marshall makes him a confessor in the interest of state power, his rage and grief demand satisfaction in a format that evades the ameliorative containability suggested in conventional confession. As a revenger, Hieronimo assumes agency for the dispensation of justice. The Bible, however, prohibits personal revenge, reserving retribution for God alone in the oft-repeated maxim, “vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord” (Rom. 12:19).<sup>13</sup> In keeping with this moral logic, in the early modern period, secular law also forbade personal revenge.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, a self-conscious revenge plot like Hieronimo’s is predicated on a challenge to the very social structures made possible by and reinforced in confessional speech acts. An act of violence perceived by the revenger as the necessary dispensation of justice for the rectification of a personal wrong, blood revenge tends inevitably to be perceived by the state as murder, and the subject who pursued it guilty of a crime against moral and social codes. This fundamental ideological disparity undermines the capacity of the revenger to participate meaningfully in the confessional practices central to the ritualized containment of disorder. Consequently, as Heather Hirschfeld has argued, “within the paradigm of revenge tragedy, the possibility of atonement has been severely jeopardized if not altogether lost.”<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, to atone is to accede to the social power of the people or institutions to whom one is expected to confess, and successful social restitution is contingent on a mutually intelligible understanding of the conventions of right and wrong that apply in any given situation. The revenger, however, weds personal agency with the implementation of a privately developed moral code.

Though Hieronimo’s attitude toward the dispensation of justice evolves gradually throughout the play, *The Spanish Tragedy* announces itself as a drama of revenge in its very first scene. As the play opens, a personified Revenge figure assures the ghost of recently slain Don Andrea that the “author of [his] death” will be repaid in kind over the course of the drama to follow (1.2.87). Revenge and Andrea act as spectators for the play that unfolds, and view it as an aesthetic construct with the

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first wrong, it doth but offend the law; but the revenge of that wrong pulleth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior; for it is a prince’s part to pardon.”

Francis Bacon, *Essays or Counsels, Civil & Moral* (London: George Newnes Ltd., 1902).

<sup>13</sup> This is the phrasing used in the *King James Bible* (1611). Hieronimo directly lays claim to this heavenly power when he announces late in the play, “*Vindicta mihi!*,” armed with a book of Seneca and having clearly ascribed to a code of justice at issue with prevailing legal and religious doxa (3.13.1).

<sup>14</sup> As Marguerite Tassi has suggested, the consolidation of the power to judge and punish harms visited on individuals in the Crown did not eliminate the popular sense that private avenues of vengeance were right and appropriate. She emphasizes the accompanying popular suspicion that personal revenge promised, in the popular view, to be more satisfying than institutional justice. Marguerite A. Tassi, *Women and Revenge in Shakespeare: Gender, Genre, and Ethics* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2011), 52.

<sup>15</sup> Heather Hirschfeld, “*The Revenger’s Tragedy*: Original Sin and the Allures of Vengeance,” in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Tragedy*, ed. Emma Smith (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 53.



inevitable teleological goal of spectacular revelation. The generic demands of the revenge narrative come to restrict the actions available to characters in the play: frequent references to the plotted-ness of the action serve to highlight that Hieronimo is subject, in Michael Neill's terms, to "the predetermined pattern of revenge."<sup>16</sup> This frame complicates the conventional sense that the revenger sees himself as acting according to individual agency; personified Revenge emphasizes a broader authorial agency into which Hieronimo's own is subsumed. Though the opening scene suggests that the quest for vengeance is the drama's very *raison d'être*, Hieronimo only becomes an actor in that quest after Horatio's death.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, as Revenge suggests to Andrea, Hieronimo is "subject to destiny" (3.15.28). In other words, in pursuing a violent answer to his personal bereavement, Hieronimo is still subject to someone or something else's ideological goals—before it was the king's, now it is the genre's. The ideological framework of revenge is compelling for Hieronimo, however, insofar as it challenges a justice system that would deny Hieronimo the right to dictate the terms of his desired retribution.

The privileging of revenge is established early in the play, but Hieronimo's own vengeance-driven subjective stance is inaugurated only when he has a personal stake in a violation of social order. Both Hieronimo and his wife Isabella initially respond to the murder with the suggestion that knowledge of who was responsible would have a therapeutic effect. Isabella asks rhetorically, "where's the author of this endless woe?" (2.5.39), implicitly expressing a sentiment her husband immediately picks up on in his response, as he adds, "to know the author were to ease some grief" (2.5.40). Their repeated association between the murderer and an "author" suggests a conception of agency that is predicated on the capacity for linguistic expression, and their interest in "knowing" the author highlights a hope that meaningful coherence could still be possible in the wake of their tragedy. For Hieronimo, however, the most attractive answer to his grief lies not in the confession of the guilty parties, with its concomitant promise of performative reconciliation. Rather, he seeks to answer it with more violence—perpetuating the cycle of bereavement and anger that shapes his own

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Neill, "English Revenge Tragedy," in *A Companion to Tragedy*, ed. Rebecca Bushnell (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), in section: "Endless Tragedy": Dramatic Structure and the Rhetoric of Excess, [http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/book?id=g9781405107358\\_9781405107358](http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/book?id=g9781405107358_9781405107358).

<sup>17</sup> Revenge does not mention Hieronimo at the beginning of the play; the latter does not yet have a personal stake in revenge, as not only is his son alive, he is celebrating his success on the battlefield. He does, however, mention Bel-Imperia who was, we learn, in love with Andrea before his death. He predicts her eventual killing of Balthazar, who was responsible for Andrea's death. She is positioned, then, as *The Spanish Tragedy's* primary revenger at the start of the play, and though the play doesn't focus as closely on her psychological development, she functions as an example of an alternate version of revenge-subjectivity, one that also depends on the manipulation of disclosure and withheld expressions of interiority.

vengeful subjective stance. This pursuit of vengeance over reconciliation is foreshadowed immediately after Hieronimo indicates his interest in knowing the author; he directly goes on to elaborate, “in revenge my heart would find some relief” (2.5.41). He associates this goal with personal, internal catharsis, and prizes that over the socially sanctioned avenues of justice and confessional knowledge production that he was once charged with upholding.

