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General Editor’s Preface

SPELL (Swiss Papers in English Language and Literature) is a publication of SAUTE, the Swiss Association of University Teachers of English. Established in 1984, it first appeared every second year, was published annually from 1994 to 2008, and now appears three times every two years. Every second year, SPELL publishes a selection of papers given at the biennial symposia organized by SAUTE. Non-symposium volumes usually have as their starting point papers given at other conferences organized by members of SAUTE, in particular conferences of SANAS, the Swiss Association for North American Studies and SAMEMES, the Swiss Association of Medieval and Early Modern English Studies. However, other proposals are also welcome. Decisions concerning topics and editors are made by the Annual General Meeting of SAUTE two years before the year of publication.

Volumes of SPELL contain carefully selected and edited papers devoted to a topic of literary, linguistic and – broadly – cultural interest. All contributions are original and are subjected to external evaluation by means of a full peer review process. Contributions are usually by participants at the conferences mentioned, but volume editors are free to solicit further contributions. Papers published in SPELL are documented in the *MLA International Bibliography*. SPELL is published with the financial support of the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Information on all aspects of SPELL, including volumes planned for the future, is available from the General Editor, Professor Lukas Erne, Département de langue et littérature anglaises, Faculté des Lettres, Université de Genève, CH-1211 Genève 4, Switzerland, e-mail: lukas.erne@unige.ch. Information about past volumes of SPELL and about SAUTE, in particular about how to become a member of the association, can be obtained from the SAUTE website at http://www.saute.ch.

Lukas Erne
Introduction

“What is an image?” is a question perhaps as old as humanity itself. In 2008 James Elkins posed it to 30 historians and image theorists who then spent 35 hours at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago debating it. In the introduction to *What is an Image?* (2011), the written records of these taped seminars, Elkins begins with a playful “selection of theories . . . in absolutely no order” (3). He soon breaks off, however, conceding that any attempt to order and delimit potentially infinite theories of the image is intrinsically “hopeless” (6). Why so? In answer he tabulates six possible problems, four of which deserve to be quoted here because of their implicit relevance to the current volume:

3. Some accounts are primarily concerned with the politics of images or images as politics, while other accounts do not feel the necessity of approaching political concepts at all. [. . .]
4. Some accounts are about the agency of images – their “voice,” their “life.” . . . At the extreme, when such accounts draw near to anthropology, religious belief, or animism, they may also involve a suspension of disbelief . . . It is not clear, at least to me, exactly how to change the register of the conversation when talk goes from a picture’s structure, or even its politics, to its agency, its voice, its life. [. . .]
5. The same sort of observation can be made about the idea that images are a fundamentally religious category. [. . .]
6. The same problem of theorizing the move from one form of understanding to another also emerges again in the discussions about the claim that images have a certain logic or rationality, and the companion claim that they possess a kind of irrationality. [. . .] (8-10)

“What is an Image in Medieval and Early Modern England?” was a question originally posed to some 60 participants at the 5th Biennial Conference of the Swiss Association of Medieval and Early Modern English

Studies held in Zurich in 2016. The conference aimed to complicate the question that Elkins had identified as problematic in two interrelated ways: firstly, by focusing on the image at a particular time and in a particular location, and secondly, by exploring the status of the visual image in relation to another sign system and medium, namely words and texts.

In the Latin West, it was in the late medieval and early modern periods that religious images would be subject to particular pressure, notably in the first half of the sixteenth century when reformers in Strasbourg, Zurich and Geneva would denounce them as idolatrous, and Catholics would reinstated them. But it was in England that the debate on images was particularly protracted, first expressed in Lollard resistance to depictions of the divine and then in the iconomachy and full-blown iconoclasm of the Reformations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

As a consequence, the relationship between the so-called sister arts of *pictura* and *poesis*, image and word, would be problematised. Yet, the story of the inexorable demise of the religious image in early modern England and the concomitant “iconophobia” of its people is being revised. Evidence suggests that there was a far more variegated iconic landscape in post-Reformation England and that the status of the religious image was inflected by its medium, location, and subject matter. Moreover, such images formed and were in turn formed by images produced in new media across a range of disciplines. What, for example, did the new print culture do to the status of the visual image embedded in a text on a page? What happens to images when they move from page to stage, or from sacred space into the secular world? How far did the Protestant celebration of hearing and denigration of sight in theory actually recalibrate the hierarchy of the senses in practice?

The 10 essays in this volume are representative of the creative ways in which established and newer scholars in the fields of medieval and early modern literature, history, and art history grappled with the difficulties intrinsic to our question. We have arranged them in roughly chronological order as a way of demarcating the historicist nature of the original project. But lest we fall for simple teleology, Brian Cummings’s lyrical, suggestive “Afterword: Words and Images” takes us back to the beginning.

For Christiania Whitehead an image is the late fifteenth-century cycle of 17 panel paintings depicting episodes from the Life of St Cuthbert, the great Northumbrian, Anglo-Saxon saint, found not in Durham, the centre of his cult, but in Cumbria at Carlisle Cathedral. She argues that in rendering pictorially the markedly visual Middle English metrical *Life of Cuthbert* while alluding to Bede’s authoritative Latin *Prose Life* beneath,
the cycle conveyed its message to both lay and clerical viewers alike. More broadly, Whitehead posits that the cycle is indicative of Durham's agenda to make Cuthbert the leading saint not just for the Benedictines of Durham but for all orders in the entire northern region. For Nicolette Zeeman an image is the pagan idol of medieval religious discourse and manuscript illumination, a figure whose insentient lifelessness paradoxically raises the possibility of aliveness and psychological interiority. By transposing this understanding of the idol to the armoured knight of Arthurian romance, the reader is alerted to the sentient being beneath the insentient exterior.

An image for Alexandra Walsham is, paradoxically, a graphic representation of an act of iconoclasm – an image of image-breaking – be it in a printed Protestant Bible, in Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, in a painted anti-papal allegory, a Catholic martyrology, or a Civil War pamphlet. Walsham asks why Protestants sought to remember their “rites of oblivion” in this way and suggests that such images served to commemorate and advocate types of reformation – from above or from below, orderly or violent, in pursuit of truth or in the face of it. Such images were thus implicated in the process by which Reformations in England and on the Continent became part of collective memory.

But an image can also be less material. It can be an image in the mind’s eye. Kilian Schindler reads Marlowe’s *Faustus* in the light of radical scepticism towards diabolical intervention in the material world, a sceptical position advocated by Dutch Anabaptists, Libertines, and the Family of Love, but already evident in Marlowe’s England. This reading puts into question the material presence of the devils in the A-text of the play, insinuating that they are the projection of Faustus’s deranged imagination. Schindler grants greater demonic agency in the B-text, but interprets this not as a critique of predestination but a response to Bullinger’s and Vermigli’s nuanced understanding of reprobation. An image for Sonia Pernet is a metaphor, specifically John Donne’s use of liquid metaphors across a range of sermons to illustrate the act and effect of preaching on the believer. Pernet argues that for Donne hearing is the pre-eminent sense, and yet in drawing our attention to his brilliant use of visual images of flowing water to represent the workings of grace, she intimates that Donne validates the sense of sight no less.

In Hannah Yip’s and Rachel Willie’s essays images are printed portraits embedded in texts. Yip alerts us to the ways in which material images – commemorative portrait miniatures and epitaphs from funeral monuments – migrate onto the pages of two seventeenth-century printed sermons. She suggests that the visual and textual dimensions of these
sermons work together to commemorate the exemplary dead and so edify the reader. In contrast, Rachel Willie traces how van Dyck’s portrait of Archbishop William Laud (c. 1633-5) gets recycled and subverted for satirical ends after Laud’s impeachment in 1640. By contextualising a particular printed pamphlet of 1641 illustrated with numerous satirical woodcuts, Willie shows how Laud’s episcopacy is equated with the papacy.

An image for Andrew Morrall is a word-picture or micrographic portrait – a pen and ink drawing of King Charles I composed of minutely written words purportedly taken from the Psalms, an image that has hung in St John’s College library since at least 1662. Reading this portrait in the context of the posthumous cult of the martyr king and through the lenses of particular viewers including a university poet, Celia Fiennes, and finally Joseph Addison, Morrall plots the rise and fall of its reception. More generally, Morrall posits that its nature as word-image is symptomatic of an evolving Protestant logocentrism.

For Antoinina Bevan Zlatar and Erzsi Kukorelly an image is visual description, an epic poet’s or novelist’s power to render a picture of someone or something through words. Bevan Zlatar argues that John Milton’s famous descriptions and similes of supernatural and pre-lapsarian beings in *Paradise Lost* are integral to the poem’s theology, anthropology and diabology. What someone looks like in *Paradise Lost* tells us about his or her nature and how he or she relates to the poem’s God. Moreover, the embodied visuality of these beings validates the material world as a repository, and the sense of sight as a conduit, of the divine.

In Erzsi Kukorelly’s essay an image is visual description and its effect on the reader as theorised by Henry Home and Hugh Blair, and as practiced by Samuel Richardson. By tracing Richardson’s use of “painterliness” principally in *Clarissa* (1748) and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753), Kukorelly plots his evolving didactic sensibility.

In his “Afterword: Words and Images,” Brian Cummings leads us back to the beginning of our volume, especially to Nicolette Zeeman’s and Alexandra Walsham’s explorations of the power of images and the Protestant attempts to disempower them. For Cummings, the iconoclast is compelled to destroy because “word and image cannot be separated except by force.”

Antoinina Bevan Zlatar
Reference

Visual and Verbal Vernacular Translations of Bede’s *Prose Life of St Cuthbert* in Fifteenth-Century Northern England: The Carlisle Panel Paintings

Christiania Whitehead

This essay offers a new reading of the late fifteenth-century sequence of wood panels depicting the Life of St Cuthbert painted on the back of the north choir stalls at Carlisle Cathedral. The panels display scenes taken from Bede’s influential *Prose Life of Cuthbert* (c. 721), identified by vernacular couplets. The essay reads this visual and vernacular translation of the *Prose Life* in the light of other late medieval vernacular versions, notably those in the southern legendaries, and in the largescale metrical *Life of St Cuthbert*, produced in Durham Benedictine Priory in the early fifteenth century.

From the eleventh century, Cuthbert’s cult had been centred at Durham Cathedral, administered by the bishop and Benedictine community there. What are we to make then of this manifestation of Cuthbertine veneration in a cathedral served by Augustinian canons in the Cumbrian diocese? This essay suggests that Cuthbert’s inclusion at Carlisle may be designed to highlight its putative early association with Cuthbert’s episcopal see. As a consequence, these panels can be interpreted as part of an assertive programme masterminded by Durham to reinvigorate and expand Cuthbertine veneration during the fifteenth century, extending his reach west and valorising him as the premier saint of the entire northern region.

In Carlisle Cathedral, in the final years of the fifteenth century, seventeen pictures depicting scenes from the life of the Northumbrian saint, St Cuthbert, were painted directly onto the wood panels on the back of

one section of the north choir stalls (Colgrave; Park and Cather 214-20) (see Figure 1). St Cuthbert (c. 634-87), the most celebrated northern saint of Anglo-Saxon England, entered Melrose monastery as a young

Figure 1: Cycle of St Cuthbert panel paintings on back of north choir stalls at Carlisle Cathedral. © Historic England Archive. Reproduced by kind permission.
man, after experiencing a vision of the soul of St Aidan, the Irish missionary to Northumbria, ascending to heaven. After a short spell at Ripon monastery, he was sent to Aidan’s foundational monastery on the island of Lindisfarne where he became prior. Around 676, wishing for a more contemplative life, he retreated to the island of Inner Farne where he built himself a hermitage. In the 680s he was reluctantly recalled from this seclusion to become bishop of Lindisfarne. Faced by the onset of ill-health, he returned to his hermitage in 686 and died there the following year. He was buried in Lindisfarne monastery, where his body quickly became the focus of a tomb cult. Within a few years of his death, an anonymous *Vita* was composed by one of the Lindisfarne monks to promote his cult, later superseded by the Metrical and Prose *vitae* of the Venerable Bede (respectively, c. 716 and c. 721).

The cycle of Cuthbert paintings at Carlisle Cathedral was one of four, unevenly divided between the north and south choir stalls, which all appear to have been commissioned and carried out during the priorate of Thomas Gondibour (1470s-1502), prior of the house of Augustinian canons which had served the cathedral since the early twelfth century. The other three cycles comprise, on the south side, parallel with the Cuthbert cycle, a *Life* of St Augustine of Hippo in twenty-four panels, and on the north side, adjacent to the Cuthbert panels, a *Life* of St Antony of Egypt in eighteen panels, and a further cycle of non-narrative images of the twelve apostles (Harcourt). While each of the twelve apostles is flanked by a matching Latin sentence from the Apostles Creed, the three cycles of saints’ lives are all accompanied by rhyming couplets in the northern vernacular, one couplet above each panel image, identifying the subject matter of the scene below.

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1 The house of Augustinian canons at Carlisle was founded in 1122. In 1133, their church was raised to the status of a cathedral, forming a new see and detaching Cumberland from the diocese of York (Summerson 30-31). One of the panels in the St Augustine cycle contains the monogram of Prior Gondibour. Gondibour was also associated with other contemporary decorative programmes within the cathedral and priory.

2 Harcourt’s mid nineteenth-century monograph is devoted to the three hagiographical cycles depicting Cuthbert, Augustine and Anthony at Carlisle; Park and Gather note that while the single figures of Sts Augustine and Anthony occur commonly in late medieval art, these panel paintings represent the only surviving cycles of these saints in England (220).
Textual and Visual Sources

Many questions present themselves: what is Cuthbert doing at Carlisle given his Northumbrian and Durham associations? What are the implications of his veneration within a house of Augustinian canons? What should we make of his representation alongside Sts Augustine and Anthony? But before turning to these, it is first necessary to establish the version of Cuthbert’s Life represented in this cycle, bearing in mind the variety of versions circulating by the fifteenth century, and to summarise the current scholarship regarding the probable source of this version. The seventeen panels that make up the Cuthbert cycle depict (1) a child’s prediction of Cuthbert’s episcopal destiny, (2) the healing of his knee by an angel, (3) his vision of St Aidan’s soul ascending, (4) his horse finds bread for him during a journey, (5) he is received by Prior Boisil at Melrose, (6) he offers an angel hospitality at Ripon and is given bread in turn, (7) Boisil prophesies Cuthbert’s episcopal future, (8) Cuthbert preaches to the people, (9) he prays in the sea and is dried by otters, (10) he is fed with fish by an eagle, (11) he builds a hermitage on Farne and drives away devils, (12) he miraculously finds a water spring on Inner Farne, (13) he reproves thieving crows on Inner Farne, (14) he is consecrated as bishop, (15) he heals a sick child during an episcopal journey, (16) he receives the sacrament on his deathbed, (17) his body is discovered to be incorrupt.3

These seventeen panels illustrate a number of chapters from Bede’s highly influential Prose Life of St Cuthbert, written in Jarrow in the early eighth century and easily the single most important text at the heart of Cuthbert’s cult up until the Reformation. As is well-known, this cult was centred at Durham Cathedral where Cuthbert’s body was enshrined under the custodianship of a priory of Benedictine monks from the late eleventh century. Bede’s Prose Life consists of forty-six chapters; however less than half of those chapters are illustrated at Carlisle, and it would seem that the Carlisle artist was also influenced by the chapters from Bede selected for use within the southern legendary tradition: the relatively terse legends of St Cuthbert in the South English Legendary (SEL) and the Gilte Legende. It is thus the case that the panel paintings favour certain early chapters from Bede’s Prose Life, including a child’s prophecy of Cuthbert’s episcopal future, the healing of his knee by an angel, and his vision of Aidan’s soul ascending to heaven, in the same

3 I number the panels in accordance with the order given in Park and Cather 217, Figure 2. The transcription of the couplets follows Fowler, Life of St Cuthbert 10-11 throughout.
Figure 2. Cuthbert immerses himself in the sea to pray and has his feet dried by sea creatures (Bede, Prose Life, ch. 10).

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manner as the SEL, while other chapters are omitted from both. The artist of the Carlisle panel paintings makes the same selections from Bede’s Prose Life as the compiler of the SEL; however, he also illustrates additional chapters from Bede, and unlike the compiler of the SEL shows an active interest in the ministry of animals to Cuthbert (panels 4, 9, 10, and 13), and in Cuthbert’s eremitic sojourn on Farne Island (panels 11, 12 and 13). We shall return to the significance of these choices later.

The similarities to the narrative tradition represented by the SEL are particularly interesting because, thus far, scholarly attention has only focused upon the iconographic source of the Carlisle panels. This is commonly agreed to be the copy of Bede’s Prose Life contained in the deluxe, late twelfth-century manuscript produced at Durham, now designated British Library, MS Yates Thompson 26, in which each Bedean chapter is accompanied by a strongly-coloured, full-page illumination. The Cuthbert panels at Carlisle are unfortunately in a poor state of preservation, but a comparison of some of the better preserved panels with the corresponding illuminations in Yates Thompson demonstrates entirely convincing levels of compositional agreement (Figure 2). Furthermore, in MS Yates Thompson 26, the Latin rubric for each Bedean chapter is followed, first by the full-page illumination, and then by the text of the chapter in question, so that one might even discern some compositional correspondence between the panels and the mise en page of the manuscript: as though the vernacular couplet and panel painting aim to pre-

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4 Chapter 3 of Bede’s Prose Life in which Cuthbert’s prayers save monks at the mouth of the Tyne from drifting away on their rafts, provides one relevant example.
5 Respectively, Cuthbert’s horse pulls down bread from a thatched roof, otters dry his feet, an eagle brings a fish for him to eat, disobedient crows bring Cuthbert lard.
6 Respectively, Cuthbert builds a hermitage on Farne with the assistance of angels, he digs a well there, he reproves the crows who steal his thatch.
7 Marner focuses on the history of this manuscript and its production, and provides facsimiles of all the illuminations. Baker reminds us that twenty manuscripts of Bede’s Prose Life survive from between 1083 and 1200, and that around half were produced at Durham (17). Baker, one of the great Bedean scholars of the mid twentieth century, was the first to notice this correspondence in 1938. His conclusions have recently been nuanced by Park and Cather, who suggest that a sketchbook may have acted as an intermediary between the manuscript and the wood panels, following typical medieval workshop practice (220), and by Baker, who places both MS Yates Thompson 26 and the Carlisle panels within a more extensive tradition of Cuthbertine pictorial cycles, including, from the fifteenth century, stained-glass cycles at York Minster and Durham Cathedral (c.1420-40). He concludes that there was a conscious revival of traditional Durham iconography in the second quarter of the fifteenth century (22-23, 42-44).
serve the rubric and illumination from each Bedean chapter, while the chapter itself has been dispensed with. Here, at the end of the fifteenth century, in a municipal setting, a sequence of simple couplets and panel paintings appears to stand as an adequate summary of the *Prose Life*.

The *Prose Life* is distilled down to a series of elementary couplets and images on these north choir stalls — to the briefest of epitomes, one might say; however, this is not quite the whole story. Intriguingly, both the first and last couplets of the panel sequence make explicit references to Bede’s text. In Panel 1, Cuthbert is rebuked for standing on his head as a child in the face of his illustrious vocation: “Her Cuthbert was forbid layks / and plays. As S. bede i hys story says” (my italics). And in Panel 17, his body is revealed to be incorrupt eleven years after its burial on Lindisfarne: “xi 3er after that beryd was he / thai fand hym hole as red may 3e” (my italics). The reference to reading here is plainly to reading about the exhumation in Bede. So, the visual sequence opens by signalling its narrative source and associating itself with the authority of Bede, and closes by referring its viewer back to further reading on the subject in Bede’s *Prose Life*. In other words, these somewhat naïve panel paintings and vernacular captions need not necessarily comprise the end of the story for the viewer. They offer a minimal visual and vernacular skeleton of the *Prose Life* for those without the educational skills to delve further, but also channel the intellectually curious viewer toward the scholarly complexity of Bede’s Latin text. In effect, they draw attention to a second, highly authoritative, Latinate text embedded beneath these vernacular couplets and images and perhaps designed for the canons, while the first addressed lay congregations within the cathedral.9

How could a twelfth-century Durham manuscript possibly have influenced a late fifteenth-century Carlisle painter? As it turns out, we know that Yates Thompson 26 moved around the north and acted as an iconographic model during the first decades of the fifteenth century. The manuscript is recorded in the Durham library catalogues of 1391 and 1416 (Colgrave 17), and the latter entry records that it had been on loan to Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York (d. 1405). As a result, it has been argued that its illuminations may have been intended as models for the gigantic St Cuthbert stained-glass window in York Minister, probably completed in around 1430, which consists of 105 scenes depicting the saint’s life (Fowler; Baker 22-25). Emphasising Cuthbert’s episcopal vocation and exemplarity, and incorporating images of contemporary northern bishops and archbishops, this window was commissioned and

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9 The issue of a mixed audience for these panels will be addressed later in this essay.
paid for by Bishop Walter Skirlaw of Durham (1388-1406) and Bishop Thomas Langley of Durham (1406-37), formerly Dean of York (1401-6), and clearly indicates the extension of Cuthbert’s cult into the heart of the York archdiocese by the early fifteenth century. In addition to its similarities to the Yates Thompson illuminations, the great Cuthbert window at York Minster also seems to have bore a close relation to a number of Cuthbertine windows at Durham Cathedral in the north aisle of the choir, the Chapel of the Nine Altars, and the cloister garth, these last two commissioned by Bishop Langley in the 1430s (Lynda Rollason; Baker 42-43). Sadly, none of the Durham windows survived the iconoclasm of the Reformation; however they are recalled and described in the late sixteenth-century treatise, *The Rites of Durham*, which details the ornaments and rituals of Durham Cathedral in the first decades of the sixteenth century, from a viewpoint of pro-Catholic nostalgia. In both instances, the York and Durham windows precede the Carlisle wood panels by six or seven decades in transforming the narrative of Bede’s *Prose Life* into a sequence of legible, self-explanatory visual compositions.10

As well as travelling down to York at the beginning of the fifteenth century, is it possible that Yates Thompson 26 could also have spent a later period in the north-west of the country? If so, it seems likely that the manuscript would have been brought by Richard Bell, who entered Durham Benedictine priory in 1426-7, served as Prior there from 1464-78, and was then appointed Bishop of Carlisle from 1478-94, before returning to Durham in the final years preceding his death (Dobson).11 Having continued Prior John Wessington’s successful programme of cultural and economic restoration at Durham, Bell may well have brought Cuthbertine interests and texts with him from Durham to his new diocese, and conveyed these interests to Gondibour and his canons.12 Together, the known information from York diocese, and the strong probabilities from Carlisle, enable us to formulate two interim

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10 It should be noted that the York and Durham windows also include scenes taken from the twelfth-century “Irish” *Life of St Cuthbert*, attributing to Cuthbert an Irish birth and infancy.

11 Colgrave notes that another twelfth-century manuscript of Bede’s *Prose Life* (London, British Library, MS Harley 1924), contains elaborate annotations by Bell (17).

12 We should note at this juncture that in addition to the Cuthbert wood panel paintings, there was also a contemporary wall painting, now destroyed, on the north-east pier of the crossing of Carlisle Cathedral depicting St Cuthbert’s vision of St Aidan’s soul ascending to heaven (Park and Cather 221-22). Cuthbertine iconography clearly played a strong role in the cathedral in the late fifteenth century.
conclusions. They demonstrate, first, that a twelfth-century illuminated manuscript might act as the key visual stimulus for fifteenth-century visual programmes in stained glass and panel paintings in various northern cathedral settings; and second, that the movement of ecclesiastical prelates and patrons during the fifteenth century – from York to Durham in Langley’s case, and from Durham to Carlisle in Bell’s case – could exercise a palpable influence on the movement and reproduction of saintly iconography in different media within the north.

Hagiographical and Geographical Contexts

In addition to acknowledging the influence of the Yates Thompson illuminations upon the Carlisle wood panels, we also need to think further about the hagiographical context in which we find Cuthbert placed. Painted adjacent to scenes from the Life of Antony of Egypt, the prototypical desert hermit, in a sequence in which three out of seventeen panels are devoted to his eremitic life on Farne Island, it would seem that Cuthbert must have been particularly venerated for his eremiticism and desert spirituality by the Augustinian canons at Carlisle at the end of the fifteenth century. The link between the asceticism and miracle working of Antony of Egypt and of Cuthbert is explicitly made by Bede himself on at least one occasion (Prose Life ch. 19), and we know that Athanasius’s Life of St Antony served as a significant model for the eremitic component of the Prose Life. As a consequence, the programmatic choice to portray the Life of Cuthbert alongside the Life of Antony in Carlisle Cathedral would seem to indicate a thoughtful and attentive engagement with Bede’s Latin text. Three out of seventeen panels depict Cuthbert’s eremitic lifestyle; however his preceding years as a monk on Lindisfarne (which are comprehensively illustrated in Yates Thompson) are completely omitted. The canons were clearly interested in the apostolic common life as represented by the images of the apostles and St Augustine of Hippo, and in the life of the desert, as represented by Antony and Cuthbert, but narratives of “Cuthbert as a monk” and the promotion of Lindisfarne as a secondary pilgrimage destination were apparently of less relevance to their canonical regime and Cumbrian sphere of ecclesiastical influence.

As well as omitting scenes of Cuthbert as a monk, the Carlisle panels severely truncate the later chapters of Bede’s Prose Life (illustrated in full in Yates Thompson), reducing Cuthbert’s many episcopal healings and prophecies to a single panel in which he is shown curing a sick child.

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during an episcopal journey. This truncation replicates the approach taken by the *SEL* and *Gilte Legende*, which also jump over Cuthbert’s healing ministry. Also omitted — and this is perhaps more surprising given the location — are those chapters from the second half of the *Prose Life* in which Cuthbert visits Carlisle on a couple of occasions, experiencing a vision of King Ecgfrith’s death, and exchanging some final words with Hereberht, the hermit of Derwentwater (chs. 27, 28). One would have thought Prior Gondibour and his cathedral associates would have been keen to select passages from the authorised *Life* emphasising Cuthbert’s physical association with the city. Clearly, the standard arc of biography established by the vernacular legendaries (*SEL* and *Gilte*) trumps the advantages of a customised narrative tailored to an individual location.

As well as visiting Carlisle at least twice during his lifetime, Cuthbert had a variety of later associations with Cumbria (Tudor 69-71). One of his earliest posthumous miracles, recorded in Bede’s *Historia eclesiastica*, describes how a relic of his hair, housed in the monastery of Dacre, near Penrith, cures the eye tumour of a young monk from the monastery (Bk. 4, ch. 32). During the ravages of the Vikings, when Cuthbert’s coffin was on the move around northern England, we know that it passed through Cumbria prior to embarking on a ship to Ireland, and that the Abbot of Carlisle played a part in that decision as one of the leaders of the peripatetic community. This story remains active in the fifteenth century, as does the list of Cuthbertine landholdings detailed in the eleventh-century *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, which includes a section describing King Ecgfrith’s gifts of Carlisle and Cartmel to the community of the saint (chs. 5-6). Later still, in the twelfth century, Reginald of Durham’s collection of contemporary miracles includes several which benefit the Cistercian abbey of Furness or involve Cumbrian churches dedicated to Cuthbert, suggesting active pockets of veneration within the region (chs. 55-56, 129). These stories and associations must have played a significant part in the veneration of Cuthbert within Cumbria, yet once again, they lose out to the *auctoritas* of Bede when it comes to visual representation, and never succeed in gaining a foothold in Cuthbert’s cathedral iconography.

However, even if Cuthbert’s local associations with Cumbria do not succeed in winning a visual place within the cathedral, his presence in

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14 We know that there was an altar to St Cuthbert in the abbey church at Furness from the 1150s, presumably in response to the miracles that Reginald cites.
the choir stalls as the single native and northern saint, situated alongside St Antony, St Augustine and the apostles, is surely worthy of note, and encourages us to reflect conversely on the unexpected hagiographical omissions from this largescale iconographic programme. The Virgin Mary is notable by her absence, even though a longstanding cult in her honour existed at Carlisle Cathedral, drawing pilgrims from far afield. The cathedral housed an important collection of relics, including both conventional universal items and those associated with British saints (the girdle of Bridget of Ireland, and the sword which martyred Thomas of Canterbury) (Summerson 36). None of these play any part in the hagiographical programmes of the panels, which effectively superimpose themselves on local traditions rather than developing out of the cathedral’s existing material culture. Then, there is also the question of other early saints with closer associations with the north west: Kentigern, missionary to the British kingdom of Strathclyde, Ninian, putative bishop of the see of Whithorn in Galloway, and Bega, a legendary Irish princess who fled her homeland to live a life of piety in Cumbria in the eighth century. All are overlooked in favour of north-eastern Cuthbert in this iconographic scheme. Casting our net further afield, a similar imbalance can be seen with respect to church dedications to regional saints in the diocese of Carlisle. Ninian’s and Bega’s names are associated with one church each, Kentigern with seven, and Cuthbert with fifteen, more than half of which are recorded for the first time in the early fifteenth-century list of church dedications to St Cuthbert compiled by Prior Wessington of Durham (Tudor 71-72; Thompson). What conclusions is it possible to draw from all this? We know that there was an ambitious resurgence in Cuthbert’s cult at Durham Cathedral in the first half of the fifteenth century, engineered by Bishop Langley and Prior Wessington, which manifested itself through stained glass and public tabulae in addition to the production of new historiographical compilations. I would suggest that in addition to extending Cuthbert’s reach down to York through that gigantic window in the Minster, commissioned and paid for by Durham bishops, the sudden spate of church dedications in Cumbria and wood panel paintings in Carlisle Cathedral demonstrate a deliberate attempt on the part of Durham to expand Cuthbertine veneration in the North West, brushing aside other Cumbrian cults and

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15 Summerson refers to a famous statue of the Virgin within the cathedral (33-34).
16 The Cumbrian Cuthbertine churches first recorded in Wessington’s list include Embleton, Brigham, Great Salkeld, Edenhall, Clifton, Cliburn, Hawkshead, Kirkby Ireleth, and Aldingham (Tudor 73-74).
effectively constructing him as the premier saint of the entire northern region, not simply Northumbria and Durham. As mentioned before, the most plausible actant of this expansionist agenda in the last decades of the fifteenth century is Richard Bell, elevated from Durham priory to the Carlisle episcopate, who presumably brought Durham’s hagiographical interests and ambitions with him.

An Episcopal Emphasis

The reading direction of the Cuthbert panels at Carlisle is vertical, moving from top to bottom in a series of adjacent columns. However, toward the end the narrative sequence becomes disordered because an image of Cuthbert’s consecration as bishop has been inserted at the bottom of the fourth column (Panel 14), where it will be at eye level and easily visible, separating the saint’s discovery of water on Farne, and his construction of a hermitage there (Park and Cather 219). The accompanying caption reads: “Consecrate bysshop thai made hym her / off lyndisfarne both fair and ner.” This is the only image from the entire panel sequence that has no corresponding illustration in MS Yates Thompson 26 or any of the other illustrated twelfth-century manuscripts of Bede’s *Prose Life* (Baker 40-42). However, it does cross-refer competently to the earlier panel (7) in which Prior Boisil of Melrose predicts Cuthbert’s episcopal future on his deathbed. In addition, a very similar image is included in the fifteenth-century York Minster window, and it is also worth noting that Cuthbert’s episcopal ministry is cast as a central event in the *SEL* and *Gilte Legende*. Cuthbert’s episcopal function is clearly a key component of his sanctity in many parts of the country in the fifteenth century. It may be possible to go even further. The choir at Carlisle Cathedral is not only a canonical space but also an episcopal space. It is where the bishop’s throne is situated and where the cathedral’s bishops (including Richard Bell) are interred before the high altar. As mentioned earlier, Carlisle became a diocese in its own right in 1133, detaching it from its earlier subordination to the diocese of York. However, the references in Bede’s *Prose Life* to Cuthbert repeatedly visiting Carlisle, ordaining priests there, dedicating churches and touring its

17 The other conspicuously disordered image is the one depicting the provision of the sacrament to Cuthbert on his deathbed (Panel 16). This is positioned immediately before Cuthbert’s rebuke to the disobedient crows. Again, its disordered position makes it clearly visible; as a consequence it may be intended to reinforce the canons’ sacramental ministry.
Roman remains, and in the *Historia* to his receiving Carlisle as a gift from King Ecgfrith, have led certain modern scholars to argue that, in the seventh century, Carlisle may well have formed part of the diocese of Lindisfarne before being later subsumed into York at an unspecified point during the Danish incursions (Tudor 67). Whether or not Carlisle was ever included in the Lindisfarne diocese, what is important is that the Durham monks clearly believed that it had been. The information from the *Historia* regarding Ecgfrith’s gift of Carlisle was carried over into twelfth-century chronicles, and continued to reappear in late medieval historiographical compilations, including the fifteenth-century Middle English *Life of St Cuthbert*, a Durham production (Bk. 4, lines 8135-48).

Our insight into this diocesan context brings additional dimensions to this extraneous panel painting of Cuthbert’s consecration as bishop. Positioned close to the throne and tombs of the bishops of Carlisle, it could suggest that the architect of the Cuthbert panel programme was keen to link the late fifteenth-century Carlisle bishopric to the genealogy of Lindisfarne and Durham bishops that succeeded Cuthbert’s seventh-century episcopate, ignoring the intermediate oversight of York. Again, this would tally well with the aims of Richard Bell’s episcopate – coming from Durham priory and party to its ecclesio-historical readings of the north, he may well have seen the Cuthbertine panel sequence as an opportunity to advance the Durham narrative about Carlisle’s episcopal subordination to the Lindisfarne / Durham genealogy of Cuthbertine bishops.

The panel of Cuthbert’s consecration as bishop may be an instance of imported Durham hawkishness. Alternatively, it is possible to back- ground the bishop in favour of the canons, and to read this panel as evidence of a broader “historiographical turn” by northern Augustinian canons. Here, in the last decades of the fifteenth century, the Carlisle house of canons appears to experience the urge to anchor its communal spiritual identity and that of its bishop, by turning back to the pre-eminent Anglo-Saxon saint of the northern region. Should this be interpreted as a desire for historical stabilisation at a time of violent dynastic change? I enquire whether this may comprise part of a broader canonical urge, because very similar visual materials seem to have been commissioned, at exactly the same time, in another Augustinian priory in the north. At Hexham Augustinian abbey, midway between the mouth of the Tyne and Carlisle, in around 1500, Prior Thomas Smithson (1499-c.1520) commissioned a series of wood panel paintings for the pulpitum screen, for a reredos (now preserved in the chancel), and for a screen in
the south transept, which depict the ancient seventh- and eighth-century saint-bishops of Hexham: Eata, Wilfrid, Acca, and others, long shrouded in obscurity. As at Carlisle, the sudden decision to resuscitate these Anglo-Saxon cults may well have been dictated by contemporary episcopal agendas. Up until the early ninth century, Hexham was a diocese in its own right. It was then absorbed by the diocese of Lindisfarne / Durham for a couple of centuries, before being eventually ceded to the archbishopric of York in the late eleventh century. Shortly afterwards, in 1113, the archbishop instated a house of Augustinian canons there. Despite this secession, the episcopal ownership of Hexham seems to have remained a source of contention between York and Durham during the twelfth century, and Rollason describes how the initial translation of its saint-bishops’ relics in the second quarter of the eleventh century, while under Durham’s influence, and again by the Augustinian canons in 1154, served respectively to support opposing narratives of control (David Rollason). In the twelfth century, the ancient Hexham saint-bishops were restored to visibility through their translation to reinforce York’s archiepiscopal oversight of the former see. While work remains to be done on the precise implications of the paintings of these same saint-bishops at the close of the fifteenth century, it is very possible that they were commissioned to serve a similar purpose. It is surely also significant that the Hexham canons resuscitate their Anglo-Saxon episcopal heritage iconographically in exactly the same decade that the Carlisle canons opt to commemorate the Lindisfarne episcopate of St Cuthbert. There was, of course, administrative contact between the two Augustinian houses, and we know that Thomas Gondibour made a visit to Hexham abbey in 1476, when already Prior at Carlisle, to preside over an election there (Greatrex). While the thought that he might have conferred with the Hexham canons on this visit about the ways in which the Anglo-Saxon bishops of the north might be made to work in the present time remains pure if appealing speculation, nonetheless, we are surely justified in drawing the more general conclusion: that in the last decades of the fifteenth century, there is a clear wish on the part of both Augustinian houses to influence or consolidate the contemporary dioce-

18 I am indebted to David Rollason’s discerning essay for much of the analysis which follows on this subject.
19 It is worth mentioning that the Durham fifteenth-century, vernacular Life of St Cuthbert expresses considerable interest in the ancient Hexham see. Book 4 pauses to list the bishops of Hexham in the course of its digest of Bede’s Prose Life (lines 6509-50), and the closing section on regnal donations details how Kings Guthred and Alfred: “The bischop landes of hexham, / Thai gaf thaim all’ to durham” (lines 8231-32).
Vernacular Visuality

Moving on from the question of Cuthbert’s episcopal emphasis at Carlisle, it is appropriate, finally, to return to the coalescence of vernacular verbal and visual media on the panels themselves. Setting aside the severely abbreviated Lives in the southern legendaries, there are only two northern instances where Bede’s *Prose Life* of Cuthbert enters the vernacular before the Reformation. One is the northern couplets atop these panel paintings. The other, compiled some seventy or eighty years before at Durham Benedictine priory in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, is a largescale metrical *Life of St Cuthbert*, translating the entirety of Bede’s *Prose Life* into Middle English, together with further twelfth-century Cuthbertine materials, in order to celebrate Benedictine sanctity at a time when the Order felt itself under attack (Clark 26-27). Reading through the Carlisle couplets, one is immediately struck by how closely they correlate with the vernacular rubrics that preface each chapter of the translation of Bede’s *Prose Life* in the metrical *Life*, distilling each chapter down to a simple, factual summary. Thus, where the Carlisle couplets explain the image of Cuthbert’s hospitality toward an angel visitor at Ripon (Panel 6) by noting: “The angel he did as gest refreshe / Wt met and drynk & hys fete weshe,” the metrical *Life* adopts a very similar voice in its seventh chapter rubric: “In this seuent chapter / And 3e will’ loke, 3e may lere / how cuthbert hade an aungel gest / And him to serue he was prest, / With erdely brede and common store, / he left him heuenly brede tharfore” (lines 1385-90). Similarly, the visual scene on Panel 7 in which Prior Boisil predicts Cuthbert’s episcopal future is captioned: “Her bos le teld hym that he must de / and after that he (bisho)p suld be,” while the relevant chapter rubric in the metrical *Life* provides a comparable summary: “In this chapiter the aught / Take tent, to 3e sall’ be taught / how cuthbert [ . . . ] all his werdes be prophesie, / Boisil telde, liggende to dy” (lines 1483-88). Later, in the body of the chapter, the content of Boisil’s prophecy is clarified: “Also to

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20 Charles Tracy detects a general enthusiasm by Augustinian canonical houses for saints of the Anglo-Saxon period in the twelfth century, citing examples of houses at Dorchester-on-Thames and Oxfordshire where cults were reinvigorated. However, the particular case of the resuscitation of northern Anglo-Saxon bishops in the late fifteenth century falls outside his main area of investigation (164).
cuthbert telled he / That a bischope he suld be” (lines 1569-70). While there is insufficient evidence to argue for any direct influence between the metrical Life and the Carlisle couplets, nonetheless, the approach taken to epitomising Bede is very similar: in both instances, the chapter content is summarised in a few utilitarian lines, the jingle of couplet rhymes serving to fix the scene in the memory.

The Carlisle couplets explain the visual compositions depicted immediately below them on the wood panels. However there is also a remarkably visual sensibility to many of the chapter rubrics in the metrical Life, as though the content that they summarise is pictorial as much as verbal: “In this seuent chapiter / And 3e will loke, 3e may lere” (my italics). “In this chapiter the aught / Take tent, to 3e sall be taught” (my italics). Very similar phrases recur throughout the metrical Life. For example, the Prologue to Book 4, which preserves a second, abridged digest of Bede’s Prose Life, opens: “In this last boke of thir foure, / Wha so lykes to loke it oure, / The fruyte of cuthbert leuyng / he sall’ se . . .” (lines 6389-92, my italics). There is an emphasis on learning from Bede’s chapters, in keeping with fifteenth-century expectations of hagiographical didacticism, but specifically on learning through seeing. It is the visuality of Bede’s narrative within the metrical Life that will render it effective as moral instruction. One may therefore argue that the Carlisle panels and the translation of Bede’s Prose Life in the Durham metrical Life share even more equivalence than initially anticipated. Both communicate Bede visually, the Carlisle panels simply making literal what the Metrical Life paints in the mind’s eye, so to speak, and both instruct by what they show. Effectively, the two share the common purpose of teaching a vernacular audience about their premier regional saint by translating Cuthbert’s authoritative life as a sequence of visual compositions.

Vernacular Audiences

What of these vernacular audiences? The Durham metrical Life addresses unspecified aristocratic readers: “Tharfore be bysy on this buke, / Lord and lady, for to luke” (lines 9-10), and may well have been initially intended for the Durham Neville family, keen patrons of Cuthbert’s cult, or the Northumbrian Percys. While the only extant manuscript of the poem, British Library, MS Egerton 3309, seems to have remained in Durham recusant circles until the late sixteenth century, we know that it travelled to Cumberland soon after, entering the Naworth Castle library of Lord William Howard (1563-1640), the well-
known recusant antiquary (Bernard, II, pt. 1, 14-15). Howard was a descendant through marriage of Sir Thomas Dacre (1467-1525), also based at Naworth Castle, and warden general of the northwestern marches, who led the English army to victory over Scotland at Flodden in 1513, accompanied by the banner of St Cuthbert. Thomas Dacre’s badges are painted, along with those of the Greystoke, Stanley and Percy families, and the prior himself, on the ceiling of the early sixteenth-century Prior’s Tower in the cathedral close at Carlisle, advertising his secular patronage of the cathedral priory (Park and Cather 222-23). While the metrical Life, a Durham production, presumably targets a north-eastern aristocratic audience capable of protecting the monastery’s endangered northern dependencies and providing military leadership against the Scots, comparable aristocratic audiences were also being brought into contact with Cuthbertine veneration in the North West, through the wood panel sequence at Carlisle, at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Thomas Dacre’s associations with the Augustinian priory in particular conceivably provide an anterior context that helps explain William Howard’s interest in Cuthbert many decades later.

The Dacre family was perhaps a prestigious vernacular audience for the Carlisle wood panel sequence, its visual narrative providing them with insight into a northern saint who endorsed their military campaigns against the Scots. The sequence must also have been viewed regularly by the canons and bishop, who would have appreciated Cuthbert’s sacramental and episcopal modelling and have had the Latin training to refer back to the full Bedean narrative, and by a mixed municipal audience, who would have taken the paintings and their couplets more at face value. Like the early fifteenth-century stained-glass programmes depicting Cuthbert at Durham, this singular response to Bede’s Prose Life reaches out to a potentially vast, northern devotional clientele, translating Bede into visual and vernacular media that ensure widespread intelligibility, while retaining explicit links to his authorised text. Yet, unlike Durham, it is conceived and orchestrated, for the first time, within a canonical milieu, suggesting that, by the close of the fifteenth century, Cuthbert’s supernatural utility for the north had overflowed Benedictine perimeters and entered the devotional orbit of other rules. Whereas the

21 It should be noted that St Cuthbert’s banner had been carried, along with the banner of St John of Beverley, in English military campaigns against the Scots since the late twelfth century (Sharpe).

22 These painted ceilings in the Prior’s Tower bear some similarity to the elaborately painted, early sixteenth-century ceilings at Naworth Castle which also prominently display Thomas Dacre’s crest.
Durham compiler of the early fifteenth-century metrical Life creates his vast poem to promote the Benedictine way of life and extol Benedictine sanctity in keeping with contemporary programmes of monastic reform, by the end of the century, visual and vernacular epitomes of Cuthbert’s life were being created at Carlisle Cathedral to very different ends: to display the relevance of Cuthbert’s sanctity to a diversity of religious orders throughout the late medieval north.
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Theory Transposed:
Idols, Knights and Identity

Nicolette Zeeman

The ideas and theories about the idol developed in medieval religious milieux impact on many aspects of the secular culture of the Middle Ages. Although from the Hebrew Scripture onwards the idol is described as something made of insentient, “dead” matter, writers also constantly recognise that idol worshipers attribute life to it; this means that for the Middle Ages the notion of the idol always raises the spectre of inner aliveness and sentience. We see this in medieval imaginings of the knight, whose heraldic iconography and chivalric accoutrements are so often reminiscent of the iconography of the pagan idol. In such heraldic and chivalric imagery, but above all in medieval romance, such impenetrable exteriors constantly raise questions about the possible inner life of the knight: much of Malory’s *Morte Darthur*, for example, pivots on a tension between the surface opacity of his armoured and often disguised men and the repeated signals of pained sentience within.

This essay is part of a larger project which explores how some of the very sophisticated theories of image use and abuse – ideas about idolatry and the idol – that were developed within the medieval church might also have impacted on secular culture. While the transfer of the theory, language or iconography of idolatry to secular contexts is sometimes explicitly acknowledged, at other times it takes place in modes that are more subterranean – manifesting itself in underlying thought structures.

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1 For crucial questions, criticism and advice, many thanks to Mathilde Bruckner, Virginie Greene, James Simpson and Sallie Spence, during a happy year spent at the Radcliffe Institute – whom I also thank for the time to begin this project.

or linguistic or iconographic connotations. I shall argue that in these new contexts the medieval figure of the idol takes on many new implications, to the point that it stands in tension with the anti-idolatry discourses in which the notion of idolatry was originally formulated. In these new contexts the figure of the idol may well retain its complexity, its “bodiliness,” its opacity, its fascination and exoticism; it may well continue to raise questions about deadness and aliveness, about surface appearance and what might be “inside”; but it may no longer necessarily carry a morally negative loading.¹

Ideas about the image, idolatry and the figure of the idol – not least the “pagan” idol – are deeply imbricated in many areas of the secular culture of the Middle Ages. It is perhaps scarcely surprising that the theory, language and iconography of idolatry provide terms for thinking about materiality, bodies and artefacts. However, I shall propose here that by drawing attention to the surfaces of the experiential world and the intractably physical and corporeal nature of human, animal and artefactual life, the figure of the idol also raises – by contrast – questions of animacy and even psychological interiority. Connected to the sense that the idol might in fact be alive, “look back” or move, these are questions about what goes on within the body or behind the face. Paradoxically, in other words, the figure of the idol shapes much medieval thought about inner life, action and identity.

My main test case will be the historical and imaginary figure of the armoured knight, as seen in medieval illustrations, artefacts and romance. It is perhaps not entirely surprising that the theory, language and iconography of idolatry have a place here, given that they are very clearly present elsewhere in medieval courtly culture. As Michael Camille and others have shown, notions of secular idolatry (the “religion of love”) are pervasive in the culture and literature of erotic desire, where they are a means of thinking about the thrills and risks of pleasure, the body, sexuality, obsession and fetishism.² Nor is it just women who are the

¹ This project owes an enormous debt to Michael Camille’s exploration of the medieval theory and iconography of the non-Christian idol in The Gothic Idol. In his inspirational book, Camille also anticipated other aspects of my project by recognising some of the areas of medieval culture where the notion of idolatry was not merely tolerated but even cultivated; he wrote, for instance, on idol-like automata, the “god” of money and the “idolatry” of erotic love in the Middle Ages. More recently, Sarah Stanbury has written on the idolatrous connotations of the secular image in Chaucer (101-16). Other important works in this area include Aston, England’s Iconoclasts; Broken Idols; Simpson, Under the Hammer.

² Camille, Gothic Idol chapter 7; for an influential early (and negative) reading of this phenomenon, see Robertson, Preface to Chaucer chapter 5.
objects of such idolatry, for medieval Arthurian romance is often startlingly clear about the idolisation of knights – the most egregious of whom is Lancelot, adored by both women and men. Here, however, I am interested in a slightly different kind of work performed by the notion of idolatry in relation to the knight. I will be looking at the armoured and accoutred man, a figure who is substantially defined by being covered in elaborate protective equipment, formalised insignia and fantastical decorations. If much of this knightly paraphernalia enables identification, providing images and signs to be read by the onlooker, its coded forms and the fact that it covers the knight mean that it is also always obscuring and substitutive. If medieval romance constantly raises questions about knowing the self and the other, many of these questions are focused and intensified in the figure of the armoured knight. One trope underlying this figure – and in dialogue with the idea that the knight and his insignia are a readable “image” or “sign” – is that of the idol.

In Judeo-Christian thought idolatry is worship of the wrong object or worship done in the wrong way. Idolatry is what other people do, and early Judaism defined itself against such practices – “I am the Lord thy God . . . Thou shalt not have strange gods before me” (Ex. 20.2-3). Idolatry also refers to the incorrect use both of images and things more generally: “Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath . . . Thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them” (Ex. 20.4-5). For Augustine idolatry is one way of describing the “enjoyment” of things, using them as ends in themselves, when they ought merely to be “used” in the pursuit of God (On Christian Doctrine 1.3; 9). More recent ways of describing this phenomenon, of course – those of psychoanalysis or “thing-theory,” for example – have associated idolatry on the one hand with getting hooked on things and their materiality, but, on the other hand, with the experience of what Bill Brown calls the “thingness” of

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4 See Burns; also Burgwinkle chapter 3.
5 All scriptural references are to The Holy Bible. The Douay Version. See also Deut. 4.15-19; Wisdom 13-15.
6 As a non-image using religion, Judaism insists that even an image (a “graven thing” or a “likeness”) of the true God is an idol.
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objects. Brown speaks of sensing “what is excessive in objects . . . their force as a sensuous presence or as a metaphysical presence, the magic by which objects become values, fetishes, idols, and totems” (5); but he also insists on the experience of “the thing baldly encountered” (5) – something rarer than it might seem, because signs and ideas tend to divert us from a recognition of the object as a thing. It is hard, Brown insists, to see the thing unless it in some way intrudes upon us – by hitting us or breaking, for instance. He cites Leo Stein to the effect that if “ideas are what we project,” then “things are what we encounter” (3). The language of the idol may also imply something of this.

