

The Concept of Discipline:

Poetry, Rhetoric, and the Church in the Works of John Milton

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ABSTRACT

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Discipline was an enduring concept in the works of John Milton (1608-1674), yet its meaning shifted over the course of his career: initially he held that it denoted ecclesiastical order, but gradually he turned to representing it as self-willed pious action. My thesis examines this transformation by analysing Milton's complex engagement in two distinct periods: the 1640s and the 1660s-70s. In *Of Reformation* (1641), Milton echoed popular contemporary demands for a reformation of church discipline, but also asserted through radical literary experimentation that poetry could discipline the nation too (Chapter 1). Reflecting his dislike for intolerant Presbyterians in Parliament and the Westminster Assembly, the two versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643 and 1644) reconsider discipline as a moral imperative for all men, rooted in domestic liberty (Chapter 2). Although written long after this period, the long poetry that Milton composed after the Restoration reveals his continued interrogation of the concept. The invocations of the term 'discipline' by Milton's angels in *Paradise Lost* (1667) sought to encourage dissenting readers to faithfulness and co-operation (Chapter 3). *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* (1671) advance the concept in the language of 'piety,' emphasising that 'pious hearts' are the precondition for godly action in opposition to contemporary Anglican 'holy living' (Chapter 4). In analysing Milton's shifting concept of discipline, my thesis contributes to scholarship by showing his sensitivity to contemporary mainstream religious ideas, outlining the Christian – as opposed to republican or Stoic – notions of praxis that informed his ethics, and emphasising the disciplinary aspect of his doctrinal thought. Overall, it holds that in discipline, as word and concept, Milton expressed his faith in the capacity of writing to change its reader, morally and spiritually.

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Discipline has proven to be very apt topic for a D.Phil. thesis ('Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk'). Therefore, to my supervisor Sharon Achinstein I owe a significant debt of gratitude. Without her patience, advice and encouragement this project would never have reached the stage where it could have been submitted. I am truly thankful that, under her watch, my love for Milton's writing has remained undimmed throughout the past four years. I would like to thank Peter McCullough and Margaret Kean for vital, kindly assistance in guiding the development of this thesis, from transfer to confirmation and beyond. Many thanks are due for the welcome peer-support and useful feedback provided by those attending the Oxford Early Modern Graduate Forum, the Merton Literature Forum, the British Milton Seminar, and the Reading Early Modern Studies Conference. With further regard to peer-support, I am especially grateful to Nick Hardy for his assistance with Latin translation; to Tim Smith-Laing for his thoughts at an early stage on my embryonic methodology, and for coffee and camaraderie throughout; and to Gabriel Roberts for regular and fruitful (and often caffeinated) conversation, as well as for being such an assiduous and constructive reader. I gladly acknowledge the funding of Merton College, Oxford, which has seen me through my postgraduate studies without hardship. Finally, for herculean labours in support of my work, for extensive proof-reading, and far more importantly for the happy state in which I live, inexpressible thanks are owed, as is my heart, to Philippa White.

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Textual Note and Abbreviations

This thesis was prepared for submission at a point of transition in terms of critical editions of Milton's works, given the current and ongoing efforts of the Oxford University Press to publish *The Complete Works of John Milton*. Unless noted otherwise, quotations from Milton's works are taken from the editions listed below. Titles of books referenced in footnotes are given in reduced form; their full-length titles are given in the bibliography.

YP	<i>Complete Prose Works of John Milton</i> , ed. Don M. Wolfe et al., VIII vols. in 10 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953-82)
OCW	<i>The Complete Works of John Milton</i> , ed. Thomas N. Corns and Gordon Campbell et al., XI vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008-)
PL	John Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> , ed. Alastair Fowler, 2 nd edition (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2007)
PR	<i>Paradise Regained</i> , in John Milton, <i>The Complete Shorter Poems</i> , ed. John Carey, 2 nd edition (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2007)
SA	<i>Samson Agonistes</i> , in <i>The Complete Shorter Poems</i>
C&C, JM	Gordon Campbell and Thomas N. Corns, <i>John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought</i>
DNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online edition, Jan. 2008; http://www.oxforddnb.com
EEBO	Early English Books Online
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
ELH	<i>English Literary History</i>
ELN	<i>English Language Notes</i>

ESTC	A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, <i>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and English Books Printed Abroad 1473-1640</i> ; http://estc.bl.uk
HJ	<i>Historical Journal</i>
JMEMS	<i>Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies</i>
LIB	<i>Library</i>
MLR	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
MQ	<i>Milton Quarterly</i>
MS	<i>Milton Studies</i>
NQ	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> , 2 nd edition; http://www.oed.com
PS	<i>Prose Studies</i>
REP	<i>Representations</i>
SEL	<i>Studies in English Literature</i>
SP	<i>Studies in Philology</i>
TS	<i>Theological Studies</i>

Introduction: The Concept of Discipline within the Works of John Milton

Ecclesiae particularis commune vinculum est **Disciplina ecclesiastica**.
 Ea est ecclesiae consensio ad vitam ex doctrina Christiana rectè
 instituendam; omniâque in coetibus decenter atque ordine facienda.
De Doctrina Christiana, Bk. I, Ch. 32¹

And certainly discipline is not only the removall of disorder, but if any
 visible shape can be given to divine things, the very visible shape and
 image of virtue, whereby she is not only seene in the regular gestures and
 motions of her heavenly paces as she walkes, but also make the harmony
 of her voice audible to mortall eares.
*The Reason of Church-government*²

In Milton's systematic theology, *De Doctrina Christiana*, discipline is specifically the order and practice of a 'particular church.' Its basic principles are outlined in the thirty-second chapter of the first book. These include the nature of the covenant binding the church together, how the ministers and laity of the church should cooperate, how the 'weak or else lapsed members's of the church should be supported, and how those who prove to be incurably recalcitrant should be treated.³ Unlike the geographical parish system of the Church of England in the seventeenth century, this understanding is congregational: a 'particular church' is a single gathered congregation, with its order and practice established by a covenant among its members. Within the schema of the treatise's first book, concerning '**Fides**, seu **Cognitio Dei**'⁴, the chapter on discipline falls under the subheading of the Visible Church, which denotes the Church of Christ as it functions in the world.⁵ This is distinct from the Invisible Church of all believers and generations,

¹ John Milton, *De Doctrina Christiana*, in OCW VIII.2.854-5 ['The uniting bond of a particular church is **church Discipline**. | That is the church's agreement to organize its life aright, in accordance with Christian doctrine, and to perform everything at its meetings decently and in order.']. Those words in bold within quotations from this volume are following the emphases of the original manuscript of *De Doctrina*.

² John Milton, *The Reason of Church-government*, in YP 1.751.

³ OCW VIII.2.854-65, in particular 858-9.

⁴ OCW VIII.1.20-21 ['**faith**, or **the knowledge of God**'].

⁵ The chapter 'On Church Discipline' is one of the five (chs. 29-33) that are taken by Gordon Campbell as primary evidence that the MS of *De Doctrina Christiana* was unfinished in his article entitled '*De Doctrina Christiana*: Its Structural Principles and Its Unfinished State', MS 9 (1976), 243-

which is '**Sanctorum communion**', 'corpus mysticum [...] cuius caput est Christus.'⁶ In emphasising this distinction, the chapter on Church Discipline concludes with a comparison of the civil power to the discipline of the Church, referring to '**Disciplina ecclesiastica**' as 'potestatem [...] ecclesiasticam', that is, the 'power of the church.' Milton asserts that civil and ecclesiastical power are utterly distinct, the former pertaining to the magistrate's jurisdiction over the 'body and the external [human] faculties' and the latter reserved for the regulation of 'the faculties of the mind.'⁷ The civil power may administer punishment, corporal or otherwise, to those that break its ordinances, whereas the ecclesiastical power may not. Equally, the Visible Church cannot prevent the dispensation of grace for repentant sinners; that is God's prerogative alone.

This is an austere vision of Church practice which coheres loosely with other contemporary varieties of Congregationalism.⁸ According to Milton's model, the believer submits to the discipline of his particular church voluntarily, and in consensus with his fellow believers, and the church itself is utterly separate from the magistrate's legitimate 'force of arms.'⁹ This sense of austerity extends to the literary quality of the chapter, which is without digression or metaphorical illustration. It does not describe or recommend lengthy injunctions on individual forms of conduct and custom, or dwell on the more abstract question of how a church's discipline might foster virtue among its members. Rather, it deals with the administration of correction in a simple set of procedures. In the main, the chapter also stays aloof from issues that dominated controversial discourse over the government of the Church in 1658-59, the period in

60. This was disputed by Maurice Kelley, in 'On the State of Milton's *De Doctrina Christiana*', *ELN* 27 (1989), 43-8. The flaws in Kelley's argument are outlined in Gordon Campbell, Thomas N. Corns, John K. Hale, and Fiona J. Tweedie, *Milton and the Manuscript of De Doctrina Christiana* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 66-8. Since this latter publication, none have disputed that the manuscript of *De Doctrina Christiana* is unfinished.

⁶ OCW VIII.2.644-45 ['**the communion of Saints**'; 'that mystical body [...] whose head is Christ'].

⁷ Ibid., VIII.2.862-3.

⁸ The topic of contemporary English Congregationalism is set out in Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *Visible Saints: The Congregational Way 1640-1660*, 2nd ed. (Weston Rhyn: Quinta Press, 2002), *passim*.

⁹ 'vi et armis magistratuum'; *ibid.*, VIII.2.864-5.

which Milton concentrated on preparing the treatise for publication.¹⁰ Through its overall restraint from controversy, the chapter refrains from prosecuting the two lines of polemic that it contains: its severe distinction between civil and ecclesiastical power, which could have been read as an implicit rebuke for those maintaining the doctrine of Erastianism, and its scorn for the presence of 'hirelings' as ministers within the Church are explicit yet very brief.¹¹

This austerity is dictated by the form of *De Doctrina Christiana*. As a work of systematic theology carried out on Ramist principles, its approach is to deduce from Scripture alone a series of headings and subheadings that encapsulate Christian doctrine. Milton divides Christian doctrine into two categories, faith and charity, each of which is then broken down into subcategories, and so on. In this Milton is following standard Reformed theological practice, as is apparent in his primary systematic models, William Ames's *Medulla* and Johannes Wolleb's *Compendium*.¹² In such a form there is little room for digression, and precision in the use of terms is necessary in order to distinguish between the different branches of the general logical scheme.

But beyond these strict delineations, Milton's 'discipline' proves to be a more complex and extensive term. As well as denoting the order and practice of a particular church congregation, the term often signifies for Milton an ethos of voluntary self-restraint deemed desirable for an individual. This individual ethos is at the centre of the second book of *De Doctrina Christiana*, which is entitled 'On the Worship of God,' where it is distinguished from the corporate ecclesiastical sense of 'discipline.' The passage from *The Reason of Church-government* quoted above indicates that this conceptual complexity of discipline also existed in Milton's early writing, where it must be seen in relation to

¹⁰ This particular contextual interpretation of the manuscript has been identified by its present editors: John K. Hale and J. Donald Cullington, additional material by Gordon Campbell and Thomas N. Corns, 'Introduction', in OCW VIII.1.xxvi.

¹¹ OCW VIII.2.856-7.

¹² These are the names mentioned by Edward Phillips in the passage from his biography of Milton, in which he discusses his uncle's plans to write 'A perfect System of Divinity,' the seed for *De Doctrina*. Cf. Helen Darbishire, ed., *The Early Lives of Milton* (London: Constable, 1932), p. 61.

contemporary debate over the government of the Church. The key aspect of the passage is its assertion that ‘discipline is not only the removall of disorder, but [...] the very visible shape and image of virtue.’ This is a deliberate, metaphorical expansion of the term which makes church government inseparable from ethical discourse. Furthermore, the understanding in the quotation of discipline as virtue’s ‘shape and image’ reveals a strong relationship between this topic and Milton’s perception of his own ability as a poet to engender moral change amongst his readers.¹³ In the same tract he places the poet’s office alongside that of the preacher. It is the poet’s role

to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of vertu, and publick civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune, to celebrate in glorious and lofty Hymns the throne and equipage of Gods Almightynesse, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his Church, to sing the victorious agonies of Martyrs and Saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious Nations doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ, to deplore the general relapses of Kingdoms and States from justice and Gods true worship.¹⁴

To impute admonitory and exhortatory power to the singing of divine ‘Hymns’ and songs amounts to an aesthetic and theological manifesto for public poetry. Thus the tract conflates ecclesiology with ethics, and discipline with poetry.

In part, this rhetoric stems from the historical moment of the *Reason* itself. Published in January 1642, its call for ‘discipline’ was Milton’s response to the controversy between five godly ministers writing under the pseudonym Smectymnuus and the Calvinist Bishop Joseph Hall. This pamphlet war represents only a part of the far more general anti-prelatical ferment of the time, which was encouraged by the Scots covenanters’ triumphs in the Bishops’ Wars and the commencement of the Long

¹³ This earlier perception may be said to precipitate the public ‘role of oppositional educator’ that Milton adopted in the last few years of his life, as argued by Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, “‘To try, and teach the erring Soul’: Milton’s Last Seven Years”, in *Milton and the Terms of Liberty*, eds. Graham Parry and Joad Raymond (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2002), p. 175.

¹⁴ *Reason of Church-government*, YP 1.816-17.

Parliament.¹⁵ In this wider controversy, 'discipline' was a watchword for many of the godly, a sign of the campaign for the further reformation of the English Church and a reiteration of the efforts of previous generations of Puritan ministers. This ubiquity of the project of 'discipline' is exemplified on the title-page of a cheap and heavily redacted reprint of Anthony Gilby's *Souldier of Barwick* (1642). Near the bottom of the page, it prays: 'Therefore the Lord of his mercy, send Discipline with Doctrine into his Church; for Doctrine without Discipline and restraint of Vices, maketh dissolute hearts.'¹⁶ Gilby (c. 1510-1585) wrote this scurrilous anti-prelatical dialogue during the Vestiarian crisis in the first half of the 1560s, and it was first published in the 1570s alongside the printed efforts of other Elizabethan presbyterians, such as Thomas Cartwright, John Field, and Thomas Wilcox.¹⁷ In 1641-42, the *Souldier* was sent forth by a new generation, equipped with this new title-page that invoked 'discipline' in order to attack Archbishop Laud and his clerical circle: prelates of a very different sort to John Whitgift. Given this importance of 'discipline' as a watchword for so many contemporaries, therefore, Milton's praise of discipline is ostensibly in keeping with the attitudes of his godly milieu.

But in other senses, Milton's use of 'discipline' in the *Reason* anticipates the centrality of the concept in his later writings; it was bound tightly with his call for individuals to work towards a better social order by living obediently and virtuously. Thus although several scholars, the foremost being Ernest Sirluck, regard the

¹⁵ The passions and anxieties sweeping through English society at this time are enumerated and examined in David Cressy, *England on Edge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), *passim*. Milton's position and activity amidst 'The Crisis of Government' is recounted in C&C, *JM*, pp. 131-51. The critical problem of Milton's ideological alignment at this time, as well as the historical problem of the true extent of anti-prelatical prejudice amongst the godly, are considered in Sharon Achinstein, 'John Milton and the Communities of Resistance, 1641-42', in Roger D. Sell and Anthony W. Johnson, eds., *Writing and Religion in England, 1558-1689* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2009); and in Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England c. 1620-1643* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 318-26.

¹⁶ Anthony Gilby, *A Dialogue between A Souldier of Barwick and an English Chaplain* (London: 1642), title-page.

¹⁷ Cf. Claire Cross, 'Gilby, Anthony (c.1510-1585)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/10709>, accessed 26 Feb 2013]; and also Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), p. 78-9.

antiprelatical tracts as the product of presbyterian convictions that Milton would drop by the time he composed his tracts for divorce and *Areopagitica* in 1643-44,¹⁸ the contention of this thesis is that Milton's concern with discipline outlived his interest in presbyterianism.¹⁹ It did not wane as his religious and political thought developed. This thesis will demonstrate that discipline features prominently not only in *De Doctrina Christiana* and *The Reason of Church-government*, but also in *Of Reformation, The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, in *Paradise Lost*, and in the 1671 poems, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*. While the concept is transformed in each of these works, it never falls into desuetude. Milton's thought and art were indeed influenced by contemporary debate, but while this influence altered his sense of the role and meaning of discipline, the concept itself remained central.

This thesis's analysis of the rhetorical density and contextual complexity of Milton's concept of discipline opens up new areas for discussion and analysis within the field of Milton studies. It establishes a context of early modern English ecclesiastical and ethical debate by scrutinising texts that have been unexamined in previous readings of Milton. In focusing on the discourse of Christian praxis, it provides a new perspective on current critical discussions regarding Milton's moral and political activism. This focus reveals the underlying conceptual connections between praxis and the various doctrinal tenets of Christian thought: it argues that neither *praxis* or *doxa* can be read critically in Milton in isolation. The thesis also reassesses Milton's rhetorical and poetical practices in the light of his treatment of discipline as a creative endeavour that incorporates both the systematic method found in Book 1 of *De Doctrina Christiana* and the virtuous and virtue-inspiring exhortations that characterise the antiprelatical tracts.

¹⁸ Ernest Sirluck, 'Introduction', in *YP* 2.1, 2.

¹⁹ This thesis, therefore, adopts a contrary position to Thomas Fulton's important recent analysis of the concept of discipline in Milton's prose. Fulton argues that over the course of the 1640s, as he came to repudiate Presbyterianism, Milton's use of the 'term "discipline" diminishes significantly, turning from positive to a negative representation.' (Thomas Fulton, *Historical Milton* [Amherst and Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010], pp. 96-7).

It has been noted that the lack of a 'substantial and unambiguous statement regarding church discipline' in Milton's poetry and prose written prior to the uncompleted *De Doctrina Christiana*²⁰ is an unfortunate absence that scholarship must bear.²¹ In order to read Milton's ambiguous statements on the subject, then, it is crucial to treat 'discipline' as one of several related terms in Milton's rhetorical armoury, which also included 'government,' 'virtue,' 'obedience' and 'piety.' It is also frequently apparent that Milton relished the term's military connotations, and exploited them in order to advance his position. 'Discipline,' therefore, must not be seen as a signifier without an intellectually rigorous and detailed signified. Discipline is variously explicated as restraint and constraint; manners and obedience; piety and moderation: this semantic cluster is at the heart of Milton's long-term project of marking out the narrow path of freely-chosen virtue between magisterial coercion and dissolute license. It is this long-term project which also necessitated Milton's engagement with the intensely controversial issues of scripture, tradition, and soteriology.

Milton, of course, was no isolated thinker; as a participant in the turbulent political and religious history of mid-seventeenth century England, his writing is shaped by this context, as has already been shown with regard to the use of 'discipline' in *Reason*. The shifting background of events is reflected in the structure of the thesis, the first two chapters of which focus on Milton's activities during the first half of the 1640s, whilst the second two examine the years after the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy. Milton's writing from the former period is characteristically optimistic, though cautiously so, in the cause of national reform; his work composed in the latter period is overshadowed by his response to the persecution of nonconformists and those who opposed Charles I during the English Civil War. Examining how Milton conceptualized discipline at different times

²⁰ See above, n. 3.

²¹ Nigel Smith, 'Areopagitica: voicing contexts, 1643-5', in *Politics, Poetics, and Hermeneutics in Milton's Prose*, ed. David Loewenstein and James Grantham Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 104.

of his turbulent career is therefore a means of testing the importance of the concept in his thought and art.

In the antiprelatical tracts, the works on divorce and *Areopagitica*, Milton gradually articulated and revised his twin ecclesiological and ethical concerns in a context of febrile debate about the future of the Church. The rhetorical richness of his prose in this period formed part of an attempt to articulate new concepts and to expand the terms of public discourse in response to rapid political and ecclesiastical change: the diminution and fall of episcopacy, the outbreak of the Civil War, and the gathering of the Westminster Assembly.²² In contrast, Milton's literary output after what he saw as the calamity of 1660 is marked by the oppressive effect of the Act of Uniformity and the Printing Act and the revived episcopal government of the Church. This dangerous context is reflected in Milton's handling of discipline in *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*.²³ With the hope of national reformation extinguished, these works go further to strip away extraneous, subordinate notions from the central concept of discipline in order to ensure its survival and validity in such an adverse climate. This involved a move away from discipline in its ecclesiological sense and a much more profound engagement with its meaning in personal and ethical terms. But this does not represent a retreat from contemporary ideas about discipline: Milton's late long poems struggle subtly with newly dominant notions of discipline and piety that were espoused by Anglicans and mainstream Nonconformists at the ecclesiological centre of the time. In this way, the thesis's description of a general movement from a period of political optimism to one of

²² Cf. Thomas N. Corns, *The Development of Milton's Prose Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 101.

²³ The difficulty in giving a full account of the semi-occluded, possibly self-censored political notions contained in Milton's late poems is raised by Annabel Patterson in *Censorship and Interpretation* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), esp. p. 20. Despite this, recent studies have gone to great lengths to identify these works's submerged radicalism: e.g. David Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution in Milton and his Contemporaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Laura Lunger Knoppers, *Historicizing Milton* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1994); and Sharon Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

grinding defeat for Milton and the Good Old Cause provides a broad canvas on which to view Milton's conceptualization of discipline. Each work discussed is treated as in part a response to contemporary religious and political concerns, as well as being shaped by artistic and generic considerations, and Milton's sense of his own poetic vocation.

Underneath the general claim that a concept of discipline persists in Milton's works, this thesis develops a deeper narrative of a crucial lexical movement in Milton's writings that enhances our critical understanding of Milton and of his contemporaries. Although the concept of discipline as a controlling centre endures, the lexical matrix moves away from an emphasis on 'discipline' and towards the dominance of the term 'piety.' On a basic level this is apparent in the thesis's split-focus between Milton's early controversial prose and his later long poetry: the former works extol 'discipline' as an all-encompassing ecclesiological framework for Christian living to be imposed on the nation, whereas the latter poems treat the same word and idea with a degree of suspicion. They choose instead to encourage 'piety' as a means for the individual to carry out works of faith. In more complex ways, however, this thesis indicates that Milton's movement away from 'discipline' and towards 'piety' represents an ongoing tension within his concept of discipline, rather than a shift that occurred at some unspecified point between *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* and *Paradise Lost*. Thus in the early *Of Reformation*, the focus of this thesis's initial chapter, Milton makes his argument for national revival through a reform of church discipline, whilst also pushing himself forward – albeit anonymously – as a poet of unique skill and probity, capable of implementing that same discipline. In these two aspects, Milton envisions a distinction between the proper recognition of unimpeachable and talented individuals within society and the imperative of radical ecclesiastical and social reorganisation; yet in doing so, he is tantalizingly unclear about which is the precondition of the other. The partial resolution of this tension

in favour of the individual can be recognized in the later poems's advocacy of pious faith and action on a primarily personal level.

* * *

In describing this movement from discipline to piety in Milton's works, this thesis builds on the history of early modern English religious ideas set out by Isabel Rivers in *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment*. Milton's departure from an explicitly Reformed conception of discipline intersects with Rivers's picture of a general shift in mid-seventeenth century 'mainstream' English Protestantism from Calvinist praxis to a form of holy living inspired by the rational tradition of Arminian theology.²⁴ Though the extent to which this shift is indicative of a 'new theological consensus' has been queried,²⁵ it allows us to see Milton's as engaging *with* the shifting 'mainstream' religious ideas of the mid-seventeenth century: in his appropriation of popular notions of discipline in the 1640s and in his exploration of piety as true faith and action in his poetry during the first decade of the Restoration. The critical contribution of this thesis therefore lies in its analysis of this engagement, and in its further indication that this had both a political and a theological dimension. Milton was wary of what he perceived as the socially malign treatments of discipline and piety in contemporary 'mainstream' Protestantism, but cautiously approving of more benign treatments of these concepts.

²⁴ Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England 1660-1780*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), passim. Rivers's notion of post-Restoration 'mainstream' Protestantism, Anglican and Nonconformist, is derived in part from John C. Sommerville's study of *Popular Religion in Restoration England* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, 1977). This work emphasises the theological similarities between the different groups that were raised up by the Act of Uniformity (1662).

²⁵ Nicholas Tyacke outlines his query of Rivers's thesis, with particular attention paid to the continuation of Calvinist theology within the University of Oxford after the Restoration, in his essay 'Arminianism and the theology of the Restoration Church', in *Aspects of English Protestantism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 322-23.

Since this approach depends largely on studying mid-seventeenth century inter-confessional dialogue, it leads this thesis to negotiate with the traditional characterization of Milton as a radical puritan. Whilst Milton's puritanism (whether radical or otherwise) was once a scholarly commonplace,²⁶ it is now robustly contested. In particular, following Campbell and Corns's biography, a lively discussion has begun about whether Milton's poems written prior to 1640 may in some way be considered Laudian²⁷ and about the various anti-Puritan strains in his writings.²⁸ This thesis provides nuance in the ongoing debate about Milton's religious allegiances by emphasising the importance of contemporary 'mainstream' ecclesiastical debate to his concept of discipline, rather than that of the enthusiastic fringe. This study brings together an assortment of divines of different denominations and allegiances, treating them as part of a larger whole on the basis of recent historical and historiographical work that goes beyond detailing the clash of opposing sides and seeks to analyse the ties that bind disparate ideological groupings.²⁹ In this way the second chapter of the thesis reads the 1643 and 1644 versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* alongside contemporary works by Independents and Presbyterians, rival groups of divines at the heart of the debates of the Westminster Assembly. This qualifies the hidebound 'Anglicans and Puritans' picture of seventeenth century English Protestantism by demonstrating the porous nature of the division

²⁶ Two generations of historically-inflected writing cemented this approach: William Haller's *Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution*, and Christopher Hill's *The World Turned Upside Down*, and *Milton and the English Revolution*.

²⁷ The ramifications of Gordon Campbell and Thomas N. Corns's revisionist portrait of Milton as a Laudian fellow-traveller in the early 1630s, rather than as a radical puritan in embryo, are still being fleshed out. Cf. C&C, JM, pp. 26-102. Essays resulting from the recent conference on 'Young Milton' can be found in *Young Milton: the emerging author, 1620-1642*, ed. Edward Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). An earlier, contrasting view is forcefully expressed by Barbara Lewalski, in 'How radical was the young Milton?', in *Milton and Heresy*, eds. Stephen Dobranski and John Rumrich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 49-72.

²⁸ Cf. Catherine Gimelli Martin, *Milton among the Puritans* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

²⁹ The study of the common ties that existed between different contemporary ecclesiastical parties can be seen in Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Ann Hughes, *Gangraena* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Webster, *Godly Clergy*; Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

between the two camps. By considering Milton in this new historiographical terrain, he is situated against a far less monochrome background. Rather than diminishing the radicalism of Milton's concept of discipline, this diverse context is conducive to a better understanding of this radical stance, in that it takes into account its social and intellectual implications.

Whilst negotiating with Milton's Puritan aspect, this thesis also addresses the scholarship which approaches Milton as a heterodox doctrinal thinker. This view of Milton focuses attention on the positive content found in his Latin systematic theology, which amounts to a combination of Arian and Socinian anti-Trinitarian theology and Arminian soteriology.³⁰ This thesis actively counter-balances this critical emphasis through its analysis of Milton's persistent concept of discipline, which thus forms a crucial counterweight to erroneous over-emphasis on abstract doctrine. To this end, it finds significant those moments in which Milton discusses 'doctrine' and 'discipline' together, rather than apart, as suggesting that his Christology and soteriology can be best understood when read alongside his writing and thought on issues of Christian praxis. This understanding of practical discipline as an essential part of Milton's doctrinal thought is confirmed in his *De Doctrina Christiana*. As a justification for dividing his work into two categories, faith and '**charitas** seu **Dei cultus**,' Milton writes that 'Partes hae duae, quanquam natura & praecipiendi ratione distinguuntur, usu tamen separari non queunt.'³¹ Whilst 'faith' pertains to 'doctrine,' and 'charity' to 'discipline,' it is crucial to understand that the two are kept distinct solely due to pedagogical necessity; for Milton the two categories are inseparable in practice ['usu']. The fourth chapter of this thesis

³⁰ See in particular William Poole, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), passim. Also Michael Baumann, *Milton's Arianism* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1986); A.D. Nuttall, *The Alternative Trinity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007); and Michael Lieb, *Theological Milton* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2006). The spread of interest in this topic is demonstrated in *Milton and Heresy*.

³¹ OCW VIII.I.20-21 ['**charity** or **the worship of God**'; 'Although these two parts are distinguished from each other by their nature and for the sake of teaching, they are nevertheless inseparable in practice'].

applies this understanding in order to deal with the Arminian soteriology contained in *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, in which true pious behaviour is treated as the precondition for salvation.

In response to the Puritan and heterodox approaches to Milton's thought and art, this thesis will address issues of morality and virtue from a new critical standpoint. While morality and virtue are often treated by critics in relationship to the joint traditions of republican civic humanism and Stoic philosophy,³² this thesis proposes that Milton's participation in contemporary discourse over Christian praxis reveals another potential source for his conviction that 'strenuous liberty' is the most desirable state for the individual. To this end, the third chapter argues that Gabriel's admonition of Satan's 'Discipline and faith' at the end of the fourth book of *Paradise Lost* is a reference to Counter-Reformation ecclesiastical controversy. This chapter draws out the contested doctrinal context implicit in the passage and urges against reading Gabriel's words as an unambiguous attack on Satan's martial and personal virtue. In pursuing this reading, the chapter adopts the context-specific methodology of the proponents of the republican civic-humanist interpretation of Milton's thought about virtue,³³ but points to a Tridentine context for Milton's ideas. It also accords with proponents of the republican civic-humanist interpretation in setting aside the decrepit notion of 'Milton as the exponent of a transhistorical Christian tradition.'³⁴

³² As set out by Richard Strier, 'Milton against humility', in *Religion and Culture in Renaissance England*, eds. Claire McEachern and Debora Shuger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 258-86.

³³ The principal exponents of this position are David Norbrook, in *Writing the English Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); and Blair Worden, 'Milton's Republicanism and the Tyranny of Heaven', in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, eds. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 225-246. Milton is also to the fore in Quentin Skinner's discussion of Neo-Roman liberty in seventeenth century England, *Liberty Before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

³⁴ John P. Rumrich, *Milton Unbound: Controversy and Reinterpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 29. It must be said, however, that the same decrepit notion is prone to being invoked unfairly as a stereotype.

In setting out a new critical approach to the interconnected issues of Milton's puritanism, doctrinal inclination, and republican humanism, this thesis also provides a qualifying contribution to the broader tradition of situating Milton and his works on the cusp of secular modernity. This thesis's narrative of the change in focus of Milton's concept of discipline from external and institutional 'discipline' to internal and dispositional 'piety' does not describe the secularisation of Christian mores. To this extent, it resembles Gordon Teskey's image of Milton as a Janus-like '*theoretical poet*' with a simultaneously – deliriously – double perspective 'on divine Creation in the past and human creativity in the future,' but it cautions against perceiving Milton as the harbinger of secular modernity.³⁵ Rather, it considers these shifting foci as representative of a tension within early modern Christianity that Milton works to resolve. In previous criticism, the subject of Milton's 'discipline' has become caught up in a narrative of secularisation, one version of a secularizing meta-narrative of progression and enlightenment. In this meta-narrative, the role of discipline in Milton's work has certainly been seen as central; yet the literary and historiographical interpretations which the term has attracted have leant too heavily on an amalgam of Michel Foucault's socio-historical discussion of prison in modern western life, *Discipline and Punish*,³⁶ and Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Calvinism*.³⁷ While such interpretations may offer valuable insights into the social proprieties of early modern England, they empty the term

³⁵ Gordon Teskey, *Delirious Milton* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 2.

³⁶ In particular, the focus of this critical interpretation on 'discipline' is misleading due to its focus on the English translation of Foucault, which introduces the notion of 'discipline' to what in the original French is entitled *Surveiller et Punir*.

³⁷ Cf. Laura Lunger Knoppers's 'Rewriting the Protestant Ethic: Discipline and Love in *Paradise Lost*', in *ELH* 58.3 (Autumn 1991), 545-59. Knoppers takes up the issue of Milton's discipline in terms of post-Restoration puritanism in *Historicizing Milton*, p. 12: 'the turn inward does not eschew politics but evinces a complex internalization of Puritan discipline that can carry on the Good Old Cause in the very theater of the Stuart monarchy.' Knoppers's excellent monograph goes far in its attempt to open up Milton's critical response to the theatricality of Restoration culture. This thesis does not take issue with the general premise articulated in this sentence, but with the fact that what 'Puritan discipline' might consist of is never fully explained.

‘discipline’ of anything other than ideological meaning.³⁸ In so doing, they miss the term’s pertinence in debates over ecclesiology and ethics, as well as its contested meaning. This thesis, in contrast, returns Milton’s ‘discipline’ to its place at the centre of the discourse of Christian praxis, whilst also recognizing his critical status as a poet on the cusp of modernity. Indeed, in its description of Milton’s turn from discipline to piety, it questions the extent to which this modernity may be understood as ‘secular.’ The move from the language of discipline to that of piety is not a secularisation so much a domestication of ecclesial discipline: what in Milton’s early career was an external matter tied to the notion of the church as an organised and visible body had, by the 1670s, become an internal matter for the individual Christian.

* * *

Current historians of the Reformation have explored the concept of discipline as a central preoccupation in early modern European Christianity. They understand the term to signify several broad tendencies amongst different stripes of Protestant as well as the Roman Catholic Church after the Council of Trent. Several point to Erasmus as the origin of the Reformers’s and Magistrates’s obsession with ‘Godly Discipline’:

[Erasmus] made fashionable the idea that every human life could be lived in as holy a manner as monks claimed to do. Roman Catholics and Protestants alike followed him in this, and rulers both Catholic and Protestant hastened to fulfil the role of abbot in which he had cast them.

³⁸ On the use of Foucault’s work as a hermeneutic for early modern religious thought, Cf. Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 12: ‘Religion has come to be seen within literary studies as a transparently ideological construct, an engine of the state. This has become so much an axiom that it might be titled (with an allowable sally at the reverence of its believers) Foucault’s Brag. The axiom holds that religion is a fantasy of power which can, by a simple gesture of translation, be demystified back into politics. Yet this in its turn is an exercise in false consciousness. Any sensitive reading of Foucault must confess that no ideology is transparent, and that no construct can simply be translated back into its ‘true’ original. The inscription of religion in politics, and vice versa, is too deep to be reclaimed by casual inversion.’

[...] The disasters of the Reformation decades, the brooding threat of the Last Days, all instilled a mood of sombre penitence, which has been described as the symbolic triumph of Lent over Carnival. That triumph was as much the work of Archbishop Carlo Borromeo of Milan and the Jesuit mission preachers as of John Calvin.³⁹

In this general definition, discipline was the business of ministers and magistrates, to be imposed on lay-persons and subjects with equal force; it denotes 'the tendency in all reformers to envisage the structure of the Church in a totalitarian spirit.'⁴⁰ By perceiving discipline as the preserve of both Protestants and Catholics, this historical treatment of the topic represents a development from a previous historiographical concentration on Calvinism as the sole religious locus of discipline. This earlier attitude may be characterised as seizing on Calvin's ecclesiology as a primordial origin for modern secular political and philosophical concerns, stating that it 'was far more importantly a doctrine of discipline and obedience than of justification [...] Obedience and not reconciliation – and this meant that Calvinism was more a social and moral system than a personal and religious one.'⁴¹ In this light, whilst Calvin and Calvinism remain landmarks in the historical background of this thesis, it is crucial to recognise the importance of other persons and ideas in the formation of discipline as a topic of study under the general heading of the Reformation in Europe.

Whereas this continental context is relevant in general terms to the discussion of Milton's concept of discipline, the significance of 'discipline' within the religious history

³⁹ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p. 592. Again, Foucault's influence may be detected here, given the importance of Cardinal Borromeo's example as a pioneering regulator of Western early modern sexuality in *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Allen Lane, 1978).

⁴⁰ John Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700* (Oxford: OUP, 1985), p. 129.

⁴¹ Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1966), pp. 24-5. Philip S. Gorski has recently revived the focus on Calvinism as an important root of Western modernity in his analysis of the admonitory systems of Reformed discipline that were established in various European polities during the early modern period as an important factor in the development of modern states: cf. Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003). A succinct description of Reformed discipline in its own terms can be found in James Cameron, 'Godly Nurture and Admonition in the Lord: Ecclesiastical Discipline in the Reformed Tradition', in *Die dänische Reformation vor ihrem internationalen Hintergrund*, ed. Leif Grane and Kai Hørby (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), pp. 264-276.

of early modern England is of more direct importance. Much of Milton's prose work brims with his acute awareness of the various struggles that had wracked England's established Church following the Elizabethan settlement. Milton's anti-prelatical tracts therefore look back to the ecclesial discourse of the second half of the sixteenth century in England. Here, discipline was understood in two conflicting senses: first as a watchword for further reform of the established Church, and second as an instrument for the preservation of conformity. The former sense is bound to the cultural moment of conforming 'presbyterian' Puritans such as Thomas Cartwright and Walter Travers, who worked through political and ecclesiastical means to redeem what Elizabethans understood by the 'outward face of religion, the institutions, discipline and worship of the church.'⁴² The distinctive rhetorical and ideological character of this movement lay in their close association of the personal edification of the elect with the desired discipline of the nation, aimed to transform the political platform of Elizabethan presbyterianism 'from just another shopping list of projected reforms and institutional adjustments into a document of world-historical significance, the implementation of which would transform the existence of the English church at a stroke.'⁴³ In this way, discipline for the Elizabethan presbyterians was more than just a matter of ecclesiastical reform: it would change the social and political fabric of England too. However, their project was prevented from being realised by the conformist faction of the Church of England led by Archbishop John Whitgift and his protégé Richard Bancroft, who adhered to discipline in its second sense, as the exclusive preserve of visible church, and therefore necessitating the strict upkeep of legal uniformity among both the clergy and the laity by the Bishops and the Magistrate.⁴⁴

⁴² *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 12-13.

⁴³ Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), pp. 31-32.

⁴⁴ Particular focus on Conformist discipline as a means of exacting uniformity in the clergy can be found in Kenneth Fincham, 'Clerical Conformity from Whitgift to Laud', in *Conformity and*

Although the grand aims of the Elizabethan Puritans were knocked back decisively in the early 1590s,⁴⁵ their defeat did not terminate the use of 'discipline' as a rallying cry for presbyterian reform. During the fifty years prior to 1640, English presbyterians engaged in a lengthy semi-covert campaign for reform that would eventually result in the huge increase of calls for the re-settlement of the Church of England on strictly Calvinist lines that accompanied the beginning of the Long Parliament. The chief hallmark of this campaign was an unwavering opposition to episcopacy, on the grounds that it was anti-English, anti-constitutional, and a stumbling block to national moral reform: Jacobean English presbyterianism 'was driven by an alternative vision of church discipline.'⁴⁶ This is not to say, however, that this movement was without internal contradictions; there were various shades of commitment amongst those who tended towards the presbyterian position.⁴⁷ Until 1640 and indeed shortly thereafter, primitive episcopacy and moderate Independency were credible, if not entirely commendable positions for many who were to nail their colours to the Presbyterian mast by the middle of the 1640s.⁴⁸ To counter the dominance of Presbyterian voices in the

Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660, eds. Peter Lake and Michael Questier (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), pp. 125-58.