As many critics have noted, Hieronimo self-consciously lays claim to an authorial position from which he seeks to control the script for himself and for others, one that promises to counter the authorial capacity exhibited by Horatio’s murderers.<sup>18</sup> The play, however, repeatedly suggests that this particular subject position can never be fully expressed in language. Hieronimo’s articulations of grief are marked by hyperbolic excess—excess, which is belied by the fact that he cannot effectively communicate, or accomplish anything, through them. Stymied in his attempts to find and punish the killers, he laments: “Where shall I run to breathe abroad my woes,/My woes whose weight hath wearied the earth?/Or mine exclaims, that have surcharged the air/With ceaseless plaints for my deceased son?” (3.7.1-4). He imagines his expressions of grief as superhuman, capable of affecting the very environment around him, but at the same time, he suggests that they are always insufficient for the adequate communication of affect. In spite of his best linguistic efforts, his soul remains “tortured” and “tormented” and the heavens “give his words no way” (3.7.18). The figurative performative capacity he ascribes to his lamentations belies their inefficacy for the communication of his subjective state, instantiated as it is by a grief that evades the ameliorative script of verbalized expression.<sup>19</sup>

Hieronimo addresses this problem more pointedly in a later scene that comes as he is trying to identify the murderers. Declining to discuss his plight with Lorenzo (who, unbeknownst to him, is one of the culprits), he laments: “My grief no heart, my thoughts no tongue can tell” (3.5.67). The problem he points to lies not in the thoughts themselves, but rather with his ability to articulate them. In displacing his ability to feel and to communicate separately onto his tongue and heart, Hieronimo’s words imply that his sorrow and subsequent quest for retribution threaten his own

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<sup>18</sup> See for example Lukas Erne, *Beyond The Spanish Tragedy: A Study of the Works of Thomas Kyd* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2001), 100–103; Frank R. Ardolino, *Thomas Kyd’s Mystery Play: Myth and Ritual in “The Spanish Tragedy”* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1985), 158–60.

<sup>19</sup> Mazzio emphasizes the fact that Horatio’s name contains the Latin *oratio*, a term for speech, suggesting as I do that there is a direct connection for Hieronimo between the loss of his son and his struggles with language (108).

subjective coherence.<sup>20</sup> As with discussing confession, the capacity for verbal self-expression tends to coincide with a sense of self-knowledge and reflection, and the capacity to communicate those inner narratives is central to one's subjective sociality. This concept is constantly undermined in the play, even as its frequent reference to authorship and writing indicates a strong interest in the desire to express the seemingly inexpressible in language. Hieronimo's problems of expression signal his increasing detachment from the sociolinguistic fields in which he has been enmeshed and more broadly, suggest that social and personal ills cannot be redressed in language.

When Hieronimo finally discovers that Lorenzo and Balthazar—heirs to the Spanish and Portuguese thrones respectively—were behind Horatio's death, he is forced to confront the inextricability of the competing social taxonomies that have jointly structured his attitude toward justice.<sup>21</sup> In his official role, he has embodied the ideological control of the state in acting as confessor to the condemned whose punishments he supervised, but in role as a bereaved father, his search for justice is driven by grief that seemingly cannot be contained or satisfied. Consequently, though he considers bringing his suit to the King, he cannot bring himself to submit to the latter's presumed authority over the case. The status of the murderers as powerful royals, tied to the future of the state itself, is suggestive of the assumed insufficiency of the current regulatory apparatus to adequately respond to Horatio's death.<sup>22</sup> A search for justice that relies on confession for narrative closure falters amidst this normative order, and the familial codes on which it depends, is not wholly stable.

Hieronimo ultimately pursues his revenge through overt spectacle in the play he stages for the court, *Soliman and Perseda*; the execution he intends is framed by the promise of theatrical entertainment. Its plot loosely mirrors the events behind Horatio's murder, but in it, the characters portrayed by Lorenzo and Balthazar are slain. Unbeknownst to their costars, Hieronimo and Bel-

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<sup>20</sup> In the first scene, Andrea used similar language to describe his travels through the underworld, saying, "I saw more sights than thoughts tongues can tell,/Or pens can write, or mortal hearts can think" (1.1.57-58), a description that, like Hieronimo's later complaints, gets at experiences that exceed the capacity of the human subject to meaningfully situate within existing signifying systems.

<sup>21</sup> Hieronimo's association with unreliable or inconsistent communication extends to his discovery of the murders' identity and shapes the specific course of his revenge. Shortly after Horatio's death, Hieronimo receives a letter from Bel-Imperia, who had been romantically associated first with Andrea and then with Horatio. In the letter, written in blood, she implicates Balthazar and her brother Lorenzo. Though Hieronimo has indicated a strong desire to learn the identity of the murderers, he doesn't trust the letter, suggesting that it might be a trap. It is only when a second letter found on Pedringano subsequently confirms the narrative Bel-Imperia communicated to Hieronimo that he actively begins to pursue her claims; he is unable to productively process the message until it is delivered in excess.

<sup>22</sup> Given the anti-Spanish political climate in England at the time, the thought of a vigilante antidote to an inadequate system of justice set in the Spanish court would probably have been more palatable to English viewers than a similar plot in a modern domestic context.

Imperia perform actual killing in place of staged simulation.<sup>23</sup> The diminished agential capacity of his targets is compounded by the fact that the performance itself is characterized by linguistic chaos: Hieronimo directs each character to speak a different language, so no two communicate in a common tongue.<sup>24</sup> In doing so, he helps ensure that Lorenzo and Balthazar are unwitting participants, unable to author their final performances. By declining to accuse them publicly, Hieronimo rejects the opportunity to posit himself as confessor to his son's murderers, either by way of sanctioned avenues of justice or through direct confrontation. His authorial position denies his targets the capacity to confess, in part to prevent them from withholding a confession and thus undermining his assumed power over language. Furthermore, he refuses to inhabit the space of mutual recognition and forgiveness—even perfunctory forgiveness—associated with confessional spaces.<sup>25</sup> The inarticulacy associated with grief means that for Hieronimo, participation in confessional rituals does not offer the promise of meaningful catharsis—the possibility for that kind of personal and social amelioration has been obviated altogether. Instead, he satisfies the goals of revenge in a manner designed to emphasize his own authorial power.

Hieronimo insists on the authorial agency to communicate a sense of his own closure: in contrast to the intentionally incoherent play, here he addresses his audience directly and in common language, his tongue “tuned to tell his latest” —or last—”tale” (4.4.84). He then proceeds to reframe the supposed entertainment he has just put on in terms of the violent revenge it actually was. Though he has struggled throughout the last two acts to communicate his grief, in this final scene he seems to take delight in speaking at considerable length, reiterating in his own words the events that have just taken place. He does so not in order to occupy the traditional role of the confessant—because based on the moral logic of his plot, he has not committed a crime for which he ought to feel sorry—but, rather, to assert control over the narrative of what has happened. He offers his own recreation of Horatio's murder, one that alludes both to Lorenzo and Balthazar's motives and means. In doing so, he appropriates their foreclosed confessional agency in order to retroactively

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<sup>23</sup> Bel-Imperia exerts her own authorial agency by departing from the part Hieronimo has set out for her and killing herself at the end of the play as well; this is one of the numerous ways in which she lays claim to a vengeful self-authorship that operates in tandem with Hieronimo's.