Deadness is a recurrent theme in Hebrew Scriptural and medieval discussions of the idol:

What doth the graven thing avail, because the maker therof hath graven it, a molten and a false image, because the forger therof hath trusted in a thing of his own forging, to make dumb idols? Woe to him who saith to wood: Awake. To the dumb stone: Arise. Can it teach? Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no spirit in the bowels thereof. (Habakkuk 2.18-19)8

“Strange gods” are described as mere artefacts, made of inanimate stuff; their worshipers form them out of wood or stone “like the image of a man, or the resemblance of some beast” (Wisdom 13.13-14) and then attribute them with life. Classical theories of idolatry had long stressed the “made” aspect of gods and idols – the fact that humans make them out of inanimate or dead matter and then worship them as if they are alive. Classical theorists also repeatedly claim that gods and idols originate in the images of rulers, historical figures or a beloved dead father or son. Written in the Hellenistic world in the first century BC, the book of Wisdom echoes these ideas:

For a father, being afflicted with bitter grief, made to himself the image of his son who was quickly taken away; and him who had died as a man, he

7 See Stein 44. See also Fradenburg, “Making, Mourning,” and Robertson, “Medieval Things.”
8 See also Isaiah 2.8; 44.9-20; Jeremiah 10.1-9; Wisdom 13.10-19; 15.15-17.
9 See Herodotus, The Histories 2.172; Horace, Satires 1.8.
10 See Minnis 31-34; Camille, Gothic Idol 50-56; Zeeman, “Mythography” 139-41. See also Freedberg 43: “when images are set among us, the dead are kept among the living and inert matter becomes lively – to such an extent that we may even be afraid of it.”
began now to worship as a god, and appointed him rites and sacrifices. (Wisdom 14.15)\textsuperscript{11}

Stressing the metal, stone and wood out of which the idol is made, Wisdom reiterates that the idolater “prayeth to that which is dead” (13.18). As Aranye Fradenburg has said, “the term ‘idol’ describes an object of devotion when its ‘quickness’ is being negated” (“Making, Mourning” 26).

The underlying premise of the Hebrew Scriptures is thus that idolatry is meaningless making and unmaking – the idolater knows the idol is just material stuff and still worships it.\textsuperscript{12} In fact, according to such texts, the idolater and idol are alike in that they share a kind of emptiness, a refusal to make meaning, an insentience. This idea too originates in the Psalms:

The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the works of the hands of men. They have mouths and speak not; they have eyes and see not. They have ears and hear not; they have noses and smell not . . . neither shall they cry out through their throat. Let them that make them become like unto them; and all such as trust in them. (Psalm 113B.4-8)\textsuperscript{13}

This last line is really a curse: “Let them that make them become like unto them.” There are medieval miracle stories that illustrate this idea, where idolators and image abusers actually appear like idols. In Robert Mannyng’s English pastoral manual Handlyng Synne, for example, a priest suddenly “sees” his congregation in terms of their sins (10167-260), and one of them looks “lyke a foul maumetrie” (10218). Jeffrey Hamburger records a fifteenth-century narrative that describes how Sister Clara Anna, a young nun involved in a feud over two patron saints at St. Katharinenthal, near Zurich, mocks an image of St John the Baptist, saying it looks like a woodcutter. She treats it as a dead image that can be insulted with impunity. As a result, she was miraculously “struck blind, dumb and unconscious,” as the author says, as “motionless as a

\textsuperscript{11} On the worship of distant dignitaries, see Wisdom 14.17-21; and Brown, ed., New Jerome Biblical Commentary 510-13.

\textsuperscript{12} The vehemence and violence of many anti-idolatry discourses and iconoclastic practices suggest that those who enact them at some level believe in their power and even their “aliveness;” see Freedberg 406-7, but also chapter 14 as a whole.

\textsuperscript{13} See also Psalm 134.15-18.
piece of wood” – remarkably like an idol, in other words (441).14 Fradenburg expresses this identification of the idol with the idolater in terms of the relation prosthetic of the artefact to its maker – it manifests something insentient within the human subject: “if something of ‘us’ were to survive in the insentient signifier, that might mean that there’s something of the insentient signifier in ‘us’” (“Making, Mourning” 37).

And yet idolaters attribute life to their creations. Simpson speaks of a “profound indecision about whether images are alive” (60)15 across the period, and he and Stanbury remind us that the very insistence that statues are dead reveals a constant fear that they might not be. For Stanbury, this is the “queer masquerade” (107) of the idol, as it operates in a space between life and death. In many medieval imaginative writings, non-Christian idolaters are portrayed as fantastical and ludicrous; they yell at their gods, they tell them that they have made them out of “stocks and stones,” and even threaten them with destruction if they do not do what they are asked.16 The idol is “wood,” “stone” and “dumb,” but its worshipers animate it, treat it as a person, tell it to “awake,” to “arise,” and, bizarrely, ask it to enable them to do the things that it cannot itself do. The all-pervasive Scriptural and medieval idea that bad spirits inhabit idols, speaking and acting through them, is one rationalisation of this process.17 Ultimately, like the Hebrew Scriptures, these texts recognise that to make an image of something that appears to be alive leads quickly to believing that it is alive, a process that has been explored at length by a more recent theorist of the image such as David Freedberg.18 The same assumption is reflected too in the many medieval images that portray the mutual and entwined gaze of the idol and the idolater; these too acknowledge the power of the image – even though

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14 On the connection between the idolater and the idol, see Camille, Gothic Idol 7, 14, 276-9; Figure 140, a “friar idol” on a pilaster (Book of Hours, London, British Library, MS Stowe 17, fol. 123v); perhaps also Figures 141 and 144.

15 See also Simpson, all chapter 2.

16 See for example, Bodel (lines 134-68, 1460-67, 1507-27); Lupack, ed., Sultan of Babylon (lines 276-7, 309-11, 1357-8, 2104-14, 2431-54). The ubiquitous Middle English coinage “stocks and stones” ultimately derives from the Hebrew Scriptures, and passages such as Wisdom 14.21, on those who “gave the incommunicable name to stones and wood” (“incommunicabile nomen lapidibus et lignis imposuerunt”); see Aston, England’s Iconoclasts 115, 120, 124; Stanbury 107.

17 Camille, Gothic Idol 56-72; Simpson 54-5, 59.

18 Freedberg 12, 30-31, 36-7, and passim; also Elkins chapter 5.
the viewer knows that it is a made thing – to transfix and to catch the viewer in its gaze, just like a living creature.\(^{19}\)

Whereas the image refers beyond itself and in so doing lays claim to meaning, the idol is defined by its refusal to do either of these things. Just as for Brown, therefore, things are always in tension with ideas, and for Fradenburg the idol is one dimension of the artefact understood as a sign and a signifier,\(^{20}\) so the medieval idol is always in tension with the image. And yet, even while repeatedly insisting on the obscurity and inanimacy of the idol, scriptural and medieval writings about idolatry paradoxically also return to what seems to be a pervasive proclivity to attribute reference, meaning and animacy to it. Somewhere within or behind the idol in these texts, in other words, lies the spectre of its imagined sentience or inner life.

A number of texts also associate colour or painting with the idol. We have already seen in the Psalms that “the idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold” (113B.4); in Wisdom we hear that the artist or carpenter makes “the resemblance of some beast, laying it over with vermilion, and painting it red, and covering every spot that is in it” (13.14). Later the same text adds that “the invention of mischievous men hath not deceived us . . . a graven figure with divers colours. The sight whereof enticeth the fool to lust after it; and he loveth the lifeless figure of a dead image” (15.4-5). One problem with colour is the way it enhances effects of naturalism and the attribution of life, making people forget that they are just looking at an image rather than the “real thing;”\(^{21}\) this is the anxiety expressed in the Wycliffite and anti-image text, the *Lantern* of Li3t, when it insists: “þe peyntour makiþ an ymage forgid wiþ diverse colours, til it seme in foolis i3en as a lyveli creature” (84). Another problem with colour may be that it is visually alluring or (given the expense of some colours in the Middle Ages) a sign of wealth and indulgence – another manifestation of idolatry. This seems to be the concern acknowledged in the negative by Walter Hilton when in *De adoratione ymaginum* he claims in passing that “the causes of adoration” should not

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\(^{19}\) See Figure 1; also Camille, *Gothic Idol* (Figures 12, 37, 41, 157, 158); or Dimmick, ed. (Figures 5, 9, 10, 12).

\(^{20}\) “Accusing the signifier of being an ‘idol’ fights uncanniness by pronouncing the signifier dead. But then, just when we bring the idol back to life, turning stocks and stones into demons who prophesy falsely, we are obliged to admit that the signifier, like the artefact, is dead” (Fradenburg, “Making, Mourning” 28).

\(^{21}\) On the association of colour with the attribution of life, see Freedberg 49-50; on the association of naturalism with the attribution of life more generally, see chapters 9-11.
be the “wood or stone” of an image or its beautiful painting. Chaucer may also invoke some combination of these ideas when the narrator of the Knight’s Tale says of the artist of Diana’s temple that “Wel koude he peynten lifly that it wroghte; / With many a floryn he the hewes boghte” (2087-8). With varying degrees of tentativeness, art historians have considered the possibility that the avoidance of colour in some later medieval art (such as the northern European fashion for leaving religious wooden sculpture unpainted) might be one response to a concern about idolatry.23

Figure 1: Pagan Worship, detail of manuscript illumination, French, 1375-77, Augustine, *City of God*, trans. Raoul de Presles, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 22912, fol.2v. Reproduced by kind permission.

22 “Pro eo quod talis ymago de ligno vel lapide adoratur, vel pulere depingitur . . . quia iste non sunt cause adorationis” (Hilton, *De adoratione ymaginum* 193).
23 Baxandall discusses the giving up of colour and German iconoclasm, but refuses to link them in any categorical way (see 42-48 and passim); but see Hamburger 216, 300; Camille, “The Iconoclast’s Desire.”
And what about the iconography of the idol? Figure 1 is a detail from the famous illustration that opens Raoul de Presle’s French translation of Augustine’s *City of God* in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 22912 (fol.2v). The full image shows the Jews, Christians and pagans with their respective objects of worship.24 On the right are the Jews, censing the ark, a box with a pointed roof and a scroll emanating from it: this is the “word” of God and its texts. In the middle are the Christians with a priest holding a book before an altar with a chalice standing underneath an image of the crucified Christ. On the left (and in the detail shown here) are the pagan worshipers, with two naked anthropomorphic figures on an altar gesturing towards them – such unclothed and mobile bodies are an extremely widespread way of imagining the pagan idol. As can be seen again at the right side of Figure 2, these bare figures standing on pillars, pedestals, plinths or altars, often painted gold and holding shields or spears, seem to be imitations of classical statues.25

Their swaying bodies and their solid supports foreground their corporeal materiality, combining militarism with a degree of eroticism; often,

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24 The full image is reproduced in Camille, *Gothic Idol* (Figure 106).
25 See also the naked trio of gods in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr 172, fol. 186r and Janus at 205v (volume reproduced on Gallica).
as in Figure 1, these idols look at their worshipers, participating in mutual gaze of seeming fascination. On the left of Figure 2, however, we also see theatrical representations of the gods – ridiculed at length in the second book of Augustine’s *City of God*. With their exotic headgear and other identifying markers, these appear to be, from left to right, Jupiter, Janus and Saturn (with a small scythe). This trio is clearer in Figure 3, where each god has his own plinth.

![Figure 3: Jupiter, Janus and Saturn on individual altars, manuscript illumination, French, 14th century, Augustine, *City of God*, trans. Raoul de Presles, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 6271, fol.114v. Reproduced by kind permission.](image)

Such idol images draw on the huge resources for iconography to be found in late-antique and medieval mythographical and astrological commentaries, myth collections and encyclopaedic texts, writings that often explicitly connect the pagan gods with idolatry. In describing the characteristic iconography of the gods, many of them also speak of *imag-*

26 See also Camille, *Gothic Idol* 61-63 and Figures 31 and 32.
27 Seznec; Smalley; Minnis 8-30; Zeeman, “Mythography.”
ines (“pictures”) of the gods or comment that a god pingitur (“is painted”) in such and such a way;28 although some modern readers have hypothesised that what is being referred to here are primarily imagined and textual “images,” some of the manuscripts do contain images of the gods, such as the late eleventh-century pen and ink illustration to a copy of Martianus Capella’s *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* illustrated in Figure 4.

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28 Smalley 110-21, 160-83; Minnis 20-21; Zeeman, “Mythography” 139-41.
Here in the middle on the left Jupiter sits on his throne; Mars appears below in his chariot, accompanied by a wolf, with Pavor (Fear) looking back at him; the earth goddess Cybele is above; in the centre in his chariot is Apollo, and on the right the ubiquitous Saturn, holding a serpent with its tail in its mouth and a scythe. Each of these gods, as in so many mythographical and astrological texts, has his or her own headgear and identifying equipment; this can be seen in Dijon Bibliothèque Municipale MS 448, fol.63v (Figure 5).

Figure 5: The Planets and their spheres (left to right, Jupiter, Mars, Sol, Saturn, Luna, Mercury, Venus), pen and ink drawing with colour, (?Abbey of Beze, Burgundy, first quarter of the 11th century, *Tractatus super astronomiam*, Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 448, fol.63v. Reproduced by kind permission.

29 On this image, see Seznec 167-68; for Bersuire’s description of the “picture” of Mars, see Minnis 20. Compare other pagan gods, usually with headdresses, in Seznec (Figures 13, 20, 31, 42, 61, 68, 70).
Other iconography, however, casts the pagan idol as a composite human-animal figure, often with a horned, grotesque or animal head, or with other animal features; Camille illustrates several of these, such as the clawed and horned Jupiter in Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M 751, fol.29v, the cat-headed god in the Winchester Bible, fol.350v, the simian figures in Bibliothèque Nationale MS fr. 13502, fol.21v, or the remarkable antlered Diana drawn by the enthusiastic Classicist, Matthew Paris, in the *Chronica majora*, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 26, p.7.30 Such composite or metamorphic figures echo Wisdom describing idols in “the resemblances of beasts” (“similitudines animalium”) (13.10);31 but they also recall Classical mythology and the shape-shifting that is so central to it and the *raison d’être* of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses.*

Figure 6: Hybrid Idols, manuscript illumination, French, 15th century, Mandeville, *Le Livre des merveilles du monde*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 2810, fol 184v. Reproduced by kind permission.

30 Camille, *Gothic Idol* (Figures 34, 36, 38, 59; see also Figures 14, 35, 41, 65, 68, 70, 72).
31 See also Wisdom 13.14; 15.18-19.
Figure 6, on the other hand, takes its inspiration from a tradition of travels to the east; the figures with animal heads that appear here illustrate a passage from the French text of Mandeville’s *Livre des merveilles du monde* in one of the manuscripts possessed by the Duc de Berry. The Mandeville author (here cited in Middle English) is at this point very explicit about this type of hybrid idol, which he claims to find on the isle of Thana, near India. Here the inhabitants worship natural phenomena, which the author calls *simulacra*, such as the heroes Hercules and Achilles; but they also worship *idols*, that is hybrid objects of worship made out a mixture of natural forms:

> And ydoles is an ymage made of lewed wille of man that man may not fynden among Kyndely [natural] thinges, as an ymage that hath iiii. hedes, on of man, another of an hors or of an ox or of sum other best that no man hath seyn after kyndely disposicioun. (Seymour 121)\(^3\)

To sum up so far then, the medieval idol is not entirely unreadable; the identifying accoutrements of the pagan gods are, after all, legible identifiers. Nevertheless, what these various figures share is an emphasis on materiality, bodiliness and a broader ethos of semantic confusion and impenetrability; they mingle accoutrements, headdresses and references to antiquity; they combine human forms, nakedness and animal parts in strange conjunctions of different bodies and cultures. They can be fascinating, exotic or grotesque. It is true that the Christian image is by no means always completely “readable” either; nevertheless, it is always understood either directly or indirectly to point beyond itself to the true object of worship, God. This is precisely what the pagan and non-Christian idol does not do, instead drawing the eye and the desire of the beholder into itself and its own opaque body. And yet, whether anthropomorphic or animal-like, whether swaying, pointing or falling, the pagan idol constantly simulates life; repeatedly accused of being “dead matter,” it nevertheless constantly poses the possibility of inner “alive-ness.”

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\(^{3}\) The passage is in the French text but not in Odoric of Pordenone, the main source at this point; see 247. See further Camille, *Gothic Idol* 158; Higgins 226-7, 242-6.
In fact, the image or the idol is in the Middle Ages a quite commonly-used metaphor with which to think about embodied identity and raise questions of interiority, intention and devotion. According to John Bromyard in the *Summa praedicantium*, for example, hypocrites are like images: they look good, but they do nothing and are dead inside. Making a beautiful image outwardly, the hypocrite is like a craftsman –

qui facit imaginem illas, exterius operari incipit, illasque partes plus ornat, & non dat vitam interius, nec multum de interiori curat decore; natura vero quae hominem product vivum, econverso interius incipit, a corde.

(who makes . . . images; he begins to work on them externally and ornaments those parts more; but he does not give life inwardly, nor does he care much for the internal decoration; truly, Nature who produces the living man, begins in contrast internally, with the heart). (2, fol.165r)\(^33\)

Citing Psalm 38.7 on the transience of the image, Bromyard points to a tension between embodied appearance and an imagined interior that is somehow at odds with that appearance. In *The Scale of Perfection* Walter Hilton articulates a much more devotional version of the idea according to which appearance and action “without the herte folwynge” are empty:

For wite thu weel, a bodili turnynge to God without the herte folwynge is but a figure or a likenes of vertues and no soothfastnesse. Wherfore a wrecched man or a woman is he or sche that leveth al the inward kepinge of hymself and schapith hym withoute oonli a fourme and likenes of hoolynesse, as in habite and in speche and in bodili werkes . . . (1,1 [31])\(^34\)

Johannes of Hauvilla’s elliptical version of this trope in the *Architrenius*, written two centuries earlier, suggests that it has a long pedigree; referring to intellectual emptiness, he says that vain philosophical students come to study like statues and leave in the same state: “statue veniunt statueque recedunt” (“arrive as statues and depart as statues”) (Book 3, chap. 21 line 406). They are empty shams.

There are also political versions of this idea. An anonymous fourteenth-century Bishop was recorded as having commented that the vio-

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33 Bromyard also compares hypocrites to tomb mounds and to the images on them.

34 On the image and idol in Hilton, see Watson.
lent French King Philippe le Bel is not even living – “non erat homo, nec bestia, sed imago” (“he was neither man nor beast but an image”) (Vigor 632) – he may be handsome, but he is without inner life or feeling. Such words no doubt echo Zacharias 11.17, “O pastor et idolum derelinquens gregem” (“Oh shepherd and idol, that forsaketh the flock”). The fifteenth-century Middle English prose translation of Deguileville’s *Pelerinage de l’ame* makes absolutely clear that the figure of the idol underlies this trope. Criticising the ineffectual rulers of the time, it describes them as being like a “dede ymage,” or “an ydole, or an ymage, that nothynge availeth;” echoing Deguileville’s use of the term *estatue*, the text explains that they are “voyde of al maner of vertue, right as an Image that nought hath of manlyhede, but only of lykenesse, by maner of shap withouten.” Indeed, the text goes on to say that kings who fail to become meaningful “signs” by doing good deeds are just stuffed manikins:

> they faren right as done weryels [scarecrows] of ymages made of clothe, stopped with strawe, that holdith in his hand a bowe, bent to fere awey the foules oute of the corne. (Book 4, chap. 29 fol. lxxvi)  

Here the conceptual overlap between the idea of the image and the idol means that both have become a means of thinking about a life so unproductive or destructive that it might as well be inanimate or dead matter.

A rather different use of the comparison recurs in medieval love literature. We find it in Chaucer’s description of Troilus when he discovers that he is to lose Criseyde, “ful lik a ded ymage, pale and wan” (*Troilus and Criseyde*, Book 4 line 235). This idea of the “dead image,” which harks back to a number of thirteenth-century French love allegories that describe the lover as transfixed like an image/idol, describes Troilus as drained of colour, animacy, even life itself. The trope is de-

35 See also Vigor 653; compare the bishop’s claim that “forma quidem Philippum caeteris antecellare, sed virtutibus vacuum esse” (“indeed, Philip excels others in appearance, but is empty of virtues” [624]).

36 There is no equivalent to this passage in the French, though for the term *estatue*, see Guillaume de Deguileville, *Pelerinage de L’Ame* (lines 7250, 7299-342); see also Camille, *Gothic Idol* 284.

37 See Stanbury 106. For earlier love texts where the transfixed lover is likened to an image/idol, see Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun (lines 2282-8); Nicole de Margival (lines 1120-25); Tibaut (lines 2182-85). All these texts – and the many romances that exploit the same motif – exploit the tension between the immobility of the lover’s body and the amorous life that is nevertheless at work unseen within.
developed by the translator and poet thought to be Charles d’Orléans, imprisoned in England in the early fifteenth century. Describing himself growing older, he tells how he is visited in a dream by a personification of Age, who cruelly tells him that young people mock him, ironically, “Saying, ‘O God, what joy yond drye ymage / May do unto a fayre lady likyng’” (2584-85).38 Here, as in the satirical texts noted just now, the “drye ymage” signals empty show and ineffectuality. But as the poet describes himself trembling at the truth that he is too old for love, he also comes to look more like the dazed Troilus: “Thus nyst y lo what best was to ben wrought, / But even format [confounded] stood like a dombe ymage” (2650-1). The dismayed lover has become a kind of tomb to his own love, an extreme example of how a human being might identify with, and feel like, an inanimate thing.

And yet, in the Middle Ages as now, to be “like a stone” could also signal the lack of feeling or sentience. When in Troilus and Criseyde Pandarus advises Troilus to give up loving Criseyde, Troilus tells him that he would have to be a “stone” to do so (Book 4, lines 466-9). A different twist is given to this trope in an early Latin body and soul debate; here the desperate soul, faced with the punishments of hell, wishes that it was an animal or an inanimate object, so it could not suffer:

O deus, O utinam
Dedisses cuiuspiam
Me fuisse volucris
Corpus vel quadrupedis.
Utinam volatile
Essem vel aquatile
Animal, vel marmoris
Pars vel truncus arboris…

(Oh God, would that you had given me the body of some bird or four-footed animal. If only I were a flying or swimming animal or a piece of marble or the trunk of a tree…). (Heningham 1717-24)

Here references to wood and stone ("marble or . . . tree") again make it clear that the subtext is the idol, always made of “stocks and stones.” Things could get so bad that a soul might actually wish not to be human. No doubt this is always a thought that underpins the fascination of the idol, as it hovers on the borderline of animacy and inanimacy.

38 For a development of this reading, see Zeeman, “The English Charles.”
I shall now look at the armoured knight, as seen in a range of medieval artefacts, texts and images, and, finally, in some passages from Malory’s *Morte Darthur* and its sources. What I am ultimately interested in here is an imaginative and literary version of “the armoured man,” though this may nevertheless have implications for the self-understanding of the historical culture of the medieval military classes.

The illustration of the three classes from *Image du monde*, London, BL, MS Sloane 2435, reproduced on the front of the hardback *Riverside Chaucer*, shows a priest, a knight and a labourer (fol. 85v). Although you can see the faces of the labourer and the churchman, the knight is masked by his helmet. No doubt this reflects the practical need to cover up when fighting – except he is not fighting here. Instead, along with his armour, the “visored face” seems to be a sign of the knight’s need, but also his power, not to be seen. Although by no means all images of knights have a visored face, images like this illustrate a tendency toward masking and occlusion that seems to be central to the medieval iconography of the knight. Sculptured knights with their heads enclosed in “great helmets,” for example, can be seen on the west front of Wells Cathedral; these are thought to have emanated from a workshop that also produced funerary monuments across England in the 1260s and 70s, and influenced tomb sculpture in south west England more generally.39 The wonderful armoured “machine man” in Figure 7 is an early example of a strikingly large number of English tomb effigies where the knight is entirely masked in his armour.40 This particular figure, strangely both lying and in “walking” pose, illustrates vividly how the armoured man could look more like a thing than a person. He is nothing less than a study in obscured identity.

Of course there were many accoutrements that could identify the knight.41 Even on the Furness tomb you can see the shield that, when he was alive, and perhaps also at one time on the tomb, would have shown the knight’s heraldic arms or “colours.” The primary means of identification in the very visual and public world of knightly performance,

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39 Hurtig 28, 118-22; Tummers 79; also Dressler.
40 For the fully helmeted knight see Tummers (64, and Figures 18, 20 and 42); Hurtig (115-16 and Figures 110, 111, 112, 190, 191). On the Furness sculpture and its distinctive “torsion,” see Lindley 43-44; also more generally, Hurtig 120-31.
41 These were developed partly because of the obscuring of the face that resulted from armour and the visored helmet; see Pastoureau, *L’Art héraldique* 17-28; *Armoirial des chevaliers* 7-8; “Heraldry” in Hourihane, gen. ed, *Grove Encyclopedia* vol. 3 302-21 (305-6).
chivalric insignia appeared on shields, tunics, ceremonial helmets, flags and horse coverings, not to mention their replication in images, sculptures and on tombs. Figure 8 comes from the “A” copy of the fifteenth
Figure 8: Edmund of Arundel, Count of Salisbury and the Countess, Salisbury Roll A, London, British Library, MS Add. 45133, fo.l.55v © British Library Board. Reproduced by kind permission.

century Salisbury Roll. It shows the Duke and Duchess of Salisbury with their ensign, a golden lion on a red background and trimmed in black, painted on his armour, sculpted on his helmet crest, and sewn on her
cloak.42 And yet this wonderful image also shows how these heraldic signs are substitutes for more direct modes of identification; readable signs and images, they also mask the person behind – in this, the “A” version of the Roll, the Duke’s face is entirely unseen, shut in its tournament helmet. This is what Michel Pastoureau calls the “ambivalence” of the identifying crest and the masked face, signs that both show and dissimulate (“Déguiser ou dissimuler?” 134).43

Other historians have recognised this chivalric interplay of revealing and concealing, of readable and unreadable surfaces. Where earlier generations (most notably Johan Huizinga) saw later medieval chivalric ritual and insignia as decadent and in effect “empty,” more recent historians and literary scholars have stressed the military and political, social and identity-forming, functionality of this kind of chivalric show and performance.44 The aristocratic and military classes used such ritual and insignia for a purpose. These issues are raised in Fradenburg’s seminal study of performance and power in late-medieval Scotland, City, Marriage, Tournament, and in Susan Crane’s fine study of ritual and clothing, The Performance of Self. Crane questions widespread narratives about the emergence of an apparently autonomous inner self in the later Middle Ages, writing subtly about the interplay of group identity, material form and the subject in the culture of chivalry; among other things, she explores how knightly identity derives from the dynamic interplay of heraldic icons – and in particular animal icons – and the knight who “ impersonates” them. Nevertheless, in my view both Crane and Fradenburg underplay the ways that, from an early period, chivalric culture and its literature constantly pose questions (even if they do not answer them) about what goes on in the heads of its subjects. Crane, for example, continues to insist on the role of public and social judgement in arbitrating chivalric identity, prioritising the outside world over questions of

42 Edmund of Arundel, Count of Salisbury and the Countess, Salisbury Roll A, London, British Library MS Add. 45133, fol.55r. This is a copy of the original Roll of c.1463 (now pp.176-225 of Writhe’s Garter Book, London, British Library Loan MS 90). Made between 1483 and 1485, the copy alters some of the original imagery and heraldry, and adds new figures; now split up, part is in Writhe’s Garter Book (146-58) and part in London, British Library MS Add. 45133 (fols 52-55). See Payne 190-3, where there are further illustrations. I have used Salisbury Roll A because its knights are visored, whereas they are not in the earlier version.

43 See also Crane 108, 121-4.

44 See Vale, War and Chivalry; Vale, Edward III; Keen; Fradenburg, City, Marriage, Tournament; Crane 122 and passim. But see also Huizinga.
interiority (Ch. 4). And Fradenburg’s emphasis on the moulding of the chivalric self to the mechanisms of outward show (perhaps like her emphasis on the way that artefacts point to some “insentience” in their makers) means that the emphatically external chivalric world she describes still sounds a little like the “empty” one described by Huizinga.

I am not in this essay going to argue that late medieval chivalric art and literature is exclusively focused on the psychic life of its visored and occluded knights. But I am going to argue that it frequently poses questions about what goes on “within” – and that a recurrent part of the debate about the nature of chivalric performance is the question: “what is inside” the head of the armoured knight? The medieval theory, language and iconography of the idol contribute to these ruminations. Just as the figure of the idol allows medieval thinkers to negotiate the interplay of the thing and the sign, material surface and inner life, deadness and aliveness, so too the idol underlies the way that chivalric culture reflects on the dynamic of external show and hidden inner life in the armoured man.

The knight’s masked body and heraldic insignia make him remarkably reminiscent of the pagan idol. These fabulous forms of chivalric display were designed to induce awe, something for which Malory tellingly uses the simultaneously religious and secular term worship (“honour,” “respect,” “renown,” as well as “veneration,” “reverence” MED). The elaborate colours of heraldic insignia (only seven of them, their use covered by strict rules) had their own logic; but colours were also associated with the idol. Knightly insignia and the tournament crests that go with them, many of them sculpted and three-dimensional and made of leather, wood, cloth, paint or feathers, have their place in medieval military history; but they are also surely somewhat reminiscent of images of

45 On p.127 Crane cites Patterson arguing a much more monolithic version of this position (Patterson 168-79).
46 See above.
47 For a twentieth-century literary reflection on the same issue, see Italo Calvino’s short story The Non-Existent Knight.
48 Pastoureau lists the figures attributed with imaginary heraldic insignia in the Middle Ages: Old and New Testament characters, the persons of the Trinity, Charlemagne, Roland, the Nine Worthies, Arthurian knights – but also the historical and mythical heroes and gods of antiquity (Armorial 13-16); also “Heraldry” in Hourihane, gen. ed., Grove Encyclopedia vol. 3 pp. 302-21 (310-12).

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the pagan gods with their accoutrements and fantastical headdresses. Even the “totemic” animals of chivalric insignia, these “half-animate, mask-like, not quite human” (Crane 107) figures, strikingly recall the hybrid pagan idol.50 These features could be illustrated from many late medieval handbooks of jousting, heraldry rolls, chivalric histories and romances. Folio 40r of British Library MS Cotton Nero D.IX, a fifteenth-century copy of Antoine de la Sale’s chivalric narrative Jean de Saintre, for example, shows two jousting and visored knights, one with a golden antlered deer and one with a thistle for a crest.51 Both the Grand and Petit armorial équestre de la Toison d’Or, made in Lille in the mid fifteenth century, illustrate an extraordinarily flamboyant series of visored knights on horseback whose elaborate helmet crests include a crown, dragons and two arms holding a broken heart.52

Figure 9 comes from the famous fifteenth-century French manuscript, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 2695, of René d’Anjou’s Livre des tournois.53 Although this book is an amalgam of practices from across Europe and is no longer thought to illustrate historical events, it documents something of the imaginative reach of the culture of the late medieval tournament. Among the crests pictured here are, at the top among the ladies, a bear’s head, and below, starting at the right, what appears to be a black dog/wolf with a bone, a basket of flowers, a red dog/wolf, and an arm pulling the hair of a wildman – or is it holding a decapitated head? These knights are not just, I think, displaying their own “kind of idolatry” or “fetishization” of the material (Fradenburg City, Marriage, Tournament 201). Admiringly viewed from the stands, they are themselves, if anything, secular idols.

To return once more to the late medieval chivalric tomb, we can see that this demands the same ambiguous religio-secular “reverence” for

49 The crest has a long pedigree, though its use reached a height in 1340-1460; see “Heraldry” in Hourihane, gen. ed., Grove Encyclopedia vol. 3 pp. 302-21 (309-11); Crane 121; and René d’Anjou 30-31.
50 On the fact that most heraldic icons do not allude to pre-Christian totems see Pastoureau, L’Art héraldique 15, 17; but see also “Heraldry” in Hourihane, gen. ed., Grove Encyclopedia vol. 3 302-21 (306-9); and Crane makes the case that an anthropological or structural “totemism” of lineage can nevertheless be seen in chivalric animal insignia (111-21).
51 An image of this can be found on http://www.scalarchives.com/web/index.asp. For this text, see Antoine de La Sale, Introduction.
52 Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS 4790 and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Clairambault; see Pastoureau, Histoire symbolique (Figures 26-29).
53 On this text and manuscript, see René d’Anjou 8-19.
the dead knight and his equipment that is solicited by these images. Medieval churches, one of whose roles was to be what Keen calls “the mausolea of chivalry” (178) were commonly draped with the banners and insignia of the nobility who were buried or memorialised there.54

Figure 9: Knights in tournament equipment, detail, pen and watercolour drawing, French, 15th century, René d’Anjou, Le livre des tournois, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS 2695, fols.100r-101r. Reproduced by kind permission.

54 These knightly accoutrements were often bequests to the church: see Hurtig 214-19; Vale, War and Chivalry 88-95; Binski 97, 105; for evidence of concern about the use of arms in churches, see Baxandall 82-3.
Tombs often included not only an image or effigy of the knight, but also of his helmet (and in northern Europe frequently his crested tournament helmet), as well as his shield, banners, tunic or gloves. Sometimes the actual equipment (the knight’s “achievements”) was displayed; the only English site where these survive today is the tomb of Edward, the prematurely dead Black Prince, in Canterbury Cathedral. In cases such as this it seems clear that the knight’s equipment had an element of the “secular relic” to it. This is exactly the implication of the satirical late-fourteenth-century Pierce the Ploughman’s Crede, with its attack on over-decorated churches shining “with schapen scheldes,” “tombes opon tabernacles” and “Knyghtes in her conisantes [emblems] clad for the nones, / All it semed seyntes y-sacred opon erthe” (Barr, ed., lines 176-86). Equally striking is the heraldic method of turning a knight’s insignia, helmet and crest into a single combinatory image, widespread in heraldic armorials, but also on “death shields” (Totenschilde): see Figure 10. Especially common in northern Europe and often hung in churches, death shields could be either painted or three-dimensional; in some early examples, the shield and helmet were sometimes real military equipment, but later on they were often copies, and the helmet was more likely to be a decorated jousting helmet. It is true that we might scarcely expect a face to be looking out from the helmets of these dislocated heraldic compilations; nevertheless, it seems entirely in accord with the knightly iconography we have been exploring that, both in the armorials and the death shields, the helmet visors are invariably shut. Images and artefacts such as these suggest that the Middle Ages was able to reflect on, and in varying degrees acknowledge, the fetishisation of the figure of the knight and the forms of “worship” accorded to him.

I propose further that one of the structuring presences that made some of these reflections possible was the idol, the figure that always in the Middle Ages posed the problem of the glorious surface and what lies within.

55 Hurtig 82-3, 106-8 and Plates 79-82, 84, 86, 152, 154-71.
56 See Alexander, ed., Age of Chivalry 479-81; Binski 97, 147; for the ceremonial re-interment in Bisham Priory, tomb and achievements of the Earl of Salisbury (d.1460), see Payne 187-8. For another later ceremonial helmet, see the “Flodden Helm” (c.1513) at Framlingham Church, Suffolc.
57 Pace Binski 148.
58 See Keen (Figure 29); Pastoureau, Armorial (Figure 31); Une histoire symbolique (Figures 18-21); L’Art héraldique (Figures 29, 34, 50, 53, 72, 80, 127, 129).
IV

Medieval French and English Arthurian romance is pervaded by attitudes towards bodies, equipment, identity and interiority implied by these materials. Romance writing does not contain the degree of heraldic elaboration that we have been seeing – indeed, it often cultivates a kind of heraldic minimalism. What it does prioritise is the business of naming, the development of reputation, the acquisition of armorial insignia, the changing of shields, the wearing of penons, the making of

Figure 10: *Memorial Shield of Jacob Ortlieb*, German, c. 1475; gessoed, painted, and partially silvered wood, iron, leather, rope. Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2007-52-1. Reproduced by kind permission.
tombs and memorials, and, in general, the fetishisation of all these phenomena in relation to knightly identity.\textsuperscript{60} Crane is right that this is a world in which identity is understood as crucially social and in many ways dependent on formal, public recognition and admiration within the court. But there is also often a “worshipful” dimension to this preoccupation with chivalric identity, manifested in its various external forms and accoutrements. One example of the very special devotion accorded to Sir Lancelot, for example, occurs at a point in the \textit{Lancelot-Grail} when Lancelot has disappeared and Galehaut (the knight who loves him more than any other) arrives at a castle courtyard in which ladies and knights are dancing round a pole from which Lancelot’s battered shield is hanging: “every time the knights or ladies came to face it, they would bow before it as before a holy relic. For a long time Galehaut watched how they were honouring the shield . . .” (Lacy, gen. ed. 2.326).\textsuperscript{61} Elsewhere in the \textit{Mort Artu}, Lancelot’s shield has been hung by a silver chain in the Cathedral at Camelot, where it is again “honoured as if it had been a holy relic” (Frappier, ed. §121, my translation).\textsuperscript{62} This is one idolatrous extreme of the diverse theatrics of chivalric identity and its public acknowledgement that pervade Arthurian romance; but it makes very clear that these theatrics do indeed draw on attitudes to the body and its objects that are at least partly shaped by contemporary theories and iconographies of the idol.

The counterpart to this preoccupation with outward appearance in Arthurian romance is a sustained interest in the imagined inner life of its protagonists – sometimes explicitly analysed, but in many texts implied, or even negatively posited, in the form of a pointed textual silence or lacuna. A good number of twelfth-century verse romances contain detailed psychologising passages and psychosomachean episodes of mental “dialogue,” in which the knight is revealed to be in some way at odds or in tension with himself or his social group. Thirteenth-century French prose Arthurian romance cuts back somewhat on these\textsuperscript{63} nevertheless it still provides extensive information as to the thoughts and feelings of its protagonists, often working hard to naturalise or smooth out (though

\textsuperscript{60} On Arthurian heraldry, see Pastoureau, Armorial; for historical families who took Arthurian arms, see ibid. 22; and Crane 110 and note. On tombs and effigies in romance, see Camille, Gothic Idol 251; Kay 232-41. Arguing that the revival of tournaments under Edward IV may have influenced Malory, see Barber.

\textsuperscript{61} For the French, Sommer, ed., Vulgate Version 4.144.

\textsuperscript{62} On this and worship of Lancelot himself, see Kaeppler 54-5; for other examples of shield fetishism, see Malory, ed. Shepherd 486, 607.

\textsuperscript{63} See Lambert 93, 103.
not to remove) the extreme psychological contrasts, contradictions and tensions that remain the métier of Arthurian romance. Malory, as we will see, takes this process further, omitting and compressing psychological material to intensify the enigma of psychological life. Nevertheless what all these texts share is a preoccupation with the interplay of apprehensible exterior and hidden interior, of seeing and not seeing, of readable and unreadable surfaces, in the exploration of chivalric identity. This preoccupation is in my view remarkably reminiscent of the discourse of the idol.

Arthurian romance is premised on the idea that the knight is not easily knowable. This is an imaginary world in which great store is set on the chivalric and military proof of distinctive identity and yet the terms for such self-identification remain highly delimited. If romance is in general interested in the “problem of signs and their interpretation” (Bruckner 4), one of the most puzzling signs is the knight himself – often puzzling, it seems, even to himself. One of the most obvious ways in which Arthurian romance formally acknowledges the opacity of the knight is in the structuring notion of aventure, an acceptance of “chance,” a going into the unknown in which proving oneself and self-discovery turn out to be the same thing. If the terms which aventure sets for self-knowledge usually remain resolutely externalised, they nevertheless implicitly raise questions about what protagonists might feel about the outcomes. What is more, this is a restless world in which there is no end to such self-proving/discovery – in which even the meaning of success is scarcely clear. A common version of such aventure is the knight who travels incognito. Crane says that the purpose of adventuring unknown is “to establish or revise the perception of others concerning the disguised knight’s merits” (132); in line with her emphasis on social judgement, she argues that going incognito is “a peculiar kind of self-dramatization that invites rather than resists public scrutiny” (125). Indeed, it “is not significantly self-concealing . . . but the reverse” (132). But going unknown is also a way of courting risk and unpredictability. Indeed, chivalric incognito insistently confronts the reader with the romance question of “what is inside,” repeatedly posing telling and even painful questions about knightly motivation, desire, hubris, anger, humility or foolishness. And so, like the idol, the ambiguous insignia of the knight, his hidden colours and his frequent wearing of others’ armour
are also all ways of pointing to a preoccupation, not with the knight’s lack of inner life, but with its puzzling possibility.

This is particularly the case in Malory’s laconic English *Morte Darthur*, which will provide my two test cases here. Malory famously compresses and pares away a huge amount of the narrative and descriptive detail of his sources (predominantly, though not exclusively, the French prose Arthurian romances), preferring action and dialogue over setting and description. In the words of Mark Lambert, Malory is original “not by inventing, but by intensifying; and usually he intensifies by cutting rather than by adding” (68). The result, as Elizabeth Edwards has shown, is a narrative founded in apparent contingency and doubt, whose sign system is marked by systematic “trepidation” (138). Malory also cuts much of the personal and psychological information to be found in his sources, removing all sorts of particularising features, which Lambert suggests Malory would have found “trivial;” (92-3); there is, Lambert says, “no Lancelotian turn of phrase, there are only knightly turns of phrase” (45). And yet while Lambert may be right that “we are not invited to share [Lancelot’s] private thoughts,” I do not think he is correct that “we are not encouraged to suppose that he has any” (97). On the contrary, what I shall be arguing is that here, once again, by cutting information and detail Malory actually often increases the psychological puzzles that he poses, making us ask with renewed intensity what is going on in the heads of his armoured men.

Two exemplary passages will have to form the basis of my evidence. The first is a tournament scene. Sir Lamorak, a knight who is under threat from the vengeful Gawain brothers because he loves their mother, enters in disguise. He is not a complete surprise at this moment, because we have seen him a few pages before jousting successfully as “the knyght wyth the rede shylde” (361) and in conversation with the cowardly King Mark of Cornwall. Nevertheless now he is disguised from us as well as from several of the observers within the text. As he fights he reveals his great prowess in his deeds, and his disguise slips – but only partly:

65 See also Lambert 56-123, McCarthy 85-6 and Cooper 197.
66 Also Lambert 92-123; see also Rumble 147-8; McCarthy 91-5; Cooper 185.
67 See also Lambert 65, 109. Edwards is not so categorical, though her too scepticism about the adultery of Guenevere is in the *Morte* “a matter of the psyche of the text rather than the psyche of the king” (133); I do not think that we have to choose.
68 Malory cited from Shepherd’s edition throughout. Here names are in italics to reflect the red rubrication of all names in the famous “Winchester Manuscript” base text.
Ryght so was Kynge Arthure ware of a knyght and two squyers that com oute of a foresyste syde wyth a covyrde shylde of lethir. Than he cam in slyly, and hurled here and there; and anone with one speare he had smyttyn downe two knyghtes of the Rounde Table. And so wyth his hurtelynge he loste the coverynes of his shylde; than was the Kynge and all ware that he bare a rede shylde. “A, Jesu,” seyde Kynge Arthure, “se where rydyth a strong knyght – he wyth the rede shylde!” And there was a noyse and a grete cry: “Beware the knyght with the rede shylde!” (365).

In a world where public acknowledgment, especially from the king, is part of the pleasure of winning, we here see Lamorak both acknowledged and yet unknown, with the exception of the few for whom it is a private pleasure to know exactly who he is. In a nice dramatic irony, the still partly disguised and unknown Lamorak goes on to unseat his enemies, three of the Gawain brothers. Unwittingly, King Arthur compounds the irony: “‘How now?’ seyde the Kynge to Sir Gawayne, ‘methynkyth ye have a falle! Well were me and [if] I knew what knyght he were with the rede shylde’” (365). But now for those who know the knight’s identity comes the pleasure of toying with King Arthur; Sir Dynadan smirkingly announces that he has the knowledge, but won’t tell; but then Sir Tristram graciously solves the mystery: “‘I know hym well inowgh,’ seyde Sir Dynadan, ‘but as at this tyme ye shall nat know his name.’ ‘Be my hede,’ seyde Sir Tristram, ‘he justyth better than Sir Palomydes – and yf ye lyste to know, his name is Sir Lamerok de Galys’” (365).

Sir Lamorak then takes down twenty other knights, including Sir Gawain himself, and then tries to slip away into the woods, but the king and others follow him and bring him back to the court for a celebration. With remarkable succinctness, this scene circles round the issue of not knowing and knowing Sir Lamorak, hiding and revealing him, teasing the reader as much as Dynadan does King Arthur. Arthur, Dynadan and Tristram of course each have different degrees of knowledge and differing emotional engagements with what they know. Here too the opposition between Lamorak and the Gawain brothers is intensified by the irony of Arthur’s unwitting intervention, which once again foregrounds the protagonists’ different levels of knowledge and investment in the scene – if Arthur and Gawain are at different points unaware of who Lamorak is, it means different things to them. At the same time, although nothing is said about what Lamorak thinks, the scene surely demands that we try to imagine it. Humour is also a central component of this compressed scene with its sharp focus on the characters’ discrepant understandings and affective engagements with the knight who turns out to be Lamorak. At the same time, these variable epistemologi-
cal and emotional relations are underpinned by Malory’s distinctive modes of narrative: his combination of events that seem to be intended and others that seem to occur by chance (often sharpened with telling adverbs), his juxtaposition of actions ongoing and others that have suddenly just happened, his mixing of active verbs and impersonalised narration (“Than he cam in slyly, and hurled here and there; and anone with one speare he had smyttyn downe two knyghtes,” “And there was a noyse and a grete cry . . .” [365]).

The features of the passage that I want to foreground, then, are already apparent. But comparison with Malory’s sources (or as close as we can get to them) in the Tristan en prose throws them into contour even more sharply.69 Here the knight also emerges out of the woods, but the narrator immediately comments: “Et se aucuns me demandoit ki li chevaliers estoit, je diroie que ce estoit Lamorat de Gales” (“and if anyone asked me who this knight was, I would say that it was Lamorat de Gales” 4.211). From the outset we know for sure who the knight is. The narrator then explains at some length that Lamorat has come to see King Mark at Arthur’s court, not because he wants to see King Mark for himself, but because he wants to see him at the mercy of King Arthur and Tristan. The narrator tells us how Lamorat looks around and says to himself he has come at a good moment; determined to show that he is not as exhausted as many others, he checks his horse, “removes from his shield a cloth with which it was covered” (“fait son escu descouvrir d’une houche dont il estoit couvers” 4.212) and rides out at walking pace, (“le petit pas” 4.212). In the French, even before Lamorat has started fighting, the king asks who the knight is, and Dynadan, “who recognised him from the shield” (“ki le reconnut a l’escu,” here green, 4.212), announces that he is a good knight; however, as in the English – though now in one of two such refusals – Dynadan will not say who he is: “Tant vous en di ore” (“that’s all I will tell you for now” 4.212). In the French text the opponency of the jousters is also rather more muted; Lamorat fights with two knights, one unnamed and the other Agravain, a Gawain family member (“Et se aucuns me demandoit qui li chevaliers estoit, je diré que ce estoit Agreavains” 4.212); and in this text Arthur does not address the fighters directly at all. In the French, in other words, this scene takes place at a much more leisurely pace. Its

69 This text exists in various forms in upward of 80 manuscripts, none thought to be the one that Malory used; see Malory, ed. Field 2.245-53. The two versions I have used match each other pretty closely at this point, though the 1489 printed version is more compressed: Ménard, gen. ed., Tristan en prose 4.211-17; and the early printed edition, Pickford, Introd., Tristan 1489 fols ggeii r-v. I will cite from the Ménard edition.
whole ethos is also slightly more disengaged, and, although fighting is still at its centre, it is also much more about the men observing and conversing from the sidelines. Indeed, in this version even Tristan first refrains from telling Arthur who Lamorat is, and when he does, Arthur does not believe him — leading to a further argument about whether this is Lamorat or Palamides!

The French narrative, then, is detailed, informative, sometimes humorous and thick with psychological observation and explanations; nevertheless, despite its discursive style, it exhibits many of the same preoccupations as Malory. But it also will be apparent that Malory’s distinctive techniques of compression mean that his characters’ interactions and words are juxtaposed with a very distinctive abruptness, comedy and intensity. Insofar as Malory poses the question of what goes on in the head of the knight, it is not just that the evidence is much reduced; it is also rawer, more unmediated and more sharply contrastive; mingling sometimes surprising combinations of action and response, its opacities are, I suggest, both more apparent and much more intractable. Of course, this is only one scene in the life of Lamorak as Malory tells it: later Lamorak is to die at the hands of the Gawain brothers, though in Morte Darthur (unlike in the Tristan en prose) we never see it, only hear about it. Retrospectively, then, we discover that this scene was one of a sequence in which Malory’s Lamorak “shows” himself before vanishing back into the Arthurian world of adventure.

My second example illustrates the psychological dramas that arise from going unknown and the effects of inner complexity that are created by the highly physical encounters of armoured bodies. It involves Sir Trystram, who often travels unknown, and his tragic double, Sir Palomydes, who also loves Isode and endlessly seeks to fight with Trystram because of it; but he never can beat him. It is Palomydes’ aventure always to come second. In this scene Trystram, who is carrying “a blacke shylde with none other remembraunce [insignia]” (316), hears of a knight by a well, who has just loosed himself from the bands tying him to a tree and is rushing around “cryyng as he had bene woode [mad]” (319). When Trystram goes to the well, he hears the knight name himself as Palomydes; he watches him rage and inadvertently drop his sword into the well —  

. . . and at the laste, for pure sorow, he ran into that fountayne and sought aftir hys swerde.Than Sir Trystram saw that and ran uppon Sir Palomydes and hydle him in hys armys faste. “What art thou,” seyde Sir Palomydes, “that holdith me so?” “I am a man of thys foreyste that wold the none harme.”
“Alas,” seyde Sir Palomydes, “I may never wyn worship where Sir Trystram ys; for ever where he ys and I be, there gete I no worship . . .” (319).