⁴⁵ Cf. Polly Ha, *English Presbyterianism 1590-1640* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), p. 1; also, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, passim.

⁴⁶ Ha, p. 36. Regarding national moral reform in England, Martin Ingram's work is essential: cf. 'Reformation of Manners in Early Modern England', in *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England*, eds. Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox, and Steve Hindle (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1996).

⁴⁷ Hughes, *Gangraena*; Webster, *Godly Clergy*. Hughes's argument in *Gangraena* was preceded by a case study of two 'high' Presbyterians: Ann Hughes, "'Popular" Presbyterianism in the 1640s and 1650s: the cases of Thomas Edwards and Thomas Hall', in *England's Long Reformation 1500-1800*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke (London: UCL Press, 1998), pp. 235-59. Likewise, Webster's focus on the Smectymnuans towards the end of *Godly Clergy* is further explained by his brief study of Stephen Marshall's time as vicar of Finchingfield during the 1630s: *Stephen Marshall and Finchingfield* (Chelmsford: Essex Record Office in collaboration with The Local History Centre, University of Essex, 1994).

⁴⁸ As well as Hughes and Webster, cf. also Robert S. Paul's history of the first two years of the Westminster Assembly: *The Assembly of the Lord* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke, 1985). This highlights a residual sense of loyalty to episcopal government held by Assembly divines such as Cornelius Burgess and Thomas Bayly.

Westminster Assembly and in the Long Parliament in 1644, Independents and Sectarians raised the notion of toleration, which effectively subsumed discussion of discipline.⁴⁹

Whilst Presbyterians and Independents struggled over the problem of church government, exiled episcopalian conformists formulated a new flavour of moral reform influenced by their Arminian soteriology.⁵⁰ Henry Hammond, Jeremy Taylor, and Richard Allestree composed and published best-selling piety manuals during the Commonwealth period.⁵¹ With the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660, and the ensuing re-establishment of episcopal rule over the Church of England, their form of piety became the popular answer to the problem of improving the kingdom's morals, at the expense of ecclesiastical discipline. Piety manuals addressed a perceived failing of the Interregnum Church, in which

the sacrament had been allowed only to those who would submit to 'discipline', which usually meant examination and admonition and promises of amendment from the communicant. But such discipline could only ever be voluntary; and while it was perfectly feasible within the gathered congregations of various sects, it was unworkable within a parochial ministry.⁵²

This use of discipline as an obstacle over which the laity had to pass to be able to receive communion proved to be immensely unpopular to all except convinced Congregationalists and Presbyterians, partly because it necessitated greater clerical scrutiny of the domestic and social lives of congregation members.

⁴⁹ See John Coffey, 'The toleration controversy during the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, eds. Christopher Durston and Judith Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

⁵⁰ See Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment*. Also, although hostile to the soteriological thought of the exiled Anglicans, CF. Allison explains the basic tenets in *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter* (London: S.P.C.K., 1966).

⁵¹ On the vast popularity of these books, see Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁵² John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 286-7.

The conformist piety advocated by Hammond and his imitators was generally less intrusive than the discipline of the Interregnum Church, even though it served as a prop to the hard coercion that was the natural corollary of the 1662 Act of Uniformity. In sermons and pamphlets, Christian obedience became ‘the way to security and happiness in the political, social and spiritual realms. This is not a challenging religion of renunciation; on the contrary, it was openly self-interested and worldly.’⁵³ Despite this, however, many of those who were abruptly ejected from the Church as nonconformists found the piety espoused by the newly powerful conformist clerics to be congenial: there was much common ground shared by both Anglicans and Dissenters in Restoration England.⁵⁴ In such an environment, the strict discipline of uniformity upheld by the Church hierarchy became increasingly undesirable; it was a distraction from the main need to improve the nation’s morals. The overlap between puritan nonconformity and incipient Whiggery in the decades immediately after the Restoration – even after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 – is illustrated in a satirical word-picture of a prelate found in a manuscript written by John Locke’s friend William Popple in 1695:

The church’s finest pillar: double famed
For orthodoxy and for discipline.
(Terms, without which, all priestcraft would decline.)
In ceremonial forms he was so nice;
Discord in them he more abhor’d than vice.⁵⁵

Within this example of anticlerical ‘priestcraft’ satire, which became so prevalent in the decades after Milton’s death, the persistent seventeenth-century struggle over the concept of discipline can still be seen in the juxtaposition of the false use of discipline as the

⁵³ N.H. Keeble, *The Restoration* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), p. 128.

⁵⁴ Sommerville, p. 128.

⁵⁵ Mark Goldie, ‘Priestcraft and the birth of Whiggism’, in *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain*, eds. Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 219.

justification for the legal enforcement of uniformity with the real need for true pastoral discipline to prevent vice.

The historical context outlined above is well established amongst historicist literary scholars of Milton's work. However, against this background Milton's concept of discipline remains a comparatively neglected topic. Those who have identified it as important feature of Milton's thought have perceived it as tied to his early affiliation with presbyterian ideas, which evidently – in *Areopagitica*, certainly – came to an end in 1644.⁵⁶ The purpose of this thesis, by contrast, is to show that Milton's concept of discipline outlived his presbyterian phase. As such, it regards the topic as closely related to other critical areas of discussion, in particular his religious politics, his doctrinal thought, and his ethics.

In the terms of current historicist scholarship, the character of Milton's political engagement may be described as 'religious politics,' in the light of his religious convictions and language. As such, this scholarship labours in the shadow of the historiographical commonplace of the 'Puritan Revolution,' established and perpetuated in relation to Milton by mid-20th century studies. Following this understanding, the Yale edition of *The Complete Prose Works*,⁵⁷ and Christopher Hill's *The World Turned Upside Down* and *Milton and the English Revolution*,⁵⁸ to name a few, situate Milton in a context of revolutionary political and religious upheaval. This notion of 'Puritan Revolution' has since been subjected to extensive scrutiny; Conrad Russell, along with other revisionist

⁵⁶ A suitable outline of this understanding of Milton's concept of discipline as tied to Reformed 'Christocratic' utopianism can be found in Fulton's chapter on 'Areopagitica: Books, Reading, and Context' in *Historical Milton*. Another article on the same subject, although it considers Milton's discipline in terms of his adherence to *sola scriptura*, rather than Platonic political idealism, is Ken Simpson, "'That Sovran Book": The Discipline of the Word in Milton's Anti-Episcopal Tracts', in *Of Poetry and Politics*, ed. P.G. Stanwood (Binghampton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1995), pp. 313-25.

⁵⁷ *YP*, ed. Don M. Wolfe.

⁵⁸ Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975); *Milton and the English Revolution* (London: Faber, 1977).

historians, dispute the exact nature of England's mid-seventeenth century crisis.⁵⁹ Accordingly, whilst 'Revolution' is still used to denote the context of political change and ideas of the Civil War period,⁶⁰ our understanding of it as an exclusively 'Puritan' phenomenon is no longer appropriate.⁶¹ What stood formerly as historiographical orthodoxy now serves current criticism either as venerable antecedent or antagonistic force. David Norbrook's *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* demonstrates the application of this shift in approach to literary considerations of Milton when it expressly states that 'there is not a simple, steadfast march towards Puritan revolution' in the canon of his works. His interpretation of the politics of Milton's early poetry adroitly combines the political context of Laud's struggle to impose order on the Church during the 1630s, the poetics of Milton's contemporaries and predecessors, and the rhetoric of the early prose. This signalled an awareness of the frequent 'discontinuities and inconsistencies' of Milton's political stance without diluting his radicalism.⁶² In spite of the challenge that the recent biographical depiction of the young Milton as a Laudian presents to the interpretative conclusions of Norbrook's influential essay, his critical method remains a benchmark for historicist treatments of Milton, in that it prioritised sensitivity to political context and the politics of form over the scholar's own political ideals.⁶³

Milton's role as an active participant in the Puritan Revolution has been relentlessly examined in a number of important studies in recent decades. These

⁵⁹ Conrad Russell's opening shot in the introduction to *The Origins of the English Civil War* provides an exemplary refutation of the revolutionary theory of the Civil War: 'we must be looking, not for explanations of a desire for revolution, but for explanations of a state of chronic misunderstanding, terror and distrust.' (Conrad Russell, 'Introduction', *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. Conrad Russell [London: Macmillan, 1973], p. 1).

⁶⁰ E.g. Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640-1660* (Yale, CT: Yale University Press, 1994); and Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution*.

⁶¹ Contemporary republicanism, in particular, is now considered to be of particular importance to understanding the political upheavals of the Civil War and Commonwealth. Cf. Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*; Worden, 'Milton's Republicanism and the Tyranny of Heaven'; Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism*.

⁶² David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, Rev. Ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 226.

⁶³ Cf. C&C, JM.

significant critical developments provide a new background to Milton's shifting concept of discipline, and to the trajectory of this thesis. This is especially clear with regard to recent studies of Puritanism, as a result of which the character of the movement, and Milton's identification with that character, is a less certain subject. The term 'Puritan' now seems too general to be applied to Milton's writing with any real depth;⁶⁴ rather, his confessional allegiances have been analysed within other, more specific contexts. His religious and intellectual affiliation during the 1640s and immediately after is now discussed with reference to the struggle between Independents and Presbyterians, and to his advocacy of toleration;⁶⁵ works published in the wake of the Restoration are no longer thought of as an expression of the Puritan 'experience of defeat,' but instead as the product of a vibrant contemporary literary culture of nonconformity and dissent.⁶⁶ This thesis also adopts these distinct and complex contexts as a means to analyse how Milton came to advocate the importance of freely chosen actions informed by disciplined self-restraint. Following this, its second chapter investigates the roots of Milton's appeal for toleration, found in his engagement in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* with contemporary Independent and Presbyterian notions of discipline. With Puritanism now understood in these complex, polyvalent terms, this thesis is free to access other confessional perspectives on the same discipline-related issues with which Milton was engaged, by drawing on a broader canon of mid-seventeenth century religious writing, both polemical and theological.

⁶⁴ Indeed, it has been argued by Catherine Gimelli Martin that the link between Milton's oeuvre and Puritanism – radical and conservative – has been grossly over exaggerated, and that it would be framed better as an engagement with novel Baconian thought: *Milton among the Puritans*.

⁶⁵ In particular this relates to the long-lived critical consensus over Milton's turn away from presbyterianism to congregationalism that was established by Ernest Sirluck in *YP* 2. More recent explanations of this turn include Fulton, *Historical Milton*; and Smith, 'Areopagitica: voicing contexts, 1643-5'. Regarding Milton and toleration, cf. Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer, ed., *Milton and Toleration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁶⁶ N.H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1987); Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*. For 'the experience of defeat,' cf. Christopher Hill, *The Experience of Defeat* (London: Faber and Faber, 1984).

Whilst the developing critical sensitivity to the shifting political and religious circumstances of the mid-seventeenth century has enabled this thesis's wide-ranging contextual approach, recent scholarship on Milton's doctrinal thought has provided a vital precedent for framing Milton's concept of discipline in terms of his intellectual milieu. The older critical argument between those who attempted to establish coherence between the heretical content of Milton's works and a universal 'Christian Tradition,'⁶⁷ and those who did not and instead proclaimed Milton a heretic,⁶⁸ has now been challenged by works that have questioned whether the notion of 'orthodoxy' is a stable position in itself.⁶⁹ Instead of being treated as a monolithic foil to diverse heterodox thought, orthodoxy is examined as equally polyvalent and vibrant. According to this position, 'the Christian Tradition' is not 'a dull set of immobile dogmas, recognised by all, interesting to none,' but 'full of sound and fury, both controlled by and controlling its myriad users.'⁷⁰ On the grounds that for Milton *doxa* and *praxis* are one in *practice* ('usu'), this thesis carries over this assertion of the real nature of 'the Christian tradition' in its discussion of Milton's concept of discipline as marking the shifting boundary between mid-seventeenth century Protestant ortho- and heteropraxy. In this light, its fourth chapter details the engagement in the poems of the 1671 volume with the debate between Milton and contemporary Anglicanism over the concept of piety; as such it moves beyond the usual treatment of Milton's later writing in an exclusively dissenting context.

The turn against a monolithic critical understanding visible in questions of the nature of seventeenth-century Puritanism and Christian doctrine is less visible in the

⁶⁷ An example of an older manifestation of this approach is William Bridges Hunter, C.A. Patrides, and Jack H. Adamson, *Bright Essence* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1971). An articulation of the approach with greater conceptual complexity is Dennis Danielson, *Milton's Good God* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

⁶⁸ In full blooded, polemical terms this position is best expressed by William Empson, *Milton's God* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961). More sensitivity to the context in which Milton wrote is exemplified by Baumann, *Milton's Arianism*; Nuttall, *The Alternative Trinity*; Rumrich, *Milton unbound*; Milton and Heresy.

⁶⁹ A particularly influential articulation of this position is Nicholas McDowell, *The English Radical Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003).

⁷⁰ Poole, p. 195.

critical approach to Milton's ethics, especially in the lack of relationship in current scholarly literature between Milton's ethics and his concepts of discipline and piety.⁷¹ In contrast to this standpoint, this thesis will contend that the two are in fact inseparable. Although the question of ethics in Milton's works has been subject to much scholarly consideration, this has tended to fall into two camps: those who argue for his ethics and notion of virtue as one of orthodox Christianity⁷² ranged against those who see them as fundamentally rooted in classical philosophy, particularly Stoicism. In the current critical climate, those who take the latter position produce the more convincing arguments;⁷³ however, the picture of contemporary religious culture and doctrinal controversy as polyvalent phenomena which has already been established has the power to form a new backdrop against which to draw Milton's virtue and ethics. In this light, this thesis will reopen the question of the 'Christian' basis of Milton's ethics; but will engage with this putative Christianity not as a monolith of orthodoxy, but as a multifaceted discourse based in issues of belief and practice. It is in response to this context that the language of both discipline and piety become relevant to this consideration of ethics, especially the

⁷¹ A recent example of the literary consideration of ethical standpoints can be found in the collection of essays entitled *Reading Renaissance Ethics*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007). It provides a number of fresh approaches to understanding Milton's ethics, both aesthetic and political, particularly in essays by Grossman and Victoria Kahn. However, overall it does not treat Milton's religious context as an important influence on his ethics.

⁷² The prime example of this position is Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin* (London: Macmillan, 1967). This work establishes the grounds for an understanding of the ethical force of Milton's literary endeavour by its use of reader response theory as a means of understanding the centrality of the notion of original sin within his thought.

⁷³ See Strier, 'Milton against humility'. The case for Milton as a crypto-Stoic is also made in Andrew Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics, and Literature in the Age of Milton: War and Peace Reconciled* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). However, a persuasive counter-argument to this general position has been delivered by Isabel Rivers, who considers Stoicism as a stance of passive opposition to the world which is inconsistent with Milton's religious compulsion to appeal to and encourage 'man's capacity for change: Isabel Rivers, *The Poetry of Conservatism* (Cambridge: Rivers Press, 1973), p. 100. Stephen M. Fallon has shown a way past this pro- and anti-Stoic impasse by considering how Milton represented his own ethical position as one singularly virtuous, rather than what precedents – Classical or Christian – he grounded his morality on. Whilst similar to the sinless personas that characterized early Quaker biographies, Milton's literary methods were rhetorical, in the manner of Aristotle, Quintillian and Cicero: Stephen M. Fallon, *Milton's Peculiar Grace* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 39.

ethos of self-restraint within Milton's works, couched in terms of both 'discipline' and 'piety.'

In its analysis of Milton's shifting concept of discipline, the methodology of this thesis draws together the lexical 'keywords' approach developed by Raymond Williams and the discourse analysis of the 'Cambridge School' of the history of political thought.⁷⁴ The purpose of the 'School' was to draw together political theory and actual political practice, as derived from historical events. This thesis, following Quentin Skinner's example in the preface to his *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, asks 'what was Milton *doing* in writing about discipline?'⁷⁵ On its own, 'discipline' may be a noun or a verb denoting a wide variety of meanings within a common matrix; although its ecclesiastical meanings are to the fore in this thesis as in Milton's writing, the military, pedagogical and punitive aspects of the term are also present and form an integral part of the lexical field within which Milton worked. By examining the word in this light, it becomes clear that the Skinnerian question necessitates a further examination of what 'discipline' denotes within Milton's writing, and how his writing about 'discipline' participated in a wider discourse conducted by his contemporaries. It implies that 'discipline' was part of a common 'vocabulary,' a set of 'normative terms' that collectively governed a particular ideological discourse.⁷⁶ In the case of this thesis, the particular ideological discourse under discussion is that of mid-seventeenth century English church practice, and its pertinence to individual moral behaviour. This is an area of discourse that overlaps significantly with what Isabel Rivers has described as the 'mainstream' language of religious ideas of the

⁷⁴ Raymond Williams, *Keywords*, rev. and expanded ed. (London: Fontana, 1983).

⁷⁵ See Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), vol. 1, p. xiii.

⁷⁶ James Tully, 'The pen is a mighty sword: Quentin Skinner's analysis of politics', in *Meaning and Context*, ed. & int. James Tully (Cambridge: Polity, 1988), p. 13.

mid-seventeenth century.⁷⁷ Following on from this premise, each of the texts by Milton that discusses 'discipline' constitutes a 'speech act,' an event in which the common vocabulary is manipulated either to uphold or change the accepted meaning of the normative term. Such speech acts accrete to transform the languages in which they were spoken, and in so doing 'make history.'⁷⁸

The 'Cambridge School' approach to contextual interpretation, whilst primarily used within the discipline of intellectual history, also offers profound utility and challenge to those concerned with more explicitly literary texts. Yet its rigorous attention to the language of the text may suit those who interpret in order only to extrapolate an author's political ideas; and in addition, it can be blind to the way in which a text's literary form also contributes to an ongoing aesthetic discourse, which can in itself have a political resonance. The role of the scholar of English literature, then, in applying the methodology of the 'Cambridge School,' must be to balance it with serious study of the author's practice, either as poet or prose-writer. In this way, the work that is subject to analysis cannot be reduced simply to ideology;⁷⁹ moreover, it may lead to consideration of how the political ideas contained within a literary work may also be expressed through its form and style, and not just through the words on the page. In the field of Milton studies, there is already a substantial precedent for this approach. It has been emphasised that the foundations of historicist scholarship lie in the act of removing 'canonical writers like Milton and Marvell from their timeless pantheon [and looking] at the poems as they were first composed or circulated, setting them in the political flux along with many much less

⁷⁷ *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment*, pp. 5-24. Comparing Lord Herbert of Cherbury with George Fox, Rivers comments on the way in which 'Writers of diametrically opposed views are certain that their linguistic methods will resolve religious and moral disputes and settle the foundations of religion and ethics.' (p. 2).

⁷⁸ J.G.A. Pocock, 'Texts as Events: Reflections on the History of Political Thought', in *Politics of Discourse*, eds. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), p. 29.

⁷⁹ This imperative is explained far more eloquently by Roger Chartier, in *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), esp. pp. 10-11.

well-known contemporaries.’⁸⁰ Furthermore, the notions of ‘polemical strategy’ and ‘print event’ have also surfaced as a means of comprehending and contemplating ‘the complex of attitudes, ploys, and pitches adopted by the polemicist to achieve his historically definable objective,’ as well as the procedures, personalities, and politics involved in actually printing Milton’s works.⁸¹

* * *

Before continuing onto a summary of the chapters of this thesis and to the four chapters themselves, it is necessary to consider – in some depth – two related historical backgrounds. First, this thesis’s narrative of Milton’s changing concept of discipline finds a parallel and a precedent in the changing meaning of the formula ‘*fides et mores*’ in post-Reformation debate. The formula, which originated in the works of Saint Augustine, occupied a central place in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theological arguments about the competing status of scripture and tradition.⁸² The formula was commonly translated by Milton’s contemporaries as ‘faith and manners.’ For early modern divines, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, writing in Augustine’s shadow, the ‘*fides et mores*’ of the Church formed the grounds on which the indifference or otherwise of individual Christian practices could be assessed. The two sides differed, however, on how the formula should be understood. Simply put, the Protestants held that the fundamental tenets of ‘faith and manners’ were to be found and understood in scripture; the Roman

⁸⁰ Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, p. 9.

⁸¹ Regarding ‘polemical strategy,’ cf. Thomas N. Corns, ‘Milton’s Quest for Respectability,’ in *MLR* 77:4 (Oct. 1982), 769. Although Corns explicitly cites Terry Eagleton’s *Criticism and Ideology* as influential in a footnote to the paragraph in which he explains ‘polemical strategy,’ the impression of the methodology of the Cambridge School is also apparent. On ‘print event,’ cf. Laura Lunger Knoppers, ‘General Introduction,’ in *OCW* II.iii. Focusing on the ‘print event’ is also a neat way of sidestepping the much-disputed issue of when these poems were composed.

⁸² For a broader understanding of the Counter-Reformation in early modern Europe, cf. MacCulloch, *Reformation*, chs. 5, 6, 7; also, Anthony D. Wright, *The Counter-Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

Catholics maintained that they were located in the traditions of the Church, as defined at the Council of Trent (1545-1563). In its role as a fault-line of inter-confessional dispute, the use of the formula was widespread. The distinction between Protestant and Catholic understandings of the '*fides et mores*' formula was further compounded by the divergent range of meanings which '*mores*' could carry: whether it meant 'manners' in the moral, behavioural sense; whether it related instead to the practice and organisation of the Church; or indeed whether it referred to both.⁸³ Thus tensions surrounding '*fides et mores*' mirrored controversy over the concept of discipline, which similarly showcased tensions within and around a terminological consensus.

The different applications of Augustine's formula in the post-Reformation period show signs of a semantic change from '*fides et mores*' as it was understood in Christian Antiquity towards our own modern understanding of faith as abstract belief and manners as polite or moral behaviour.⁸⁴ This modern sense is different from what the formula meant to Augustine, in whose works '*fides*' 'refers [...] to the content of the truth, as contained in the Gospel of Christ,' whilst '*mores*' 'simply refers to the manifold forms of Christian life, especially sacramental and liturgical, as rooted in the living tradition of the Church.'⁸⁵ In *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*, Jean-Louis Quantin argues

⁸³ There are two slightly different accounts of this semantic divergence: Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press/Warburg Studies, 2009). The issue of how '*fides et mores*,' particularly '*mores*,' was translated in the early modern period is briefly summarised in n. 151, pp. 51-2. And also Piet Fransen, 'A Short History of the Meaning of the Formula '*Fides et Mores*''', *Hermeneutics of the Councils and Other Studies*, collected by H.E. Mertens & F. de Graeve (Leuven: Leuven University, 1985).

⁸⁴ This latter interpretation of '*mores*' can still be seen in current English translations of Augustine's letters to Paulinus. Cf. Augustine, *Letters*, Vol. I, trans. Sister Wilfrid Parsons, S.N.D. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1951), p. 253, 256, 289; Augustine, *Works*, Vol. VI, ed. Rev. Marcus Dods (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1872), p. 198, 200, 231. The first uses 'morals,' and the second uses 'sound morality.' Regarding the modern understanding of 'faith' as abstract belief rather than the content of the Gospel, Fransen refers to the seventeenth century Gallican Catholic clergyman Henry Holden's *Divinae fidei analysis*, which treats faith as 'a supernatural way of discovering the truth about things, and therefore exclusively illuminated by God's revelation.' (Fransen, p. 310).

⁸⁵ Fransen, p. 306, 293; Fransen's position is based on his reading of the Appendix entitled "'Faith and Morals" at Trent', in John L. Murphy, *The Notion of Tradition in John Driedo* (Milwaukee, WI: The Seraphic Press, 1959), pp. 292-300; and John Kevin Coyle, *Augustine's 'De Moribus Ecclesiae*

that even at the start of the sixteenth century the meaning of '*mores*' had begun to shift. Referring to the use of the term in the decrees of the Council of Trent, he notes the lack of indication as to whether it was used to mean 'morals or disciplinary and liturgical usages.'⁸⁶ As an example of the term being read as 'morals' he cites the documents analysed in J.K. Farge's study of the theology faculty of the University of Paris in the early part of the sixteenth century.⁸⁷ The commonplace early modern English translation of '*fides et mores*' into 'faith and manners' further complicates the understanding of how the formula was interpreted. Writing against Roman Catholic apologists, the works of Protestant divines in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries often conflate godly morality with their own perceived proper notion of Church discipline. An example of this is in John Jewel's *Apology*, which rebukes Rome by appropriating Cyprian's comments on the decay of manners in the generations after the Apostles: 'In Bishops there was no deuotion: in ministers no vpright dealing (*'fides integra'*), no mercye in their doinges, no discipline in their maners (*'non in moribus disciplina'*).'⁸⁸ In other words, the practice of the Church is meaningless when its leaders are not bound by a code of moral behaviour. Jewel goes on to argue that the newly minted English Church settlement has disciplined the manners of the clergy once again, instancing the Protestant categorisation of fornication as a sin, which he claims to be contrary to Rome's lax canonists. It is this proximity of morality and ecclesiastical practice in the etymology of '*fides et mores*' that allows the formula to be applied in Counter-Reformation texts in a variety of ways and to very different ends.

The phrase 'faith and manners' originates in two of Augustine's works, both of which were frequently quoted and translated by English Protestant divines in sixteenth

Catholicae' (Fribourg: The University Press, 1978), p. 90. Also, cf. David Stagaman, S.J., 'Piet Fransen's Research on *Fides Et Mores*', in *TS* 64 (2003), 69-77.

⁸⁶ Quantin, p. 50, and pp. 50-1, n. 151.

⁸⁷ Cf. J.K. Farge, *Orthodoxy and Reform in Early Reformation France* (Leiden: Brill, 1985).

⁸⁸ John Jewel, *An apologie*, English trans. (London, 1562), p. 23. Latin interpellations taken from the original: *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London, 1562), sig. C5.

and seventeenth centuries. The first source is a passage in the second book of Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*, which states that all things containing '*fidem, Moresque Vivendi*' are to be found in the plain parts of scripture.⁸⁹ The applicability of this quotation to the cause of the Elizabethan Church can be seen in John Rainolds's conclusion to *The summe of the conference* (1584), an account of his disputations in Oxford with the Jesuit John Hart. Rainolds supports his point that 'The holy scripture is of greater authoritie then the Church' with the following authoritative citation: 'Austin saith, that all things concerning faith and maners are contained in those, I say not which are, but which are plaine in scripture.'⁹⁰ A further demonstration can be found Andrew Willet's *Synopsis Papisimi* (1592). First, in defence of the 'playnnes' of scripture, he writes: 'The plaine and easie places of scripture conteine all things necessarie vnto faith and good life, *Ergo* the doctrine of saluation in the scriptures is not hard and difficult, but easie of good Christians to be vnderstood.' Later he describes the controversial belief that Church practice is not bound up with 'faith, and the rule of life': '*Ergo* by the sentence of *Augustine*, traditions besides scripture haue nothing to do with the doctrine of faith and manners, but do consist onely in externall rites and customes of the Church.'⁹¹ In these examples, both of an Elizabethan puritan persuasion, the defence of scripture requires the understanding of '*mores*' as 'maners,' or 'the rule of life,' in the moral sense. The role of the Church in fostering Gospel belief and behaviour depended on the supremacy of scripture. Ecclesiastical and patristic authority was only valid when it was not contrary to the plain 'faith and manners' contained in scripture.

⁸⁹ Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, in *Opera Omnia CAG*, electronic ed. (Charlottesville, VA: Intellex Corporation), pt. 2, Lib II, Cap. XIV.

⁹⁰ John Rainolds, *The summe of the conference* (London: George Bishop, 1584), p. 197 [i.e. p. 689]. N.B. Rainolds also cites 'faith and maners' in its Tridentine context twice in this work: first, in an acerbic swipe at the Portuguese Roman Catholic theologian Diogo de Paiva de Andrada (or 'Andradius'), on the issue of the verity of the Vulgate, on p. 250; and second, in response to Hart's use of Matthew 23:3 to support the Roman Catholic notion of tradition, p. 314.

⁹¹ Andrew Willet, *Synopsis Papisimi* (London: Thomas Man, 1592), p. 25; p. 41.

The second source is Augustine's two letters to Januarius, which were written in approximately 400 AD, and are concerned with the thorny subject of the variety of Church customs practiced in different localities. In answer to his correspondent's concerns regarding which ecclesiastical practices were permissible, the Bishop of Hippo wrote that all forms of worship were indifferent. On the provision that they were not contrary to 'fides' and 'bonos mores,' they represented a valid 'disciplina' for the 'gravi prudentique christiano.'⁹² This is the same position which was deduced by Willet from his interpretation of *De Doctrina Christiana*.⁹³ However, other English divines who were less inclined toward Puritanism seized upon the Januarius epistles in order to support the case for the strict uniformity of the established Church. In his *Answer* (1572) to John Field and Thomas Wilcox's *Admonition*, John Whitgift held that although worship was indifferent to salvation, it was right that it should be practiced uniformly in the Church according to the wishes of the Supreme Governor.⁹⁴ The same point is made by the former Jesuit Thomas Bell in *The Regiment of the Church* (1606), which was dedicated to Whitgift's successor as Archbishop of Canterbury, Richard Bancroft. The latter renders Augustine's 'golden words' as follows:

Neither can there be any better discipline in these matters for a graue and discrete christan, then to doe so as hee shall see that Church doe, to which hee hath occasion to come. For, that which is neither against faith, nor

⁹² Augustine, 'First Letter to Januarius (CXVIII)', in *Opera*, ed. Erasmus (Basel: Ambrosium & Aurelium Frobenios, 1569), Tomus. II, pp. 556. The earliest printed version of Augustine's letters was printed in Strasbourg by Johann Mentelin in 1471, entitled *Liber Epistolarum beati Augustini episcopi hipponensis ecclesie*. This edition was reprinted in Basel by Johannes Amerbach in 1493. In these, the letters to Januarius are numbered CXVIII and CXIX; however, in recent editions, both Latin and translated, they are numbered 54 and 55.

⁹³ As an example of the use of the Januarius epistles in a continental context prior to the conclusion of Trent, we may consider Calvin's *Institutes*, Book 4, Chapter 10 (entitled: 'Of the power in making of lawes: wherein the Pope and his have used a most cruel tyranny and butcherie upon soules'), Section 19, in which Augustine's position on 'indifferent' tradition serves to support his argument that Roman Catholic vestments were an innovation: cf. John Calvin, *The Institutes of Christian Religion*, trans. Thomas Norton (London: William Norton, 1578), p. 498.

⁹⁴ John Whitgift, *An Answer* (London: Humfrey Toy., 1572), p. 24.

against good manners, may be indifferently obserued for their societie,
amongst whom we doe conuerse.⁹⁵

The historical context for Augustine's statement was not important for Bell. Instead, the text spoke to Bell's own time: his claim that there was no 'better discipline' than that of the established Church alludes to the rival claims made by the Elizabethan and early Jacobean Puritan movement for presbyterian 'Discipline.'⁹⁶ Those puritan nonconformists and Roman Catholics who would not abide by the locally established practices were, in the words of Ambrose (whom Augustine quoted elsewhere in his first letter to Januarius), causing unnecessary 'scandal.'⁹⁷ In this quotation it is plain that the '*fides et mores*' formula was open to explication with the terminology of discipline by those English divines seeking to put their patristic learning to policy-driven uses.

These English translations of the original '*fides et mores*,' that introduce the English term 'discipline,' may be understood as an attempt to reclaim Augustine's pronouncements from the hands of the Roman Catholic Church after the conclusion of Trent. The formula was central to two decrees issued by the Council following the fourth session on April 8, 1546, in order to assert the authority of the Church in matters of scriptural interpretation, opposing the Protestant *sola scriptura*.⁹⁸ The first decree, 'Concerning the Canonical Scriptures,' defines '*fides et mores*' as being rooted both in scripture *and* unwritten tradition:

the council accepts and venerates with a like feeling of piety all the books
of both the old and the new Testament, since the one God is the author of

⁹⁵ Thomas Bell, *The Regiment of the Church* (London: William Welby, 1606), p. 183. Cf. Alexandra Walsham, 'Bell [alias Burton], Thomas', in *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/2026>, accessed 19 June 2012].

⁹⁶ Cf. Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*; also Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?*

⁹⁷ Bell, *Regiment of the Church*, p. 58.

⁹⁸ The political wrangling that preceded the Council's Fourth Session is comprehensively described in Hubert Jedin's *A history of the Council of Trent*, trans. Ernest Graf (London: T. Nelson, 1957-61), Vol. II, pp. 52-98.

both, as well as the traditions concerning both faith and conduct (*'nec non traditiones ipsas, tum ad fidem, tum ad mores pertinentes'*), either spoken directly by Christ or dictated by the Holy Spirit, which have been preserved in unbroken sequence in the catholic church.⁹⁹

In this, scripture and tradition are treated as equal in importance with regard to the attainment of salvation and the conduct of the Church. With this principle in place, the decree continues by demarcating the biblical canon as that contained in St. Jerome's Latin Vulgate.

The second decree, 'on the Acceptance of the Sacred Books and Apostolic Traditions,' established the Vulgate as the official Bible of the Church, to be used in all 'public lectures, disputations, sermons and expositions held as authentic.'¹⁰⁰ This was not principally because of its accuracy, but because it had been vindicated by its continuing use by the Church. The decree also made provision for the punishment of those who used other versions of the Bible or interpreted it according to their private judgement, as well as setting out procedures for the licensing and censorship of Bibles and commentaries. Here, '*fides et mores*' was invoked in reference to the dangers of errant scriptural interpretation:

no one, relying on his own personal judgment in matters of faith and customs (*'in rebus fidei et morum'*) which are linked to the establishment of Christian doctrine, shall dare to interpret the sacred scriptures... by twisting its text to his individual meaning...¹⁰¹

Overall, whilst they took aim at *sola scriptura*, these two decrees remain fundamentally unclear in several respects. Quantin writes that 'the council did not explain how traditions were to be known and whether, in matters of faith, they should be understood as materially supplementing scripture (and therefore amounting to a second, parallel

⁹⁹ Stagaman, p. 74.

¹⁰⁰ *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, trans. Rev. H.J. Schroeder, O.P. (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1960), p. 18.

¹⁰¹ Stagaman, p. 74.

source of revelation), or only as illuminating its obscurities.’¹⁰² What is clear, however, is the rigorous enforcement that the Council considered expedient to the protection of the ideas that they associated with ‘*fides et mores*,’ through instruments including the Inquisition and the Index.

The Council’s denial of scripture’s authority over tradition in the decrees of the Fourth Session threatened the intellectual grounds on which the Protestant Churches of Europe based their disciplinary authority. As such, it caused decades of Protestant rebuttal, in many instances depending on their own alternative understanding of Augustine’s formula. One of the earliest examples of this in English is a printed response to Pius IV’s Bull *Benedictus Deus*, which was issued on January 16, 1564, to promulgate the decrees of the recently concluded Council. *A godly and necessary admonition of the decrees and canons of the Counsel of Trent* (1564) was the work of the Lutheran divine Matthias Flacius Illyricus, translated from Latin by Archbishop Matthew Parker and published by the thoroughgoing Protestant printer John Day.¹⁰³ The polemic’s opening salvo was specifically targeted at the contents of the first decree of the fourth session:

In the first decree of the 4. Session the Synode decreed, that vnwritten Traditions vsurped by continuall succession in the Catholike Churche, shalbe receaued and reuerenced with as great an affection of piety and reuerence, as if they had come from Christes owne mouth, or had bene spoken by the holy ghost.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Quantin, pp. 51-2.

¹⁰³ That the translation is attributed to Parker is of interest, given that his own well-documented antiquarianism was closely involved in the production of the *Ecclesiastica historia* by Flacius and his fellow Magdeburg ‘Centuriators.’ Cf. David J. Crankshaw and Alexandra Gillespie, ‘Parker, Matthew (1504–1575), archbishop of Canterbury and patron of scholarship’, in *DNB*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison; online edn ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2011 [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/21327>, accessed 1 Aug 2013].

¹⁰⁴ Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *A godly and necessary admonition of the decrees and canons of the Counsel of Trent*, trans. Matthew Parker (?) (London: John Day, 1564), p. 3.

The claim of usurpation here points to how the Council had elevated its own edicts to the same level of authority as scripture. What Flacius considered to be the self-evident truths of scripture could be opposed by the Papacy by invoking the Council's insistence on the parity of scripture and 'vnwritten Traditions.' In defence of Protestant divinity, the Lutheran cleric turns to Augustine's rule of '*fides et mores*':

our men haue neuer earnestly contended agaynst traditions, which are not manifestly agaynst the worde of God, but thought that they myght be retayned without offence to God so that yet they were not vitiated with the opinion of the seruice of God, as it is sayd: Thei worship me in vaine with the commaundementes & doctrines of men: yet wil our aduersaries neuer be contente.¹⁰⁵

The influence of the patristic formula here is evident in Flacius' caveat on traditions: they ought not to be 'contended agaynst,' providing that they 'are not manifestly agaynst the worde of God.' This repetition of 'agaynst' echoes the syntax of Augustine's use of the formula in the first of his letters to Januarius: '*neque contra fidem, neque contra bonos mores*' (my emphasis). The wider argument presented here is that the '*fides et mores*' decrees of the Council of Trent bear little relation to Augustine, but instead were issued as a political gesture designed to dismiss central theological tenets of Protestantism. There is an irony here in the conflict between Flacius' harsh Augustinian theology and the Council's similarly Augustine-inspired emphasis on the living catholicity of the Church. The need for Protestants across Europe to rebut Tridentine ecclesiastical teaching is further illustrated by the fact that the Lutheran's *Admonition* was published and circulated in England following a compact between two very different sorts of English Protestant in the shape of Matthew Parker and John Day.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the contents of the Council's decrees were reiterated by Cardinal Bellarmine. In the fourth book of his *Disputationes* (1599),

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 5. The scriptural reference is to Matthew 15:8-9, which is in itself a quotation from Isaiah 29:13.

entitled 'De Verbo Dei non scripto,' he restates the substance of the Council's first '*fides et mores*' decree: 'Primum est, quod nos asserimus, in Scripturis non contineri expressè totam doctrinam necessariam, sive fide, sive de moribus: & proinde præter verbum Dei scriptum, requiri etiam verbum Dei non scriptum, id est, divinas & Apostolicas traditiones.'¹⁰⁶ These words were translated into English by George Carleton, Bishop of Chichester under James I and cousin to the diplomat Sir Dudley Carleton, in his *Directions to know the true Church* (1615):

Wee affirme, that in the Scriptures is not conteined expressly all necessarie doctrine, whether of faith or maners, and therfore besides the written word of God, is required also the vnwritten word of God, namely, Diuine and Apostolicall Traditions.¹⁰⁷

Carleton's quotation of Bellarmine's words is positioned straight after the first Tridentine '*tum ad fidem, tum ad mores pertinentes*' decree. The overall purpose of Carleton's quotation was to demonstrate that the novel swerve from primitive orthodoxy in the Roman Church was brought about by the Council of Trent, and not before. In the same vein as Flacius, English Protestants such as Carleton identified the Tridentine conception of tradition as dangerous because it was self-referential: it included the Council's own decrees as integral to its understanding of tradition, creating a new kind of universal catholicity. The same view was memorably expressed in William Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants* (1638): Bellarmine's *Disputationes* were mere ciphers for the errors of Trent. In a strikingly eloquent passage, he addresses his Roman Catholic interlocutor: 'I doe not understand by your Religion, the doctrine of *Bellarmino* or *Baronius*, [...] but that wherein you all agree, or professe to agree, *the Doctrine of the Councell of Trent*.' In a forceful contrast to this, he then

¹⁰⁶ Robert Bellarmine, *Disputationes ... De Controversiis Christianae Fidei, Adversus Huius Temporis Hæreticos, Tribus Tomis comprehensæ* (Ingolstadt: Adami Sartorii, MDXCIX), Lib. IV, Cap. III, p. 252. This work was originally published between 1588-93: see Gordon Campbell, 'Milton's *Index Theologicus* and Bellarmine's *Disputationes de Controversiis Christianae Fidei Adversus Huius Temporis Haereticos*', in *MQ* 11 (1977), 13.