<sup>24</sup> Mazzio notes that *Soliman and Perseda* is the first known play-within-a-play in English drama in order to emphasize the point that *The Spanish Tragedy*'s meta-theatrical bent can also be seen in Hieronimo's self-conscious role as playwright and author (94).

<sup>25</sup> Tentler associates two qualities with Protestant confession: “an objectively unconditional offer of forgiveness” and an “absolution [that] is subjectively certain” (360). Though this speaks specifically to the religious context of confession, as opposed to this one, associated with individual, rather than institutional, confessional clout, I argue that an awareness of this type of conventional expectation would still have the power to shape the exchange.

frame the punishment he has implemented. This speech contains some of the attributes of a personal confession on his part: he provides an explanation which reveals what he did and why, but he refuses to frame it in a way that acknowledges the power of his interlocutors. Furthermore, as his claim that with the staging of his revenge, his “heart is satisfied” makes clear, he does not regret or repent, and he speaks not to expiate the violence he has caused but rather to compound it in words (4.4.129).

Hieronimo spectacularizes both guilt and punishment in a manner that satisfies the revenge narrative in which he has been inscripted, but which promises to be illegible to participants not familiar with the telos of that plot. For the audience, the spectacle of death in Hieronimo’s play-within-a-play, which was enjoyable when experienced as fiction, is horrifying as fact: that it *is* satisfying to Hieronimo clearly demonstrates his appropriation of the agency to interpret the prevailing moral standards that define acceptable actions according to his personal grief. His speech after the playlet serves no social function except to compound the incomprehension of the bearers of power. The repetitions and detailed descriptions of events which have been staged for all to see contained within his speech suggest, however, that on some level he is insisting that they *must* understand the comprehensible moral value he sees in his actions. Hieronimo expects them to understand him precisely because he sees this ending as inevitable and prescribed. His insistence that the drama has reached a satisfying end belies the fact that his revenge has perpetuated a cycle of violence: his bereavement has led inexorably to that of the King, Duke, and Viceroy in his audience, who have just been deprived of their own children and heirs. He presents Horatio’s body on stage in order to offer a graphic justification for his revenge, but for those outside his subjective space, the absolute moral distinction he perceives between Horatio’s dead body and the others blurs. Though Hieronimo points out that the Portuguese Viceroy’s loss “resembles” his, this seems intended to compound his ideological revenge, rather than to vilify his own behavior. The conclusion of the revenge plot, tied as it is to a personal vision of justice, produces likeness, but not a sense of community or meaningful communication.

In his speech after the playlet, Hieronimo places repeated emphasis on drawing the drama to a definitive close. This insistence on producing an ending demonstrates his effort to privilege his personal plot, which reached its previously expressed telos in the deaths of Horatio’s killers. At the end of this speech, he instructs his audience to:

Now behold Hieronimo

Author and actor in this tragedy,  
Bearing his latest fortune in his fist:  
And will as resolute conclude his part  
As any of the actors gone before.  
And gentles, thus I end my play:  
Urge no more words: I have no more to say (4.4.146-52)

He is indeed both an actor and an author in the play—he has been both framed by and an agent of a revenge plot which, as he emphasizes, is structured around his personal grief.<sup>26</sup> But his resolution to conclude is *not*, as he says, akin to that of those who have done before him, who were subject to his manipulation of an incoherent linguistic system—one in which plot superseded meaningful communication. His final insistence that he has nothing to add is incomprehensible to an audience that has just been confronted with an act that they view not as the inevitable end of a revenge plot, but instead as a senseless breach of social and moral codes. He retells his story, but resists the interlocutory role of the confessant, attempting to deny his socially superior audience the opportunity to question him or shape his final monologue. His refutation of the conventional rituals of ideological regulation is incomplete; the King and court prevent him from hanging himself in an attempt to directly and visibly circumvent the state's authority over the body of the killer.

Numerous critics have described the speech Hieronimo makes following *Soliman and Perseda* as a confession, and some, including Mazzio and Lukas Erne, have gestured in particular to the apparent redundancy of this continued questioning of Hieronimo in the wake of the extensive account that he has provided of what has transpired.<sup>27</sup> Though Hieronimo's words appear in some ways to serve as confessional, the rejection of conventional taxonomies of justice that has allowed Hieronimo to distinguish between his revenge and others' murder makes it unintelligible as such.<sup>28</sup> The resulting irreconcilable tension drives the state's insistent effort to produce a meaningful narrative. The King attempts to extract a more coherent conclusion while reasserting his rightful authority over discourse, exhorting Hieronimo: "Speak, traitor; damned, bloody murderer, speak/For now I have

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<sup>26</sup> In Michael Neill, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), Neill notes that Hieronimo's phrasing in this final couplet is engineered to connect his literal death to a "theatrical full stop" (213). The King's subsequent refutation of this poetic, theatrical, and personal effort at closure undermines the dramatic authority Hieronimo claimed previously in the scene.

<sup>27</sup> See Mazzio, 110, and Erne, 63.

<sup>28</sup> In Katharine Eisaman Maus, "The Spanish Tragedy, or, The Machiavel's Revenge," in *Revenge Tragedy: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Stevie Simkin (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 102-03, Maus describes how both Hieronimo's playlet and speech, in different ways, fail to educate his audience—both sides are unwilling, or unable, to comprehend the stakes of their shared positions as bereaved fathers. She notes, however, that this communicative failure does not undermine the defiance of Hieronimo's gesture.

thee I will make thee speak” (4.4.163-64). Hieronimo’s revenge, much like the grief that precipitated it, seems not to have been successfully communicated in language. They focus specifically on the “why’s” of Hieronimo’s action, rather than the “what’s,” illuminating the failure of his speech to satisfy one goal of confession: to reassert a sense of personal and social coherence in the face of a spectacle that poses a fundamental challenge to it. I would reframe the King’s demand by emphasizing not that the King wants to make Hieronimo *speak* (which he is already doing), but that he wants to *make* him speak. As discussed above, true confession conventionally demands a hierarchy that subordinates the person confessing to the social standard as it is embodied in their confessor. In other words, in his attempt to compel a confession, the King is attempting to reassert his authority through control over the confessional exchange in an attempt to elicit a performative reaffirmation of social convention. Furthermore, he seeks from Hieronimo a narrative that will “satisfy”, though the play has otherwise suggested that no such narrative is actually possible (4.4.196). Hieronimo’s explicit denial of the possibility of such a performance is perceived as an act of personal and political aggression. Hieronimo refers to his right to “harmless silence”, but (the exchange that follows makes clear) this silence is powerful and threatens the integrity of the regulatory rituals which would reincorporate his revenge into a moral and judicial taxonomy that would see them not as just executions and instead as traitorous murders (4.4.181).