Here, then, armour makes it possible for Palomydes both to know and not to know his closest competitor, despite the fact that he is now holding him in his arms. “Going unknown” thus enables Trystram to learn something about Palomydes, but also about himself; and of course both he and the text are entirely silent about what he thinks at this point. He just asks Palomydes what he would do if he had Trystram in his power: “I wolde fyght with hym,” said Sir Palomydes, “and ease my harte uppon hym – and yet, to say the sothe, Sir Trystram ys the jantyllyste knyght in thyw worlde lyyngye” (320).

This extraordinary compression is typical of Malory, and its effect is one of tight and painful paradox, but one that is seen vividly embodied in two figures – and two imagined interiors – as close as they can be, one in the arms of the other. It is also typical of Malory not to say anything more. The reader is left to hypothesise the conflicted feelings that pass through them – Palomydes, as he acknowledges the contradiction of what he feels, and Trystram, as he hears it.

The French is much more expansive and psychologically informative. Tristan goes to find Palamidés, purposefully sends his squire back and hides behind a tree to listen to Palamidés’ lament; this lament is an altogether longer item that involves a discussion about whether God or Tristan is responsible for Palamidés’ misfortune (it turns out to be the latter). While searching wildly for his sword Palamidés finds Tristan, who explains that he was listening; Tristan asks who this “Tristan” can be – an active deception he sustains over the rest of this part of their encounter. It is in response to this question that Palamidés responds “Certes . . . il n’est mie vallés, ains est sans faille li miudres cevallers du monde; et par maintes fois ai je sa bonté veü et esprouvee” (“Certainly . . . he is no page, indeed, he is without doubt the best knight in the world; and many times I have seen and experienced his goodness,” 2.308). Palamidés then goes on to explain that Tristan’s goodness kills

70 As remarked in the subsequent scene in the French text when he is entertained by Trystram but unbeknownst to him: “Palamidés . . . mout regarde volentiers monsaigneur Tristran, que il n’avoit veü se armé non . . . reconnoistre ne le puet, car mesire Tristrans avoit auques le visage debatu et defoulé des caus k’il avoit receüs en l’assamblee . . .” (Ménard, ed., Tristan en prose 2.312). Compare Malory’s “but in no wyse Sir Trystram myght nat be knowyn with Sir Palomydes” (320).

71 Ménard, ed., Tristan en prose 2.306-11; see also Pickford, Intro., Tristan 1489 fol 3viir-zir.
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him (Palamidés) and asks if his unnamed interlocutor knows where Tristan’s pavilion is; when Tristan asks why he wants to know, Palamidés finally explains: “Pour ce . . . que volontiers irioe cele part et feroie tant en aucune maniere que je de Tristan me vengerie: u je le metrai du tout a mort u il m’occirra” (“because I would go there willingly and act in such a way that I would avenge myself on Tristan: either I will put him completely to death or he will kill me” 2.309). Of course in the French Palamidés also has contradictory views and feelings about Tristan. The main difference is that the French text works harder to naturalise, or to make a kind of surface sense out of, the dynamics of his passions, allowing them to emerge over a series of verbal exchanges and psychological progressions. It is precisely this attempt to make sense of his characters’ psychology that Malory avoids. Instead, he allows Trystram swiftly to interject his question “what wolde ye do . . . and ye had sir Trystram?”

Even this question, of course, brings the focus back onto Trystram: what is he thinking and feeling as he hears the answer? Palomydes’ in fact paradoxical reply compresses and reverses his answers to two separate questions in the French text (one about why he seeks Tristan, and the other about who Tristan is, at 2.309 and 308). It sets all his internal contradictions startlingly side by side: “I wolde fyght with hym,” said Sir Palomydes, ‘and ease my harte uppon hym – and yet, to say the sothe, Sir Trystram ys the jantyllyste knyght in thys worlde lyvynge”’ (319).

In the following sections, the French (and the English) text tells how, unknown to Palamidés, Tristan hosts him for the night before they all return to the tournament on the next day, where once again Tristan excels. At some point in the French text, he and Palamidés, both on foot, encounter each other. Tristan runs to his enemy “et li donne desus le hiaume un si grant caup com il puet amener d’en haut a la force de ses bras, et puis li dist: ‘Palamidés, or tenéis ceste: ce est Tristrans, vostre amis chiers, qui si grans caus vous set donner!’” (“and gives him on the helmet as great a blow as he can bring down from on high with the strength of his arms, and then he says: ‘Palamidés, now take this: this is Tristan, your dear friend, who is able to give you such a great blow!’” 2.325). To this Palamidés responds with the cry “Tristan!” and a tirade of aggression. Much later, when Tristan has won the day (at one point he lifts Palamidés off his horse and dumps him on the ground), he retires wounded, but is followed by Palamidés and Gaheriet. Predictably, he unhorses both of them, and after a jocular exchange with Dynadans, the two depart, leaving “Palamidés et Gaheriés gisant, ki encore n’avoient pooir d’aus relever, tant durement estoient estourdi” (“Pal-
midés and Gaheriés lying, so stunned that they did not have the power to get back up” 2.338-9).

In Malory much of this is compressed; but most importantly for my purposes, the central scene is more melodramatic and psychologically more complex. In the course of a brief narration of the tournament, Trystram and Palomydes meet in armoured combat once again, though still Palomydes does not know who Trystram is. Trystram knocks his opponent off his horse and, as they fight on foot, he dramatically asserts himself over him, with not one but three blows. He also reveals himself, but now much more obliquely and partially (can Palomydes even now be sure who he is?), and again three times over. The effect is devastating. “And at the last Sir Trystram smote Sir Palomydes uppon the helme three myghty strokes – and at every stroke that he gaff he seyde, ‘Have thys for Sir Trystramys sake!’ And with that Sir Palomydes felle to the erthe grovelynge” (321). As in the French, this is not the end of the scene; the two are soon re-horsed and exchanging blows, and later on Trystram unceremoniously unhorses both Palomydes and Gaherys. But later, as the court recalls the day’s deeds, Arthur again remembers this symbolic moment when Trystram “smote Sir Palomydes uppon the helme thryse . . . and also he seyde ‘here ys a stroke for Sir Trystram’ – and thus he seyde thryse” (323). Through Arthur, Malory seems to acknowledge the potency of this particular encounter between Trystram and Palomydes.

It is armour, a visor and a black shield that allow Trystram to make his way across the battlefield unknown to the man who cares about him perhaps more strongly than anyone else. At this point, Trystram can choose when, how and the degree to which he identifies himself to Palomydes, and he does so in a manner to cause maximum surprise, shock and humiliation. Although that multivalent word grovelynge gives us some clue as to what is going on inside Palomydes, it is scarcely full information. Is he grovelynge from the blow or from grief? Is this a symbolic submission or the involuntary fall of an idol? Of course we don’t know much about what Trystram feels at this moment either. Like the idol, both Trystram and Palomydes are at this point very hard to read. My point, then, is not just that these are two of the idols of the Arthurian world – though they may be. My point is that there is something idol-like about the intractable unreadability of these armoured forms, precisely because we also intuit something of the raw sentience within.

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72 At the equivalent point in Pickford, Intro., Tristan 1489 fol. zvi, however, the text reads only that they “laissent illec pallamedes et gaheriet.”
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This essay investigates a category of Protestant art that appears to be inherently paradoxical: graphic images of acts of iconoclasm. Approaching image-making and image-breaking as intrinsically linked practices, it explores a series of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century depictions of the destruction of idols and analyses their significance for our understanding of reformed visual culture. It asks why Protestants depicted these rites of oblivion and considers the purposes such pictures served in a society that was fraught with anxiety about the dangers of sight as a stimulus to spiritual fornication. In particular, it situates such iconography in a context in which a desire to extinguish all memory of medieval monuments of “superstition” and “idolatry” coexisted with an impulse to preserve mutilated traces of them as a memorial of their defeat and eradication. It argues that they illuminate the evolution of a distinctively Protestant commemorative culture and the process by which the Reformations in England and Europe became embedded in collective memory.

This essay probes an iconographical phenomenon that at first sight seems paradoxical. It investigates visual representations of an act that apparently epitomises Protestantism’s intense allergy and antipathy towards art: iconoclasm. Image-breaking was a critical feature of the Eng-

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1 This essay is dedicated to the memory of Margaret Aston. I thank the organisers of the Zurich conference for the invitation to deliver a keynote lecture and the members of the audience for their helpful comments. The research underpinning it was undertaken as part of the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council project “Remembering the Reformation” (http://rememberingthereformation.org.uk/).
lish Reformation: initially carried out by private individuals acting in defiance of the state, it was later embraced by the Tudor regime as a key engine of religious reform. The limitations and equivocations of the official war against idols not only prompted ongoing initiatives of a more surreptitious and seditious kind; they also created a legacy of discontent that culminated in the renewed spasms of iconoclastic violence that accompanied the Civil Wars of the 1640s. By placing a series of images of image-breaking under the microscope, this essay seeks to deepen our understanding of Protestant visual culture and to illuminate the process by which England’s prolonged, contested, idiosyncratic and tangled Reformation came to be entrenched in collective memory. Critically evaluating their significance, function and meaning, it suggests that such pictures offer additional insight into what Daniel Woolf has called “the social circulation of the past.” Endlessly reproduced in popular narratives and scholarly monographs, they are used to illustrate events that they themselves have helped to transform into concrete historical facts.

I

The discussion that follows must be set briefly within two historiographical contexts. The first is the extraordinary surge of sophisticated work on iconoclasm that has occurred over the last few decades. Scholars of symbolic violence in the early modern period increasingly recognise it as a form of theology in action, as behaviour that embodied the belief that statues, pictures and images were dangerous provocations to the sin of spiritual fornication that was idolatry (Aston, *England’s Iconoclasts*; Aston, “Iconoclasm in England”; Aston, “Puritans and Iconoclasm”; Aston, *Broken Idols*; Wandel, esp. 23-24). Iconoclasm reflected the conviction that making, praying to and worshipping visual representations of God, Christ and the saints constituted a heinous transgression of the second commandment: it entailed the assumption that people were being led to damnation by worshipping dead stocks and stones and mere lumps of plaster and wood. At the same time, as David Freedberg, Ann Kibbey (esp. ch. 3), Joseph Koerner (esp. 106, 110-13) and other scholars (Jonckheere, *Art* 175) have observed, iconoclasm was fraught with contradiction and ambiguity: the very vehemence with which it was sometimes carried out manifested fear and anxiety about the power of the image and the need to prove that it was in fact lifeless. So too did the ways in which the targets of such attacks were commonly desecrated — by mutilating eyes and noses, heads,
hands, and limbs. Iconoclasm entailed a negative reverence for material objects that made the iconoclasts guilty of a kind of idolatry themselves. The point was obliquely acknowledged by the Strasbourg reformer Martin Bucer, in the first treatise to be published on the subject in English in 1535, when he argued that idols should be destroyed with force (“yea, & that all to powder”) and not “softly & so tenderly handled” as if they had “mans wyttes & reason” (sig. F8v). Meanwhile, the debates that took place in Lutheran circles about whether re-education should precede or follow the removal of offending images attest to the worry that the destruction of idols might serve to strengthen attachment to them rather than undermine and defuse it (Johnston and Scribner 82-3). They reflect contemporary recognition of the possibility that the shock involved in seeing the defacement of a revered object or icon could engender an even greater empathy with it (Jonckheere, “Power” 147).

This links with another insight that is relevant to the current enquiry: the idea that we must see iconoclasm as a mode of memory. Anticipating Eamon Duffy’s compelling description of it as a “sacrament of forgetfulness” (480), contemporaries themselves understood it as a rite of oblivion, a strategy for effecting the physical erasure of past error, and a mechanism for bringing about a kind of individual and collective amnesia. The ecclesiastical injunctions and visitation articles issued under Edward VI and Elizabeth I were explicit in this respect, insisting that parish officials “utterly extinct and destroy” all “monuments of feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry, and superstition; so that there remain no memory of the same in walls, glass windows, or elsewhere within their churches or houses” (Cardwell i. 17, 221). Several bishops even insisted that the tabernacles in which religious statues had stood and which were now “standing void” should be filled up and the vacant places made “plain” lest they act as a reminder of what had gone (Frere and Kennedy iii. 323, no. 30). Some Protestants clearly supposed that total obliteration was the best form of protection against a relapse to popish idolatry. Others, though, thought that broken idols and mutilated remnants should stand as lasting memorials or trophies to the achievement of the Reformation. Their defacement and disfiguration was admonitory and prophylactic: it bore witness to the success of reform and served as a warning of backsliding into the mire of Catholicism once more (Aston, Broken Idols 225, 236). In this way, iconoclasm was an agent of the creation as well as annihilation of meaning. Bringing about a form of “sign transformation” to use a phrase coined by Richard Clay (Boldrick and Clay 10; Boldrick, Brubaker and Clay 2), it should be seen as “symmetrical to the iconophilia” against which it is directed (Ford 77). Instead of
seeing it as the opposite and antithesis of art, it may fruitfully be situated on a spectrum with other forms of representation.

The second body of historiography that provides a backdrop for this essay concerns Protestant art. Once the phrase would have seemed like a contradiction in terms. But we have now moved well beyond the notion that early modern England was a society suffering from “severe visual anorexia” (Collinson 119). Important work by Tessa Watt, William Dyrness (esp. ch. 4), Tara Hamling, David Davis (Seeing Faith; From Icons) and others (Finney; Hamling and Richards; Hunter; Thomas; Walsham, “Idols”) has not merely underlined the limits of reformed iconophobia, but delineated the distinctive forms of religious iconography that developed in the post-Reformation era. They have underlined the point that John Calvin was not hostile to art per se: as he himself remarked, he was “not . . . so superstitious as to think that all visible representations of every kind are unlawful” (i. 100). The Genevan reformer and his English disciples defended the utility of images that served a civic, didactic and memorial purpose: in particular they approved of pictures that provided a narrative of past events, whether those described in the pages of the bible or those of more recent times. The Cambridge puritan divine William Perkins similarly declared that the “historical use of images” was legitimate: representing “to the eye the acts of histories, whether they be human or divine” was useful and edifying (829-30). The Church of England’s own homily on idolatry differentiated carefully between “dumb” and static three-dimensional images and flat pictures that depicted “the process of a story, painted with the gestures and actions of many persons” (Certain Sermons 213). And if they prohibited the erection of icons of God the Father, Christ and the Holy Ghost within the setting of the church, they were willing to admit that they might be permissible in other more neutral locations including the spaces of the printed page and book, where the text in which they were enveloped functioned as a safeguard against the temptation to unlawful veneration (Davis, Seeing Faith, esp. ch. 2).

Historians have become more aware of the ways in which a Protestant aesthetic centred on stories from Scripture penetrated the godly household and shaped patterns of interior decoration (Hamling; Wells-Cole). They are also more sensitive to how the anti-Catholic images that proliferated in the early days of the Reformation and which continued to be produced at moments of crisis functioned. As Adam Morton has taught us, many of these pictures were complex emblems designed to engage the intellect rather than the senses and affections. They must be understood as part of a wider culture of shame and ridicule and as an
extension of physical acts of destruction and demystification through visual spectacles – in short, as forms of iconoclasm themselves (chs. 1 and 2, esp. pp. 104-29). In turn, as in the Netherlands, image-breaking catalysed a critical re-evaluation of art and stimulated new modes of creativity (Jonckheere, *Art*; Mochizuki; Vanhaelen).

Such research is progressively breaking down inherited polarities and destabilising the settled assumptions that surround visual representations of image-breaking with an aura of inconsistency. Building on these insights, we must now analyse what compelled contemporaries on both sides of the confessional divide to create pictures that preserved the memory of the rites of oblivion in which Protestants engaged and to consider their place and purpose in a world in which concern about the sense of sight as a stimulus to sin and idolatry remained persistent and profound.

II

The first set of images of iconoclasm to be examined comprises those depicting Old Testament stories involving the demolition of pagan idols by force or fire. Pictorial representations of passages that enjoined and described acts of holy violence predated the Reformation. They feature in woodcut illustrations of incunable Italian bibles, including one printed in Venice in 1490, which shows the breaking of images and statues called for in Numbers 34 and the reforming zeal against idolatry of King Josiah described in 4 Kings 23 (Aston, *King's Bedpost* 38, and see 37-48 passim). The latter scene in which Josiah listens to the law being read to him while idols burn in a pyre on the right also appeared as an illustration in a Vulgate published in Lyons in 1520. But the popularity of these pictorial themes increased in the wake of the Reformation for two reasons. One was the new emphasis on the Decalogue, and especially the first table of the commandments, which Protestants renumbered to elevate the prohibition on making graven images into a separate edict (Aston, *England’s Iconoclasts* 371-92). The second was the mandate and precedent that such passages provided for the reformers’ attack on the material culture of Catholic Christianity. The image of King Asa, who deposed his mother because of her idolatry and burnt the image she worshipped by the brook Kidron, incorporated in the 1572 Wittenberg bible is particularly telling because here the godly monarch is advised by a priest who bears a distinct resemblance to the portly Martin Luther. He is seen directing an official and public programme of image-
breaking that both corresponds with and acts as an advertisement for the magisterial brand of the Reformation carried out in Saxony (reproduced in Aston, *Broken Idols* 27). Alongside the destruction of the brazen serpent by King Hezekiah in 4 Kings 18: 4, the iconoclastic campaign overseen by Josiah was a powerful prototype for top-down Protestant reform.

It is not surprising that the vernacular bibles sponsored by Henry VIII, including the Coverdale version of 1535 (*Biblia*, sig. nn5v) and the Great Bible of 1539 (*Byble*, sig. 15v) (Figure 1), included visual images of these scenes (Luborsky and Ingram, i. 85-92, 96-103); nor that Josiah’s godly crusade against idols appeared in the translation of *Icones*, a picture book with woodcuts by or after Hans Holbein which appeared during the reign of Edward VI as *The Images of the Old Testament*, though in this

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Figure 1: King Hezekiah purges images: *The Byble in Englyshe, that is to saye the Content of all the Holy Scripture*, rev. Miles Coverdale. [Paris: F. Regnault and London]; R. Grafton and E. Whitchurch, 1539, sig. 15v. Trinity College Library C.5.3. By permission of the Master and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.
Figure 2: Josiah overseeing the burning of idols by or after Hans Holbein: The Images of the Old Testament, Lately Expressed, Set Forthe in Englishe and Frenche, with a Plaun and Brief Exposition. Lyons: Johan Frellon, 1549. Trinity College Library C.7.30. By permission of the Master and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.
version the bonfire of idols viewed through the doorway on the right is far less prominent and more allusive in character (sig. H2r) (Figure 2).

Elucidating the text they accompanied, they helped the reader to comprehend and remember compelling stories that supplied a blueprint for the English Reformation. The section of a catechism translated from Dutch published in 1549 is illustrated with a picture of another incident that became synonymous with reformed Protestantism’s ardent hostility towards idolatry: the tale of the downfall of Dagon, the great Philistine idol that mysteriously fell down and shattered into pieces when the ark of the Lord was set beside it in 1 Samuel 5.2. Placed on the same page as an exposition of the second commandment, the typological relationship between medieval Catholicism and ancient false religion is underlined in this image by the presence of people kneeling before an image of the resurrected Christ and an altarpiece (van der Heyden sig. B7r).

Protestantism scarcely had a monopoly on this iconography, as its presence in bibles and prints emanating from humanist and Catholic circles in France and the Southern Netherlands in the mid and late sixteenth century reveals. These include Bernard Salomon’s *True and lively historyke parttreatures of the woll Bible* (1553), the preface to which tellingly defended the depiction of idolatry as a mechanism not to provoke but to “tourne” viewers “cleane awai” from that “abominable deed” by presenting to the eyes of the “weacke and simple” the punishments that befell the children of Israel who committed this sin (sig. A3r-v). Significant here too are a number of engravings by Maarten van Heemskerck, a figure whose career coincided with the beeldenstorm that swept through the Low Countries in 1566. A loyal Catholic at his death, he had close connections with the governors of Haarlem, where he lived and worked until the Spanish siege of the city in 1572. Sharing the didactic goals of other humanist inspired scriptural narratives, the several series of Old Testament prints he produced in the 1560s (Veldman, esp. 130) have themselves been seen as commentaries on the contemporary events of which he was an eye or at least ear-witness (Figure 3). As Eleanor Saunders has shown, in these he “violated his customary fidelity” to the biblical text by consistently and conspicuously depicting religious and secular leaders as overseers of the process of purification (77). Prescriptions for the orderly, government-sanctioned removal of church art, his images entailed a subtle critique of the spontaneous and frenzied acts of destruction carried out by self-appointed zealots during the so-called Dutch wonder year.
They may be seen in the same light as Frans Hogenberg’s familiar and famous image of iconoclasm and plunder printed in Cologne in 1570, which has recently been reinterpreted by Ramon Voges as a re-action to the ostentatious violence against material representations of the sacred. The impression of objectivity and impartiality it conveys is part of a complex visual rhetoric which encoded a moderate message of the need for controlled reform rather than a violent overthrow of the established social order. It has convincingly been suggested that it was Hogenberg, who had fled temporarily to England to escape persecution in the Netherlands, who produced the woodcut of King Josiah for Matthew Parker’s Bishops’ Bible of 1568 (Aston, King’s Bedpost 45–47). A clear variation on the versions of this scriptural motif already discussed, here too the king and priest take centre stage, while the vignette of the idol-burning ordained by Josiah is confined to a rectangle in the top left hand corner. The composition of the image is certainly in keeping with
the priorities embodied in Hogenberg’s depiction of current events in the Netherlands (*Holie Bible*, 1568, pt II, fo. 109r).

In these pictures of iconoclasm, conceptions of past and present converge and exercise reciprocal influence on each other. They function at once as justifications for the Protestant purge of Catholic idolatry and as pictures that present a selective and sanitised memory of Reformations that were more radical, subversive and violent than many contemporaries were willing to admit. Although capable of more than one reading, they occlude elements that subsequent historians of religious change in England have conveniently contrived to forget. They do not fit with the myth of a via media between extremes that became integral to Anglican identity in the nineteenth century, as Diarmaid MacCulloch demonstrated in a seminal essay published in 1991 (see also Aston, *Broken Idols* 14). They eclipse the unruly iconoclastic enthusiasm that characterised its early evangelical phases and that came to seem like a painful and embarrassing aberration to later generations (cf. Pollmann).

### III

From the realm of biblical illustration and scriptural prints, we turn next to the pictures of iconoclasm incorporated in John Foxe’s *Actes and Monuments*, first published in 1563, but augmented and reissued several times during the Elizabethan period. Our understanding of the function of the illustrations in Foxe’s book of martyrs has been transformed in recent years. No longer are they seen primarily as a means of making his great history of the true Church accessible to the illiterate. Instead, conscious of how much they increased the cost of John Day’s printed text, historians now emphasise their role as documentary devices that supplemented and authenticated the revisionist narrative and archive of the Christian past Foxe presented to the educated and erudite (Pettegree, *Reformation* ch. 5; Evenden and Freeman ch. 6; see also Aston and Ingram). Produced in the period before illustration largely disappeared from English history books (Pettegree, “Illustrating the Book”; Knapp ch. 4), they navigate their way around the Protestant theology of images by closely integrating word and image. They are visual monuments that avoid the taint of idolatry by depicting, to repeat the words of the Homily, “the process of a story, painted with the gestures and actions of many persons” (*Certain Sermons* 213). The identity of the craftsmen responsible for producing these woodcuts remains obscure, but plausible candidates include Frans Hogenberg and the Flemish artist Marcus...
Gheeraerts. The latter’s *Allegory of Iconoclasm* of 1566 depicted a monstrous mountain of diabolically inspired Catholic cultic ritual and corruption in the process of being undermined by Protestants armed with pickaxes, wheelbarrows, hammers and shovels. This takes the shape of a rotting monk’s head. Neither artist was in England when the episodes in question occurred: for all their apparent verisimilitude, these images are imaginative reconstructions designed to perform an evidential function (Knapp 142-43). Although discussed in isolation here, they must be assessed as an integral part of a volume that powerfully shaped Protestant memory of the Reformation in subsequent generations through the very accumulation of the visual depictions of symbolic violence and martyrdom that it contained.

The first image of iconoclasm in Foxe requiring comment depicts the hanging of three men arrested for removing the miraculous rood from the parish church of Dovercourt in Essex under cover of night in 1532 and disproving its power by subjecting it to an ordeal by fire (1563 ed. 496) (Figure 4). Possibly influenced by the preaching of Thomas Bil-

![Figure 4: The Dovercourt martyrs: John Foxe. *Actes and Monuments*. London: John Day, 1563 edn, p. 496.](image-url)
ney, who, in a sermon delivered in London a few years before, had invoked the example of Hezekiah destroying the brazen serpent (Aston, *Broken Idols* 112, 725), the illicit attack carried out by these East Anglian iconoclasts reflects the clandestine phase of image-breaking in the English Reformation. Only a few years later, the sacrilegious outrage for which they were executed became the official policy of the Henrician regime. In the picture, the men appear lifeless, suspended from their gibbets. Beside them on the left is the great crucifix they incinerated, which (in ironic contrast) has the quality of an animated living body. Preserving elements of traditional hagiographical iconography and reinterpreting them for evangelical ends (Cummings 188), this is an image in which events that occurred over a period of months are juxtaposed and collapsed into a single moment in time. It allows the viewer and reader vicariously to witness the rite of demystification and oblivion alongside the martyrdom of those who committed it. It celebrates and commemorates the heroic act of idol destruction they carried out in conformity with their burdened consciences in combination with their own sacrifice in the service of the true religion. This is a graphic depiction of iconoclasm that re-enacts an event intended to obliterate an offensive object precisely in order to cement it in collective memory.

A second relevant picture from Foxe is the large plate that immediately precedes the opening of Book 9, which recounts the achievements of the reign of Edward VI (1570 ed. 1483) (Figure 5). This image depicts the official iconoclasm that accompanied his Reformation, together with the enthroned young king handing out the English bible to his people, and a reformed church interior befitted for worship according to a liturgy centred on the two sacraments of the Eucharist and baptism. The word of God is preached to an attentive congregation seated in neat rows and following the text expounded in the sermon dutifully in the books on their laps. At the top, people stream from a church building while another pulls down an image with rope just outside: this is the “temple well purged” and to its right is a flaming bonfire in which idols burn. The procession of iconoclasts merges with a parade of “papists packing away their Paltry” and transporting their trinkets overseas in a vessel that is labelled the Ship of the Romish Church. This too is a picture that plays temporal and spatial tricks in its effort to create a multidimensional visual monument to the young king’s accomplishments. It memorialises an era that later generations of the godly came to remember as the high point of the evangelical drive to restore the gospel in its primitive purity and that is still, perhaps misleadingly, treated as a distinct historical period. Showing “the process of a story, painted with the
gestures and actions,” it glosses over the tensions, conflicts and rebellions that complicated the years between 1547 and 1552 to present an emblem of the exemplary reforms of a youth whose actions imitated those of biblical Josiah with whom he is visually conflated (see also King, Tudor Royal Iconography 95-101).


These images of iconoclasts must be assessed in the context of another famous and much discussed woodcut in Foxe’s book: the one showing Henry VIII stamping upon the pope (1570 ed. ii. 1201). This striking snapshot depicts something that never happened: its apparent realism is an illusion and fiction because this image is a symbol of the Royal Supremacy, the legislative development that severed England from Rome, formally reclaimed ecclesiastical jurisdiction as the preserve of its sovereign, and redefined the pontiff as foreign usurper of monarchical power. Iconoclasm is as much its modus operandi as its subject: it is a satire designed to break down the pretensions of the papacy, which has displaced God and set itself up as an idol. It shows Henry VIII with his feet on a humilitatingly prostrate pope, whose triple tiara has fallen off and broken. His acolytes react in horror, crying aloud and hiding their heads in their hands, while the king’s supporters Cromwell and
Cranmer serenely accept the Word of God from their sword-bearing king. The picture also evokes the established iconography of the wise judge and ruler that was Solomon. A piece of caricature masquerading as a representation of an event in history, the many offspring and variants it engendered are indicative of the extent to which it embedded itself in social memory as a visual shorthand for the political consequences of the Reformation.

Foxe’s Actes and Monuments is a laboratory in which we can see iconoclasm at work in another and more intriguing respect. In some copies of the book and in detached versions of its constituent woodcuts, certain images have become the subject of defacement and mutilation by contemporary readers. In one in the library of Ohio State University (BR1600. F6 1570, copy 1, sig. 2N2v) the face of the pope whose feet are being kissed by an emperor in an act of obeisance has been gouged in much the same way as statues of medieval saints. Even more notable is the infamous portrait or “counterfeit” of Bishop Bonner scourging a suspected heretic in the orchard of Fulham palace: in some surviving examples, the face of this most notorious of Marian persecutors has been crossed, blacked, or even cut out (King, Foxe’s “Book of Martyrs” 233), while in another, Foxe’s presentation copy to his old college, Magdalen in Oxford, two black ears have been added to complete the picture of a diabolical villain. Symbolic violence was part of the reader response to this volume as well as a key rhetorical and visual strategy deployed by its author and illustrators.

IV

The picture of “The Pope Suppressed by K. Henry the eight” is reminiscent of a polemical grisaille painting in the Royal Collection on display at Hampton Court Palace. Known by the title A Protestant Allegory, this was the work of the Italian painter Girolamo de Treviso and can be dated to the years 1542-4 when he was employed as a military engineer by Henry VIII (Figure 6). In an inventory of 1547 it is described as “a table of the bushopp of Rome and the four Evangelists casting stones upon him.” Frequently deployed to denote a memorial tablet or plaque, the noun chosen here suggests that the painting was explicitly intended

2 I owe this information to Mark Rankin. The Magdalen copy has the shelfmark T.13.6-7.
to function as a monument (OED, s.v. “table,” sense 2). One of a number of congratulatory anti-Catholic pictures produced to stroke the ego of the king and celebrate the break with Rome, the painting portrays a scene of ritual punishment in which Matthew, Mark, Luke and John bring down large boulders upon the head of a pope sprawling on the ground together with two female figures labelled Avarice and Lust. A cardinal’s hat and papal bull lie scattered beside them, together with a cooking pan that has extinguished a candle. This contrasts with the one burning above the city of Jerusalem in the top left hand corner, which symbolises the triumph of the Gospel. This too is a picture that telescopes time and typologically relates the Tudor present to the biblical past. Appropriating the pictorial language deployed in woodcuts illustrating the stoning of Old Testament offenders in the Coverdale bible, in both theme and effect it is an iconoclastic image as well as a commemorative one.
Another painting featuring the breaking of idols is “Edward VI and the Pope,” now in the National Portrait Gallery. Long thought to be a piece of propaganda produced during his reign, it was definitively proven to have been produced more than twenty years later in the reign of his sister Elizabeth by Margaret Aston in *The King’s Bedpost*. Indebted to the biblical prints of Maarten van Heemskerck and his imitator Philip Galle for its iconographical schemes, it is less a celebration of the young Josiah’s prowess as godly reformer and as the successor to his father in putting down the “feigned holiness” of the Pope than a visual admonition. Aston presents us with two possibilities: either it was designed to warn Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk, that his proposed marriage to Mary Queen of Scots would imperil the conquest of papal idolatry, or it was a pictorial exhortation to Elizabeth underlining her failure to live up to the example of her precocious dead brother and urging her to apply herself more earnestly to the task of purifying her realm of popish impiety and superstition (*King’s Bedpost* esp. 214-18). It acquired its edge as a political picture from the queen’s liturgical conservatism – a conservatism embodied in the silver crucifix and candles she kept in her chapel, despite the best efforts of several clandestine iconoclasts, and in her refusal to take down what zealous Protestants such as Edward Dering regarded as the “gorgeous Idoll” of Cheapside Cross, the monument in the city of London erected by Edward I to the memory of Queen Eleanor and adorned with incriminating Catholic iconography (sig. A2r). The scene of iconoclasm viewed through a window on the right shows a standing cross headed by the image of Christ crucified in the process of being toppled from its pedestal, with a pile of ruins evocative of the fall of the Tower of Babel visible in the background. The picture is both a memorandum of the achievements credited to a boy who was already entering into popular legend, and a hopeful prescription for the future: it is an historical picture that operates simultaneously as a template for further reform. In this respect it turned out to be ineffective, a piece of wishful thinking. But if it failed as a strategy for persuading Elizabeth to mimic King Hezekiah in destroying the brazen serpent, it did help to crystallise an image of the Edwardian past, shaping the historical outlook of the circle of courtiers who saw it, and subsequently of the members of the wider public who have visited it in the royal palace and viewed reproductions of it. Its hidden and ulterior meaning as a private document and memorandum of state has been ob-
scurred by the passage of time, but later centuries have seen it become an icon of a critical phase in the early English Reformation.3

V

The next set of images of iconoclasm to be placed under the microscope are the products of Catholic resistance to the rolling Protestant programme of religious purification. They come from the high quality engravings of a series of murals by Circignani in the English College at Rome published by Giovanni Battista de Cavalleriis in a folio volume entitled *Ecclesia Anglicaeei Trophaea* in 1584, and from Richard Verstegans’s graphic picture book of Calvinist atrocities in England, France and the Netherlands, *Theatrum Cruelitatum Haereticorum nostri temporis*, published in Antwerp three years later (Highley; Dillon, *The Construction* chs. 4-5). These publications comprise a gallery of martyrlogical pictures. The purpose of the frescoes preserved in the pages of the *Trophaea* was to educate seminary priests and inspire them to face the prospect of death in defence of the faith for which they were being trained to reclaim the English people as missionaries; in turn the book stirred the emotions and piety of the Catholics and promoted the cause of this embattled community abroad. As Richard Barrett wrote to Alfonso Agazzari in 1584 in response to it: “The sense of sight which is very keen, by seeing everything most clearly at one view, excites the ardour of devotion, more than if we came to know the same things by ear” (Renold 114).

Verstegans’s *Theatrum* was even more emphatically intended as a call for an international crusade to invade England led by Philip II of Spain. As Anne Dillon has convincingly argued, it was a political manifesto demanding intervention to depose a bastard Protestant queen and avenge the death of the cousin and anointed sovereign her regime had beheaded. It must be seen as “an Armada pamphlet” as well as an instrument of the French Catholic League and its principal patrons, the Guise (*The Construction* ch. 5, esp. 275-76). On one level, the two images of the destruction of idols in these expensive publications fit into the category of “visual reports” delineated by Philip Benedict in his recent

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3 For a similar discussion of wall paintings in Hill Hall, once owned by Sir Thomas Smith, dating from the same period, as an admonitory invocation of Edwardian reform, see Richard Simpson. These depict the destruction of the brazen serpent by King Hezekiah and the breaking down of altars, cutting down of groves and demolition of images as described in 2 Chronicles 31.1.
work on a series of Genevan prints of the sieges, massacres and troubles of the French Wars of Religion: they too aspire to provide a substitute for direct eye-witnessing. But on another, they are pictures that entail an attempt to recreate and manipulate recent history in order to create a pristine vision of Catholic truth and institutional continuity. They occupy “a field of tension between the goals of . . . information and commemoration” (Benedict 98). A pictorial riposte to John Foxe’s Actes and Monuments, they engage in forms of remembering but also forgetting. They epitomise Nicholas Sander’s insistence in his Treatise of the Images of Christ (1567) that pictures are commendable because they put people in “remembrances of good, holy and honourable verities” (fol. 9v). But they also invent a compelling image of immediate events in a provocative bid to transform the future.

One of these images appears in both books. This is the “double execution” or “martyrdom” of the Observant Franciscan monk John Forest and the notorious Welsh image Dderfel Gadarn. Forest was burnt as a heretic at Smithfield in May 1538 for denying the Royal Supremacy — a judicial anomaly because most others who committed this crime were condemned for treason. The fuel for his pyre was provided by the great wooden statue that had been the focus of a pilgrimage to Llandderfel in North Wales. Denounced by the bishop of St David’s as one of the “antique gargels of ydolatry” that blighted the land (Wright 208), it was made the subject of a spectacle intended to unmask its reputed power (Dillon, “John Forest”; Peter Marshall; see also Morton 106-7). The image of this event in the Trophaea is combined with the hanging and disembowelment of four other victims of the Henrician purges, including three Benedictines and a layman. Confined to the top third of the picture, it quietly replaces the image of Dderfel Gadarn with a carved figure of Christ, which is specifically referred to in the accompanying Latin text (29) (Figure 7). Perhaps reflecting a humanist and Tridentine strand of unease with dubious cults that exposed Catholicism to ridicule as a superstitious religion, this piece of visual sleight of hand also serves to align the death of Forest with that of the redeemer of mankind. It also has something in common with the picture of the Dovercourt iconoclasts in Foxe’s Actes and Monuments, which conspicuously omits Forest from its catalogue of martyrs. Representation of “this ritual wedding of the anti-papal cause with that of radical iconoclasm” (Duffy 404) takes a further twist in Verstegan’s Theatrum, where the Dderfel Gadarn is once again displaced by the more respectable Welsh saint, St David, clinging
to what appears to be a harp, whose life-like quality contrasts with Forrest’s limp corpse (28-29) (Figure 8). The image engages in a form of censorship, altering the past to conform with a new set of ideological imperatives. It deliberately sets out to distort history even as it professes to document it. Dderfel’s double oblivion at the hands of Protestants

and Catholics was defied locally by the preservation to this day of the warrior saint’s horse and staff (see also Aston, *Broken Idols* 115-17).

The other image of iconoclasm appears only in Verstegan’s *Theatrum*. It is the opening plate in the section devoted to the cruelties of the English heretics and shows “the first fruits of the new religion” (“Novi Evangelij fructus”) (22-23) (Figure 9). The scene employs various motifs from biblical prints that are familiar from the Protestant pictures already discussed, but it repurposes them to denounce reformed rites of holy violence as acts of appalling profanation. Here we see a crucifix being dragged down with ropes and its base being severed with a pickaxe; we see iconoclasts at work high up in the rafters of a church and a bonfire into which men are throwing statues and books, including a figurine wearing a bishop’s mitre. The image is not one of orderly dismantling but of anarchic destruction by a wild mob. The accompanying text declares that the king was motivated to order these vicious attacks only by “uncontrolled and greedy desire,” while the verses below evoke David’s lament for the destruction of the sacred altars of the Edomites “by the
people” rather than the authorities. They insist that only the heartless will not be horrified by the devastation of churches, sanctuaries and relics by which they are confronted in this picture. But it too entails a re-writing of the chronology of the English Reformation: as Margaret Aston remarks, it inserts “an unhistorical Zwinglian or Calvinist leaf into Henry’s book of sacrilege”, fast forwarding from the Lutheran-style drive against abuses that marked his reign towards the more comprehensive Swiss style reform of religious imagery in churches that occurred under Edward and Elizabeth (Broken Idols 778). It is a visual testimony to the scars and wounds wrought by Protestantism consciously designed to provoke the pious viewer to pity and anger. Possession of and meditation on such images may have functioned as a badge of confessional loyalty and belonging to the beleaguered Church of Rome. Like ruined monasteries and mutilated statues such as Our Lady Vulnerata, the Marian Madonna of Cadiz vandalised by the Earl of Essex and his troops in 1596 and preserved in the English College at Valladolid,
they could become focal points for resistance, prayer and hope for the nation’s reconversion (Shell 200-7).

There is a danger, though, in applying a single matrix of interpretation to complex images that invite multiple forms of appropriation: in different hands and circumstances, it is at least possible that these same pictures provoked feelings of pride and victory rather than revulsion and stubborn refusal to accept defeat. Their polyvalency in a multiconfessional society should not be underestimated.

VI

The final group of images of iconoclasm deserving discussion relates to the renewed spasms of symbolic violence that coincided with the outbreak of the Civil War in the early 1640s. A century on from what puritans regarded as England’s unfinished Reformation, a new opportunity arose to bring it to completion. Once again official and unofficial initiatives occurred in tandem. The Long Parliament issued edicts and decrees expanding the previous parameters of permitted image-breaking to encompass items and iconographies that had hitherto not been casualties of the war against idols – from medieval angels to new Laudian altar rails – and which were found on the outside of churches and in the wider landscape rather than confined within the walls of ecclesiastical and secular buildings (Spragggon; Walsham, Reformation of the Landscape ch. 2). It commissioned puritan laymen such as William Dowsing to put this legislation into practice: his journal recording the results of his iconoclastic tour of Cambridgeshire and Suffolk is well known (Dowsing). But image-breaking was also a more spontaneous feature of the febrile years during which the king and his subjects took up arms against each other, carried out by ordinary people and by common soldiers as they traversed the countryside (Walter). And these episodes too were captured in pictorial form.

Two key figures in this enterprise were the godly London printseller Thomas Jenner (see Horden) and John Vicars, schoolmaster of Christ’s Hospital, devout Presbyterian, friend of William Prynne, and self-appointed chronicler of the civil wars (see Gasper; Cressy 262). In 1642, Jenner issued a topical and partisan picture book entitled: All the Memorable & Wonder Striking Parliamentary Mercies. Prefaced by a title-page in which Time and Truth, holding scrolls inscribed with verses from Isaiah and Revelation, flank a pyramid-shaped monument, this publication consists solely of ten captioned plates depicting key events leading to
the outbreak of fighting, beginning with Scottish riots against the Laudian prayer book in 1637-8 in which men and women pelted the archprelate of St Andrews with crickets, stools, sticks and stones. The work of the Bohemian born engraver Wenceslaus Hollar, whose output straddled both the religious and political divide, they reappeared with others in Vicars’ *A Sight of the Transactions of these Latter Yeares* (1646), in *True Information of the Beginning and Cause of all our Troubles* (1648), and in two later compilations of Parliamentary proceedings (Vicars, *Former Ages*; Jones 93-96). These publications combine word and image. Two plates show soldiers en route to York “turn[ing] unto reformers” and pulling down Popish pictures and crucifixes, breaking communion rails, and turning altars into tables (Vicars, *Sight* 7) (Figure 10) and the incineration of Catholic images, crucifixes, books on a raging bonfire overseen by men bearing staves, flags and pikes (Vicars, *Sight* 23). What we see in these images is less a magisterial and monarchical Reform-

Figure 10: Soldiers “turn unto reformers” and destroy idols: John Vicars, *A Sight of the Transactions of these Latter Yeares Emblemized with Ingraven Plats, which Men May Read without Spectacles*. London: Thomas Jenner, [1646], 7. © British Library Board. E 365 (5).

ation than a parliamentary, military and popular one in which individuals with a fire in their belly step into the shoes of the godly Old Testament rulers Hezekiah and Josiah. Their actions are an oblique and implicit critique of the Caroline regime – of the king and his advisors who have
condoned idolatry and indeed created it in invidious new forms. The third depicts the destruction of Cheapside Cross by a troop of horse and foot soldiers in May 1643 to the joy of the crowd, which threw capes in the air and shouted, but was reputedly so well behaved that no one was hurt. The inscription tells us that “Leaden Popes” were burnt on the spot that it vacated, accompanied by bell ringing and public acclamation, while the engraving below depicts the ritual destruction of the Declaration of Sports by the hangman at the same location eight days later (Vicars, *Sight* 21) (Figure 11). In this instance, iconoclasm served in some sense to sacralise the space hitherto occupied by an abominable idol, which was further consecrated by the burning of a book that sanctioned sabbath-breaking on the next Lord’s Day. Another pamphlet celebrating this event explicitly invoked another favourite biblical precedent: *The downe-fall of Dagon.*

What was the purpose of this iconography and how were contemporaries supposed to read and see these images? These works of pictorial journalism need to be seen in a series of overlapping contexts. The first is signalled by the title of *A Sight of the Transactions*, which describes them as emblems “which men may read without spectacles”: this latter phrase should perhaps be understood both literally and metaphorically. The prefatory epistle says that these “neat and pertinent pictures and figures” are presented for “the better affecting of the sight and sense of the Readers thereof, and especially for the full making out of the truth of what is therein delivered” (1). They are devices for discernment and discovery of the mischiefs and mysteries that have brought the English nation and the Protestant religion to crisis and impending ruin. Accordingly they do not require the viewer to engage in the strenuous exercise of decoding them: their meaning is transparently clear.

At the same time they must be conceived of as visual mnemonics, as remembrancers of events that the likes of Vicars and Jenner regarded as momentous. These are pictures that both effect and facilitate a form of witness of history in the making. Material reminders of a process of ritual forgetting, they are designed to perform the same function as the fragments of shattered stained glass windows that the London artisan Nehemiah Wallington gathered up from London churches in 1641 “to keep for a remembrance to show to the generation to come what God hath done for us, to give us such a reformation that our forefathers never saw the like” (qtd. in Seaver 151). Paradoxically, these Protestant relics were collected to preserve the memory of developments that targeted the excesses of Christian materiality.
Puritans never spoke of “reformation” as a past event; they invariably regarded it as something that would reach its final culmination in the future (Walsham, “History, Memory, and the Reformation” 921). But the images created and disseminated by Vicars, Hollar and Jenner do serve to situate unfolding developments in a chronological timeline. Alongside the reports, letters, and edicts that their publications have preserved for posterity — and these include the Commons’ order for iconoclasm itself (Vicars, Sight 22) — they are visual building blocks in canonical narratives that still shape our view of the period. The incentive for such record keeping came from Scripture. Preachers such as Stephen Marshall called their hearers to compile a catalogue of the great things that God had done for his people for subsequent generations (51). The picture books and the plates of iconoclasm they contained must be seen as paper monuments. They are extensions of the genre of broadside memorials of providential deliverances such as the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the thwarting of the Gunpowder Plot in which Thomas Jenner specialised (Walsham, Providence 250-66). Vicars himself contributed to this tradition of two dimensional thankful acknowledgements of divine intervention in the form of his Englands Remembrancer (1641). The “panegyric pyramids” constructed entirely of words that adorn the title and opening pages of his God in the Mount (1642), an omnibus of four chronicles of the miraculous mercies and victories vouchsafed to the Parliamentary cause, were pictures for true Protestant iconophobes (title-page, sigs A2r, A3r) (Figure 12).

Such images help to delineate the contours of a Protestant visual culture that is far richer and more sophisticated than older caricatures of the antagonistic relationship between the Reformation and art allow. Vicars’ oeuvre embodies its complexities. It contains both a tract denouncing The Sinfulness and Unlawfulness of . . . Making the Picture of Christ’s Humanity (1641) and single-sheet prints including a scatological engraving of Dutch origin entitled Behold Romes Monster (1643) accompanied by poetic verses — another highly iconoclastic picture which both depends upon and provokes contempt for the pope. His work also illuminates two other processes with which this essay has been concerned: the development of a visual awareness of the distant and recent past and the evolution of consciousness of the Reformation itself as an historic event.
By the late seventeenth century, when Bishop Gilbert Burnet published his *History of the Reformation* (1681-3) that idea had been firmly cemented: the visual cues to iconoclasm in the engraved frontispiece index the extent to which symbolic violence against Catholic idols, together with the dissolution of the monasteries, had become synonymous with the birth of the Protestant movement. Combining biblical typology and contemporary testimony, such images are entirely compatible with a visual culture that was fundamentally commemorative in character. Showing “the
process of a story painted with the actions and gestures,” they have conditioned how we see the past and how we periodise it.

The art of iconoclasm analysed in this essay must briefly be situated alongside the medieval art that outlasted the era of image-breaking. The broken idols, slashed missals, censored indulgences, disfigured rood screens, and empty reliquaries that still reside in cathedrals and churches, museums, libraries, and archives testify to the tension between preserving and destroying, remembering and forgetting, that was integral to the process of reform itself. Some are probably still extant because they were kept by Roman Catholics as precious remnants of a world that they continued to hope might be not yet be irrevocably lost. Others may owe their survival to the conviction of some Protestants that mutilated objects were the best safeguard against backsliding towards idolatry once more, or to their impulse to collect trophies of the triumphant process of vanquishing popery. Whatever their provenance and subsequent biographies, attacked and damaged items carry multiple meanings. The historian Jaś Elsner comments that “Like the Roman god Janus, such monuments face in two directions simultaneously” (210). They evoke a past in which they existed intact and they signal the transformations that led to their present altered state. And for us they have an added poignancy because of the way in which they have been attacked: the iconoclasm they have suffered is now part of their aesthetic appeal. Finally, as James Simpson has argued, their migration out of hallowed spaces into secular institutional ones is itself a reflex of the Reformation (ch. 4). The very concept of art has been forged in the crucible of our inherited fear of idolatry (see also Cole and Żorach). As this essay has served to underscore, it is less the inverse of iconoclasm than its inseparable twin.
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Devils on Stage: Dramatic Representations of the Supernatural in *Doctor Faustus*

Kilian Schindler

Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* powerfully epitomises the uncertainties and contradictions of the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century. Obsession with the Devil reached a high-water mark with the large-scale witchcraft persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At the same time, however, representatives of the Radical Reformation, such as Anabaptists, Libertines, or the Family of Love, began to question the existence of the Devil as part of a spiritualising reformation of Christianity, which privileged the internal struggle of the soul over external and material forces, such as angels and demons, and their visual manifestation. Elizabethan drama in general, and *Doctor Faustus* in particular, likewise entertained a fraught relationship with its own, visual mode of representation. This essay argues that by putting devils centre stage, Marlowe exposes them to widespread anxieties concerning the visual representation of the supernatural, which further highlights the play's heterodox, spiritualising tendencies. However, while the devils' role in Faustus's downfall is consistently undermined in the A-text, the B-text is at pains to restore their credibility. Finally, such a revision of demonic agency in the play also holds important clues for a new assessment of the play's treatment of predestination and how it relates to contemporary orthodoxy.