¹⁰⁷ George Carleton, *Directions to know the true Church* (London: John Bill, 1615), p. 108.

declares rousingly that ‘the *Religion of Protestants* [...] that wherein they all agree, and which they all subscribe with a greater Harmony, as a perfect rule of their Faith and Actions, that is, The BIBLE. The BIBLE, I say, The BIBLE only is the Religion of Protestants!’¹⁰⁸

Milton was aware of these debates and their contribution to the changing meaning of discipline. His familiarity with this material has been argued elsewhere in critical essays that discuss his *Index Theologicus*, the missing volume of notes on Counter-Reformation theological controversy that he referred to several times in his Commonplace Book.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, the editors of the Yale *Complete Prose Works of John Milton* have posited that Milton used Erasmus’ edition of Augustine’s epistles in writing *Of Reformation*.¹¹⁰ Yet beyond this consensus, the additional influence of Paolo Sarpi on Milton’s use and understanding of the formula – particularly in its Tridentine setting – is of crucial importance with regard to this thesis: this constitutes the second necessary background for the following four chapters.

Milton’s familiarity with Sarpi is plain, as he referred to his works thirteen times in his Commonplace Book and used many of these references in the composition of prose

¹⁰⁸ William Chillingworth, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1638), p. 375.

¹⁰⁹ These essays may be categorised as a response to Gordon Campbell’s compelling argument for the purpose of Milton’s missing *Index Theologicus* as a document being compiled in preparation for a work attacking Cardinal Bellarmine’s *Disputationes*. See Gordon Campbell, ‘Milton’s *Index Theologicus* and Bellarmine’s *Disputationes de Controversiis Christianae Fidei Adversus Huius Temporis Haereticos*’. Campbell’s argument has since been developed and complicated – but most importantly not dismissed – in two recent essays: William Poole, ‘The Genres of Milton’s Commonplace Book’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, eds. Nicholas McDowell and Nigel Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); and Jeffrey Alan Miller, ‘Reconstructing Milton’s Lost *Index theologicus*: The Genesis and Usage of an Anti-Bellarmino, Theological Commonplace Book’, in *MS 52* (2011), 187-219.

¹¹⁰ Milton quotes from Augustine’s letter to Fortunatian in *Of Reformation*: ‘St. Austin writes to Fortunatian that he counts it lawfull in the books of whomsoever to reject that which hee finds otherwise then true, and so hee would have others deale by him. He neither accounted, as it seems, those Fathers that went before, nor himselfe, nor others of his rank, for men of more then ordinary spirit, that might equally deceive, and be deceiv’d’ (YP 1.562). In n. 154, on the same page as this passage in YP 1, Don M. Wolfe and William Alfred suggest that Milton may have used Erasmus’ edition of Augustine, *Opera* (10 vols., Basle, 1556), in which the passage Milton quotes can be found in II, 523.

works including *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* and *Areopagitica*.¹¹¹ With regard to ‘*fides et mores*,’ however, the Venetian Servite’s *History of the Council of Trent*, first published in England in 1619, was influential because it restated the substance of the Tridentine decrees in an utterly distinctive way. Sarpi made it clear that the ‘*mores*’ of ‘*fides et mores*’ signified Church practice rather than morality. Furthermore, through the sceptical approach that characterises the whole of the *History*, he argued implicitly that the Roman Catholic Church used the formula to justify its use of temporal powers – such as the Index and the Inquisition – to achieve dominion. As the third chapter of this thesis will demonstrate, Sarpi’s pragmatic understanding of ecclesiastical discipline’s openness to political misuse would later push Milton towards a belief in the primacy of freely chosen acts by self-disciplining individuals.

The critical question of which edition of Sarpi’s *History* – Italian, English or Latin – Milton used provides grounds for considering how Milton interpreted ‘*fides et mores*,’ as well as what Sarpi intended to say. Until recently, the assertion that all references were taken from the original Italian edition of the work has been accepted without too much scrutiny.¹¹² Recently, however, Edward Jones, in his study of the Kederminster Library to which Milton had access whilst living in Horton (1635-9), has suggested that Nathanael Brent’s English translation may well have been used as an aid to the original Italian.¹¹³ Brent’s translation of Sarpi’s discussion of the Council’s fourth session certainly accords with Milton’s translation of ‘*fides et mores*’ as ‘faith and manners’ in *Areopagitica*.¹¹⁴ Where Sarpi translates ‘*mores/morum*’ in the Council’s decrees as ‘*costume/costume*,’ Brent neatly translates it as ‘manners,’ like John Rainolds, John Whitgift, Thomas Bell, and George Carleton. The ‘purity of the Gospel,’ goes Brent’s translation, was ‘promised by the

¹¹¹ See Ruth Mohl, *John Milton and His Commonplace Book* (New York, NY: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1969), p. 239. Also, see below, Chapter 3.

¹¹² Cf. Ruth Mohl’s note on the work in her edition of the ‘Commonplace Book’, in *YP* 1.396.

¹¹³ Edward Jones, ‘Filling in a Blank in the Canvas’: Milton, Horton, and the Kederminster Library’, in *RES* 53:209 (2002), 54.

¹¹⁴ Cf. below, Chapter 3.

Prophets, published by Christ, and preached by the Apostles, as the fountaine of all trueth, and discipline of maners [*'come fonte d'ogni verità e disciplina de' costume'*].¹¹⁵ Brent continues: the Council 'receiue[s] with equall reuerence, all the bookes of the old and new Testament, and the traditions belonging to faith and manners [*'e le tradizioni spettanti alla fede et a' costumi'*], as proceeding from the mouth of Christ, or dictated by the holy Ghost, and preserued in the Catholique Church.' Further, through 'setting downe the Catalogue of the books,' 'euery one may know what ground the Synode will vse in confirming the points of doctrine, and reforming of maners in the Church [*'confermar i dogma e restituir i costume nella Chiesa'*].¹¹⁵ In this passage, Sarpi made it clear that the Council understood '*fides et mores*' as signifying the orthodox doctrinal tenets and the ceremonial and organisational traditions of the Catholic Church. This is particularly evident in his use of the Italian '*costume*' as an adequate translation of the Latin '*mores*,' which maintained the traditional Augustinian understanding of '*fides et mores*.' The English cognate of '*costume*,' 'custom,' would also have conveyed the indifferent, descriptive meaning of '*mores*.' Brent's translation of '*costume*' into English as 'manners,' however, puts Sarpi's account in accordance with the reams of controversial theology published in England since the settlement of the Elizabethan Church.

As Brent's biased translation of Sarpi's original indicates, different political and theological perspectives were at work in these two versions of *The History*. This speaks of the role played by the English government in the publication of *The History*. The hopes that were pinned on this work by the Jacobean administration are amply illustrated by the portrait of Sarpi that still hangs in the Bodleian Library with the inscription '*Paulus Sarpius Venetus Concilii Tridentini Eviscerator*,' and by Archbishop George Abbot's personal

¹¹⁵ Pietro Soave Polano (Sarpi's pseudonym), *The historie of the Councel of Trent*, trans. Nathaniel Brent (London: Robert Barker and John Bill, 1620), p. 162. The interpolated Italian is taken from the current academic edition, based on Sarpi's re-edited Geneva-printed 1629 edition: Paolo Sarpi, *Istoria Del Concilio Tridentino*, Vol. 1, ed. Corrado Vivanti (Torino: Gioulio Einaudi, 1974), p. 276.

interest in the publication of Sarpi's original Italian¹¹⁶ and its translation into Latin and English.¹¹⁷ The prefatory material to the English translation of 1620, composed by Brent, sets out the underlying reasons for the stated need to eviscerate the Council. First, in the dedicatory epistle to the king, Sarpi's skewering of the activities of the Council provides justification for James's own attempts at 'the building up, or repairing, of Gods Church.'¹¹⁸ Next, in an epistle to the reader, the blame for international hostilities and the persecution of Protestants is laid firmly at the door of the Council. This is tied into the English experience of sixteenth-century religious discord with a quotation taken from the Jesuit Edmund Campion's *Ten Reasons*, which praises the virtues of Trent. The final piece addressed Abbot, Brent's patron, in laudatory terms and upholds the doctrinal position of the Church of England by declaring that the Councils of the Early Church were dictated by the Holy Spirit, in contrast with the unlawful, pride-driven proceedings at Trent. These reasons of state policy, doctrinal truth, and the ecclesiastical legitimacy of the established Church, all fitted with the pre-Sarpi Protestant appropriations of Augustine's '*fides et mores*.' In particular they accorded with John Whitgift's and Thomas Bell's use of the formula in the letters to Januarius to push for uniformity against the claims of Roman Catholic polemicists and English presbyterians.

¹¹⁶ This is the work to which Ruth Mohl refers. It is worth noting that the aims of de Dominis were quite different from the ones held by those who had given him sanctuary. Noel Malcolm writes that 'For de Dominis, Sarpi's *History* was a useful weapon in the ecumenist campaign, since it would demonstrate to Catholics that the obstacles to unity on their side were not immutable verities of faith, but impediments factitiously created by Popes for their own political ends; for Sarpi and Carleton, however, the work was a cautionary tale for Protestants, warning them to have no truck with Rome.' (Noel Malcolm, *De Dominis, 1560-1624* [London: Strickland & Scott Academic Publications, 1984], p. 57). It is also worth noting that a second Italian edition of Sarpi's *History* was published in Geneva 1629 containing authorial revisions and corrections (according to the title-page): see Frances A. Yates, 'Paolo Sarpi's *History of the Council of Trent*', in *Renaissance and Reform: The Italian Contribution* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), p. 255, n. 53.

¹¹⁷ It was Sarpi's translator Nathanael Brent himself, under the instructions (and patronage) of Abbot, who went to Venice to organise the transcription of Sarpi's work and its transportation back to England. Brent, a Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, was already familiar with Venice, having been attached to Sir Dudley Carleton's embassy there in 1613-16. Once the transcription reached England, it was given to the apostate archbishop of Spalato, Antonio de Dominis, who prepared the original Italian version for its publication in 1619. Cf. Malcolm, p. 56. Also, A. J. Hegarty, 'Brent, Sir Nathanael (1573/4-1652)', in *DNB*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison; online edn., May 2011 [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/3324>, accessed 1 Aug 2013].

¹¹⁸ 'To his most Sacred Majestie', in *The historie of the Councel of Trent*, sig. ¶ 3.

This English use of Sarpi, as exemplified in Brent's translation, misunderstands the actual content and intention of the *History*. It is therefore the way in which Sarpi himself presented the detailed political context in which the Tridentine doctrinal decrees were made, rather than Brent's reconfiguration of this account, which is of direct importance to understanding Milton's 'faith and manners,' as well as his shifting concept of discipline. The circumstances and principles behind Sarpi's service as State Theologian to Venice during the Interdict crisis in 1606-07 have been discussed at greater length elsewhere,¹¹⁹ as have the enlightened private views which he set out in his *Pensieri*.¹²⁰ Sarpi's intentions were not to expose the erroneous nature of the theology propounded by the Council. Instead he wished to argue that theological error was the natural corollary of the Vatican's malign grip on the institutional operation of the Church.¹²¹ This can be seen in the structure of *The History*, in which the entirety of the first book is concerned with the political events and military conflicts of the early sixteenth century. The Council, the commencement of which is described in the second book, is depicted as a botched compromise resulting from the inefficacy of the Curia's delaying tactics. The purpose of the *History* can also be detected in Sarpi's description of the narrative as 'the Iliade of our age.'¹²² This imputed to the work a quality of literary, persuasive force. It aimed to provoke moral outrage in the reader through the relentless contrast between the activities of the Council and the Papacy's ongoing manoeuvrings with the crowned heads of Europe.

The provocative, sceptical quality of Sarpi's writing would influence Milton's approach to the political aspect of contemporary religious issues and practices. This is

¹¹⁹ Cf. John Leon Lievsay, *Venetian Phoenix* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1973); William Bouwsma, 'Venice, Spain, and the Papacy: Paolo Sarpi and the Renaissance Tradition', in *The Late Italian Renaissance, 1525-1630*, ed. Eric Cochrane (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 353-76.

¹²⁰ David Wootton, *Paolo Sarpi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); an additional historiographical depiction of Sarpi as an essential forerunner of the European Enlightenment is Hugh Trevor-Roper's 'The Religious Origins of the Enlightenment', in *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 193-236.

¹²¹ Cf. Wootton, p. 113-4.

¹²² Polano, p. 2.

evident in Milton's use of a passage from the second book of Sarpi's *History*—in which the Council of Trent's '*fides et mores*' decrees are also covered—which he noted in his Commonplace Book under the heading 'Of Civil War':

Tyrants pretend that they do not make war on anyone because of religion, but on certain ones who under that pretext are rebels against their rulers. Charles V ensnared many Protestant states by these artifices and kept them from the use of arms. Hist. Concil. Trident Book 2. p[age] 170.¹²³

Sarpi's particular argument in this passage is that Charles V justified his wars on Protestant states on the false grounds that they were rebellious against his civil authority, whereas his actual reason for war lay in his alliance with the Pope and his role in enforcing the decrees of the Council of Trent.¹²⁴ This is in accordance with the general argument of Sarpi's *History*, which is that the temporal power wielded by the Roman Catholic Church and its allies absolutely poisoned its claims to spiritual authority. Milton's acceptance of this broader conclusion is clear in *Areopagitica*, in which he praises Sarpi as 'the great unmasker of the *Trentine* Council': the mask is 'Religion'; what lies beneath is cynical, political tyranny.¹²⁵ This is illustrated elsewhere in Milton's use of the example of Charles V in *Eikonoklastes*, his attack on the pseudo-martyrological account of Charles I's actions found in the immensely popular *Eikon Basilike*. In *Eikonoklastes*, Milton perceived the 'stale pretence of *Charles* the fifth, and other Popish Kings' in the Stuart king's contention that Civil War could have been prevented if he had appeased the '*Antiepiscopal Faction*' by sacrificing '*the Church-government and Revennues to the fury of their covetousness.*'¹²⁶ Through his reading of Sarpi, Milton was able to further his accusations

¹²³ YP 1.501. Fulton has noted that Milton's Commonplace was distinctive in that it was used to record 'facts or concepts rather than aphoristic phrases': this sets it apart from the Commonplaces of Milton's poet-contemporaries (Fulton, p. 57).

¹²⁴ This is also explained by the editor of the Commonplace, Ruth Mohl, in YP I. 501, n. 8.

¹²⁵ John Milton, *Areopagitica*, in YP 2.501.

¹²⁶ John Milton, *Eikonoklastes*, in YP 3.444. N.B. Hughes points out in this edition that Milton's reference to Charles V is indebted to Sleidan's *Commentaries*. Mohl, however, in her YP edition of

of tyranny against Charles I by likening him to the 'Popish Kings' of the previous century, which also implied that the lurches in Charles I's religious policies were the result of political reasoning like that of the Papacy. The same engagement with Sarpi as 'the great unmasker' would continue elsewhere in Milton's prose and in *Paradise Lost*, which the third chapter of this thesis will demonstrate.

In these linked backgrounds, that of early modern appropriations of Augustine's '*fides et mores*' and that of Sarpi's writing about the Church as an institutional entity, it is possible to comprehend how small lexical shifts were engendered by large changes in theological and ecclesiastical discourse. The example demonstrates this thesis's approach to the interpretation of discipline in Milton's works. There was no broad consensus amongst sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Protestant divines over the correct interpretation of '*mores*' in the formula '*fides et mores*': according to different ecclesiological leanings, the Latin term could be translated into English as either 'manners' or 'rule of life' or 'actions.' None of these translations adequately communicated Augustine's original 'disciplinary' understanding of '*mores*,' but instead reflected a conceptual movement in English divinity towards treating ethical practice, rather than ecclesiastical order, as the chief arbiter – alongside the Gospel – of individual behaviour. There is a parallel to be drawn between this varied and shifting understanding of '*mores*' and Milton's treatment of discipline, which registers in his later poetry as a lexical shift toward 'piety.' Certainly, Milton's likely awareness of Sarpi's translation of '*mores*' in its Tridentine setting as '*costume*' confirms his movement away from 'discipline' as signifying Church practices: 'custom' and 'discipline' were freighted with implications of spiritual and temporal coercion, and therefore could not adequately communicate his thoughts on what comprised true discipline. This would indicate that the post-Reformation history of

the Commonplace Book, indicates that Milton may have been referring to Sarpi in this passage of *Eikonoklastes* (cf. above, n. 124).

'fides et mores' also functioned for Milton as a precedent and influence on his changing concept of discipline.

* * *

This thesis examines Milton's concept of discipline, and how he developed it in discussion with his contemporaries. In devoting attention to the political implications of what Milton says about discipline, this thesis brings to light previously unexamined religious texts – polemical, systematic, and catechetical – that are far from the canon covered by the principal historians of Milton's political thought. Each chapter focuses on how Milton conceives of discipline in one or several related works, and in this way maps the political terrain in which Milton and the divines with whom he was engaged were situated. The four chapters as a whole trace a gradual movement that starts with Milton viewing Church discipline and individual self-control as tightly and causally related, and ends with them almost entirely divorced. This reflects a more general development in Christian praxis during the seventeenth century, in which the coercive and political aspects of discipline were gradually subsumed by the State. Consequently, the Church adapted itself to the nurture of individual piety. As shaped by and shaping this individualising context, it is crucial to understand Milton's move from institutional ecclesial discipline to internal and personal piety as part of a larger early modern narrative. Yet Milton's role in shaping the debate must not become submerged in contextual readings which emphasises his continuity with – and typicality within – contemporary thought. Whilst he worked with contemporary mainstream religious ideas of discipline and piety, Milton's own concept of discipline was truly distinctive: although conscious of the need to change the medium of his message to suit particular circumstances, which required the application of his superlative skills as a poet, he

nevertheless relentlessly emphasised the primacy of individual, self-willed moral action as the basis for a disciplined community.

Of Reformation (1641), the first of the antiprelatical tracts, represents Milton's earliest articulation of his concept of discipline; it is the focus of this thesis's first chapter, which is entitled "Disciplining Gods People': *Of Reformation* and the Smectymnuan Controversy.' Milton conceives of 'discipline' in the tract as a harmonious union between the utopian Reformed tradition outlined in the preceding literature review, and his own notion of himself as a poet-polemicist with the authority to inculcate virtue in the nation. This approach emerges from Milton's attempt to discipline – in the admonitory sense – the rhetorical techniques and scholarly sources of his interlocutors in the Smectymnuan controversy, 'Smectymnuus' and Bishop Joseph Hall. Milton was dissatisfied with the controversy's narrow focus on disputing the nature of episcopacy; his analogy between the virtuous aims of poetry and the societal benefits of a properly reformed Church, which formed the basis of his concept of discipline in the tract, was a means of provoking fresh discussion of sweeping change to the nation's ecclesiastical settlement, whilst also avoiding the onus of offering any specific suggestions.

The possibility of a new and uniform church settlement in England increased with Parliament's call of the Westminster Assembly of Divines in 1643, but by that time Milton's priorities were changing. The second chapter, "Uniform in Virtue': Discipline and Reform in Milton's *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*,' reads the 1643 and 1644 versions of that tract as works that revise Milton's concept of discipline in response to the progress within the Westminster Assembly, with specific regard to the controversy caused by the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration*, which was written by members of the Independent minority in the Assembly. The primary cause for the incipient divisions between the Presbyterians and Independents in the Westminster Assembly was a disagreement over how to define discipline. To the former group the term implied a

coercive and uniform government necessitated by man's sinful nature, and to the latter it was a simple matter of voluntary obedience to the covenant of one's own gathered congregation. In this context it is very striking that Milton repeatedly asserts in *The Doctrine and Discipline* that his argument for divorce was due to his concern for discipline, rather than in spite of it. This chapter argues that the new prologue to the revised and expanded edition of his divorce tracts is explicitly indebted to the Independent Apologists, rhetorically and intellectually. This may in part explain the virulent Presbyterian attack on Milton as licentious. However, his argument for 'discipline' also suggests his unwillingness to yield the concept to the Presbyterians: diminishing his previous emphasis on poetry as a means of inspiring national discipline, Milton instead conceives of discipline in terms of his own liberties as a man and as a Christian citizen.

After the publication of the 1644 version of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, Milton referred to discipline less and less in his prose, which intimates his disenchantment with the coercive Reformed understanding of the concept. However, discipline remained important in his thought and art, as the third chapter shows in its reading of *Paradise Lost* (1667). "Discipline and faith engaged": Milton's '*fides et mores*' in *Paradise Lost*, returns to this thesis's introductory exposition of '*fides et mores*' as a background for Milton's changing concept of discipline. Gabriel's admonition of Satan's 'discipline and faith' at the end of Book IV of *Paradise Lost* (l. 954) represents an intervention by Milton in the Counter-Reformation controversy over scriptures, tradition and practice that Augustine's formula had come to denote. Three years before Milton's epic was published, the controversy was continued in the pamphlet dispute that followed the conversion in 1664 of Robert Everard, the former Baptist and a captain in the New Model Army, to Catholicism. *Paradise Lost* advocates a new concept of discipline for those struggling as Dissenters in Restoration England, one that encourages faithfulness and co-operation between different groups, based on obedience to Scripture.

The chapter that concludes this thesis, '*Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*: Milton's Piety in Restoration England', considers how and why, although Milton's concept of discipline did not fall into desuetude after the Restoration, he eventually rejected the word 'discipline' as the concept's primary signifier. Instead, the poems of his 1671 volume argue that he came to rely on 'piety' as a means of signifying godly, self-willed practice. In order to establish the truth of his own form of piety, Milton sought in the two poems to critique the dominant 'holy living' piety espoused in extremely popular manuals written by Anglican divines Henry Hammond, Jeremy Taylor, and Richard Allestree. This chapter proposes that the debate over Milton's radical and quietist tendencies following the Restoration has not taken sufficient account of his ongoing dialogue with conformist thought and practice. Milton uses the exchanges between Satan and Jesus, and Dalila and Samson, to tacitly affirm common approaches to inculcating discipline in the reader through persuasive literary techniques, as well as to reject false notions of piety that result in political and spiritual slavery. In this last chapter, the distance which Milton had travelled from the conception of discipline that he had articulated in *Of Reformation* is evident. The poems of the 1671 volume mark a final stage of development into an internal, individualised discipline.

1. 'Disciplining Gods People': *Of Reformation* and the Smectymnuan Controversy

The importance of discipline in Milton's first tract is evident from its complete title: *Of Reformation Touching Church-Discipline in England: and the Causes that hitherto have hindred it*. If we follow the common scholarly judgement that Milton was a decided Presbyterian at the beginning of the 1640s,¹ then 'discipline,' in the conceptual sense intimated by this title, may be understood as denoting a utopian vision of the proper government of the Church – and, consequently, the nation – by a truly Reformed ministry. This would be in line with the ecclesiology propounded by figures such as Calvin and Bucer.² Yet an interpretation on these lines is compatible with the tract's principal complaint that the lack of such a quality in the Church of England is detrimental to the nation's wellbeing:

for, albeit in *purity* of *Doctrine* we agree with our Brethren; yet in Discipline, which is the *execution* and *applying* of *Doctrine* home, and laying the *salve* to the very *Orifice* of the *wound*; yea tenting and searching to the *Core*, without which *Pulpit Preaching* is but shooting at Rovers; in this we are no better then a *Schisme*, from all the *Reformation*, and a sore scandal to them.³

Milton develops a metaphorical contrast here between the proper preaching of the Gospel, in which 'Discipline' serves as the close surgical application of 'Doctrine,' and the sort of 'Pulpit Preaching' in which only 'Doctrine' is discussed, which is likened to the idle act of shooting at distant objects with a bow and arrow. This serves to underline that the Church of England's doctrinal orthodoxy is not enough to effect true reformation and

¹ This can be seen in Thomas Kranidas, *The Rhetoric of Zeal* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2005); Janel Mueller in 'Embodying Glory: the apocalyptic strain in Milton's *Of Reformation*', in *Politics, poetics, and hermeneutics in Milton's prose*, ed. David Loewenstein and James Grantham Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and Jameela Lares, *Milton and the Preaching Arts* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2001), esp. p. 111. All three of these works follow from Ernest Sirluck's 'Introduction' to YP 2, in which Milton's anti-prelatical tracts are categorised as the product of 'a Presbyterian demanding the immediate institution of the "one right discipline"' (p. 2).

² This is the judgement of Fulton in *Historical Milton*, pp. 94-5.

³ John Milton, *Of Reformation*, YP 1.526. All subsequent references to this work will be cited parenthetically within the text.

bring it into union with the continental Reformed Churches. However, whilst the absurdity of the comparison between the two images is rhetorically vivid, it does not substantiate in detail what 'Discipline' meant for Milton in terms of his ecclesiology. Indeed, this example is representative of the imbalance within *Of Reformation* and the four other antiprelatical tracts. Although all five tracts make bold rhetorical calls for 'discipline,' each displays a degree of intellectual evasiveness with regard to what that 'discipline' might actually look like.⁴ The opacity of this aspect renders Milton's supposed Presbyterian convictions ambiguous: *Of Reformation* could instead be articulating an adherence to congregationalism and Independency,⁵ or be driven by a concern for civil reform.⁶ To overemphasise the importance of discipline as a strictly Reformed concept in *Of Reformation* is to shut down the semantic polyvalence of the term, and the contextual complexities of the tract itself.

Regardless of its unreliability as an indicator of confessional identity, 'discipline' in *Of Reformation* does serve in another sense as an accurate descriptor of Milton's method of engagement with the tract's chief stimulus: the Smectymnuan controversy.⁷ In a polemical move indicative of his individual approach to 'tenting and searching to the Core' of the problem of ecclesiastical reform, Milton sought to discipline the dispute by adopting the stance of the public poet. As such he subtly advanced the distinctive claim that his poetic office held the same authority as 'the godliest, the wisest, the learnedest Ministers' in 'the instructing and disciplining of Gods people' (600). This approach is

⁴ This point is in accordance with Nigel Smith's observation in '*Areopagitica*: voicing contexts, 1643-5' (p. 104) that the antiprelatical tracts fail to indicate any 'clear preference for any kind of church discipline.' However, this chapter and this whole thesis dispute Smith's declaration that the lack of 'a substantial and unambiguous statement regarding church discipline in this period' is an unfortunate 'burden' for scholarship.

⁵ This position is held in C&C, *JM*, p. 149; it is also reiterated by Christopher Tilmouth, in 'Early Poems and Prose: Some Hidden Continuities', in *Young Milton*, ed. Edward Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 280-304, esp. in fn. 27.

⁶ Martin, *Milton among the Puritans*, pp. 114-16.

⁷ It is now critical orthodoxy that Milton's first three anti-prelatical tracts—*Of Reformation*, *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*, *Animadversions*—were written in order to participate directly in the Smectymnuan controversy. Cf. C&C, *JM*, pp. 140-41. Also, William Riley Parker, *Milton's Contemporary Reputation* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1940), p. 15.

manifest in the composition of the tract, which works to critique the polemical terms of the pamphlet-debate between Bishop Joseph Hall and the five puritan clergymen who wrote collectively under the pen-name of Smectymnuus. Milton judged that their dispute had become mired in needless arguments that were fundamentally neither godly nor wise nor learned, and therefore not conducive to national and ecclesiastical reform. Despite the ecclesiological disagreements between the parties, with Hall in favour of episcopacy and the Smectymnuans seeking greater authority for presbyters, they exhibited similar methods of proving their arguments.⁸ They drew on scripture, ecclesiastical and civil history, and contemporary scholarship, and as such participated in an established tradition of clerical disputation.⁹ In *Of Reformation* (published between May 12th and 31st 1641), however, Milton asserted his methodological autonomy from his interlocutors. Writing expressly as a poet, and emphasising throughout the tract that his poetic approach to the problem of church reform was distinct from the clerical approach yet equally valid, Milton advances his argument through a sophisticated amalgam of proofs encompassing scripture, passages of poetry, allusions to poetic theory, references to contemporary antiquarianism, and snippets taken from the very patristic sources which it appears to condemn. Set alongside these proofs are several illustrative digressions, including the narration of the fable of the Wen. As this chapter will demonstrate, Milton's innovative approach to polemical engagement necessitates a change in how the concept of discipline in Milton's prose at the beginning of the 1640s is understood: his apparent

⁸ This is not to say, however, that both sides were of the same intellectual calibre or learning. Thomas Roebuck has noted Hall's greater familiarity with contemporary scholarship on the Church Fathers, as well as his knowledge of the Greek fathers, in contrast with Smectymnuus's reliance on the Latin fathers and a Latin translation of Cyprian: 'Milton and the Confessionalization of Antiquarianism', in *Young Milton*, ed. Edward Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 60-61.

⁹ A close analysis of this tradition, particularly pertinent to the ongoing English debates over the relative merits of episcopacy and presbyterian government is Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?*

adherence to the coercive model of Reformed theopolitical orthodoxy was bound up with and significantly changed by his faith in his ability as a poet to discipline others.¹⁰

Reading *Of Reformation* in this light requires a critical re-evaluation of the Smectymnuan controversy and Milton's involvement with it. Such an endeavour must encompass the complexities of the controversy's written medium, and the nuances of its attendant political dynamics. The polemical engagement between Hall, the Smectymnuans, and Milton in print is suited to analysis under the terms set out in Jean-Louis Quantin's recent pioneering survey of seventeenth century English ecclesiastical debate, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*:

All debates [pertaining to the Church of England during the seventeenth century], including that on the authority of the Fathers, involved a limited number of patristic proof-texts, which recurred again and again. What changed was the way these texts were applied and combined. Indeed, the early modern appeal to the Fathers was not only, and perhaps not primarily, a doctrine. It was an art of manipulating authorities, as part of what might be termed a technology of truth. Philology, rather than being an independent discipline, became a set of tools for theologians: to declare a text apocryphal, interpolated, or corrupted was one of the standard ways to neutralize it.¹¹

This important hypothesis is confirmed in the opening exchanges between Hall and the Smectymnuans, which consist of Hall's initial *An Humble Remonstrance* (registered January 13th 1641),¹² which provoked the Smectymnuan ministers's reply, *An Answer to a Booke Entitled, An Humble Remonstrance* (registered March 20th 1641),¹³ which in turn caused Hall to reassert his position in *A Defence of the Humble Remonstrance* (registered April 12th 1641).¹⁴ Milton had already become involved in this back and forth by contributing the

¹⁰ Cf. above, n. 2.

¹¹ Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*, p. 18.

¹² Joseph Hall, *An Humble Remonstrance* (London: Nathaniel Butter, 1640[i.e. 1641]). Hall's position of Episcopalian-Calvinism is summarised in Richard McCabe's *Joseph Hall* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982). Also cf. Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, 'Popularity, Prelacy and Puritanism in the 1630s: Joseph Hall Explains Himself', in *EHR* 111:443 (Sep., 1996), 856-81.

¹³ Smectymnuus, *An Answer to the Humble Remonstrance* (London: J. Rothwell, 1641). Although written against Hall's tract, *An Answer* does not take up the strong anti-episcopal rhetoric of earlier works such as Alexander Leighton's *An Appeale to the Parliament, or, Sions Plea Against the Prelacy* (1628). The Smectymnuans's actual demands were far more opaque.

¹⁴ Joseph Hall, *A Defence of the Humble Remonstrance* (London: Nathaniel Butter, 1641).

Postscript for Smectymnuus's *Answer*, probably at the behest of Thomas Young, the 'TY' of the collective pseudonym Smectymnuus, who had been his tutor.¹⁵ However, Milton's use of a profuse array of proofs in *Of Reformation* was designed to disrupt the settled 'art of manipulating authorities' that Hall and the Smectymnuans both practiced. He was concerned that the one who does not 'bring both his cheeks full blown with Oecumenical, and Synodical, shall be counted a lank, shallow, unsufficient man, yea a dunce, and not worthy to speak about *Reformation of Church Discipline*' (569). This act of questioning his interlocutors's unstated assumption that the debate was to be settled through an appeal to a canon of patristic quotations indicates that Milton was concerned with broadening participation in this same debate; however, at the same time Milton also gestures to many of the same authorities as Hall and Smectymnuus, in order to maintain his authoritative participation in the dispute by recognising its philological and patristic focus.¹⁶ But in drawing on sources that are untouched by his interlocutors, through literary allusion and extensive imagery as well as straight quotation, Milton also signalled his dissatisfaction with such a focus, and an eagerness to change the terms and stakes of the debate. In previous criticism, the antiprelatical tracts have been considered in the same terms as the Puritan preacher, whose '*kerygmatic authority*' lends him 'the power to mediate scripture to the people like a preacher in print.'¹⁷ However, given Milton's distinctive use of proofs in *Of Reformation*, and his engagement with authority manipulation in the Smectymnuan controversy, it may be said that the tract is an exercise – albeit a peculiar one – not in homiletics but in seventeenth-century ecclesiastical controversy.

¹⁵ With regards to Milton's relationship with Thomas Young during 1641, Parker suggests that Young was the 'FREIND' to whom *Of Reformation* was addressed: cf. *Milton's Contemporary Reputation*, pp. 12-13. Also cf. Edward Jones, 'The Wills of Edward Goodall and Thomas Young and the Life of John Milton', in *John Milton: "Reasoning Words"*, eds. Kristin A. Pruitt and Charles W. Durham (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2008).

¹⁶ Cf. Roebuck; and also David Weil Baker, "'Dealt with at his owne weapon": Anti-Antiquarianism in Milton's Prelacy Tracts', in *SP* 106:2 (Spring 2009), 207-34.

¹⁷ *Rhetoric of Zeal*, p. 92

Understanding the rhetorical practices involved in the 'art of manipulating authorities' sheds light on the different conceptions of discipline at play in the Smectymnuan controversy, which in turn can highlight the various political objectives that informed the protagonists's polemical strategies. This approach is dictated by current historical scholarship on the debate between Hall and Smectymnuus, which emphasises each party's willingness to seek a compromise and the common assumptions that they shared. Hall and the Smectymnuans both held that the discipline of the Church should have its basis in the practices of the primitive Church, and was to be upheld by the firm government of the clergy, with support from the Magistrate. Although they differed over whether the discipline of the primitive Church was episcopal or presbyterian, they agreed that ecclesiastical uniformity was an indispensable bulwark of social order.¹⁸ A point of human contact and mutual respect between the Bishop and the Ministers was Archbishop James Ussher, whose plan for 'reduced episcopacy' was an option that both sides found credible if not entirely satisfactory.¹⁹

This significant common ground between Hall and the Smectymnuans becomes more apparent when their dispute is set in its context. It was carried out in a bewilderingly diverse and intense atmosphere of polemical endeavour: there is now an acknowledgement of 'the sheer complexity of the political debate at the time, before the downfall of Episcopacy seemed like a foregone conclusion, before Independency had been hardened into opposition to Presbyterianism.'²⁰ The Smectymnuan controversy forms a very small part of a much larger national conversation over ecclesiastical reform, which encompassed the views of a variety of Parliamentarians, godly sectarians, pro-Laudian divines, and Scots Presbyterian envoys. What distinguishes the polemics of Hall and the

¹⁸ On early seventeenth century English Presbyterianism, cf. Ha, *English Presbyterianism*.

¹⁹ A crucially nuanced reappraisal of the Smectymnuan controversy is set out by Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 318-26. The failure of the plan for reduced episcopacy in the 1640s is examined by Hugh Trevor-Roper in 'James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh', in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans*, pp. 120-165.

²⁰ Achinstein, 'John Milton and the Communities of Resistance, 1641-42', p. 294.

Smectymnuans from these many voices, however, is that they represent a struggle amongst moderate godly conformist ministers – a populous and influential constituency – over the future of the Church of England.²¹

Milton's attempt in *Of Reformation* to discipline the Smectymnuan controversy by foregrounding the public responsibilities of the poet was a way for him to engage fully with this dispute over the middle-ground of popular opinion on ecclesiastical reform. It provided a means of expressing dissent from the *status quo* whilst at the same time staying aloof from association with any particular confessional or factional grouping. As the first of the works of Milton's 'left hand,' the tract builds on the connection between vernacular poetics and ecclesiastical critique that was submerged in *Lycidas*. It also re-articulates the defence of poetry that Milton makes in his early poem *Ad Patrem* in distinctively ecclesiological terms.²² In the crucial passage that narrates the fable of the Wen, Milton draws on Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*, particularly Sidney's poetic gloss on Livy's tale of Menenius Agrippa ('*Menenius Agrippa* speed us' (583)). Milton characterises himself in the poet-statesman mould of Menenius: his fable is of the Wen rather than the Belly, but the allusion – as elsewhere in *Of Reformation*, a poetic rather than patristic allusion – is clear and confident. Like Menenius, Milton's poetic persona is authoritative in political debate yet independent of factional acrimony, displaying a conviction of the poet's power to effect reconciliation between opposing factions.²³ Akin to this is Milton's

²¹ Ibid., p. 297-99. On the Smectymnuans's moderate stance, cf. Webster, *Godly Clergy*, p. 323. Webster specifically refers to the use of a letter from John Reynolds to Sir Francis Knollys. Regarding Hall's moderation, and his difficult position as a bishop and godly-sympathiser, cf. Fincham and Lake; and also Peter Lake, 'The moderate and irenic case for religious war: Joseph Hall's *Via Media* in context', in *Political culture and cultural politics in early modern England*, eds. Susan D. Amussen and Mark A. Kishlansky (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 68-9.

²² See John Milton, 'Ad Patrem', in *Complete Shorter Poems*. In this poem Milton expresses his impassioned appeal to be allowed to pursue his vocation as a poet in almost exclusively Classical terms, drawing in particular on Ovidian imagery.