Hieronimo, though more than willing to speak in terms of his own script, is fundamentally unwilling to accede to the discursive authority of those he has wronged; he promises “never shalt thou force me to reveal /That thing which I have vowed inviolate” (4.4.188). Critics have long puzzled over the opacity of the “inviolate” and inarticulable thing to which Hieronimo alludes—up until this point, he has seemed keen to describe his sorrow and triumph to the audience.<sup>29</sup> Even in suggesting that there is more that he will not reveal, he maintains a claim to authorial autonomy that defies attempts to coerce a meaningful confession from him, and posits his ability to make and keep a vow—a speech act—in direct violation of a regal command.<sup>30</sup> The “inviolate” thing to which

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<sup>29</sup> In his edition of the play, Phillip Edwards insists that there is nothing that Hieronimo has vowed inviolate, and says that the fact that the king’s understandable distress should manifest itself in insistent questions is very odd. See Philip Edwards, “Introduction,” in *The Spanish Tragedy* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1983), xxxv. Michael Neill has offered one interpretation of the remaining secret to which Hieronimo alludes, suggesting that “the thing that still remains unrevealed and unwritten, is its ending” (Neill, *Issues*, 202).

<sup>30</sup> In her reading of *As You Like It*, Susanne Wofford claims that Shakespearean theater, and I suggest, that of his artistic contemporaries, contests the control of the performative utterance by the crown, implicitly claiming for itself the right to do things with words.” Susanne Wofford, “‘To You I Give Myself, for I Am Yours’: Erotic Performance and Theatrical Performatives in *As You Like It*,” in *Shakespeare Reread: The Texts in New Contexts*, ed. Russ McDonald (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 149.

Hieronimo alludes is suggestive of the uncontrollable nature of subjects able to conceive of and narrate their own capacity to threaten the regulatory apparatuses of prevailing ideological systems. Furthermore, it demonstrates the limits of a ritual that depends on the verbal submission of the transgressor. A 1602 printed edition of the play included new material to the previously published play text that sheds a slightly different light on the power dynamics of this struggle to control articulation.<sup>31</sup> The new version of the final scene does not include the line about that which is “inviolable,” suggesting through different means that confession does not always work as a meaningful *pro forma* performance. Hieronimo notes that by this point he “grew inward with revenge,” a phrasing which emphasizes his intimacy with it, and in particular the extent to which it has come to structure his sense of his own interiority, alienating him from the possibility of confessional restitution. When the King proposes physical torture for the truculent Hieronimo, the latter responds with verbal “torture” of his own, reiterating again both the potential futures lost with the deaths that have occurred and insisting on his agency in carrying them out. His audience seems to recoil, indicating the performative power of his words: he appropriates the narrative principles of confession and the social position of the confessant in a manner that subverts the conservative power dynamics that typically underlie the exchange. In doing so, he compounds his revenge by posing threat to these powerful men beyond the one suggested in his physical violence.

In the 1602 addition to the scene, Hieronimo also offers a more elaborate expression of his post-revenge subjective state, one that explicitly highlights his abandonment of his previous role as agent of the state in favor of a far more autonomous self-conception. In seeing the spectacle of his revenge, he tells his royal interlocutors that he is “grown a prouder monarch/Than ever sat under the crown of Spain” (4.4.178). In addition to asserting his relative power over them, this formulation betrays the slippage between Hieronimo and those he targets in his role as revenging hero. Though his strategic use of silence is intended to preserve his subjective and authorial singularity, moments like these illuminate his connections both to the bereaved fathers before him and the killers that he has in turn killed. His anti-confessional stance is a symptom of the problems in the system he is trying to confront, and it illustrates the extent to which the prevailing social network, which has been so spectacularly threatened by Hieronimo’s performance, was always unstable, characterized by secrets, miscommunications, and rivalries. The trajectory of his revenge metes out punishment not

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<sup>31</sup> Kyd himself did not write them, nor would they have been performed as part of the play originally, but they have long been considered in criticism of the text. Though Ben Johnson is often posited as an author for these scenes, there is no definitive information on their provenance.



only on those who actively committed murder, but also on their forbearers. This displacement is most dramatically expressed when, before killing himself, Hieronimo suddenly and for no obvious reason kills the Duke (Lorenzo's father). This act demonstrates the breakdown of the moral logic of revenge and extends the effects of the revenge plot beyond the ending Hieronimo previously professed, indicating that subjective space afforded by that plot cannot be wholly contained.

Hieronimo physically demonstrates his unwillingness to comply with the desire for the catharsis of a coherent public narrative of his actions when he bites out his own tongue. His final line: "First take my tongue, and afterwards my heart" recalls the divide between tongue—or linguistic capacity—and heart—subjective interiority—with which he has struggled since he embarked on his path to revenge.<sup>32</sup> He offers his interlocutors the embodied emblems of confession, but they are both literally and figuratively fragmented. The spectacular, violent disarticulation of Hieronimo's self-mutilation ultimately suggests that revenge is a crime that eludes confession—though Hieronimo can, and does, *retell* his crime, he cannot offer a satisfying confession to his audience onstage or off, because his plot has been dictated by a personal logic of retribution that cannot be recuperated in conventional language. Even with this defiant gesture, he does not fully escape the efforts of his would-be confessors to reinscribe him in their system of power, since they demand a written confession instead. Hieronimo demonstrates his subversive power one final time in using this demand against them, stabbing himself with the penknife intended to facilitate fuller disclosure. Hieronimo's subversive suicide cements the inability of the regulatory apparatus to exert physical and linguistic control over a defiant subject and the inability of this new set of bereaved fathers to attempt to orchestrate their own revenge.

As the play demonstrates, the prescriptive powers of the revenge plot situate players into roles that compromise their ability to access and communicate their subjective experiences, and consequently, the tantalizing promise of full revelation and social catharsis embedded in narratives of confession can never be fully realized. Accordingly, at the end of the play, there is no real promise of earthy redemption or social cohesion, and the repercussions of the revenge plot seem destined to be endless, especially for a state which has been violently robbed of its heirs.<sup>33</sup> The play ends where it began, with the personified figure of Revenge, who watches the drama unfold. The last line of the play, in which Revenge hints at the "endless tragedy" being prepared for Hieronimo and Andrea's

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<sup>32</sup> In figuratively offering up his heart, he is perhaps alluding in part to the practice of removing the hearts of traitors.