I. Theatre and Idolatry

The relationship between the early modern theatre and Protestantism was notoriously fraught with problems that can perhaps best be sum-
marised as a conflict between word and image.¹ As Michael O’Connell points out, what made plays so offensive to anti-theatrical writers was their reliance on visual representation (34). Even hardliners such as William Prynne found no fault with plays as long as they were merely read (929-31). However, the antagonism between the theatre and opponents of the stage should not be overstated. O’Connell suggests that “the drama that emerged in the latter half of the reign of Elizabeth assumed something of the character it did, not in spite of but because of, the attack upon it” (18). Similarly, Jonathan Crewe criticises “the erroneous belief that Elizabethan pamphleteers and playwrights lived in worlds apart, each speaking a language alien to the other” and that anti-theatricalism was “an attitude wholly external or alien to the Elizabethan theatre itself” (96). Finally, Huston Diehl argues that the early modern English theatre was not “hostile to Protestantism or particularly sympathetic to the old religion,” on the contrary, plays were generally “likely to expose both magic and older forms of theatricality as fraudulent. And although they sometimes mourn the loss of beloved images and familiar rituals, many also endorse and even engage in acts of iconoclasm” (5). Diehl sees the theatre not only as a victim of “iconoclastic” scorn and condemnation, but also as a willing collaborator. Notably, Diehl detects such a deep-seated distrust of visual representation also in the plays of Christopher Marlowe:

His theater interrogates its own theatricality, creating spectacles that dazzle and seduce his audiences while dramatizing the fall of a protagonist who is bedazzled by demonic shows and seduced by his own power to manipulate images . . . Faustus is depicted in this play as a man who at crucial moments chooses images, shows, pageants, and spectacles, all explicitly the craft of the devil, over a God he cannot see. (77-78)

By associating the devil with the theatre, Marlowe taps into a rich tradition going back to antiquity which considered the theatre in terms of idolatry and Devil-worship. Already Tertullian had asserted that it was the Devil who “introduced into the world artificers of statues and of images, and of every kind of likenesses” (“On Idolatry” chap. 3), and this also holds true for the theatre. If the making of similitudes as such is already tainted with idolatry (“On Idolatry” chap. 5), the theatre obvi-

¹ Funding to support the research for this essay was provided by the Swiss National Science Foundation with a Doc.CH grant.
ously cannot escape Tertullian’s vehement censure: “The man who counterfeits voice, sex or age, who makes show of false love and hate, false sighs and tears, [God] will not approve, for He condemns all hypocrisy” (De spectaculis chap. 24). As all idolatrous practices that deal in mere “likenesses,” spectacles “were instituted for the devil’s sake, and equipped from the devil’s store” (De spectaculis chap. 24). The pagan deities to whom the theatres were dedicated, Bacchus and Venus, were in fact demons, who “among the other pollutions of idolatry devised those of the spectacles for the purpose of turning man from his Lord and binding him to their own glorification, and so inspired these ingenious arts” (De spectaculis chap. 10).2

Elizabethan critics of the theatre eagerly recycled the arguments of the church fathers and were equally, if not more, at pains to stress the demonic nature and origin of the theatre (O’Connell 19). Thus, “[p]layers are the inuention of the deuil, offerings of Idolatrie” (Gosson G8v), whose plays are “sucked out of the Deuilles teates, to nourishe vs in Idolatrie, Heathenrie, and sinne” (Stubbes 88v). They are “feends that are crept into the worlde by stealth, and holde possession by subtill inuasion” (Rankins 2r), and they are “sent from their great captaine Sathan . . . to deceuie the world, to leade the people with intising shewes to the diuell” (Rankins 2v). This is exactly what Marlowe’s devil-actors, who are literally “feends sent from their great captaine Sathan,” do when they stage the pageant of the Seven Deadly Sins in order to distract Faustus from his impending doom. Apparently, Marlowe takes the anti-theatrical claim that plays are the invention of the devil seriously and lays bare the stratagems by which the Devil ensnares his victims with images, shows, and illusions. As Michael O’Connell argues, it was “the illusion of presence” that accounted for “opposition to theatrical representation” (9) and which critics of the theatre considered as “the very essence of idolatry” (20). In Marlowe’s play, however, the Devil and his minions are no longer merely the source of idolatry but take centre stage and are turned into a dazzling spectacle themselves. But if images are not to be trusted and dramatic spectacles only distract from spiritual realities, could the dramatic presentation of the Devil not also undermine his metaphysical status and credibility?

2 For a similar argument, see Augustine 1.32 and 2.25. On patristic arguments against the theatre in general, see Barish 43-65.
II. The Devil in the Radical Reformation

As Richard Waswo has shown, English Protestantism had a tendency “to envision hell less as a place than as a state of mind” (71) and to emphasise “that even the present state of the unredeemed is condemnation” (72). Whereas The Catechism of the Council of Trent (1566) still upheld both the spiritual torments (poena damnit) and physical torments (poena sensus) of hell (1.7), a strong emphasis on the former was common currency in Elizabethan England. In addition to Waswo, a number critics have noted that Marlowe, too, stresses primarily the spiritual aspect of damnation as, for instance, in Mephistoles’s declaration that “Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed / in one self place, for where we are is hell, / And where hell is must we ever be” (2.1.121-123).3 The idea that physical hellfire is actually nothing but a metaphor can be traced back to the allegorising Scriptural exegesis of Origen and, in the sixteenth century, most notably to Erasmus, one of Origen’s most avid early modern readers. However, it received the orthodox seal of approval by Calvin and thus acquired independence from its originally more extravagant doctrinal context in Origen’s theology.4 Scepticism or otherwise heterodox opinions concerning the Devil, which might well have been gleaned from Origen, were by no means an inevitable consequence of metaphorical interpretations of hellfire. Hence I will not further discuss the question of hell but limit my argument to the Devil and his fallen angels.

In survey histories, the existence of the Devil is usually said to be questioned no earlier than the mid-seventeenth century and to lose intellectual credibility not before the eighteenth century (Russell 26; Almond, The Devil 196). However, one need not wait for seventeenth-century radicals such as the Ranters, Diggers, or Grindletonians to learn that man is devil to himself, or for Spinoza and Descartes, in order to find

3 See Sanders 200-05; Keiper; Streete. All references to the play are to Doctor Faustus and other Plays, ed. Bevington and Rasmussen. References are to the A-text unless indicated otherwise. References to the B-text are likewise to the edition by Bevington and Rasmussen.

4 Origen, De principiis 2.10.4-5; Erasmus, Enchiridion militis Christiani CWE 66, 113. Hyperaspistes I CWE 76, 132; for discussions of Calvin’s view on hell and its repercussions in early modern drama, see Streete and Pope. Among the magisterial reformers, only Zwingli seems to have been seriously interested in Origen’s maligned heresies such as the doctrine of apocatastasis, the universal restoration not only of humanity but also the Devil and his fallen angels, to an extent that worried his correspondents such as Urbanus Rhegius (CR 94: 128; CR 95: 726-27; CR 95: 738). Eventually, however, also Zwingli finally distanced himself clearly from the doctrine when it came to be associated with the Anabaptists in the second half of the 1520s (In catabaptistarum strophas elenchus 186-87).
more philosophical refutations of diabolical activity in this world. As Euan Cameron puts it, already “the Reformation inflicted what one might term collateral damage on beliefs about the spirit realm” (18). Scepticism was waiting in the wings in the sixteenth century, especially among the representatives of the so-called Radical Reformation. Importantly, this scepticism can be characterised as a symptom of changing attitudes in the Reformation towards the understanding of material and particularly visual aspects of religious worship and doctrine.

Despite a long history of conflict between Radical Protestants on the one side and Calvinists and Zwinglians on the other, there were a number of theological areas in which they shared similar views, such as their critical attitude towards ceremonial and external aspects of worship. Future Anabaptists had been at the forefront of iconoclastic activities in Zurich in the early 1520s (Gordon 192), and a strain of iconoclasm also runs through many branches of the Radical Reformation that emphasised internal spirituality and devalued external ceremonies (Williams 367). However, radicals and orthodox reformers disagreed substantially on how far one should go in internalising and/or spiritualising various practices of worship, sacramental rites, and elements of traditional Christian cosmology. While the most notorious area of disagreement was arguably the sacrament of baptism, radicals also began to question fundamentally the ontological status and agency of angels and demons.

The Northern Italian Anabattisti, for instance, determined at a clandestine synod in Venice in 1550 that Christ is not God, but a man, that there are no angels and no Devil other than human prudence, that the souls of the wicked are mortal, and consequently, that there is no hell (Williams 871-72). Similar developments can be observed north of the Alps, where the Dutch Anabaptist leader David Joris, who had been banished from Delft after encouraging acts of iconoclasm on Ascension Day in 1528, voiced heterodox opinions on the Devil in the strongest possible terms as early as the 1540s (Waite, “Man is a Devil”). While few may have been as explicit as Joris, similar attitudes were quite common in the Netherlands, where spiritualist movements such as the Family of Love were gaining a stronger foothold than anywhere else in Europe (Waite, “From David Joris”; “Where did the Devil Go?”). In 1545, Calvin himself published a treatise against one of these movements, the so-called Libertines or Spiritualizers (Contre la secte phantastique et furieuse des

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5 On the English seventeenth-century radicals and their attitude towards the Devil and witchcraft, see Clark 540-45; on Spinoza, see Almond, The Devil 211-13; on Descartes, see Russell 82-84.
Libertins, qui se nomment spirituels). Among other things, Calvin denounces their belief that the Devil and angels are mere imaginations:

By this they mean that whenever we think of the devil or of sin, these are only frivolous fantasies which we have conceived. And not only do they speak of devils as they do angels [sic] – taking them as inspirations without essence – but they think they are only vain thoughts which we ought to forget as dreams. (Treatises 234)

Importantly, Calvin ascribes such scepticism to a misguided conflation of the Devil with the idols rejected by the apostle Paul: “In brief, they speak of these things in the same manner that Saint Paul speaks of idols. For when he says that ‘an idol is nothing’ (I Cor. 8:4), he means that it exists only as a conception, without reason or foundation, in the minds of the ignorant” (235). Despite Calvin’s refutation, the idea that the Devil is merely an idol of the mind caught on, also in England. In 1550, Roger Hutchinson complains about the “many late Libertines, and late English Sadducees, which would teach out of scripture . . . that devils are evil thoughts, and good angels good thoughts” (138). The charge occurs repeatedly during Elizabeth’s reign, up to the 1590s, and usually with the implication that latter-day Sadducees are indeed still swarming around. The supposedly Libertine conviction that “there is no devil, but such as the painters make” (Wilkinson 66r), suggests that the sect considered belief in the devil as an outgrowth of an unduly visual religious culture, which ought to be reformed in a thoroughly spiritualising manner. Admittedly, there is little to no evidence for a distinct Libertine movement in Elizabethan England, but their ideas were firmly anchored in the Elizabethan theological imagination since they were discussed and refuted in highly influential theological works such as Calvin’s Institutes of the Christian Religion or Heinrich Bullinger’s Decades.

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6 Based on Acts 23:8, the Sadducees became a common reference point for the denial of the existence of angels or demons: “For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection neither Angel, nor spirit: but the Pharises confessed bothe.”


8 Major studies of Tudor Radical Protestantism such as Martin or Pearse mention them only a couple of times, without discussing them or distinguishing them from other radicals such as the Anabaptists, Familists, or Freewillers. Even George H. Williams’s comprehensive survey of the Radical Reformation traces no references to them in the Elizabethan period and merely suggests that “Familist Spiritualism” was “akin to and perhaps dependent upon the earlier Netherlandish Libertinism” (726).
Of particular interest for English scepticism, however, is Reginald Scot’s *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), and especially its appendix, “A Discourse vpon diuels and spirits.” At least on the surface, Scot sides with Calvin and opposes the Sadducees (540). However, he is equally repelled by the “witchmongers” and flatly denies that a witch or magician can ever be anything else but a fraud or a pathological case of madness. This argument rests on his insistence that the devils are purely spiritual beings and therefore cannot intervene in the physical world. Brushing aside Neoplatonic emanations and gradations, Scot insists in an almost proto-Cartesian fashion that “a bodie is no spirit, nor a spirit a bodie” (540). Consequently, “we find not that a spirit can make a bodie, more than a bodie can make a spirit” (541). Hence, Scot also denounces the Devil’s supposed “corporall assaults, or his attempts vpon our bodies, his nightwalkings, his visible appearings, his dansing with witches, &c” (540). Physical interaction between humans and demons, even their visual appearance in the physical world, belong to the realm of superstition.

Again, such a limited and spiritualising demonology takes its inspiration from contemporary fears of idolatry. Scot links witchcraft to other forms of idolatry that wrongly attribute supernatural power to physical objects or anyone other than God: “[H]e that attributeth to a witch, such diuine power, as dulie and onelie apperteineth vnto GOD (which all witchmongers doo) is in hart a blasphemer, an idolater, and full of grosse impietie” (12). Conversely, Scot frequently associates Popish idolatry, such as the veneration of saints, with devils: “[N]ot onelie their saints, but the verie images of them were called Diui. Which though it signifie gods, and so by consequence idols or feends: yet put but an (ll) therevnto, and it is Diuill in English” (529). Additionally, Scot points out that the devils named in Scripture were originally pagan idols (518). He takes this observation from Johann Weyer’s *De praestigiis daemonum* (1563), but whereas the Dutch physicist had still believed that the pagan idols were actually devils, Sydney Anglo (128) argues that Scot reverses the argument and concludes that devils are nothing else but idols, a view which we have already encountered in Calvin’s treatise against the Libertines.9

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9 The question whether Scot actually believed in the Devil and demons is a difficult one, especially because of his explicit disavowal of Sadduceism. Sydney Anglo nonetheless argues that “Scot no more accepted the reality of spirits and demons than he accepted the reality of witches,” and that demons are “either purely metaphorical expressions of mysteries beyond human comprehension or, more usually, of psychological disorders and physical diseases” (129). Moreover, Anglo concludes that “were it not for his leap of
Marlowe was quite probably familiar with the *Discoverie of Witchcraft*.\(^ {10} \)
One could even say that Scot provides a rationale for Marlowe’s theatrical experiment. Scot frames his scepticism concerning supernatural interventions frequently in theatrical terms, as when he declares that he “neuer could see anie diuels . . . except it were in a plaie” (443). What Scot has in mind here is clearly not the old religious drama which Anne Righter describes as “a glass held up towards the Absolute” (14) that stripped supernatural reality of the mists of illusion and deception. In the *Discoverie*, “playing” is synonymous with the dissembling, legerdemain, and the cozenage of petty magicians. Also Faustus’s magic is remarkably insubstantial, that is, theatrical and literary. It is no coincidence that he describes his fantasy of magical omnipotence in Horatian terms as “a world of profit and delight” (1.1.55) and that he cannot conjure “true substantial bodies” (4.1.44) but merely “spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and his paramour” (4.1.48-49). In other words, Marlowe draws attention to the histrionic nature of magic and deliberately destroys the illusion of presence which had worried anti-theatrical writers so much. When Faustus wonders at the play’s most sublime moment: “Was this the face that launched a thousand ships / And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?” (5.1.90-91), the audience is reminded that it is actually the face of a young boy actor. Just as Scot explains away all miracles as malevolent manipulation or pathological delusion, Marlowe, too, “exploits the power of the stage to enchant, paradoxically, in order to disenchant” (Diehl 79). But to what extent does Faustus, who is not only a magician but also a spectator of demonic shows, succumb to the power of images himself? Or to put it differently, to what extent does Marlowe also cast doubt on the Devil himself as the projection of an idolatrous imagination? Some scepticism is already apparent in *The Faust Book*, such as when Faustus is not certain whether “it were true or false that he had seen hell, or whether he was blinded or not” (122). Mar-

\(^{10}\) In his edition of *Doctor Faustus*, David Wootton makes a substantial case for Marlowe’s familiarity with Scot’s *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, based on a number of shared linguistic and other idiosyncrasies and parallels that are missing from Marlowe’s main source, *The Faust Book* (cf. xix-xxii).
lowe’s Faustus entertains no such doubts, but the play suggests at several points that he would have been well-advised to do so.

III. Devils in *Doctor Faustus*

In his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) Robert Burton observes that religious despair, to which Faustus is certainly no stranger, could be the source of a great variety of delusions, including that “Thou hast given thy soule to the divell, as Witches and Conjurers doe, *explicitè* and *implicitè*, by compact, band, and obligation” (3: 431). With regard to Faustus, we have good reasons to be as sceptical as Burton. When Faustus writes the pact in his own blood, the blood congeals and a mysterious inscription appears on his arm:

> But what is this inscription on mine arm?
> “*Homo, fuge*!” Whither should I fly?
> If unto God, he’ll throw thee down to hell.–
> My senses are deceived; here’s nothing writ.–
> I see it plain. Here in this place is writ
> “*Homo, fuge*!” Yer shall nor Faustus fly. (2.1.76-81)

Jennifer Waldron reads the scene in light of “Protestant claims that human bodies were God’s own theatrical properties” (93) and interprets it as a manifestation of divine providence on the human body (94). Marlowe’s version, however, is considerably more sceptical about such supernatural intervention than his source. *The Faust Book* may not mention the congealing blood, but we are given no reason to doubt the appearance of the inscription on his arm:

*[H]e took a small penknife and pricked a vein in his left hand, and for certainty thereupon were seen on his hand these words written, as if they had been written with blood: O *homo fuge*, whereat the spirit vanished, but Faustus continued in his damnable mind and made his writing as followeth. (98)*

In *The Faust Book*, the inscription appears “for certainty.” By contrast, with the temporary disappearance of the inscription Marlowe suggests that Faustus’s “senses are deceived.” Moreover, this supposed manifestation of God’s will remains quite inconsequential and does not dispel Mephistopheles as it does in *The Faust Book*. When proceeding from page to stage, the matter becomes even more dubious. Having an inscription appear and disappear on an actor’s arm within seconds must
have been extremely difficult, probably even impossible, to stage. Either
the actor adopts a posture which blocks the audience’s view of the sup-
posed inscription or acts the scene in such a manner that the audience
can plainly see that “here’s nothing writ.” A performance can thus
hardly confirm the intervention of divine providence. It can at best re-
tain some ambiguity, but it might just as well disambiguate the playtext
to the effect that Faustus’s senses are indeed deceived.

Significantly, Faustus’s perception seems to fail him just at the mo-
ment when he signs the pact, an action which both Johann Weyer and
Reginald Scot had dismissed altogether as resulting from misguided de-
clusion (Clark 201). Scot argues that since the Devil is a spirit, there is no
way in which the bargain could be sealed and documented physically:
“[T]he joining of hands with the diuell, the kissing of his bare buttocks,
and his scratching and biting of them, are absurd lies” (47). In fact, the
impossibility of a pact that has been physically sealed with the Devil
means that there is no way to prove it ever occurred: “What credible
witness is there brought at anie time, of this their corporall, visible, and
incredible bargaine; sauing the confession of some person diseased both
in bodie and mind, wilfullie made, or injuriouslie constrained?” (48)

In the sixteenth century, the pact had been of little importance in
England to begin with. Witchcraft was rather considered as maleficum
than heresy. Consequently, the witch’s harmful acts were more impor-
tant than her apostasy. However, the pact, sealed with a physical mark,
was an integral part of Calvinist demonology. By 1548, the search for
the mark had become part of Genevan witchcraft trials (Almond, Eng-
land’s First Demonologist 83). Through the mediation of John Knox, the
same procedure was introduced in Scotland and imported to England
under King James, who asserted the existence of the pact with the Devil
as well as the Devil’s mark in his Daemonologie (1597) (Almond, The Devil
135-40). The Witchcraft Act of 1604 (2 James I c. 12) prohibited a pact
with the Devil under penalty of death, and by 1608, William Perkins
could write that the pact “is so manifest in daiely experience, that it can-
not well be called into question” (A discourse of the damned art of witchcraft
49). In accordance with his Calvinist heritage, he also listed the Devil’s
mark as one of seven forensic criteria for discerning a witch (203).
However, when Doctor Faustus was first staged in the late 1580s, the pact
had not yet become an integral part of English demonology, and we
should not take its occurrence in Doctor Faustus for granted. The fact that
in Marlowe’s play, the pact is associated with hallucination and does not
feature a physical mark makes it highly suspicious. Calvinist demonolo-
gies and witchcraft trials had closely linked the pact to a physical mark,
and sceptics such as Scot seized on this weak spot. Without a mark, there was no proof that a pact had ever been made. Any confession would prove nothing more than that the suspect is “diseased both in bodie and mind,” as Faustus’s possibly deceived senses suggest, too.

Similarly, the Good and the Evil Angel, absent in *The Faust Book*, are more troubling phenomena than is usually assumed. Tracing their pedigree to the morality play, as is frequently done (Bevington 248; Sinfield 118), is misleading and obscures Marlowe’s originality. The pairing of a Good and an Evil Angel is not as common as one might think, and the only morality play that is ever explicitly mentioned in such comparisons is *The Castle of Perseverance* from the early fifteenth century. Given that the play has survived in only one manuscript, it seems unlikely that Marlowe knew of it.

It is more rewarding to look for precedents for Marlowe’s angels in theological sources. The guardian angel had been a well-respected concept in patristic and medieval theology (Keck 161-65), and the Evil Angel can be traced back to early Christianity. Peter Lombard seems to take their existence for granted in the *Sentences* (2.11), and *The Golden Legend* is equally clear in the chapter on St Michael: “To every man two angels are given, one good and the other bad, the bad one to test him and the good one to protect him” (593). Although guardian angels did not fare as well after the Reformation and are often discussed without their evil counterpart, Protestant theologians did not unanimously discard the Evil Angel. Moreover, the two angels may still have been part of popular belief, which is plausible in light of their occurrence in the *Golden Legend*. However, Marlowe’s Good and Evil Angel stand out because they are often, and for good reasons, read as merely spiritual impulses. They are closely linked to Faustus’s consciousness and seem to have no independent existence. They do not interact with anyone, and Faustus

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11 Stachniewski 296; Matalene 511; Potter 126.
12 Cf. Origen, *De principiis* 3.2.4 and homily 12 on Luke 2.8-11, 49-50; see also the apocryphal *Pastor of Hermes* 2.6.2 (first to second century CE).
13 Girolami Zanchi, for instance, allows guardian angels for the elect and rejects the Evil Angel (1.3.15). Calvin professes agnosticism concerning the guardian angel, but reports popular belief in a Good and an Evil Angel without denouncing it (*Institutes* 1.14.7). Pietro Martyre Vermigli could be interpreted to the effect that God has indeed appointed Good and Evil Angels although their number is not clear (cf. 1.13.21). As one might expect, Scot rejects them, but reports that papists, and even some Protestants, believe in them (505-06). On Protestant guardian angels in general, see also Peter Marshall 293-316.
14 cf. Campbell 233-35; Matalene 515-16; and Sinfield 118.
appears not to see them when he wonders: “Who buzzeth in mine ears” (2.3.14)? In one case, Faustus seems to sense their presence even before they enter the stage: “O, something soundeth in mine ears” (2.1.7). At other times, there is no indication that Faustus even notices them (1.1.72-79, 2.3.77-80). Moreover, Faustus’s angels tend to appear only after the fact and do little more than repeat Faustus’s already disjointed soliloquies (2.1.1-21, 2.3.74-82). Hence they differ significantly from Sensual Suggestion and Conscience in Nathaniel Woodes’ *Conflict of Conscience* (1581), to which David Bevington compares them (248). Woodes’s advisors are the ones who prompt Philologus to explore the different aspects of his dilemma (4.3) whereas Faustus’s angels for the most part merely externalise what is already happening in his mind. Woodes’s Sensual Suggestion, even as an abstraction, is solidly real and hatches out plans with the Cardinal in order to overthrow Philologus, but Marlowe constantly raises doubts whether anyone, including Faustus, is aware of the angels’ presence, or whether they are not merely a projection of his mind.

To conclude, the existence of personal Good and Evil Angels may have been subject to theological debate, but as metaphors for Faustus’s conflicting spiritual impulses, Marlowe’s angels can neither be connected to preceding dramatic nor to orthodox theological traditions. They were never stock figures of the morality play, and their ontological elusiveness and close connection to Faustus’s consciousness are a far cry from the “Protestant patterning of angels as merely external protective agents” (Marshall 303). The closest parallel for Marlowe’s dramatic design is therefore to be found in the Libertine tenet that “devils are evil thoughts, and good angels good thoughts” (Hutchinson 138). Calvin, Bullinger, and Perkins condemned this heresy again and again, but Marlowe seems to explore exactly this kind of radical spiritualism.

This tendency to undermine the agency of supernatural forces is perhaps most pronounced in Faustus’s final meeting with the scholars in act 5 scene 2. On this occasion, Faustus babbles, seemingly incoherently: “Look, comes he not? Comes he not?” (5.2.4-5), to which one of the puzzled scholars replies: “What means Faustus?” (5.2.6). Another scholar conjectures that “[b]elike he is grown into some sickness by being over-solitary” (5.2.7-8), to which Scholar 1 replies: “If it be so, we’ll have physicians to cure him” (5.2.9). We are thus alerted to the possibility that Faustus might be a pathological case and suffer from melancholia, one of the main sources for a disturbed imagination in early modern medical thought. As Scot observes, “[m]anie thorough melancholie doo imagine, that they see or heare visions, spirits, ghosts, strange noises,
"(461), and this is particularly the case with witches: “If anie man aduisedlie marke their words, actions, cogitations, and gestures, he shall perceiue that melancholie abounding in their head, and occupieng their braine, hath depriued or rather depraued their iudgements, and all their senses” (52). This is apparently also the conclusion which the scholars draw. Moreover, Woodes’s Conflict of Conscience provides a precedent which renders plausible the hypothesis that at this point, Faustus is indeed hallucinating. In act 5 scene 2, the despairing Philologus, like Faustus, is plagued by visions of devils: “And certainly euen at his [sic] time, I doo most plainly see, / The deuils to be about me rounde” (5.2.2981-82). To this, Theologus replies: “Your minde corrupted dooth present, to you, this false illusion, / But turne awhile, vnto the spirit of trueth, in your distresse, / And it shall cast out from your eies, all horror and confusion” (5.2.2189-91). As in Marlowe’s play, there is no indication that devils are actually present. Philologus’s mistaken trust in what his eyes “doo most plainly see,” and Theologus’s admonition to “cast out from your eies, all horror and confusion,” thus anticipate Marlowe’s distrust in vision as a reliable means of perceiving supernatural forces in Doctor Faustus.

If Faustus is merely hallucinating at this point, one crucial question at stake is his objective ability to repent. When he confesses that he has made a pact with the Devil, the scholars exhort him to “call on God” (5.2.25). Faustus, however, replies that the Devil keeps him from repentance: “I would weep, but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood instead of tears, yea, life and soul. O, he stays my tongue! I would lift up my hands, but see, they hold them, they hold them” (5.2.27-30). The scholars, however, do not see anything. Apparently puzzled by Faustus’s frenzy, they merely ask: “Who, Faustus?” (5.2.31). Faustus replies: “Lucifer and Mephistopheles” (5.2.32), but according to the stage directions, neither of them is actually onstage. Quite possibly, no devils are holding down his arms and keeping him from repentance. Instead, Faustus might have become a prisoner of his own misguided imagination and his obsession with reprobation. The epilogue makes clear that Faustus is dead, but we cannot be entirely sure that he has actually been fetched by the devils. Unlike the Faust Book, the A-text does not show how an infernal thunderstorm nearly scares the scholars out of their wits and omits the grisly details of how they find the mortal remains of what
once was Faustus. All that the audience is left with at the end of the play is Faustus’s subjective horror of damnation.\textsuperscript{15}

The B-text of Doctor Faustus, however, is at pains to restore some credibility to demonic agency in the play, as is evident in its revision of Faustus’s last meeting with the scholars. Here, the B-text goes to great lengths to make clear that Faustus is \textit{not} hallucinating in his last encounter with the scholars. Unlike in the A-text, Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistopheles are actually supposed to be on stage in the scene. At first glance, this seems odd since their presence does not serve any recognisable purpose. They do not speak during Faustus’s last encounter with the scholars, and the latter are unable to see them. Critics have therefore characterised the B-text’s tendency to increase the number of devils on stage as a pattern of redundancy (Beckerman). However, their presence in Act 5 Scene 2 is not redundant at all. On the contrary, their addition can be read as an attempt to forestall the suspicion raised by the A-text, namely, that they are merely figments of Faustus’s disordered imagination. Moreover, the B-version of the scene is quite remarkable because it begins with Lucifer, Beelzebub and Mephistopheles, who gleefully anticipate Faustus’s terminal despair, before the latter enters with Wagner and the other scholars. It is the most substantial of four scenes in the B-text, as opposed to none in the A-text, in which devils are on stage without any human characters present.\textsuperscript{16} In other words, the B-text is at pains to stress that they are not a projection of Faustus’s imagination and that their appearance is independent of his presence. The B-text drives this point home by adding even further material to Act 5. After the scholars have left, the Good and the Bad Angel join forces in order to gloat over Faustus’s imminent damnation. Faustus is granted a brief vision of both the throne of heaven and the “vast perpetual torture-house” (5.2.116) of hell. And if this were not enough, the B-text undoes another of Marlowe’s deviations from his source in the

\textsuperscript{15} One might argue that the stage directions should resolve, if not for the audience, at least for the reader, the whole business of when devils are on stage and when they are not. However, a parallel in Faustus’s own dealing in illusions questions such certainty. When Faustus is at the court of Charles V and conjures spirits in the likeness of Alexander and his paramour, the Emperor falls victim to the verisimilitude of Faustus’s show: “Sure these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes” (4.1.65-66). Apparently, we cannot rely on the technically misleading stage directions, which state: “Enter Mephistopheles with Alexander and his Paramour.” Even though the stage directions indicate the entrance of devils at the end of the play, and even if they are staged like “true substantial bodies,” the audience as well as the reader cannot therefore be sure that they actually are what they seem to be.

\textsuperscript{16} The other three instances of “independent” devils are 1.3., 3.3., and 5.1 (B-text).
A-text by adding a final scene in which the scholars collect Faustus’s mangled limbs, as they do in *The Faust Book*. There remains no doubt that the Devil is not only a spiritual but also a material force to be reckoned with.

IV. Predestination and the Devil

In the remainder of this essay, I will suggest that the differences between the A-text and the B-text with regard to demonic agency might shed some new light on the play’s stance towards the doctrine of predestination and some of the problems which scholarship on this question has raised. One first problem comes with the frequent claim that the B-text emphasises free will and mutes predestination. As Michael Keefer argues in the copious introduction to his edition of the play, “passages that suggest Faustus’s acts of choice may not have been free were systematically altered” (19) in the B-text. Just to give one example, the A-text’s line “Accursèd Faustus, where is mercy now?” (5.1.62), which foregrounds the importance of God’s granting or withholding of mercy, is replaced with “Accursèd Faustus, wretch, what hast thou done?” (5.1.64), stressing Faustus’s own agency and depravity. However, Keefer is also aware that an interpretation of the B-text’s alterations as emphasising free will are inconsistent (93). Unlike in the A-text, Mephistopheles, too, now takes responsibility for Faustus’s downfall: “‘Twas I that, when thou wert i’the way to heaven, / Damned up thy passage” (5.2.92-93). One could even say that the B-text’s thoroughgoing emphasis on demonic agency consistently undermines Faustus’s autonomy.

Although it is certainly true that the B-text highlights Faustus’s volition and depravity, this does not mean that the B-text is antipredestinarian or that its emphasis on demonic agency contradicts the emphasis on Faustus’s will. Freedom of will and freedom of action should not be confused, and even if one is free to act as one wishes (i.e. freedom of action), it does not follow that the will has been free all along. That is to say, just because the B-text highlights Faustus’s volition, his will is not necessarily free. By stressing Faustus’s volition and the Devil’s agency at the same time, the B-text is therefore not inconsistent, but forestalls the conclusion that God is the immediate and unapologetic author of the tragedy of reprobation, something which the Church of England felt very uneasy about.

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17 See also Hunter, 64; Marcus 48.
Critics usually read *Doctor Faustus* through the lens of Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, where the doctrine of double predestination is laid out in exemplary clarity, including reprobation. But clerics were well aware that reprobation was notoriously difficult to preach and to apply fruitfully in a pastoral context. As Erasmus had famously pointed out in *De libero arbitrio*: “Who will be able to bring himself to love wholeheartedly the God who has created a hell seething with everlasting tortures where he can punish his own evil deeds in wretched human beings, as though he delighted in their suffering?” (CWE 76: 13). Consequently, many Protestant theologians had qualms about openly preaching double predestination. Such pastoral uneasiness with reprobation is evident in the “rustic Pelagianism” encouraged by the Prayer Book, as in “the prayer which any Calvinist was bound to find objectionable, that all men might be saved” (Collinson, *The Elizabethan* 37). 18

Even Nicholas Tyacke, who argues that the Thirty-Nine Articles “favoured the Calvinists,” notes that “the Elizabethan Prayer Book needed careful exposition in order not to contradict predestinarian theology” (3). Also the “Homilie of Repentaunce” in the *Book of Homilies* stresses that it is never too late to repent: “Doth not the Lorde hymselfe say by the prophete: I will not the death of the wicked, but that he turne from his wicked ways and liue?” (*The second Tome of Homilies* 511). Finally, pastoral concerns are also evident in the definitive dogmatic statement of the Church of England on predestination, Article 17 of the Elizabethan Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion:

> [F]or curious and carnal persons, lacking the spirite of Christe, to haue continually before their eyes the sentence of Gods predestination, is a most daungerous downefall, whereby the deuyll doth thrust them either into desparation, or into rechelesnesse of most vnceleane liuing, no lesse perilous then desperation. (391)

What is striking is the importance which the article attributes to the Devil in inducing despair. Likewise, Vermigli (3.1.33) and Bullinger (644–47) argue that to fall into suspicion of one’s own reprobation is the Devil’s work and that one simply cannot know for sure if one is reprobate or not.

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18 For instance in the “Commination against sinners, with certaine prayers, to be used divers times in the yere”: “O moste mighty GOD, and mercyfull father which haste compassion of al men, and hatest nothing that thou haste made: whiche wouldest not the death of a synner, but that he should rather turne from synne, and be saved . . . Thy propertye is to have mercy” (181).
Critics often point out that Calvinism was fashionable during Marlowe’s Cambridge days (Stachniewski 49; Keefer 53), but that does not warrant the postulation of a Calvinist hegemony. Patrick Collinson points out that “English theologians were as likely to lean on Bullinger of Zürich, Musculus of Berne, or Peter Martyr as on Calvin or Beza.” In fact:

if we were to identify one author and one book which represented the centre of theological gravity of the Elizabethan Church it would not be Calvin’s Institutes but the Common Places of Peter Martyr. . . . And at least equally influential was Bullinger. (Collinson, “England and International Calvinism” 214-15)

Also the characterisation of Article 17 as Calvinist is misleading. David Neelands has shown that “Vermigli more than any other individual, should be seen as the source, if not the author, of Article 17” (374). For Vermigli, predestination is not double predestination in Calvin’s sense because reprobation is not so much a positive decree as an omission of grace. It is “the most wise purpose of God, whereby he hath before all eternitie, constantlie decreed without any inujustice, not to haue mercie on those whome he hath not loued, but hath overhipped them” (3.1.15; emphasis added). According to Vermigli, “[t]he elect onlie, and not the reprobate, are predestinate” (3.1.9), and Article 17 likewise only mentions “[p]redestination to lyfe.” Notably, if reprobation is nothing else but “overhipping,” this leaves some space for the Devil as tempter to despair.

Calvin, on the other hand, had no qualms about the positive decree of reprobation even in a pastoral context: “Whoever, then, heaps odium upon the doctrine of predestination openly reproaches God, as if he had unadvisedly let slip something hurtful to the church” (Institutes 3.21.4). There were fruitful lessons to be drawn from the contemplation of reprobation, and these basically amounted to a pedagogy of fear and terror since no other means are capable of rousing fallen humanity. Calvin notes in his preface to Matteo Gribaldi’s account of the death of the famous reprobate Francesco Spiera: “Because god woulde shake from vs this beastlye sluggishnes, he sheweth often tymes, such monstrous examples as maie constraine vs to feele, yea, though we be aslepe” (Aiiv).19 In De aeterna praedestinatione Dei (1552), Calvin similarly exhorts

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19 Francesco Spiera, the Protestant archetype of despair, was an Italian Protestant who recanted before the Inquisition of Venice and consequently died in despair and in the conviction of his reprobation in 1548. See M. A. Overell 619-37.
believers “to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling” in order to correct “the indolence of our flesh” (8.8). Calvin is aware of the Scylla of complacency and false security. Unlike Bullinger and Vermigli, however, he is hardly worried about the Charybdis of despair: “God commands the ears of His people to tremble at the voice of His prophet (Is 6.9). That their hearts may be touched? Rather that they be hardened. That those who hear may repent? Rather that the already lost may perish twice over” (9.6). For Calvin, despair is not an unintended consequence of preaching predestination that provides an opening for the Devil’s destructive insinuations. It is a vehicle of providence.

For a dramatic rendition of Calvin’s pastoral view of predestination, we might turn to Woodes’s *Case of Conflict*, which is based on Gribaldi’s account of Spiera’s death. Spiera/Philologus is convinced that he is reprobate and repeatedly makes sense of his own downfall in the same terms as Calvin in the preface to Gribaldi’s account. God plagues him with suicidal despair, but nonetheless keeps him alive, in order to instruct others with his godly tragedy: “But I alas, shall in this lyfe, in torments still remaine, / while Gods iust anger, vpon mee, shall be revealed plaine: / And I example made to all, of Gods iust indignation” (5.2.2325-27).20 However, this emphasis on divine purpose in the drama of reprobation is muted in Vermigli’s suggestion that “peraduenture God did not this to Spiera, but the diuell” (3.1.33). Vermigli and Bullinger are at pains to clear God from any responsibility for the tragedy of reprobation.21 With its stress on demonic agency, the B-text encourages the same conclusion. Not God, but the devils are keeping Faustus from repentance. While the A-text lays bare the horrors of predestination by highlighting Faustus’s spiritual paralysis and largely removing the Devil from the equation, the B-text can indeed be considered as a return to orthodoxy, that is, an interpretation of predestination in the sense of Bullinger and especially Vermigli, whose theology is captured in Article

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20 See also 5.4.1984-90; 5.4.2039-40; 5.2.2205-06.

21 Strictly speaking, however, God can not be entirely dissociated from the actions of the Devil. Like most Protestants, Bullinger thinks that the Devil “can doe nothing without Gods permission” (753). This, however, is an inference that Bullinger and Vermigli understandably prefer not to draw when it comes to reprobation. Vermigli makes a similar concession when he admits the possibility that “God would in [Spiera], by a certeine singular, and vnacustomed dispensation, feare awaie others from the like wickedness and impietie.” Unlike Calvin, however, he refuses to propagate a pedagogy based on the fear of reprobation and insists “that this neither customable happeneth, as far as we can gather out of histories; neither also can anie man, by the holy scriptures, see this desparation.” Hence, “it is vaine . . . that manie fall into suspicion of their reprobation” (3.1.33).
17. By focusing on agency rather than the problem of volition itself – or the lack thereof – the B-text sidesteps the issue of free will and reflects Vermigli’s and Bullinger’s pastoral uneasiness about reprobation. Instead of sounding the depths of God’s decrees, the B-text simply rehearses Vermigli’s and Bullinger’s warning against the Devil’s temptation to despair. *Doctor Faustus* should therefore not be read as a Calvinist drama of reprobation that instils fear and terror of an inscrutable God, but rather a moralising gloss on Article 17, which aptly captures the article’s pattern of diabolical temptation, despair, and damnation. In Bullinger’s words, Faustus makes the mistake of listening to “the eggings of the diuel, wherewith he goeth about not onely to ouerwhelm the hope of our election, but to make vs suspect and doubt of God as though he had his creature in hatred, whom hee had rather haue destroied than saued” (647). God is not responsible but the Devil. Unlike Philologus in the Calvinist *Conflict of Conscience*, the B-text Faustus is therefore not the chosen vessel of God’s didactic spectacle of terror; instead, he dutifully accuses Mephistopheles: “O thou bewitching fiend, ’twas thy temptation / Hath robbed me of eternal happiness” (5.2.89-90).
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“Where there is a frequent preaching, there is no necessity of pictures”: The Fluid Images of John Donne’s Preaching as Substitutes for Visual Representations

Sonia Pernet

This essay explores John Donne’s (1572-1631) attitude to images, which contrasts with the mainstream view of the Protestant Church that all types of images are potentially idolatrous, be they physical representations or mental pictures. Both these types of illustrations impact Man’s perception of the divine through the senses. At the time in which Donne preached, sight and hearing were universally seen as the two predominant senses, acting as vessels between the body and the external world. Donne, following most of his contemporaries, gives precedence to the sense of hearing. For him, hearing, preaching and the divine are intricately linked, and he chooses the extremely visual metaphor of fluidity to stage moving water as the element connecting Man and God through preaching and hearing. The mutable and moving quality of Donne’s fluid metaphors not only demonstrates their importance in the sermons (which has been widely overlooked academically), but also their ultimate goal to move the believers to apply the Word of God to their lives in order to reach salvation.


The post-Reformation period in England gave birth to a kaleidoscopic variety of views regarding the use – or avoidance – of images in worship.\(^2\) The two main and competing senses in the conveyance of the Word of God were sight and hearing, with hearing usually given precedence by the Protestant Church. John Donne (1572-1631), who was ordained in 1615 and appointed Dean of St Paul’s Cathedral by King James in 1621, had a clear idea of the role of both sight and hearing. In his 1628 Easter sermon preached at St Paul’s, he states that

> the eye is the devil’s door, before the ear: for, though he do enter at the ear, by wanton discourse, yet he was at the eye before; we see, before we talke dangerously. But the ear is the Holy Ghost’s first door, He assists us with Rituall and Ceremoniall things, which we see in the Church; but Ceremonies have their right use, when their right use hath first beene taught by preaching. (VIII: 228)

For him, therefore, both senses act as metaphorical doors allowing immaterial powers to penetrate the believer’s body. While his association of the eye with the devil’s door shows his suspicion of the sense of sight, he reiterates his preference for hearing. The ability of the Holy Ghost to teach the “right use” of ceremonies seen in the church highlights the primacy of preaching. In his sermons, Donne recurrently uses liquid imagery to depict the conveyance of God’s Word. These fluid metaphors are closely linked to the two Sacraments of the Protestant Church, namely the Eucharist and Baptism, which had blood and water at their centre. Donne’s representation of preaching through fluid imagery thus creates powerful mental images in the mind of the congregation. The fluid imagery depicting the transmission of the Word of God underlines Donne’s will, on the one hand, to blend the realms of sight and hearing together, and on the other, to bridge the provinces of the human and the divine.

Fluidity in Donne’s sermons unsurprisingly has no single, fixed meaning, but rather cascades in several directions. It is simultaneously linked to both the sacraments through their use of liquids, but it also carries the notions of constant change, renewal and refreshment, which illustrate both the unstable religious period in which Donne preached, but also the beneficial effect of God’s grace on the faithful. Donne’s

\(^2\) See Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing*, for a discussion of attitudes to images in the Protestant Church, esp. chapter 1.
fascination for watery images is not restricted to his sermons, but can be encountered in his *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*. In this instance, however, it tends to represent water in more negative terms, that is, as affliction, tears, sickness. Although some examples of this negative aspect of water can also be found in the sermons, Donne tends to focus on the positive side in order to edify the congregation. In Donne’s preaching, images of fluidity are often self-referential in that they are not bound to a single type of representation, but flow from one to another. They can be verbs denoting a fluid movement, entire metaphors running throughout a sermon, sometimes even across different sermons, or simply clear mentions of liquids, such as water, blood, tears or sea. This essay focuses on metaphors of water that illustrate the act and effect of preaching on the believers. As Donne himself states in a Christening sermon: “the water here [in the sermons], must not be so much as water; but a metaphorcall, and figurative water” (V: 146), underlining the importance of verbal images to illustrate God’s impact on his believers.

One of the main qualities of Donne’s fluid imagery is its representation of preaching as an essential component of a divine, cyclical movement that should bring the faithful to salvation.

Scholars have routinely disregarded the importance of Donne’s fluid images. Although some academics have mentioned these images in their work, they were neither fully pursued nor given enough credit. Winfried Schleiner, whose monograph *The Imagery of John Donne’s Sermons* (1970) is the most recent – as well as the only – book to be published specifically on the imagery of Donne’s sermons, has for example argued that “a metaphor like ‘his words flowed’ is hardly very striking. Metaphors like this one, which [...] link the spiritual and the material, are so common that we have to make a deliberate effort if we want to avoid them” (Schleiner 9). Given the fact that Donne’s fluid metaphors are frequently related to language and thereby inform his conception of preaching, they play a crucial role in the sermons. They create an intimate space of encounter between God and Man by metaphorically staging the penetration of the human body by the Holy Ghost through the ear. Indeed, the Holy Spirit is characteristically described in both scripture and liturgy with moving elements such as wind or water. Donne’s sermons perpetuate this imagery, but overwhelmingly display the use of liquid elements rather than any other. Indeed, the essence of fluidity as well as of God’s Spirit is to be continuously moving and evolving, and the depiction of God’s action through fluid images indicates not only that he was continually active in his Church and untiringly working on
his disciples’ souls, but also that he was indeed not to be fixed in any sort of concrete representation.

As a first step into Donne’s connection between the physical world and the spiritual one, he repeatedly employs images staging the body as an empty container that has to be filled by the fluid grace of God. Before benefiting from God’s grace, the human body is pictured by Donne as being filled with sin or “concupiscencies” (IV: 286) that pour out of the body through the doors of our senses. It is through these same doors that grace will later penetrate. These images display a constant movement fluctuating between the two extremes of being either entirely full of sin or, on the contrary, filled with grace. The fluctuation Donne willingly pictures through his fluid imagery denotes the impossibility of attaining either damnation or salvation during Man’s earthly life, and is congruent with the idea that judgement occurs after this cyclical motion stops, that is, after death. Both tropes of liquidity and of the body as a container run throughout several of Donne’s Christmas sermons. In the sermon preached on Christmas Day 1622 at St. Paul’s Cathedral on Colossians 1:19-20, he explains that

for our parts [bodily parts, the parts that compose man], as when a River swells, at first it will finde out all the channels, or lower parts of the bank, and enter there, but after a while it covers, and overflows the whole field, and all is water without distinction; so, though we be naturally channels of concupiscencies, (for there sin begins, and as water runs naturally in the veins and bowels of the earth, so run concupiscencies naturally in our bowels) [. . .] Then, (as it did there) it induces a flood, a deluge, our concupiscence swells above all channels, and actually overflowes all; It hath found an issue at the eare, we delight in the defamation of others; and an issue at the eye, If we see a thiefe, we run with him; we concurre in the plots of supplanting and destroying other men; It hath found an issue in the tongue, Our lips are our owne, who is Lord over us? We speak freely; seditious speeches against superiours, obscene and scurrile speeches against one another, prophane and blasphemous speeches against God himselfe, are growne to be good jests, and marks of wit, and arguments of spirit. (IV: 286)

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3 The perception of God’s grace as fluid is not typical of a specific corpus of sermons, but runs throughout Donne’s religious prose.

4 “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” (King James Version; all biblical citations in this essay are from the King James Version).
Donne transforms the entire body into a channel through which “concupiscencies” flow. He makes clear that they run “naturally in our bowels,” but explains that in some cases concupiscence is comparable to “a flood,” “a deluge” that causes an overflowing of “all.” The first parenthesis in the passage, which illustrates concupiscence as water and the physical body as the earth being composed of “bowels” and “veins” is not only the logical development of the metaphor of blood Donne already employed in the divisio of the sermon, but it also adds a more concrete level to it. Donne’s comparison of the “concupiscencies” running in our bowels with water running “naturally in the veins and bowels of the earth” strikingly resonates with a passage from Pliny’s *Natural History*, which we can assume Donne had read. In this passage, Pliny explains this phenomenon in nearly identical words, stating that the “earth open[s] her bosom and water penetrat[es] her entire frame by means of a network of veins radiating within and without” (Pliny, II.166, trans. Rackham, in Dickson 15). This type of resonance between biblical exegesis and classical writings is recurrent in Donne’s sermons, and has been noted by Peter McCullough in his chapter “Donne as Preacher,” where he writes that “Donne [. . .] responds creatively to non-scriptural evidence,” as well as that “the huge range that [he] allows for himself in inventio distinguishes him from other prominent preachers of his day” (170). The metaphor of concupiscence as water running through our body therefore is more than a simple poetic image: it opens a door to a form of unification between non-scriptural and scriptural texts in the minds of Donne’s readers, blending the physical world with that of the divine.

After the first parenthesis of the quote, Donne comes back to images taken directly from the Bible. He links his own, original approach of liquid concupiscence to the words “flood” and “deluge,” both negatively connoted and obviously referring to the episode of the Flood. They make our concupiscence “swell above all channels” and overflow the boundaries of the physical body. The concupiscence then becomes visible to others, as it “hath found an issue” at the ear, at the eye and in the tongue, allowing “prophane and blasphemous speeches against God” to flow from one’s mouth into the world.