²³ Although the problem of the wen, in Milton's fable, is solved by the Philosopher rather than the Poet, this is an engagement with Sidney rather than a statement of the relative merits of Poetry and Philosophy. Where Sidney had elevated poetry above philosophy on the grounds that philosophy requires 'attentive, studious painfulness' whereas poetry is able to 'entice any man' into virtue,

coherent presentation of the disparate proofs used in the Smectymnuan controversy. In this way its incorporation of poetry and allusions to poetic theory precede the vivid self-representation to which Milton would actually put his name in *The Reason of Church-Government* nine months later: in that later work he wished to be seen as a vernacular poet capable of becoming 'an interpreter & relater of the best and sagest things among mine own Citizens throughout this Iland in the mother dialect.'²⁴ This element qualifies the widespread critical judgment that *Of Reformation* was written 'squarely in the tradition that had its basis in classical and Renaissance rhetorical theory and that manifested itself in Puritan polemic.'²⁵ Rather than this facile rendering of the debate in terms of 'Puritans' versus 'Anglicans,' the historical context in which the tract was written was one of extreme complexity, with a broad spectrum of shifting identities. Thus, for Milton to cleave too closely to Presbyterian thought would have characterised him as a Presbyterian, thus compartmentalising his argument and reducing its relevance for proto-Independents, moderate Episcopalians and other concerned parties in the landscape of ecclesial debate.²⁶ By utilizing the central analogy between poetry and true discipline, this tract went far beyond any standard model of Puritan polemic, instead arguing that its poet-author could speak to every party.

Understanding Milton's efforts in *Of Reformation* to 'discipline' his interlocutors in the Smectymnuan controversy necessitates close analysis of the ways in which Hall, the Smectymnuans and Milton himself sought to manipulate established authorities in order to further their own argument. The initial section of this chapter will therefore consider

now Milton equates the two. Cf. Sir Philip Sidney, 'The Defence of Poesy', in *Sidney's 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism*, ed. Gavin Alexander (London: Penguin Books, 2004), pp. 22-3.

²⁴ John Milton, *The Reason of Church-Government*, in YP 1.569-70. This self-representation, as well as others throughout Milton's works, has been discussed in great detail by Fallon, *Milton's Peculiar Grace*, esp. pp. 88-99.

²⁵ Michael Lieb, 'Milton's *Of Reformation* and the Dynamics of Controversy', in *Achievements of the Left Hand: Essays on the Prose of John Milton*, eds. Michael Lieb and John T. Shawcross (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974), p. 74. This is also the position of Kranidas, Mueller, and Lares: cf. n. 12.

²⁶ Cf. Achinstein, 'John Milton and the Communities of Resistance, 1641-42', p. 299.

Hall's *Humble Remonstrance and Defence*, as well as his earlier work *Episcopacy by Divine Right* (registered February 10th 1640), and Smectymnuus's *Answer*, in terms of their rhetorical presentation of proofs and the manner in which they incorporated this into their respective polemical styles. From the study of this aspect of the controversy it is possible to determine a shared assumption regarding 'discipline,' which is that the order and authority of the Church rested on a learned hierarchy of ministers; the dispute between Hall and Smectymnuus was over the shape of this hierarchy, rather than whether it was in itself indispensable. Once this context has been established, the chapter will move on to cover Milton's response. First this means considering Milton's initial participation in the controversy, the *Postscript* to Smectymnuus's *Answer*, which consists of a lengthy list of political crimes perpetrated by prelates.²⁷ The co-option of this brief piece by the Smectymnuans gives the impression that they approved of Milton's approach, and yet its contents do not cohere at all with the rest of the *Answer*. This interpretation is supported by the fact that Hall's *Defence* singles out the *Postscript* for withering criticism. Milton's resistance to his interlocutors's proof-manipulating practices begins in this text, and is given full expression in *Of Reformation*. Studying this latter work as a continuation and massive expansion of the methods of the *Postscript* will form the second part of the analysis of Milton's response to the manipulation of authorities in the Smectymnuan controversy. Through his purposefully eclectic use of a variety of proofs in the tract, Milton advanced a concept of discipline in which the ideal order of the church was likened to the poet's ability to provoke virtuous action.

* * *

²⁷ Milton's authorship of the *Postscript* has never been conclusively proven, yet it is a credible speculation, held as true by most scholars. Cf. Don M. Wolfe, 'Preface' for 'A Postscript' (YP 1.961-5) for the basic arguments. The most recent evidence, based on computational analysis, is presented in David L. Hoover and Thomas N. Corns, 'The Authorship of the Postscript to *An Answer to a Booke Entitled, An Humble Remonstrance*', in MQ 38:2 (2004), 59-74.

For Hall and the five godly ministers, the practice of manipulating authorities was a necessity. The Smectymnuan controversy was a symptom of the tensions that wracked the Church of England following the impeachment of Archbishop William Laud in December 1640, and the ensuing collapse of his faction.²⁸ Recent historical work has nuanced the impression given by some Milton scholars that this context as essentially polarised, with Hall as an establishment stooge and the Smectymnuans – as well as Milton – as crusading ideologues for radical presbyterianism.²⁹ It has taken into account the important fact that *both* parties in the controversy were conforming ministers within the Church of England: Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstowe *as well as* Joseph Hall.³⁰ Without downplaying their differences, it is fair to say that Hall and the Smectymnuans were united in their distaste for Laud's divisive ecclesiastical policies. Both sought a satisfactory arrangement over Church government that would preserve a necessary level of doctrinal conformity. Indeed, Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, and Matthew Newcomen sat with Hall and Ussher on the Lords's committee for innovations in matters of religion, convened by John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, at the beginning of 1641.³¹ Whether or not the five godly ministers actually sought to change the government of the Church of England to presbyterianism, their position necessitated sincere engagement with a significant constituency that was generally 'in favour of primitive episcopacy, in moderate and

²⁸ Cf. Cressy, *England on Edge*, pp. 129-278. Specifically regarding ecclesiastical politics in 1641, cf. George Yule, *Puritans in Politics* (Appleford: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1981); and Anthony Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War* (London: New York University Press, 1981).

²⁹ For this position cf. Mueller; Kranidas; Lares.

³⁰ Cf. Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 319-26; and Fincham and Lake, 'Popularity, Prelacy and Puritanism in the 1630s', *passim*.

³¹ Like Hall, Williams's career had suffered during the 1630s due to his Calvinism and his public opposition to the Laudian altar policy. Lord Saye and Sele entrusted Williams with heading the Lords's committee for innovations in matters of religion. Cf. Brian Quintrell, 'Williams, John (1582-1650)', *DNB*; online edn. Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29515>, accessed 2 April 2011]. Also cf. Thomas N. Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue: English Political Literature, 1640-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 17. Richard L. Greaves writes on Calamy's participation in Williams's committee in *Saints and Rebels* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985), pp. 14-5.

extreme forms.’³² This influenced how they conducted themselves in their argument with Hall. In the light of this less polarised picture of the political context, the Smectymnuan controversy may be seen as a struggle for the broad centre-ground of clerical and lay opinion on the topic of church government. The publication and circulation of both sides’ arguments provided an opportunity for them to rally disparate groups to their respective causes.³³

As well as being the product of its immediate political context, the controversy was also a recapitulation of an older argument about the need for further ecclesiastical reform within the Church of England, in which discipline was the watchword. The central dispute was over the relative merits of episcopal and presbyterian church government, the former as it was actually established, the latter as a largely hypothetical alternative. Arguments within this dispute had been formulated ever since the Elizabethan settlement in 1559, supported with reference to both Scripture and Antiquity. This entailed further debate on the proper relationship between the Church and the State, as well as on which religious practices were to be considered indifferent to salvation — *adiaphora* — and which were not. Until the fall of Laud, those in favour of episcopacy had the upper hand over the presbyterians, due in part to the support of successive monarchs, which helped to overcome occasional bouts of parliamentary dissent.³⁴ With Laud’s impeachment, however, and the submission of the ‘Root and Branch’ petition to the

³² Webster, *Godly Clergy*, p. 326. The ‘moderate form’ of primitive episcopacy being closer to the existing diocesan structure of the Church of England, and the ‘extreme’ being similar to the Scottish Kirk’s system of Moderators.

³³ Cf. Achinstein, ‘John Milton and the Communities of Resistance, 1641-42’, pp. 297, 301.

³⁴ The main ‘presbyterian’ campaign against episcopacy during the reign of Elizabeth I, as conducted from the pulpit, in print, and in Parliament, is recounted expertly in Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*. The trials of episcopacy in the Jacobean period are covered by Fincham in ‘Clerical Conformity from Whitgift to Laud’; and *Prelate as Pastor: The Episcopate of James I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). Related issues are touched on in Collinson’s *Ford Lectures: The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982). Also, the pursuit of conformity through polemic during the reigns of James I and Charles I has been closely examined in Lori Anne Ferrell, *Government by Polemic* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998). More recently the continuation of the presbyterian party after Elizabeth’s death and before the English Civil War has been analysed in Ha, *English Presbyterianism* (cf. n. 9).

Parliament on December 11th 1640, the abolition of episcopacy suddenly became a real prospect. Discipline was once again a common watchword for those in favour of sweeping reform. The debates that dominated the Elizabethan Church functioned as a powerful precedent for the manipulation of authorities in the Smectymnuan controversy, as is reflected in *Of Reformation* by Milton's opening narration of England's reformation history. Prominent in this canon of ecclesiastical dispute are the serious and deeply influential exchange between Thomas Cartwright and John Whitgift,³⁵ alongside more radical outbursts: the Marprelate tracts and John Field and Thomas Wilcox's *Admonition to the Parliament*.³⁶

The differing responses of Hall and the Smectymnuans to this legacy of debate over discipline are instructive. In *Episcopacie by Divine Right*, one of the controversy's parent texts, Hall quoted from several Elizabethan works to highlight the naivety and radicalism implicit in opposing episcopacy. In contrast, the Smectymnuans, in their tracts and sermons, studiously omitted all reference to the specific sources that he held against them.³⁷ They alluded less specifically to 'the severall Bookes, written in the Reignes of our severall Princes, and the many Petitions exhibited to our severall Parliaments, and the many speeches made therein against Episcopall Government: many of which are yet extant.'³⁸ In this contrast one aspect of the practice of authority-manipulation can already be seen. Hall makes selective use of Elizabethan presbyterians in order to tar the anti-

³⁵ Cf. *The Works of John Whitgift, D.D.*, ed. John Ayre, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1851-3). The debate between Whitgift and Cartwright is analysed at length in Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?* Lake's conclusion considers the influence of the exchange on the ecclesiastical politics of the following half-century (pp. 239-50). Lake returns to this subject in 'Puritanism, (Monarchical) Republicanism, and Monarchy; or John Whitgift, Antipuritanism, and the "Invention" of Popularity', in *JMEMS* 40:3 (Fall 2010), 463-95.

³⁶ *The Martin Marprelate Tracts: A Modernized and Annotated Edition*, ed. Joseph L. Black (Cambridge: CUP, 2008); John Field and Thomas Wilcox, *An Admonition to the Parliament*, in *Puritan Manifestoes*, eds. W.H. Frere and C.E. Douglas (London: SPCK, 1954).

³⁷ Joseph Hall, *Episcopacie by Divine Right* (London: Nathanael Butter, 1640). Hall refers several times to the works of Cartwright, Walter Travers, and Anthony Gilby (who was the local minister in Ashby-de-la-Zouche when he was growing up). This indicates that the text was directed at English puritans as well as Scots presbyterians (to whom it is ostensibly addressed).

³⁸ Smectymnuus, *An Answer*, p. 20.

prelatical cause as radical and anarchistic, and thereby split moderate from radical within the campaign for reform. On the other hand, his opponents's silence on the same figures seems calculated to keep moderates on side.³⁹

The manipulation of authorities in the Smectymnuan controversy must be read within the context of its immediate political circumstances and the traditions of Puritan and Antipuritan rhetoric within the early modern English Church. The controversial issue of church discipline was fundamentally tied to contemporary conventions of the use of scholarship. This can be seen in *Episcopacie by Divine Right*, in which Hall gestures pointedly towards the origins of the controversy when emphasising the necessity of grounding arguments for discipline on apostolic practice: 'ever since we were a Church, [we] have consented to the Apostles practice, and constantly used the same. What do I stand upon this? They are the words of Cartwright himself.'⁴⁰ In its length and erudition, *Episcopacie...* presents itself as the intellectual benchmark for the use of scholarship in the controversy that erupted after the publication of *An Humble Remonstrance*. Milton obliquely acknowledged its importance in *Of Reformation* in the sentence in which he attacks the English Catholic Franciscus Santa Clara's *Apologia Episcoporum Seu Sacri Magistus*:

the Pope and Papists [...] plot all they can to uphold them [i.e. the Bishops], as may bee seene by the Booke of *Santa Clara* the Popish Preist in defence of the *Bishops*, which came out piping hot much about the time that one of our own *Prelats* out of an ominous feare had writ on the same *Argument*; as if they had joyn'd their forces like good Confederates to support on falling *Babel*. (527-28)⁴¹

Laud specifically requested Hall to compose the work in order to defend divine-right episcopacy in the face of ecclesiastical tensions caused by the conflict with the Scots

³⁹ Webster, *Godly Clergy*, p. 326: the Smectymnuan effort was to 'encourage the moderate godly to take the first step away from diocesan episcopacy.'

⁴⁰ Hall, *Episcopacie by Divine Right*, pt. 1, p. 32.

⁴¹ This attempt to blacken Hall's reputation by associating him with Santa Clara may be indicative of the puritan opprobrium that Hall had earned in being co-opted by Laud, having hitherto been considered as supportive of puritans (cf. Fincham and Lake, 'Popularity, Prelacy and Puritanism in the 1630s', p. 877).

Covenanters.⁴² The suitability of the then Bishop of Exeter for this difficult task can be seen in the work's display of a keen awareness of the common godly counter-arguments to his position.

The most important feature of *Episcopacie* with regard to the polemical conduct of the Smectymnuan controversy is its insistence on establishing its argument through the use of three distinct canons of proof: scripture, the church fathers, and modern, Protestant theology. As will be shown, this method set out the means with which Smectymnuus could reply. It radiated a sense of how learned ecclesiastical debate should be conducted, and what its end should be. Within scripture, the first canon of proof, Hall focuses on particular passages from Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus, as well as the early chapters of *Revelation* in which the 'Angels' of the Churches are referred to. From the fathers and ancient Councils, the second canon, Chrysostom, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Augustine, Ignatius, and the Council of Chalcedon are all cited and interpreted. From the evidence found in scripture and antiquity, Hall constructs a picture of the Church in its first four centuries as being founded on an apostolically-ordained form of episcopal Church discipline.⁴³ He supports this construction with reference to various modern divines, which constitute the third canon of proof in *Episcopacie by Divine Right*. The words of the Reformation's great originators, including Luther and Calvin, are drawn upon and supplemented with citations from a broad spectrum of English divines, ranging from Lancelot Andrewes to William Perkins. In this way the three canons combine to prove and justify Hall's assertion that contemporary English episcopacy was Apostolic,

⁴² With regards to the complicated process of composition, in which Hall repeatedly clashed with Laud and his lieutenant Matthew Wren over the phrasing of certain contentious passages, cf. McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, pp. 17-9. It is clear that Laud considered Hall as the best intermediary with his godly opponents due to the bishop's rigorous doctrinal Calvinism.

⁴³ Hall was eager to demonstrate that he had arrived at this conclusion through strong scholarship: he indicates his awareness of the disputes over the authenticity of the writings of Ignatius. *Episcopacie*, pt. 1, pp. 65-79.

Catholic, and Reformed.⁴⁴ In the Smectymnuan controversy that followed, neither Hall nor Smectymnuus deviated from the use of these canons of proof. Resort to scripture, the fathers, and modern divines remained unchallenged throughout because both Hall and Smectymnuus were concentrated on winning over the middle ground: that is, the constituency at the political centre of the wider debate who were upset by Laud but by habit shied away from the prospect of presbyterianism. To gain the upper hand polemically, both sides chose to vary the rhetorical framework within which they set out their proofs. This understanding somewhat qualifies Thomas Kranidas's analysis of the Smectymnuan controversy as the direct product of the contemporary relaxation of licensing laws and the increased freedom of interpretation that this entailed.⁴⁵ Despite these new liberties, the debate's protagonists continued to adhere to methods of interpretation and argumentation that had been established by their predecessors, Puritan and Antipuritan alike.⁴⁶

There are two predominant rhetorical strategies in the exchange between Hall and Smectymnuus that demonstrate the practice of manipulating authorities to support their respective understandings of church discipline. The first may be termed allusion. Rather than quoting proofs directly in the text, the author mentions their existence in passing, usually with a name or a brief summary, in order to avoid exacerbating the dispute. This approach characterises Hall's compositional method in *An Humble Remonstrance*, which needed to balance two contradictory polemical imperatives. Hall needed to distance himself from Laud, who was impeached only weeks before the tract's publication, whilst also defending at the same time his episcopal office from those calling for root-and-branch

⁴⁴ At one point, listing moderate puritans, Hall writes: 'We deny not some Traditions (however the word, for want of distinguishing, is, from their abuse, growne into an ill name) must have their place, and use; and in vaine should learned Chamier, Fulk, Whitakers, Perkins, Willet, and other Controversers labour in the rules of discerning true Apostolicall Traditions from false, and counterfeit, if all were such' (Ibid., pt. 1, pp. 42-43).

⁴⁵ Kranidas, *Rhetoric of Zeal*, p. 92.

⁴⁶ Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?*, p. 15. Lake outlines the similarities in learning and logic that Cartwright and Whitgift held. The tracts by Hall and Smectymnuus indicate a common tradition of argumentative method, most likely inculcated at university.

reform. He considered himself as being in a position to make an appeal to those across the political spectrum sickened by Laud's divisive anti-puritan policies, due in part to his credentials as a defender of Reformed religion, as earned by his participation in the defeat of the Arminians at the Synod of Dort. Following this reasoning, Hall sought to project a conciliatory stance in his *Remonstrance*, which he was prevented from doing in *Episcopacie by Divine Right* because of the constraints imposed on him by Laud and Laud's lieutenant, the Bishop of Ely, Matthew Wren.

A key component of the stance which he adopted is the avoidance of direct quotation from patristic sources. This can be seen in his use of Jerome when tackling the problematic topic of episcopal superiority. The belief that bishops were of a higher order than priests was a deeply controversial component of Laud's vision of the discipline of the Church of England. In contrast, Hall considered episcopacy to be of the same order as the priesthood, but superior by degree.⁴⁷ Bishops were first among equals rather than on another level. In this, Hall was in agreement with moderate puritans including the Smectymnuans, who maintained that Laud's position was detrimental to the authority of the presbytery as well as fallacious. In support of his position, rather than quoting from a battery of different authorities, Hall only mentions Jerome. This was significant because those who argued against episcopacy regularly referred to Jerome's remark that, as Hall paraphrases it, 'the superiority of Bishops over Presbyters' was 'grounded rather upon the custome of the Church, then any appointment of Christ.'⁴⁸ To complete this allusion, and defuse the potentially radical implications of the Father's words, Hall makes two comments:

First, that we cannot prescribe to other mens thoughts; when all is said, men will take liberty, (and who can hinder it?) to abound in their own sense: But secondly, if they shall grant (as they shall be forced) that this

⁴⁷ Cf. *Episcopacie by Divine Right*, pt. 1, p. 32.

⁴⁸ Hall, *Humble Remonstrance*, p. 28. Notably, Calvin approved of Jerome's ecclesiology, which set a precedent for others in the Reformed tradition. Cf. Eugene F. Rice, Jr., *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 142.

custome was of the Church Apostolicall, and had its rise, with the knowledge, approbation, practice of those inspired Legates of Christ, and was from their very hands recommended to the then present, and subsequent Church, for continuance; there is no such great dissonance in the opinions, as may be worthy of a quarrell.⁴⁹

Hall initially concedes that all are free to think what they like on the subject; 'we cannot prescribe' particularly resonates with Hall's antipathy to the legal measures adopted under the Laudian regime to exact conformity amongst the clergy.⁵⁰ The second part then functions as a retraction. Keeping the custom of the Church and those things appointed by Christ in stark opposition was a useful rhetorical distinction for those in favour of further disciplinary reform: it helped to dismiss much of the patristic evidence that the Church was founded as an episcopal institution. Hall's strategy works the other way, however, in that he pointedly fails to distinguish the ecclesiastical dictates found in the New Testament from the customs described by the church fathers. The Apostles and the Fathers, Jerome included, were both regarded as 'those inspired Legates of Christ.' These two conflicting two points are then hazily concluded, by diminishing the significance and necessity of the argument. This indicates that Hall's allusion to Jerome was aimed at preemptively shutting down discussion of a controversial issue that could potentially broaden the dispute. The doctrine of episcopal superiority was not worth quarrelling over: it would only form an obstacle to ideological rapprochement.

The second rhetorical strategy for the manipulation of authorities in this dispute over discipline may be termed counter-quotation. Smectymnuus's *Answer* exemplifies this approach in its attempt to undo Hall's use of allusion. They needed to reclaim the significance and urgency of the proofs that had been alluded to in the *Remonstrance*. This decision affected the entire structure of the tract, which refutes the *Remonstrance* point by point rather than offering a systematic treatise on the Smectymnuans's ideal ecclesiology.

⁴⁹ Hall, *Humble Remonstrance*, pp. 28-9.

⁵⁰ The use of the oath *ex officio* was particularly despised. Cf. 'Clerical Conformity from Whitgift to Laud', p. 151; Peter Lake, 'Moving the Goal Posts? Modified Subscription and the Construction of Conformity in the Early Stuart Church', in *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church*, pp. 179-205; and McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 15.

This approach was enabled by the common academic training and learning that they shared with Hall.⁵¹ Thomas Young's sabbatarian tract *Dies Dominica*, another significant precedent text to the controversy, was published in 1639, and relies on proofs from many of the same sources with which Hall worked in *Episcopacie*.⁵² The Smectymnuans accepted Hall's tacit stipulation that the only valid argument against episcopacy would have to be proven with scripture, patristic materials and the approbation of prominent Reformed authorities. Contrary to Hall's bid to hush dispute, however, counter-quotation provided a way of articulating a moderate oppositional platform, which could in turn provide a rallying point for the disparate groups pressing for reform. The best example of this strategy can be found in the Smectymnuans's very different presentation of the same passage of Jerome to which Hall had alluded. The quotation itself is lengthy, with the text in Latin and English side-by-side, setting it apart on the page. It starts by stating that 'a Presbyter and a Bishop is the same,' and substantiates this with reference to Paul's opening greeting in his epistle to the Philippians.⁵³ It is then followed by a list of interpretative points, which stand as a fine example of hermeneutic hair-splitting. Their chief distinction is that

S. Ierome saith, that after men began to say, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, &c. it was decreed that one of the Presbyters should be set over the rest, &c. This is spoken indeed in the Apostles phrase, but not of the Apostles times; else to what purpose is that coacervation of Texts that followes.⁵⁴

⁵¹ This most often manifested itself in the same 'pedantic point-scoring' that Lake detects in the exchange between Cartwright and Whitgift: Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?*, p. 14.

⁵² Cf. Thomas Young, *Dies Dominica* (1639). Richard Baxter published a translation of the work over thirty years later: *The Lords-day* (London: E Leach, 1672). Webster reads the text as almost 'entirely orthodox'; he notes that it contained a few moderate objections to Laudian policies, and considered Bishops and Presbyters to both be comprehended by the term '*Episcopi*', but 'he made it clear that he saw a valid distinction between the two, and that bishops existed as overseers, watchmen or, in a significant word, superintendents.' (*Godly Clergy*, pp. 319-20). This equates to episcopal superiority by degree rather than by order, which is similar – if not entirely the same – to Hall's position.

⁵³ *An Answer*, p. 27-8. In Philippians, Paul addresses the Bishops and Deacons on the city of Philippi; that a city could have more than one bishop is the basis for Jerome's conclusion.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

The claim that the line ‘*it was decreed that one of the Presbyters should be set over the rest*’ was inserted by Jerome, rather than being an actual Apostolic command, effectively separates Hall’s alloy of the custom of the Church with the appointments of Christ. This fits with the Reformers’s stock narrative of the ascent of prelatical bishops through diabolically-inspired schism within the presbytery.⁵⁵ The strategy of counter-quotation gives the impression of context and detail; it enabled the Smectymnuans to hint that through his vague allusions, Hall had been concealing the truth about the discipline of the early Church.⁵⁶

A further element to the manipulation of authorities in the Smectymnuan controversy is to be found in the explicitly political reasoning on which both Hall and Smectymnuus rely. The question of whether the government of the established Church was faithful to apostolic practices was tied inseparably to the issue of which form of church discipline was best suited to the needs of the commonwealth. Although the three main canons of proof outlined above were essential in the debate over the former question, they were of limited use when disputing the latter issue. This necessitated the inclusion of historical examples and quotations that were more pertinent to the politically charged atmosphere of 1641. Used at irregular points, these proofs served to supplement the primary ‘antiquitarian’ aspect of the controversy by pointing towards its high worldly stakes. For example, it is of note that the longest quotation in Hall’s *Remonstrance* is an account of James (VI and) I’s statement in favour of the established prayer book, which declares that ‘the stedfast maintaining of things, by good advise established, is the weale

⁵⁵ Milton himself, quoting Spenser’s *Maye* eclogue (ll. 103-131), deploys the same narrative in *Animadversions*. Cf. YP 1:722-3; also cf. *Edmund Spenser: The Shorter Poems*, ed. Richard A. McCabe (London: Penguin, 1999).

⁵⁶ The constant refrain of *An Answer* pertains to the great gulf between the episcopacy of the primitive Church, and that of the contemporary Church of England: e.g. ‘The Bishops of the primitive times differed as much from ours now, as Rome ancient from Rome at this day, as hath beene sufficiently declared in this Booke.’ (p. 91). The implication of this being that Hall’s *Humble Remonstrance* was being dishonest when it declared that ‘If our Bishops challenge any other spirituall power, then was by Apostolique Authority delegated unto, and required of *Timothy*, and *Titus*, and the Angels of the seven Asian Churches, (some whereof are known to us by name) let them be disclaimed as usurpers.’ (p. 23).

of all Common-wealths.’⁵⁷ In this invocation of the figure of the monarch, Hall constructs an idealised picture of a pre-Laudian Jacobean ecclesiastical government.⁵⁸ Even if the Church could not be unanimous on the apostolic legitimacy of the episcopate, it was essential that it was united around the figure of an even-handed supreme governor. Underlying this was a deep concern about the unravelling of episcopal power in the face of an ungoverned, uneducated mass of sectaries. Fear of the mob’s dangerous potential is tangible at the beginning of the tract, when he writes: ‘Lest the world should think the Presse had of late forgot to speake any language other then Libellous, this honest paper hath broken through the throng, and prostrates it selfe before you.’⁵⁹ Elsewhere, in an address to the Lords, he cites previous violent revolts as precedents for what would occur if the authority of the Church fell into terminal decline:

My Lords, if these men [i.e. the sectaries] may with impunity, and freedom, thus bear down Ecclesiastical authority, it is to be feared they will not rest there, but will be ready to affront civil power too: Your Lordships know that the *Jack Straws*, and *Cades*, and *Watt Tylers* of formertimes, did not more cry down Learning then Nobility⁶⁰

In this speech, learning is depicted as the link between ‘Ecclesiastical authority’ and ‘civil power.’⁶¹ To this end, Hall’s ostentatiously learned approach to solving ecclesiastical dispute was also meant to demonstrate the political necessity of keeping all spiritual and a degree of temporal authority in the hands of the Bishops.

⁵⁷ *Humble Remonstrance*, pp. 14-6.

⁵⁸ The choice of James instead of Charles perhaps indicates how tied up the current King was with Laud’s policies. Cf. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*; and ‘Clerical Conformity from Whitgift to Laud’, pp. 157-8.

⁵⁹ *Humble Remonstrance*, p. 1. This representation fits with Hall’s memoir of the years prior to war breaking out, which depict the Parliament, and particularly the Bishops, as being under siege: cf. Joseph Hall, ‘Bishop Hall’s Hard Measure’ in *The Shaking of the Olive-Tree* (London: J. Crooke, 1660).

⁶⁰ Joseph Hall, ‘A Speech in Parliament’, in *The Shaking of the Olive-Tree*, pp. 426-27.

⁶¹ This relates to Hall’s support for tithes as a means to upholding a learned clergy. Specifically referring to Hall, Quantin writes: ‘it may be said that there was a de facto solidarity between patristic learning and antipuritanism, hence the deeply ambiguous position of those senior clergymen of the early seventeenth century who might be theologically sympathetic to the Puritan case but whose own career had made them fully accept the axiom: ‘take away the reward of learning and learning will decay.’’ (*The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*, p. 113).

The response in *An Answer* to Hall's political argument may be understood as an attempt to demonstrate that church discipline without episcopacy would continue to serve as an instrument for the upkeep of civil order. This high value which the Smectymnuans placed on civil and social order was consistent with the orthodox Calvinist theopolitical concept of discipline discussed at the head of this chapter, in which Christ's ministry and the magistrate worked together to discipline the nation. The main body of the tract scrupulously maintains the appearance of being a respectable, orthodox contribution to the ecclesiastical debate. It engages with the *Remonstrance* as it presents itself, which is as a display of learning and hermeneutic skill based on the three principal canons of proof outlined above. This may be read as a movement towards dispelling the notion that Smectymnuus's cause was politically subversive: following Hall's logic, to be learned in the conventional manner was also to be serious about the need for firm government. Its title-page declares that it keeps strictly to the ecclesiastical and technical subject of the parity of Bishops and Presbyters in scripture, the 'occasion of their IMPARITIE in Antiquitie,' and the 'DISPARITIE of the Ancient and our Moderne Bishops,' all in order to vindicate the 'ANTIQUITIE of Ruling Elders in the Church,' and have the 'PRELATICALL Church Bownded.'⁶² When *An Answer* inevitably touches on political issues, it adopts an air of disinterest. In one of the queries that forms the last section of the tract, it is asked 'Whether that assertion, No Bishop, No King, and no Ceremonie, no Bishop, be not very prejudiciall to Kingly Authoritie? For it seemes to imply, that the Civill power depends upon the Spirituall, and is supported by Ceremonies and Bishops.'⁶³ There is a certain disingenuousness to the way in which Smectymnuus points out, as any loyal subject would, the problems of prelacy in the abstract.⁶⁴ There is

⁶² *An Answer*, title-page. In this the Smectymnuans summarise the narrative that informs their reading of Jerome: cf. above, n. 48.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁶⁴ Again, in comparison to earlier presbyterian works the wording in *An Answer* of this question is mild. Ha writes that the full-blooded works of English presbyterianism composed in the forty

no substantiation to justify this particular qualm. In this way, the Smectymnuans avoided the obligation of systematically describing a politically legitimate alternative to prelatical episcopacy.

A second part of the Smectymnuans's approach to tackling Hall's robust political argument is manifest in the *Postscript* that they appended to *An Answer*. This was Milton's contribution. It stands in stark contrast to the tract's main body in that it aims to give positive proof of prelatical episcopacy's malefic effect on civil government and its inconsistency with correct church discipline. The *Postscript* serves to ridicule 'that assertion, No Bishop, No King,' onto which Hall and his episcopal colleagues doggedly held. As a brief history of how English Bishops have systematically undermined the English state, it was specifically pertinent to the circumstances of 1641. Milton's work is sourced almost exclusively from works by Bede, and by the historians John Speed and Raphael Holinshed. The only deviation from this historical source-material is a quotation from Martin Bucer's *De Regno Christi*. Although this accords with the normative use in the controversy of quotations from Reformed divines to support one's position, it suits the general aggressive purpose of the piece by quoting a warning directly addressed to Edward VI about the obstructive designs of his bishops.⁶⁵ From an analysis of the *Postscript*, David Hoover and Thomas Corns propose that Milton, through his former tutor Thomas Young, 'supplied the Smectymnuans with detailed notes that he expected them to use in the body of their text to supplement their refutation.'⁶⁶ These notes would have been dramatically different in composition to the rest of *An Answer*. It is very apparent that Milton's frequent use of unbecoming ridicule jars with the respectful tone adopted in the rest of the text. For example, his serious claim that the Elizabethan prelates

years prior to Smectymnuus's appearance were characterised by a vehement anti-episcopal rhetoric. Cf. Ha, *English Presbyterianism*, p. 21: 'They [i.e. the English presbyterians] challenged the very nature of episcopacy and made extensive arguments against the civil powers that the bishops claimed. Episcopacy, they argued, was not only unbiblical but unnatural. It was also unconstitutional, unlawful, and un-English.'

⁶⁵ *An Answer*, p. 103.

⁶⁶ Hoover and Corns, p. 70.

designed to 'tread downe the power of godlinesse' is made with 'an ordinary Proverb, that when any thing is spoyled wee use to say, *The Bishops foot hath beene in it*' (YP I.975). As the next section will show, the mixture of ridicule and moral outrage that characterises the *Postscript* served to establish the tone that runs through *Of Reformation*. The purposeful contrast of style between both of Milton's works and the staid manner adopted by Smectymnuus also indicates a contrasting understanding of the issues of ecclesial reform within the controversy: Milton was keen to move the debate onto a new footing and towards a new understanding of the discipline required by a reformed Church.

The distance of the *Postscript* from the sober tenor of the debate between Hall and the Smectymnuans is made clear in both *An Answer*, and in the Bishop's *Defence*. Rather than incorporate Milton's notes into their main argument, the Smectymnuans carefully distanced themselves from these more bitterly worded conclusions. The relegation of the *Postscript* to the back of the tract indicates that they considered Milton's use of English historiography as disruptive to their carefully mannered use of proof. It also, however, suggests a lack of confidence in the persuasiveness of their arguments against Hall's political claims. This understanding is condoned by Hall's withering attack on the *Postscript* in his *Defence*. In the most part, Hall is condescendingly polite to his opponents in his point-by-point refutation of *An Answer*; when he perceives a flaw in their scholarship he chides them lightly and without apparent bitterness. When he turns to the *Postscript*, however, he is quick to punish the Smectymnuans's decision to split their approach to his political argument. He declares that 'The best beauty that you could have added to your discourse, brethren, had beene honesty and truth both in your allegations of Testimonies, and inferences of argumentation,' not 'to garnish your worke with a goodly Pasquin borrowed (for a great part) out of *Sion's Plea*; and the Breviate consisting

of a rhapsodye of Histories.’⁶⁷ The *Postscript* was the truly dangerous component of the manipulation of authority in Smectymnuus. In proving the threat of episcopacy to the state through historical sources, it broke with their normative use of scripture, patristic writing and Reformed sources. In contrast to the Smectymnuans’s moderate and learned yet also unspecific call for reform, its peculiar use of evidence was construed as a call for the abolition of prelatical episcopacy because of its diabolical grip on the nation. As such, Hall’s association of the *Postscript* with Alexander Leighton’s *Sion’s Plea* attempts to limit the strength of Milton’s argument by passing it off as a product of the radical fringe.⁶⁸ Hall was able to justify the use of his satirical talents to blast the *Postscript* by rendering it as an on-loan piece of pernicious sectarianism, rather than the well-meaning but misled work of one of the conforming godly.

* * *

Given the nature of this polemical struggle, Milton’s *Of Reformation* may be seen primarily as a direct response to the Smectymnuans’s publication of his apparently private contribution to their cause. It is also difficult not to consider Hall’s accusation that the *Postscript* was a derivative, insubstantial garnish to the rest of *An Answer* as a spur for Milton’s action. Writing on the tract within its political context, David Norbrook has asserted that it was ‘calculated to wreck’ schemes for a compromise of ‘reduced’ episcopacy.⁶⁹ Similarly, it has been noted by several critics that *Of Reformation* indicates that Milton’s thinking on the subject of discipline differed greatly from that of his

⁶⁷ Hall, *Defence*, p. 163.

⁶⁸ Those referring to *Of Reformation* as evidence of Milton’s radical political activism are quick to emphasise the textual links between the work and *Sion’s Plea* (as well as William Prynne’s contemporary work): cf. Mueller, p. 26; and Lieb, ‘Milton’s *Of Reformation*’, p. 57.

⁶⁹ Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, p. 110. Also cf. Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue*, p. 16.

supposed colleagues the Smectymnuans.⁷⁰ The reading that follows provides nuance to these interpretations: Milton's position on reduced episcopacy in *Of Reformation* is mostly obscure, whereas his critique of the conventional methods of contemporary ecclesiastical dispute is quite clear. *Of Reformation* regards the normative manipulation of authorities practiced by both Hall and Smectymnuus as preventing real discussion over the means to and ends of a decisive reformation of church discipline.

In rejecting their methods of disputation, Milton was effectively stating – with a poet's authority – that the Smectymnuans's argument for reform was tarnished because it was set out in the same manner as Hall's: a practice which used learning as a political shibboleth rather than as a gateway to truth, thus barring alternative approaches to debating the problems of the Church. By widening the terms of the debate, Milton sought to dismiss his interlocutors's notion that the establishment of true discipline was a matter of apostolic succession, the intricacies of clerical hierarchy, and the upkeep of doctrinal uniformity.⁷¹ In *Of Reformation*, under the guise of a rebuke to the 'Polititians' speaking in defence of the prelatical status quo, Milton presented a fresh interpretation of the common understanding that good ecclesial discipline was the surest buttress of magisterial authority. He emphasised the integral importance of the individual's self-conduct as a component of the concept of discipline. This could only become a reality when the populace were 'instructed and inur'd to the fervent and continuall practice of *Truth and Righteousnesse*' by those inspired 'to sing and celebrate [...] *divine Mercies*, and *marvelous Judgements* in this Land throughout all AGES' (616). Confident of poetry's pedagogical power to accustom the nation to virtuous living, Milton proclaimed in *Of Reformation* that discipline was the province of poets as well as clerics.

⁷⁰ Simpson, "'That Sovran Book'", p. 322. Also cf. Tilmouth (see above, n. 5), who makes a similar point, although his focus when reading the anti-prelatical tracts is on the difference between Milton's thinking and those of anti-prelates other than the Smectymnuans: Henry Burton, Katherine Chidley, and Sir Henry Vane.

⁷¹ Cf. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, esp. pp. 270-321. This covers the intellectual technicalities of Early Stuart debate. On the touchstone issue of discipline and clerical conformity, cf. Fincham, 'Clerical Conformity from Whitgift to Laud', pp. 125-58.

In this light, Milton's efforts to discipline his interlocutors in the Smectymnuan controversy by drawing on his authority as a poet to forge a new argument for reform may be understood as a distinctive articulation of 'the art of manipulating authorities,' on which Jean-Louis Quantin has written. Pursuing this interpretation requires a fuller application of Quantin's hypothesis to the debate between Hall and Smectymnuus, with particular consideration given to the roots of 'authority manipulation' in Michel Foucault's terminology of the 'technology of truth.'⁷² Hall and the Smectymnuans were engaged in a contest over 'demonstrative truth': the 'true' basis of the discipline of the primitive Church in episcopacy or presbyterianism was to be established through the application of a common philological methodology to a limited canon of proof-texts.⁷³ On its surface, then, this dispute was about knowledge, and whose was the most accurate, but deeper down it was a struggle over power: the display of learning was a means of acquiring political influence over the contemporary debate on church discipline. Borrowing from Foucault's terminology, this power-based aspect of the Smectymnuan controversy may be understood as the 'truth-event.' By rejecting his interlocutors's polemical methods and utilizing new proofs in *Of Reformation*, Milton sought to portray himself as one 'whom truth has chosen to sweep down on' with fresh insight, rather than as one who has merely uttered the 'required words or performed ritual actions.'⁷⁴ His purposeful self-representation as an inspired poet—bringing into the debate what Foucault would term a 'thunderbolt of truth'⁷⁵—gave him the authority to cultivate civic and ecclesiastical reformation, in an attempt to seize hold of the locus of power in the debate. It is therefore at odds with the explicitly learned practice of disputation employed by Hall and the Smectymnuans. Furthermore, as this chapter will continue to explore,

⁷² Quantin, p. 18.