<sup>33</sup> Given the political tensions between England and Spain at this time, the disintegration of the Spanish royal house would probably have been received as a positive outcome by the English audience.

enemies, points beyond the scope of a drama to confirm the uncontainable nature of revenge. Hieronimo demonstrates that on an individual level, revenge is driven by motives so powerful and personal as to be essentially inexpressible. The play suggests that on a broader level, however, the social tensions driving revenge and retribution are perpetually present and inescapable. If, as I have argued, confession is an interactive performance that offers to repair a ruptured social network, then the revenge plot of *The Spanish Tragedy* refuses to accede to that notion. However, the avid pursuit of meaningful confession by the surviving members of the Spanish court and the subversive power Hieronimo derives from his appropriation of the roles associated with it demonstrate the ideological power of the ritual to shape intersubjective relationships. This power, however, lies not in the conventional capacity of confession to reify extant dynamics; rather, it finds its most striking expression in the spaces it opens up for unpredictable performances of social and linguistic agency.

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## Women, Heresy, and Crusade: Toward a Context for Jacques de Vitry's Relationship to the Early Beguines

By Benjamin A. Wright

Jacques de Vitry (1165/70–1240) has been a familiar name in histories of the Beguines, which were religious communities not living according to an established rule and not bound by traditional monastic vows. Born at Vitry in Champagne sometime between 1165 and 1170, Jacques's clerical career took him to the University of Paris, the diocese of Liège (1210), and then to the Crusader port of Acre (1217) where he served as bishop until his return to Europe in 1227. A close friend of Cardinal Ugolino of Ostia, Jacques was appointed as cardinal archbishop of Tusculum near Rome after the latter was elected Pope Gregory IX. Jacques died on April 30, 1240.<sup>1</sup> His association with Beguines received prominent treatment in Herbert Grundmann's 1961 publication, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, which argued for Jacques's foundational role on the basis of a single letter. Written a few days before September 29, 1216, Grundmann argued that this letter was an official permission that made possible religious communities living without a rule.<sup>2</sup> Subsequent writers on the Beguines have avoided overplaying this alleged privilege acquired in August of 1216. However, as an historical actor, Jacques continues to hover patriarchally over accounts of the foundation of Beguine

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<sup>1</sup> To date no complete biography of Jacques exists in the English language. The last comprehensive study of Jacques life was written by Robert Funk, *Jakob von Vitry: Leben und Werke* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1909). More recently, Ernest McDonnell has devoted a chapter to roughly outlining Jacques' career in his study of Beguine culture. "The Education of Jacques de Vitry" in *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), 20-39.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 1996). The critical edition of Jacques' letters was edited by R.B.C. Huygens, *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry: (1160/1170-1240) évêque de Saint-Jean-d'Acre* (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 71-78. (Hereafter, *Letter 1*, followed by Huygen's line numbers). No exact date can be given for letter 1, but Jacques ends his letter by indicating that he and his entourage had already boarded their ship, and seems reasonable to assume they would have done this not much earlier than one or two days before their departure on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

institutions.<sup>3</sup> This paper seeks to clarify Jacques's privilege and its role in the Beguine movement in the first decades of the thirteenth century, demonstrating how Jacques sought to appropriate Beguine spiritualities and institutions for the politics of crusade rather than pave the way for Beguine institutions by establishing legal protection for religious women.

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Grundmann's search for a founding figure is understandable in light of the problematic nature of Beguine institutional history. Beguine historiography has long struggled with the anomalous lack of clear foundation documents and accounts. As early as the 1250s, the Cistercian chronicler Giles of Orval sought to provide a founding myth for these women in the person of a heterodox Liégois cleric, Lambert le Begue ("the Stammerer"). Writing in the 1250s, he suggested an etymological link to the twelfth century cleric: "Women and girls who desire to live chastely are called 'Beguines' in French, because Lambert le Begue was the first to preach to them by word and deed about the rewards of chastity."<sup>4</sup> The persuasiveness of this etymology was reasonable enough to convince even some Beguines themselves. An illustration on the frontispiece of a Psalter copied for a Beguine community provides evidence of early appropriation of Lambert le Begue as patron: the miniature depicts a priest with the captions "Lord Lambert" and "This good man was first to found the order of the Beguinage."<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, the connection between Lambert and the religious movement has proven to be as fanciful as the false etymology behind their name.

The impulse to identify a definite historical figure as "founder" of the Beguine movement has proven hard to resist. Herbert Grundmann drew attention to Jacques, citing him as the first cleric to acquire official recognition for the religious women outside of Liège on the basis of Jacques's *Letter 1*. Grundmann begins his discussion of women's religious movements with a very general treatment of Jacques's letter, characterizing it as a permission to form independent cloistral communities.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> McDonnell's portrait of Jacques avoids discussing the implications of Jacques' privilege, but maintains him as a central figure of the early Beguine movement. McDonnell, *Beguines*, 156. By comparison, Walter Simons states explicitly that "despite the claims of various early modern and modern mythologies, the beguine movement was not the creation of a single individual, male or female." *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 36.

<sup>4</sup> "Lambertus li Beges... a cuius cognomine mulieres et puelle que caste vivere proponunt Beguines Gallice cognominantur, quia ipse primus extitit, qui eis premium castitatis verbo et exemplo predicavit." Giles of Orval, *Gesta episcoporum Leodiensium* in Johan Heller, ed. *Monumenta Germaniae Historia, Series Scriptores*, vol. 25 (Hannover: Hahn, 1880), 110. (Hereafter, MGH SS)

<sup>5</sup> Walter Simons reproduces this frontispiece from London, British Library, Add. Ms. 21114, f. 7v. *Cities of Ladies*, 32-33 and 167 n. 153

<sup>6</sup> Grundmann does not give evidence for why he sees Jacques' intended communities as "cloistral." *Letter 1* does not mention any specific regulations for his *mulieres religiosae*. Likewise, Grundmann mistakenly assumes that this privilege was

Grundmann starts, not with an analysis of the underlying social conditions that produced the movement, but with the character and personality of Jacques de Vitry.<sup>7</sup> Placed in this formative context, Jacques is portrayed as the cleric who obtained “permission” for the religious women and paved the way for the Beguine movement. After Grundmann, Ernest McDonnell gives a closer reading to the letter, but still characterizes this as an attempt to “regulate the affairs of the *mulieres religiosae* and to secure official recognition of their small communities.”<sup>8</sup> More recent writers have assumed this picture of Jacques, but struggle to reconcile it with their reading of other texts by subverting the importance of institutional narratives. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and Marie-Élisabeth Henneau propose a reading of the Life of Marie of Oignies that recasts Jacques as one who was formed by, rather than the one who formed the holy women of Liège.<sup>9</sup>

Interpreting Jacques as “founder” may be historiographically useful, but it obscures the context in which he worked to authorize the Beguine life and exaggerates the results that he attained. Moreover, this reading of history implies that there was an effective formal recognition for religious women before the rise of Beguine spirituality in the mid-thirteenth century—an assertion that may not actually be justifiable. Resituating Jacques’ privilege in the context of the early Beguines involves an examination first of the details of Jacques’s biography to provide insight into his motivations, and then an examination of the text of *Letter 1* itself.