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5 Donne makes numerous references to Pliny in the sermons. Among them, one is through a certain “Aristomachum Solensem” who spent “threescore years in the contemplation of Bees” (III: 232-33). This comes from Book XI, chapter 4 of Pliny’s *Natural History*. Donne also quotes Pliny in Latin (III: 233-34; III: 277). Donne quotes a passage from *Natural History* Book V chapter 17 in Latin as well (IV:15). He also quotes Book XI, chapter 116 (VII: 185; IX: 366).
This metaphor of the body-container runs through this specific sermon, where it displays the body of man as unable to be emptied of spirituality, be it sin or grace. Rather, the body is designed to be constantly filled by spiritual liquids, echoing the continuity of the relationship between Man and God. A page later in the sermon, Donne uses an identical image to picture the body of Christ as a container. However, because of Christ’s heterogeneous nature, his body is not only pictured as being deserted by sin, but also as being more full of grace than Man’s. In a passage in which Donne uses the generic “I,” he states that

I shall be as full as St. Paul, in heaven; I shall have as full a vessel, but not so full a Cellar; I shall be as full, but I shall not have so much to fill. Christ only hath an infinite content, and capacity, an infinite roome and receipt, and then an infinite fulnesse; omnen capacitatem, and omnem plenitudinem. He would receive as much as could be infused, and there was as much infused, as he could receive. (IV: 287)

One cannot rival the “infinite content” Christ experiences. Although both Christ and Man can be full, the difference lies in Donne’s representation of the capacity of their bodies. In the passage quoted above, human beings “shall not have so much to fill” while Christ “hath an infinite content, and capacity, an infinite roome and receipt, and [. . .] an infinite fulnesse.” There is a perfect balance between Christ’s physical and spiritual existence, as Donne illustrates in an image where even his words are balanced and form a chiasmus. Christ “would receive as much as could be infused, and there was as much infused, as he could receive.” What causes Christ to be full is the Holy Ghost, as the preacher attests when he explains that “The Holy Ghost hath dwelt in holy men, but not thus; [. . .] but in Christo, in plenitudine, in Christ, in all fulnesse” (IV: 289). Of course, the infinite fullness of Christ is not only contained in his physical body, as it is the case for regular human beings. Rather, the fact that “in this person dwelleth all the fulnesse of the Godhead bodily” (IV: 288) makes his fullness overflow his physical body. However, contrary to Man, Christ’s fullness is beneficial to humanity, provided that it is brought to the faithful by a mediator. As Donne mentions,

there is a third fulnesse [after that of Man and God], the Church, (which is his body, the fulnesse of him, that filleth all in all) perfit God, there is the fulnesse of his dignity; perfit man, there is the fulnesse of his passibility; and a perfit Church, there is the fulnesse of the distribution of his mercies, and merits to us. (IV: 288)
This latter image of the Church as Christ’s body being full and able to fill “all in all” word for word comes from Ephesians 1:23. Donne concludes his imagery of Man and Christ’s fullness with a biblical image underlining the role of the Church as the medium through which Christ’s fullness is distributed to the faithful through the preaching of the Word. This notion of Christ’s fullness in his humanity contrasts with the Eastern Christological notion of *kenosis* (self-emptying), which posits that through the Incarnation, Christ renounced, or “emptied” part of his divine nature. Although it is not clear if Donne was familiar with this concept, the contrast is interesting – even more so when Donne starts mentioning the emptying of one’s conscience in order to fill it with divine will.

In his sermon preached to the Earl of Carlisle (tentatively assigned by Potter and Simpson to 1622) Donne slightly changes his metaphor of the container and applies it to the immaterial conscience, which invites his audience to embrace a more personal, intimate approach. This time, the imagery presents the believer as acting on his own conscience, and the preacher as providing his audience with practical advice on how they should fill their conscience with grace. Donne states that

> as long as thy conscience is foule, it is but an illusion to apprehend any peace, or any comfort in any sentence of the Scripture, in any promise of the Gospell: search thy conscience, empty that, and then search the Scriptures, and thou shalt finde abundantly enough to fill it with peace and consolation. (V: 264)

The Word of God, it is made clear, should be the source of peace and consolation, and reading it should entitle believers to be filled with grace when they are not exposed to the preaching of a sermon.

These liquid images staging the body as a container to be filled by God’s grace are indeed cyclical. At the same time, however, they are fixed, being confined to the physical limits of the body. The chiasmus Donne used to illustrate Christ’s fullness is not only a manner of expressing the perfect balance between the amount of grace that is given and received by Christ, but it also restricts the fluid grace of God in an internal cycle that is not directly profitable to the faithful. Donne breaks this closed cycle and adapts his imagery to the fact that preaching is, for him, the most prominent vehicle to convey the Word of God to the world. Representations of grace flowing from the preacher – who was divinely inspired by the Spirit – to the audience are therefore central in Donne’s imagery and suggest God’s omnipresence and continual action on his believers.
The metaphorical links between language and the body in relation to beliefs can be traced to the Bible. The Gospel of John, for example, describes the person of Christ as the “Word made flesh” (John 1:14). Indeed, his Incarnation was the physical representation of God’s word. Thus, Christ’s body was perceived as a spiritual source similar to the written Word of God. Donne metaphorically transforms Christ’s body into fluid words that are diffused in the audience by the preacher. In his 1622 Christmas sermon – centred on Christ’s body – Donne first explains that what makes Christ divine is the fact that the Holy Ghost dwells in him, “in plenitudine, [. . .] in all fulnesse,” and not just in the spirit of wisdom, meekness, or chastity, as he did in prophets (IV: 289). The fact that the Spirit dwells in Christ in all fullness presents his body as a container filled with liquid grace, and is the starting point of the flowing metaphor. As Donne himself explains:

So that this is Christ’s fulnesse, that he is in a continuall administration of his Church; in which he flowes over upon his Ministers; (for, of this fulnesse have all we received, and grace for grace: that is, power by his grace, to derive grace upon the Congregation;) And so, of his fulnesse, all the Congregation receives too. (IV: 289)

The liquefaction of Christ’s body into grace is visible in Donne’s choice of the verb “flow” that illustrates the action of Christ on both “his Minister” and the congregation. Donne also clearly links the idea of fullness with grace and insists on the fact that grace is available to every congregation, that “we have all received” it. The fluid movement operated by grace places the preacher at the centre of its diffusion, entrusting him with an essential role of mediator between God and Man. According to Donne’s images, the ministers, empowered by God, are able to “derive grace upon the Congregation,” so that every member of the audience receives a portion of divine grace through preaching. In other words, the presence of movement emphasises the diffusion of grace, which flows from a single head represented by Christ to various branches, his ministers, to finally reach the ocean, the congregation.

Following the movement of grace, Donne focuses on the role of the preacher, and stages his own body as a vessel through which God’s grace is distributed to the congregation. In a sermon preached to King Charles I at Whitehall in 1627, he explains that God’s

Ordinance of preaching batters the soule, and by that breach, the Spirit enters; His Ministers [. . .] are as the fall of waters, and carry with them whole Congregations; [. . .] Therefore what Christ tells us in the darke, he bids us
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Donne describes the ordinance of preaching in rather violent terms in this passage, which reminds us of his holy sonnet “Batter my Heart” where the Trinitarian God is asked by the speaker to “batter [his] heart” in order to enter the “usurp’d town” of his body and to mend him. However, the sonnet has no mention of liquid metaphors, while this passage underlines the power of the ministers of God as falls of waters, which are strong enough to “carry with them whole Congregations.” The waterfall image, however, comes directly from the Devotions, in which Donne states that “Thou hast called thy servants, who are to work upon us in thine Ordinance, by all these loud Names – Winds, and Chariots, and falls of waters; where thou wouldest be heard, thou wilt bee heard” (XXI. Expostulation 129). In the quote from the sermon, the vocabulary is also powerful, facilitating God to “bee heard.” Donne illustrates the act of preaching as a mediation between “what Christ tells us in the darke” and what he “preach[es] on the house top,” underlining that guiding his audience to salvation requires the doctrine to be “put into a Messengers mouth” by God, so that it may be “spoke alowd” and “delivered” to the congregation. Both speech and preaching are central to secure the faithful’s access to salvation. Subsequent to the liquefaction of Christ pictured earlier, it is the preacher’s body that becomes liquid as grace departs from it in the form of words.

The image of the waterfall exists elsewhere in the sermons, and Donne also applies it to both Man and the Holy Ghost. Despite the fact that this specific image does not come from the Bible, Donne thought it fit to include it in his fluid metaphors. Man, who is unable to access the divine without benefiting from spiritual edification becomes a destructive waterfall in Donne’s imagery. In his 1624 Easter Day sermon preached at St. Paul’s on the resurrection, he states that “Man falls, as a fall of waters, that throwes downe, and corrupts all that it embraces” (VI: 70). The power of the waterfall – that is, the power of Man – is destructive and “corrupts all that it embraces,” because it is guided neither by the minister nor by the Spirit. In opposition, God’s ministers are portrayed “as a fall of water” edifying them to access salvation. Similarly, in the undated Whitsunday sermon preached at Lincoln’s Inn commemorating the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, Donne compares the Spirit with a waterfall, and states that “the Holy
Ghost is said to have fallen, which denotes [. . .] a pouring out of himself, upon those, upon whom he falls: He falls as a fall of waters, that covers that it falls upon [. . .]; it desires and it will possesse that it falls upon” (V: 49). This movement of the fall is directly related to the conveyance of the Word of God through preaching. In the same sermon, Donne explains that the Spirit of God “does not lie in those round drops in which it falls, but diffuses, and spreads and inlarges it self” in order to fall “upon all” (V: 36). The movement from the outside world to the inside of the audience is visible in the quote discussed above, in which Donne explains that preaching is the ordinance of God that “batters the soule” and creates a breach by which the Spirit enters. However, since the Christian perception of the soul locates it inside the physical body, the grace of God can only enter the believers’ soul after it has penetrated their body.

To represent the penetration of grace in the souls of the congregants, Donne follows his fluid metaphors and depicts the act of preaching as something fluid that would diffuse the grace of God in the audience in an edifying, healing, and nourishing way. In his first Christmas sermon preached at St. Paul’s in 1621, he mentions that “every word that falls from the preachers lips shall be a drop of the dew of heaven, [. . .] to wash away that sinne, so presented by thee to be so sacrified by him” (III: 364). The preacher’s words therefore have a healing power. Not only that, but they also have a nourishing ability. As the preacher Richard Carpenter, one of Donne’s contemporaries, explains, the duty of the preacher is to be

as conduit pipes of grace to convey to the thirsty soules of our hearers, the living water of Gods word, and to be as the mesaraicall veynes in the body naturall, through which the spiritual foode must passe, whereby the members of Christs body mysticall are to be nourished up unto everlasting life. This is our worke. (Hunt 9)

As Hunt puts it, this metaphor displays “that a regular supply of preaching was as basic and necessary [. . .] as the supply of food and drink to the body” (9). Indeed, just like food and drink, the words preached had to make their way inside the body to nourish one’s soul. In accordance with his perception of the body as a container, Donne uses images of the ears and of flowing water to create the conduits that would allow the word preached to enter the believer’s body and soul. In the Lincoln’s Inn Whitsunday sermon mentioned earlier, Donne asserts that “the Eares are the Aqueducts of the water of life” (V: 55), underlining one
more time the importance of the sense of hearing to allow the Holy Ghost to enter one’s body.

Donne confirms the importance of hearing sermons to access salvation in his sermon preached on Easter Monday 1622 at “the Spittle,” in which fluid grace spreads not only to a congregation, but expands physically through the creation of new places of preaching. Furthermore, his imagery hints at King James’ efforts to introduce more frequent preaching. The King, therefore, appears as the mediator between Man and God’s grace, providing his people with more occasions to encounter God. As Donne expresses, God

hath opened our Ears to him, and his to hear you in the publick Congregation: and as he that waters his Garden, pours in water into that Vessel at one place, and pours it out again at an hundred; God, who as he hath wall’d this Island with a wall of water, the Sea; so he waters this Garden with the waters of Paradise: the Word of Life hath pour’d in this water, into that great, and Royal Vessel, the Understanding, and the love of his truth, into the large and religious heart of our Soveraign, and he pours it out in 100, in 1000 spouts, in a more plentiful preaching thereof, then ever your Fathers had it; in both the ways of plenty; plentiful in the frequency, plentiful in the learned manner of preaching. (IV: 107)

Here again, the physical body of the King is pictured as a container of the “water” poured by God, his grace. God is depicted as pouring water into the King’s understanding, which Donne names the “Royal Vessel.” According to the preacher, the Sovereign had a “religious heart” that acts as a mediator between God and his believers, and he used his power to provide his people with the frequent, edifying preaching they needed in order to reach salvation. The grace of God then was poured out by the King’s will “in 100, in 1000 spouts,” in a more abundant way “then ever your Fathers had it.” By comparing both the number of places and the frequency of preaching with a garden that needs to be watered, Donne pursues his fluid metaphors illustrating the relationship between Man and God. The proliferation of the spouts in this quote echoes the idea that the Holy Spirit is not simply “falling upon” the congregation, but that he is indeed spreading, diffusing through the more numerous places of worship, as well as through a more frequent preaching.

The last aspect of the cyclical imagery of fluidity is the effect preaching has on the believers. The penetration of the water of life into the body through the ears, combined with the increased supply of preaching, creates an everlasting source of grace inside the believers. In an un-
dated Christening sermon, Donne uses a passage from the Gospel of John to illustrate this effect directly through the voice of God, and states that “the water that I shall give, shall be in him, a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life” (V: 109). This metaphor of the “well of water” comes from Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman, which took place by an actual well, that of Jacob, according to Saint John (John 4:6-14). It is from this object that Jesus derives the image of the well containing the water of life. In the metaphor, the source of grace springing in the receptacle that is Man’s body replaces the fullness of sin and its destructive effect on both the external world and his soul. Preaching, through a set of liquid images has conducted the faithful to be in constant contact with God, not only through the sacraments, which are his external signs, but most importantly through a continual preaching and a sustained use of a particular type of metaphor.

Donne’s metaphorical language describes the cycle of fluid grace, without representing God and his actions on the world in fixed or immutable images. Rather than harshly condemning the use of images in worship, either mental or physical, he focused on verbal images as a means both to avoid the risk of idolatry and to bring them closer to God. By transforming images that were prominent in the Bible, Donne manages to create an original set of images to illustrate God’s grace while not fixing it in a way that would not be acceptable for the Protestant Church. As Jeffrey Johnson puts it: “in addition to the tangible representations that fill the eye, Donne is equally aware of the power that images created in the spoken and written word have on the mind’s eye” (63). The fluid metaphors Donne uses throughout his sermons overflow the boundaries, combining images with hearing, the human with the divine, and the physical with the immaterial. The preacher’s imagery of fluidity constantly flows, transforms and adapts in order to bring God’s Word to the congregations, “moving them to apply that doctrine to their lives – to live in conformity with Christ” (Shami 321). In other words, liquid representations not only serve as mental representation of divine action, but are, in their essence, an edification of the faithful. It is no surprise, then, that Donne mentions in a Christening sermon that “water hath still been a subject, and instrument of Gods conversation with Man” (V: 146-47).
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“The text and the occasion mingled together make a chequer-worke, a mixture of black and white, mourning and joy”: Visual Elements of the Printed Funeral Sermon in Early Modern England

Hannah Yip

It is the intention of this article to draw attention to printed images and visual elements of the sermon in early modern England, which have not constituted a serious area of focused enquiry thus far. Although scholars have long recognised the centrality of the sermon to post-Reformation worship, its printed form and the way it was read has remained a secondary consideration, too often regarded as an inert “postscript” to the original performance. This essay will therefore highlight the visual signals provided for the reader’s interpretation and edification in the preacher’s absence. It brings the printed image in one of the most disseminated religious literatures of the period to the fore, questioning its role in relation to the text and considering its ambiguous status in an era in which the Christian religion was constantly negotiating its relationship with images. Focusing in particular on the portrait of the deceased and the representation of epitaphs in two seventeenth-century funeral sermons, it offers a reinterpretation of these texts as illustrated books which shared fundamental values with the portrait miniature in gift culture, and with the funeral monument in its visual and textual aid to remembrance of the exemplary dead.

Broadly defined as a discourse upon a chosen Biblical text delivered by a preacher to a congregation or auditory, the Protestant sermon in early modern England sought to apply these selected passages to the listeners’

lives, exhorting them to act upon the lessons learnt in order to achieve salvation (McCullough, “Sermons” 566). Over the past two decades, scholars have devoted considerable attention to this genre of oral text, acknowledging its status as “the era’s most characteristic religious genre” (Morrissey, “Interdisciplinarity” 1112), “the ideal vehicle to express the biblicocentric core of Protestantism” (Pettegree 38) and “the most significant expression of the English church’s values and authority” after the Reformation (Shami 155). In particular, there has been much valuable interdisciplinary scholarship that considers the sermon in light of its original contexts as preached, from a comprehensive overview of preaching in various architectural settings within early modern London (Rhatigan) to an exhaustive reconstruction of the heraldic funerals of Sir William Cokayne in December 1626, with John Donne’s sermon as the centrepiece (McCullough, “Preaching and Context”). However, amidst this outpouring of studies addressing preaching, audiences and circumstances of delivery (in particular, Kirby and Stanwood; Hunt; “Virtual St Paul’s Cathedral Project”), scholarship which centres on the sermon in print is comparatively limited, despite its integral place in the early modern book trade (Green 194; Rigney 204; McCullough, “Sermons” 560). Routinely classified as “static, typeset texts” (Walsham, Providence 282) which were “postscripts” to performance (Ferrell 199), commentators have tended to concentrate primarily upon the logistics of the movement of sermons from pulpit to page (Hunt 131-63; Morrissey, Politics 42-49; Rigney 200-02). Consequently, the minutiae concerning the intended manner in which consumers were to read and interpret these religious texts have only been partially addressed (Lund 147-53).

It is, therefore, the objective of this essay to argue the case for an additional interdisciplinary focus for the early modern sermon; specifically, one which considers the printed sermon as an historical, material artefact in its own right. The quotation in the paper’s title is derived from Edward Rainbowe’s sermon preached at the funeral of Susanna Howard, Countess of Suffolk in 1649. The lugubrious “occasion” and the “text” are not only drawn vividly together with Rainbowe’s “chequer-worke” of “black and white”; such a metaphor is also exploited in the printed version (British Library, E.532.[40.]). The “sad occasion” of the congregation’s meeting, which set “a black and mournfull Preface before the Text” (Rainbowe Br), is represented in print by a solid black rectangle placed before the chosen Biblical text of Ecclesiastes 7:1, inviting contemplation without the preacher’s exhortation (Figure 1). Rainbowe immediately continues by counselling the reader to take comfort from both the text and Howard’s virtuous memory; like the printed
page itself, “[t]he text and the occasion mingled together make a chequer-worke, a mixture of black and white, mourning and joy” (B).

By drawing attention to some of the ways in which early modern printed sermons made use of visual stimuli to guide a reader’s spiritual edification, this paper aims to give prominence to the intrinsic value of a bibliographical and art-historical reading of these religious texts. Such an approach builds upon the typical concentration upon textual imagery
which lies at the heart of the current scholarship on early modern printed sermons (Hodgson 4-6; Lund 156-57). Furthermore, by highlighting the prevalence of visual forms in a printed text which represents “the core of all Protestant worship” (Pettegree 38), this article seeks to support ongoing debates refuting older arguments for Protestant “iconophobia” and the entrenched perception of the religious persecution of the image in post-Reformation England (Hamling and Willis; Collinson, From Iconoclasm to Iconophobia 8 and 22-29; Barber and Boldrick 6, 9, 20-21 and passim). Tessa Watt, Tara Hamling, David J. Davis and Alexandra Walsham (see works listed in the Bibliography; Walsham, “Idols”), among others, have argued persuasively for a more nuanced interpretation of the manner in which images could operate within a Protestant framework, revealing their presence in diverse contexts from the Protestant household (Hamling) to the Protestant emblem book (Diehl). Nonetheless, within meticulous surveys of the relationship between Protestantism and the illustrated print culture of the era (Watt, particularly 131-50; Davis, particularly 45-69; Walsham, “Idols” 23-27), the printed sermon represents a prolific and somewhat overlooked source which might substantially endorse these claims for a variegated Protestant visual culture in post-Reformation England.

In an essay of minor proportions, an analysis of two particular features of a specific type of sermon must suffice. This essay will therefore focus on the “pictorial migration” (Aston, “Bibles to Ballads” 113; Walsham, “Idols” 45) of two forms of commemorative material culture to two seventeenth-century Protestant funeral sermons: namely, the portrait miniature in The Churches Lamentation for the losse of the Godly by Richard Stock (1614; Bodleian Library, 8° L 100(2) Th.), and the epitaph in Death and the Grave by Thomas Dugard (1649; British Library, 1417.c.19). Notable for their “blend of biographical detail and exemplary purpose” (Molekamp 44), scholars have made various observations upon the preaching of funeral sermons, within the context of the extravagant visual culture of commemoration, as an exclusive privilege of the social elites of early modern England (Gittings 175-76 and 217; McCullough, “Preaching and Context” 229-31). However, printed funeral sermons, considered as gifts intended to secure noble patronage, have not thus far been subjected to close scrutiny for their active reflection of this culture. These two works have been selected from a period in which published funeral sermons first began to thrive in the book trade (Collinson, “Magazine” 245; Tromly 310-11), with a prominent peak in publication during the Civil Wars and Interregnum (Collinson, “Magazine” 246; Houlbrooke 298). With its striking woodcuts that al-
lude to the portrait miniature in their idiosyncratic construction, *The Churches Lamentation* will be understood as a memorial token of condolence and gratitude for Richard Stock’s bereaved patrons. The carefully annotated portrait of the deceased, situated amongst a series of visual representations of heraldic and personal prestige, also contributed significantly to the didactic value of the sermon for the wider reading public, giving weight to its portrayal of the deceased as a paragon of exemplarity. In his funeral sermon for Lady Alice Lucy, Thomas Dugard portrays her commissioned funeral monument and its epitaphs as a prime example of the deceased gentlewoman’s modesty (Cust). An examination of the reproduction of these epitaphs in the printed sermon-book not only observes the transfer of this message for the benefit of subsequent readers, but also looks closely at their formation as composites of text and printers’ designs, questioning their classification as images.

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Considered tangentially from the perspective of authorship, reception and reputation, portraits of preachers are the most recognised visual element of the early modern printed sermon (Howe 477; Hunt 19; Dixon 465, 468, 473 and 475). Printed portraits of the deceased subjects of funeral sermons, on the other hand, have been little explored and have been regarded, if at all, as curiosities to be mentioned only in passing (Collinson, “Magazine” 245 n. 98). It is possible that this oversight stems from the need for a deeper understanding of the printed funeral sermon as a commemorative artefact within the culture of public gift-giving and patronage (Lund 149). Ralph Houlbrooke (302-03), Paul Seaver (“Puritan Preachers” 131-34) and Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos have taken useful steps in this direction. The latter describes published funeral sermons as “often the product of the relations between clergymen and their lay patrons, to whom a sermon for a deceased relative was presented at their request and as a tribute and ‘return of gratitude’ for their favours” (Krausman Ben-Amos 229). Developing these observations further, an analysis of the portrait of the deceased within *The Churches Lamentation* by Richard Stock, alongside due consideration for the work’s patronage, foregrounds the printed sermon’s affinity with the material gift of the portrait miniature, described by Roy Strong as “an art form peculiarly expressive of Protestant England” (“Introduction” 9). Moreover, it will be suggested that, together with the preceding symbols of family standing and personal achievement, this portrait served
It was certainly the case that many seventeenth-century Protestant preachers regarded portraiture and biography as “sister arts” (Wendorf 120), their final duty to the deceased being to imitate the painter in this respect. Such connections, as part of the large stock of “figurative embellishment[s] in word painting [. . .] appropriated by preachers” (Aston, “Art and Idolatry” 250), were expressed either within the accounts of the deceased in the sermon proper or in the dedicatory epistles to the published sermons. These were often addressed to the preachers’ (prospective) patrons. Gaspar Hickes, in his obsequious epistle to Sir Edward and Lady Frances Barkham, writes of the deceased’s “excellencies, which deserve to be drawn and flourished by the most curious pencil” (A2v). Addressing his congregation at the funeral of Sir John Gayr, Nathaniel Hardy wishes for “time to draw his Picture to the length, and skill to doe it to the Life” (25). Robert Willan, writing to the Right Honourable Anne Bayning, Viscountess of Sudbury, is more confident: “Accept then these lines wherein you may behold so true a Portrayture of your deceased Lord, that those which envyed him cannot object flattery, nor such as love’d and honour’d him, distraction to the Pencill ” (A3v). Finally, Jeremy Taylor takes these metaphors further by intermingling tears of grief with an artist’s palette, presenting Richard Vaughan, Second Earl of Carbery, with his wife’s “picture; drawn in little and in water-colours, sullyed indeed with tears and the abrupt accents of a real and consonant sorrow; but drawn with a faithfull hand, and taken from the life” (A2v). The biographical “portraiture” within the funeral sermon might therefore be profitably placed alongside the “water-colours” of the portrait miniature. Preaching upon the death of Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, Samuel Fairclough draws the parallels between his own art, manuscript illumination and the related art of limning:

[. . .] I actually perform no more then he that undertook to represent the beams and body of the Sun, onely by making a prick or dot of gold with his pen, in a fair sheet of paper; or that Limner, who having undertaken to draw a most beautifull picture, finding his skill insufficient, cast a vail over the face of it, to cover his own ignorance, as well as the beauty of the piece. (11)

In an insightful article on limning in sixteenth-century England, Katherine Coombs traces the origins of the term as “coming from the Latin ‘luminare,’ to give light”; that is, to illuminate meaning (“Limning” 78). Fairclough’s analogy aptly relates these delicate arts to his central task of deciphering the Biblical text, illuminating its meaning, and succinctly
framing the life of the deceased in such a way that the auditors can learn by example. From these initial accounts, it is possible to draw comparisons between a preacher’s depiction of the illustrious deceased for the benefit of the living and as consolation for his distinguished patrons, and the limner’s highest aims to portray the best moral aspects of the sitter (Hilliard 54) for the edification of an exclusive group of onlookers.

Such a conceit is carried out to its fullest iconographical extent in Richard Stock’s *The Churches Lamentation*, preached at the funeral of John Harington, Second Baron Harington of Exton and published in 1614. Perhaps best remembered today as John Milton’s boyhood minister, London preacher Richard Stock was the Rector of All Hallows, Bread Street from 1611 until his death in 1626 (Seaver, “Stock, Richard” 240). Although little has surfaced regarding the particulars of Stock’s relations with the Harington family (Pebworth 19-20 n. 4), it is notable that this handsomely illustrated text represents the only funeral sermon within Stock’s extremely slim output of publications, suggesting the importance attached to his homage to them. The early demise of Harington, an eminent courtier and close friend of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, inspired an outpouring of public grief from artists, poets, and the godly clergymen who he had patronised alike (Pebworth 27-31; Strong, *Henry Prince of Wales* 20-22; Healy), and elements from their tributes seem to unite in this printed text.

The title page of *The Churches Lamentation* is immediately followed by an escutcheon containing the Harington family crest (Figure 2). This dynastic symbol comes directly before a double-page spread displaying a fascinating image purporting to represent Harington’s medal commemorating his knighthood (Pebworth 29; Healy), but which also strongly resembles a portrait miniature locket and pendant (Coombs, *Portrait Miniature* 22 and 62). The portrait of Harington, within an “intimate small oval” characteristic of the early seventeenth-century English portrait miniature (Coombs, *Portrait Miniature* 45), is identically proportioned and adjacent to this image, almost as if the two pictures constitute the two opened halves of the locket (Figures 3 and 4). All three images are accompanied by epigrams in both Latin and English contributed by an anonymous author and Harington’s friends, John Playfere and Francis Herring (Robbins 775), summarising the lineage, accomplishments and virtues of “that truly noble, and most hopefull young Gentleman” (Stock title page).

In the epistle dedicated to Harington’s sister, mother and aunt, Stock expresses concern that “any should taxe [him] with flattery” (ar), revealing a major preoccupation of early modern Protestant preachers who were
anxious to avoid charges of “pagan” over-zealous praise of the dead by radical reformers (Willan A3v; Tromly 301). At the same time, however, he also wishes to reconcile “the love and honour” that he bore towards Harington with the instructive function of the sermon, “to make evident to others for imitation, that grace which God had made so eminent in [Harington]” (Stock n.p.). As “commemorative aids” (Diehl 56), these printed, annotated images seem to compensate for several omissions made by Stock in the sermon. Dedicating most of his eulogy, which begins at page 61, to an appropriately godly discussion of Harington’s “Sobriety, Justice, [and] Piety” (Stock 71-105), he deigns to “passe by the birth of this honorable person, and his progenitours” (Stock 64), already represented in the “ample Coate” (Figure 2), actively omits “to speake of his education and bringing vp” and declines to “stand vppon his naturall parts of wit, memory, sweetnes of nature [and] habilitie of body” (Stock 66), all depicted in the epigrams underneath Harington’s portrait (Figure 4). The representative portrait miniature jewel also evokes Stock’s intentions for the octavo-format sermon to serve “as a small testimonie of [his] thankefull minde” (a2r); namely, as a token exchanged in favour for the continued patronage of the Harington family. David L. Gants notes that two-thirds of single sermon-books published between 1614 and 1618 were in the larger quarto format (Gants 190; Hunt 169; Morrissey, Politics 42-43). This additional perspective underlines the more personal and intimate nature of this printed sermon.

Their evident value to the work notwithstanding, it is important to recognise that it was clearly necessary to relegate these images to their proper place by means of the accompanying epigrams, which ensured the reader’s correct assimilation of them. Thus, although the “ample Coate speaks auntient vertues praise,” it is determinedly inferior to Harington’s “greater merits” which “nobler trophe’s raise.” This tiny poem hints that these qualities will be divulged for the curious reader, encouraging them to look beyond this initial page. Playfere’s pithy couplets inscribed underneath the representation of the medal direct the reader’s thoughts away from worldly successes – and indeed earthly possessions such as a portrait miniature jewel – and towards heaven (“In calis illum proxima pene locant”; “[.] he climbes beyond the Spheares”). Finally, while Herring presents Harington’s portrait as a beautiful depiction of the features of the deceased (“Aspicis Heronis vultum, graphicamque figuram”) in which the viewer is able to see the “true likenesses” (“Effigiem verae”) of virtue, nobility, candour and religiosity, he deems it impossible for anyone to “paint” his spirit. Playfere goes even further with this point;
as a “dead picture” which portrays but a Lord, the portrait cannot depict Harington’s soul, and that “[i]f his soules portrait ’twere,” it would be able to speak of the achievements and virtues which once characterised the Baron. Ultimately, despite the portrait’s commendable efforts to achieve the limner’s ideal, the reader is firmly reminded that it is still only a “likeness.” These thought-provoking images, placed at the very beginning of the work in order to set up its principal objective to “keep the righteous in a blessed memorial or remembrance [. . .] to make that common to others” (Stock n.p.), also appear to complement the very nature of Stock’s chosen Biblical text around which the sermon is based (Micah
Figure 4: Richard Stock, *The Churches Lamentation for the losse of the Godly*. London: John Beale, 1614. 8°. Third woodcut after title page. Page size: 164 × 110 mm. With permission from the Bodleian Library, 8° L 100(2) Th.
The preacher states that the first part of the text is “set downe first vnder a Parable and similitude, which helps both present attention, and future memory, being delightfull” (5). On the other hand, the second part “without parable [. . .] truely enformeth the judgement, being perspicuous” (5). Indeed, a final image, placed at the very end of the printed sermon, requires no explanatory verse. The representation of a coffin draped with a black pall is an unmistakable summation of the occasion and the latter part of the text: “The good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none righteous among men” (Stock 1).

Figure 5: Bartholomew Aye and Isaac James, Sir Thomas and Lady Constance Lucy monument. St Leonard’s Church, Charlecote. Alabaster, marble and oolite. c. 1605. © Hannah Yip

The final part of this essay turns to the representation of what was arguably “the most important kind of church art” made in post-Reformation England (Llewellyn, “Honour” 179) within the printed
funeral sermon. Thomas Dugard’s *Death and the Grave*, preached at the funeral of Lady Alice Lucy in August 1648 and published in 1649, features various allusions to the funeral monument, from the verbal description of the actual funeral monument of Sir Thomas and Lady Alice (42-43) to the distinctive typographical designs of the first and final pages of the printed text. Like Stock’s sermon, *Death and the Grave* represents the only funeral sermon in Dugard’s published oeuvre. Dugard was Lady Alice’s household preacher for three years (Dugard a; Cust), an occupation which required considerable dedication as she was an invalid, unable to “visit the House of God” (Dugard 45-46). The Warwickshire gentlewoman was, like Lord Harington, a committed patron of godly preachers (Cust); such was her piety that Samuel Clarke dedicated an entry to her in his *Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons* (Part the Second 140-43), reproducing much of Dugard’s eulogy.

Attention is immediately drawn to the visual elements of the printed page with the intriguing inscription of the names of Lady Alice’s children at the beginning of the dedicatory epistle (Dugard ar). “The Remain’s of that Honorable Pair, Sir THOMAS LUCIE Knight, and the Ladie ALICE his Wife” (Dugard a) are divided into two adjacent lists according to gender, calling to mind contemporary funeral monuments which would sometimes include effigies of the offspring, separated by gender, on their parents’ tombs. The children would undoubtedly have known about such monuments as their grandfather’s memorial at their family seat in Charlecote, Warwickshire featured this specific arrangement (Figure 5). Identifying the children as the patrons of the published sermon, Dugard writes: “I was in a manner necessitated, as before to the Pulpit, so now to the Press; my former relation to your Noble Familie [. . .] not excusing mee from the one, nor your Pietie toward your dearest Parent from the other” (ar-av). Dugard’s textual “monument” constructed for the offspring of Sir Thomas and Lady Alice Lucy can be viewed in light of the significance which he accords to “that Magnificent Monument” (42) commissioned by Lady Alice for her husband. Reproductions of the epitaphs from this monument appear as an appendix in the printed funeral sermon (Figures 6 to 8).

The “title page” of the epitaphs is noteworthy in its economical construction. The imprinted borders of Sir Thomas’s epitaph on the verso are clearly visible, thus forming part of the design on this page which represents “THE MONUMENT” to the deceased. Sir Thomas’s epitaph is set out on a double-page spread to facilitate reading of the text, which is taken directly from his original epitaph and recounts his numerous virtues. The shapes of both epitaphs correlate to the originals (Figures 9
and 10), and are outlined by mourning borders which more frequently adorned the title pages of printed elegies and funeral sermons from the 1640s onwards (C.; Sedgwick). The principal departure from the monument, apart from the insertion of “Domina” in Lady Alice’s epitaph, is found in the floral elements which are incorporated into both image-designs. Foliated initials are used in both epitaphs and an arabesque fills the remaining space left after Lady Alice’s considerably shorter epitaph, upon which Dugard had previously placed emphasis in the sermon as a hallmark of her own modesty (“such was her modestie, that [. . .] shee would not suffer her Epitaph to bear anie proportion with His”, 42). The arabesque is also possibly suggestive of the common con-
ceit of “flowers for the hearse” used by many preachers to characterise their verbal tributes to the deceased (Watson 28; Cartwright n.p.). Indeed, Dugard unleashes a eulogistic spate of floral imagery towards the end of the sermon, describing the gentlewoman as “a choice Garden; not only free from eminent weeds, but richly furnished with all manner of fragrant flowers and delicate fruits” (51). Although Juliet Fleming has underscored the dangers of reading too much into “printers’ flowers” within sixteenth-century texts, which “elaborated, for the first time, an aesthetic order freed from the obligation to signify” (“Printed flower” 187), she concedes that “[i]conic connections” could be established in some later seventeenth-century texts; in particular, funeral sermons with imprinted borders of “death’s heads and hour-glasses” (“Changed opinion” 49).

Taking into account their simple composition of standard printers’ designs and text, it might be difficult to classify these printed epitaphs as images. Yet, their idiosyncratic framing and faithful adherence to the or-
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originals leaves little doubt as to their intended visual representation of the funeral monument. Moreover, as mentioned above, Dugard alludes to the centrality of the “Magnificent Monument” within his exhortation, desiring his auditors – and his subsequent readers – to “expect no more but what may bee a Supplement or addition to [Lady Alice’s] Epitaph” (43). Acquainting his auditors and readers with the virtues “forbidden” by Lady Alice “to make their appearance in that Marble” (45-54), he describes in detail her godly reading and prayer (46-47), the religious upbringing of her children (47-48), and her charitable deeds (48-50). Notably, while the images in The Churches Lamentation served to offset Stock’s abridged tribute to Harington, the restrained epitaph of Lady Alice, which chiefly depicts her devotion to her husband (“Fuisse Conjugis [. . .] observantis-simam”, Figure 8), is highlighted and bolstered by Dugard’s lengthy testimonial. These image-designs therefore constituted reference points for the reader at the end of the sermon-book. Translated into English and placed directly after the original Latin versions, the epitaphs were also accessible to a wider range of readers upon the sermon’s distribution, as compared with the inevitably limited number of onlookers who could read Latin within the parish at Charlecote. While the imposing nature of the marble monument, with Lady Alice’s epitaph at its foot to symbolise her subservience, was unable to translate onto the printed page, it is noteworthy that Sir Thomas Lucy’s epitaph on the double-page spread revealed more words than the original, which is forever partially obscured behind his effigy in real life.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that Dugard’s views on Lady Alice’s birthright, the first and only sentence dedicated exclusively to her in the epitaph, are in accord with Stock’s equivalent omission. “Her Birth was none of Hers: and therefore cannot bee either her Virtue or her Prais” (Dugard 43). By prioritising godly concerns over the worldly attributes of the deceased, Dugard guides the reader’s interpretation of the imminent printed epitaphs in a similar manner to the epigrams inscribed underneath the images in The Churches Lamentation. Further similarities can also be found in the ways in which the illustrative matter of the two sermons seems to complement the preachers’ interpretations of their chosen Biblical texts. Psalm 89:48 (“What man is hee that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall hee deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah”, Dugard 1) is, for Dugard, “one of the Psalmist’s Winter-drops; a black line from that Pen, which erstwhile was so filled with Joy” (2). Such imagery evokes once more Rainbowe’s “black and mournfull Preface before the Text”; in Death and the Grave, the black lines from the printer’s
Figure 9: Nicholas Stone and John Schurman, Sir Thomas and Lady Alice Lucy monument. St Leonard’s Church, Charlecote. Carrara marble. c. 1640. © Hannah Yip

Figure 10: Nicholas Stone and John Schurman, Sir Thomas and Lady Alice Lucy monument. St Leonard’s Church, Charlecote. Carrara marble. c. 1640. © Hannah Yip
“Pen” serve to illustrate the sombre verse, occasion and “Winter” of Lady Alice’s life.

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The notoriously popular conception of “puritan barbarism” and widespread iconoclasm, particularly in the post-Reformation and Civil War periods (Parry 6 and 177), has obscured scholarly understanding of Protestants’ appropriation of visual culture in early modern England. Commentators focusing on the seventeenth century have emphasised the “censorious” godly preacher’s antagonistic attitudes towards the Laudian ascendency that sought to promote a new visual culture of religion (Parry 5), and the propagandistic implementation of sermons, preached and published, to endorse parliamentary attacks on images during the Civil War (Spraggan 50-51). However, these two case studies have revealed that image and design could work in tandem with the text in the printed Protestant funeral sermon of the first half of the seventeenth century, providing models of exemplarity for the instruction of the living. To borrow a phrase from Tara Hamling, these visual elements were not merely decorative but constituted “intrinsically meaningful comments on religious and social concerns” (284). The printed portrait in *The Churches Lamentation* was analogous to the portrait miniature in its intimate visual depiction of the deceased, who was to be regarded by the common onlooker as an elite paradigm of godliness. Like the original epitaphs, the monumental allusions in *Death and the Grave* illustrated the Lucy family’s lineage and prestige within the community, but principally served to prompt pious meditation upon the dead as patterns for imitation (Llewellyn, *Art* 101-2). As bespoke publications, the two sermons clearly exhibit their origins as gifts from indebted preachers to bereaved patrons. This essay has gestured towards a vital consideration for the integral place of the printed sermon within the material and illustrated print cultures of the era. The printed funeral sermon was a record of an event which happened in the past; the hearse and funeral monument could be immortalised on paper by a portrait and a reproduction of the epitaph.

Indeed, a certain tension between the hierarchy of the senses is at play when considering the printed sermon as an oral text once spoken, heard and then adapted to be seen in material form, of which published preachers were very much aware. To “wrap my selfe in dead letters,” wrote Nathaniel Delaune, was to “helpe memorie in those that were
present, and to extend the benefit of God's word to others that were absent" (A2v-A3r). Edward Boteler’s “Sheets” as depicted within his dedicatory epistle to Elizabeth Sheffield, Countess of Mulgrave, constitute a pun on winding sheets and his own printed sheets, which showed “more White in the gracious Life of [her] deceased LORD, then will chequer all the Blacks of his Death and Funerals” (A3v-A4r). Thomas Gataker’s Saint Stevens Last Will and Testament, which includes a winged death’s head and the accompanying motto “SPES ADDIDIT ALAS” (“Hope has added wings”) on its title page, is presented to his friend and fellow preacher Daniel Featley as a “private Monument, to lie by you as a memoriall of [the deceased]” (n.p.), demonstrating the fluidity of the visual, material and textual as forms of memorialisation, and accentuating the funeral sermon’s possibility to serve as a “walking monument [. . .] in paper to all the World” (Shute A2r).

Numerous avenues for further enquiry are still outstanding. This essay has merely hinted at the blurred boundaries between image and typographical design in Dugard’s printed funeral sermon. A detailed analysis which fully unpacks the definition of the “image” in the printed sermon, coupled with a statistical evaluation of its frequency in the formidable volume of material to be examined, has been beyond the scope of this small study. Archival research which investigates, for example, preachers’ extant manuscript drafts of sermons prepared for publication, or printers’ records beyond the Stationers’ Register, might uncover the extent of preachers’ interventions in determining the appearance, and not simply the content, of their printed sermons. While the visual elements of both The Churches Lamentation and Death and the Grave seem to contribute much to the texts in terms of enhancing their content and structure, did these preachers actively collaborate with the printers, poets and anonymous artists also involved in the creation of their printed tributes to the deceased? A forthcoming online database of early modern manuscript sermons, to include preachers’ notes, promises to facilitate such potential endeavours (“GEMMS”). Did ornate woodcuts and engravings indicate the social standing or wealth of the patron, much like the gradations of splendour for contemporary funeral monuments? The intricate woodcuts of The Churches Lamentation, as compared with the relatively modest designs in Death and the Grave, seem to invite further probing into this line of enquiry. And what of the sermons which did not require patronage, or which were published without the preacher’s knowledge or permission? As Rosemary Dixon has demonstrated in her work on sermons printed in the latter half of the seventeenth century, published sermons could also fall into the category of cheaper print
further inspection might reveal if there were other particular considerations given to the appearance of these sermons for the wider reading public.

Scope for yet further work lies in the assessment of extant contemporary commentary on these images. As the more sophisticated pictorial representations within Stock’s sermon appeared to require careful verification, it would be fruitful to consider any documented diatribes and criticism against the appealing visual aspect of these particular printed texts. In the prefatory material to Robert Farley’s emblem book of 1638, John Hooper complains of flamboyant bookbindings in which can be discerned “[m]ore of the Carvers than th’Authors skill,” also commenting wryly on the interior: “I Need not praise thy Booke: No more to tell, / Then that it Pictures hath, will make it sell” (Farley n.p.). Research into the presence of printed images as featured in both sermons and popular printed literatures may contribute to an understanding of how and why sermons played such a major role in the commercial success of the religious print industry (Morrissey, “Sermons” 491; Dabbs 225). Arnold Hunt has remarked that the printed sermon was often more intellectually demanding than the sermon as preached (148); there is a strong case to consider the visual elements which stimulated a reader’s contemplation as a significant contribution to these intellectual pursuits. Indeed, the readership of the early modern sermon merits a full-length study in itself. Far from having a negligible afterlife in print, these best-selling texts stirred not only the aural imagination with their rousing evocation of the rhetoric of the past event (Houlbrooke 304), but also, with the visual elements of the printed page, a response which prompted one contemporary commentator to depict a deceased preacher as “living, though long dead, / In this white paper, as a winding-sheet [. . .] Speaking now to our eyes” (Fletcher 20v).

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Hannah Yip


Visual Elements of the Early Modern Funeral Sermon


Sensing the Visual (Mis)representation of William Laud

Rachel Willie

When William Laud (1573-1645) was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633, he and his associate clergy defended episcopal authority by citing apostolic inheritance, but apostolic succession, with its appeal to history and lineage, was problematic. In parliamentary debates in 1640, both those sympathetic to the episcopacy and its detractors observed that appeals to apostolic antiquity presented bishops in ways that might be construed as popish. These parallels between episcopacy and the papacy were made more apparent in anti-Laudian pamphlets. In the early 1640s, a series of satirical attacks on Laud were printed and these texts comprise numerous woodcuts. Visual culture flirts with Laud’s image to present a negative iconography. This essay will focus upon Canterbury His Change of Diot (1641) to address some of the difficulties in interpreting the relationship between church and state in mid-seventeenth century pamphlets and how visual imagery connects these representations with ideas of popery, regicide and the body politic.

In 1633, William Laud was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. His actions as one of Charles I’s chief advisers became a cause of tension within church and state. These tensions continued after Laud’s impeachment in 1640 and execution for treason in 1645.¹ His reforms in ecclesiastical worship reenergised disputes that had never been fully laid to rest by the Elizabethan Church Settlement. Central to these discussions were questions regarding the role and prerogative of bishops. In

¹ The two main biographies of Laud remain Trevor-Roper and Carlton.

the late sixteenth century, these debates led to the Marprelate controversy where a series of scurrilous pamphlets attacking the bishops were printed by an illegal press (Black, *The Martin Marprelate Tracts*; Raymond, esp. 27-44). In 1641, two of the Marprelate tracts were reissued, suggesting that invective from the 1590s was also pertinent to anxieties regarding godly governance in the 1640s (Hill; Pierce 836). Print proved a fertile space for questioning whether or not there was a place for bishops in church governance.

Critics of episcopacy viewed bishops as a relic of popery and a threat to the reformed church; they sought the removal of bishops as part of further reforms in ecclesiastical governance. Yet others argued that, in England, royal supremacy formed the basis of church hierarchy and in so doing became a means of endorsing episcopacy. Erastianism, which asserted that the State ruled over the church (even in ecclesiastical matters) meant that church and state became inextricably linked and the power of the bishops was limited by royal prerogative. Laud’s reforms in ecclesiastical worship and his perceived Arminian leanings were censured because it was believed Laud was overreaching; this became a contributory factor in parliament’s decision to execute him. Laudian reforms thus drew attention to tensions that had plagued the reformed church in England since its beginnings and, as Tim Harris asserts, recent research highlights that “there was never a Jacobean consensus in the Church” that was destroyed by Laud (625). While some appreciated Laudian reforms, others believed Laud might as well have been a Catholic. Indeed, representations of Laud that circulated in cheap print alluded to his purported papal pretensions. In this essay, I survey a representative sample of anti-Laudian pamphlets, focusing specifically on a 1641 play pamphlet, *Canterburie His Change of Diot*, to show how textual political protest connected to visual culture and the body in mid-seventeenth-century England. As a corollary, this essay addresses some of the difficulties in understanding the relationship between church and state in mid-seventeenth-century pamphleteering.

*Canterburie His Change of Diot*, which has been attributed to the Leveler Richard Overton (Wiseman, *Drama and Politics* 28), is of particular note as it engages with debates, politics and poetics that arose as a consequence of the Reformation and were never fully laid to rest by the Elizabethan Settlement or by Jacobean ecclesiology. It is also unrelenting in the way in which it recasts previous, positive visual representa-

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2 For discussions on how Overton resurrected the persona of Martin Marprelate, see Black, “The Rhetoric of Reaction”; Smith.
tions of Laud – especially those produced by Anthony van Dyck (discussed below) – and transforms the iconography of authority into an iconography of protest. As Helen Pierce has argued, Laud was not the first authority figure to be satirised in pictorial form, but he was the first to be the subject of such sustained visual satire (813). The pictorial attacks in *Canterburie His Change of Diot* are not unique, but the sheer number of specially-commissioned woodcuts used to narrate the text’s satire is remarkable. Printers tended to recycle woodcuts and/or to use images sparingly. Woodcuts were expensive to make and images took up valuable space on the page: since paper and the production of woodcuts would make up a publisher-printer’s biggest outlay, each illustration was used judiciously. The pamphlet amounts to a title page, followed by a blank page and a further six quarto pages that comprise dialogue split into four acts. The first three acts are accompanied by a woodcut and the woodcut that illustrates the third act is replicated on the title page. The images thus present a sense of circularity and deserved punishment as the text narrates how Laud feasts upon the ears of a divine, a lawyer and a physician before he is locked in a birdcage as punishment for his vicious deeds. The woodcuts not only imply a circularity to the narrative, but also present pictorial representations that enact the dialogue upon the paper stage and make the narrative of the play pamphlet comprehensible to consumers with varying levels of literacy.3

*Canterburie His Change of Diot* appears to have circulated widely and it is important to situate this and other pamphlets in the context of the visual culture of the church and ecclesiastical office in the 1630s and early 1640s. Laud himself knew about the attack when incarcerated in the Tower of London and complained about his ill-usage at being represented as locked in a cage (Laud sigs. Aa3r-Aa3v; Pierce 811). Laud was well-versed in visual ceremony and the deliberately facile imagery in the woodcuts combines with the biting satire of the texts to undermine official representations of the archbishop and the visual culture of the Laudian church.

Visualising Office

Laud’s reforms sought a more uniform style of church worship and the extent to which they marked a move away from Calvinist doctrine to

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3 For a fuller discussion of how drama is enacted upon the paper stage through text and through image, see my “Viewing the Paper Stage.”
Arminianism continues to be debated (Walsham). Even Pope Urban VIII appears to have been confused by Laud’s spiritual leanings: on 4 August and again on 17 August 1633, Laud was offered (but refused) a cardinal’s cap (Laud sig. Gigg).