⁷³ Michel Foucault, 'Lecture 10, January 23rd 1974', in *Psychiatric Power*, ed. Jacques Lagrange, trans. Graham Burchell (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 236.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 237.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 238.

Milton's poetic self-image shaped the way in which he conceived discipline, in that he believed that the Reformed ideal of a properly governed Church and Nation could be achieved through the truth-revealing and virtue-inducing ministrations of poetry.

Milton's project in *Of Reformation*, therefore, was to justify, perpetuate, and extensively develop the disruptive moment of the *Postscript* in order to present his own concept of discipline. First, it had to rebut the approach of Hall and Smectymnuus to manipulating authorities. The structure of Milton's tract is based upon his distinction between the ways in which 'Antiquitarians' and the 'modern politician' (571) hinder the cause of further reformation in England. The former is described in the first book and the latter in the second, but there is much to suggest the dependence of one hindrance on the other. Conservative political assumptions shared by both groups regarding church discipline led ecclesiastical controversy to be conducted through strictly limited treatments of scripture, the fathers, and modern divines.⁷⁶ To reinforce this critique, Milton drew upon his humanist learning and poetical ability to express how a public conversation on the reformation of discipline could be properly conducted. Milton established new canons of proof in the dispute by placing Dante and Chaucer alongside Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* as worthy authorities. *Of Reformation* begins as a private letter, burdened by the weight of 'deepe and retired thoughts' (519), and ends with a peroration that features a single voice just audible 'offering high *strains* in new and lofty *Measures* to sing and celebrate' (616). The tract thus forms a stark contrast to the hierarchical and clerical solution to England's disciplinary problems sought by Hall and Smectymnuus, both of whom argued in their respective ways for a reform of doctrine and discipline among the clerical elite which would then trickle down to reach the laity. Milton, however, argues that real resolution of ecclesial problems and reformation of discipline at every level of the church can be brought about through the poet's office.

⁷⁶ Milton's attack on libertines, the third named hindrance, is scurrilous but extremely brief, which suggests a greater interest in the flaws of the other two.

The first aspect of Milton's critique of his interlocutors's practices can be seen in how he re-appropriates them in a manner that draws attention to their flaws. His self-consciously critical adoption of counter-quotation in *Of Reformation* is announced in the first book when he writes that 'the *Antiquary* is to bee dealt with at his owne weapon [...] the ancientest, and best of the Fathers have disclaim'd all sufficiency in themselves that men should rely on, and sent all commers to the Scriptures, as all sufficient' (560). Although it has been suggested that in doing this Milton sought to expose 'what he considers to be the prelatical dependence upon custom and tradition,'⁷⁷ he makes no clear distinction between his prelatical and anti-prelatical interlocutors's failings. In a paragraph that enumerates those Fathers who – like him – held the scriptures as the supreme, self-evident authority, he lists Ignatius, Cyprian, Athanasius, and Basil, before halting abruptly, so as not to be 'endless in quotations' (565). At the top of the next paragraph he claims to be averse to running 'into a paroxysm of citations' (566) before instancing Athanasius' words: 'the knowledge of Truth, saith he, wants no humane lore, as being evident in it selfe, and by the preaching of Christ now opens brighter then the Sun' (566).⁷⁸ On the surface these two examples express the purposeless tedium of their approach to disputing 'humane lore' through counter-quotation. However, they also demonstrate a willingness and an ability to manipulate authorities in a similar manner to Hall and Smectymnuus. Part of Hall's strategy in his *Defence* was to scorn the excessive use of certain sources by his antagonist: Smectymnuus cites Jerome 'that the Reader may know they have seen a Father,' an observation by Cyprian is 'overworne.'⁷⁹ Milton borrows from and amplifies this approach. In a further iteration, he describes 'the admirers of Antiquity' as 'beating their brains about their *Ambones*, their *Diptychs*, and *Meniaia's*' (568).

⁷⁷ Lieb, 'Milton's *Of Reformation*', p. 58.

⁷⁸ This quotation is taken from 'the very first page' (564) of Athanasius' *Against the Gentiles*. In their notes to *Of Reformation* (n. 164), Don M. Wolfe and William Alfred point to the *Opera*, ed. Nannius, 2 vols. (Heidelberg. 1601) as Milton's possible source edition of Athanasius.

⁷⁹ *Defence*, p. 42, 42.

This image of brain-beating prefigures the moment in *The Reason of Church-Government* in which Milton writes that to participate in the 'hoars disputes' over episcopacy one must 'be fain to club quotations with men whose learning and beleif lies in marginal stuffings.'⁸⁰ In this light, Milton implies that the entire endeavour of the Smectymnuan controversy is nothing more than a fruitless, centripetal melee of proofs. These have been seen as individual instances of a larger contest of rhetoric in the anti-prelatical tracts, a shifting 'back and forth between two rhetorics – that of the temporal world of men and events, the world of polemical activity and "clubbing quotations"; and that of the realm of moral Truth, a realm manifested through the free use of imagery.'⁸¹ However, this analysis limits Milton's creative agency, as if he only used the former rhetoric grudgingly. Treating *Of Reformation* as a purposeful attempt to exploit the difference between the former and the latter rhetoric is more conducive to understanding its place within the Smectymnuan controversy and therefore its novel conception of discipline.

In spite of his disparaging language, Milton's treatment of 'Authority' in *Of Reformation* cannot be described as outright rejection. Throughout the tract he takes care to emphasise that his critique is primarily levelled at the misuse of proofs ancient and modern by 'Antiquitarians,' rather than the worth of the proofs themselves.⁸² This can be seen in the apologetic paragraph that interrupts the tract's opening narration of the reformation in England. The brief defence of 'vehement Expressions' concludes with an extended, figurative description of 'Truth,'

whose native worth is now become of such a low esteeme, that shee is like to finde small credit with us for what shee can say, unless shee can bring a Ticket from *Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley*; or prove her selfe a retainer to

⁸⁰ YP 1.822.

⁸¹ Lana Cable, 'Shuffling Up Such a God: The Rhetorical Agon of Milton's Antiprelatical Tracts', in *MS 21* (1985), 5.

⁸² However, this is not to say that Milton does not stint in asserting the corruption of various texts. Quantin (pp. 256-7) notes Milton's vehement dismissal of some of the Fathers in the passage that lists 'the Heresies, the vanities thick sown through the volumns of *Justin Martyr, Clemens, Origen, Tertullian* and others of eldest time' (552). However, this list is not comprehensive, nor, as this chapter argues, was it meant to be.

Constantine, and weare his *badge*. More tolerable it were for the *Church* of GOD that all these Names were utterly abolisht, like the *Brazen Serpent*; then that mens fond opinion should thus idolize them, and the Heavenly *Truth* be thus captivated. (535)

In this, Milton's distinction between the use and abuse of authorities is explicit. Given license by the bishops's 'Ticket,' or wearing the 'badge' of Constantine as a mark of utter dependency on the monarch, Truth is worthless. Furthermore, reference to the '*Brazen Serpent*' implies the corruption by idolatry of those patristic materials used as proof for discipline of the early church: the serpent served a divine purpose for Moses, but by the time of King Hezekiah it had come to obstruct true worship.⁸³ Milton's call is not for an end to 'Names' so much as an end to idolizing 'Names' for the sake of perpetuating what he perceived to be an unproductive dispute over an illegitimate form of episcopacy. The canons of proof used by Hall and the Smectymnuans were conducive to a contained, technical argument over the precise nature of the discipline of the early church, and how the English church should emulate it. In condemning these canons as the function of Name-idolatry, Milton was attempting to change the parameters of the debate.

These parameters of acceptable authority were changed in *Of Reformation* to foreground Scripture as the chief authority which Milton's poetic inspiration was to communicate, asserting that scripture is the 'very essence of Truth [...] plainnesse, and brightnes' (566). Milton's critique of Hall and Smectymnuus is enabled by his categorisation of the Gospel as utterly transcendent, rather than as one of several canons of proof to be used to dispute controversial ecclesiastical topics. This is suggested by the absence in the tract of any lengthy treatments of scripture, a feature that sets it apart from some of Milton's later works, particularly *Tetrachordon* and *De Doctrina Christiana*. The Gospel's transcendence in *Of Reformation* is based on its accessibility, from which, Milton argues, transformative national discipline can emerge. The self-policed argumentative strictures of the Smectymnuan controversy sought to uphold scholarship as a means to

⁸³ Cf. Numbers 21:4-9; and 2 Kings 18:4.

establish grounds for moderate reform, and a barrier to sweeping, popular change.

Milton's assertions on this matter, however, are strikingly egalitarian:

If we will but purge with sovraign eyesalve that intellectual ray which *God* hath planted in us, then we would beleieve the Scriptures protesting their own plainnes, and perspicuity, calling to them to be instructed, not only the *wise*, and *learned*, but the *simple*, the *poor*, the *babes*, foretelling an extraordinary effusion of *Gods* Spirit upon every age, and sexe, attributing to all men, and requiring from them the ability of searching, trying, examining all things, and by the Spirit discerning that which is good (565-6).

This passage seems to be aimed at diminishing Hall's political shibboleth, in which the mob is the enemy of learning *and* nobility. Transformed by the Spirit through knowledge of the scripture alone, 'the *simple*, the *poor*, the *babes*' have parity with 'the *wise*, and *learned*.' Together with Milton's iconoclastic distinction between 'Names' and their worship in scholarly debate, this is the basis for his critique of the manipulation of authorities in the Smectymnuan controversy. What was obstructive to proper discussion also served to disbar contributions from those Christians that knew scripture, but were unschooled – or unwilling to collude – in its 'correct' interpretation.

Milton's understanding of the Gospel as a transcendent authority served to justify his avoidance of the burden of proving his point with reference to specific passages from scripture.⁸⁴ Furthermore, in ranging far beyond the bounds of the Gospel to make his argument, Milton contradicted his tract's loud defence of the principle of *sola scriptura* as the sole authoritative means of resolving issues touching on church discipline: *Of Reformation* cannot be called a work of deep scriptural exegesis.⁸⁵ This understanding of the Gospel's role had ramifications for his argument, in that the other authorities that he

⁸⁴ Dayton Haskin, *Milton's Burden of Interpretation* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), p. 58: writing in reference to the anti-prelatical tracts, Haskin remarks that 'for all his emphasis on his tireless intellectual labor, Milton made relatively little use of particular texts to advance his argument, and he wrote almost nothing about the process of interpreting the Bible.'

⁸⁵ John R. Knott, Jr. has noted that 'Milton says little in the antiprelatical tracts about the actual process of interpreting the Bible, other than that men are called to search and try Scripture with the aid of the Spirit.' (*The Sword of the Spirit: Puritan Responses to the Bible* [Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1980], p. 109). Knott, Jr. also writes that *Of Reformation* dwells on the radical implications of treating scripture as *autopistos*, as self-authenticating (ibid., p. 110).

cited were to be searched, tried, and examined with the same level of scrutiny. In *Of Reformation*, Milton's method of 'discerning that which is good' seems to have less to do with the Spirit and more with his application of the full force of the humanist education that he had imbibed since childhood. This can be seen in his continued use of English history to disrupt his interlocutors's accounts of the Church. In the historical narrative at the beginning of the tract, he reincorporated many of the notes seen in the *Postscript*. This may be seen as disputing the Smectymnuans's relegation of his research to supplementary, secondary status at the back of *An Answer*. *Of Reformation* alters the purpose of this research by including it in a narration of the whole course of England's reformation history from John Wycliffe onwards, and not just a repetition of episcopacy's inherently state-threatening tendencies: 'where there was stark functionality, here is a vivid copiousness.'⁸⁶ As well as regurgitating details from Speed and Holinshed, he added new sources, including Hayward and Camden. John Foxe, the prime influence on this historical passage, is not actually mentioned, although his edition of the '*Ecclesiastical Constitutions*' is.⁸⁷ In referring to this eminently respectable document, as well as sympathetically mentioning Archbishop Grindal's discharge, Milton demonstrates an informed sympathy for the moderate section of the Elizabethan reform movement, Laodicean though they were.⁸⁸ Faced with Hall's accusation that the contents of the *Postscript* were all taken from *Sion's Plea*, *Of Reformation* responds by ostentatiously

⁸⁶ Hoover and Corns, p. 70. This echoes Corns's comments on the antiprelatical tracts in *The Development of Milton's Prose Style*, p. 19: that they 'exhibit a degree of richness, innovation, wit, and sparkle that sets it apart (...) from that of his contemporaries.'

⁸⁷ I.e. the *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*, cited in order to prove failure of those under Edward VI and Elizabeth I to reform Church Law. N.B. Edward Jones has recently brought to light the fact that Milton gave a copy of the *Reformatio* to Thomas Young; Jesus College Cambridge has this in their possession, the text inscribed "Ex dono D. Jo. Milton hunc librum possidet T.Y. D D". Cf. 'The Wills of Edward Goodall and Thomas Young and the Life of John Milton' in Kristin A. Pruitt and Charles W. Durham, eds., *John Milton: "Reasoning Words"* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna UP, 2008), pp. 71-2.

⁸⁸ Milton criticises Camden's account of Grindal's downfall (YP 1.539-40). On Grindal and Milton cf. Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), p. 17; in this work, Collinson also notes Spenser's sympathy for Grindal, or *Algrin* as he is represented in *The shepheardes calendar* (pp. 275-6).

gathering more historical examples, rather than by not resorting to their use at all. Milton held on to English history as legitimate proof that the political arguments for prelatical episcopacy were erroneous.

This extraordinary polemical strategy of gathering together such an eclectic set of authorities gives the impression that *Of Reformation* – though published anonymously – was the product of a poet, or of one convinced of poetry's efficacy in the disciplining of intractable political and ecclesiastical problems. Over the course of the tract, it becomes increasingly apparent that Milton sought to justify his own approach to manipulating authorities on the grounds of his poetic office; there is no precedent in the Smectymnuan controversy for the inclusion in both books of the tract of several lengthy poetic quotations in order to support Milton's position.⁸⁹ Since these quotations were used to attack political assumptions relating to the reign of Constantine, they are directly addressed at the Smectymnuan controversy. Both Hall and the Smectymnuans take care to uphold Constantine as the model for relations between a secular ruler and the Church. Hall invokes 'the charitable example of our religious Constantine' when appealing for restraint in the punishment of 'the manifold scandals of some of the inferiour Clergy.'⁹⁰ Writing in favour of the popular election of bishops, Smectymnuus's *Answer* calls upon 'that admired Constantine the great Promover and Patron of the peace of the Christian Church.'⁹¹ Thus, although the grounds for approval of Constantine varied between the two parties in the dispute, they were united in commending the strong magisterial support for the Church which the emperor represented. Milton, however, opposed this notion on the grounds that the influx of Constantine's wealth into the Church led ecclesiastical corruption to become systemic. He perceived this corruption in the

⁸⁹ Although there are other contemporary examples of poetry being used in controversial and learned prose works. For example, John Selden refers to Chaucer's wife of Bath whilst discussing various European matrimonial ritual formulae in his *Uxor Hebraica* (London: Richard Bishop, 1646), p. 285.

⁹⁰ *Humble Remonstrance*, p. 37

⁹¹ *An Answer*, p. 34

composition of church texts, the authors of which 'extoll *Constantine* because he extol'd them' (554).

Confronted with this bias in certain historical works, Milton draws on the poets to support his position and shame his interlocutors. The strategy of shaming is central to the achievement of true church discipline elsewhere in the anti-prelatical tracts, achieved rhetorically through Milton's self-representation as a poet and the citation of a range of poetic authorities.⁹² He cites the anti-papal *Plowman's Tale*, which he attributes to Chaucer,⁹³ and translates stanzas from Dante, Petrarch and Ariosto into English; calling them

three the famousest men for wit and learning, that *Italy* at this day glories
of, whereby it may be concluded for a receiv'd opinion even among men
professing the Romish Faith, that *Constantine* marr'd all in the Church.
(558)

For Milton to point out that even those of the 'Romish Faith' support his position reads as an ostentatious attempt to shame his interlocutors, Hall and Smectymnuus. Elsewhere in *Of Reformation*, shame is one of the defining characteristics of prelacy: Cranmer and Ridley were 'not without shame and teares' after being admonished by Edward VI, 'that godly and Royall Childe' (532); episcopal support for the *Book of Sports*, and its perceived corruption of the sanctity of the Sabbath, was a 'way to despoile us both of *manhood* and *grace* at once, and that in the shamefullest and ungodliest manner' (588); the tract's end thunders that those who 'by the impairing and diminution of the true *Faith* [...] aspire to high *Dignity, Rule* and *Promotion*' can expect 'a shamefull end in this *Life*' before eternal damnation (616). Later, in *The Reason of Church-Government*, Milton would justify shame's disciplinary qualities in classical philosophical terms as 'the greatest incitement to

⁹² For example, *Reason of Church-Government* in which Milton writes that the Church should aspire to disciplining its members in the same manner as the Roman censor, who surveyed and controlled manners only through 'Terror and shame' (YP 1.832).

⁹³ Cf. YP 1.579, n. 30.

virtuous deeds, and the greatest dissuasion from unworthy attempts that might be.’⁹⁴

Rightly, this has been taken as an indication of Milton’s indebtedness to the ‘republican tradition of shame-culturing’ in his conception of discipline.⁹⁵ In *Of Reformation*, as quoted above, however, the shame-provoking tradition within which Milton seeks to align himself is crucially a poetic one. It is as a poet that Milton seeks to shame both sides of the Smectymnuan controversy.

Milton’s poetic-vocational rationale for the manner in which he disciplines the Smectymnuan controversy in *Of Reformation* is formed through an engagement with Sir Philip Sidney’s *Defence of Poesy*, most clearly in the tract’s inventive fable of the Wen; even though Sidney is never mentioned in the tract by name. In his *Defence*, Sidney describes the poet as having ‘all from Dante’s heaven to his hell under the authority of his pen.’⁹⁶ This confessional blindness in appropriating Dante for the defence of poetry is a vital precedent for Milton’s recruitment of Dante and his fellows in *Of Reformation*. Their inclusion was by virtue of their office as poets of ‘wit and learning,’ whereas their confessional allegiance was incidental. Sidney’s influence within *Of Reformation* is due to his position as a native English humanist forefather: his eloquent apologia serves to authorise Milton’s controversial polemical conduct. The fable of the Wen stands within the tract’s second book as a digressive moment in which Milton’s narrative and polemical strategies collide in order to refute the orthodox maxim ‘No Bishop, No King.’⁹⁷ It may also be read as a point of confluence of Milton’s various influences, suddenly surfacing within the text. Many have noted the intertextual presence of Milton’s radical

⁹⁴ YP 1.840.

⁹⁵ Tilmouth, p. 301. On shame as a form of discipline in Milton’s works generally, c.f Paul Stevens, ‘Milton and the New World: Custom, Relativism, and the Discipline of Shame’, in *Milton and the Imperial Vision*, eds. Balachandra Rajan and Elizabeth Sauer (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1999).

⁹⁶ Sidney, ‘The Defence of Poesy’, p. 20.

⁹⁷ As such, the case could be made that it prefigures the mythical digressions in the divorce tracts analysed in Annabel Patterson’s ‘No meer amatorious novel?’, in *Politics, Poetics, and Hermeneutics in Milton’s Prose*, pp. 85-101.

contemporaries within this passage, as well as the drama of contemporary events.⁹⁸ As the influence of Paolo Sarpi's historical writing on Milton's thought on church discipline and polemical engagement has been noted in this thesis's introduction, it is of particular interest that '*Padre Paolo*' is cited in *Of Reformation* just before the fable of the Wen commences, as an oracular authority on what should happen if and when the 'Hierarchy of *England* shall light into the hands of busie and audacious men, or shall meet with Princes tractable to the Prelacy' (581).⁹⁹ Sarpi's influence is clearly to be seen in Milton's attempts in his writing to provoke moral change in his readers and therefore bring them closer to the ideal of discipline: Milton places him alongside Chaucer as a voice against Papal abuses.

In order to perceive Sidney's influence, however, Milton's fable must be seen within its literary context: as one of several literary reiterations of Menenius Agrippa's tale of the body's mutiny against the belly, first recorded by Livy. Foremost among English examples after Sidney is Shakespeare's dramatic rendition of Menenius' persuasive powers in the crowd scene at the beginning of *Coriolanus*. It is his reconciliation of the plebeians with the patricians that prefaces the tragedy's overarching meditation on 'the self-destructive potentials of human society' – political and personal – in the figures of Caius Martius and the two tribunes.¹⁰⁰ For Sidney himself, however, writing after Quintilian, the fable is proof of the superiority of poetry over philosophy as a way of provoking moral and political change.¹⁰¹ Menenius's success at persuading the Roman people was due to his forgoing oratory and philosophical maxims, and instead

⁹⁸ Mueller, p. 26; and Lieb, 'Milton's *Of Reformation*', pp. 56-7, link the fable to works by Leighton and Prynne. On the fable as a specific attack on Bishop Wren, cf. Charles W.A. Prior, 'New Light on Milton's 'Fable of the Wen'', in *NQ* 54:4 (December 2007), 395-400.

⁹⁹ This passage does not, however, refer to Sarpi's *History of the Council of Trent*; rather, Milton is drawing on a letter written by Sarpi to the French jurist Jacques Leschassier. In their notes on *Of Reformation* in *YP* 1, Don M. Wolfe and William Alfred propose that Milton sourced the text of this letter from Louis du Moulin's *Irenaei Philadelphi Epistola* (1641) (*YP* 1.581, n. 36).

¹⁰⁰ Philip Brockbank, 'Introduction', in *The Arden Shakespeare Coriolanus*, ed. Philip Brockbank (London: Methuen Drama, 2007), p. 37.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, ed. Brian Vickers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), p. 359, n. 96.

taking on the role of the 'homely and familiar poet.' Because of this, his tale 'wrought such effect in the people, as I never read that only words brought forth but then so sudden and so good an alteration, for upon reasonable conditions a perfect reconciliation ensued.'¹⁰² This serves to uphold the central claim of the *Defence*, which is that the moral efficacy of poetry is due to its enduring prelapsarian status.¹⁰³

Although it is scurrilously satirical – and almost excessively grotesque – in its delivery, Milton's reinterpretation of the Menenius Agrippa commonplace as the fable of the Wen brings his deep reverence for Sidney's idealized understanding of poetry to the fore of the tract. The fable, with its express debt to the tale of Menenius, is prefigured in *Of Reformation* by two references to prelatical bellies. Each reference comes in the context of an attack on the notion that episcopal government and royal authority are inextricably linked: in the first book, the 'Bellies' of the Elizabethan Bishops are answerable for making the Queen 'beleeve that by putting downe *Bishops* her *Prerogative* would be infring'd' (540); and in the second book, the Bishops at the time of Constantine, 'through [the Emperor's] lavish Superstition [...] forsook their *first love*, and set themselvs up two Gods instead, *Mammon* and their Belly' (576-7). Given this belly-based prefiguring, the principal discrepancy between Sidney's version of the fable in the *Defence* and Milton's in *Of Reformation* comes as a surprise: whereas in the former the body is in revolt against the belly, which is in truth indispensable, the latter describes the members of the body as being 'amaz'd' (583) at the sudden usurpation of the Wen, which is not only dispensable but cancerous. However, Milton's emphasis on the figuratively disgusting aspect of the Wen does not make his fable less idealistic in purpose than Sidney's earlier rendition. In the anti-prelatical tracts 'the harmonious vision is to be inferred from the pejorative image

¹⁰² 'The Defence of Poesy', pp. 24-5.

¹⁰³ The controversial theological position on which this claim is made in Sidney's *Defence* is neatly expounded by Cummings, in *The Literary Culture of the Reformation*, pp. 264-70.

of the diseased and deformed which masquerades as the flashy “outside”.¹⁰⁴ In a similar manner to Milton’s shame-inducing citation of ‘Romish’ poets, his narration of the Wen’s condemnation is a demonstration of poetry’s higher persuasive powers.

Alongside this refiguring of the fable of the Wen from Sidney’s more faithful rendering of the tale, Milton replaces Menenius with the figure of the Philosopher. Milton’s choice of appellation perhaps indicates a minor disagreement with Sidney, who in his *Defence* immediately prior to his citation of Menenius writes of ‘hard-hearted, evil men’ despising ‘the austere admonitions of the philosopher’ and yet being won over by ‘the good-fellow poet’ who can reveal through delight ‘the form of goodness (which seen, they cannot but love).’¹⁰⁵ The role of the Philosopher in condemning the Wen suggests a conviction within Milton that the austere admonition and delightful language which are conducive to virtue could be combined effectively in the hands of the poet. Note here the similarity between Milton’s epithets for the Philosopher as ‘wise and learned’ (583) and his praise of Dante, Petrarch, and Ariosto as ‘men of wit and learning’: even though Milton does not state whether or not the latter party ‘knew all the Charters, Lawes, and Tenures of the Body’ (584), their qualities are also those of the Philosopher. It has been claimed that Milton sought in his writing to subvert the ‘absolutist aesthetic’ at the core of *The Defence of Poesy*.¹⁰⁶ The fable of the Wen, however, indicates that there cannot be subversion without engagement: moreover, the direct object of Milton’s subversive strategy was the polemical practice of his interlocutors, Hall and Smectymnuus. The underlying role of Sidney (and Menenius) in *Of Reformation* is that of the authority

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Kranidas, *The Fierce Equation: A Study of Milton’s Decorum* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1965), p. 52.

¹⁰⁵ ‘The Defence of Poesy’, p. 24.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 210.

justifying the tract's distinctively poetical approach to the problem of episcopal church government in England.¹⁰⁷

After the fable of the Wen, Milton's close identification of the poet's practice with discipline is confirmed in the peroration that concludes *Of Reformation*, in which Milton's heroic self-representation gradually emerges from the tract's ostensible anonymity.¹⁰⁸ The high-styled oratory of this final section represents a sudden change in rhetorical mode, lifting the tract above the bounds of polemical engagement and reflecting on the eschatological implications of its argument.¹⁰⁹ This can be seen in its turn from addressing the 'Sir' to whom the tract is initially directed, to the 'Omnipotent King' (613). The poet's precedence amongst the ensuing apocalyptic picture is then expounded:

Then amidst the *Hymns*, and *Halleluiahs* of *Saints* some one may perhaps be heard offering at high *strains* in new and lofty *Measures* to sing and celebrated thy *divine Mercies*, and *marvelous Judgements* in this Land throughout all AGES; whereby this great and Warlike Nation instructed and inur'd to the fervent and continuall practice of *Truth* and *Righteousnesse*, and casting farre from her the *rags* of her old *vices* may presse on hard to that *high* and *happy* emulation to be found the *soberest*, *wisest*, and *most Christian People* at that day when thou the Eternall and shortly-expected King shalt open the Clouds to judge the severall Kingdomes of the World, and distributing *Nationall Honours* and *Rewards* to Religious and just *Common-wealths*, shalt put an end to all Earthly *Tyrannies*, proclaiming thy universal and milde *Monarchy* through Heaven and Earth. (616)

Although the use of the unspecific 'some one' gives the passage a slightly disingenuous air, the overall purpose of this passage is to allude to as well as valorize the approach taken in the rest of the tract. Milton declares that through 'high *strains* in new and lofty *Measures*' England be 'instructed and inur'd to the fervent and continuall practice of *Truth* and *Righteousnesse*.' The attainment of such a result will involve 'casting farre from her the *rags* of her old *vices*' and pressing 'on hard to that *high* and *happy* emulation to be

¹⁰⁷ Milton's admiration for Sidney has been commented on elsewhere by Gavin Alexander, in *Writing After Sidney: The Literary Response to Sir Philip Sidney, 1586-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 333. Also cf. E.G. Fogel, 'Milton and Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*', in *NQ* 196 (1951), 115-17.

¹⁰⁸ *Milton's Peculiar Grace*, pp. 82-3.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. David Loewenstein, *Milton and the Drama of History: Historical Vision, Iconoclasm, and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 13-20.

found the *soberest, wisest, and most Christian People.*' Making this statement after delivering the Sidney-indebted fable is to repeat the idealistic sentiment of that previous part in overwhelmingly positive terms, without the grotesque figure of the Wen to function as the condemned antithetical position. In rejecting as 'old *vices*' the normative use of proof in the Smectymnuan controversy, and in emulating what he considered to be the most superior poetic refutations of Constantinian Christianity, Milton was appealing for *Of Reformation* to be read as a salutary act of discipline within the context of a tired and oft-rehearsed tradition of 'moderate' ecclesiastical dispute.

* * *

Of Reformation's predominant concern with articulating a proper method of conducting ecclesiastical dispute was an attempt to turn the Smectymnuan controversy towards a forthright discussion of how to bring about a true reformation of discipline in England. Read as such, it addresses indirectly the tract's relative obscurity when it comes to expressing Milton's thoughts on what form church discipline should actually take. In its overriding desire to identify itself as a poetic contribution to the contemporary debate over episcopacy, *Of Reformation* entirely subordinates those few moments which, when taken together, amount to a very minor reform manifesto. Partly, this suits the political circumstances in which the tract was published. Pointing to the diverse opinions amongst Milton's potential readership, it has been argued that *Of Reformation* indicates how circumspect he was in 'outlining the form of Church government he espoused. Like the Smectymnuans, like the Erastians, like the moderate Episcopalians, he sought a limited number of points of agreement.'¹¹⁰ His attention was devoted to the order of an individual congregation. Carefully avoiding discussing whether or not this model

¹¹⁰ Achinstein, 'John Milton and the Communities of Resistance, 1641-42', p. 299.

congregation may be perceived as parochial or gathered, he describes the office of the 'true *Apostolick Bishop*' in the following terms:

inabl'd with *gifts* from *God*, and the lawfull and Primitive choyce of the *Church* assembl'd in convenient number, faithfully from that time forward feeds his Parochiall *Flock*, ha's his coequall and compresbyteriall Power to ordaine *Ministers* and *Deacons* by publique *Prayer*, and *Vote* of *Christs* Congregation in like sort as he himself was ordain'd (537).

The key element of this miniature description is its distinction between episcopacy and 'Prelatisme' (537), the latter being portrayed throughout the tract as a temporal, coercive function derived from corrupt customs but the former figured as a manifestation of true discipline. When Milton describes 'Censure, Pennance, Excommunication, and Absolution' as 'the sacred and dreadfull works of holy *Discipline*,' he militates against the Church of England's consistory courts, which charged 'sordid Fees' (591). Instead he argues that these works of discipline should be administered *pro bono*, within the congregation. This level of concern for the administration of discipline was unusual amongst Milton's anti-prelatical contemporaries,¹¹¹ but it still leaves the question of his confessional identity in *Of Reformation* wide open: such a position was not anathema to the cause of reduced episcopacy, or that of English presbyterianism, or to congregational order and tradition. The cautious avoidance of elaborating how (or, indeed, if) this 'Parochiall *Flock*' should interact with others at a national level accords with Milton's poetic objective — *pace* Sidney (and Menenius) — of delivering a satisfactory reconciliation between the controversy's protagonists.

In retrospect, Milton's poetic objective in *Of Reformation* seems naive and ultimately fruitless. The tract was largely met with silence, although a few took exception to its disrespectful attitude to the Marian episcopal martyrs, which indicates a common misprision amongst conformist clergymen of Milton's disruptive treatment of accepted

¹¹¹ This is the judgement of Tilmouth, p. 300; cf. also the substance of n. 24 of Tilmouth's essay, which sets Milton's anti-prelatical tracts alongside those of Henry Burton, Katherine Chidley, and Sir Henry Vane.

proofs and 'Names.' If the mute reception to *Of Reformation* in contemporary works is the sole measure of Milton's reputation, then 'we shall have a strangely distorted picture – one which leaves out of account the private applause of friends and the approving nods of mute, inglorious strangers whose thoughts he has expressed.'¹¹² We may speculate that the silence of Hall and the Smectymnuans towards Milton's effort indicates it was either unexpected or unwelcome, or both. In comparison, the later *Animadversions upon the Remonstrants Defence* managed to draw forth *A Modest Confutation*, which Milton himself attributed to Hall and his son Robert.¹¹³ Furthermore, we may also pause briefly to wonder how the tract would have been received if the Civil War had not commenced within eighteen months of its publication. The factionalizing effect of the conflict no doubt amplified the political stance implicit in Milton's prose.

With regard to Milton's concept of discipline, however, *Of Reformation* is a foundational text. In its stylistic approach discipline becomes a matter of excelling in the application of one's talents, rather than conforming to restraining proprieties. As such, it brings to the fore those qualities that other critics of Milton's early writings have determined as both radical and elitist.¹¹⁴ The critique of Hall's and Smectymnuus's manipulation of authorities is made on terms that seem egalitarian. However, the integral component of this critique is a heroic depiction of the poet as one capable of engendering 'Truth and Righteousnesse' in the nation, which radiates raw individualism inflected with a patrician concern for the commonwealth imparted by Sidney's influence. *Of Reformation* also serves as a foundational text for Milton's concept of discipline in that it sets out

¹¹² Parker, p. 14.

¹¹³ The editor of Milton's *An Apology* in YP 1, Frederick Lovett Taft, discusses the likelihood of Milton's attribution, with the conclusion that 'Just who wrote the *Modest Confutation* will probably never be determined, and is, after all, relatively unimportant.' (YP 1:863).

¹¹⁴ This critical debate is ongoing. The latest blast is by Tilmouth, in his essay in the *Young Milton* collection. The notion that Milton's early works are an intractable mixture of progressive and reactionary impulses is advanced by Annabel Patterson, in "'Forc'd fingers": Milton's Early Poems and Ideological Constraint', in *The Muses Common-Weale": Poetry and Politics in the Seventeenth Century*, eds. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1988), pp. 9-22; and David Loewenstein, in "'Fair Offspring Nurs't in Princely Lore": On the Question of Milton's Early Radicalism', in *MS 28* (1992), 37-48.

certain themes, rhetorical and intellectual, to which he returns again and again in his later writing. Within the narrow scope of the four following anti-prelatical tracts, *The Reason of Church-Government* in particular elaborates the theme of discipline which is condensed in *Of Reformation*. Indeed, discipline is the predominant burden of *Reason*. In the tract's first chapter, which defers its judgement on whether the ordinances of church government in Scripture are 'Presbyteriall, or Prelaticall,' Milton declares that 'there is not that thing in the world of more grave and urgent importance throughout the whole life of man, then is discipline.'¹¹⁵ In the civic, ecclesiastical, and domestic spheres, discipline is the chief means and end. Milton supports this conceptualization in the second book of *Reason* through his further exercise in the autobiographical mode, which is telling given the importance of the veiled, self-referential figure of the poet in *Of Reformation*. It is important to track the development of this link between Milton's conviction of discipline as an important ecclesiastical and civic virtue, and his written identity as poet and Christian. As we shall see, his shifting historical circumstances conspired to warp what in *Of Reformation* is a straightforwardly analogous relationship between the practice of poetry and the ethical life of the poet, and church discipline.

¹¹⁵ *YP* 1:750-1.

2. 'Uniform in Virtue': Discipline and Reform in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*

But now his fit of Law past, yet hardly come to himself, hee maintains, that if Mariage bee void, as beeing neither of God nor nature, *there needs no legal proceeding to part it*, and I tell him, that offends not mee; *Then, quoth hee, this is no thing to your book, beeing the Doctrin and Disciplin of Divorce*. But that I deny him; for all Discipline is not legal, that is to say juridical, but som is personal, som Economical, and som Ecclesiastical.¹

Together with its twin-text *Tetrachordon*, *Colasterion* forms the conclusion to Milton's pamphlet-campaign for divorce. The abiding impression of its prose is one of severe condescension mixed with a barely disguised loathing of those who had chastised its author from the pulpit and in print for his contentious advocacy. By the tract's publication on March 4th 1645, Milton's *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* had attracted criticism from the irascible William Prynne, as well as from an array of clergymen, including Herbert Palmer, Daniel Featley, and his old tutor Thomas Young. He would also soon feature in Thomas Edwards's infamous catalogue of religious aberrancy, *Gangraena*. The irritation present within *Colasterion* is also ostensibly due to the anonymous author of *An Answer to a book intituled, The doctrine and discipline of divorce*, whom Milton brands variously as 'hoyd'n,' 'Brain-worm,' 'rank petti-fogger.' Amongst these *ad hominem* insults, however, the corrections that this anonymous author elicited from Milton reveal many of the misunderstandings and misconceptions that obstructed the proper communication of his argument for divorce.² In the quotation above, for example, Milton pounces on the confusion of the author of the *Answer*, who is apparently misled by the formulation of the title *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*. What does the case for divorce due to contrary dispositions, without recourse to the legal procedure of

¹ John Milton, *Colasterion*, in YP 2.742 [N.B. the muddled pagination in this part of the Yale volume]. From henceforth, the page numbers referred to in quotations from this volume shall be noted parenthetically in the text.

² Similarly, Thomas Corns is convincing in his brief argument that *Colasterion* is more than a display of haughty bile. Milton, he writes, 'is not prompted by wild anger,' but 'proceeds with the cunning skill of a good executioner': cf. Corns, 'Milton's Quest for Respectability', p. 775.

‘divorce,’ have to do with doctrine or discipline? Underlying the Answerer’s pose of bewilderment is the assumption that discipline operates through law: the Church’s imposition of morality and doctrine on the people necessitated the support of the magistrate’s coercive power. Milton’s denial of this position speaks of his opposition to the strong ‘Presbyterian’ faction that came to dominate the Westminster Assembly and the Parliament at this time.³ Indeed, his understanding of discipline as personal, economical, and ecclesiastical suggests that he had radically extended the church-government focused conception that he espoused in his antiprelatical tracts.

This chapter considers how Milton’s conception of ‘discipline’ developed over the course of his divorce tracts, and how this relates to his experience of the changes in London’s ecclesiastical politics following the outbreak of the Civil War. In the previous chapter’s analysis of his first tract, the discipline – true discipline, that is – upheld by the Church was indistinct from the powers belonging properly to the true poet. As it is envisioned in *Of Reformation*, the Church at the basic level of the individual congregation governs its wayward members through the non-coercive methods of shaming and admonition.⁴ As a demonstration of the efficacy of these methods, Milton employs them in his tract against his interlocutors in the Smectymnuan controversy. In its style, however, the tract also declares that these methods were not the exclusive preserve of the clergy: Milton advances himself as one capable of administering the same ministry through ‘new and lofty *Measures*.’ In contrast, the divorce tracts bring to light the inherent intellectual and rhetorical difficulties of this idealistic – even antinomian – stance. Milton wished to demonstrate that he was advocating divorce because he continued to believe

³ John Coffey writes that contemporary Presbyterian ecclesiology held Church ‘discipline’ and religious uniformity to be of fundamental importance; by this reasoning it was therefore necessary for them to be supported by the magistrate, whose role lay in suppressing dissent: ‘The toleration controversy during the English Revolution’, pp. 44-8. Also see Ha, *English Presbyterianism*, esp. p. 43; Hughes, *Gangraena*; and Paul, *Assembly*.