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Jacques’s career as a cleric took him to the University of Paris by as early as 1187, where he was a master before 1193.<sup>10</sup> The University in the last decades of the twelfth century was a gathering place for various schools of thought, not all of which Jacques considered equally orthodox. Jacques later wrote about his time at Paris and his affiliation with the circle of Peter the Chanter, whom he praised as a “lily among thorns” and a teacher of honorable life and serious doctrine.<sup>11</sup>

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“only in oral form.” Jacques explicitly says, “obtinui... litteras.” Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 75; Jacques de Vitry, *Letter 1*, 76.

<sup>7</sup> Compare Grundmann’s genesis of the Beguines with Walter Simons’ *Cities of Ladies*, where the first chapter surveys the demographic and economic condition of cities in the Low Countries and the Rhineland, arguing for a contextualization free of authoritarian founding figures.

<sup>8</sup> McDonnell, *Beguines*, 155.

<sup>9</sup> Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and Marie-Élisabeth Henneau, “Introduction: Liège, the Medieval ‘Woman Question’, and the Question of Medieval Women” in *New Trends in Feminine Spirituality: The Holy Women of Liège and their Impact*, Juliette Dor, et al. eds. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), pp. 1-32.

<sup>10</sup> Funk, *Jakob von Vitry*, 9; Benton’s charter of 1193 refers to Jacques as “magister.” Benton, “Les parents,” 46.

<sup>11</sup> Jacques de Vitry recounts his years at Paris in his *Historia Occidentalis*, ed. John Hinnebusch, *The Historia Occidentalis of Jacques de Vitry* (Fribourg: Spicilegium Friburgense, 1972), 89-93.

Peter's circle provided the environment in which Jacques encountered the charismatic personality of Fulk of Neuilly (d. 1201). Fulk was a rural parish priest in the diocese of Paris and—Jacques tells us—greatly unlearned. This lack of learning embarrassed Fulk, whose pastoral cares weighed upon his conscience. Trading the rural life of his parish for the University at Paris, Fulk came—wax tablets in hand—to gather spiritual and moral lessons to preach. Under the instruction of Peter the Chanter, Fulk filled his tablets during the week, and on feast days would preach these texts in local churches. Peter took interest in his pupil's preaching and compelled him to speak at the Church of St. Severinus to an audience of scholars and university masters. Fulk's unschooled eloquence impressed the Parisian scholars.<sup>12</sup>

The success of Fulk's preaching spread his fame throughout the Kingdom of France and the Empire. Fulk had a dramatic effect wherever he went. Jacques states that when Fulk urged clerics to put away their concubines crowds of prostitutes would leave their brothels to hear his preaching. Spiritual conversion for these "working girls" (*meretrices*) had economic and social implications as well. Fulk arranged marriages for many of these women, and others he enclosed in religious houses so they could abandon their customary means of earning a living. This influx of new converts to the religious life crowded existing houses of nuns, so Fulk founded a new monastery outside Paris to receive former prostitutes as Cistercian nuns.<sup>13</sup>

Fulk's religious reforms also embraced the broader political concerns of his time. Fulk's preaching tours took him to a tournament of nobles in Jacques's home county of Champagne in 1099. His crusade preaching signed numerous important lords, including Simon de Montfort. Simon and the other nobles soon put their crusade fervor into action in the infamous Fourth Crusade which ended in the sack of Constantinople in 1204. It is difficult to measure the motivations behind crusading campaigns, but the impact simple preachers such as Fulk had was undoubtedly significant.<sup>14</sup>

Whatever the impact on broader history, Fulk's crusade preaching was formative for his classmate Jacques. Jacques highlights Fulk as the forerunner of the renovation of the western Church that he describes in his catalog of religious movements, the *History of the West*, written in the 1220s

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<sup>12</sup> Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Occidentalis*, 89-90, 93-96.

<sup>13</sup> Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Occidentalis*, 96-101. The foundation Fulk established, St-Antoine-des-Champs, outside of Paris, was later received into the Cistercian order and was patronized by many leading figures in France, including Simon de Montfort. Constance Berman, "Cistercian Nuns and the Development of the Order: The Abbey at Saint-Antoine-des-Champs outside Paris" in *The Joy of Learning and the Love of God: Essays in Honor of Jean Leclercq*, ed. E. Rozanne Elder (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1995), 121-156.

<sup>14</sup> Fulk's preaching during the tournament at Ecry-sur-Aisne forms the beginning of Villehardouin's chronicle of the Fourth Crusade, ed. Martin Bouquet, *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 18 (Paris: 1879), 433.

while Jacques was bishop of Acre.<sup>15</sup> Jacques's own career would take him in different directions, but the pattern of crusade preaching and subsequent foundation of women's religious houses would continue to shape his own actions after his departure from Paris. For example, Jacques is attested in several charters granting lands and other properties to recently founded monasteries for Cistercian nuns.<sup>16</sup>

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According to Thomas of Cantimpré, Jacques was still a student at Paris and not yet ordained when he heard the holy reputation of a certain woman named Marie living in Oignies, a small village in the diocese of Liège: "When he had heard of the holy servant of Christ, Marie of Oignies, he left his theological studies to which he was fervently devoted and came to Oignies where she herself had recently moved."<sup>17</sup> Marie of Oignies (d. 1213) was a pious laywoman who lived a religious life outside the regular structure of traditional monasticism. Born to a well-to-do (though not necessarily noble) family, Marie was interested in the monastic life, but her parents arranged a marriage for her at the age of fourteen. Marie was able to negotiate a chaste marriage with her husband until he died, and then lived the rest of her life independently, ministering to lepers and the clergy of the collegiate church of St. Nicholas of Oignies.<sup>18</sup>

By the year 1210, Jacques went back to Paris where he was ordained and then returned to Oignies to join the community of regular canons at St. Nicholas, where he served as Marie's confessor.<sup>19</sup> Although her ecclesiastical superior, the respect and deference he held for her adds considerable depth to our understanding of their relationship. Thomas of Cantimpré says that it was she who ordered him to return to Paris for ordination, and then later "compelled him to preach to the people and call back souls which the devil had snatched."<sup>20</sup> Thomas later adds that it was only because of the intercession and prayers of Marie that Jacques's preaching miraculously achieved celebrity, so much

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<sup>15</sup> Jacques characterizes other preachers, including his colleague in Liège, John of Nivelles, as followers of the example of Fulk. To what extent Jacques's own model for preaching was based on the *exemplum* of Fulk is an interesting question and potentially significant for understanding the large body of preaching materials left by Jacques. *Historia Occidentalis*, 102-103.