Yet Laud’s reforms not only affected the modes of worship, but also impacted the very fabric of the church. The positioning of the altar — table-wise or altar-wise — and the addition of an altar rail changed how worshippers moved around the church: church décor not only altered the layout of the church, but also transformed the visual culture of devotion (Fincham, “The Restoration of the Altars”; Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*). These physical changes to the church, coupled with the official portrait of Laud painted by Anthony van Dyck in 1636 (Figure 1), demonstrate that Laudian reforms were invested in visual imagery and the iconography of office. In representing Laud, the anti-Laudian satire in the anonymous and scurrilous pamphlets amalgamates the visual culture of the church as underpinned by the State with the visual culture of cheap print to enact political protest.

Central to pictorial attacks on Laud is a recognition of his official portrait as a symbol of ecclesiastical office. Van Dyck’s portrait of Laud was copied and distributed widely; there are fifty-five extant painted copies of the portrait and Wenceslaus Hollar was commissioned to produce an etching of the painting in 1640 (Pierce 817). Hollar’s etching made van Dyck’s portrait more readily available and, following Laud’s impeachment in December 1640, the image was replicated in anti-Laudian satire. Pierce has argued that Laud perceived the commissioning of this portrait “as both an obligation and an extravagance,” as implied by his only reference to the painting being an observation regarding van Dyck’s high fees; this complaint, coupled with Laud briefly alluding to the portrait in his will as being an addition to the Lambeth Palace collection, suggests that the continuity of episcopal office takes precedence over the subject of the portrait (814). Laud thus plays a minor role within the portrait, despite it being of him; instead the picture

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4 For a study that seeks to unearth Laudianism’s distinctive artistic characteristics, see Parry. Marsh has explored how worshippers inhabited sacred space.

5 As numerous scholars have observed, the apparatus of drama was used as a form of protest in pamphlets throughout the 1640s, particularly in play pamphlets. This has been connected to the closure of the theatres at the outbreak of civil war in 1642. Thus, at a time when performance was banned, the theatre was reenergised as a form of political protest on the paper stage. However, many of the anti-Laudian play pamphlets predate this ordinance for theatre closure. See Butler; Willie; Wiseman, *Drama and Politics* and “Pamphlet Plays.”
asserts the power and authority invested in the role of the Archbishop. At the Restoration, William Juxon then built upon this iconography by commissioning a portrait that echoed van Dyck’s in posture, costume and organisation (Harmes 184-85).

The notion of the portrait as a visual and material manifestation of episcopal authority runs parallel to van Dyck’s innovations in presenting the visual image of the king. According to Kevin Sharpe, van Dyck transformed pictorial representations of monarchy, conjoining the body natural more closely to the body politic as a way to assert the authority of the monarch. At the same time, van Dyck’s innovations in portraiture crossed political divides. Yet, while van Dyck’s monarchical portraits asserted the power of the monarch, conditions within church and State raised questions about the king’s authority. This culminated in the severing of links between the body natural and the body politic that enabled the regicide to take place in 1649. Furthermore, after Oliver Cromwell was made Lord Protector in 1653, the stances in van Dyck’s monarchical portraits were imitated by artists keen to legitimise the authority of the new regime; Protectorate authority was both undermined and endorsed by unofficial representations and royalist satire (Knoppers 3-8 and passim). This ongoing appropriation of visual imagery demonstrates the fragility of the visual image as an inscriber of authority even as it is used as a means to assert power. Laud’s posture in the van Dyck portrait paradoxically exudes a sense of unease and discomfort as well as nonchalance, which, arguably, makes the instability of the visual image particularly apparent.6

Van Dyck’s portrait of Laud has been described by Sharpe as “almost uniquely austere” in comparison to other portraits that used objects to minimise visually the political and confessional differences held by the subjects of the portraits (Sharpe, Reading Authority 150). The use of objects created the appearance of unity amongst the nobility, but this practice came under increasing pressure as Charles’ personal rule led to more vocal opposition as the 1630s progressed. Laud, however, has no properties to denote his office, which not only contrasts with the idealised landscapes of portraits of royalty and the nobility, but also with previous portraits of Archbishops (Sharpe, Reading Authority 142-51). The gloom of the plain background is punctuated by a rich, sumptuous fabric, but Laud is leaning, almost casually, against some furniture and is dressed in cassock, ruff, surplice, chimere and Canterbury cap. Without

6 On the influence of van Dyck’s earlier portrait of the Abbe Cesare Scaglia on the composition of the Laud portrait and Titian’s influence on the paintings, see Pierce 816; Jaffé 600; Brown 272-74.
a cross by way of ornament, or a Bible or Book of Common Prayer in the painting, Laud gazes nonchalantly at the viewer. In previous portraits of archbishops in the reformed English church, the properties of piety were prominent; most noticeably, prayer books and bibles were often clutched by the Archbishop sitting for the portrait, emphasising the importance of *sola scriptura* to the Protestant tradition. However, in the van Dyck portrait, clothing becomes the one means by which Laud’s worldly position is asserted (Pierce 815-16). This demonstrates how religious office within the Laudian church was bound up with garments.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Bevan Zlatar has explored in detail Elizabethan criticism of religious “uniform” and its perceived connection to popery (chapter 6). For a study on the centrality of clothing to early modern culture, see Stallybrass and Jones.
Van Dyck’s visual representation of Laud thus places the authority of the church on the Archbishop of Canterbury through his apparently austere clothing. However, for those in opposition to Laud’s reforms in church worship, ecclesiastical costume – perhaps particularly the more ornate vestments worn during church services – became representative of what they perceived to be the corrupt ceremonial practices of the Church of England. In a text that was reissued in 1637, the Chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer and Marian exile, Thomas Becon attacked “Masse-mongers” (sigs. A5r-v). Becon also condemned the “fooles cat [sic.] which is called a Vestment, lacking nothing but a coxcomb,” partly because of how vestments were decorated:

Some have Angels, some the blasphemous Image of the Trinity, some flowers, some Peacocks, some Owles, some cats, some dogs, some hares, some one thing, some another, and some nothing at all but a crosse upon the backe to fray away spirits. (sigs. C12v-D1r)

The reissuing of his attack on the mass in 1637 demonstrates how spiritual and ideological tensions did not disappear as the ecclesiology and the liturgy of the Elizabethan Church Settlement gained acceptance. Instead, these disputes re-emerged in the 1630s (Collinson; Morrissey). By reprinting Becon’s text in 1637 when Laudian reforms were the subject of increasing criticism for their apparently papal leanings, the visual imagery of Laudian church worship is implicitly drawn into Becon’s criticisms. As Antoinina Bevan Zlatar has noted, for Elizabethan reformists, even the apparently austere cap and surplice was construed as the “popes liuerie,” especially when compared to the plain black cassock worn by continental Protestant clergy: in this interpretation of ecclesiastical costume, episcopes in the Church of England become almost indistinguishable from Roman bishops (esp. 134-50). In this wider context, Laud’s portrait is no longer representative of a plain style and a mind focused upon spiritual affairs: it instead becomes a site of discord.

Cheap Print and Visual Protest

Anti-Laudian pamphlets replicated van Dyck’s image, and in so doing re-ascribed its meaning from being an assertion of authority to weakening that authority through the use of satire, invective and parody. Some

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8 Kirby has drawn attention the importance of the political theology of Heinrich Bullinger and Peter Martyr Vermigli to the Vestrian controversy in England (chapter 5).
texts took the basic poise of the primate and embellished it. For example, one woodcut that appears on the pamphlet *Rome for Canterbury* and also on the ballad *Canterburies Conscience Convicted* (both dated 1641; Figures 2 and 3) uses the image as a way to assert Laud’s alleged papal pretensions.
Figure 3: 1475.c.8. Canterbury’s Conscience convicted: or, His dangerous projects and evil intents, tending to the subversion of Religion detected, etc. 1641. © British Library Board. Reproduced by kind permission.
The texts purport to be a true narrative of the rise and fall of Laud, the circumstances of his life and his imprisonment in the Tower of London for treason. In the woodcut, we are presented with the image of Laud wearing a Canterbury cap. However, he is no longer able to lean on the table next to him as a bishop’s mitre has been placed on it. In the background, the curtain has been replaced by two cityscapes connected by a wide but crooked road. Two men ride on horseback from Canterbury to Rome. Here, the bishop’s mitre is presented as both a symbol of Catholicism and a prized object owned by Laud. The ready and easy way between Canterbury and Rome becomes a means by which Laud’s reforms in church worship are thus presented as leading to a reconciliation between England and Rome and the restoration of Catholicism as the legitimate mode of Christianity in the British Isles.

The woodcut was used again in 1643 in *The Copy of the Petition* (Figure 4). Although the woodcut has had the words “Canterbury” and “Rome” removed, the text develops the theme of Laud seeking greater accommodation with Rome. This time, however, it is asserted that the motive is to make the Church of England more palatable to Charles I’s Catholic wife, Henrietta Maria, and to persuade her to convert. Monarchy is thus brought into dialogue with Laudian reforms to present church and state as working against the religious interests of a Protestant people.

Van Dyck’s image became a template that was redefined and embellished by Laud’s detractors repeatedly in the months following his impeachment. However, the very lack of ornamentation in van Dyck’s portrait and Laud’s appearance in his robes of office ascribes a very particular kind of authority; an authority located within the physical body of the Archbishop and inherited through an unbroken line that extends back to Christ. When Laud was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633, he and his associate clergy looked to *jure divino* theories as a means of asserting episcopal authority. Rather than deriving their authority from the magistracy and royal supremacy as Erastianism asserted, *jure divino* theories claimed that bishops were established through apostolic inheritance (Harmes 175-76). These theories were relatively uncontroversial in the early Stuart church, but Laud’s reformist programme went further (Tyacke in Fincham 57-58). Laud’s reforms focused upon doctrine and worship, looking to Elizabethan precedent to return the church to its “first Reformation” ( Fincham in Fincham 77). This placed pressure on *jure divino* theories: apostolic succession, with its appeal to history and lineage, was not without its problems. In parliamentary debates in 1640, both those sympathetic to the episcopacy and its detractors observed that appealing to apostolic antiquity presented the bishops
in ways that might be construed as popish (Harmes 181-82). These parallels were even more apparent in anti-Laudian pamphlets in the early 1640s, like *Canterburie His Change of Diet*, the text to which I would now like to return.
Sensing Bodies and Spiritual Emotion

The pamphlet opens with Laud negatively commenting on the meal he is to share with a doctor, a divine, and a lawyer. After he dismisses the dishes in favour of some nourishment “after the Italian fashion” (sig. A2v), Laud’s band of fully-armed bishops enter and assist Laud in relieving the divine, the lawyer and the doctor of their ears. Dismembering combines with cannibalism as Laud awaits the ears to be prepared for his consumption. This cannibalistic feast represents mutilation of both the physical bodies of a divine, a doctor and a lawyer and the offices that they represent. Laud’s reforms in church worship lead to the divine’s ears becoming muffled, thereby preventing the Word of God from being received clearly through oratory. This might allude to a frequent complaint amongst the godly that Laud controlled preaching, the number of sermons that could be heard in a week, the length of the sermon and its content (Woolrych 76-83). Unable to elaborate upon scripture and provide their own glosses, the godly lamented that they could not adequately serve their flocks.

Whereas Harris has queried whether there was a “Jacobean consensus,” Anthony Milton has argued that the Jacobean ecclesiastical consensus was an efficient, if conflicting, compromise between different theological traditions, which came under pressure from Laudian reforms (Milton in Fincham 188). In this configuration, it was not so much the Church of Rome, but Papal religion as initiated by the Council of Trent (1545-63) that was deemed corrupt: rather than dismissing the Roman Church, the Church of England returned the church to its pre-Council of Trent status (Milton in Fincham 194-97). Despite looking to Elizabethan precedent, Laudian reforms effectively marginalised some tenets of the Elizabethan Settlement and attacked Jacobean sermon culture.

As Peter Lake has demonstrated, Laud’s control of preaching re-focused worship towards liturgy and ceremony. As noted previously, the very fabric of the church reorientated the godly to worship God with soul and body (Lake in Fincham 165). For Laud, the divine Word, coupled with divine presence amplified through the visual culture of the church was paramount: prayer and preaching prepared people for the sacraments and the sermon played a lesser role in devotion (Lake in Fincham 170). This desire to curb the cult of the sermon was not well-received by the godly, who believed the sermon was the most important part of the service. This cropping of ears in Canteburie his Change of Diot thus connects to debates regarding the status of sermons and how to listen to scripture. The cropping of ears metaphorically enacts the crop-
ping of sermon culture; disfiguring hearing prevents the body of the believer from receiving spiritual nourishment through listening to the service. Yet, in a period where many could not read and so had access to scripture through listening to texts being read aloud to them, muffling the sense of hearing would also prove a serious impediment to receiving the divine Word.9

Laud’s reforms in church worship are thus presented as mutilating divine office, but he is also presented as corrupting medicine and the law. These references had very specific cultural resonances in the early 1640s, which connect to the trial of William Prynne, Henry Burton and John Bastwick in 1637. The trial and the offences that led to it centre around the importance of print as a platform from which to articulate and perform discontent and voice political protest. In 1637, the three men were accused of “Writing and publishing seditious, schismatical and libellous Books against the Hierarchy” (Rushworth sig. T1‘). These texts attacked the role of bishops within the Church of England, claiming that they operated beyond their divine jurisdiction and were a threat to the royal prerogative. Although the three presented themselves as defenders of church and state against the arbitrary governance of the Bishops, the very attack on ecclesiastical authority was received as a potential threat to the authority of the king. After a protracted court case in the Star Chamber, the trio were duly found guilty, fined 5,000 pounds each and sentenced to life imprisonment. They were also to have their ears cropped. Prynne, who had already had his ears lightly cropped, been banned from practising law, and sentenced to life imprisonment following a previous libel conviction, had his ears cropped further and SL (“seditious libeller”) branded onto his cheeks (Rushworth sigs. T1‘-V3v; Woolrych 81). Prynne’s body in particular thus became a statement of punitive justice: word and image conjoin by inscribing letters upon the mutilated body to present a physical memento of both crime and punishment. The three launched a spirited defence, and, at the pillory, vigorously contested the severity of the punishment meted out to them. The brutality of the punishment, coupled with accounts of the ineptitude of the hangman leading to greater violence against the bodies of the condemned, fostered public sympathy for the men.10

9 Hunt’s groundbreaking scholarship on sermon culture stresses its aural/oral nature.
10 For a contemporary account, see Rushworth Vol. II sigs. V3r-V3v
In 1641, the Star Chamber was abolished, and with it press censorship collapsed. It was therefore possible to publish seditious texts and attention was refocused on Prynne, Bastwick and Burton. As Joad Raymond has observed, at their trial, the trio made much of the wrongs of Caroline censorship (189). However, they also alluded to their professions: at the pillory, Prynne allegedly stated that “no degree or profession was exempted from [... Laud’s] malice; here is a divine for the soul, a physician for the body, and a lawyer for the estates” (Rushworth Vol. II sig. V3v). The focus is upon the men’s professions – Prynne the lawyer, Burton the divine and Bastwick the physician – and the trio are presented as attending to the legal, spiritual and physical ailments of the nation and as being severely punished for their pains. This idea is appropriated in anti-Laudian tracts: by presenting Laud as feasting upon the ears of a divine, a doctor and a lawyer, the author of Canterbury His Change of Diet directly invokes remembrance of the 1637 trial. In the play pamphlet, the bishops assisting Laud to relieve the three men of their ears is symbolic of the criticism that Prynne, Burton and Bastwick levied against the episcopacy and how perceived ecclesiastical overreaching infringed upon kingly authority.

However, Laud’s eating of the ears also exposes tensions between seventeenth-century medical theories and the eating of human flesh. Beginning with the addition of the remains of mummies to cordials and expanding to accommodate ground up bones and the blood of the condemned, human remains were believed to cure a variety of ailments in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. Working on the premise that like cured like, the vital spirits present in the blood and the ground up remains of other parts of the body were believed to possess healing qualities; corpse medicine was judged to heal by transferring the strength of the deceased to the unwell (Noble; Sugg). In eating the ears of a doctor, a divine and a lawyer, Laud gains physical nourishment from medicine, the law and the church; Laud cannibalises civil, spiritual and anatomical authority and while this may strengthen his body, it weakens the body politic. The act of eating the ears thus becomes emblematic of the perception that Laud seeks power beyond his jurisdiction, and gains it through oppressive measures. The illegality and popish overtones of the action are affirmed by the assertion that the meal is prepared “after the Italian fashion.” Despite the prevalence of corpse medicine in early

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11 Even though censorship effectively collapsed, many of these pamphlets were printed by anonymous publishers, or under pseudonyms such as “the Man in the Moon.” For a thorough exploration of early modern pamphlet cultures, see Raymond.
modern Europe, cannibalism was viewed with disdain: for Protestant polemicists, it was considered a barbaric act practiced by Catholics through the belief in transubstantiation transforming Holy Communion into the body and blood of Christ (Noble 95). Consuming human ears thus becomes a means by which Laud is presented as a Catholic: following “the Italian fashion,” Laud eschews royal supremacy as the basis of episcopal worship and instead ensures that divinity, law and medicine become muffled and deformed.

The specific body parts that the pamphlet highlights are also significant as it focuses upon the sensory organs of the ears and the nose. The second act of the play pamphlet opens with Laud needing to sharpen his knife. A carpenter refuses to sharpen it, lest Laud removes his ears as well and instead he puts Laud's nose to the grindstone. While, in the seventeenth century, the semiotics of putting the nose to the grindstone have clear political and ecclesiological resonances focused upon the subversion of authority, here I am most interested in how this image evokes the senses. When Laud laments the carpenter's cruelty, the carpenter asks: “Were not their eares to them, as pretious as your nostrils can be to you” (sig. A3r). As punishment for mutilating the hearing of his dinner guests, Laud has his sense of smell dulled. This is significant in relation to medieval ideas regarding the senses and religion that continued to hold sway within early modern culture. As Matthew Milner states, although controversial with some reformists, fasting and spiritual exercises were believed to lead to a tighter bond with God through sharpening the senses (The Senses 76, 122-23, 319-21). Giving into the senses could impede spiritual progress, but holding in check sensual appetites and partaking of physical mortification was believed by some to lead to greater unity with God.

In her analysis of Olfaction in the Life of St Francis of Assisi by the eleventh-century Franciscan Friar, St Bonaventure, Ann W. Astell draws attention to spiritual and physical sensory activity and how the senses are spiritualised through grace:

Even as all of the corporeal senses of the glorified body are fundamentally and habitually spiritual, touched as they are from within by the soul's constant bliss, its contact with God, so too all the physical senses of the still

12 In Boanerges Thomas Scott references a now lost woodcut depicting James VI/I putting the Pope's nose to the grindstone (sig. D2r) and the satirical print, The Protestant Grindstone (c. 1690) presents William III as putting the Pope's nose to the grindstone (British Museum 1868,0808,3331). Around 1650, satirical images of Charles II with his nose pressed to the grindstone by Scottish Presbyterians circulated (Norbrook 220).
mortal body can be spiritualized through grace, not habitually, but in individual acts of perception. (100)

The potential for the senses to be glorified along with the body in the afterlife means that grace may move from the soul and affect the senses: spiritual and physical conjoin. By the early modern period, thoughts regarding human anatomy, mind, body and soul had been redefined, but residues of earlier epistemologies still had currency, perhaps particularly in cheap print. Following Pseudo-Dionysius, some medieval and early modern divines associated the sense of smell with the discernment of good or evil, though the Aristotelian hierarchy of sensory experience ranked touch, smell and taste as baser senses. Invisible yet palpable, olfactory experience could make the individual aware of divine or demonic presence and the ability to discern good and bad smells revealed hidden truths regarding identity, morality and godliness. This is taken up in The Papists politike projects discovered. Or a dialogue betwixt crucifix and holy-water (1641) where bad smells are associated with the breath of Catholic priests. In considering the breath of priests, the crucifix and the holy water assert that priestly breath is more pestilent than “anbeilitu oris etineat hominess” – the breath that kills humans (sig. A3v).

The brutal physical humour of pushing the primate’s nose to the grindstone therefore has wider cultural resonances: in being held responsible for dulling the sense of hearing and the ability of legal, divine and medicinal authority to receive God’s word, Laud has transgressed the boundaries of his political and ecclesiastical authority. In punishment for this lack of discernment, Laud has his ability to discern sensually dulled and his lack of discernment is made visible. The senses thus become a site of conflict and of conflict resolution through the carpenter restoring order and meting out punishments. Grinding Laud’s nose metaphorically dismisses apostolic grounds for endorsing episcopacy and reaffirms the notion that Laud’s reforms covertly reintroduce Catholicism. Laud’s associates might have appealed to apostolic inheritance to legitimise the role of bishops, but the carpenter as inheritor of Christ’s trade denies the episcopacy any such authority. Yet putting

13 Gavrilyuk and Coakley 8; Ashbrook Harvey esp. 169-80. Milner has highlighted how Luther and Calvin in particular “distrusted the senses” (“The Senses in Religion” 91) as they could deceive.

14 Jonathan Gil Harris has shown how bad smells were put to devilish use on the Jacobean stage as the noxious smell of sulphur had long been associated with Satan and hell (esp. 476).
Laud’s nose to the grindstone also draws attention to Calvinist teachings.

In discussing confession and repentance, Calvin makes the following observation:

For we shall see many that will never stick to say that God hath done rightly in punishing them & that their faults are as grievous and grosse as any mens: but yet they will fall to their old byasse againe straight ways. If God hold their nozes to the grindstone by some sicknesse or by some other crosse: then they make faire promises. But assone as Gods hand is withdrawn from them: they shewe plainly how there was nothing but dissimulation in them. Therefore whereas wee are here commaunded to confesse our faults: let vs marke well, that wee must haue the sayd pureness and vprightnesse, which is to condemne the euill, in reconciling our selues vnto God. (sigs. K6r-v)

Whereas Calvin envisions God putting the ungodly’s nose to the grindstone as a way to reveal those who truly repent, *Canterbury His Change of Diot* translates the metaphor into a representation of a physical punishment meted out to the false repenter. The play pamphlet ends with Laud’s Jesuit confessor binding up his wounds and sprinkling them with holy water. The suggestion that Laud has a Jesuit confessor gestures to complaints that the Jesuits misused confession as a way to interfere in politics (Bireley 3). Laud is thus presented as enmeshed in a web of political intrigue and further distanced from apostolic tradition through having dealings with the Jesuits. To show both Laud and his Jesuit confessor as having erred, in the final act, we witness the carpenter putting Laud and the confessor into a birdcage.

Locking Laud in a birdcage distances Laud from the reformed church through allusion to devotional practice and to emblems. In 1635, Francis Quarles’s *Emblemes* were printed. This text would prove extremely popular; it went into multiple editions and even influenced domestic interiors (Adlington, Hamling and Griffith 541; Horden). If we consider *Canterbury His Change of Diot* in relation to Quarles’s text, we see that the woodcuts in the play pamphlet not only enact and illustrate the drama presented in the text, but also gesture towards the morally didactic quality of emblems: by reading word and image together, the reader of the play pamphlet is presented with a narrative of just punishment for transgression. However, Quarles’s text also draws attention to the varying qualities of love through using the imagery of the birdcage.
Emblem IV in Book II (Figure 5) of Quarles’s text presents Divine Love as entreat ing the soul to be free from the follies of the material world; these follies are symbolised by Human Love being chained to a ball and smoking a pipe. The inscription reads, “Quom grave servitium est, quod levis esca parit” (how heavy slavery is that light food [tobacco] can cause), pointing to smoking as a marker of earthly vice that prevents grace. By locking Laud in a birdcage, Canterburie His Change of Diot suggests that Laud is tied to the material world and cannot be freed from the follies of his crypto-Catholic beliefs. However, Quarles’s Emblems was developed from two Jesuit emblem books, Pia desidera (1624) and Typus mundi (1627); the inter-confessional quality of word and image combine with the intertextual resonances of these texts that are in circulation at the same time. The symbolism of locking Laud in a birdcage becomes fractured as a consequence of conflicting meanings feeding into the visual imagery: instead, the focus is drawn to the laughing jester who is outside the cage.

The satire in the anti-Laudian pamphlets appears not to be subtle. However, the final scene (in which the king and his jester laugh at the encaged men) becomes a means through which to realign episcopacy and reassert Erastian views of the relationship between church and State. In 1638, the king’s jester, Archie Armstrong, had been dismissed from the court after Laud complained that he had declared in a Westminster tavern that the Archbishop was “a monk, a rogue and a traitor” (Carlton 154-55). Drawing from Keith Thomas, Andrea Shannon notes that the fool partly served a medicinal purpose in the body politic, using wit to sooth, heal and tell truth to authority; with tensions between the Court and Scotland growing, Armstrong’s words meant the fool ceased to perform this function and instead allowed the wounds within the body politic to fester (esp. 99-101 and 111-12). In this context, the representation of the jester laughing at Laud draws attention to political and ecclesiological disorder. Not only is the jester revenged on Laud, but he also contains the body of Laud: the disruptive force within the body politic is locked away and the king’s authority is reinstated. But the very act of laughter focuses attention on the passions and how laughing is an articulation of emotion.

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15 I am grateful to Matthew Steggle for helping me to translate this inscription.
16 Quarles’s engagement with Catholic texts was far from unique. Anthony Milton has shown how Protestant divines read Catholic texts and how the early Stuart Church developed a confessional identity that sat somewhere between Geneva and Rome. See Milton.
As Indira Ghose observes, in his *Treatise on Laughter* (1579), Laurent Joubert pinpoints joy and sorrow as being at the root of laughter:

laughable matter gives us pleasure and sadness: pleasure in that we find it unworthy of pity . . . sadness, because all laughable matter comes from ugliness and impropriety: the heart, upset over such unseemliness, and as if feeling pain, shrinks and tightens. (Joubert 44; Ghose 21)

Joubert’s view that laughter stems from joy and sadness constricting the heart runs parallel with the sense of physical justice being meted out to Laud. The “ugly” actions of Laud in eating the ears of a divine, a lawyer and a physician has led to disorder within church and State that can only
be purged through the releasing of passions elicited by laughter. Yet, as Robert Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* noted, laughter not only cures melancholy, but can induce it if the mirth is sustained beyond the point at which the subject of the satire is aware of their absurdity (Shannon 111-12). The emotions in the body and in the body politic are thus tenuously balanced and can easily become imbalanced through words. Emotions, then, can inhibit reasoning and expose flawed judgement.

For Thomas Hobbes, the emotions can prove obstructive to right reasoning, leading people to act against their own interests, or to bring long-term misfortune upon themselves for short-term gain, or to mistake their passions for right reason (esp. chapter 5). The state of nature, Hobbes asserts, is one of war but this conflict can be mediated by subjects accepting the authority of a sovereign and entering into a covenant whereby they accept the rule of the sovereign. Central to this covenant is trust. Trust is a civic virtue, but strength of passion in the state of nature means that contracts alone cannot succeed as “the bonds of words are too weak to bridle men’s ambition, avarice, anger and other passions without the fear of some coercive power” (84; see also Baumgold). Only when words and the passions align can a contract be upheld. Trusting the institution of sovereignty – in whatever form it takes – enables a contract of trust and trustworthiness that accommodates everyone. Trust thus becomes a moral and a civic virtue that underpins the passions, enabling beneficent emotions to be nurtured.

Trust, therefore, lies at the heart of an ecology of ethics, but so too does the sovereign. Undermining the institution of sovereignty destroys the generous passions and encourages the breakdown of civil society. In being perceived as overreaching his authority, Laud could be construed as undermining the authority of the king and pushing the kingdoms ever closer to civil war. Whereas van Dyck ascribed authority onto the monarch’s body through portraiture, in *Canterburie His Change of Diot* authority is asserted through laughter; in presenting the king and his jester as laughing at Laud’s fate, the bond between the king’s two bodies is strengthened. The laughter purges the king’s body of an excess of passion, thereby restoring order in the body politic and re-establishing the bond of trust between sovereign and subject.

The Politics of Woodcuts

*Canterburie His Change of Diot* exemplifies a mode of political writing that imagines elaborate and brutal punishments for the beleaguered Arch-
bishop. But the number of woodcuts that adorn this short pamphlet is striking. Taylor Clement has discussed the ways in which woodcuts in cheap print were recycled across texts, becoming “unstable signifiers” that relied upon the text and other paratexts to be cues to their meaning and interpretation (406 and passim). However, in *Canterburie His Change of Diot*, each woodcut specifically addresses an episode in the narrative: the first depicts Laud and his confessor imprisoned in the birdcage, the second represents Laud dining with the lawyer, the doctor and the divine, and the third comprises the carpenter putting Laud’s nose to the grindstone (Figures 6, 7 and 8). The visual image punctuates the words and enables the drama to be enacted on the paper stage. Yet the prominence of the jester in the woodcut on the title page and at the start of act three is particularly noteworthy. Dismissed as Popish, Laudian reforms become contained through laughter and the king’s complicity in this laughter becomes a means by which royal supremacy is reasserted.

The relationship between church and state and the body politic would be revisited throughout the 1640s and 50s. These texts point to the complex ways in which people viewed the relationship between church and State in the mid-seventeenth century and how word and image was used as a form of religious and political protest. In appealing to tradition as a way of asserting a mode of Christianity that was separate from Rome, divines in England did not negate Rome’s influence, but rather brought into focus the difficulties in presenting an independent episcopacy stripped of papal inflections. *Canterburie His Change of Diot* and similar pamphlets demonstrate an anxiety to reaffirm the status of the monarch as defender of the faith and upholder of order within the body politic (regardless of his shortcomings) as a means of offering protection from the perceived evils of popery.
Figure 6: By38a L364 641n. [Richard Overton], *A New Play Called Canterburie His Change of Diet*. 1641. Title page. Used by permission of Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
Figure 7: Bs38a L364 641n. [Richard Overton], *A New Play Called Canterbury His Change of Diet*. 1641. Sig. A2r. Used by permission of Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
Figure 8: By38a L364 641n. [Richard Overton], A New Play Called Canterburie His Change of Diot. 1641. Sig. A5. Used by permission of Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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“On the Picture of the King Charles the First . . . written in Psalms”: Devotion, Commemoration and the Micrographic Portrait

Andrew Morrall

This essay examines a portrait drawing of King Charles I that has been in the Library of St. John’s College, Oxford, since at least 1662. The drawing is unusual in that the lines with which it is composed are made up of minutely written words, reported by early commentators to contain the Psalms of King David. The implicit relationship thus created between Charles I and the biblical king is compared to other often “curious” memorials to Charles associated with his posthumous cult, and especially to the popular literary “self portrait” of the martyred king, the Eikon Basilike. An analysis of a poem, written as a response to the portrait in 1665, reveals how the image functioned as an object of explicitly Protestant devotion and commemoration and offers insights into a broader mode of micrographic portraiture that was developed to allay concerns about idolatry unleashed by the Reformation. A chain of surviving responses to the portrait under different viewing conditions and altered cultural circumstances between the 1660s and the early eighteenth century further demonstrates an instability and contingency of meaning that attached to the image in the half-century after Charles’s execution. Finally, it is suggested that the interplay between image and script within the portrait – its character as word-picture – is symptomatic of a tendency within an evolving Protestant aesthetic to subject the visual to the written word, one which, over time, was to give rise to a larger form of cultural logocentrism.

The execution of King Charles I of England on 30 January 1649 struck a powerful blow, at home and abroad, against a political establishment predicated upon the divine right of kings. For royalists in England, as for the European ruling classes, it was profoundly shocking – in a way that rocked their whole sense of world order – that a king, anointed by God, could be thus struck down. The profound mark that this event left
in the European consciousness well into the second half of the seventeenth century is registered in a number of European commemorative images most of which date from after the restoration of Charles’s son, Charles II in 1660. A still life by the Dutch artist, Carstian Luyckx (1623-c.1675), for example, painted probably after Queen Henrietta Maria’s death in 1669 (Figure 1), commemorates both king and queen by situating their printed images amidst stock vanitas symbols: the terrestrial globe suggests Charles’s importance as a world leader, while the skull, with the jaw wrenched from the cranium, recalling Charles’s own violent death, is crowned by a laurel wreath, symbol of glory and worldly accomplishment.1 A second monument from this period is a remarkable equestrian statue made from chiselled iron by the Nuremberg iron-worker, Gottfried Leygebe, between 1662 and 1667 (Figure 2). It shows Charles II of England as St. George. It was given as a gift by the Archduke of Brandenburg, Friedrich Wilhelm, to Johann Georg II of Saxony, as part of a diplomatic effort to garner support for an international league against France. While not strictly commemorative – it celebrates Charles II’s purported military prowess as a potential ally of their league – one of its points of interest is that the dragon that he is slaying is excreting the head of the recently deposed Lord Protector, Richard Cromwell, whose father, Oliver, had made him heir to the Protectorate. The reference not just to the hydra-headed enemy of the European stage but also to the internal politics of England is enough to show how keenly the political events surrounding Charles I’s execution and the eventual restoration of his heir were watched with interest and anxiety elsewhere in Europe (Falke 92-98). These technically and conceptually sophisticated examples also point to stark differences in the traditions and character of commemorative image-making between those of Continental Europe and mid-to-later seventeenth-century Britain, where, in the wake of the Reformation, of continuing religious discord, and the circumstances of the Civil War, the conditions for artistic training, production, and consumption were very much more limited.

In England, the celebration of the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 was remembered by “the public communal response, the visible joy” that it inspired (Knoppers 68). As Lois Potter has observed, it was also the first opportunity in ten years for public communal mourning of

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1 A number of other vanitas still-lifes that include portraits of Charles I exist, including those by Luyckx’s pupil, Simon Renard de Saint-André (ca. 1669-1677), and the Dutch painter, Edwaert Collier (1642-1708), who made something of a speciality of such royal commemorative portraits. See Minna Tuominen.
Charles I (240-41). Indeed, the public reaction in the immediate aftermath of Charles I’s execution in 1649 had been extremely muted. The crowds were dispersed immediately after the execution. The funeral was a modest affair, the funeral procession was conducted in the dark and the service was private and without an oration. The cost was 500 pounds as opposed to the 50,000 pounds expended for James I (Wedgwood 203-05; Potter 241; Gittings 227, 229-31).

The sense of private mourning that took the place of displays of public grief may explain the often “curious” nature of many memorials
to Charles I (Potter 241-42). These included images of the king concealed in rings or lockets, portrait miniatures or anamorphic portraits which resolved into a face only when seen reflected in a silver tube: works in other words that seem to have been designed for concealment and secret use. It seems that, even for the communities of royalists in exile, grief for the king was essentially a private experience. A portrait of the playwright and theatre manager, Thomas Killigrew, painted by William Shephard one year after the king’s execution when Killigrew was in Venice as the political agent of the exiled Charles II (Figure 3), shows him in the traditional pose of the melancholic, sitting before a portrait of Charles on the wall behind, while on his desk, a copy of the *Eikon Basilike*, the purported collection of the king’s own writings and favourite psalms and prayers, supports a pile of his own plays. Of course, this portrait makes a very public statement about Killigrew’s private devotion.
to his late monarch; indeed, in the 1660s, after the Restoration, it was engraved and even pasted as the frontispiece into at least one of his publications (Killigrew). Yet however much a show of private grief could become a public testament of loyalty, it surely reflects the kinds of private devotion that attached to the cult of the martyred king and which stimulated the production of small-scale portraits, miniatures, and other intimate kinds of memorial art.

Figure 4: Anon., Portrait of King Charles I of England, brown ink and metalpoint on parchment (with blue pigment and shell gold). St. John’s College, Oxford. (Reproduced by permission of the President and Fellows of St. John’s College, Oxford).

It is within this context that we may examine the fortunes of a single image that fell into this category (Figure 4). This is a portrait of King Charles I of England made in brown ink and metalpoint on parchment
Micrographic Portrait of Charles I

(with possibly later additions of blue pigment and shell gold). It has hung continuously in the Old Library of St John’s College, Oxford, at least since 1662, the date of the first surviving reference to it. Within an oval frame is the inscription “Regno Christo Auspice” (“I reign under the auspices of Christ”). Another inscription below reads: “Serenissimus Potentissimusque Princeps Carolus, Dei Gratia, Britanniae Magnae, Franciae & Hiberniae Rex, Fidei Propugnator &.” (“Most serene and all powerful ruler Charles, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Scotland, Defender of the Faith”). The king is shown full face wearing a rich lace ruff and gorge. What distinguishes an otherwise fairly prosaic depiction is that the lines of the face, of the hair, the lace ruff and details of the costume, as well as the surrounding bands of script and the spandrels of the outer frame are made up of minutely written words, now all but indecipherable (Figure 5). From the earliest commentators onwards these miniscule sentences have been said to contain either the Book of Psalms, or by some, the Penitential Psalms. This form of picture-writing – or “micrography” – is an art form with an ancient pedigree that can be traced back to an ancient Jewish scribal tradition, in which minute script was written sometimes into abstract borders or initials or sometimes formed into shapes of objects. It reached a high level of development in late medieval Spain and by the sixteenth century the skill had emerged in Christian Northern Europe, where it was taken up by writing-masters, modistes and “penmen” (Sirat and Avrin; Rottau 158-59). Though today in a very faded condition, over the fifty or so years after its creation the St John’s College portrait attracted a considerable number of comments from a variety of viewers. The range of responses allows us to gauge its reception over time and to measure the nature and status of a royal image in the context of changing ideas of theology and governance.

It is not known where or precisely when the portrait of Charles I was made and there are no records of how the college acquired it. The drawing appears to have been modelled on the print by Willem Jacobsz. Delff (1580-1638), printed in Holland before 1638 (the year of the artist’s death), after the portrait by Daniel Mytens of 1628 in the Royal Collection. 1628 is therefore the earliest possible date post quem for the

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2 Conservation report by Jane Eagan, 22 June 2004, held in St John’s College Library. I would like to acknowledge the generous assistance of Catherine Hillard, former librarian of St John’s College, for sharing her knowledge of the portrait with me, as well as the current librarian, Stewart Tilley and his colleagues for allowing me access to examine the portrait.
drawing. John Evelyn, who visited the college library in July 1654, mentioned several of the college’s curiosities, but not the portrait (Evelyn, *Diary 3*, 108). The earliest reference to the drawing comes in July 1662, in the journal of the Dutchman William Schellinks, which provides a useful description of its context:

On the 6th July we went to St John’s College and delivered a letter of recommendation to a Mr John Tarbuke, a student, whom we found in the library. He and his companion received us courteously, showed us first the bibliotheca and then the new library, this with a very large and extremely interesting quadrangle, where a bronze statue stands about every gate, one of King Charles and the Queen his wife, lately built by the Archbishop of Can-

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3 The connection was made by Catherine Hilliard.

4 “We went to St. John’s, saw the Library & the two Skeletons, which are finely elense’d, & put together: observable also are the store of Mathematical Instruments, all of them chiefly given by the late A: Bishop Lawd, who built here an handsome Quadrangle.” John Evelyn, *Diary*, 12 July 1654.
terbury, William [Laud], beheaded in [1645] in the reign of the Protector. The new library or medical and mathematics school is a very long room, which has, as one enters, a large globe on either side and on the far end two skeletons, and a bust of the founder bishop in a niche. From a locked cabinet he showed us some books, Chinese, Arabic, and others, also a fairly large portrait of King Charles I, the hair, the beard, and the lace of his collar, all the psalms of David and some texts from the Holy scriptures, very subtly written with the pen. (95).

It is thus quite possible that the portrait was acquired at some point between 1654 and 1662. Conversely, a notice by Thomas Baskerville, writing in about 1680, described the portrait as “drawne by a penman as far as the bust, containing in the haires of his head, face, beard, & other clothing, the whole booke of Psalms. Bishop Laud paid the Penman for this,” (193) which might equally reflect an accurate oral tradition within the college.

On the available evidence, therefore, it is not impossible that the drawing was acquired within Charles I’s lifetime; and it leaves unclear how the genesis of the portrait may have related to the cult of King Charles the Martyr that followed his death. Nonetheless, even though the association of contemporary monarchs with King David was a fairly commonplace topos of royal encomium, it is perhaps of significance to the date of its creation and certainly to its later reception that the intimate association between Charles I and the Psalms of King David contained in the drawing was of particular importance to his posthumous cult. This was so in that most popular of all commemorative items, the literary “self portrait” of the martyred king, the Eikon Basilike. The Pourtraicture of His Sacred Maiestie in His Solitudes and Sufferings (Figure 6). This volume, today widely held to have been written largely by Charles and later shaped by the Presbyterian minister and later bishop of Exeter, John Gauden, contained the king’s own apologia for his life and the events of his reign (Lacey 78-81). With its inclusion of his favourite prayers and psalms, it offered a kind of spiritual autobiography. It was being sold on the streets shortly after his execution and according to Francis Falconer Madan, went through 35 English editions in 1649 alone and within ten years had been translated into Latin, French, German, Dutch and Danish (164-66). Both the prayers and the meditations of the Eikon Basilike directly echo the Psalms of David, sometimes very closely, as, for instance, the prayer from Chapter 3 which closes with: “Then let the enemy persecute my soule, and tread my life to the ground, and lay mine Honour in the dust,” an almost direct quotation

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from Psalm 7:5. The author of the Princely Pelican, a defence of Charles’s authorship of the Eikon (which his detractors immediately called into question), explained this choice of inspiration:

But such was God’s goodness ever to him [Charles], as his afflicted soul was never so much depressed, but by repairing to those Rivers of Divine Comfort, the Psalms of David, he became infinitely refreshed: So as, the burden of his grief was nothing so heavy, as the Solace which that Book afforded him, was delightfully stored with all Spiritual Melody.

This it was which induced His Majesty to end every Meditation with a Psalm: that as the former lay open to the world his distressed Condition: so by acknowledgement of God’s mercy, and resignation of his will to his all-sufficient Mercy, he might return Comfort to his thirsty Soul in the conclusion. (Princely Pelican 12; qtd. in Wheeler 126)

5 Compare with the King James Bible verse: “Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.”
The larger point, however, is the concinnity of intention and tone between the two. The narration of the *Eikon Basilike* follows David of the *Psalms* in presenting no justification of Charles’s royal politics or actions, but asks that God judge him rather on the basis of his piety and sincerity of heart, in the spirit of David in Psalm 7:8: “Judge me O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.” The success, indeed the extraordinary character of the *Eikon Basilike* in an age of divine kingship, as Elizabeth Sherpan Wheeler has shown, was that it presented not Charles the king, but Charles the man: pious, humanly limited and perplexed that his rule had gone so seriously wrong (127).

As the structure and tone of the *Eikon Basilike* make clear, Charles’s relationship with the Psalms of King David went well beyond mere spiritual reliance or inspiration: it extended to a form of self-identification. As such, and for the light it can throw upon the intentions of the St John’s portrait, it is worth considering what kinds of preconditions made possible the *Eikon’s* remarkable subjectivity, its unprecedented public baring of a king’s soul even to the lowest of his subjects. In part, the quasi-religious mystique that surrounded the contemporary idea of kingship worked effectively to elide, without anachronism, the thoughts and actions of a contemporary monarch with those of a great seer and king of the Old Testament. But another important conditioning factor that made such public self-identification seemingly natural was the position the King David of the Psalms had come to hold within Protestant thought. In an important sense, a strategy was already in play within the Reformation theology of the Psalms that could act as a template for Charles and his supporters – and which formed the basis of the *Eikon Basilike*. As Yvonne Sherwood has demonstrated, the rare instance of a subjective, first person voice within the Bible that the Psalms of David offered, was enthusiastically taken up by the reformers (647-48). Luther proclaimed the book of Psalms the “very hidden treasure of [the] hearts’ feelings,” that recorded the voice, soul and spirit of David (*Psalms* 7). The Psalms, he continued, “give thee not only the outward David, but, more expressively still, the inner David; and that more descriptively than he could do it himself, if he were to talk with you face to face” (*Psalms* 7; Sherwood 648). The importance of this for Luther lay in the contrast with other scriptures and histories, [where] the works and bodily exercises only of the saints are described: you have very few histories which give you the words, expressions, and sighs of the saints, which are the indexes of the state of their mind. (6)
And again, “I had much rather hear David or any such eminent saint speak, than merely see the works or exercises of his body; so, much rather would I know [. . .] the faith” (Psalms 8; Sherwood 648). By thus framing the biblical references to David within the doctrine of Faith versus Works, Luther seemed implicitly to be offering a contrast between the David of the Psalms and the David of the Books of Samuel and Chronicles, where the prophet’s actions and deeds, presented in the third person, appear in a much more compromised light, most famously, in 2 Samuel 11, where he commits adultery (with Bathsheba) and murder (Uriah).

From Luther onwards, Reformed interpreters leaned more heavily towards the penitent David of the Psalms – particularly Psalm 51 – as a means literally to justify the flawed, worldly actions of the David of the Book of Samuel. They found in the contrast between spirit and works thus set up, an exemplary explication of the Protestant doctrines of original sin and of justification by Faith not Works, which, by focusing on David’s spirit within the Psalms, could relegate David’s actions to the external letter.

On this basis, the Psalms became an established model for spiritual autobiography and a resource for many Protestants in which to find connections with their own spiritual lives and consciences. Calvin cast Psalm 51 in this confessional light when he declared that it was a demonstration of how “we may lawfully and freely lay bare before [God] the infirmities which a sense of shame prevents our confessing to men” (Commentary on the Psalms i, p.viii). And similar sentiments were echoed in the French reformer Theodore Beza’s popular explanation of Psalm 51, in Anthony Gilby’s 1580 English translation:

What a rare example is this of so great a king and so worthy a Prophet, that laying aside all humane respect, either of his royall Majesty or private reputation, did not onely suffer the story of that his crime to be put in writing, but even he him selfe wrote a perpetuall testimony of his acknowledging of the fact, thereby to satisfie the whole Church. (127; Sherwood 650)

The Eikon Basilike in effect performed the same confessional function for the actual King Charles. In so doing it fell into what was, by the mid-seventeenth century, a well-recognized Protestant model of penitential spiritual practice. It allowed the king to appeal to God to judge him not on the basis of his deeds but on his sincerity, on his integrity of heart, a position that exonerated him, like King David, from human laws and judgement.
The intimacy offered by the Eikon’s textual portrait was replicated in a number of small-scale commemorative portraits that were made after the King’s execution and on into the Restoration era. One example, the size of a limned portrait miniature, is actually made of embroidery of an extremely professional quality (Figure 7). A number of surviving versions of this pattern suggest some kind of commercial, serial manufacture. The model for the portrait is the engraved likeness from the Eikon Basilike and the link with the cult of the martyr is made further explicit by the embroidered inscription, a quotation from Psalm 18, which thus associates Charles with King David by putting the words of the psalmist into Charles’s mouth: “Deus meus est Rypis mea Psa: 18.” The reference is to Psalm 18: 2-3, which invokes God’s protection against his enemies:

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and
my high tower. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

While the uncertain dating of the St John’s portrait drawing leaves the original intention to elide the figure of King Charles I with King David of the Psalms unclear, there is vivid evidence to show that the portrait became closely associated with the cult of the martyred king in the years following his execution. This comes in a surviving response to it in the form of a poem, written in 1655 by a scholar of the college and future divine, Jeremiah Wells (1646-1679): “On the Picture of King Charles The First, In St John’s Colledge Library, Oxon, Written in the Psalms.” Such a response is not surprising, emanating from a college closely associated with the royalist cause and whose chief recent benefactor and president had been Archbishop Laud, the discredited first minister of Charles I (Loveman).  

The poem exists in two versions, the first in an unpublished manuscript (Bodleian f. 363) and a second, slightly amended, in Wells’s anonymously published collection, Poems upon Divers Occasions, printed in 1667. The poem in effect instructs the reader how to approach the image. The first lines of the first, manuscript, version give the gist of the author’s ecstatic, highly affective, approach: “Wash thy impure feet, and trembling trace/ With wary steps this more than sacred place (Bodleian f. 363). This was amended in the published version to:

> With double reverence we approach, to look,  
> On what’s at once a Picture and a Book:  
> Nor think it Superstition to adore  
> A King made Now more sacred then Before.  
> [. . .]  
> The Object here’s Majestick and Divine,  
> Divinity does Majesty enshrine,  
> Each adds to th’ others luster: such a thing  
> Befits the Image of a Saint and King.  
> Each Lineament o’ th’ Face contains a Prayer,  
> Phylact’ries fill the place of common Hair;  
> Which circling their belov’d Defender spread  
> Like a True Glory round his Royall Head.

6 Jeremiah Wells graduated with a BA in 1669 and became a clergyman with a London living in West Hanningfield. In 1670, he married Deb Willett, the former mistress of Samuel Pepys, whose patronage he later sought in obtaining a position as a navy chaplain and, later, in procuring a lectureship at All Hallows, Barking.
His Mouth with Precepts fill’d bespeaks our Ear,
Summons That Sense too, bids us See and Hear,
Both are Divine: Blest Moses thus did see
At once the Tables and the Deity:
Thus Faith by Seeing comes: Religion thus
Enamours, when to th’ Sences obvious:
This sight would worke a Miracle on the Rout:
Make them at once both Loyall and Devout. (1-3)

From the thread of verbal paradoxes, of speaking pictures and texts
heard, that runs as an extended conceit throughout the body of the
poem and which serves to mirror the word-portrait’s intrinsic visual
character, there emerges a sustained meditation upon the idea of di-
vinely-inspired kingship. As in an earlier tradition of religious devotional
art, the act of contemplating the saintly royal image is revealed as one of
full-blown religious reverence: one that can see the radiance of divinity
in a thinly-drawn face and the glory of sainthood (“belov’d Defender)”
in an aureole of words around his head. Remarkably, for an aspiring
Protestant divine, Wells explicitly commends the act of seeing as a
means to piety and faith. Yet it is the nature of the image as word-
picture that, as we shall see, allows him to do so.