⁴ Cf. above, Ch. 1, n. 111, on Tilmouth’s judgement that Milton’s anti-prelatical tracts went further than those of his reforming contemporaries in discussing the actual workings of admonition and excommunication.

that true discipline could be established in England, and not because he despaired of this eventuality occurring. This chapter considers the effect of these difficulties through a comparative analysis of the two versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*: its original 1643 form, and its subsequent revision in 1644.⁵ This may not be untrodden ground in recent Milton scholarship,⁶ but out of the four divorce tracts it is the two versions of *Doctrine and Discipline* and the contrast between them that speak most directly of the transformed ecclesiastical context in which Milton sought to advance his controversial arguments.⁷ Milton's figure of the poet imbued with ecclesiastical power, on which his thought and self-image depended in the anti-prelatical tracts, was diminished by the weight of public scrutiny directed at his writings for divorce. In its stead, Milton came to define discipline without ostentatious recourse to poetic practice, in terms that were closely associated in 1643 and 1644 with the moderately tolerationist 'Independent' position.

The development of Milton's concept of discipline in the two versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* can be understood more clearly when the tracts are considered alongside the several other pamphlets printed between 1641 and 1643 with titles that profess a concern for 'Doctrine and Discipline.' These other pamphlets were produced by authors and printers who represented a variety of different positions on the fraught matter of ecclesiastical reform, which was a constantly shifting battleground in those years. *Colasterion* is quite unreserved in its expression of Milton's antipathy to the

⁵ Whilst a third and a fourth versions of *Doctrine and Discipline* exist, neither demonstrate further authorial intervention, as Lowell L. Coolidge has written in his preface to the Yale edition of the tract (YP 2.217). Analysis of 'the two versions' of *Doctrine and Discipline* in this chapter excludes these latter 'versions' / editions.

⁶ Of those articles dealing with the discrete features of the two versions, see Patterson, 'No meer amatorious novel?'; and Stephen M. Fallon, 'The Spur of Self-Concernment: Milton in his Divorce Tracts', in *MS 38* (2000), 220-42.

⁷ *The Judgement of Martin Bucer* adds very little to Milton's argument, other than the endorsement of a venerable reformer; *Colasterion*, other than the passage quoted at the head of this chapter, is concerned not so much with 'discipline' as with vindication; and *Tetrachordon* eschews the thorny matter of discipline and divorce in order to focus purely on the elaboration of the argument's scriptural basis. Note that the word 'discipline' does not feature even once in the text of *Tetrachordon*.

English and Scottish Presbyterians almost a year after the publication of *Doctrine and Discipline*, much like his sonnet of 1646 that inveighs against ‘the New Forcers of Conscience.’ However, when read in the light of these other earlier pamphlets, it is possible to discern in the first and second versions of *Doctrine and Discipline* the various complex political factors with which Milton had to negotiate when composing them. This chapter treats ‘Doctrine and Discipline,’ in the context of pamphlets of the 1640s, as a ‘keyword,’ or phrase: ‘a way of recording, investigating and presenting problems of meaning.’⁸ The pamphlets of Milton’s contemporaries projected a range of different understandings of this ‘keyword’: to some it denoted a return to the principles of the Elizabethan settlement, to others a radical reorganisation of the Church of England along the same lines as the Scottish Kirk. ‘Doctrine and Discipline’ was a call for reform that did not belong to any one specific party.

However, this proposed analysis, as it pertains to *Doctrine and Discipline*, is conducive to two contradictory interpretations. First, that Milton was attempting to depict his argument as in step with—and a genuine contribution to—the wider London-based movement for reform.⁹ Second, in the same way as those who had already taken up the ‘Doctrine and Discipline’ tag in the titles of their tracts, Milton was using *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* as a means of both altering and conquering the common ground at the heart of this reform movement. The first interpretation serves to obscure the aggressive strategy implied by the second. It was surely no accident that Milton chose this title at the time of the commencement of the Westminster Assembly, the gathering that proved to exacerbate the incipient divisions between ‘Presbyterians’ and

⁸ Raymond Williams’s definition and use of ‘keyword’ as a means of analysis remains valid and valuable: *Keywords*, p. 15.

⁹ This understanding is in accordance with the historical context for the divorce tracts drawn out by Gordon Campbell and Thomas Corns in their biography of Milton (see C&C, *JM*, p. 161). Like them, the following chapter emphasises the full spectrum of factions and positions in play before, during and after the crisis over the *Apology* in 1644, as well as the continuing, largely friendly exchanges between moderates of all parties in this period (cf. Hughes, *Gangraena*, pp. 318-33; and Paul, *Assembly*, pp. 101-32).

‘Independents.’ The two camps were formed principally on the basis of fundamental disagreement over the correct form of ‘discipline,’ rather than ‘doctrine.’ Their differences over this issue explain why theological consensus did not lead automatically to unity, or uniformity. The two versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, read as distinctive contributions to this dispute, reveal the way in which Milton’s desire for national ‘discipline’ changed under the influence of his clear preference for the accommodation and toleration of all virtuous Christians.

The approach to reading Milton’s changing concept of discipline summarised above is to an extent shaped by the aggregated critical perception of his published prose from between 1643 and 1645 as an ideological fulcrum in his career. This is enshrined in Ernest Sirluck’s magisterial introduction to the second volume of the Yale *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*. For Sirluck, Milton’s own account in *The Second Defence* of his early prose as an exercise in apologetic for three species of liberty (‘religious, domestic, and civil’) is undercut by the ‘radical discontinuity’ between the anti-prelatical works and those that follow them. The works of 1643-1645 represent Milton’s ‘break from Presbyterianism toward the left,’ with *Areopagitica* as the high water mark of his liberated humanist endeavour.¹⁰ Whilst interest in Milton’s allegiance to Presbyterianism has waxed and waned since 1959, the sense that the first of the divorce tracts was a significant turning point in Milton’s career has become unshakeable.¹¹ In general terms this critical orthodoxy is indisputable: the two versions of *Doctrine and Discipline* move discernibly away from Milton’s confident stance in the anti-prelatical tracts as a poet-polemicist with the authority to discipline his readers and the nation. However, after the previous chapter’s reading of the Smectymnuan controversy and *Of Reformation*, this chapter must take issue with Sirluck’s polarized depiction of Milton as a convinced Presbyterian in 1641

¹⁰ Ernest Sirluck, ‘Introduction’, YP 2.1, 2.

¹¹ E.g., it is the first instance of Milton’s Arminianism: Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution*, p. 125. Or, it stands as an early experiment in monism: Stephen M. Fallon, ‘The metaphysics of Milton’s divorce tracts’, in *Politics, Poetics, and Hermeneutics in Milton’s Prose*, p. 69.

but as an ex-Presbyterian by 1643. Recent historiographical developments have rendered the left-right paradigm of religious allegiance in London in the first half of the 1640s an irrelevance. Concluding her brief but bracing counter-narrative of Civil War and Commonwealth religious history, Ann Hughes proposes that the division of the 'puritan' camp into Presbyterians and Independents 'was in fact the product of contingent polemical competition within an unstable spectrum of opinion.'¹² This reading of the events and publications of this period opens up profitable new areas for those studying Milton's own contemporary works. Whilst undoubtedly driven by Milton's own unhappy marital experience and burgeoning heterodox intellect, the two different versions of *Doctrine and Discipline* divorce tracts also negotiate a path through the ideological and factional flux of the time. This is, consequentially, reflected in their discrete treatments of 'discipline.'

This study argues that Milton's divorce tracts are not radically discontinuous with his earlier prose. Rather, in their conceptualization of discipline the two versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* indicate gradual change, with certain rhetorical aspects receding, and others coming forward. They do not suggest a sudden change of allegiance from Presbyterianism to moderate Independency or covert radicalism. Instead, they perpetuate the vaguely 'reformed' sentiment that was kindled in the anti-prelatical tracts, but with a distinctly poetic fervour. The use of the 'Doctrine and Discipline' tag on the title-page of his first divorce tract, as well as various textual allusions within it, indicates that Milton had no qualms in recycling keywords that were common to a variety of 'reforming' factions based in London. He made deft use of these keywords as an obscuring fog to suggest the unity of his thought with moderate ecclesiastical opinion, as well as his distance from any one particular group. As will be demonstrated in the second half of this chapter, the resulting effect of Milton's studied indifference to faction was a

¹² Hughes, *Gangraena*, pp. 332-3.

greater focus on the moral behaviour of the individual Christian citizen. The two versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* are works which reflect the progressive development of Milton's notion of discipline as self-imposed restraint; the two versions therefore cannot function, as in Sirluck's reading, as the fulcra on which Milton's ideological stance see-sawed in 1643 and 1644. The tracts also demonstrate that this developing notion was at least partly the product of an antipathy to the common understanding of discipline as a tool of ecclesiastical control. These works laid the groundwork for the conceptualizations of discipline that feature in Milton's later poetry, as we will further explore in chapters three and four. His experiences between 1643 and 1645 at the hands of his critics, and his witnessing the political wrangling in the Westminster Assembly, led him to believe that a national Church settled in the Reformed tradition would not inexorably produce a disciplined nation. It is because of this that his concern increasingly was with the problem of how to encourage the individual to exercise self-discipline.

* * *

The appeal in Milton's argument for divorce to a broad and moderate readership is made evident by his choice of title for the 1643 edition of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*.

In full it declares:

THE
DOCTRINE
AND DISCIPLINE
OF DIVORCE:
RESTORD TO THE GOOD
OF BOTH SEXES,
From the bondage of Canon Law,
and other mistakes, to Christian freedom,
guided by the rule of Charity.

Wherein also many places of scripture, have

recover'd their long-lost meaning,

Seasonable to be now thought on in the
Reformation intended

Matth. 13. 52.

*Every Scribe instructed to the Kingdome of Heav'n, is like the Maister
of a house which bringeth out of his treasure things old and new.*¹³

The use of the tag 'Doctrine and Discipline' at the very head of the page clearly indicates the direction of his appeal. Presumably reached together with his printers, Thomas Paine and Matthew Simmons, the title may well refer to the parliamentary ordinance passed in the middle of June 1643 that called the Westminster Assembly into being. The assembled divines and lay-persons were to 'confer and treat among themselves of such matters and things concerning the liturgy, discipline and government of the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same from all aspersions and misconstructions.'¹⁴ This ordinance, however, cannot be the sole point from which Milton derived the 'Doctrine and Discipline' tag that adorns the head of his title-page. Several other tracts published since the recall of the Parliament at the end of 1640 incorporate the same tag, which reflect the contemporary contest of diverse parties over the control of the movement for church reform.¹⁵

This section reviews these works and the different positions that they represent. It shows that each different conception of discipline is contingent on the author's (or authors's) response to certain political and theological imperatives: with an over-riding

¹³ John Milton, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (London: Thomas Paine and Matthew Simmons, 1643), title-page. The line-breaks are rendered here as they are in the original. Note that at this time, Simmons was also involved in printing works by Roger Williams, John Goodwin, John Cotton, and a reprint of *The Remonstrance of the Commissioners of the General Assembly of Scotland*.

¹⁴ Cf. Doc. 74, in J.P. Kenyon, ed., *The Stuart Constitution, 1603-1688: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), pp. 261-3. Campbell and Corns suggest that this ordinance was the source from which Milton derived the title of his tract, in C&C, JM, p. 158. This chapter will, in part, offer a different perspective on this matter.

¹⁵ There are, of course, texts containing 'Doctrine and Discipline' within their title that predate 1640, but these will be put to one side in this chapter to preserve the focus of the argument. Of particular interest is the English translation of Jean Paul Perrin's *Histoire des Vaudois, Luther's Fore-Runners* (London: Nathanael Newbury, 1624), the contents of which may well have influenced the composition of Milton's sonnet 'On the late Massacre in Piedmont'.

concern for the maintenance of social order, for example, or the preservation of peace between England and Scotland, or the need to match reformed doctrine with the establishment of reformed discipline. The purpose is to demonstrate the diversity of opinion within the large constituency of those eager for ecclesiastical reform in England. The tracts surveyed represent several alignments, ranging from the conservative 'High' Calvinism of the non-Laudian bishops to 'Classical' Scots Presbyterianism of the Kirk's commissioners in London. In these may be discerned the lurching movements that characterized London-based church politics in the early 1640s. None of the projects being advanced in these tracts 'succeeded' in the short term, but more important is their credibility as projects with the *potential* for delivering a successful resolution to the re-settlement of the Church. As we shall see, Archbishop William Laud features strongly throughout these works as a figure against which various contrary factions joined together in commonly shared loathing. It is also notable that 'Doctrine and Discipline' features in the titles of several tracts published in 1641; but apart from Milton's first divorce pamphlet, only one tract published in 1643 bears the tag. The rough outline that this survey produces will serve as the foundation for the rest of the chapter: a study of Milton's two versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* as shaped by and shaping the fracture in the early 1640s of the relatively united front for church reform that had come together in 1640.

To comprehend the nature of Milton's moderate appeal in *Doctrine and Discipline* fully, it must first be acknowledged that the reform of 'Doctrine and Discipline' was not a cause restricted to those of a godly, Presbyterian-sympathetic persuasion. This is ably demonstrated on the title-page of Edmund Waller's address to the Short Parliament, 'against the prelates innovations.' Printed in 1641, the Thomason catalogue indicates that

this was the first tract title to utilize the tag in the period.¹⁶ The publication's full title is as follows:

*An honorable and learned speech made by Mr. Waller in Parliament against the prelates innovations, false doctrin, and discipline, reproveing the perswation of some clergie-men to His Majestie of inconveniencies : who themselves instead of tilling the ground are become sowers of tares : with a motion for the fundamentall and vitall liberties of this nation which it was wont to have.*¹⁷

As this title suggests, the body of the parliamentarian's speech is in the main an attack on civic abuses. Whilst he was careful to omit the names of his opponents in his speech, given its immediate context, it is plain that it was taking aim at the clerical circle around William Laud. These were those 'Preachers' who declared that 'The King must bee a more absolut Monarch, then any of his Predecessors, and to them he must owe it, though in the meane time, they hazard the hearts of his people, and involve Him into a thousand Difficulties.'¹⁸ To Waller, the proper relationship between Church and State was one of delicate balance, and was contingent on the upkeep of the ancient liberties of all English subjects. The Laudian faction was undermining the order of the commonwealth by endangering these liberties. At the time of Waller's speech, accusations of Laudian subversion were particularly centred on their involvement in the creation of the *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiasticall* of 1640, which enshrined the doctrine of the divine right of Kings, and also included the infamous 'etcetera' oath.¹⁹ The first item handed undue power to the monarch and sidelined the role of the Parliament, and the second legally bound subjects to controversial ecclesiastical innovations: together they threatened

¹⁶ *Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books, Newspapers, and Manuscripts Relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and Restoration, Collected by George Thomason, 1640-1661*, Vol. 1 (London: William Clowes, 1908), p. 1. The MS note made by Thomason on the tract's title-page declares: 'This Speech was spoken the last Parliament before this.' Although the tract's title-page states that its year of publication is 1641, the catalogue dates it to April 1640.

¹⁷ Edmund Waller, *An honorable and learned speech* (London: Richard Smithers, 1641), title-page.

¹⁸ *An honorable and learned speech*, p. 3.

¹⁹ Cf. Church of England, *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical* (London: Robert Barker, 1640). This document was agreed on at the Church of England's Convocation, which met at the same time as the Short Parliament.

the 'fundamentall and vitall Liberties, the prosperity of our Goods, and freedome of our Persons.' The principal aim of Waller's rhetoric, therefore, was to determine the repeal of these *Constitutions and Canons* as the main condition for assenting to the King's desired financial and military 'supply' for the so-called Bishops' War.²⁰

The accusation of 'false doctrin, and discipline' that adorns the title-page of *An honorable and learned speech* is never mentioned in the speech itself. Waller's concern for the cause, which was characteristic amongst the other politicians of the Great Tew Circle, only extended to ridding the Church of those innovatory instruments that inhibited the proper functioning of civil government, and of the constitution.²¹ Through indiscriminate use of the courts of High Commission and Star Chamber, Laud and his allies had 'bent their Witts, against the Law of their Country ... [and] neglected their own profession.'²² Waller's was not a call for root and branch reform. He does not voice any opposition in his speech to Arminianism or Prelacy in and of itself, despite the fact that these issues proved to be extremely contentious for many others. Indeed, Waller praises the previous constitutional role of bishops as 'Mediators, between the King and his Subjects, to present and pray redresse of their grievances.'²³ A year later, confronted with the growth of anti-prelatical sentiment within the Long Parliament, it seems that Waller felt compelled to clarify his position on the constitutional role of bishops in another speech on ecclesiastical issues. In this he described episcopacy 'as a Counter-scar[p], or outwork' that served to fortify the entire English political system: redesign, rather than demolition, was the order

²⁰ Ibid., p. 5.

²¹ In his essay on Great Tew, Hugh Trevor-Roper writes briefly on the cooperation of Waller, Lucius Cary, and Edward Hyde in the Long Parliament prior to the outbreak of the war as a 'reforming group': cf. 'The Great Tew Circle', in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans*, pp. 176-7.

²² *An honorable and learned speech*, p. 4. Edward Hyde's great historical work recalls the negative reception of Laud's juridical-disciplinary policies amongst the aristocracy. Cf. *The History of the Rebellion*, ed. W. Dunn Macray, Vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 125.

²³ Ibid., p. 3.

of the day.²⁴ Such a position infuriated the commissioners sent by the Scots Covenanters to ensure radical ecclesiastical reform was guided through the Long Parliament. It was also identical to that adopted by Lucius Cary, 2nd Viscount Falkland and the convenor of the Great Tew Circle. In a letter dated March 15th 1641, the Kirk Presbyterian Robert Baillie named Cary as one 'against the corruptions of Bishops; [but for] the keeping in of a limited Episcopacie.'²⁵ In this context, Waller's use of 'Doctrine and Discipline' to tag the title-page of his first speech on 'false doctrin, and discipline' may be seen as an invitation to godly readers to consider the controversial issue in terms that included the rational imperatives of civil and constitutional order.

Waller's conservative stance on ecclesiastical reform is echoed, if not entirely replicated, in a seven-page pamphlet also published in 1641, entitled *A copie of the proceedings of some worthy and learned divines, appointed by the Lords to meet at the Bishop of Lincolnes in Westminster touching innovations in the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England*. Again, the cause of 'Doctrine and Discipline' in this tract was understood as necessitating the repeal of unwanted innovations and a return to an earlier spirit, rather than a push towards complete reformation on presbyterian lines. However, in contrast to that which emanated from the intellectual milieu of Great Tew, *A copie* is representative of the position of the reforming episcopal faction led by John Williams, the Bishop of Lincoln, and James Ussher, the Archbishop of Armagh. As we have already noted, Ussher held the respect of many English puritan ministers,²⁶ and his support for Williams

²⁴ Edmund Waller, *A speech made by Master Waller esquire* (London: 1641 [July 3]), p. 4. This speech was delivered to the Commons on May 17th 1641. Cf. Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War*, p. 124.

²⁵ Robert Baillie, *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, A.M., 1637-1662*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Alex Lawrie & co., 1841), p. 307.

²⁶ On Puritan interactions with Williams and Ussher, cf. Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 318-26. Webster suggests that Joseph Hall and Ussher were also involved in the publication of John Reynolds's [or Rainolds's] letter to Sir Francis Knollys in favour of episcopacy. Also, on the subject of puritan episcopalians at the time of the Assembly, cf. Paul, *Assembly*, pp. 105-10.

may have helped to overcome the Bishop of Lincoln's reputation for untrustworthiness.²⁷ *A copie* principally consists of three lists. The first, entitled 'Innovations in Doctrine,' and second, entitled 'Innovations in Discipline,' catalogue various errors perpetrated by the Laudian faction. These included such heterodoxies as teaching and preaching 'that good workes are concauses with faith in the act of Iustification,' and 'standing up at the *Hymnes* in the Church, and alwayes at *Gloria Patri*.'²⁸ They also name various transgressors, such as Peter Heylyn,²⁹ and Robert Sibthorp and Roger Maynwaring, two enthusiastic advocates of divine right theory.³⁰ The third list offers considerations regarding the revision of the Book of Common Prayer. Interspersed between these lists are a number of brief items concerning certain books requiring reproof (such as 'The reconciliation of *Sancta Clara*, to knit the Romish and Protestant in one'),³¹ and the ordering of worship in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches. Importantly, *A copie* does not give oxygen to the fraught issue of presbyterianism, let alone the more practical topic of how bishops should operate alongside the clergy of their diocese.

As envisioned by Williams and Ussher, then, the 'Doctrine and Discipline' of the Church of England was properly based on the three pillars of Episcopacy, Calvinism, and the Prayer Book. Accordingly, all other accretions were to be dispensed with. This was the public stance adopted in the release of this document which shows how they sought to win over those upset by Laudian innovations. *A copie* also indicates how John Williams

²⁷ Cf. Trevor-Roper, 'James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh', in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans*, p. 151. This is also the opinion of Edward Hyde, although his expression is much more severe: cf. *History of the Rebellion*, p. 464, 469.

²⁸ Church of England, *A copie of the proceedings* (London: 1641), p. 1, 4.

²⁹ Note that Heylyn, whose patron was William Laud, had previously clashed with two of the individuals that signed their name to *A copie*: John Prideaux and John Williams: see Anthony Milton, 'Heylyn, Peter (1599-1662)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/13171>, accessed 17 Nov 2012].

³⁰ See J. Fielding, 'Sibthorpe, Robert (d. 1662)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/25511>, accessed 7 Nov 2013]; and Vivienne Larminie, 'Maynwaring, Roger (1589/90?-1653)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/18011>, accessed 17 Nov 2012].

³¹ *A copie*, p. 2. N.B. Milton himself briefly attacks Franciscus Santa Clara in *Of Reformation* (cf. *YP* 1.527-28), comparing him unfavourably – to both parties – with Joseph Hall. Cf. Above, Chap. 1, n. 42.

went about this conciliatory task in the relative privacy of the committee that he chaired in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey between the March and May of 1641. The result of a motion in the Lords authored by Lord Saye and Sele, this committee sought direct mediation with the disaffected – yet still at this point conforming – ecclesiastical party by inviting them to participate. Although there is no specific date available for the publication of the tract (it does not feature in Thomason's collection), the names signed beneath its conclusion shed some light on the exact circumstances of its composition and publication. The names are as follows: 'Arch Bishop of Armach. Bp. of Lincolne. Dr. Prideaux. Dr. Ward. Dr. Brownrig. Dr. Featly. Dr. Hacket.'³² Absent from this list are the more puritan divines that Williams had invited to participate in the committee. According to Baillie, these included the principal 'Remonstrant' Ministers: '[William] Tuisse, [Cornelius] Burgesse, [Thomas] Young our learned countryman, [John] Whyt, [Stephen] Marshall, [and Roger] Hill.' From other records we know that Edmund Calamy and Matthew Newcomen, two further Smectymnuans, were also in attendance.³³ The absence of their names in *A copie* probably indicates that it was published after the committee broke up on May 12th due to a disagreement over the Commons's proposal to abolish deaneries and chapters.³⁴ As Williams is named only as Bishop of Lincoln, it is also clear that the pamphlet came out prior to Charles's decision later in the same year (October 5th) to elevate him to the position of Archbishop of York, through the suggestion of Charles's secretary, Sir Edward Nicholas. The aim of this late action was to fill the episcopal bench with moderate bishops of a Calvinist persuasion, and therefore mollify

³² *A copie*, p. 7.

³³ See Baillie, *Letters and Journals*, I.309; Brian Quintrell, 'Williams, John (1582-1650)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/29515>, accessed 18 Nov 2012].

³⁴ Tom Webster, 'Marshall, Stephen (1594/5?-1655)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/18148>, accessed 18 Nov 2012].

those militating against episcopacy on the grounds of the spread of Arminian doctrine: in pursuit of the same goal, Brownrigg was appointed to Exeter and Prideaux to Worcester.³⁵

The lack of godly signatories at the end of *A copie* signals the political failure of Williams and Ussher's plans for the perpetuation of episcopacy in England in a reduced form. However, the powerful intellectual and habitual appeal of their ideas amongst conformist clergy and laity of various stripes is without doubt. Unlike Waller's case for limited reform, which argued exclusively on civil grounds, the authors of *A copie* recognized and sought to amend the ecclesiastical and theological errors instigated by the Laudian faction. This conservative understanding of the doctrine and discipline of the Church held significant influence at the beginning of 1641, which was due in part to its compatibility with the line taken by parliamentarian advocates of moderate reform, including Waller and Cary. In a letter from London dated January 29th, Baillie wrote to the Presbytery of Irvine with some concern:

all [are] for the erecting of a kind of Presbyteries, and for bringing down the Bishops in all things, spirituall and temporall, so low as can be with any subsistence; bot their utter abolition, which is the onlie aime of the most godlie, is the knott of the question; wee must have it cutted by the axe of prayer: God, we trust, will doe it.³⁶

From this Covenanting perspective, although the will of 'the most godlie' in England was undoubted, their political strength was perilously unsound. Later, in a letter dated March 15th, Baillie seems sure that the recently established committee was but a 'trick' of the Bishops, which he hoped would irritate the Commons so much that it would spur them on to root-and-branch reform.³⁷ The substance of this conviction is evident in the causes for the break-up of the committee on May 12th; however, Baillie's account also testifies to the real danger of Williams to the cause that had brought the Scots commissioners down to London at the end of 1640.

³⁵ Fletcher, p. 121.

³⁶ Baillie, *Letters and Journals* 1, p. 303.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 309.

Other tracts from this time that bear 'Doctrine and Discipline' on their title-page suggest alternatives to the conservative (and pro-episcopal) case for church reform advanced in civic terms by Waller, and ecclesiastical ones by Williams and Ussher. Two particular examples are re-prints of earlier works, neither of which is explicitly against episcopal government *per se*. Their re-appearance in the first year of the Long Parliament, however, demonstrates the re-appropriation of earlier godly movements by those in pursuit of a more resolutely presbyterian agenda. The first example is William Prynne's *Newes from Ipswich*, which was originally published in 1636 under the pseudonym Matthew White. It seems that the events of 1641 convinced the publisher T. Bates of the value of reissuing it in the November of that year.³⁸ The text and title-page offer a conservative understanding of the 'doctrine and discipline' of the Church of England that accords with Prynne's stance during the mid-1630s as a 'staunch Royalist and [...] loyal Anglican':³⁹ he attacks the innovations of Laud and his faction, not the established Church itself. However, the occasional meaning of the tract's reprinted form in 1641 transforms the implications of its content. Prynne's sufferings under Laud's regime, and the change of mood in Parliament in 1641 dramatically changed his opinion of episcopacy.

According to its full title, which remained unaltered throughout its several editions, *Newes from Ipswich* sets out to discover 'certaine late detestable practices of some dominiering Lordly Prelates, to undermine the established Doctrine and Discipline of our Church.' The woodcut adorning the pamphlet's title-page depicts a lordly bishop declaring "Only canonical prayers" and "no afternoon sermons"; he is flanked by 'An

³⁸ *Catalogue*, p. 45. The ESTC indicates T. Bates's busy operations between 1641 and 1643, in which he was employed in printing pamphlets for Parliament and the King, as well as other private individuals.

³⁹ William M. Lamont, *Marginal Prynne, 1600-1669* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 41.

alter cringing priest' and 'Churchwardens for Articles.'⁴⁰ It is presumed that this domineering prelate is a caricature of the controversial Laudian Matthew Wren, who held the role of Bishop of Norwich between 1635 and 1640 and therefore had episcopal oversight of the town of Ipswich. The pamphlet itself heaps invective on the central tenets of Laudian churchmanship. On the matter of *jure divino* episcopacy, Prynne writes that these 'Atheisticall persecuters,' the prelates, insist on being styled:

Lord Bishops Iure divine, by the holy Ghosts own institution (who never yet instituted any unpreaching, rare preaching Prelates, or persecuters and suppressors of preaching) and shame not to stile themselves the *Godly holy Fathers of our Church, and pillars of our faith*, when as their fruits and actions manifest them to be nought else but very *Stepfathers* and *Caterpillers*, the very pests and plagues of both.⁴¹

Elsewhere, the crack-down on unlicensed preaching and the use of episcopal visitation to enforce order within the Church are perceived to be as 'a persecution and havock made among Gods Ministers' the like of which had not been seen 'since Q. Maries daies.'⁴² This last reference is one of several instances in *Newes from Ipswich* in which the spectre of popery is raised as the satanic, invisible hand guiding the actions of the prelates. Recent alterations to the Book of Common Prayer were not by Church of England clergymen working at the behest of Charles, but instead by 'Romish Inquisitors' intent on 'gelding' it.⁴³ In sum, the content is both seditious and libellous—it is little wonder that Laud sought to stamp out the threat Prynne posed by, in 1636, having his ears cropped and the letters 'S.L.' carved on his cheeks. It is not, however, presbyterian. Prynne takes care to conclude the pamphlet with a prayer that 'all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy holy Word, and the people obediently to follow the same.'⁴⁴ He was able to do so by drawing a distinction between bishops and '*Luciferian Lord Bishops*' intent on the spread of

⁴⁰ William Prynne, *Newes from Ipswich* (London: T. Bates, 1641), title-page.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, sig. A2^v.

⁴² *Ibid.*, sig. A3^r.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, sig. A2^r.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, sig. A3^{2r}.

popery and tyranny.⁴⁵ That *Newes* went through three editions before the end of 1636 suggests a strong public appetite for Prynne's Archbishop-baiting; it does not suggest widespread support for the eradication of episcopacy.

The reappearance of *Newes from Ipswich* in 1641 may conceivably be interpreted as an attempt by Prynne and Bates to associate this older work with the new cause of the root-and-branch movement. In this case its re-published call for 'Doctrine and Discipline' would serve to prefigure rather than contradict Prynne's evisceration of prelatical episcopacy in *The antipathie of the English lordly prelacie, both to regall monarchy, and civill unity* (1641). His opponents, Wren and Laud, were both incarcerated in the Tower by March 1st of that year. Prynne himself, along with his fellow sufferers John Bastwick and Henry Burton, had been released from prison to the sound of public rejoicing. In a letter dated December 2nd 1640, Baillie excitedly describes the entry of Prynne and Burton into London: 'never here such a like show; about a thousand horse, and as some of good note says, above four thousand; above a hundred coaches, and, as manie says, above two hundred; with a world of foott, every one with their rosemary branch.'⁴⁶ Within this context of godly jubilation, Prynne's espousal of support in *Newes* for an established Church based on Calvinism, Episcopacy, and the Prayer Book, was of little consequence. However, the tract's strong, railing language puts it in alignment with the root-and-branchers, who were similarly vehement. It stands in significant contrast to the reforming bishops's brief, dry *copie of the proceedings*. With Wren and Laud in the Tower, there is also something of the victory lap to the 1641 publication of *Newes*: a personal triumph married to vindictive glee at the prospect of opponents brought so low.

The other old pamphlet thought seasonal to the developments of 1640-41 and therefore republished was Anthony Gilby's *A Dialogue between A Souldier of Barwick and an English Chaplain* (1642). When it was originally published in 1581, Gilby was addressing a

⁴⁵ *Idid.*, sig. A1^r.

⁴⁶ Baillie, *Letters and Journals* 1, p. 277.

very different ecclesiastical crisis, in which the terms of the Elizabethan settlement were being picked over by those advocating further reform through printed prose polemic and parliamentary legislation.⁴⁷ The 1642 edition, however, is heavily redacted by its anonymous printer, the better to suit the demands of the present moment. To its title-page the following subtitle is added: 'Therefore the Lord of his mercy, send Discipline with Doctrine into his Church; for Doctrine without Discipline and restraint of Vices maketh dissolute hearts.'⁴⁸ Within, the knock-off version contains enough of Gilby's original dialogue to convey its brilliantly scurrilous qualities. The dialogue is held between Miles Monopodios, a godly former soldier who unsurprisingly is lame in one foot, and Sir Bernard Blynkarde, 'a formall Priest, and a Lords Chaplaine,' who – astonishingly – is quite blind to his own hypocrisy.⁴⁹ In their conversation, Blynkarde, who lives in luxury, is repeatedly exposed through Miles's biting sarcasm, as being almost indistinguishable from 'an olde popishe Prelate.'⁵⁰ Although the republished version arbitrarily ends the dialogue halfway through its full length, it does follow it up with a list of 'An hundred pointes of Poperie, yet remayning, which deforme the Englishe reformation,' which also features in the original.⁵¹ And after this, there is a table of popish ceremonies imported into the Church, which claims to be taken from the work of William Ames.

As with the return of the Martin Marprelate pseudonym at the same time,⁵² the partial resurrection of Gilby may be categorised as part of a more general conservative hankering for a return to the Elizabethan settlement as it was then imagined. The

⁴⁷ The vestiarian crisis, as well as the Admonition controversy; it was written in 1566, but suppressed by the author until 1573. Cf. Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 78-9.

⁴⁸ Gilby, *A Dialogue*, title-page. Note Gilby's education at Christ's College, Cambridge, as well as his association with Joseph Hall whilst the latter was growing up in Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, sig. A3^v.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵² Cf. *A Dialogue [...] by Dr. Martin Mar-Prelat* (Amsterdam: 1640); *Hay any worke for Cooper* (Edinburgh: 1641); *Hay any worke for Cooper* ('Printed in Europe, not farre from some of the Bounsing Priests' [i.e. London]: 1642); *The Character of a Puritan [...] by D. Martin Mar-Prelat* (London: 1643). The compositional history of these works is comprehensively covered in *The Martin Marprelate Tracts*, ed. Black.

hundred points of 'Poperie' attack bishops that are 'called Lords' and 'haue domination, and exercise authoritie ouer their Brethren, contrarie to the commaundement of our Sauour Christ, Mat. 20. 25. 1. Pet. 5. vers. 4.'⁵³ However, as with Prynne's *Newes*, episcopacy itself is not within the scope of this assault. What sets *A Dialogue* apart from the other pamphlets detailed in this review is that it contains no reference to the effect of Laud on the Church, which is unsurprising given its date of composition. It pictures a Church in which the rot did not suddenly set in under the mismanagement of one Archbishop. The Table of "human ceremonies" at its end provides a sweeping picture of corruption taking hold by degrees from the inception of the Church to the present day. The implication of this is that only stern resolve and radical legislation can free the Church from its bondage. This perspective is balanced by the addition of the subtitle: the call for 'Discipline with Doctrine' catapults this Elizabethan voice into the contemporary situation.⁵⁴ Alongside the various other tracts adopting this rhetorical tag as a banner for proper reform, the revived Gilby may be seen as a call to look beyond episcopacy and consider closer unity – although not strict uniformity – with other European Reformed Churches, with the Scottish Covenanters first and foremost.

The influence that the Covenanter cause exerted on English ecclesiastical controversy at that time can be seen in two further tracts bearing the phrase 'Doctrine and Discipline,' each stemming – indirectly and directly – from the Covenanters. When this chapter turns to the foundation of the Westminster Assembly in 1643, and the correlative split between the 'Independents' and 'Presbyterians,' the prominence of the Kirk's commissioners in that context will be plain to see. With this in mind, earlier Covenanter advocacy of 'Classic' presbyterianism is evidenced by *THE DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE Of the*

⁵³ *A Dialogue*, p. 21.

⁵⁴ It is worth considering whether or not by 1642 'Barwick' (or Berwick) had a new significance as the name lent to the peace treaty between Scotland and England that ended the Second Bishops' War.

KIRKE of SCOTLAND, which was published a month after the rerelease of Prynne's tract, in December 1641.⁵⁵ The work establishes the basis of their Kirk's polity by regurgitating the contents of the two Books of Discipline, as first established in 1560. It systematically sets out the main heads of reformed doctrine (*sola scriptura*, solefidianism, etc.), and establishes the roles and responsibilities of prince, pastors and people so that these may be upheld. To this older material is added a new preface, which aims to prove the worth of this Reformed polity in the light of the grave events of the previous ten years which had given rise to the Covenanter movement. Discipline is lionised as the bastion which Charles's ecclesiastical policy in Scotland could not penetrate, and the adhesive that held the nation together as one uniform entity:

It is cleerly knowne to many in this Kingdome, and in forraine parts, what a wall for defence, and a band for peace, and progresse of the Gospel, was **that heavenly discipline**, whereby brotherly amitie, and sacred harmonie of Prince, Pastors and Professours, were so continued and increased that all, as one man, did stand together for the Doctrine, Sacraments, and Kirke government, against the adversaries, either lurking or professed. It was the hedge of the Lords vineyard, and the hammer whereby the hornes both of adversaries, and disobeyers, were beaten and broken.⁵⁶

Whilst the reforming English bishops were coy on the subject of the divine provenance of the current doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, the Scots were not at all bashful when it came to the 'heavenly discipline' of their Kirk. This passage is crammed with biblical metaphors for *jure divino* presbyterianism: 'the hedge of the Lords vineyard,' alluding to Isaiah 5, portrays discipline as that which keeps Israel – and therefore Scotland – safe from trespass; the image of the 'hornes both of adversaries, and disobeyers' being broken echoes the last verse of Psalm 75, in which the 'horns' (representing strength) of the wicked are broken and those of the righteous raised up. Thus it declares, not only judgment on 'adversaries, and disobeyers,' but that the Kirk

⁵⁵ *Catalogue*, p. 51.

⁵⁶ Church of Scotland, *The Doctrine and Discipline of the Kirke of Scotland* (London: Robert Young and John Sweeting, 1641), sig. A2r (my emphasis).

prevailed because of the direct intervention of the God of Jacob. The two passages of scripture referred to in these metaphors both speak of imminent catastrophe for God's people, and of God's power to hasten or prevent it. Thus, the lack of civil strife in Scotland at the time of the tract's publication and the success of the Covenanters's army in the Bishops' Wars are both attributed to the entire godly society's obedience to holy law.

THE DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE Of the KIRKE of SCOTLAND continues the apologetical work carried out by the ministers that had been sent to join the Scots commissioners in London at the end of 1640. Like the republication of *Newes from Ipswich*, there is a note of triumph in this pamphlet: a sense that the Covenanters's decision to stick with the established form of their Kirk against the wishes of Charles had been vindicated by the providential events of the past two years. More importantly, however, its systematic outline of the polity of the Kirk also suggests that the purpose of its publication was to provide English readers with more information on how the Scottish settlement operated.⁵⁷ Ominously, the Bible verse quoted on the title-page, Exodus 25:9, declares: 'According to all that I shew thee, after the paterne of the Tabernacle, — even so shall yee make it.' At one level this is merely the Lord instructing Moses as to the dimensions of the tabernacle; but this is only one remove from describing the pamphlet's contents as God's word, which the English Moses — 'yee' — should be ready to act upon. There is no explicit indication of this interpretation within the text, yet its structure and content stand in striking contrast to the list of quick fixes offered by Williams and Ussher for returning the Church of England to the right track.