<sup>16</sup> Ursmer Berlière, "Jacques de Vitry: Ses relations avec les abbayes d'Aywières et de Doorezele," *Revue Bénédictine* 25 (1908): 185-193.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas of Cantimpré, *Vita Mariae Oigniacensis, Supplementum*, edited in Daniel Papebroeck, ed. *Acta Sanctorum*, (June 23) vol. 4 (Antwerp: Peter Jacobs, 1707), 666.

<sup>18</sup> Jacques de Vitry, *Vita Mariae Oigniacensis*, edited in Daniel Papebroeck, ed. *Acta Sanctorum*, (June 23) vol. 4 (Antwerp: Peter Jacobs, 1707), 666.

<sup>19</sup> Jacques writes of Marie's confessions, slightly breaking protocol by adding, "As God is my witness, never in my life did I perceive a single mortal sin in her life and behavior." *Vita Mariae Oigniacensis*, 641.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas of Cantimpré, *Supplementum*, 667.

that “hardly any mortal was able to equal him in expounding the scriptures and overcoming sins.”<sup>21</sup> If Thomas is taken at his word, it is Marie and the power of her prayers, not Jacques’ own ambition, talent, or agency that helped him acquire his fame in preaching.

During the years 1211–1213, Jacques continued to preach at Marie’s bidding. This preaching, however, was flavored with the crusade fervor he had learned from Fulk of Neuilly’s preaching.<sup>22</sup> Like his mentor, Fulk, Jacques’ preaching had definite effects on the success of the crusades. Peter of Vaux-Cernay, the chronicler of the contemporary Albigensian Crusade, records that in April of 1212, Simon de Montfort’s forces were bolstered by the arrival of pilgrims who had joined the crusade due to the preaching of Jacques.<sup>23</sup> Attempts to garner support for the crusade in Southern France incited another Fulk, the Bishop of Toulouse, to visit the region of Liège. Bishop Fulk was introduced to Jacques and Marie, as well as other communities in that area and was, says Jacques, greatly impressed by the piety of the holy women of Liège, noting that nothing like them existed in his own diocese.<sup>24</sup> Shortly after Fulk returned to the South, Marie died in 1213. Reflecting on her life as a prescription for the problems of Southern France, Jacques penned his *Life of Marie* at Fulk’s request. This hagiographic work was not addressed to the holy women of Liège or any other Beguine group, but to Fulk, now embroiled in the height of the Albigensian Crusade.

Jacques’s crusade preaching garnered the attention of more than just bishop Fulk. In the years between 1213 and 1215 he seems to have attracted the attention of distant churches. By the last months of 1215, word of Jacques’s preaching reached Outremer, and the Cathedral chapter of St. John’s in Acre elected him as bishop of that diocese, presumably on his reputation for an ability to stir the multitudes with Crusade fervor.<sup>25</sup> Jacques seems to have quickly accepted his preferment, and began his journey early in 1216 to the court of Innocent III at Perugia to receive confirmation in his office. Jacques’ *Letter 1* narrates the events of this journey from spring 1216 to the end of September that same year.

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<sup>21</sup> Thomas of Cantimpré, *Supplementum*, 667.

<sup>22</sup> Funk, *Jakob von Vitry*, 31-37.

<sup>23</sup> Peter of Vaux-Cernay, *Historia Albigensis*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH SS* vol. 26, 399.

<sup>24</sup> Jacques de Vitry, *Vita Mariae Oigniacensis*, 542.

<sup>25</sup> Ernoul’s Chronicle explains that Jacques “had signed many for the crusades wherever he went preaching.” Immediately adding that the canons elected (*l’eslirent*) him and only subsequently sought permission from Innocent III to confirm their choice. *Chronique d’Ernoul*, ed. Louis de Mas Latrie, (Paris: Renouard, 1871), 410.



Jacques's *Letter 1* is the first in a series of seven letters he wrote between September 1216 and Easter of 1221.<sup>26</sup> These dates correspond directly with Jacques's journey from Liège, his time as Bishop of Acre, and the two years he spent with the crusader army at Damietta in Egypt. Written as public letters, Jacques's correspondence is refined but not altogether personal. However, addressees are identified in some manuscripts. Unfortunately the first line of the only manuscript to reproduce *Letter 1* has been mutilated, so there is no direct evidence of its recipients.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, because the continuous narrative of the first two letters, the recipient of *Letter 2* would have also read *Letter 1*.<sup>28</sup> Following this logic, a case may be made that the recipient of *Letter 1* was the same as the recipient of *Letter 2*, who is identified in the same manuscript as Liutgard of Aywières, abbess of one of the Cistercian monasteries Jacques had acquired donations for in 1213.<sup>29</sup>

Jacques begins *Letter 1* by recounting his journey down the Italian Alps in early spring, when the melting snow caused the rivers to overflow and even washed out the bridges. During one such treacherous crossing, one of his chests filled with his "arsenal"—his books, he explains—fell into the torrents and was swept away. His mule, however, was able to hold up the other chest, containing a reliquary which carried the finger of his "mother"—Marie of Oignies—so that it was not soaked in the flood. The chest with his books was quickly found caught up among some tree branches and Jacques associates a miraculous event with Marie: the books sustained very little water damage, and could still be read.

Jacques describes his arrival in the city of Perugia, on July 17,<sup>30</sup> a mere day after the death of Innocent III. Jacques describes his visitation of Innocent III's body a day after his death: "I entered the church, and I realized how transient and meaningless is the false glory of this age."<sup>31</sup> The following day, however, the conclave gathered and a new pope was elected. The consecration of the pope happened the Sunday after his election, and the following Sunday, Jacques himself was consecrated as bishop of Acre. Jacques claims Honorius received him in a friendly manner, and allowed him an audience almost as often as he wanted.

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<sup>26</sup> Huygens, *Lettres*, 52.

<sup>27</sup> The manuscript in question is Ghent, University Library, MS 554; Huygens, *Lettres*, 6.

<sup>28</sup> Jacques wrote *Letter 1* from Genoa, indicating that his goods had already been loaded onto the ship. *Letter 2* is written from Acre, picking up his narrative at his departure from Genoa.

<sup>29</sup> Berlière, "les abbayes d'Aywières et de Doorezeele," 185-193.

<sup>30</sup> Jacques reveals that Innocent, who had died on July 16<sup>th</sup>, had been laid out in state the day before his arrival, hence Jacques must have arrived on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> Jacques de Vitry, *Letter 1*, 66-67.

Jacques is vague with respect to the political implications of these meetings, but he does highlight two privileges he obtained, and a third which he requested but was denied. The first of these privileges was a license to preach not only in his own diocese in the Latin east, but also in Crusade regions in the west. Presumably this would have enabled Jacques to make a preaching tour in Occitania prior to his departure for Acre the following spring.