The image in fact falls within an established category of micro-
graphic portraiture that became particularly associated with a Protestant
commemorative tradition. A number of similar portraits of reformers
and heroes of the Reformation, notably of Martin Luther and John Cal-
vin, survive from the sixteenth century onwards. The best known prac-
titioners of the genre were members of the Austrian-Bavarian calligra-
pher-family, Püchler (Roth 174-80). Johann Michael Püchler the Young-
er, working in Augsburg, produced a number of variants of micro-
graphic portraits of Luther and Calvin as well as other Protestant divines
(Figures 8 and 9). These images dealt directly with a problem identified
by Margaret Aston regarding the status of portrait images of Protestant
reformers that they themselves had commissioned. Aston cited the
Scottish Jesuit, John Hay in 1580, who put it thus:

Quhy sall the images of our lord Iesus Christ, of his glorious mother, and of
the Apostles, be computed unleasome and unclene, contraire the accus-
tomed use of the kirk, and the images of Calvin, Beza, Jupiter and Venus,
quhilks some of yow hes in your cabinets, be compted lawful? (187)

7 For similar issues around early portraits of Luther, see R. W. Scribner 14-36.
It was a good point. The Protestant divine, Christopher Hales, who had spent time in Zurich getting to know the leaders of the Swiss reform movement, commissioned six portraits of Zurich reformers from his friend Rudolf Gualter in 1550 after his return home, only to be gently rebuffed because of “the danger that in future a window might be opened to idolatry” as well as the fear of imputations of vainglory in the sitters (Aston 187). Those fears were partly assuaged by adopting older compositional formulae: the portraits of reformers were classically in
half length, holding or pointing to a scriptural page or gesturing in the act of preaching. They were portrayed, in other words, not as themselves, but as mouthpieces of the scriptural Word. As Margaret Aston put it, “The glory of their memory was not therefore their own, but God’s” (191). Aston found this bookish tradition continued in the sepulchral effigies of English divines, who continued even in death to stare out of their marble niches, mouths frozen in mid-speech, one hand on book, the other raised in explication. Püchler’s micrographic portraits of Luther and Calvin followed this same tradition, based as they were on conventional portrait models by Cranach and after Beza’s *Icones* (Geneva 1580), respectively. They, too, show the Reformers either holding a book or preaching. But Püchler’s images go further to offset the fear of idolatry, not merely by the obvious conceit that they are literally
fashioned from words; they also explicitly combined commemoration –
giving the events of their subject’s life (contained in the area of their
hair) – and an exhortatory function, by including quotations from the
book of Wisdom and Jesus Sirach (situated in their clothing). These dis-
crete intentions are explicitly stated in the larger, more easily legible
scripts of the surround. Well-known proverbs or mottos associated with
the reformer, clearly written below the image, invite the spectator-reader
to contemplation and devotion.

Püchler produced further micrographic portraits of the Wittenberg
theologians Johann Friedrich Mayer and Philip Jacob Spenler, made
sometime between 1686 and 1701, as well as a portrait of the Protestant
King and General, Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden (Figure 10). The in-
trepid traveller, Lady Celia Fiennes, who visited St John’s College library
in 1694 and recorded seeing the portrait of King Charles I, also men-
tioned seeing a portrait of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden “whose por-
traiture,” she reported, “is represented to the eye in writing alsoe and
contains his whole Life and prowess” (Fiennes 59). Though this particu-
lar copy has been lost, it was very probably a version of the same micro-
graphic portrait by Püchler, which also records the events of his life –
again in his hair – while his armour contains quotations from the Book
of Wisdom, thereby equating him with the wisdom of King Solomon
(Roth 176). At the least, Celia Fiennes’s comments suggest the possibil-
ity of a link between the portrait of King Charles and this Protestant
European micrographic tradition.

The appeal of this kind of imagery to Protestant divines was the
same as that enjoyed by the Jewish scribes who had originally developed
the genre: it permitted a form of figuration that resisted the suspicion of
idolatry or image worship by the virtue of it also being text. Returning
to Jeremiah Wells’s contemplation of the King Charles portrait, he was
careful, as a good Protestant, to offset just such an accusation at the
very outset of his poem when he wrote:

With double reverence we approach, to look,
On what’s at once a Picture and a Book:

---

8 Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Inv No. 304-125. The larger
band inscription reads: “Wahre und Eigentliche Controfactur weyländt des Al-
ler...Durchleuchtigsten Fürsten undt Herrn Gustavi Adolphi der Schweeden Göthen
und Wenden Königs, Grosfürsten aus finlandt etc: etc: /Pro Christo. Et Ecclesia
Indisen figures haaren ist der seeligste lebenvul gustavi geschrieben, In den harnisch
aber besten Sprüch ex libro Sapient.” See Michael Roth 176.
Nor think it Superstition to adore
A King made Now more sacred then Before.

[...

The Object here’s Majestick and Divine,
Divinity does Majesty enshrine,
Each adds to th’ others luster: such a thing
Befits the Image of a Saint and King. (1-2)

Wells’s “enshrined luster” suggests another possible meaning intended in the use of the technique. As Leila Avrin has written of Jewish micrographic images, “the scribe was intent on inducing the cerebral condition of alexia, the inability to read the written words . . . the letters seem to melt before one’s eyes” (Sirat and Avrin 51). In the Charles I portrait, too, the letters, even in their original, less faded state, would have been barely legible and, as Wells’s poem implies, would have functioned more as a vehicle of mystical identification and contemplation. The physical words, in their illegibility, act as a material signifier of an invisible divinity. The various near-contemporary accounts of the portrait of Charles I

Figure 10: Johann Michael Püchler the Younger, Micrographic Portrait of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, engraving, 20 x 14.7 cm, Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Inv. No. 304-125. (Photo © bpk / Kupferstichkabinett, SMB / Volker-H. Schneider / Art Resource, NY). Reproduced by kind permission.
indicate considerable confusion as to what is actually there: Samuel Sorbière asserts that they are in Latin (42-43); Robert Plot, in his *Natural History of Oxfordshire* of 1677 described the image as “the written *Picture* of his Majesty King Charles the first . . . taking up the whole Book of Psalms in the *English* tongue” (276).9 Celia Fiennes thought it was the *Book of Common Prayer* (58). Yet the intention of the text to an ecstatic like Wells seems to have been less legibility than mystical identification between the saintly King and his biblical exemplar. Invisible in plain sight, the Divine Word acts like a genetic code, deeply embedded within the person of the King, its presence clearly palpable, but its substance obscure. The aura of Majesty, as Wells explains, is thereby augmented by the Divine. Indeed, Wells’s ecstatic, almost mystical reactions to the image are striking. An early reader, struck by the lines: “The mad Phanatick, seeing these thy rayes,/ Struck with the light, falls on his face, and prays,” was prompted to write “fulsom” in the margin (6).10

At another point in his poem, Wells addresses Charles directly, reinforcing and deepening Robert Plot’s understanding of the image as a “written picture.” He analyzes the artist’s use of this word-image duality in claiming that:

\[
\text{The Artist has Design’d, not Drawn thee here,} \\
\text{Nor is’t a Picture, but a Character:} \\
\text{The Embleme of thy Mind; Posterity} \\
\text{May hence learn what Thou wert, & They should be. (5-6)}
\]

This leads Wells to further reaches of hyperbole. Art, he says has covered Charles “with a double veil”; “But well has Art, lest our weak Sight should fail, / Cover’d our *Moses* with a double veil” (3). Having grasped the first, outer veil of gross outward appearance,

\[
\text{Then may’st thou draw the Outer Veil, and pry} \\
\text{Into this image of Divinity . . .} \\
\text{[which is] . . . Lodged in Thee [Charles].} \\
\text{Thy Count’nance does with innate luster shine}
\]

9 “The written *Picture* of his Majesty King *Charles* the first, in *St. Johns College Library*, taking up the whole Book of Psalms in the *English* tongue; and the written Picture of King *James*, and the *Arms of England* (as now born) taking up the whole Book of Psalms in the *Latin*, in the hands of Mr. *Moorhead Rector of Bucknel*, are pretty *curiosities*, and much admired” (Plot 267-77).

Whose every Feature’s, like Thy Selfe, Divine.
The lines and Thee so like in ev’ry Thing,
That while we see the Psalms, we read the King.
Inabled thus Thy self, Thy self to inspire,
To be at once the Sacrifice and Fire.
Glorious Without, thy Bodie’s ev’ry part
Is fashion’d, as thy Soul, after God’s heart.
Those Parcels of Religion we adore
In Others, are Complented Here, and More,
That Impresse of the Deity in the Mind
Of Others stampt, we in Thy Body find.
Thy frame so like Divine in ev’ry part,
That thou do not Resemble it, but Art. (4-5)

The sense of the sheer revelatory power of the word inhering within the image is combined with a self-consciousness about the role of “Art,” which for Wells lies essentially in its conceit, in its emblem-like role of concealing and revealing, and its ability, as he goes on to say, of “[i]mproving both our Piety and Wit” (7).

In the years following Wells’s poem of 1665, the balance between divinity and artful conceit appears to have shifted in favour of the latter as the portrait came to be regarded less as an icon of sacred memory than as a curiosity. This was in part by virtue of its being housed within a famous library, so that it became one of the sights on a well-worn tourist itinerary of Oxford. Changes in the way it was displayed may also have contributed to this. The library, first completed by Archbishop Laud in 1633, was, when Wells was there, only sparsely furnished. Samuel Sorbière, who recorded his visit to St John’s library in 1664, described it thus:

I saw a Fine Library... and a large Wainscotted Gallery, wherein I found no other Ornament than the Picture of King Charles I, which they took out of a Cover, and shewed here for a Raritie, because the Hair of his Head was made up of Scripture Lines, wrought wonderfully small, and more particularly of the Psalms of David in Latin...”(42-43)

A report of a visit by Cosimo III, the grand Duke of Tuscany, in 1669, states that “His Highness viewed the library, and the gallery, which, except the cieling, possesses no ornament but a portrait, drawn with a pen, of King Charles I [which is shewn as a curiosity]” (Colvin and Thomas 19). It might have been the sparse conditions of the simply wainscoted rooms in the 1660s, where the drawing was shown in severe isolation, that prompted the opening lines of the unpublished manuscript version
of Wells’s poem, quoted above ("Wash thy impure feet, and trembling trace/ With wary steps this more than sacred place” [Bodleian f. 363.])

A drawing by Dr John Speed (1595-1640), son of the cartographer and a fellow of the college, shows another feature of this otherwise plain setting: two articulated skeletons or “anatomies,” standing on either side of the (north) doorway in pedestal cases (Colvin 74). They had been presented to the college by Speed himself perhaps inspired by similar skeletons, holding moralizing scrolls, which were a feature of the anatomical theatre at Leiden, where they were used for medical demonstrations.

This can be compared to the viewing conditions experienced by Celia Fiennes, thirty years later, in 1694, by which time the Gallery had seemingly accrued more the character of a cabinet of curiosities. She described seeing it thus:

The inner [library] has severall Anatomy’s in cases, and some other Curosity of Shells Stone Bristol Diamonds Skins of fish and beasts; here they have the great Curosity much spoken off, King Charles the Firsts Picture, the whole lines of face band garment to the shoulders and arms and garner is all written hand and containes the whole Common prayer, its very small the character but where a straight line is you may read a word or two; there is another of Gustaus Adolphus whose portraiture is represented to the eye in writeing alsoe and contains his whole Life and prowess; there is alsoe the Lords prayer and ten Commandments in the compass of a crown piece, there are also several books all of writing on vellum leaves, and one book written in the Chinese Caractor on the Indian barks off trees, there is alsoe a Book of the Genealogies of the kings since the Conquest to King Charles the Second with the severall Coates all gilded very fresh till the two or three last . . .; there was alsoe a fine Prayer book or Mass book off Q. Marias; this was in the new part of the Library which was neately wanscoated and adorned. (58-59)

By 1694, the portrait seems long since to have lost its commemorative or religious lustre and become a rarity amid other rarities.

It was Joseph Addison who definitively completed the process of emptying the portrait of its religious aura and mystique in an essay on “false wit” in the *Spectator*, no. 58, dated Monday 7 May, 1711, in which he invoked:

...that famous Picture of King Charles the First, which has the whole book of *Psalms* written in the Lines of the Face and the Hair of the Head. When I was last at *Oxford* I perused one of the Whiskers; and was reading the other, but could not go so far in it as I would have done, by reason of the Impa-
For all his apparent insouciant amusement of tone, Addison was concerned that certain kinds of wit, such as he found embodied in this portrait’s conceit, were essentially destructive in that they encouraged habits of mind that subordinated rational thought to what he regarded—in this case—as religious enthusiasm and obscurantism. Addison implied that in making words subject and subordinate to the form of the portrait—and he likewise criticized similar kinds of conceit such as verses forming the shape of eggs or altars or wings [aka George Herbert’s “Easter Wings”]—their meaning was obscured and made secondary. Such kinds of pattern poetry were the works of “a kind of Painter, or at least a Designer,” in which “The Poetry was to contract or dilate itself according to the Mould in which it was cast” (247). As Elizabeth Kraft has pointed out, this kind of “false wit” was inextricably linked in Addison’s—the Whig’s—mind to politics. She noted how Addison twice connected the Stuart kings to such examples: the portrait of Charles I, which begins his discussion of examples of patterned poetry; and James I, who is cited as a “tolerable” punster (631-32). For Addison, puns, acrostics, and other forms of word play were further forms of false wit to be deplored.

Addison used the vehicle of the Spectator to advocate—via “true wit”—values of rationality, good sense and propriety. In his critique he was making a case for clarity of thought and expression, values he deemed essential to the proper workings of a modern society. For this to happen, as Kraft puts it, “[t]he body of language, like the body of the king, has to be demystified through a subordination of image to meaning, sign to significance, word to thought” (634). In the chain of responses to the portrait of Charles I, therefore, from an object of devout contemplation of a martyr-king, to a “Great Curiosity,” to finally, the object of an attack in the defence of reason and enlightened government, one sees in the essential instability and contingency of meaning that attached to a royal image a reflection of the cultural turn that England underwent in the half century after Charles’s execution.

Conclusion

What general conclusions, if any, about the nature of the image in mid-to-later seventeenth-century England can be drawn from this very singular portrait? On one hand, Wells’s reactions to it demonstrate the per-
sistence of habits of contemplation and of mystical identification within a Protestant culture that had belonged to a pre-Reformation tradition of religious devotional art and practice. Such kinds of private viewing certainly continued after the Reformation, migrating from cult images of saints to other genres, such as the portraits of reformers noted above, as well as, in England, to the small and intimate format of the secular portrait miniature (Fumerton). Yet even while it drew upon this tradition, the St John’s portrait, in its structural use of words, in its essentially textual character, can be seen as a symptom of a broader characteristic of an emerging Protestant aesthetic that was born of a reformed uneasiness with visual representation: namely, an increasing tendency of visual imagery to be dependent upon text. The portrait of Charles I fits within a reformed understanding of a new relationship between images and texts, which raised the verbal over the visual, and which, crucially, came to see the one in terms of the other. Paradoxically, Charles’s features exist only by virtue of their being literally formed out of words. Indeed, the work’s success as “Art” turns on this fact. This new relationship was ultimately grounded in theological notions about experiencing the Divine and about the nature and limits of representation that had been formulated by the early reformers. It is exemplified in Bullinger’s agreement with Calvin in the Zweite Helvetische Bekenntnis of 1566, to prohibit all representations of God the Father (as well as Christ) on the grounds that:

as God is invisible, omnipresent and eternal spirit, he cannot be represented by any image or picture [. . .]; neither did Christ assume human form in order to serve as a model for sculptors and painters. Instead, in order to instruct men in faith and about divine things and their salvation, the Lord commanded that the Bible be preached (Mk 16, 15).11

Luther, too, in regarding images as adiaphora, as things indifferent to worship or salvation, had declared that “Christendom will not be known by sight, but by faith. And faith has to do with things not seen” (Luther, Werke vii 14; cited in Koerner 210). For the reformers, the sacred was

11 “Weil nun Gott unsichtbarer Geist und unendlichen Wesens ist, kann er auch nicht durch irgendeine Kunst oder ein Bild dargestellt werden; [. . .] Denn obwohl Christus menschliches Wesen angenommen hat, hat er das nicht deshalb getan, um Bildhauern und Malern als Modell zu dienen. Er hat gesagt, er sei nicht gekommen, Gesetz und Propheten aufzulösen (Matt. 5.7). [. . .] Damit aber die Menschen im Glauben unterwiesen und über Göttliche Dinge und ihre Seligkeit belehrt würden, hat der Herr befohlen, das Evangelium zu predigen (Mk 16, 15), aber nicht zu malen oder mit Malerei das Volk zu lehren” Bullinger 1-5.
invisible. Images by their nature could not possess or communicate the inherently ungraspable nature of the divine; at best, they could serve as material pointers to something ineffable beyond themselves or as moral lessons in scriptural history. Words, by contrast, being immaterial, were deemed inherently closer to an invisible God. As Carlos Eire put it, the Word of God was allowed to “stand as an image of the invisible reality of the spiritual dimension” (316). Wells’s grasp of this concept is clear in his evocation of the stream of divine words emanating from within Charles’s persona, filling his face and hair, encircling his head, halo-like, in a blaze of “True Glory” (“Divinity does Majesty enshrine”).

Out of a theological understanding, where the visual, and with it, notions of visuality, bent to the tyranny of the word, there developed a further notion, widely adopted across the larger visual culture, that visual images might be deemed legitimate only in so far as they were reducible to language. This is implicit in the popularity of image-word combinations in prints, broadsheets, and, paradigmatically, in the genre of the emblem, which became so predominant a form of devotional and educational mnemonics in Protestant practice. For the emblem, in its classic tri-partite form of motto, image and epigrammatic explanation, was not strictly a picture so much as a visual sign. Not being properly pictorial, the emblem provided, rather, a kind of matrix of visual-verbal material that proved a highly effective tool in religious teaching as well as in more broadly educational endeavours. It is significant that Wells placed the St John’s College portrait within this category of works, even though it is the palpable, material presence of the words rather than their literal meaning that is at play in the image. In his formulation, the image is “designed, not Drawn”; it is not “a Picture, but a Character,” an “Embleme” of Charles’ mind.” The element of “wit” in evidence – the clever conceit, the self-conscious artfulness in the play of image and text – so admired by Wells and as strongly condemned as “false” by Addison – was also an essential characteristic of the emblem; indeed, by the 1650s, these qualities had become a necessary component of the period idea of Art, aptly mirrored in Wells’s own poetic style.

In its ability to elicit such a range of responses, from Wells’s mystical contemplation before a quasi-religious monument, to the tourists’ wonderment at the micrographer’s “curious” skill, to Addison’s ironical but emphatic censure, it is clear that the word-portrait of King Charles stood at the cusp of two distinct traditions, of the religious and secular, the mystical and rational, the affective and coolly detached. It was a juncture where one could glimpse the increasing ascendancy of a new Protestant cultural paradigm, which instituted in effect a new ontology.
of the visual, and which helped engender over time a decisive shift from image to word within western cultural consciousness and led ultimately to a largely logo-centric culture, whose assumptions about the nature of the image live on into the present day.
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Micrographic Portrait of Charles I


“The Image of their Glorious Maker”: Looking at Representation and Similitude in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*

Antoinina Bevan Zlatar

This essay reads the narrator’s representation of the Son of God in heaven and Adam and Eve in Eden in the opening Books of *Paradise Lost* alongside the famous chain of similes describing Satan in hell – the so-called leviathan simile. In so doing it suggests that Milton’s descriptions and similes are integral not just to the poem’s style and narrative but to its theology, anthropology, and diabology. What someone looks like is an ontological issue in the poem; it tells us about the nature of the being described and how far they resemble its God. As we shall see, Milton’s supernatural and prelapsarian beings are described in terms that accentuate their embodied visuality, a trait which valorises the material world and the sense of sight while suggesting that the division between the spirit and the flesh is not so absolute.

What is an image in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*? This essay will attempt to answer this question by exploring Milton’s use of what George Puttenham in *The Art of English Poesy* (1589) terms “Hypotyposis, or the Counterfeit Representation” (323-25), and, more specifically, “Omiosis, or Resemblance,” what we call simile (326-33).¹ It will quickly become apparent, however, that Milton’s descriptions and his famous similes are inte-

¹ According to Puttenham, “Hypotyposis, or the Counterfeit Representation” comprises “Prosopographia, or the Counterfeit Countenance”; “Chronographia, or the Counterfeit Time”; “Topographia, or the Counterfeit Place” and “Pragmatographia, or the Counterfeit action.” Hypotyposis is of course related to *energia*, *phantasia*, *ekphrasis*, *evidentia*, and *descriptio* among others. For a discussion of early modern *ekphrasis* in theory and as practiced by Sidney, Shakespeare, and Spenser, see Claire Preston.

This has not always been the prevailing view. In the eighteenth century, Addison celebrated the similes for providing “sublime . . . Entertainment” (203) while Richard Bentley found several so irrelevant or silly as to doubt they were actually Milton’s. Centuries later, T. S. Eliot would commend Milton’s skill in “introducing imagery which tends to distract us from the real subject” (326). It was not until James Whaler’s article of 1931 that the relevance of the similes to their immediate narrative context or to future episodes was systematically proposed, a view championed by Christopher Ricks (118-50) and popularised by Alastair Fowler in his Longman edition of the poem (19-20). Anne Ferry, Helen Gardiner, and Stanley Fish, meanwhile, drew attention to those similes where the gap or dissimilitude between tenor and vehicle is most pronounced, a gap deemed inevitable when attempting to describe hell, heaven or paradise. More recently, Neil Forsyth has argued that Milton’s similes disturb the clarity of vision usually associated with them and thus undermine the authority of the narrator (100-05).

In what follows I will argue that counterfeit representation and similes are part of a larger exploration of similitude or likeness in Paradise Lost. What someone looks like is an ontological matter in the poem; it tells us something about the nature of the being described and how far they resemble its God. So as to make my case, I will begin by sketching Milton’s conceptualisation of the imago dei or divine similitude as it applies to the Son of God in Book III and to Adam and Eve in Books IV and following, and briefly indicate how it intersects with Milton’s monist theory of matter. I will then turn to the narrator’s first description of Satan in Book I – a description which famously ends by comparing Satan to the leviathan. This attempt to visualise Satan deserves special note because it is the first complex simile in the poem and because it introduces us to a type that is particularly prominent in hell. Here we have a series of images linked by “or” taken from disparate books of knowledge – classical myth, the Bible, and the natural world. The conjunction “or” suggests that no one image is definitive, none wholly accurate or sufficient. And yet, by linking the final twist of the figure’s long tail to a

2 The following brief survey of the reception of Milton’s descriptions and similes is indebted to John Leonard (327-90).
specific print illustration from Conrad Gessner’s *Historia animalium*, I hope to show that Milton is proffering an encyclopaedic model of knowledge based on a Protestant reading of the natural world, God’s second book. In the process Satan is given a wondrously material body and made into a pre- eminent emblem of God’s creative powers.

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George Puttenham understood that using words to make something or someone “appear they were truly before our eyes though they were not present” required “cunning” (knowhow) and “great discretion” (323). As for trying to represent supernatural or fictitious things, still greater skill was needed:

And if the things we covet to describe be not natural or not veritable, than yet the same asketh more cunning to do it, because to feign a thing that never was nor is like to be, proceedeth of a greater wit and sharper invention than to describe things that be true. (323)

Significantly, Puttenham includes “heaven, hell, paradise” (324) in his list of places “not natural or not veritable.”

If counterfeit representation was challenging, it was prized for its power to move by means of its appeal to the eye. In the *Institutio oratoria*, Puttenham’s ultimate source, Quintilian had theorised it as a figure of particular utility to the forensic orator who set out to move his audience by making them see the crime scene in their mind’s eye as though (he and they were eyewitnesses (9.2.40-44; see also 8.3.61-71). Quintilian is drawing on a tradition in which sight was given pride of place in the hierarchy of the senses, where things seen were generally deemed more reliable, vivid, and memorable than things heard (Squire 8-19; Webb 209-16). As for “Omniosis, or Resemblance,” the figure of similitude, it too was valued for its persuasive force:

As well to a good maker and poet as to an excellent persuader in prose, the Figure of Similitude is very necessary, by which we not only beautify our tale but also very much enforce and enlarge it. I say enforce because no one

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3 Puttenham’s other key source was Susenbrotus’s *Epitome Troporum*. See Whigham and Rebhorn (23-43; especially 41).
thing more prevaieth with all ordinary judgements than persuasion by similitude. (326) 4

Similitudes “beautify” and “enforce” the narrative by painting pictures. This is spelled out in the first of Puttenham’s three types of simile – “Icon, or Resemblance by Imagery”:

But when we liken a human person to another in countenance, stature, speech, or other quality, it is . . . called . . . Resemblance by Imagery or Portrait, alluding to the painter’s term, who yieldeth to the eye a visible representation of the thing he describes and painteth in his table. (329) 5

He goes on to specify that “This manner of Resemblance is not only performed by likening of lively creatures one to another, but also of any other natural thing bearing a proportion of similitude . . .” (329).

In Paradise Lost counterfeit representation and “icons,” or a series of “icons” in the case of Milton’s celebrated epic similes, are especially evident in Book I when we are introduced to Satan and company in hell, and again in Book IV when we first meet Adam and Eve. But in the first half of Book III of the poem when the narrator attempts to represent God the Father and God the Son in heaven, complex similes are conspicuously absent. If a “proportion of similitude” or a degree of similarity between the things compared was a requisite, similes surely could not be used to represent God the Father or God the Son. The Reformation debate on images had made this abundantly clear: the infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, invisible God was beyond compare; to equate him with finite, visible things in the natural world, things so far beneath him on the ontological scale, was a violation of the second commandment. 6 Yet, in the monist universe of Paradise Lost the division between spirit and flesh, supernatural and natural is not so absolute.

4 On Homiosis, see Quintilian, Institutio oratoria (8.3.72-81).

5 Puttenham follows Susenbrotus in splitting similes into three types: “Icon,” “Parabola,” and “Paradigma” (326-33). See Susenbrotus (97-99, quoted in Whigham and Rebhorn 326).

6 The official and most compendious discussion is found in the Elizabethan Homily against Peril of Idolatrie. The literature is vast; Margaret Aston’s two volume survey serves as a rich introduction.
Divine similitude in Heaven and Eden

In Book III the narrator takes the reader to heaven and shows her God the Father looking at the Son: “On his right / The radiant image of his glory sat / His only Son” (III.62-64). This Pauline conceptualisation of the Son as the “image” of the Father sitting at his right hand will be fleshed out more fully a little later:

    Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
    Most glorious, in him all his Father shone
    Substantially expressed, and in his face
    Divine compassion visibly appeared,
    Love without end, and without measure grace. (III.138-42) 7

How far is Milton’s Son of the same essence as the Father? How far subordinate to the Father? 8 I will engage more fully in this debate elsewhere, but, for the moment, I want to focus on the idea of the Son’s visibility relative to the Father’s invisibility, an idea that is given its fullest expression in the angels’ hymn:

    Thee Father first they sung omnipotent,
    Immutable, immortal, infinite,
    Eternal king; thee author of all being,
    Fountain of light, thyself invisible
    Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitst
    Throned inaccessible, but when thou shad’st
    The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
    Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
    Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,
    Yet dazzle heaven, that brightest seraphim
    Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
    Thee next they sang of all creation first,
    Begotten Son, divine similitude,

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7. “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person . . . when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3 KJV). The nature of Paul’s “image” has been much debated. For a succinct account that distinguishes the Pauline conceptualisation from that of Plato, Plotinus, and Philo, see Alain Besançon (25-86, especially 81-86). For a recent corrective account that seeks to foreground Paul’s visual piety by dissociating it from a Platonising denigration of the material world, see Jane Heath (13-61; 65-142).

8. The debate over the extent of Milton’s heterodoxy with regard to the Son is surveyed in Leonard (477-525), and Russell Hillier (9-36). For a reading that emphasises the Son’s subordination to the Father, see MacCallum (71-79).
In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud
Made visible, the almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold. (III.372-87)

The emphasis on sight and seeing, on invisibility versus visibility in these passages prompts us to ask: what does the Father look like? According to the angels, the Father is “Fountain of light,” invisible amidst the brightness in which he dwells, paradoxically discernible through cloud, yet still too bright for the brightest seraphim to see. This is the negative theology of deus absconditus. But he is rendered visible in the “divine similitude,” in the Son in whose “conspicuous countenance” he shines. The Son, we are told, renders visible the invisible Father “whom else no creature can behold.” So what does the Son look like? The Son is the radiant reflection of the Father’s brightness “Substantially expressed” (III.140). He is the perfect likeness of the Father, “Beyond compare . . . / Most glorious” (III.138-39). There is a sense in which the exact nature of the divine similitude cannot be expressed because he cannot be compared to something below him on the ontological scale. And yet, in offering to become man and die for the sins of mankind, the Son becomes part of the material, visible world. The angels, privy to the Son’s conversation with the Father in which he offers himself in sacrifice and is told of his future exaltation (III.236-317), are here paying tribute to the Incarnation.

If the angels’ hymn ultimately mystifies how exactly the Son manifests the Father and fails to satisfy the reader’s desire to see the divine face, this is surely intentional. In the De Doctrina Christiana, Milton embraces the doctrine of the Incarnation as scriptural but insists that we accept it as a “mystery,” unlike those who hand down its secrets as if, says Milton mischievously, they themselves “had . . . been present in Mary’s womb” (479). Nevertheless, the hymn suggests that it is precisely visibility that marks a difference between Father and Son. Once again this finds support in De Doctrina Christiana. Explicating scriptural proof texts that refer to the Son as “only-begotten,” Milton adds “— not, however, one with the Father in essence, since he was visible, given and sent by the Father, and issued from him” (135; my emphasis). Later, Milton marshals a chain of Pauline references to Christ as the image of God,

10 Stephen Dobranski reviews the recent discussion of the (in)visibility of the incarnate Son in Paradise Lost (189-99); he argues that in the final Books of the poem the Archangel Michael serves as a “Christic surrogate” (201-03).
including Hebrews 1:3, as evidence that the Father and the Son’s essence “is not single and that one essence is lesser than the other” (225).

If similitude is at the heart of the theology of Book III, it is no less integral to the poem’s anthropology. This constitutes our (and Satan’s) first sighting of the human pair:

Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty seemed lords of all,
And worthy seemed, for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure . . . (IV.288-93)

In the following lines we are told of Adam and Eve’s sexual difference and “inequality,” and it is difference and inequality that famously drives Eve’s narration of her creation at IV.440-91.11 Here I want to pursue the idea that they are both made in God’s image – “Two of far nobler shape erect and tall . . . lords of all,” and that this resemblance is manifested corporeally and visually “in their looks divine.” We might object that these “looks divine” soon melt into abstraction – “Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure . . .” – just as the Son’s face had melted into “Love without end, and without measure grace” (III.142). But, as the description continues the narrator gazes (with Satan) at the human pair and watches as they go forth hand in hand and sit down to enjoy their supper fruits in the company of “All beasts of the earth” (IV.341). We see them embodied in the Edenic landscape, their hands touching, their bodies cooled by the breeze, their mouths chewing the savoury pulp of the nectarine, smiling. Indeed, Satan soon confesses that he could love them “so lively shines / In them divine resemblance, and such grace / The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured” (IV.363-65). Later the sight of Eve’s beauty will render Satan “Stupidly good” (IX.465) for a brief, poignant moment.

The poem will return to the doctrine of the imago dei in Raphael’s account of the creation of Adam and Eve in Book VII. Raphael reports how God the Father turned to the Son and said “Let us make now man in our image, man / In our similitude, and let them rule / [. . .]” (519-20). Given that Creation is “performed” by both Father and Son, and that the Son is the perfect image of the Father as explored above, the

11 Milton’s portrayal of gender continues to court controversy. For a survey of the debate until 1970, see Leonard (650-704). For a reading which remains persuasive in celebrating Eve’s virtues and creativity, see McCollery.
imago dei would seem to refer to both Father and Son here. Raphael then turns to Adam and explains:

In his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express, and thou becam’st a living soul.
Male he created thee, but thy consort
Female for race. (526-30)

This is an amalgam of Genesis 1:27 and 2:7, and, like its source, sheds little light on the precise nature of Adam’s divine resemblance.

For a more expansive treatment of Genesis 2:7 and the implications of Adam’s becoming a “living soul,” we might turn to De Doctrina Christiana:

When man had been created in this way [Genesis 2:7], it is at last said: so man became a living soul [anima]; from which it is understood (unless we prefer to be taught what the soul is by pagan authors) that man is an animate being [animal], inherently and properly one and individual, not twofold or separable – or, as is commonly declared, combined or composed from two mutually and generically different and distinct natures, namely soul and body – but that the whole man is soul, and the soul is man. (303)

Would that we knew who Milton had in mind when referring to “pagan authors” (“ab ethnicis authoribus” 302). What we can say is that, unlike more dualist thinkers who argued that body and soul were different and distinct, and who located the imago dei in the invisible nous (Philo) or mens (Augustine), Milton is here positing a monist understanding of the inseparability of the body and soul and suggesting that the imago dei is the whole man. Raphael pays fulsome tribute to this in Book VIII:

For God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also poured
Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking or mute all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms. (219-23)

12 Genesis 1:27 reads “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” Genesis 2:7 reads “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”
13 For a survey of this notoriously complex theology, see Besançon (82-84; 92-96; 101).
Adam as he sits before Raphael is God’s “image fair” both inside and out. Whether speaking or silent, moving or still, he is “all comeliness and grace.” And will the divine image survive the Fall? Yes, at least in part; it will be multiplied through Adam and Eve’s progeny, right down to the seventeenth century, for it is the “human face divine” (III.44) that is the climax of the blind narrator’s lament for the things that he can no longer physically see.

The inseparability of body and soul in man and woman is best understood in the context of Milton’s theory of matter or animist materialism. In his pioneering *Milton among the Philosophers*, Stephen Fallon puts it thus:

> Instead of being trapped in an ontologically alien body, the soul is one with the body. Spirit and matter become for Milton two modes of the same substance: spirit is rarefied matter, and matter is dense spirit. All things, from insensate objects through souls, are manifestations of this one substance [. . .] Milton [. . .] moved toward the position that all corporeal substance is animate, self-active, and free. (80-81)14

Given that God creates everything from the same dynamic substance, the difference between spirit and matter is one of degree not kind. Once again it is the affable angel Raphael who spells out this continuum:

> O Adam, one almighty is, from whom All things proceed, and up to him return, If not depraved from good, created all Such to perfection, one first matter all, Indued with various forms, various degrees Of substance, and in things that live, of life; But more refined, more spirituous, and pure, As nearer to him placed or nearer tending Each in their several active spheres assigned, Till body up to spirit work, in bounds Proportioned to each kind. (V.469-479)

Indeed, mankind and the angels differ “but in degree, of kind the same” (V.490), and if Adam and Eve are “found obedient” (V.501), perhaps, in time, they may become more like angels and partake of angelic food just as Raphael can now share Adam and Eve’s rural repast. Conversely, if found disobedient, the difference between man and loyal angel will

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14 For recent qualifications of aspects of Fallon’s study, see Donnelly; Sugimura.
grow, they will become less refined, spirituous and pure. Disobedience brings ontological dissimilitude in *Paradise Lost*.

**(Dis)similitude in Hell**

If, as suggested above, the narrator is at pains to describe the looks of the protagonists of Books III and IV, the question of what Satan and his fallen angels look like is even more urgent in Books I and II. Indeed, Satan’s first words in the poem, his address to Beëlzebub, indicate the importance of appearance:

> If thou beest he; but oh how fallen! how changed From him, who in the happy realms of light Clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine Myriads though bright: (I.84-87)

Satan compares the fallen Beëlzebub to his unfallen self and the difference is registered in the hiatus introduced by the semi-colon followed by “but,” and in the delay between “thou” at the start of line 84 and “didst outshine” at the end of line 86. The devastating difference – “oh how fallen! how changed / From him” (I.84-85) – is so great that Satan initially doubts his compeer’s identity –“If thou beest he” (I.84; my emphasis). Yet, Satan does not specify the exact nature of Beëlzebub’s metamorphosis; all we can infer is that he has lost his former brightness. A few lines later Satan will assume that he too has suffered change in “outward lustre” (I.97), but, insisting on a dualist understanding of body and soul, will famously deny inward change (I.94-124). Much later in Book IV, Ithuriel and Zephon will fail to recognise him. In response to Satan’s “Know ye not me?” (IV.828), Zephon explains “thou resemblest now / Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul” (IV. 839-40).

It is after some 100 lines of dialogue between Satan and Beëlzebub that the narrator deploys “Hypotyposis or Counterfeit Representation,” using first “Prosopographia, or the Counterfeit Countenance” – a description of an absent person’s visage, speech, and countenance, and then “Icon, or Resemblance by Imagery” or, rather, a series of “icons” making up the long-tailed simile we know:

> Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate With head uplift above the wave, and eyes That sparkling blazed, his other parts besides Prone on the flood, extended long and large
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briarios or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:
Him hapy slumbering on the Norway foam
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wishèd morn delays:
So stretched out huge in length the arch-fiend lay
Chained on the burning lake, nor ever thence
Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs .... (I.192-213)

The narrator begins with Satan’s head “uplift above the wave.” Given that Satan has just delivered two of the most grandiose speeches in English literature the fact that his head is barely above the “fiery surge” is surely a bathetic detail. The narrator will return to this head at the end of the passage and give it weight – it is immensely heavy, he must “heave” it to lift it, and he cannot lift it a millimetre without God’s permission. A few lines later when Satan “rears from off the pool / His mighty stature” (I.221-22) and spreads his wings, we are told in an almost throwaway half line that the air “felt unusual weight” (I.227). All would suggest that Satan is a corporeal being. Yet, this corporeality is complicated. Joad Raymond distinguishes a spectrum of attitudes to the (in)corporeality of angels prevalent in seventeenth-century Britain: the Thomist position that angels were incorporeal and non-material beings who sometimes adopted bodies of air to appear before humans; the Hobbesian materialist and mechanist notion that they were corporeal and substantial; the monist position espoused by Milton that they were substantial and material, but, unlike humans, made of highly spiritual matter and therefore not corporeal (284-91). What we can say is that the narrator is keen to give Satan materiality and visibility – weight but also shape.

As for Satan’s face (the “prosopon” in “prosopographia”) all we are told is that his eyes “sparkling blazed.” T. S. Eliot faulted this detail for inconsistency:
There are, as often with Milton, criticisms of detail which could be made. I am not too happy about eyes that both blaze and sparkle, unless Milton meant us to imagine a roaring fire ejecting sparks: and that is too fiery an image for even supernatural eyes. The fact that the lake was burning somewhat diminishes the effect of the fiery eyes; and it is difficult to imagine a burning lake in a scene where there was only darkness visible. (327)

Alastair Fowler, in turn, would fault Eliot for his literalism (63). But perhaps Eliot is inadvertently drawing attention to an aspect of Satan’s eyes that does need explaining. Satan’s eyes “sparkle” because they reflect what he sees – the fiery surge of hell; simultaneously, they emit rays of their own and so “blaze.” This active, “extramissive” conceptualisation of the eye and seeing, what Michael Squire has termed “the embodied eye” (19-30), prevailed from antiquity until the seventeenth century. It is consistent with Satan’s first highly subjective act of looking in the poem: “round he throws his baleful eyes / That witnessed huge affliction and dismay / Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate” (I.56-58).

What of the rest of Satan’s body? “[H]is other parts besides / Prone on the flood extended long and large / Lay floating many a rood” (I. 194-96). We must be content with the highly unspecific “other parts” and a shift in emphasis to dimension. Extended – a long word – introduces the alliteration of “long and large / Lay floating,” the sense of Satan’s length reinforced through the enjambment. As for “rood” this was a unit of measurement for land equal to 40 square rods or a quarter of an acre (Oxford English Dictionary 7.a.). But our narrator is careful to remain suggestively imprecise: Satan lay “many a rood” long.

It is now that the narrator resorts to a series of “icons” or similes linked by “or”:

in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briarios or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream: (I. 196-202)

The narrator is at pains to convey the magnitude of Satan’s body, his “bulk,” and this prompts him to compare Satan with a series of prodigiously, monstrously large beings from classical myth and from the Word of God. We might say much about the correspondences between
the Titans and the Giants who warred on Jove, and Satan and the rebel angels who warred on God. We might pause when remembering that according to Hesiod’s *Theogony*, Briareos was one of 3 children born of Earth and Heaven who were “[154] hated by their own father from the beginning” (15) and were hidden in the Earth away from the light, or that Typhon stole Zeus’s thunder and was punished by being buried beneath Etna. While these myths pose fascinating questions about theodicy, it is the huge dimensions of these beings that the narrator insists upon. Hesiod’s Briareos and brothers were all “[147] great and strong, unspeakable . . . A hundred arms sprang forth from their shoulders, unapproachable, and upon their massive limbs grew fifty heads out of each one’s shoulders” (15). The description of Thyphon (Thyphoeus) is more detailed: “[820] and from his shoulders there were a hundred heads of a snake, a terrible dragon’s, licking with their dark tongues; and on his prodigious heads fire sparkled from his eyes under the eyebrows, and from all of his heads fire burned as he glared” (69; 71). There were many other versions of these myths and various pictorial traditions; once again our narrator fails to specify.

What of leviathan? Here the narrator turns to the most authoritative book of all, the Word of God, but the biblical leviathan turns out to be somewhat slippery too. Isaiah 27:1 reads “In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.” Some early modern commentators understood there to be three distinct animals in this verse: a crocodile, a snake, and a whale. Job 41: 1-34 provided the most detailed description of leviathan but it too left room for speculation. Was this huge, fire- and smoke-emitting being who “laugheth at the shaking of a spear” (29), “who is made without fear” (33), a crocodile as suggested by “His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal” (15)? Or, given that “He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. / He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary” (31-32), was he not a whale after all? But here our narrator is specific: “that sea-beast / Leviathan, which God of all his works /

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15 For a discussion of Milton’s deployment of the various classical versions of the Typhon and Briareos myths, see Forsyth (30-35), and Herman (189-90).
16 Calvin’s commentary on this verse reads “The word Leviathan is diuerslie expounded, but generallie it signifies a serpent, or the whales and fishes of the sea, which are as monsters in regard of their excessiue greatnes . . . by way of Allegorie he speakes here of Satan” (260).
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream” (I.200-02). The principle subtext would seem to be:

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. / So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. / There go the ships: then is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. (Psalm 104:24-26)

Satan is wondrously huge but, like the great beast leviathan that plays alongside ships in the great wide sea, he is God’s creature.

The long-tailed simile continues for one last twist:

Him haply slumbering on the Norway foam
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays. (I.203-08)

It is these 6 lines that have attracted most critical attention. Richard Bentley, the editor whom Miltonists love to hate, is predictably irritated, objecting to “foam” as inadequate support for a whale and amending “night-foundered” to “nigh-foundered” (11 and Leonard 331-32). T. S. Eliot will praise and damn them simultaneously:

What I wish to call to your attention is the happy introduction of so much extraneous matter. Any writer, straining for images of hugeness, might have thought of the whale, but only Milton could have included the anecdote of the deluded seamen without our wanting to put a blue pencil through it. We nearly forget Satan in attending to the story of the whale; Milton recalls us just in time . . . I find in such passages a kind of inspired frivolity . . . (327-28)

Yet, the story of the whale so large as to be mistaken for an island by seamen, and understood to be an allegory of the devil, was found in the Physiologus and in Latin and English bestiaries (J. H. Pitman; Silver 262-63). For James Whaler this was the classic example of a simile that was both relevant to its immediate narrative context and proleptic of future episodes, namely the fall. The leviathan simile, according to Whaler, conveys three things: Satan’s “enormousness,” his “beastliness,” and his “deadly untrustworthiness” (1050). “Hugest that swim the ocean
stream” draws attention to Satan’s greater size relative to his compeers; the “scaly rind” perhaps suggests “A quasi-serpentine hide must be imagined on Satan’s body,” while the deception of the pilot anticipates Satan’s deception of first his fellow fiends and then of Adam and Eve. Whaler concludes that, like the biblical leviathan as interpreted by Gregory the Great, Rabanus Maurus, and popular bestiaries such as the Physiologus, the simile casts Satan as “An intentional deceiver” (1050).

But what if we add another book of knowledge to the narrator’s library? The Historia animalium, an encyclopaedic study of the animal kingdom by one of Zurich’s most famous early modern polymaths, the philologist and physician Conrad Gessner. The 4-volume Historia animalium was published in Zurich by Froschauer between 1551 and 1558 and in the course of over 3,500 folio pages Gessner aimed to collect everything written about animals by authors ancient and modern, and to include woodcut illustrations where possible. This image appears in Volume IV, the volume dedicated to fish and aquatic animals:

![Image of a ship and aquatic animal](image_url)

Figure 1: Detail of the Teüffelwal. Conradi Gesneri medici Tigurini Historiae animalium liber IIII. qui est de piscium & aquatilium animantium natura: cum iconibus singulorum ad vivum expressis fere omnib. DCCVI. Zürich, 1558, p. 138. Zentralbibliothek Zürich NNN 43. Reproduced with kind permission.

Here we see a ship having dropped anchor on a large aquatic animal with a snout and tusks more reminiscent of a boar than a whale. Its skin is distinctly scaly and two water-spouts protrude from the top of the
head. Two seamen wearing warm clothes have built a fire on the animal’s back and are warming themselves and looking forward to supper. We are clearly in a cold climate. Indeed, the accompanying text explains that such whales are found off the coast of Norway. This animal is very awake, captured by the illustrator presumably just prior to dragging the mariners and ship down to the depths. The caption tells us that this whale is known as “Trolual” or “Teüffelwal” in German.17

The title page of the historia animalium promises us “iconibus singulorum ad vivum,” but, as Sachiko Kusukawa has shown, the concept of “drawn from life” was complex (307-22). Gessner’s Historia animalium does include much information about animal physiology and behaviour based on observation and the accompanying woodcuts are often intended to be zoologically accurate. But the Historia animalium was also, perhaps predominantly, a philological endeavour. Gessner’s publisher Christopher Froschauer advertised it as a work of grammar and rhetoric, and its bulk was largely due to its inclusion of all things known or believed about the animal in question, including ancient and modern descriptions, etymologies, names in different languages, as well as proverbial and emblematic wisdom. It was a humanist history of animals and included descriptions and pictures of the observed world alongside accounts from the ancients as well as medieval bestiaries, accounts that were beginning to be questioned by the new science. Gessner’s woodcut illustrations were similarly eclectic and included images commissioned by himself or received from trusted friends, taken from life or from dried specimens or compiled from animal parts, as well as copies of pictures of real or fabulous animals from broadsides, books, and manuscripts. “Direct observation of the original was not yet a strict requirement for . . . images to be ‘ad vivum’” (Kusukawa 322). In fact the Teüffelwal appears beneath a woodcut of a much more naturalistic, what we would recognise as “ad vivum,” depiction of a whale being axed and carved into pieces ready for human consumption by a band of whalers.

17 The 2016 exhibition (and conference) commemorating the quincentennary of Gessner’s birth at the Landesmuseum, Zurich, curated by Urs Leu, alerted me to the possible link between Gessner’s Teüffelwal and Milton’s leviathan. Subsequently, I discovered that Amy Lee Turner in an unpublished PhD of 1955 references Gessner’s Historia animalium as a book containing woodcuts of animals that Milton may have known (110-12). She even reproduces the image of the Teüffelwal as a possible gloss for the leviathan simile but makes nothing of its larger significance for Paradise Lost.
Gessner was meticulous in citing the sources and provenance of his woodcuts, especially for the more exotic species, and he tells us that he had recycled the Teüffelwal from Olaus Magnus’s map of the northern
lands. The 1532 *Carta Marina* was printed in Venice and, some 4 foot high by 5 foot wide, was expensive to produce. The original print run is not known, but by the early 1570s it seems to have gone out of circulation. A much smaller amended copy was printed in 1572. While it is conceivable that Milton’s leviathan simile is evoking Olaus Magnus’s map, it is much more likely to be referring to Gessner’s *Historia animalium*. Olaus Magnus does not link the island-whale to the devil, neither in the legend on the map itself nor in his description in *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* published in Rome in 1555 (Book 21, esp. chapters 25 and 26), whereas Gessner’s caption to the image specifies that it is known as “Trolual” or “Teüffelwal.” Besides, Gessner’s *Historia animalium* was revered across Europe, not least in Cambridge. Two Cambridge men, William Turner the reformer and naturalist, and John Caius the physician and naturalist, both met Gessner in Zurich and would maintain collaborative friendships with him through letters and gifts. Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, gave a copy of the *Historia animalium* to Cambridge University Library in 1574. Edward Topsell (1572-1625), whose *The History of Four-Footed Beasts* (1607) was a translation-cum-adaptation of *Historia animalium* Liber I was an alumnus of Christ’s College, Milton’s alma mater.

Gessner’s printed image and accompanying text would have given Milton “Norway,” “scaly rind,” and the association with the devil. “Norway” foretells Satan’s affiliation with the northerly regions of heaven when he tells Beëlzebub of his intent to go “Homeward with flying march where we possess / The quarters of the north” (V.688-89). The “scaly rind,” meanwhile, foretells Satan’s reptilian disguise in Book IX and the devils’ being turned into serpents in punishment in Book X. But I would like to suggest that Gessner’s *Historia animalium* is of relevance to *Paradise Lost* more generally, that in invoking the great Zurich pandect Milton is proffering an encyclopaedic model of knowledge based on a Protestant reading of the natural world, God’s second book.

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18 See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carta_marina#/media/File:Carta_Marina.jpeg. When we look closely at Magnus’s map, we see that its many sea-beasts are shown in dangerous proximity to ships and that each ship is given a nationality. The island-whale is perilously close to a ship full of “Angli.” See Chet Van Duzer (81-87), for the map in general, and Nigg (108-11) for the island whale).

19 For Gessner’s pan-European network of correspondents, see Urs Leu, *Conrad Gessner* (208-18), and “Conrad Gessners Netzwerk.” For Caius’s gifts see Leu, *Conrad Gessner* (179; 192; 202; 213; 215; 227). For Turner, see Raven (49-134) and Jones.