The final pamphlet considered in this review, and the second to be produced by the Coventanters in London, is Robert Baillie's *The Life of William now Lord Arch-Bishop of*

⁵⁷ For instance, it features alongside Milton's early prose works in the pamphlet collection of Sir Edward Dering, an MP in the Long Parliament who also contributed much of interest to the debate over ecclesiastical reform: cf. *Private Libraries in Renaissance England*, vol. 1, ed. R.J. Fehrenbach and E.S. Leedham-Green (Binghampton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1992), pp. 79-135.

Canterbury. The tract functions as a robust hatchet-job on Laud and his ‘*Canterburian*’ faction. Its title-page advertises its aim of setting out the vilified prelate’s ‘principall actions, or deviations in matters of doctrine and discipline (since he came to that sea of Canturbury [sic.]).’⁵⁸ Published on October 24th 1643,⁵⁹ it postdates the publication of Milton’s first edition of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, which appeared around August 1st 1643.⁶⁰ As such, the tract attests the enduring significance of the ‘doctrine and discipline’ tag in the ongoing struggle over the settlement of the Church in England. Of further interest in this regard is the fact that *The Life of William* was not a new work. It was a reissue of Baillie’s earlier work *Ladensium Katakrisis*, which was published in April 1640 in Amsterdam and Glasgow, and in 1641 in London by Nathaniel Butter. What sets the 1643 edition apart is its different title-page, and its omission of ‘A Post-Script for the personate Jesuite Lysimachus Nicanor,’ which was appended to the earlier versions. In both versions it is structured around the Archbishop’s several theological faults, which fundamentally stem from the seduction of popery. The chapter headings are as follows: ‘*The Canterburians avowed Arminianisme*’; ‘*The Canterburians professed affection towards the pope and popery in grosse*’; ‘*The Canterburians joine with Rome in her grossest idolatries*’; ‘*The Canterburians avow their embracing of the popish heresies and grossest errours*’; ‘*Anent their Superstitions*’; ‘*The Canterburians embrace the Messe it selfe*’; ‘*The Canterburian maximes of Tyrannie*.’⁶¹

The changes that had occurred since the first publication of *Ladensium Katakrisis* are only evident in the significant reworking of the title (possibly by Baillie, possibly by Butter). Shortly after the release of *The Life of William*, Baillie returned to London in order

⁵⁸ Robert Baillie, *The Life of William now Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury* (London: N.B., 1643), title-page, *passim*.

⁵⁹ *Catalogue*, p. 293.

⁶⁰ Cf. Gordon Campbell, *A Milton Chronology* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1997).

⁶¹ Baillie, *Life of William*, sigs. †3-opp. A.

to attend the Westminster Assembly, which had been called in July.⁶² Later in the same year, the Solemn League and Covenant, which bound the causes of the English Parliament and the Scots Covenanters together, would be sworn to by the Commons, the Lords, and the Assembly at the end of September. Of the ‘Cantuarrians,’ Laud remained in the tower, as did Wren: they were of no real danger. In this context, the republication of *Ladensium Katakrisis* as *The Life of William* speaks of a need to reassert the worth of the Kirk’s service in toppling prelatical government in England at the beginning of a new phase in English and Scots cooperation.⁶³ The Scots still had much ground to cover in order to convert the English properly to true Kirk Presbyterianism. In a letter written a few months later, dated January 1st 1644, Baillie expresses his worries:

As yet a Presbyterie to this people is conceived to be a strange monster. It was our good therefore to go on hand in hand, so far as we did agree, against the common enemy; hoping that in our differences, when we behoved to come to them, God would give us light.⁶⁴

The political necessity of a ‘common enemy’ to unite disparate elements under one cause is acknowledged in the re-worked title of Baillie’s pamphlet. His description of Laud’s actions as a deviation from ‘doctrine and discipline’ suggests an attempt to echo the earlier sentiments of Prynne and others. This view is supported by Baillie’s claim – featuring in both *Ladensium Autokatakrisis* and *The Life of William* – that in straying too close to popery under the guise of acting ‘for the good of the whole church universall,’

⁶² He arrived in London on November 18th 1643: cf. David Stevenson, ‘Baillie, Robert (1602–1662)’, *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/1067>, accessed 19 Nov 2012].

⁶³ It may also be that the title was changed in order to jump start sales of Baillie’s books, which according to a letter of his to his cousin William Spang dated December 7th 1643, had been dwindling significantly: ‘My pamphletts doe not sell. I have brought up some of my “Ladensium” and “Parallels” hither, but for no purpose: if yow can make anything of them there, send word with the next.’ (Baillie, *Letters and Journals*, vol. 2, p. 116).

⁶⁴ Baillie, *Letters and Journals* 2, p. 117.

Laud was leading England back to Rome against its will.⁶⁵ Baillie goes further than Prynne in the preface of the work, however, in reimagining the Church of England as 'the Kirk of *England*,' which held in common with 'all the reformed Kirks' a 'common quarrell' with 'grosse *Arminianisme*, plain Popery, and of [sic.] setting up of barbarous tyrannie.'⁶⁶ Beneath the claim of ecclesiastical kinship between the Scottish Kirk and the Church of England through the Reformed tradition, *The Life of William* actually offers only one, true way of removing the 'Canterburian' stain: presbyterian church-government in England based on the Scottish model. The ruptures caused by this attitude are evident in the events and publications that prevented unity within the Westminster Assembly at the beginning of 1644, following the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration*.

The utter disparity of views on discipline and ecclesiology within the tracts covered in this brief review is undeniable. Barring publications by the sects, the Roman Catholic Church and those loyal to Laud's vision of the Church of England, these tracts represent most of the spectrum of moderate reformed opinion at this time. It is precisely this notion of 'moderate reformed opinion' that provides the grounds for an underlying unity between the above cross-section of statements on 'doctrine and discipline' produced prior to and just after the beginning of military hostilities. Notions of faction in these tracts appear vague; disagreements are carefully concealed under an outspoken longing for general reform. Although they disagree over the exact details of proper Reformed praxis, they all take as given the orthodoxy of Calvinist doctrine, as well as the necessity of legally-binding uniformity. Their title-pages speak of a shared sentiment, even if the contents of their arguments do not: that 'doctrine and discipline' had been subverted and needed to be restored.

⁶⁵ Baillie, *Life of William*, p. 100. This quotation is taken from the passage in which Baillie dismisses the 'Canterburians *embrace* [of] the Masse it selfe' (p. 90). The perception is of Laud abusing the doctrine of the universal Church in order to further his anti-Christian aims.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, sig. Br.

It is in this milieu that *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* asserts its place. Milton's use of the tag of 'doctrine and discipline' on the title-page functioned as his password for entry into the general discussion. He had used it before without contention in the narration that begins *Of Reformation*, when he writes 'for, albeit in *purity of Doctrine* we agree with our Brethren; yet in *Discipline*, which is the *execution* and *applying* of *Doctrine* home [...] we are no better then a *Schisme*, from all the *Reformation*.'⁶⁷ In contrast, Milton's utilization of the term in *Doctrine and Discipline* as the title under which to advocate a startlingly heterodox position may be seen as a subtle act of subversion that worked in contrast to the unbending and increasingly predominant Kirk understanding of 'doctrine and discipline.' It promotes a plural understanding of the tag at a time when the hard-line Presbyterians, with their singular understanding of 'doctrine and discipline,' held the upper hand through their majority in the newly-formed Westminster Assembly.⁶⁸

* * *

The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce demonstrates further the useful elasticity of the widely used tag. The circumstantial and textual evidence of contemporary tracts bearing 'Doctrine and Discipline' on their title-page, as we have seen, indicates that the tag was used to advertise a number of suggestions for the reform of ecclesiastical government, both complimentary and divergent to one another, all fitting within a wider anti-Laudian framework. Those works originally composed in the 1630s and 40s are outspoken in their opposition to Laud and Laudianism, albeit for different reasons; the republication of Gilby's tract implicitly expresses similar sentiments. In this light it would not be unreasonable to state that the spike in the number of tracts published using the tag in

⁶⁷ YP 1.526.

⁶⁸ In this way, the 1643 edition of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* may be considered as an example of a continuation of Milton's cautious polemical practice in 1641-2, as described by Achinstein, in 'John Milton and the Communities of Resistance, 1641-42', pp. 292-3.

1641,⁶⁹ the Puritan *annus mirabilis*, was commensurate with the importance of the topic in the first months of the Long Parliament. With this background, Milton's revival of the phrase in the title of his first tract on divorce in 1643 can be seen as an attempt to conjure up the heady reforming spirit of two years past. The commission of the Westminster Assembly by Parliament the month before the tract's publication made such a gesture very 'Seasonable.' This perspective is supported by one particularly opaque passage in the tract, the added conjecture that deals with 'that sort of men who follow *Anabaptism*, *Famelism*, *Antinomianism*, and other *fanatick* dreams' (279). In recent criticism, this has been parsed as a sign of Milton's tentative sympathy with the sects.⁷⁰ In this chapter, however, it will be demonstrated that this should not preclude our understanding of the breadth of Milton's intended readership. His conception of discipline as a universal virtue, or group of virtues, was intended to bypass the thorny issues⁷¹ that stemmed from the general desire for a reform of church discipline.

What makes this idea of the tract being pitched towards a broad spectrum of Parliamentary-Reformed opinion much more complex, however, is that its overall rhetorical thrust works relentlessly against this direction. The first edition of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* marks the beginning of a significant turn in Milton's disciplinary thought. The anti-prelatical tracts, particularly *Of Reformation*, considered the pastoral Church discipline of admonition and excommunication as straightforwardly analogous with the practice of the virtuous poet, and therefore capable of inculcating moral discipline in the hearts of the English populace. In *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643), however, Milton's earlier poetic conceit is less in evidence. Rather, his argument depends on building and then resolving a tension between the obligations of Church

⁶⁹ As gauged with reference to *English Short Title Catalogue* [<http://estc.bl.uk>] and Early English Books Online [<http://eebo.chadwyck.com>].

⁷⁰ See Corns, 'Milton's Quest for Respectability', p. 774.

⁷¹ Congregationalist, or Presbyterian? What power — if any — should the magistrate have over ecclesiastical issues? etc.

practice and the righteous moral actions of the individual. This tension is established in the extreme dichotomy of 'abused libertie' and 'unmercifull restraint' (235) at the beginning of the tract, and resolved in the closing peroration which turns 'the vigor of discipline' (355) to better purposes. It is significant in that it makes the claim that Church discipline, as imposed by positive laws, can actually damage and obstruct the virtuous actions of the individual.⁷² This realisation determines *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643) as the first sign of motion towards Milton's later conviction of the absolute separation of the 'spiritual power and the civil.'⁷³

Milton's attempt to raise the memory of the triumphs of 1641 in the mind of the reader is an integral part of his conjecture on Anabaptists, Familists, Antinomians, and Fanatics. In contrast to the sects, he writes of 'the rest of vulgar men not so religiously professing, doe not give themselves much the more to whordom and adulteries; loving the corrupt and venial discipline of clergy Courts, but hating to hear of perfect reformation' (279). As Lowell W. Coolidge points out in his notes on the tract in the Yale edition (*ibid.*, n.4), the mention of 'whordom and adulteries' is taken directly from one of the articles of *The First and Large Petition of the City of London*, otherwise known as the Root and Branch petition:

XXIII. The great increase and frequencie of whoredomes and Adulteries, occasioned by the *Prelates* corrupt administration of Justice, in such Cases, who taking upon them the punishment of it, doe turn all into moneyes for the filling of their purses, and lest their Officers should defraud them of their gaine, they have in their late Canon, in stead of remedying their vices, decreed that the *Commutation* of Pennance, shall not be without the Bishops privity.⁷⁴

⁷² Not that Milton was opposed to any sort of legal understanding of divorce: Martin Dzelzainis has written convincingly on his debt to Roman law, in particular the *Institutes of Justinian*, in this phase of his career. Cf. Martin Dzelzainis, 'Liberty and the Law', in *Milton, Rights and Liberties*, eds. Christophe Tournu and Neil Forsyth (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 57-67.

⁷³ John Milton, 'To Sir Henry Vane the Younger', in *Complete Shorter Poems*, l. 10.

⁷⁴ *The first and large petition of the Citie of London* (London: 1641), p. 11.

In deliberately echoing the language of this particular complaint, Milton places his own call for the reform of Church courts in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643) in line with the aims and ethos of the earlier godly campaign. The Petition had galvanised the actions of the party committed to reform, and scandalized most others, due to the many thousands – of varying social degree – who signed it and marched it to Parliament on December 11th 1640.⁷⁵ By 1643, its influence was evident: in that year, most notably, the Cheapside Cross was torn down by the orders of Sir Robert Harley, and William Prynne, not content with the imprisonment of his archenemy, marched into the cell of William Laud and confiscated his papers, in order to expose him to further public vilification.⁷⁶ Milton's display of such stern words may be read as an attempt to borrow the grave godliness that characterised the Petition as a phenomenon. At the same time, however, *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643) displays no trace of distaste or anxiety about 'prelatical' or 'episcopal' government.⁷⁷ Unlike Prynne, Baillie, and others, Milton seems to have considered the former threat as neutered, even though not abolished. The reference to the City Petition, then, serves as a veil – albeit a thin one – to cover a far more radical agenda than that proposed two years before by London's earnest citizens.

This gesture towards the root-and-branch phenomenon also indicates Milton's perspective on the newly commissioned Westminster Assembly. In the opening paragraph of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643) he acknowledges that marriage is one aspect of the greater burden of disciplinary reform by declaring that his argument for divorce is worthy of further study by the assembled 'theologians.'⁷⁸ He repeats the substance of this

⁷⁵ Cressy, *England on Edge*, pp. 183-4, 381-2.

⁷⁶ According to Hugh Trevor-Roper, these actions were the corollaries of William Greenhill's Fast Day sermon, delivered on April 26th 1643, which inveighed against living and lifeless 'delinquents.' Beneath the tuning of the pulpits, however, it is probable that the creeping of the Root and Branch petition could still be heard. Cf. Trevor-Roper, 'The Fast Sermons of the Long Parliament', in *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change*, pp. 294-344.

⁷⁷ Indeed, the words 'prelate,' 'prelatical,' 'prelacy,' 'bishop,' 'episcopal' are entirely absent from the 1643 edition.

⁷⁸ 'I conceive my selfe exhorted among the rest to communicate such thoughts as I have, and offer them now in this generall labour of reformation, to the candid view both of Church and

declaration just after his allusive reference to 'whordom and adulteries' in the 'Anabaptism' conjecture: the consideration of divorce as a solution to 'fornication' and 'adultery' could possibly 'be worth the study of skilful men in *Theology*, & the reason of things' (279). This works to interpret the recent gathering of divines to Westminster as the outcome of anti-Laudian triumphs of 1641, rather than as necessitated by the need to bind the Covenanters to the Parliamentary cause in the Civil War with the promise of full Presbyterian uniformity in both kingdoms. Not that Milton is blind to the political circumstances of the time of its composition. In May 1643, Charles I used the threat of 'Anabaptists' and sectaries in an attempt to lure the Covenanters to his side. The Parliament, he suggested, was being disingenuous in its outspoken desire to establish 'an *Uniformity of Church-Government with Our Kingdom of Scotland*.' Rather, argued Charles, 'Church-Government by Law [...] (or indeed any Church-Government whatsoever),' was anathema to the rebels.⁷⁹ Milton's 'men who follow *Anabaptism*,' however, only hold to such '*fanatick* dreams' because of 'the restraint of some lawfull liberty, which ought to be giv'n men, and is deny'd them' (278). This tolerant sentiment, although not articulated with any particular depth, runs contrary to the politicised scare-mongering that was employed by the rival sides of the Civil War in England to win the Covenanters to their respective causes.⁸⁰

In his conjecture on '*Anabaptism*,' Milton's optimistic perception of the Assembly as boundless in the scope of its enquiries and not tied to any received wisdom comes with a subtly critical note that signals his dissatisfaction with the concept of discipline as it was

Magistrate; especially because I see it the hope of good men, that those irregular and unspirituall Courts have spun their utmost date in this Land; and some better course must now be constituted.' (YP 2.238-9).

⁷⁹ Paul, *Assembly*, p. 87, quoting from Rushworth's *Historical Collections*, VI.464, 466.

⁸⁰ In his article on the Westminster Assembly in the *Oxford DNB*, Chad Van Dixhoorn explicitly marks out two different motivations for the commissioning of the Assembly: first, to eliminate the abuses to the doctrine and practice perpetrated by Laud and his circle; and second, to appease the Scots. Cf. 'Westminster assembly (act. 1643-1652)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/theme/92780>, accessed 26 Nov 2012]. This is in accordance with Paul's narrative of the Assembly's beginnings: cf. Paul, *Assembly*, pp. 87-100.

advanced by committed Presbyterians at the time. This is seen when he breaks out from his strict focus on divorce and its scriptural justification with the suggestion that the Assembly should be free to:

examin whether some undue and ill grounded strictnes upon the blameles nature of man be not the cause in those places where already reformation is, that the discipline of the Church so often and so unavoidably brok'n, is brought into contempt and derision. (279)

In this clause, Milton links the main weight of his tract's argument to a considerably higher order of discussion that depicts the granting of permission for incompatible partners to divorce, on the grounds of mutual blamelessness, as the key to the establishment of true Church discipline. This understanding renders the Kirk's discipline, much vaunted by Baillie and his fellows as a bulwark of civil and ecclesiastical order, as incomplete and ineffective: Presbyterian Scotland – 'where already reformation is' – was not yet disciplined because its ministers and magistrates mistakenly sought to foster virtue in the nation through the imposition of legislation that was based on 'undue and ill grounded strictness.' Despising 'an *alphabetical* servility' (280), Milton instead held that individuals should be encouraged to discipline themselves without active coercion. This understanding provided an alternative rationale for the Assembly's existence that was lacking elsewhere, in that Milton judged it to be imbued with the powers to deliberate on the imperatives of reformation, even to the root of man's moral ills.⁸¹ Such a display of optimism in the reforming potential of a properly composed Assembly perhaps also reflects the purposelessness that seems to have hung over the first weeks's proceedings. Whilst waiting for news on whether the Scots were to side with Parliament or not, the

⁸¹ Further research on Milton's distinctive espousal of conciliarism may yield interesting results. Certainly, elsewhere in the same passage, he makes a telling pun, referring to marriage as it was then instituted as a potential trap 'committing two ensnared souls inevitably to kindle one another, not with the fire of love, but with a hatred *inconcilable*' (YP 2.280, Milton's emphasis). If one inverts this concluding adjective, Milton seems to suggest that a true marriage is like a true Church council.

gathered divines resorted to combing through and revising the XXXIX Articles.⁸²

Although the Articles stood as the doctrinal DNA of the established Church, it is apparent that these activities were not fuelled with a sense of radicalism or urgency (qualities that Milton clearly thought were much needed, with the Scots or without them).

As a whole, the concept of discipline that Milton advances in this passage hinges on the dichotomy of ill-judged 'restraint' and 'debausht [...] satisfaction of the flesh' (278) which is established at the beginning of the tract. Indeed, the entire tract may be read as being built on the back of Milton's skilful manipulation of a lexical matrix that includes restraint, strictness, and discipline. Milton invokes the cause of 'discipline' in order to prove the moral worth of his argument. This happens first in the '*Anabaptist*' conjecture, which falls at the mid-point of the tract after his reading of the Torah, and then in the concluding peroration that follows his gospel hermeneutic. This patterning becomes clearer in the tract's revised 1644 version, in which the conjecture forms the last chapter of the first book. The passage forms the point at which Milton pitches his proposal for 'perfect reformation' (279) as the ideal median between the actions of the sects and those that remain committed to the Church courts as a means of upholding proper manners. He envisions that the new regime would still see fornication 'austerely censur'd' and 'adultery punisht,' but this would be due to marriage being appointed as 'the refuge of nature,' rather than a torturous pact imposed by defunct canon law (279).

The concluding peroration of the first edition of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* echoes and amplifies the earlier '*Anabaptist*' conjecture. The continued utility of the language of the Root and Branch petition to Milton's argument is gestured to in his assault on 'the *prostitute* loosenes of the time' (355, my emphasis). In this later passage, however, the word denoting illegitimate and immoral sexual practices functions as the adjectival descriptor of the 'time' in which the tract was written. The 'discipline' under

⁸² Paul, *Assembly*, p. 86.

discussion is no longer an aspect specifically pertaining to Church courts and canon law; instead, Milton's focus is general, encompassing the wider, more pressing ills of his Nation: 'open vice, and frantic heresy, or else inward[...] repining and blasphemous thoughts' (354). In removing arbitrary laws that limit and damage man's nature, the Church and the State of England may claim its place next to 'the civilest, the wisest, the holiest of Nations' (355).

* * *

While the first edition of Milton's *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* was composed and published in a moment of temporary uncertainty over the future of the Westminster Assembly, the circumstances that heralded the revised version's publication in February 1644 are altogether different. Most importantly, the intervening six months had witnessed the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, which led to the confirmation of a military alliance between Parliament and the Scots Covenanters in November 1643. This development is partially reflected in Baillie's adoption of the 'doctrine and discipline' tag in 1643 to rename his *Ladensium Autokatakrisis*. Parliament's successful diplomacy necessitated a dramatic change in the proceedings of the Assembly: the pact with the Kirk meant that the divines ceased examining the XXXIX Articles and moved on to debate the contentious issue of church government.⁸³ The first visible cracks of division between the 'Independent' and 'Presbyterian' parties stem from this development and are due to differences over ecclesiastical discipline. These differences need to be described and analysed in light of how they were articulated by the principal controverters. The key text of the endeavour will be *An Apologeticall Narration*, a short pamphlet addressed to Parliament by five 'Independent' ministers: Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, William

⁸³ Cf. Paul, *Assembly*, pp. 135-38.

Bridge, Jeremiah Burroughes, and Sidrach Simpson. Following its publication on January 3rd 1644,⁸⁴ this mild plea for the accommodation of Congregationalist practices within whatever church settlement the Assembly agreed on provoked a glut of Presbyterian and Independent argument and counter-argument in which the convictions of each party were laid bare to the public eye. As we shall see in the next section, this context is of great significance to our interpretation of Milton's rationale for the revision of his controversial tract. The newly written prefatory address to Parliament at the beginning of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1644) demonstrates his awareness of, and interest in, this debate. He appropriated certain polemical methods employed in *An Apologeticall Narration* and other works by Independents, and drew inspiration from their arguments in order to reiterate with greater force and authority his depiction of divorce as a key to the establishment of true discipline in England.

The following reading of *An Apologeticall Narration* and the Presbyterian backlash that it precipitated will prepare the way for an interpretation of Milton's 1644 version of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*. As such, its main focus will be on the different conceptions of 'discipline' adopted by each faction. Two aspects of the Apologists' approach that were particularly infuriating for their detractors are relevant in regard to this focus. First, that the Apologists went over the heads of their colleagues in the Assembly and spoke directly to Parliament, and second, that they chose to explain Congregationalist practice in terms of its fundamental (and fundamentally orthodox) principles rather than through any sort of systematic exposition. This double polemical strategy was the product of the dire circumstances in which the 'Independents' found themselves at the end of 1643. The case has been convincingly made elsewhere that the purpose behind the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration* was to arrest a slide towards

⁸⁴ N.B. January 3rd 1644 is the date provided by Thomason. Paul hypothesises, on the basis of evidence in Lightfoot's *Journal*, that the controversial pamphlet was circulated amongst the members of the Assembly much later in the month, on Friday 26th January. This was the day after the Scots had first detailed their form of church government to the Assembly (*Assembly*, pp. 228-9).

admitting Presbyterianism as the national form of church government without proper debate.⁸⁵ Up to that point it had seemed that the Assembly was being led inexorably, without proper debate, towards establishing a *de facto*, uniform system of Presbyterianism due to a crisis over ordination. The efficacy of the Apologists's intervention in preventing this is testified to in the records of the Assembly.⁸⁶ They challenged the Presbyterian faction to speak clearly on two contentious issues: the intended role of the magistrate within their proposed polity, and the authorities from which they derived a warrant for '*authoritative Presbyteriall Government*.' In exposing these complex topics to debate, rather than meekly concurring with their opponents, the Apologists and their supporters shattered the conception prevalent amongst the majority of the Assembly's members of a single, monolithic form of church-government fit for the whole of England. Their assertion was that a plurality of different church disciplines could exist within a national, established Church, and that this would not lead to anarchy.⁸⁷ This necessitated the careful limitation of what 'discipline' actually was: not an all-encompassing category that defined all Christian practice and necessitated absolute uniformity, but rather one piece of a greater set of obligations for godly life. In the Presbyterians's counter-arguments, and the Apologists's subsequent defences, this important distinction would stand as a vital marker of difference between the two camps.

In *An Apologeticall Narration*, the five signatories's intimate their congregational concept of discipline to their readers through a rhetorical stance of irenic moderation. This is at the heart of their plea for accommodation. Towards the tract's end, Goodwin and his fellow ministers claim outright that the truth at the core of their profession lay 'in

⁸⁵ Cf. Paul, *Assembly*, p. 206.

⁸⁶ The Assembly's primary record is its 'minutes.' These have been supplemented by historians of the Assembly, including Robert S. Paul, with references to the letters, journals, and notes of a small few involved contemporaries: John Lightfoot, George Gillespie, and Robert Baillie (cf. Paul, pp. 72-4). At the time of writing this chapter, Chad van Dixhoorn's edition of the 'minutes,' which may rid the historiography of this topic of certain inconvenient lacunae, has yet to be released.

⁸⁷ An illustration of this Congregationalist attitude, in which plurality of opinion was not an obstacle to unity of action, can be found in Nuttall's outline of the similarities and differences between the five Apologists, in *Visible Saints*, pp. 11-14.

a *middle way* betwixt that which is falsly charged on us, *Brownisme*; and that which is the contention of these times, the *authoritative Presbyteriall Government* in all the subordinations and proceedings of it.’⁸⁸ As proof of this, their staunch ecclesiological defence is made with a sense of fraternal meekness towards their opponents. This is exemplified in their statement that those who hold classical presbyterianism to be the final fulfilment of the reformation ‘stand in need of a further reformation,’ even though they remain ‘our godly learned brethren in the Ministry’; furthermore, this judgment is avowedly ‘without prejudice to them, or the imputation of Schisme in us from them’ (22). Elsewhere, the Apologists describe those pamphlets circulated by the enemies of ‘Independency’ prior to *An Apologeticall Narration* as follows: ‘Books have been written by men of much worth, learning, and authority, with moderation and strength, to prepossesse the peoples minds against what are supposed our Tenets’ (25). Note that it has been left unclear whether the books’s authors have maliciously and deliberately spread falsehood, or if they too are under the wrong impression, despite their laudable ‘worth, learning, and authority.’ This collegiate manner, which permeates the tract, is underlined by the prefatory commendation inserted opposite the title-page, which was written by another member of the Assembly, Charles Herle. A convinced Presbyterian, Herle was nevertheless full of praise for the work: ‘tis so full of peaceablenesse, modesty, and candour’ (opp. title-page).

Although briefly summarised here, it is clear that this rhetorical approach served ably to represent the Apologists’s ideas on church-government: that is, that it should be seen as an efficacious means to prevent heresy and promote godliness. This is evident in the tract’s penultimate paragraph, when *An Apologeticall Narration* picks up the topical ‘doctrine and discipline’ tag, and directly addresses the issues at stake. First it confirms

⁸⁸ Thomas Goodwin, et al., *An Apologeticall Narration, Humbly Submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament* (London: Robert Dawlman, 1644), p. 24. Throughout the course of this section of the chapter, the page references for quotations taken from *An Apologeticall Narration* will be made parenthetically within the text.

their orthodoxy in matters of '*Doctrine*' by arguing that if the Apologists were not doctrinally orthodox, they 'would never have exposed [them]selves to this tryall and hazard of discovery in this Assembly' (28). Then it declares the following:

in matters of *Discipline* we are so farre from holding up the differences that occur, or making the breaches greater or wider, that we endeavour upon all such occasions to grant and yeeld (as all may see and cannot but testifie for us) to the utmost latitude of our light and consciences; professing it to be as high a point of Religion and conscience readily to own, yea fall down before whatsoever is *truth* in the hands of those that differ, yea though they should be enemies unto us, as much as earnestly to contend for & hold fast those truths wherein we should be found dissenting from them (29)

On one level, this passage makes a political statement, which is to signal that the Apologists seek a compromise from within the Assembly (with the additional assistance of Parliament, of course). This may stretch those tenets that they hold by conscience, but it may not utterly disregard them. On another level, however, the opportunity to make this statement allows the Apologists to characterise their practice, their '*Discipline*,' in a brief and persuasive manner. Just as relations between congregations are not perfectly uniform, but err towards union, so does their argument dissent from, and at the same time correspond with that of their opponents. The Apologists continue the passage quoted above with a glance to the future: 'when matters by discussion are brought to the smallest dissent that may be,' they will not cease to urge a temper 'such as may suit and tend to union as well as searching out of truth' (29).⁸⁹ What is implied here is that there was no need to establish full Presbyterian uniformity. The Apologists's argument that 'Independency' could be accommodated without preventing union was made on the condition of assent to the notion that true discipline could be attained within and between congregations despite limited dissent.

⁸⁹ N.B. the choice of 'union' over 'uniformity': a minor, yet striking, semantic difference.

The Apologists's rhetorical characterisation of congregationalism as based on consensus in *An Apologeticall Narration* is paired with a distinctive exposition of their practice. In one paragraph they explain that 'the way & practices of our Churches' is 'made up of no other parts then the worship of all other reformed Churches doth consist of': worship,⁹⁰ a set form of government,⁹¹ and the exercise of that government through censures.⁹² In these aspects, the Apologists claim that there is no difference between their own discipline and that of their Presbyterian brethren in the Assembly. More indicative of the distinctions of congregationalism, however, are the three guiding principles of 'Independent' practice that are outlined following this paragraph. The first principle consists of abiding by the 'Primitive patterne and example of the churches erected by the Apostles,' as can only be discerned in 'the fulnesse of the Scriptures, that there is therein a compleat sufficiencie, as to make the *man of God perfect*, so also to make the Churches of God perfect' (9). Second is the principle never to 'make our present judgement and practice a binding law unto our selves for the future' (10): this principle, which was sacrosanct 'in the midst of all other Laws and Canons Ecclesiastical in Christian States and Churches throughout the world' (11), stems from the conviction that human frailty can cause the rule of the first principle to be misunderstood. And third, in cases of controversy, was to choose the safest practice at all times, as determined by that which 'all sorts, or the most of all the Churches did acknowledge warrantable' (11). This reduction of the entirety of 'Independent' discipline into principles is in marked contrast to the Scots's systematic descriptions of their Presbyterian discipline, as was exemplified earlier in 1641 edition of *THE DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE Of the KIRKE of SCOTLAND*. In and of themselves, these three principles function as a hermeneutic code through which every

⁹⁰ *An Apologeticall Narration*, p. 8: 'publique and solemne prayers for Kings and all in authority, &c. the reading the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; Exposition of them as occasion was; and constant preaching of the word; the administration of the two Sacraments, Baptisme to infants, and the Lords Supper; singing of Psalmes; collections for the poor, &c. every Lords day.'

⁹¹ *Ibid.*: 'Pastors, Teachers, Ruling Elders, (with us not lay but Ecclesiastique persons separated to that service) and Deacons.'

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 9: 'namely, Admonition, and Excommunication upon obstinacie and impenitencie.'

article of practice can be assessed. As such, they cannot be enshrined in law. They also serve to divorce scripture, which is sufficient in itself as a rule for the Church, from any one form of discipline. This is in utter contradistinction to any *jure divino* argument for church government, be it Presbyterian or Episcopal.

The Presbyterian response to this modest provocation was as wrathful as it was prolix: if the English ecclesiastical settlement as it was envisioned accommodated the request of the Apologists, and therefore failed to impose complete uniformity, then its discipline would be no sort of discipline at all. Specifically Scots replies that articulate this line of thought include Adam Steuart's *Some Observations and Annotations upon the Apologeticall Narration*, Alexander Forbes's *An Anatomy of Independency*, and Robert Baillie's sermon to the House of Commons on February 28th 1644, published as *Satan the Leader in Chief of All Who Resist the Reparation of Sion*. Numbered amongst other angry replies is also *Antapologia*, by Thomas Edwards.⁹³ Steuart's *Observations and Annotations* may be taken as representative of the Scottish Presbyterians's counter-measures. Although Steuart (otherwise known to Milton as 'mere A.S.'⁹⁴) was not a member of the Assembly, his ties with Baillie are clear from his biography.⁹⁵ It is telling, then, that his pamphlet fell into the hands of Thomason the day after Baillie preached his sermon to the Commons.⁹⁶ As part of the initial effort by the Presbyterian faction to squash the Independents, Steuart adopts an animadverting style in order to highlight the Apologists's inconsistencies. This stylistic choice also

⁹³ These few pamphlets may be understood as the main instruments in 'the presbyterian mobilization' of 1644, as posited by Hughes in *Gangraena*.

⁹⁴ John Milton, 'On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament', in *The Complete Shorter Poems*, ll. 8.

⁹⁵ M. A. Stewart, 'Steuart, Adam (1591-1654)', *DNB*, [http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/66373, accessed 18 Dec 2012]. James Cranford, the English clergyman who wrote the prefatory commendation for Steuart's *Observations*, also had ties with Baillie: in June 1645, he 'spread rumours at the Royal Exchange that a number of lords, including Viscount Saye and Sele, were going to betray the parliamentary cause to the royalists. For his pains the House of Commons committed Cranford to the Tower for a month, fined him a total of £2000, and forced him publicly to recant.' See E. C. Vernon, 'Cranford, James (1602/3-1657)', *DNB* [http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/6610, accessed 18 Dec 2012].

⁹⁶ *Catalogue*, p. 312.

contrasts with the oratorical form of *An Apologeticall Narration*: whereas his opponents chose an 'Rhetoricall and Oratorius way' to persuade their readers, he strives to be grave and learned.⁹⁷ As we shall see, Steuart's main strategy was built with a view to driving a wedge between holy living and discipline, two things that he considers the Apologists to have mixed erroneously. In this way he proves to be a perceptive early reader of *An Apologeticall Narration*, despite his bias against it.

Steuart defines holy living in *Observations* in two ways: the first general, the second specific. In the first, holiness belongs to the same category as 'Doctrine,' the distinct partner of 'Discipline.' In a notable passage, written in direct response to the three ecclesiological principles espoused by the Apologists, Steuart writes:

Again, we desire to know, What ye understand here, but the Being of a Church: whether her internall, or externall Being? In Doctrine and Holinesse? or in Discipline? If the first, it is not to the purpose; for we have no Dispute here with you about the internall Being, or Doctrine of the Church, as ye confesse yourselves, but about her externall Being, or Discipline; And in this also we confesse our ignorance, that we know not wherein consisteth its Essence or Being; and that we cannot distinguish it well from its Accidents, or Super-structories, till ye teach us; and therefore desire you to avoyd those obscure terms, and to give it us in some cleerer.⁹⁸

This highlights the Apologists's careful avoidance of treating the topic of 'Church discipline' in the expected 'Reformed' manner: for Steuart, the three principles were an incomprehensible substitute for a clear explanation of how several 'Independent' congregations could be considered as one Church. Steuart found insufficient the notion that different congregations could be seen as in union with one another because all subscribed to the same or similar doctrinal tenets: this was categorically not discipline. His general definition of holy living overlaps with a specific definition, which pertains to the piety of the Apologists themselves. Several times, Steuart lauds the piety of his

⁹⁷ Adam Steuart, *Some Observations and Annotations* (London: Christopher Meredith, 1644), p. 2.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

opponents. In his prefatory epistle to the 'To the Right Reverend, and Learned Divines, the Authors of the *Apologeticall Narration*,' he commends their 'great learning, and so apparent pietie.'⁹⁹ A little later on, however, in his brief list of 'Considerations' touching on the whole of *An Apologeticall Narration*, he insinuates that this appearance of piety serves a malign purpose. He asks if the Apologists publish their 'great Sufferings, and extraordinary Piety, and so to move us all to compassion, and ravish us into admiration, as if [they] meant rather to perswade, then to prove them?'¹⁰⁰ The point is hammered home that piety, which is a sign of good doctrine, is nothing without discipline, meaning that the Apologists's godliness was irrelevant to a debate on church-government.

In turn, Steuart argues that the establishment of good discipline is not the preserve of the morally unimpeachable. He concludes his reproof of the Apologists's understanding of the first reformers as focussing their efforts on doctrine, rather than discipline, with the following statement:

a good Discipline, may very well be established, by men of lesse holinesse of life, so be it, they have greater abilities; for the gift of constituting a good Discipline, is not a proper gift to a good man, but to a good Church Officer; it is not *Gratia gratum faciens, sed gratis data*; not a saving gift or grace, that maketh us gracious or acceptable to God, but graciously given or bestowed upon us; not to save our selves, but other men, as the gift of Prophetie; for a man in preaching and ruling, may save others, and damn himself. And a man may be a very good Prophet or Ruler in the Church, if he have the abilities thereunto, and exercise them well; and an ill man, if he let not himself be taught and ruled: So we may say, a man may be a good Citizen, a good King, a good Souldier, or a good Cobler, but an ill man.¹⁰¹

Steuart's solefidian analogy serves to support his typically presbyterian position: as God's grace is freely given to the elect, so too is discipline handed down as a gift from heaven to mankind regardless of whether they deserve it or not. In one sense this is reminiscent of Milton's self-representation in his anti-prelatical tracts as a poet specially gifted with

⁹⁹ Ibid., sig. A3v.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 12-13.

disciplinary powers. However, Milton also claimed in those tracts to be morally unimpeachable, as a way of proving his authority to speak on such matters.¹⁰² In contrast, Steuart's understanding of discipline deems an individual's godliness to be entirely distinct from their ability to excel at their given function within the ideal Reformed nation. Discipline is a system of church-government that can be implemented by any with this gift, much like the spiritual gifts of Prophecy or Rule, even if they themselves are damned. This connects 'the gift of constituting a good Discipline' with these other gifts, associating it, like them, with ministers, elders and 'Church Officers,' and arguing that its utility was for the Church as a whole, rather than linked to the individual godliness of such a person. In this way Steuart opposes the Apologists's defence of only admitting into their congregations 'none but such as all the Churches in the world would by the balance of the Sanctuary acknowledge faithful.'¹⁰³ The position of Steuart and the Kirk, as well as earlier English conformists, however, was that a national Church must admit the faithful and the unfaithful, the elect and the reprobate. These overtly Presbyterian *Observations* stand as an extreme reaction to the Apologists's *Narration*: discipline was all and inseparable from doctrine.

The polarised environment caused by the fall-out over *An Apologeticall Narration* provided fertile ground for other ideas to take root. More radical voices from outside the Westminster Assembly, such as John Goodwin and Roger Williams, went further than the Apologists by calling for toleration rather than clinging to any hope that true discipline might be established without persecution.¹⁰⁴ John Goodwin, an Independent excluded from the Assembly, wrote a savage reply to Steuart's *Observations* which dropped all pretence of the moderation practised by his brethren. In the second edition of this reply,

¹⁰² Cf. above, ch. 1, passim. Also, cf. Fallon's chapter 'The Least of Sinners: Milton in Context', in *Milton's Peculiar Grace*, pp. 21-44.