The second privilege is well known thanks to Grundmann. Jacques says:

To this end I obtained and received from him letters with agents and executors so that religious women not only in the Diocese of Liège, but also in the Kingdom [of France] and the [Holy Roman] Empire might live together in one house and provoke one another to good works by mutual exhortations.<sup>32</sup>

This privilege is significant for Beguine history, but Grundmann seems to have misunderstood it on two counts. First, Grundmann erroneously states that this permission was oral, yet Jacques himself says he obtained letters (*litteras*).<sup>33</sup> Second, Grundmann cuts out a very significant part of the sentence in which Jacques makes this statement. If we continue to read the same sentence from where Grundmann leaves off:

for which reason, because the defense of the crusaders had been handed over to the prelates in the Kingdom of France, he did not wish to give me a special authority to defend them. He did this, as it is said, at the advice of certain clerics who wished to become Papal legate to France. But upon the advice of my friends and allies, I did not wish to go back unless I could be able to defend them. For those who had joined the crusade were oppressed virtually everywhere with this or that obligation, and in places they were even physically imprisoned. Indeed, if I were not able to protect them in the affairs which had been promised, they would not receive the message preached and, what is more, even spit in my face.<sup>34</sup>

What Jacques sought was not only support for the Beguine struggle, but also a special authority to defend the property and persons who might be signed on to Jacques' "Beguine crusade." He laments

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<sup>32</sup> "Obtinui preterea, ab ipso, et litteras cum executoribus et protectoribus impetravi, ut liceret mulieribus religiosis non solum in episcopatu Leodinensi, sed tam in regno quam in imperio in eadem domo simul manere et sese invicem mutuis exhortationibus ad bonum invitare..." *Letter 1*, 76-81.

<sup>33</sup> Grundmann, *Religious Movements*, 75; Grundmann may have made this assertion because no record of this privilege cannot be found in the Potthast's Regesta for Honorius III.

<sup>34</sup> "...unde, quia in prelatibus in regno Francie commissa fuerat cruce signatorum defensio, noluit michi dare specialem potestatem ut eos defendere valerem. Hoc autem fecit, ut dicitur, quorundam consilio, qui ad legationem regni Francie aspirabant; ego vero, habito cum amicis et sociis meis consilio, nolui redire nisi cruce signatos, qui fere ubique taliis et aliis exactionibus opprimuntur, quorum etiam corpora passim incarcerationuntur, valerem defendere; aliter enim verbum predicationis non reciperent, sed magis in faciem meam conspuerent, si eos, secundum quod promissum est eis in predicationibus, protegere non valerem." *Letter 1*, 81-90.

that, without the power to defend those who become members of Beguine communities, no one would listen to his preaching about the virtues of Marie of Oignies and the lifestyle of *mulieres sanctae*.

Jacques suspected that underlying this refusal were the interests of clerics engaged in a policy of appeasement towards the King of France. It is obvious why the King of France's interests would oppose a cleric such as Jacques being given free rein to place individuals and their properties under a tax-shelter, and anyone in the Curia who had blocked such a privilege could expect the favor returned in the form of royal support during the election of a new legate to France.

Blocked from pursuing his course of preaching, Jacques' entire attitude towards his intended preaching tour in the Midi changed.

Because it would be winter when I would come to the regions of France, and then I would immediately have to take to the road again the next Lent, I would only be able to profit a little and I would have to work much. And because I would become very exhausted from uninterrupted work, I decided to rest a little while so that I would be ready and able to sustain the work in Outremer.<sup>35</sup>

Jacques stayed in the Curia a few weeks longer, but seems to have found little to his liking there. With little to keep him in Europe, Jacques made his way to Genoa, where he chartered a ship to carry him across the Mediterranean to his Crusader diocese at Acre. Jacques would never again make an effort on behalf of official protection for Beguines.

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Jacques de Vitry will always remain an important figure in Beguine history, but perhaps only as an example of those who would appropriate the movement for their own purposes rather than as an influential supporter. Henneau's assessment<sup>36</sup> can be confirmed by an examination of the sources: Jacques' influence on Beguine history is only an outgrowth of the profound influence Marie of Oignies had on him. Even so, it does well to not exaggerate Jacques' contribution, and it is even more important that we not misunderstand it.

Unlike the claims of most historiography since Grundmann, I would argue that Jacques's "privilege" was a part of a much larger vision that he conceived. As is clear from his later letters,

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<sup>35</sup> "Preterea, cum ad partes Francie venissem, hiems esset et statim in Quadragesima proxima iterum arripere iter me oporteret, unde parum possem proficere et multum oporteret me laborare; et quia ex labore continuo me valde debilitatum sentiebam, preelegi aliquantum quiescere, ut laborem exercitatus ultra mare valerem sustinere..." *Letter 1*, 90-95.

<sup>36</sup> Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and Marie-Élisabeth Henneau, "Introduction: Liège, the Medieval 'Woman Question'"

Jacques considered women an integral part of the crusade movement. Only a few weeks after Jacques left Perugia, he writes that he preached to the women of Genoa while their husbands were away on a military campaign and “a large number of the wealthy and noble ladies took up the sign of the cross.”<sup>37</sup> For Jacques, women as well as men were an integral part of the Crusading movement. Historians whose narratives of crusade and church reform preclude them from seeing women as agents in crusade have simultaneously been unable to see the connection between Jacques’ privilege for religious women, the crusading movement, and the ongoing struggle with heresy in the age of Innocent III and church reform. The final step to uniting Jacques’ concerns about women, heresy, and crusade, however, was denied, and Jacques seems to have vacillated in his enthusiasm for his plans to preach a new women’s religious movement in Southern France to combat heresy, defended by the authority of a papal decree and the military force of the crusader armies. Lacking the authorization to defend these groups, Jacques modified his plans and decided to leave early to take up his episcopal duties in Acre.

Jacques never published the written privilege he had obtained from Honorius, and appears to have merely filed it away never to see the light of day. His interest in promoting a religious women’s movement was short lived. Was this privilege ever an official sanction for the Beguine life? It seems the answer is no. Far from acquiring a privilege for the Beguines, let alone being a founder or even proponent, Jacques seems to have merely used the legend of Marie as positive publicity in his plan to stimulate Crusade fervor, counter the forms of religious life found in regions under the suspicion of heresy, and fashion himself as founder of a religious order. With or without official recognition, however, the religious movement of the holy women of Liège continued to grow into the Beguine institutions, whose founders are unknown and whose agenda were their own. In the end, the story of Beguine origins belongs neither to Jacques nor any other ecclesiastical prelates of an increasingly bureaucratic society, but the pious yet subversive women whom those prelates called mothers.

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<sup>37</sup> Jacques de Vitry, *Letter 1*, 152-153.