21 For Topsell, see Ley.
The leviathan simile is one of many references to the beasts of the natural world in *Paradise Lost*, and, as such, is part of the heated debate over the extent of Milton’s endorsement of the new science. Kester Svendsen’s thesis that Milton favoured the old emblematic natural history over the new experimental philosophy has recently been challenged.22 In *Milton and the Natural World*, Karen Edwards argues with great subtlety that Milton would have considered it the duty of a writer of epic to embrace all the learning of his day, even if some of it was in the process of being discredited and some of it was highly speculative . . . The old emblematic natural history is indeed present in *Paradise Lost*; Svendsen is not mistaken to point to it. But it is not given the poem’s representational endorsement. The old science is invariably invoked for the less interesting . . . interpretative option . . . often marked by sly humour, . . . incorporating an acknowledgment of its unreliability. At the same time, the poem consistently makes available new representational possibilities suggested by the experimental philosophy, and it does so with excitement, wit, and creative relish. (10)

Edwards thus suggests that the old animal lore is used for Satan in hell, and points to the griffin simile of II.943-50 and the leviathan simile of I.200-08 to conclude that “the poem draws upon and refashions the traditional symbolic richness of fabulous creatures while denying their actual bodily existence” (100; 99-114).

I would like to propose a different reading which, rather than aligning Milton with or against the new science, seeks to celebrate the encyclopaedic model of knowledge represented by the *Historia animalium*. As we saw above, Gessner juxtaposed ancient animal lore with descriptions based on observation. Kusukawa writes:

[It] was . . . an “inventory” of knowledge about animals throughout history – Gessner did not distil or reduce similar descriptions, but rather juxtaposed them; nor did he eliminate contradictory or false descriptions of existing animals, or omit descriptions of animals whose existence was uncertain. (306)23

In this light, the “or” which links the different icons that make up our chain of similes is not asking us to choose between incompatible things,

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22 For a warning that Milton should not be aligned with the new science in the absence of hard evidence, see William Poole.
23 Gessner did doubt the veracity of some of the accounts he included, questioning the existence of 21 out of 25 “fabulous” creatures. See Leu, *Conrad Gesner als Theologe* (97).
It is not “either . . . or . . .” In this simile “or” links comparable things and functions more like “and.” The narrator’s prootophobia of Satan, which evolves into our long-tailed simile, presents us with a chain of descriptions from disparate books of knowledge, and, like Gessner’s encyclopaedia collated from different sources and media, each description proffers an aspect of truth. Thus, Satan has a material form, a heavy head, eyes that blaze and sparkle. His other parts are not specified neither is his exact length. But we know he is enormous, as huge, strong, and terrifying as the monsters of classical myth as described by an unspecified ancient poet, as vast as the leviathan of Job 41 and Psalm 102. But he is also somehow like that Teüffelwal seen, or reportedly seen, off the coast of Norway that Gessner preserved in graphic form.

In his prefatory letter to the Historia animalium, after a measured account of the utility animals, Gessner’s enthusiasm for the apparently useless emmet gets the better of him:

And what man withall his witte, can sufficiently declare and proclaime the wonderful industrious minds of the little Emmets and Bees . . . so that I might conclude, that there is not any beast which hath not onely somthing in it which is rare, glorious, and peculiar to himselfe, but also something that is deuine . . . not set before vs like sports & pastimes to reioyce at, but as honorable emblems of Diuine and supernaturall wisedome. (Topsell 1607 2v-3r)

Gessner is here paying tribute to the belief that God revealed himself in the natural world, his second book. All God’s creatures, from the seemingly insignificant emmet to the monstrous Teüffelwal, signified God’s original creative act as well as his on-going providential intervention in the world. This was an ancient commonplace but had been given new emphasis by the first generation of reformers, particularly Luther, Zwingli, and Bucer, and would become a trope in Milton’s England (Leu, Conrad Gesner als Theologe 31-48; Walsham 328-57; Edwards 40-63). Milton would of course pay tribute to “The parsimonious emmet” (VII.485) in Raphael’s account of Creation. “Nature was an emblem rather than a photograph of the divine” (Walsham 333) but this image of the almighty far surpassed any made by human hand. By referencing Gessner’s image, the narrator powerfully reinforces his message:

24 For a reading which highlights the ubiquity of “or” in Paradise Lost, but argues that it fills the poem “with larger and smaller instances of unresolved, aporetic choices that reflect Milton’s own . . . state” (203) after the Restoration, see Peter Herman.
So stretched out huge in length the arch-fiend lay
Chained on the burning lake, nor ever thence
Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs .... (I.209-13)

Satan, like the leviathan, is God’s creature, a wonder to behold and a sign of his maker’s omnipotence, but still “at large” – free to swim away or sink the skiff as it were.

By juxtaposing the narrator’s representation of the Son of God in heaven and Adam and Eve as *imago dei* in Eden with the famous opening chain of similes describing Satan in hell, this essay has brought God the Maker into dialogue with the poet maker and emphasised their preoccupation with images. In *Paradise Lost* an image is emphatically visual and embodied: the Son of God is the “conspicuous countenance” of the Father while in Adam and Eve’s “looks divine / The image of their glorious maker shone.” Meanwhile, the chain of similes which compares Satan to the monsters of the fables, to that sea beast leviathan and, ultimately, to a printed image on the page of a famous Protestant natural history invites us to visualise Satan both as a material body of wondrous dimensions and as the pre-eminent emblem of God’s creative powers. More broadly, this emphasis on embodied visuality in *Paradise Lost* validates the natural, material world and the sense of sight as possible ways to apprehend God. This valorisation may come as something of a surprise from a poet so routinely dubbed “Puritan.”

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Samuel Richardson’s Visual Rhetoric of Improvement

Erzsi Kukorelly

Samuel Richardson was deeply concerned with reader improvement, and used painterly elements in his writing to bring this about. In order to examine this claim, I read eighteenth-century literary critics and theorists Henry Home, Lord Kames’s *Elements of Criticism*, and Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* to see how they understand visually descriptive language’s capacity to sway readers. They agree that such language makes readers into eyewitnesses whose emotions are moved, and who can be led to change their behaviour. Richardson also believed that culture had this efficient quality; as such, it should be used to promote the cause of virtue and morality. He used visual description in a way that concurs with the theory laid out by Kames and Blair. However, his approach to using visuality in order to improve his readers changed over his career. As he became more proficient, and as he extended his practice as a novelist, he demanded more from his readers. If in his first printed text, *The Apprentice’s Vade Mecum* (1734), visual description is used to improve readers in a straightforward but rather uncouth manner, in *Clarissa* (1748) and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753) readers’ hermeneutic abilities are taxed to the limit. Nevertheless, if we read with the proficiency and attention that Richardson expects from us, we can see that he positions readers so as to maximise the potential that the texts offer for improvement.

Samuel Richardson was deeply concerned with improvement, and he hoped that culture, especially the novel, would engineer the betterment Richardson bore witness to his conviction that culture had an effect on people’s lives, and thus should have a strongly didactic function.¹ The

¹ See *Vade Mecum* and *A Collection*.

methods that Richardson adopted in his struggle to make his readers docile vessels for the middle-class morality that he wished to inculcate were various. Some were pointed out to readers by Richardson and his acolytes in prefatory paratexts: for example, in the letters that precede *Pamela*, our attention is drawn to the persuasive effectiveness of the natural and intimate epistolary prose (4-8). Other tactics have been identified in retrospect by scholars, such as the paratextual straightjacket of footnotes that Richardson added to *Clarissa* over the course of the different editions of the novel published during his lifetime (Castle 175). I would like to suggest that one of Richardson’s tactics was his use of visually descriptive writing, that this painterliness is part of his rhetorical arsenal to improve readers.²

In order to investigate this claim, I have turned to Henry Home, Lord Kames’s *Elements of Criticism* (1762), and Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783). Both discuss the merits of visuality in texts, and, crucially, how visuality affects and influences readers. In the first part of this essay, I will review the persuasive and phenomenological aspects of textual visuality as these eighteenth-century thinkers theorised it. Then I will discuss some sequences from Richardson’s writings, as I verify how they accord with the ideas put forward by the theoreticians. Richardson’s use of visual elements in his writing develops in line with his practice as a didactic writer and a writer of fiction: as he moves through his career, the lessons to be learned from the visual elements in his writing become more subtle, and demand more work from his readers.³

The first volume of Kames’s treatise deals at length with the effect art has on its consumers. He sets out “to ascertain what power the fine arts have to raise emotions and passions,” suggesting that “[t]he principles of the fine arts . . . open a direct avenue to the heart of man” (I 32),

² Although scholars have spent time investigating his use of visual writing, notably Lynn Shepherd, the focus has mainly been on aesthetic rather than rhetorical concerns. Shepherd devotes much of her excellent study to the congruence between developments in eighteenth-century portraiture and novelistic description in Richardson; she mainly focuses on portrait-like descriptions (of individuals, but also of groups i.e. “conversation pieces”), as well as illustration of the novels. Other studies include Murray L. Brown, Janet E. Aikins, and Alison Conway.

³ Tom Keymer makes the case that Richardson trains readers to be active and engaged readers, a practice that would enhance their “competence to understand, judge and negotiate the actual experience of living in the world” (xvii). Rather than “the blinkered dogmatist of modern caricature,” we should acknowledge that Richardson knew “that his approach in the novels should be to withhold the simplicity of didactic imperatives and refuse to dictate a series of straightforward, uncontested meanings” (65-66).
and later, that a constant habit of well-regulated cultural consumption opens a “commodious avenue to the heart of a young person” (I 52).

Blair, who seeks both to analyse literature (Belles Lettres) and to give training in persuasive language (Rhetoric), begins by claiming “Speech is the great instrument by which man becomes beneficial to man” (I 1). Both authors feel that people influence each other through the use of words. For Kames, this useful feature of language is God-given: “the author of our nature, attentive to our wants, hath provided a passage to the heart, which never can be obstructed while eye-sight remains” (I 301). Under divine auspices, texts function as channels of influence, and keeping this channel open depends on operations of the visual sense.

Both men focus our attention on language that uses visual elements to provoke a visual perception on the part of the reader. It is, writes Kames, the work of narrative to paint objects “so accurately as to form in the mind of the reader distinct and lively images.” Indeed, “[t]he force of language consists in raising complete images; which have the effect to transport the reader as by magic into the very place of the important action, and to convert him as it were into a spectator” (II 614). A good description invites the reader into the text, and makes him into an eyewitness. Blair is delighted with the visual potential of language:

“What a fine vehicle it is now become for all the conceptions of the human mind; even for the most subtle and delicate workings of the imagination! . . . Not content with a simple communication of ideas and thoughts, it paints those ideas to the eye; it fixes colouring and relievo, even to the most abstract conceptions. . . . It entertains us, as with a succession of the most splendid pictures; disposes, in the most artificial manner, of the light and shade, for viewing every thing to the best advantage. (I 289)

The most advanced form of language is that which renders “abstract conceptions” as painterly forms. Blair claims that the substitutive dynamic of metaphor is a function of visuality: “Of all the figures of Speech, none comes so near to painting as Metaphor. Its peculiar effect is . . . to make intellectual ideas, in some sort, visible to the eye, by giving them colour, substance, and sensible qualities” (I 297). Blair is certain that writing can call up emotions in the reader by using visuality:

“Of all the means which human ingenuity has contrived for recalling the images of real objects, and awakening, by representation, similar emotions to those which are raised by the original, none is so full and extensive as that which is executed by words and writing. (I 93)
For Kames it is a question of “raising complete images” whereas for Blair it is one of “recalling the images of real objects”: subtly different, perhaps, but both authors are certain that the power of language to produce visual perception is almost as effective as the power of the object being described, and that this process has the potential to raise emotions.

For Kames, descriptive texts have the ability, through visual evocation, to influence the emotions and passions of readers, which in turn form desires that move them to action. This process was useful for a writer like Samuel Richardson, who intended that his novels improve their readers by moving them to change their behaviour. Kames develops a theory called “the sympathetic emotion of virtue” (I 48). This results in “a spectator . . . or reader” replicating the attitude that they find in what they read: “let us figure some grand and heroic action, highly agreeable to the spectator: . . . the spectator feels in himself an unusual dignity of character, which disposeth him to great and noble action” (I 50). This is sympathy because we project ourselves into the place of the protagonist through fellow feeling with him. “[T]he strongest branch of sympathy,” according to Kames, is “that which is raised by means of sight” (I 310), and “[w]riters of genius, sensible that the eye is the best avenue to the heart, represent every thing as passing in our sight; and, from readers or hearers, transform us as it were into spectators” (II 351). Such a writer “inspires [the reader] with the same passions as if he were an eye-witness” (II 351).

The effect of textual visuality is to make of readers eyewitnesses, to transport them “as by magic” to the scene that is described (Kames II 614); once they are there, they have access to emotion and passion. But they do not only have access to these; rather, emotions are forced upon them; there is an irresistible automaticity in this process. In an important sense, they are, as Scott Paul Gordon suggests, “responsive rather than responsible”; they respond to the texts they read in a passive manner, rather than interpret them in acts of will (8).

Both Kames and Blair use the word “transfuse” to describe the way in which writing affects readers. Kames writes that “the splendor and enthusiasm of the hero [is] transfused into the readers” (I 177), and Blair that “language is become a vehicle by which the most delicate and refined emotions of one mind can be . . . transfused into another” (I 98). Kames devotes a whole chapter to “Emotions caused by Fiction” where he develops his ideas around the automaticity of textual visuality to engender emotional reactions (I 66 ffd). “I am imperceptibly converted into a spectator” (I 67) he writes, and
the power of language to raise emotions, depends entirely on the raising . . .
[o]f lively and distinct images... [T]he reader's passions are never sensibly
moved, till he be thrown into a kind of reverie; in which state, forgetting
that he is reading, he conceives every incident as passing in his presence,
precisely as if he were an eye-witness. (I 69)

For Kames, passions make us act: fear and anger move us to protect
ourselves (I 63), whereas pity, “warming and melting the spectator, pre-
pares him for the reception of other tender affections” such as “love or
friendship” resulting in “tenderness and concern for the object” (I 60).
Visual descriptions produce emotions in readers, which in turn spur
them to act.

The effect of this process of textual visuality leading to emotions and
thence on to action is one of individual, but more importantly, social
improvement. Social emotions, benevolence, sympathy, sensibility: all
are engendered by visual description that moves the passions and results
in action. This action can be individualistic, but it can also be strikingly
social. When we perceive an object of beauty, its visual aspect, writes
Kames, “concurs in an eminent degree with mental qualifications, to
produce social intercourse, mutual goodwill, and consequently mutual
aid and support, which are the life of society” (I 149). By writing in such
a way as to bring spectator-readers into the “ideal presence” of what
happens in the text, the author makes use of

that extensive influence which language hath over the heart; an influence,
which, more than any other means, strengthens the bond of society, and at-
tracts individuals from their private system to perform acts of generosity
and benevolence. (Kames I 74)

Visual descriptions, then, are central to the eighteenth-century goal of
bringing about a better society through reading. Samuel Richardson was
certainly a proponent of this goal. If in his early non-fiction texts (Vade
Mecum and Familiar Letters) his use of visuality is quite straightforward, as
he develops as a novelist his incorporation of visual elements becomes
more sophisticated, and draws more and more heavily on his readers’
skills. In the Vade Mecum, there is an exuberant description ridiculing the
“modern London-Apprentice of the Gentleman-Class,” who spend all their
money and time on aping their betters:

All the Fopperies and Apish Fashions of the Men of Mode of the other
End of the Town must be introduce’d into the City: And I have seen a prim
young Fellow, with a Cue or Adonis, as they call the effeminate Wigs of the
present Vogue, *plaister'd* rather than *powder'd*, and appearing like *Twigs* of a *Gooseberry-Bush*, in *deep Snow*; his Shoulders also crusted or iced over with a White, as thick as a *Twelf-Cake*, with a plaited Shirt, ruffled at Hands and Bosom; a Coat, with a Cape reaching, like an *old Wife’s Tippet*, half way down his Back; Stockens, milk-white; and perhaps Velvet-Breeches, with Silver Buckles at the Knee, Tassels hanging half way down his Legs; Spanish Leather Pumps, (without Heels), and the burnished peeked Toes, seeming to stare the Wearer in the Face; fine wrought Buckles, near as big as those of a *Coach-Horse*, covering his Instep and half his Feet; on his Head a diminutive Hat hardly bigger than such we have seen of *Gingerbread*, at a Country Fair, gallantly cock’d and adorn’d with a Silver Button and Loop.

(32-33)

The bent towards improvement is clear, as the narrator invites the reader (who is addressed as “you”) to look on aghast at the glittering accessories that accumulate on the surface of the young man’s body. The reader steps onto the moral high ground, joining his gaze with that of the disapproving writer. The process of improvement is straightforward, as the vehement, overabundant description produces a visual image that none would wish to emulate.

*Letters, Written to and for Particular Friends, on the most Important Occasions* (1740) is situated somewhere between a letter-writing manual, a conduct book, and a collection of short stories. It includes a series of letters from a young woman to her relatives in the provinces about seeing the sights during her first London visit. At Westminster Abbey, she is exposed to the power of visual culture to change her for the better. She looks at the monuments and comments:

> such was the solemn Effect the sacred Repository had upon me, that I never found an awful Reverence equal to what I felt on that Occasion. Whatever be the Intention of erecting these costly Monuments, they seem to me very capable of being made an excellent Sermon to succeeding Generations. (494)

One such sermon is:

> The Body of Queen *Catherine*, Consort to *Henry* the Fifth . . . shewn us in an open *Coffin*; and what remains of Skin, looks like black discoloured Parchment. She is said to have been very beautiful; and surely, to view her now, is a most effectual Antidote against the Vanity rising from that dangerous Accomplishment. (495)
It is seeing the putrefied body of the dead Queen that is an “excellent Sermon” for the young lady, and readers of Richardson’s book partake in the improvement purveyed by precise description of “black discoloured Parchment.” Richardson’s visual rhetoric here is more sophisticated than in the *Vade Mecum*, as the reader’s gaze is aligned with that of the young lady. As a rhetorical tactic to foster reader improvement, this is more effective than the satirical denunciation of youthful behaviour by a middle-aged commentator in the *Vade Mecum*.

In *Pamela* there are many painterly moments, especially after Pamela and B are engaged to be married, and the plot slows down to the stasis of conduct literature. I choose to focus on two passages, both from the 1742 sequel, *Pamela in Her Exalted Condition*. In the last volume, B. gives his wife John Locke’s *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, and the young matron reads, summarises, and comments on Locke’s advice. Mainly she agrees with him, for example, when he advises against “too straight Clothing” for infants (503):

> How has my Heart ached, many and many a time, when I have seen poor Babies roll’d and swath’d, ten or a dozen times round; then Blanket upon Blanket, Mantle upon that; its little Neck pinn’d down to one Posture; its Head, more than it frequently needs, triple crown’d like a young Pope, with Covering upon Covering; its Legs and Arms, (as if to prevent that kindly Stretching, which we rather ought to promote, when it is in Health, and which is only aiming at Growth and Enlargement) the former bundled up, the latter pinn’d down; and how the poor Thing lies on the Nurse’s Lap, a miserable little pinion’d Captive, goggling and staring with its Eyes, the only Organs it has at Liberty, as if it were supplicating for Freedom to its fetter’d Limbs. (503)

Like Locke, Pamela disapproves of swaddling infants. By the middle years of the eighteenth century, this practice was considered archaic, and, as here, associated with arbitrary rule and tyranny. Visuality is exploited in order to incur feelings of tenderness and pity for the infant. If we turn back to Kames, we find that he suggests that readers replicate and feel with their bodies that about which they read. This sort of avant-la-lettre mirror-neurone theory leads him to write that “A constrained posture, uneasy to the man himself, is disagreeable to the spectator” (I

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4 See Wolff 392-93, where he discusses Rousseau’s *Emile* (1762), and Benzaquien 38, where she discusses Buffon’s *Natural History of Man* (1749).
130). If the effect of Pamela’s description is to make the reader pity the swaddled baby, this is brought about by the phenomenological effect of reading visual descriptions of constrained and uncomfortable bodies.

Towards the end of the last volume, Pamela, who has attained the status of educator of her family, her neighbourhood, her correspondents, as well as readers of the novel, describes a storytelling moment to her friend Lady G.:

Then, Madam, we all proceed hand in hand together to the Nursery, to my Charley and Jenny: And in this happy Retirement, so much my Delight in the Absence of my best Beloved, imagine you see me seated, surrounded with the Joy and the Hope of my future Prospects, as well as my present Comforts.

Miss Goodwin imagine you see, on my Right Hand, sitting on a Velvet Stool, because she is eldest, and a Miss Billy on my Left, in a little Cane Elbow Chair, because he is eldest, and a good Boy: My Davers, and my sparkling-ey’d Pamela, with my Charley between them, on little silken Cushions at my Feet, hand in hand, their pleased Eyes looking up to my more delighted ones, and my sweet-natur’d promising Jenny in my Lap; the Nurses and the Cradle just behind us, and the Nursery Maids delightedly pursuing some useful Needle-work, for the dear Charmers of my Heart. – All as hush and as still, as Silence itself, as the pretty Creatures generally are, when their little watchful Eyes see my Lips beginning to open. (590)

This is a textual tableau, which was considered to be a particularly efficacious literary form in the eighteenth century, as it precipitated an “epiphany of sensibility” and “persuaded [its readers] by a narrative composition founded not on discursive reasoning, but on soliciting the imagination” (Wenger 123, 126; my translation). Blair might have identified this scene as “a vision,” a figure “proper only to animated and warm Composition . . . when, in place of relating something that is past, we use the present tense, and describe it as actually passing before our eyes” (1 359). He adds:

when well executed, [it] must needs impress the reader or hearer strongly, by the force of . . . sympathy . . . [I]t requires an uncommonly warm imagination, and such a happy selection of circumstances, as shall make us think we see before our eyes the scene that is described. (359-60)

Modern neurological research validates Kames’s insight. As Edmund Rolls explains, “the firing of mirror neurons in the observer of a given action provides the observer with proprioceptive awareness of that action, and not merely proprioceptive information” (354).

5 Modern neurological research validates Kames’s insight. As Edmund Rolls explains, “the firing of mirror neurons in the observer of a given action provides the observer with proprioceptive awareness of that action, and not merely proprioceptive information” (354).
The description here is indeed visual. First, it focuses our attention through acts of gazing. Lady G.’s extra-textual gaze is shared by readers as she is told to “imagine [she] sees” the delightful scene. Then, we are asked to observe the gazes of the children and Pamela as the former’s “pleased Eyes look[] up to [her] more delighted ones”; indeed, this is habitual when the children’s “little watchful Eyes see [her] Lips beginning to Open.” As we follow the gaze, we are drawn to the very font and source of improvement, Pamela’s lips and the words that will issue forth. Second, its descriptions are precise and pictorial. The personages are placed in space and the objects that emplace them are described. Blair writes that the “best describers . . . set before us such features of an object as, on the first view, strike and warm the fancy: they give us ideas which a Statuary or a Painter could lay hold of, and work after them” (I 384).6 This is exactly what happened, as both Joseph Highmore and Hubert Gravelot copied this scene in their illustrations of the novel, the former in a series of paintings, the latter in the engravings included in the 1742 deluxe octavo edition of the novel (Shepherd 56-57; Richardson Pamela in her Exalted Condition 692).

The rhetorical effect here has gained sophistication, requiring more readerly skill. When Pamela asks Lady G. to picture the scene in the B nursery, readers are to do the same thing. This solves a number of problems, logical and rhetorical. First, Pamela is contained within the scene; were we to gaze with her, we would not be able to gaze on her, and the point is for us to see how domestic well-being emanates out from her. Logically, we need a point of view that is outside the scene. Second, there is the problem of self-adulation. If Pamela praises herself, she is guilty of pride and vanity and is not worthy of imitation; this would render her rhetorically useless. By couching the nursery scene as textual tableau, Richardson inserts the distancing mechanism of Lady G.’s gaze, and the onus for developing admiration for the protagonist’s maternal perfection is shifted to viewers and readers, fictional and real. As we are not privy to Lady G.’s response, there is no inscribed reader, no model for reading; we are left alone to interpret and profit from the scene as best we can.

6 This sentiment was shared by Denis Diderot during his advocacy of bourgeois drama in Entretiens sur le Fils naturel (1757), when he distinguishes between a coup de théâtre and a tableau, the former is “[a]n unexpected incident that happens in the course of the action and that suddenly changes the situation of the characters,” and the latter “[a]n arrangement of those characters on the stage, so natural and so true to life that, faithfully rendered by a painter, it would please me on canvas” (qtd. in Fried 95).
In order to illustrate Richardson’s developing use of visuality as rhetorical tactic in *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* I have chosen to focus on scenes of breastfeeding. This is an apt topic to explore the rhetorical effect of visual writing, given that breastfeeding was a complex ideological, political, and cultural domain in the middle decades of the eighteenth century, and contemporary readers would have recognised the novels’ participation in the ongoing polemic. On one hand, there was the modern, sentimentally and affectively correct, stance (mothers should breastfeed), and on the other, the old-fashioned stance, motivated by a husband’s proprietary notions about his wife’s body (mothers should not breastfeed). How, then, do the painterly descriptions of breastfeeding in Richardson’s two last novels position their readers to adopt the correct stance?

Whereas the passage from *Sir Charles Grandison* is complex and dynamic, the passage from *Clarissa* is a tableau, and one of the more sexual scenes in the novel. Lovelace, who has sequestered Clarissa but not yet raped her, imagines being a father:

> Let me perish, Belford, if I would not forgo the brightest diadem in the world for the pleasure of seeing a twin Lovelace at each charming breast, drawing from it his first sustenance; the pious task continued for one month, and no more!

> I now, methinks, behold this most charming of women in this sweet office, pressing with her fine fingers the generous flood into the purple mouths of each eager hunter by turns: her conscious eye now dropped on one, now on the other, with a sigh of maternal tenderness; and then raised up to my delighted eye, full of wishes, for the sake of the pretty varlets, and for her own sake, that I would deign to legitimate; that I would condescend to put on the nuptial fetters. (706)

The scene is mediated through Lovelace’s imagination. He is not recalling a scene, but creating it. He is in a sort of reverie, in which a future of parental bliss is rendered real to him through an almost unwilled act of imaginative seeing. A few lines down, it is Clarissa’s ideal, imagined,

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7 In both William Cadogan’s *An Essay upon Nursing* (1748) and James Nelson’s *Essay on the Government of Children* (1753) the physician writers strenuously advocate maternal breastfeeding. In addition to these self-help books, *The Gentleman’s Magazine* contained lengthy discussions of the practice in 1748 and in 1752, a sure sign that this was a matter for public debate in the mid-decades of the century. Richardson himself had already spent time discussing the topic in the sequel to *Pamela* (309-22), and in later editions of *Clarissa* a footnote to the breastfeeding scene refers us to the correct place in the earlier novel.
gaze that is described, as she looks down on their children, and then up towards Lovelace.

In the last volume of *Sir Charles Grandison*, Lady G., the eponymous hero’s feisty sister, is burst upon by her husband as she is breastfeeding. “[H]e entered my chamber; and surprised me, . . . how? Ah, Harriet! In an act that confessed the mother, the whole mother! – Little Harriet at my breast” (III 402). The nursery maids panic, and rather than shielding their mistress from her husband’s gaze, they run around ineffectually. Charlotte too panics, is “ready to let the little Leech drop from [her] arms,” and tells her husband to “begone! – begone!” (403). To her surprise, though, she finds that “Never was a man in a greater rapture.” She continues:

He threw himself at my feet, clasping me and the little varlet together in his arms. Brute! said I, will you smother my Harriet – I was half ashamed of my tenderness – Dear-est, dear-est, dear-est Lady G. – Shaking his head, between every dear and est, every muscle of his face working; how you transport me! – Never, never, never, saw I so delightful a sight! Let me, let me, let me (every emphatic word repeated three times at least) behold again the dear sight. Let me see you clasp the precious gift . . . to that lovely bosom – The wretch (trembling however) pulled aside my handkerchief. I try’d to scold; but was forced to press the little thing to me, to supply the place of the handkerchief – Do you think, I could not have killed him? – To be sure, I was not half angry enough. I knew not what I did, you may well think – for I bowed my face on the smiling infant, who crowed to the pressure of my lip. (403)

In this scene, movement, gaze and effect are tightly choreographed. At first Lord G. drops to his knees and clasps wife and child in his arms. At this point he cannot actually see them, but their image remains in his mind’s eye as a “delightful . . . sight.” Instantly, though, he wishes to replace memory with reality and begs: “let me . . . behold again the dear sight. Let me see you clasp the precious gift to that lovely bosom.” He becomes insistent and “pull[es] aside [his wife’s] handkerchief,” baring her lactating bosom to his eyes. As readers, we do not see the bosom or the baby’s mouth; rather we are given their effect in the husband’s enthralled and panting reaction.

In the earlier passage from *Clarissa*, the paternal gaze through which we see the breastfeeding mother is that of Lovelace, arch-villain and rapist; here it is that of very proper Lord G. As readers, we process our feelings about the scenes via our judgment of the respective paternal gazes. Lovelace’s imaginative vision of Clarissa nursing their non-
existent sons is practically pornographic and, perhaps because of this, ineffectual, as Lovelace does not aver that it would bring him to legitimize the children through marrying their mother. In contrast, Lord G.’s actual sighting of the maternal breast and suckling daughter confirms his status as a man of sensibility, perfectly attuned to the abounding parental love of the newly nuclear family. Here, visuality takes its effect in both the fictional world and in the reader’s imagination, as the latter is pushed to value the sight of a breastfeeding mother as a symbol for proper parenting and a happy marriage.

As Richardson progresses as a novelist, the work that readers must do in order to understand and interpret what they see, and to use the knowledge gained for self-improvement, becomes more complex. Tom Keymer discusses “the reader’s role within the terms of Richardson’s aim of enhancing, through the mental experience of reading, the reader’s competence to understand, judge and negotiate the actual experience of living in the world” (xviii). Readers need to work to attain the didactic intention encoded in the work, presumably because the world itself is a complex and unforgiving place, which needs to be read and interpreted before social activity can safely take place. For Keymer, Clarissa’s greatest value as an engine of improvement is that it enables readers to hone their skills in reading. The ideal reader of the novel is

a careful subordinate prepared to work his way obediently through the text, filling in its gaps and indeterminacies in response to the text’s internal signals and thereby realising a set of meanings which in the last resort remains authorially governed. (72)

The breastfeeding scenes from both novels provide a case in point.

In Clarissa, Lovelace is the villain; readers are intended to follow neither his conduct nor his opinion. A cursory reading of the breastfeeding scene, however, shows him to hold the correct sentimental opinion. As readers, we can align our gaze with his, and revel in a scene that in many points resembles the model sentimental family: a mother, suckling babies, and a paternal onlooker. However, this is problematic. First, Clarissa and Lovelace are not married; theirs is an illegitimate family. Second, Lovelace transforms the scene into one of predatory desire, disturbingly located at the juncture between babies’ mouths and mother’s breasts. Lovelace describes “the purple mouths of [the] eager hunter[s],” recalling his own voracious sexuality rather than filial dependency viewed with parental love (706). Third, Clarissa’s “maternal tenderness” is suspect, as it is cast as part of a strategy to get Lovelace to marry her. The situation is all wrong, and its wrongness was initiated by
the event that precipitates Lovelace’s vision: the removal, in the previous scene, of Clarissa’s handkerchief in order to reveal “the beauty of beauties,” and his “press[ing] with [his] burning lips the charmingest breast that ever [his] ravished eyes beheld” (705). Lovelace the predator is replaced by his envisioned “eager hunter” sons. The parallel between father and sons emphasises their illegitimacy, and their very presence assumes that Clarissa and Lovelace have had sexual intercourse; as such, they are an imaged foreshadowing of the protagonist’s rape. All viewers of the scene are illegitimate: Lovelace, Belford, and we readers. Clarissa’s handkerchief should never have been removed since all that is revealed is practically incestuous sexual desire.

There is a different reading of the scene, though, one that sets it up as a test for Lovelace. The tableau he paints of Clarissa is an object of cultural consumption which has the potential to reform him; indeed, he suggests that he might “put on the nuptial fetters” (706). However, Lovelace fails the test: watching breastfeeding Clarissa does not make him reform, does not bring him to “deign to legitimate,” because he is impervious to sentimental culture. He does not recognise the vision of himself watching Clarissa suckle his sons as the central composition or tableau from which correct familial and social existence must emanate. Readers must be clever to gain improvement from the scene, but once the work of interpretation is done, we have drawn two important and linked conclusions. Lovelace is a bad consumer of cultural production who does not understand the image he has conjured up, and, in a society that equates improvement with correct sentimental reactions, he is beyond reformation.

Quite the opposite happens in *Sir Charles Grandison*, as the scene results in the improvement of both husband and wife. Readers are provided with dual positions in the text, wife and husband; these are then judged from a third position, three letters later, when Harriet Grandison tells us that Lord and Lady G. have improved as husband and wife. The first who improves is Lady G. She is somewhat surprised at her own reaction to her husband’s behaviour: she is “half ashamed of [her] tenderness” for her daughter, then she is “not half angry enough” at him (III 403). In the end, she revels in “[her] maternity so kindly acknowledged, so generously accepted” by her husband (III 404). Lord G. too is improved. In the early days of their marriage, he had felt that his feisty bride did not respect him enough; however, the sight of his lactating wife has brought about a change:
I have seen that it was all owing to a vivacity, that now, in every instance of it, delights my soul. You never, never, had malice or ill-nature in what I called your petulance. You bore with mine. You smiled at me . . . O my Charlotte! Never, never, more shall it be in your power to make me so far forget myself, as to be angry. (III 403)

Charlotte is delighted, and exclaims “[t]he infant is the cement between us; and we will for the future be every day more worthy of that, and of each other,” a speech that draws from her husband the ultimate sign of the correct sentiment, tears: “My lord hurried from me in speechless rapture; his handkerchief at his eyes” (404). Readers, whether men or women, must align their gaze consecutively with the husband, stimulated by the sight of his nursing wife to recognise her inherent goodness and lack of malice, and with the wife, who becomes more tender and less angry at the sight of her enraptured husband. The child is “the cement” that holds husband, wife and child together in companionate sensibility, fixing the tableau for reader inspection.

A few letters later Harriet validates their happiness and good conduct. Harriet’s opinion is highly valued in the novel, and provides readers with an unambiguous judgment: “they are both so much improved as husband and wife!” (III 412). Indeed, Charlotte is “one of the most obliging of wives, tenderest of mothers, and amiable of nurses” and “[m]y lord appears, even in her company, now that his wife has given him his due consequence, a manly, sensible man” (III 412). The couple have mutually improved each other by engaging in negotiation and compromise, and by recognising correct behaviour in each other. The moment at which the marriage moves from potentially disastrous to effectively perfect is the breastfeeding scene, where readers see mutual improvement gravitating around the sight of the nursing wife. The visu- ality that Richardson puts into play at this point, the effects of seeing and correctly reading a scene of family life, are central in purveying the correct message to readers: the ground zero of a good marriage is the lactating bosom, viewed by a sentimental but manly husband.

The reader’s role in engineering his or her improvement in these two breastfeeding sequences is complex. In the case of Clarissa, the reader must learn to read the scene backwards: it does not so much propose to improve readers by having them adopt the correct, sentimental opinion on breastfeeding; rather it seeks to improve them by producing Love-lace as a conduct conundrum. If we read his vision of breastfeeding Clarissa at face value, we will misjudge his behaviour as adhering to the tenets of newly valued masculinity, permitting the mother to nurse her children, and looking on with satisfaction. However, such a reading is
hasty and superficial. Once we place the scene more precisely in its context, once we make the link between Lovelace’s predatory behaviour and his sons’, and once we examine the implications of legitimacy and legitimising in the scene, we are led to see the scene as it should be understood, as a test for Lovelace, one that he fails.

In Sir Charles Grandison, the case for readerly activism is equally sophisticated. As we read the scene, we must be nimble readers, successively adopting feminine and masculine viewpoints in order to understand the dialectical way in which correct behaviour is produced. The scene enacts feminine behaviour, masculine reaction to it, then masculine behaviour, and feminine reaction, and so on, at each stage showing incremental but real improvement in the conduct of the principals. If we have read correctly, our interpretation is validated by Harriet’s subsequent authoritative praise for the G. couple. Delaying validation of the couple’s behaviour gives us time to develop our own interpretation of the scene and to hone our reading skills; however, as the novel moves towards closure, the text makes sure that we have learned our lesson.

Samuel Richardson, as I stated at the outset, was preoccupied with improving his readers, and visual descriptions not only permitted him to give them didactic lessons, but also to set them exercises in reading. The promotion of active reading, which demanded that readers piece together useful and virtuous interpretations of the novel in order to become better in their private and social existences, jars somewhat with the contention that textual visuality provokes automatic responses from readers. However, it is surely possible to break down the reading process into a succession of events: first, the visual descriptions transform readers into eyewitnesses, transporting them “as by magic” to the scene described (Kames II 614). At this point, emotions and passions are automatically stimulated, and action follows. Between emotions and actions, though, readers will be drawn into interpretation and activism. There is no “magic” in acquiring didactic lessons from complex novels, only in setting the (passive) passions in motion. One canny reader of Richardson, Denis Diderot, remarks on this process in his Eloge de Richardson (1762), as he describes both automatism and passionate response, and reflection and interpretation. Although he draws attention to the painterly aspects of Richardson’s writing, stating that “the passions he paints are such that I experience them in myself,” he begins his

8 These positions are those held, respectively, by Keymer and Gordon, though Gordon locates the automaticity of response not so much in the visual qualities of Richardson’s writing, as in its pathos and sentiment (185).
remarks with the statement that a “man of sense, who reads his work with reflection recreates most of the maxims of the moralists.” Passion, on the way to improved conduct, needs the input of careful, thoughtful, active reading.

9 “Les passions qu’il peint sont telle que je les éprouve en moi” (31), “Mais un homme d’esprit, qui lit avec réflexion les ouvrages de Richardson, refait la plupart des sentences des moralistes” (29).
References


Erzsi Kukorelly


In a manuscript addition to a printed edition of John Foxe’s *Pandectae* (1585), now in Lambeth Palace Library, an early reader has written:

A certayne carver was set on worke to carve a plumme tree into a God, wch idoll by the Divells helpe gave propheticall answers to those that enquired of him. The Carver coming to be resolved of some question, the Idoll would give him noe answer, wherupon he breaks out into a passion and sayes to it, Yee need not be soe proud for I knowe ye [are] of a plumbe tree. (MSS 677-678, fo. 359)

The carver in the story, and the reader who represents him, are at loggerheads with each other, and yet brought together by their mutual incomprehension. For, just as the carver, having made his image, is exasperated that it will not talk back to him, so the reader, despite his sarcastic description of this dialogue of the deaf, seems equally in awe of the idol. The tree is no longer just a tree. It has assumed the shape of a god, and like a god it appears for all the world as if it can talk. It is only natural, indeed, to try to communicate with the tree. The carver’s passionate eloquence and the idol’s dumb silence tell of the same wonder: *what if idols could speak?* Carver and reader match each other in obverse: the carver’s anger is met by the tree’s failure to respond; while the reader’s blank refusal of idolatry is equalled by his imaginative *ekphrasis* of the presence within the wood. Indeed, the reader’s disbelief has conjured this idea into being, just as surely as the credulity of the carver. He has imagined the encounter as a conversation, and so has brought to life the very thing that he fears and despises, in front of another reader, the one (like you or me) who now beholds it.

The place of these words written into a work by Foxe could not be more powerfully resonant with the iconoclastic conflicts of late medieval and early modern England. By 1585, this was an old project for Foxe: in March 1557, Johannes Oporinus printed his *Locorum Communiuim Tituli* in Basel as a structured commonplace book, with headings for 154 topics, divided into ten categories (Freeman). Like its predecessor, John Day’s London printing of the *Pandectae* combined revised headings with blank pages to be filled in by a reader. Foxe’s introduction to the *Pandectae* makes clear his desire to help the reader to nurture memory through study. Like the *Actes and Monuments*, the *Pandectae* reorders the conceptual framework of the reader. The book replaces the image. Foxe the iconoclast (who cast down images by hand in his youth) reinforces his commitment to the arts of rhetoric and logic by making the reader participate in acts of writing. Inculcating the alphabetic lessons of the Reformation, the reader enacts its doctrines. Finding the words *Idola, Idolatria*, in the list of commonplaces legislated by Foxe, he draws from his experience and responds with a lesson of his own, in the exemplary tale of the carver. However, it turns out that he cannot, after all, so easily separate idolatry from ideology. The idol rears its head in the opposite direction, giving “propheticall answers to those that enquired of him.” The carver in return is left only with compensatory violence, as he “breaks out into a passion and sayes to it, Yee need not be soe proud.”

The intimate connection between writing and violence in the work of Foxe is immediately obvious to all his readers. By the time of the fourth edition of *Actes and Monuments* in 1583, the centrality of the connection was declared on the title-page, which with a certain grisly relish advertises its contents as the “bloody times, horrible troubles, and great persecutions against the true Martyrs of Christ.” *Actes and Monuments* constitute a comprehensive history of violence through the Christian centuries leading up to his own tortured century. This is a violence mediated to the reader. There is a way of responding to iconoclasm which accounts for its violence by seeing it entirely in negative terms, as the iconoclast reacts with destructive force to something alien to him (or to her). Hating the image, he smashes it into pieces. However, the god in the plum tree shows us that the contrary is true: the iconoclast destroys because drawn to the image, because word and image cannot be separated except by force. Margaret Aston’s wonderful last work, *Broken Idols of the English Reformation*, proves how close word and image are to each other even in the explicit culture war that is played out of “Word against Image” (chapter 9). The worst of all idols, Aston points out, were the ones who...
pretended to speak, “whose heads nodded and lips moved” (930) as if they were conveying the word to believers. “Hau not your idols giuen answer? hau they not wagged their heads and lips, &c. O shamelesse dogges & blasphemous idolaters,” (sig. N5v) denounced William Fulke. Iconoclasts reserved some of their most virulent bile for such delusions. In brilliant shows of pastiche, Hugh Latimer delighted in demonstrating how such relics (like the Rood of Boxley) might be fakes, revealing the automaton that lay beneath the moveable eyes of the dumb idol (349). Reformers went to extreme lengths to endorse such principles, not only whitewashing walls in order to render images invisible, but recommending silent prayer to purge the liturgy of any taint of ritual performance.

However, violence was not itself invisible. The Reformation left iconoclasm in plain sight, as a visual reminder as well as doctrinal reminder. Sculptures would be left with their heads torn from the socket of the neck; the faces of saints in rood screens were scratched and their eyes gouged. Latimer’s desecration of the fake display of relics was itself a form of public display. In that way, violence was mimetic as well as anti-mimetic. Indeed, without any apparent recognition of the contradiction, the new doctrine ordered the destruction of books as well as images. A circular in June 1535 from Thomas Cromwell to the bishops, and later to the secular authorities, ordered the word papa to be erased from all prayers, mass-books, canons, rubrics and other books in church:

all manner prayers, orisons, rubrics, canons in mass books and in all other books used in churches, wherein the said bishop of Rome is named or his presumptious and proud pomp and authority preferred, utterly to be abolished, eradicated, and erased out, and his name and memory to be nevermore (except to his contumely and reproach) remembered but perpetually suppressed and obscured; and finally to desist and leave out all such articles as be in the general sentence which is usually accustomed to be read four times in the year, and do tend to the glory and advancement of the said Bishop of Rome, his name his title, or jurisdiction. (Wilkins III 773)

Henry VIII took a personal interest in these acts of erasure, and emended the documents to insist upon a visible enforcement of destruction. In this process, bureaucratic relentlessness joined with destructive zeal. In relation to the cult of St Thomas Becket, the proclamation went as follows:

Therefore his Grace straigthychargeth and commandeth that from henceforth the sayde Thomas Becket shall not be estemed, named, reputed, nor
called a saynte, but bysshope Becket; and that his ymages and pictures, through the hole realm, shall be putte downe, and avoyded out of all churches, chapelles, and other places; and that from henseforthe, the dayes used to be festivall in his name shall not be observed, nor the service, office, antiphoners, colletes, and prayers, in his name redde, but rased and put out of all the bokes. (Hughes I 276)

In September 1538, Thomas’s shrine was dismantled, its treasure removed and carted away, and his bones disinterred and possibly burnt. This caused a palpable shock in the Papal curia. Something odd, nonetheless, is going on here. The cult of Thomas Becket is felt to reside not only in relics, or in images that form a transitional substitute for the body of the saint, but in his very name. The zeal against idolatry is transferred over into the realm of the onomastic or the semiotic. To declare that “the sayde Thomas Becket shall not be estemed, named, reputed, nor called a sayncte” is to bring down not only the visual order but the world of words. Yet it is not enough for the name not to exist: it must be seen not to exist. In that way, words are being treated as if they were things, and the very mode of representation is subject to destruction, in addition to the objects of representational disgust.

Surviving missals and other service books manifest how the decrees are carried out to the letter, or rather the non-letter. The quarrel between word and image is nowhere more obvious than in the rigorous attention to detail in censors carrying out instructions. Eamon Duffy and others have drawn attention to the opposition to these laws shown by defenders of the books. In Ranworth in Norwich the service for St Thomas Becket was defaced with faint diagonal lines, and easily re-used in the reign of Mary (360). Perhaps the oddest case of failure to comply is in King Henry’s own Book of Hours, where neither the name nor the image of the saint is removed (MS Kings 9, fo. 38v-39r). Royal privilege extends far indeed.

But perhaps as remarkable is the dogged literalness with which the order was time and again fulfilled. Iconoclasm here destroys the letter as rigorously as the spirit. This is manifested in a number of ways, showing not only the degree of enforcement but also the time-consuming process involved.¹ Let us take the evidence of surviving York Use missals. In the Broughton Missal, recently acquired by Lambeth Palace Library as MS 5066, the word pape is untouched in the Calendar, but in the Canon of the Mass, the word papa is overwritten with rege, making the Mass

¹ The following examples have all been examined personally; for the best account of this process across all liturgical books, see Aude de Mezerac-Zanetti.
conform to monarchical piety. In York Minster Library MS XVI.I.3, the word *pape* is consistently marked out for censorship in the Calendar with crosses, but it is not in fact either scratched or erased. The feast of the translation of Thomas of Canterbury is, however, untouched. In York Minster Library MS XVI.A.9, the word *pape* is struck through in black, and then also crossed out for good measure. The translation of Thomas of Canterbury is once again untouched. In London, British Library MSS Add. 43380, two censors seem to have worked at different times: in the Calendar, *pape* is scratched out so as to be almost invisible, except in July, where the translation of Thomas has been crossed through in black ink. Cambridge, Sidney Sussex MS 33 shows the same zeal in relation to the word *pape* in the Calendar, and to the name of Thomas of Canterbury whenever it appears. The words *papa nostro* in the Canon of the Mass, are, nonetheless, untouched. In Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.11.11, the word *pape* in the Calendar is uniformly scratched out so as to be invisible in every instance. The Octave of Thomas is also obliterated by being scratched out. On fo. 28r and following, the prayers and sequences for the feast of Thomas of Canterbury are erased, and the name Thomas is removed meticulously. In the Canon, however, the word *papa* is first removed under Henry VIII, and then later restored under Queen Mary.

Only twelve manuscripts survive of the York Missal, perhaps itself a sign of the rigour of the iconoclasts. Under Edward VI in 1548 and 1549, the iconoclasts turned book destroyers, no longer content with names alone. As the Act of Uniformity ordered the introduction of the *Book of the Common Prayer*, so all mass books were to be turned in and torn up. Whereas the censorship of the Henrician orders seems sometimes banal in its expediency, an example of a printed York Use Missal illustrates the violence of the Edwardian order in the most startling way possible. Perhaps no image better expresses the violent memory of the Reformation than this damaged missal. Published in Rouen in 1516 for sale in York, an obit for the priest John Best shows it in use in Faceby in Yorkshire in 1530. The book was not so lucky afterwards. It has become a wounded body, slashed and mutilated, seven times in all. The deepest of these gashes is at the *Teigitur*, the opening of the Canon of the Mass (*Missale* sig. N2r-3). The most sacred part of the Roman rite, this page was traditionally decorated with an illuminated crucifixion. The priest would kiss the book at the foot of the page when raising it, and evidence survives of this in the way that the paint is here smudged. The cross has been sliced right through, deep into the pages beneath, barely avoiding the body of Christ. On the facing page, the companion image, of God
the Father enthroned, has been cut through the nose and between the eyes. Perhaps the iconoclast mistook God for the Pope, due to the iconography of a papal tiara.

And yet, by a further historical curiosity, the book survived in this invalid form. In the seventeenth century, it was owned by two successive vicars of Stainton, also in Yorkshire, on the edge of the Moors. Was it the mutilated state of the book that made them take it in, as the incorruptible wounded body of a now obsolete and illegal liturgy? Whatever their motivation, the Stainton Missal asks urgently the question, “What is an image?” For, just like the god in the plum tree in Foxe’s *Pandectae*, here too the idol speaks back to us. Christ on the cross has died twice and weeps again a second time in the slashing of the book. Did the iconoclast miss (by a few centimetres) the body of Christ, out of residual respect, even as he tore into the cross that bears him? Or was his rage so blind that he did not know what he was cutting? The forensic mutilation of the face of God enthroned, on the other hand, shows a precision to the violence. A further question beneath, however, is the relation of damage done to a book, to damage done to an image. Sixteenth-century book destruction blurs the distinction between word and image more than ever. The Stainton Missal, because of its role as the container of the defamed or even damnable Roman Mass, is more than a book to the iconoclast. It is a kind of relic or image of the Mass, and therefore subject to the same law against idolatry as the graven image of the godhead. But it is also visibly a carrier of words. Where does representation end and idolatry begin? In redefining the boundary of semiosis, the Henriian and Edwardian lawgivers broke the very rules that made them upholders of the law.
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