¹⁰³ AN, p. 11.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Coffey, 'The Toleration Controversy', pp. 48-9; also, Sirluck's 'Introduction', YP 2.65-92.

entitled *A Reply of two of the Brethren to A.S.*, which was published in July 1644, he stated that 'We wave the question now; *Which is the only true form of Discipline?* and put the case in generall, *What opinions and practices that are conscienciously taken up ought to be left unrestrained?*'¹⁰⁵ Goodwin indicates here that discussion over discipline would have to be suspended until the Apologists's plea for accommodation was accepted: discipline and limited toleration had increasingly less to do with one another. John Goodwin's writing on this topic is of particular interest because it is likely he and Milton were acquaintances. Certainly they both had works printed by Matthew Simmons.¹⁰⁶

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Given the context outlined above, it is of note that the Bodleian Library's copy of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1644) is bound together with Steuart's *Observations*, Goodwin's *M.S. to A.S.*, Forbes's *Anatomy of Independency*, and other works published in the wake of *An Apologeticall Narration*. The person who assembled Pamphlets C. 62(10) clearly recognized that Milton's revised and augmented work could be categorised alongside these arguments.¹⁰⁷ It is possible to read the second edition of *Doctrine and Discipline* as in part a response to the impact of *An Apologeticall Narration*, albeit an idiosyncratic one. Depending on the date of its publication, Milton would have had somewhere between a month and a week to react to *An Apologeticall Narration*. Certainly, Milton's new prefatory address 'To the Parliament of England, with the Assembly' demonstrates an awareness of the steadily widening gulf between the Independent and Presbyterian factions, in that it alludes to 'the Church tir'd out with dependencies and

¹⁰⁵ John Goodwin, *A Reply of Two of the Brethren to A.S.* (London: M. Simmons for H. Overton, 1644), p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), p. 97. Also cf. Barbara Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 172-3, 409-10.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. John Milton, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (London, 1644), in Pamphlets C. 62(10), Bodleian Library, Oxford.

independencies' (230). With this in mind, we might posit that this address to Parliament was a last minute addition to *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644), on top of its revisions and augmentations. This section will look for more than the impact of *An Apologeticall Narration* and Milton's awareness of it in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644), however. Its focus will be on the exchange of ideas and rhetorical strategies between Milton and the Independents. It will be demonstrated that the situation in the Westminster Assembly, and the polemical fire-storm sparked off by *An Apologeticall Narration*, brought various latent aspects of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643) to the fore. In particular, the modified structure of the work, in which the address to Parliament is integral, indicates that Milton deemed it imperative to define discipline as a guiding concept in presenting his argument for divorce to his readers. Milton retreated from the battle between Independents and Presbyterians over what was 'the true form of Discipline,' whilst simultaneously associating true discipline as identical with virtuous behaviour.

The addition of the prefatory address is Milton's main alteration to the rhetorical structure of *Doctrine and Discipline*, and the principal site of evidence for the further development of his conception of discipline as an exclusively moral category. This is not, however, the only significant alteration; indeed, placed as it is at the beginning of the pamphlet, it sets the scene for the changes made in the work that follows. James Egan, excluding the novel address to parliament, describes Milton's revisions and augmentations to the existing body of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643) as serving to amplify his earlier text. On Egan's reading, these revisions do not alter the work's rhetorical structure, which he breaks down into the following progression: 'an exordium (234–36), a narration (236–39), a proposition (239–41), a confirmation (241–80), a refutation (281–354), and a peroration (354–56).'¹⁰⁸ However, Egan neglects to comment on the division of the work into books and chapters that Milton superimposes on the work in *Doctrine and*

¹⁰⁸ James Egan, 'Implicit Aesthetics: Rhetorical formulae and poetic shaping in Milton's tracts on divorce and education', in *PS* 29:2 (August, 2007), 185.

Discipline (1644). In one sense, there is no need: the exordium, narration, proposition and confirmation slot neatly into the first book of the new edition, whilst the refutation and peroration form the second. The formatting does not impinge on the rhetorical structure; it merely labels what is already there. In another sense, however, this new format exposes the reasoning behind Milton's two mentions of 'discipline,' as discussed in the previous section on *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643). The 'Anabaptism' conjecture is freshly designated as CHAP. XIV, the last of the first book; and the concluding peroration is folded into CHAP. XXII, at the end of the second book. In this way it becomes clear that Milton appeals to his own conception of discipline in order to punctuate his work: he ends his reading of the passages on divorce in the Hebrew Bible with the claim that his purpose is to rescue 'the discipline of the Church [from] contempt and derision' (279). Similarly, his much more controversial reading of Jesus' injunction against divorce through the hermeneutic lens of charity is signed off with an expression of hope that 'the vigor of discipline' may be put to better use than the unprofitable regulation of men's natural infirmities (355). This also is evidence of amplification, but not in the sense of enhancing the existing argument. The division into books and chapters, each chapter headed with an italicised summary of its argument, serves to broadcast the author's pure intentions: that his argument for divorce is because of a concern for discipline, rather than in spite of it.

The newly composed preface to Parliament 'with the Assembly' underlines the contemporary relevance of this concern. It contains several indicators that support the thesis that Milton wrote it after reading *An Apologeticall Narration*. Foremost among these is its oratorical form, paired with the object of its address. Milton's choice of form is on its own an implicit statement in favour of the Parliament's power to settle Church matters,

with the advice of the Assembly, rather than vice versa.¹⁰⁹ This is made manifest within the speech as praise, married with exhortation. Milton styles both Houses as the 'supreme Senat' (229), and as potentially the 'defenders of Charity' (232). The former flagrantly strips the King of his role as supreme governor of the Church of England, and hands it to the deserving Parliament. The latter provides a variation on this transfer of powers and titles to England's 'senate' by presenting them with an altered form of the King's title of *Fidei Defensor*, originally the gift of Pope Leo X to Henry VIII. In 1 Corinthians 13, charity is greater than faith; therefore, runs Milton's reasoning, as England's rightful governors, it is the Parliament's duty to safeguard his freedom to read Jesus' injunction against divorce charitably.

Milton's approach is not identical to that of the Apologists, yet the similarities that they display indicate that they were motivated by a shared concern about Presbyterian hegemony in the Assembly and Parliament. It is through Milton's negotiation with this context that his concept of discipline moved significantly towards an emphasis on personal self-discipline. Like Milton's new preface to *Doctrine and Discipline, An Apologeticall Narration* treats the Parliament as the Assembly's more powerful partner, although it is more subtle in doing so. The five ministers speak of their hope for 'an happy *latitude* and agreement by means of this *Assembly*, and the wisdome of this *Parliament*,' which suggests an equality between the two bodies.¹¹⁰ Elsewhere, however, they are careful to remind the Parliament and their fellow divines who nominated them to participate in Westminster: they speak of 'this *Assembly* whereof *both Houses* were pleased to make us *Members*.'¹¹¹ The subtlety of this treatment speaks of the Independents's delicate political position at this moment. As we have seen, the crisis over ordination was

¹⁰⁹ In this respect, *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) corroborates Ernest Sirluck's (and Nigel Smith's) theory on Milton's appeal in *Areopagitica* to the Erastians of the Parliament, as exemplified by John Selden. Cf. YP II.170-8; and Nigel Smith, '*Areopagitica*: voicing contexts, 1643-5', p. 104.

¹¹⁰ *An Apologeticall Narration*, p. 26.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

forcing the majority of their peers into accepting the basic tenets of Presbyterianism as a necessary antidote to anarchy. It was because of this that most of the Assembly's 'political laymen were more than ready to equate *vox populi* with *vox dei* [...] opposition to the will of the majority appeared to be blatant obstruction.'¹¹² The Independents, then, found themselves in a very small minority. Due to this constraining situation they could not continue to push for congregationalism to be established: hence their call for accommodation. This conditioned the Apologists's manner towards the Parliament, and how they proceeded with their plea. Whilst they were careful to emphasise the honour, wisdom, and godliness of their addressees, the Lords and Commons,¹¹³ they also sought to imply that their control over the Assembly's proceeding could be best demonstrated by sparing the conscience-stricken from judicial censure. The 'union and conjunction' of English Protestants, they argue, may be achieved so long as the Parliament 'forbeare what might any way be like to occasion or augment this unhappy difference.'¹¹⁴

The means by which the Apologists made their play for more time are replicated by Milton in his preface, although he chose to do so in much more combative terms: arguing that his attempt to further the cause of discipline in England has been mistaken for idle licentiousness. The anxieties that beset him when faced with the unpopularity of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643) are not particularly well hidden. He wonders if 'It might perhaps more fitly have bin writt'n in another tongue' (233), and reflects more generally that 'hee who shall indeavour the amendment of any old neglected grievance in Church or State, or in the daily course of life' should be ready to be 'boorded presently by the ruder sort, but not by discreet and well nurtur'd men, with a thousand idle descants and surmises' (224).¹¹⁵ Given the laudatory titles that Milton heaps on the Parliament

¹¹² Paul, *Assembly*, p. 232.

¹¹³ Cf. *An Apologeticall Narration*, p. 26.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ This 'hee who shall' passage belongs to the autobiographical/narrative category that Patterson identifies in "No meer amatorious novel?" (passim.). This fictional representation of the difficult

elsewhere in his address, the aside that defers to the discreet and well nurtured may also be read as a flattering address to Parliament. A few lines later, returning to the subject of his own labour, he goes on to say:

I shall not be unjust to hope, that however Infamy, or Envy may work in other men to doe her fretfull will against this discourse, yet that the experience of your owne uprightness mis-interpreted, will put ye in mind to give it free audience and generous construction. (225)

In the last paragraph of the address, this is re-couched in a martial, almost chivalric parlance. He wishes to provoke any 'who prefers either Matrimony, or other Ordinance before the good of man and the plain exigence of Charity [...] to the trial of this truth before all the world.' Like a knight errant—Spenser's Redcrosse, perhaps?¹¹⁶—his 'errand is to find out the choisest and the learnedest, who have this high gift of wisdom to answer solidly, or to be convinc't' (233). Whilst liberty to divorce remains the ultimate aim of Milton's work, these passages from the preface emphasise that in the current moment, it is of greater importance that his freedom to advocate divorce in writing is guaranteed. This is the compromise that he offers to the Parliament: a plea for his pamphlet to be read properly and taken seriously; nothing more. As it speaks the truth, only the dishonest would object to it.

It is in mining this vein of muscular rhetorical engagement that Milton augments the conception of discipline that he advanced in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643). The first edition considered church discipline as broken and tarnished by 'contempt and derision' (279), and sought to repurpose it as a happy, virtuous medium between ill-judged 'restraint' and 'debausht [...] satisfaction of the flesh' (278). In *Doctrine and Discipline*

reception of *Doctrine and Discipline* is also akin to the Apologists's descriptions of their trials at the hands of those who misunderstand and misrepresent their practice. Note that Steuart found this 'rhetorical' aspect of *An Apologeticall Narration* to be particularly infuriating.

¹¹⁶ Fallon has already provided an expert analysis of the unconscious and personal anxieties that lie beneath Milton's use of Spenser's Redcrosse in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644): 'The Spur of Self-Concernment', p. 223. The anxieties under discussion here, however, are primarily political.

(1644), however, Milton began to articulate true discipline in terms of liberty and masculinity. This allowed him a fresh opportunity to restate and strengthen his claim to hold the middle-ground of the debate on Christian practice. For example, the address to Parliament contains a passage that repeats the 'whoredoms and adulteries' phrase that featured in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643), in which he exhorts his audience as follows:

Yee have now, doubtless by the favour and appointment of God, yee have now in your hands a great and populous Nation to Reform; from what corruption, what blindnes in Religion yee know well; in what a degenerat and fal'n spirit from the apprehension of native liberty, and true manlines, I am sure ye find: with what unbounded licence rushing to whordoms and adulteries needs not long enquiry: insomuch that the fears which men have of too strict a discipline, perhaps exceed the hopes that can bee in others, of ever introducing it with any great successe. (226-7).

Here, the qualities of 'native liberty, and true manliness' currently lacking in England form one link in the chain of subordinate clauses that follow the sentence's declamatory main clause — 'yee have now in your hands a great and populous Nation to Reform.' Furthermore, the concluding section of this complex syntactical construction renders discipline as the means of regaining such qualities: the sole condition for its successful introduction being that it is not 'too strict.' Milton binds the rhetoric of ecclesiastical moderation associated with the Apologists to the civic virtues of liberty and 'true' masculinity. This aspect of Milton's polemical strategy is reiterated towards the end of the address to Parliament in very different configuration. Here, Milton asserts that if Moses' judgement on divorce was vindicated against 'the shallow commenting of Scholasticks and Canonists,' this fallen and messy situation would be transformed:

Doubt not after him [i.e. Moses] to reach out your steady hands to the mis-inform'd and wearied life of man; to restore this his lost heritage into the houshold state; wherwith be sure that peace and love, the best subsistence of a Christian family will return home from whence they are now banisht; places of prostitution wil be lesse haunted, the neighbours bed lesse attempted, the yoke of prudent and manly discipline will be

generally submitted to, sober and well order'd living will soon spring up
in the Commonwealth. (230)

In setting Moses against the 'Scholasticks and Canonists,' Milton is vindicating his decision to argue for divorce through both Hebrew Law and the Gospel injunctions of Jesus, according to his hermeneutic of charity. Furthermore, in hailing 'prudent and manly discipline' as the proper government of 'the houshold state' and the 'best subsistence of a Christian family,' Milton's argument envisions the concept of discipline in domestic terms. The successful introduction of discipline starts in the family, not in the gathered congregation or the national Church. This passage is similar in its conclusions to the content of the peroration at the end of *Doctrine and Discipline*, in both the 1643 and 1644 editions, which posits that the establishment of the right to divorce would mean that discipline could be put to a better purpose in overturning 'the prostitute loosenes of the time' (355).

Milton also used this new paradigm of true, 'manly' discipline to counter those who ignorantly misinterpreted him, by labelling them as insufficiently, or degenerately masculine. In this way, for example, those who read *Doctrine and Discipline* (1643) as giving license for debauched behaviour, the 'brood of Belial,' are represented as 'the draffe of men, to whom no liberty is pleasing, but unbridl'd and vagabond lust without pale or partition' (225). To these, whose dangerous passions and poverty were deemed to be at the root of their licentious misinterpretation, Milton declares that 'honest liberty is the greatest foe to dishonest license' (225).¹¹⁷ Similarly, when refuting Pareaus in a newly added passage at the end of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644), Milton argues that ordering the Christian magistrate to punish hardheartedness with 'fine and imprisonment' is the equivalent to a discipline that nourishes 'violent affections in youth, by cockring and

¹¹⁷ This is liberty as self-control, a refutation of the criticisms of congregationalism mentioned in *An Apologeticall Narration*: 'no powerful or effectual means to reduce a Church or Churches that fal into heresie, schisme, &c. but every one is left and may take liberty without controule to do what is good in their own eyes' (p. 15).

wanton indulgences, and to chastise them in mature age with a boyish rod of correction' (352-53). The use of civil punishment to correct a spiritual flaw, which approximately characterises the attitude of the Presbyterian faction within the Westminster Assembly, was infantilizing.

It could be argued that this fresh emphasis on discipline as true masculinity situates the argument of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) as pertaining to an exclusively economical, or domestic, discourse; that it has nothing to do with discipline in any other sense: after all, the focus is on divorce and marriage. However, this is not the case: indeed, Milton takes care to establish the connection between his advocacy of divorce and the Parliament's eagerness to reform the nation, which in turn pre-empts his declaration in *Colasterion* that 'all Discipline is not legal, that is to say juridical, but som is personal, som Economical, and som Ecclesiastical.' In another part of his new preface to Parliament, he urges them as follows:

Advise yee well, supreme Senat, if charity be thus excluded and expulst, how yee will defend the untainted honour of your own actions and proceedings: He who marries, intends as little to conspire his own ruine, as he that swears Allegians: and as a whole people is in proportion to an ill Government, so is one man to an ill marriage. (229)

In deeming the macrocosmic and the microcosmic to be equivalent, Milton is doing more than expressing his approval of the Parliament's actions against the King, as Coolidge glosses it (229, n.34). In this passage, 'Government' means more than the 'State,' as can be discerned from the following sentence, in which Milton expands his frame of reference:

If they against any authority, Covnant, or Statute, may by the sovereign edict of charity, save not only their lives, but honest liberties from unworthy bondage, as well may he against any private Covnant, which hee never enter'd to his mischief, redeem himself from unsupportable disturbances to honest peace, and just contentment (229)

Milton is implying here that any relationship between two people or more, whether covenanted or otherwise, may be kept vital and truthful through upholding the same principal virtues: 'reason, charity, nature and good example' (229).¹¹⁸ Furthermore, according to this reasoning, disorder in one sphere, whether public or private, disrupts the other. It is of note, then, that this passage in which the commonwealth and the household are determined as equivalent, and of the same order, is then followed by renewed call for 'the statutes of God [to] be turn'd over, be scann'd a new, and consider'd' (230).¹¹⁹ In this light, the vitality of church discipline in England is also deemed to hinge on the same principal virtues.

Although there is much in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) to suggest the congeniality of *An Apologeticall Narration* to Milton's own thought, in certain respects he actually went much further than the Apologists. At the end of the sentence that begins with the line quoted previously, Milton expresses the hope that a truly successful 'Council' would allow a people 'created so different each from other, and yet by the skill of wise conducting, all to become uniform in vertue' (230). The Independents hoped for a church polity in which separate congregations remained in 'union' without 'uniformity'; they believed that a commonly understood and accepted set of doctrinal tenets could achieve this, whereas to seek uniform church discipline would be too divisive. In contrast, Milton's vision of a diverse population that was also 'uniform in vertue' indicates the radical aspect of his disciplinary thought at this time, which cannot be folded into our picture of Milton as an advocate for toleration. Although aware of contemporary arguments over church discipline, his preface to Parliament in *Doctrine and Discipline*

¹¹⁸ In her comparative reading of *Doctrine and Discipline*, Hobbes's *Leviathan* and William Gouge's *Domesticall Duties* (1622) Victoria Kahn identifies how the depiction of domestic relations complicates any purely legalistic notion of early modern contract theory: cf. "'The Duty to Love': Passion and Obligation in Early Modern Political Theory', in *REP* 68 (Fall 1999), 84-107.

¹¹⁹ We might also consider that this call, although it may seem naive, lends its support to the efforts of the Independents to deliberate at length over the issue of church-government, rather than to rush through an easy but ultimately unsuccessful solution.

(1644) suggests that he sought to avoid localised controversy by emphasising the inherent liberty of the individual,¹²⁰ and the responsibilities that this entailed.

* * *

In that it conceptualizes discipline as a universal moral obligation, rather than denoting the proper government of an individual congregation, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1644) stands apart from the 'Independent' position with which Milton has become associated in current criticism.¹²¹ The tract's repeated emphasis on this notion may be understood as an attempt to claim that common ground could still be found between the various reforming factions based in London at that time; and that this common ground was the contentious issue of discipline. In contrast, the authors of *An Apologeticall Narration* and their supporters held that subscription to orthodox Reformed doctrine was the only necessary common ground required; they feared that the 'Presbyterian' urge to establish a national Church discipline would certainly lead to a rigorous, legally enforced ecclesiastical uniformity. As this chapter has already established, it was this stance that provoked the conflict over church government between the 'Independents' and 'Presbyterians' that wracked the Westminster Assembly throughout 1644. The frustration that this caused to the Scots Presbyterians is eloquently demonstrated in 'The Epistle Prefatory' to *Satan the Leader in Chief of all those who Resist the*

¹²⁰ It is clear, however, that by individual, Milton meant an adult, property-owning male. This exemplifies Schochet's view of the continuity of certain patriarchal assumptions in Parliamentary works arguing for a contractual theory of politics, against the Royalist defence of royal supremacy on the grounds of innate patriarchal authority. Cf. Gordon J. Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), *passim.*, esp. pp. 6-7. In this respect, *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) also reflects the increasing significance in Milton's thought of neo-Roman republican theory. Milton's status as a proponent of this form of political philosophy has discussed at length elsewhere: in particular cf. Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism*; also, Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*. With regard to this development in Milton studies, the account presented here emphasises that Milton's republicanism cannot be considered as being 'pure': it was mixed with other intellectual traditions, such as Congregational Reformed praxis.

¹²¹ Cf. C&C, *JM*, p. 161; they do not contradict Sirluck in his introduction to *YP* 2, *passim*.

Reparation of Sion, in which Robert Baillie comments despairingly that 'no Protestant Church to this day, did ever stay the half of the time in purging the whole Body of Religion, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and all, as this Land hath already spent on some few points of Discipline alone.'¹²² Although *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) demonstrates an awareness of the growth of these divisions, the fact that it was published at the very beginning of the year means that it cannot be considered as fully anticipating such developments.

To comprehend the circumstantial changes wrought by the Assembly's bitter wrangling, and their effect on Milton's distinctive position, we must turn to *Colasterion*. This chapter, in returning to its opening quotation and examining the later work's retrospective, revisionary quality, will conclude by assessing briefly the extent to which Milton's conceptualization of discipline had developed by the end of his lengthy campaign for divorce. Published 14 months after the second edition of *Doctrine and Discipline*, *Colasterion* restates many of the principles on which the earlier tract was based, yet it does so in a way that speaks of a transformed polemical environment. The notion that there could be common ground amongst the godly in London on discipline was no longer tenable. The widening breach between the 'Independents' and the 'Presbyterians' transformed each party into discrete and 'potentially new confessional stances.'¹²³ In addition, inflammatory publications such as Thomas Edwards's *Antapologia* effectively hammered the wedge further into the crack: they stoked popular fears of spiritual anarchy by striking up a 'dynamic relationship with a broad range of the population.'¹²⁴ Milton was caught up in this development, as the position of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) in the Bodleian's C Pamphlets suggests. The same can be said of the misleading

¹²² Robert Baillie, *Satan the Leader in Chief* (London: Samuel Gellibrand, 1644), sig. A3^r. Note that this sermon was first delivered to Parliament on February 28, 1644. Thomas Young also preached to the same audience on that day: according to William Haller, it is in his sermon, *Hopes Incuragement*, that Milton's *Doctrine and Discipline* is obliquely criticised. Cf. Haller, *Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1955), pp. 123-4.

¹²³ Paul, *Assembly*, p. 436.

¹²⁴ Cf. Hughes, "'Popular' Presbyterianism in the 1640s and 1650s", pp. 235-6.

references to his tract for divorce in the pamphlets at which he strikes throughout *Colasterion*, as well as in the preface to *Tetrachordon*: Milton the divorcer was just one exhibit in the 'Anabaptisticall, Antinomian, Hereticall, Atheisticall'¹²⁵ rogues gallery that was being collated by the self-appointed defenders of orthodoxy. In the face of the 'with us, or against us' attitude adopted by the 'Presbyterians,' Milton's 'with neither side, with all' stance was simply not possible. *Colasterion*, specifically, is already thought of as a significant marker for the great ideological distance between Milton and his former comrades the Smectymnuans.¹²⁶ However, this is not to say the tract indicates that by the time of its publication Milton was a full-blooded 'Independent': it represents a retreat to his basic principles, rather than an advance towards the stand-point of the dissenting brethren.

It is *Colasterion*, rather than its twin *Tetrachordon*, that offers the better perspective on the intellectual distance travelled by Milton on the subject of discipline since the publication of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644). The tract's title (transliterated from the Greek *κολαστήριον*, meaning 'place, or instrument, of punishment') and animadverting form enact Milton's continued protestation both of his concern for discipline and his own self-discipline. Additionally, through its animadversions, Milton's literary mode fluctuates between the apologetic and the outright polemic: it allows for the unremitting prosecution of the anonymous author of the *Answer*, whilst at the same time vindicating the author's controversial position. These are aspects of what James Egan describes as Milton's attempt to assert 'mastery' in the twinned tracts: mastery over himself, over his argument, and over others.¹²⁷ In *Tetrachordon* this is manifest in Milton's incorporation of the Puritan homiletics used by his opponents within his own vigorous exegesis: and in doing so he

¹²⁵ William Prynne, *Twelve Considerable Questions Touching Church Government* (London: I.D. for Michael Sparke Sr., 1644), p. 7. The same passage is quoted by Milton at the beginning of *Colasterion* (YP 2.722). Discussion of the strategies used by those such as Prynne, including Daniel Featley, can be found in Corns, 'Milton's Quest for Respectability', pp. 771-75.

¹²⁶ Thomas Kranidas, 'The *Colasterion*: Milton's Plural Adversary', in *PS* 19:3 (1996), 279-81.

¹²⁷ James Egan, 'Rhetoric, polemic, mimetic: the dialectic of genres in *Tetrachordon* and *Colasterion*', in *MS* 41 (2002), 122, 125.

excels their inadequate efforts. However, whereas Egan only detects Milton's assertion of his own mastery in his consummate rhetorical dismissal of the formal methods of his opponents, it also rests in his continued use of the ecclesiastical-disciplinary lexicon. Although this is most clear in *Colasterion*, it can also be detected in *Tetrachordon* to a lesser extent. For example, in the preface 'To the Parliament' it is notable that Milton complains that even if he has overstepped the bounds of discipline, then one of his clerical critics, Herbert Palmer, has failed to censure him correctly: 'unconferr'd with, unadmonisht, undealt with by any Pastorly or brotherly convincement,' he has nevertheless been scandalized.¹²⁸ Although passages such as this, in which the ecclesiastical and polemical-strategic aspects of Milton's composition collide, do occur in *Tetrachordon*, they are infrequent; whereas in *Colasterion* they characterise the work as a whole.

Now, to return to the quotation at the head of the chapter: 'for all Discipline is not legal, that is to say juridical, but som is personal, som Economical, and som Ecclesiastical.' This denial provides the means with which to measure how Milton perceived in retrospect his earlier conceptualization of discipline in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644). To say that 'all Discipline is not legal' goes much further than the 1644 tract, which only argues that those whose 'hardnes of heart' bids them divorce should not be 'amerc't with fine and imprisonment' (352). Whereas the prefatory address to Parliament in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) argues that the granting of divorce for reasons of contrary dispositions would cure the nation's disciplinary woes, in *Colasterion* there is a disjunction between the problem of divorce and that of discipline: the latter is of a higher order that cannot be fixed quite so easily. Its tripartite definition of the controversial subject is reminiscent of the oft cited passage from *Defensio Secunda* (1654), in which Milton designates his polemical prose written in the 1640s as belonging to three different categories: religious, domestic, and civil liberty. There is a sleight of hand involved in that

¹²⁸ John Milton, *Tetrachordon*, in YP 2.579.

revisionary designation, as Sirluck points out in his introduction to *YP II*, which conceals 'radical discontinuity'; the same can be said of this quotation from *Colasterion*. In one sense, the quotation confirms what has already been said in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644). Without mentioning morality or virtue, it nevertheless determines discipline as being no longer the sole preserve of the Church: it specifically relates to individual, familial, and social conduct. In a second sense, to say that discipline only pertains to an individual's own conduct, his household, and his churchgoing, reins in the notion of its direct pertinence to civil matters. Already here we see the distance between the 'spiritual power and civil'; Milton would later praise Sir Henry Vane the Younger for knowing the difference between these two powers. In writing *Colasterion*, Milton was attempting to absolve himself from the charge of causing civil disorder by circulating dangerous doctrines: he avoids prosecution according to positive law by deliberately evading this subject in his argument for divorce.

Simultaneously, however, there is a note of ambiguity within the quoted clause. To divide the 'all' into 'some,' 'some' and 'some' allows the possibility that some discipline could also be 'legal, that is to say juridical.' We must consider the possibility that for Milton, discipline was not just a category defining moral conduct that could not and should not be subject to legislation. His notable flinch in *Areopagitica* at the notion of 'tolerated Popery, and open superstition,' and his subsequent statement that no law can permit 'that which is impious or evil absolutely either against faith or maners' (565), indicates that he thought that discipline's ultimate and most extreme sanction should be legal and punitive. His argument in *Colasterion* is no different. Of course, Milton considered himself and his restrained argument for divorce as above such censure. The association between 'legal' and 'juridical' in the passage is also consistent with his mockery of the Answerer's dubious detour into Roman law, and therefore on its surface it functions as a simple jibe. Nevertheless, the urge to maintain his apolitical stance (his

respectability if you will)¹²⁹ is clear in this passage, despite the divisive strategies of the ‘Presbyterians’ leading the charge against those such as him.

There is a lesser, but no less interesting facet of *Colasterion* in which Milton seems to be actually begging to be disciplined, legitimately and respectfully. At its end, echoing the sentiment of the quotation from *Tetrachordon* above, he declares that if there is one who can answer his argument without ‘leaning on the old and rott’n suggestions,’ then ‘let him not, I entreat him, guess that by the handling, which meritoriously hath bin bestowd on this object of contempt and laughter [i.e. the *Answer*], that I account it any displeasure don mee to bee contradicted in Print’ (758). Unlike the Spenserian tone of the preface to *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644), there is none of the knightly challenge about this call for a decent reply to his argument. The posture, albeit subtle, is one of supplication. This indicates the great distance travelled by Milton since the publication of his first tract, *Of Reformation*. That piece was fuelled by a powerful conviction in the disciplinary powers of the poet (and by implication himself), which he deemed analogous with the authority of the Church. In *Colasterion*, however, Milton’s use of this forcefully poetic variety of self-representation has dwindled. The tract’s concluding passage suggests that Milton’s call for self-discipline stems from a belief that there are very few who can administer proper ecclesiastical discipline with equity and charity. As such, the divorce tracts are not shaped exclusively by an image of a poet imbued with divine power. Rather, they depict at times the figure of a flawed individual: self-sufficient by necessity, and fallible by nature.

¹²⁹ Cf. Corns, ‘Milton’s Quest for Respectability’, *passim*.

3. 'Discipline and faith engaged': Milton's '*fides et mores*' in *Paradise Lost*

Before Raphael is sent to Adam 'to admonish him of his obedience,'¹ and before Michael is sent with a band of cherubim to dispossess the first parents, Milton's *Paradise* is guarded by Gabriel. The significance of the latter angel's actions in the narrative of *Paradise Lost* has been less marked than those of his senior comrades: he does not feature so heavily as they do, nor does he interact at all with his human wards. And yet, over the course of the fourth book, Gabriel plays a markedly significant role. It is he who confronts Satan, who has been discovered squatting 'like a toad' next to the ear of the sleeping Eve by the angelic pickets. In the barbed exchange that follows, 'the warrior angel' chides his fallen opponent for portraying himself as a 'faithful leader':

Faithful to whom? To thy rebellious crew?
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head;
 Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve
 Allegiance to the acknowledged power supreme?²

This third question, in the crucial phrase 'discipline and faith,' draws together the military and religious motifs that are woven through the fabric of this passage: Satan and his fellow rebel angels are depicted by Gabriel as traitor-soldiers *and* ecclesial apostates.³ This

¹ John Milton, *PL*, 'BOOK V: *The Argument*', p. 281.

² *PL*, IV.954-6. From henceforth, the line references for the quotations taken from this volume shall be noted parenthetically in the text.

³ This chapter is largely focused on the ecclesial rather than the military sense of 'discipline' in *Paradise Lost*. As the ensuing analysis of Gabriel's words proves, Milton's concern in Book IV, and in the rest of the poem, is with obedience itself, and obedience to God in particular; '*military obedience*' (my emphasis) forms just one aspect of this. Indeed, although this thesis does not pursue this aspect in any depth, the martial content of *Paradise Lost* is pertinent to the discussion of Milton's concept of discipline. Any undertaking to develop this discursive area in the future would need to consider certain critical precedents that take seriously the attitudes of Milton and his contemporaries to warfare, classical and contemporary: e.g. Stella P. Revard, *The War in Heaven* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980); James A. Freeman, *Milton and the Martial Muse* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980); Robert Thomas Fallon, *Captain or Colonel* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1984); Michael Murrin, *History and Warfare in Renaissance Epic* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994). Murrin's thesis of how the literary forms of epic and romance changed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in response

identification, which permeates the angels's exchange, is compounded further in the apocalyptic, armed stand-off that concludes the passage and the book. The opposition of the loyal angels's phalanx with the dilated, Atlas-like figure of Satan forms a powerful image of discipline and the consequences of both its proper use and negligent abuse. Milton's use of the language of military formations and martial conduct in *Paradise Lost* provided a metaphorical language to discuss ethical principles and ecclesiastical practice. Although the angels's combat is not merely a cipher for a Christian ideal of spiritual warfare, it forms a crucial part of Milton's strategy of instruction in the poem: his readers are urged to discern whose words and actions are truthful, and truly obedient.

The binary construction and semantic similarities of Gabriel's phrase 'discipline and faith' also suggest that this passage of *Paradise Lost* is closely engaged with the Counter-Reformation controversy over '*fides et mores*,' which was discussed at length in this thesis's introduction. Indeed, Gabriel's words may be read as a loaded translation of Saint Augustine's formula, and therefore as a contribution to the ongoing debate over the authority of scripture and tradition. Milton's choice of 'discipline' to signify '*mores*' propagates the prevailing uncertainty among early modern divines of various stripes over what Saint Augustine's formula meant: did '*mores*' denote 'manners' in the moral, behavioural sense, or did it stand for the practice and organisation of the Church, or did it encompass both meanings?⁴ The previous chapter perceived a similar tension between ethics and ecclesiology in Milton's appeals for discipline in the 1643 and 1644 versions of *Doctrine and Discipline*. In those tracts, the concept's strong association with man's irrevocable domestic liberties stemmed from Milton's dissatisfaction with the 'juridical' coercion that convinced Presbyterians deemed necessary for the foundation of nationally

to the ways in which warfare itself changed lays the groundwork for considering Milton's works alongside present-day historical studies of seventeenth-century military practice: e.g. Ian Gentles, *The New Model Army* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Charles Carlton, *Going to the Wars* (London: Routledge, 1991).

⁴ See above, Introduction, n. 83.

uniform Church discipline. Milton's aversion to coercive ecclesiology can also be seen in Gabriel's profoundly ironical attribution of the qualities of 'discipline and faith' to the traitorous Satan and his followers. The suggestion of '*fides et mores*' associates the fallen angels in *Paradise Lost* with the Roman Catholic Church.⁵ As the Council of Trent's decrees suggest, and as Paolo Sarpi's Italian paraphrase of those decrees confirms, '*mores*' – 'discipline,' '*costume*,' 'manners' – was within the remit of the Roman Catholic Church, to be upheld with the support of such instruments as the Index and the Inquisition, and in extreme cases military force. Gabriel's querying of the 'discipline and faith' of his false opponent casts the Satanic cause in a particularly 'Popish' light. In another sense, however, Gabriel's words also reflect on the loyal angels and their 'discipline': if Satan is a figure of 'discipline,' then how might the ordered behaviour of those obedient to God be described? As this chapter will demonstrate, by the time that he composed his epic poem, Milton was coming to believe that the term 'discipline' was no longer adequate for his own concept of *true* discipline as the self-willed godly actions of the individual.

Given its engagement with the context of Counter-Reformation controversy over '*fides et mores*,' *Paradise Lost* may be read as another moment in Milton's career at which his concept of discipline develops significantly. Disobedience is the chief subject of the epic, as its first lines testify, yet the episode outlined above intimates that Milton considered the comprehension of this broader theme to be dependent on the attainment of a proper conception of discipline. A further support for this hypothesis is found in the poem's twelfth book, in Michael's admonitory sermon to the fallen Adam. In a clear allusion to Paul's *Letter to the Galatians*, the angel declares that Moses' law will serve to prepare humanity for 'a better covenant, disciplined | From shadowy types to truth [...] from servile fear | To filial, works of law to works of faith.' (XII.303-4, 305-6; cf. *Galatians*

⁵ Of course, anti-Catholicism in Restoration England and in *Paradise Lost* has already been discussed at length in various studies. See below, this chapter, n. 10 and n. 11.

3:24). This passage confirms the conceptual link between discipline and disobedience in *Paradise Lost*: according to Gabriel, Satan's fall was the result of false 'discipline and faith'; according to Michael, true discipline, understood as 'works of faith,' will help to undo the catastrophic effects of Adam's fall. Both passages therefore allude to the '*fides et mores*' formula, but it is reworked to create their own definition of true and false discipline; just as the formula's hermeneutic function in early modern Protestant divinity was as a means of discerning what was and was not permissible within Christian praxis. Its inclusion in these two episodes within *Paradise Lost* serves to indicate how Milton thought the actions of his poem's protagonists should be read.⁶ In Book IV, his readers should see that Satan's self-disciplined martial heroism is fruitless because of his faithlessness, and that Gabriel's preservation is due to the righteousness of his action and his faith in God, rather than his skill at arms. Michael's words to Adam in Book XII invite the reader to reconsider Adam and Eve's penitential turn to God after their Fall as a 'work of faith,'⁷ which is the proper result of true discipline.

Exploring the ways in which Milton and his contemporaries used '*fides et mores*' contributes to a better understanding of the moment of the publication of *Paradise Lost* in 1667.⁸ Debates over scripture and tradition continued between Protestants and Catholics after the Restoration, but these were transformed by the effects of the re-establishment of episcopacy and the Act of Uniformity in 1662.⁹ As such, the emergent and diverse culture of dissent, and Milton's place within it, provides a crucial contextual lens through which

⁶ This is not, however, a gesture of complete assent to Stanley Fish's totalizing account of reader response theory in *Surprised by Sin*. Rather, in its discussion of Milton's treatment of '*fides et mores*,' and the Counter-Reformation context of that formula, this chapter considers one of the hermeneutic tools that the poem offers the reader in order to assist their comprehension of its words and the actions of its characters.

⁷ The penitential passage referred to here is X.1097-1104: 'So spake our father penitent, nor Eve | Felt less remorse'. It is crucial for Milton that Adam and Eve turn to God out of faith in His 'favour, grace, and mercy' (X.1096), rather than because of any obligation to His Law.

⁸ As such, this chapter adopts and builds on what is currently being championed in the Oxford *Complete Works of John Milton* series: the critical emphasis on reading Milton's in the context of when it was published—or prepared for publication (cf. Knoppers's edition of the 1671 poems, and Hale and Cullington's *De Doctrina Christiana*).

⁹ Cf. Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*; Keeble, *Literary Culture of Nonconformity*.

to consider the dynamics of Gabriel's heated exchange with Satan. Previous critical discussion of the manifest anti-Catholicism of *Paradise Lost* has often focused on a putative relationship to the popular opinion that Roman Catholic conspiracy was in some way responsible for the English Civil War, and the way in which this opinion lingered after the Restoration.¹⁰ In turn, this focus has been justified by a limited historical understanding of the different allegiances to which individuals were subject in this period: reading, for example, the anti-Jesuit rhetoric present in Satan's seduction of Eve in terms of a homogenous early modern 'English Protestant identity';¹¹ or employing a binary interpretation of Milton's works as consistently 'anti-formalist,' and opposed to a constructed 'formalist' opposite.¹² In contrast, scholarship on the doctrinal aspects of *Paradise Lost* has been more sophisticated in its sensitivity to the poem's specific contextual moment.¹³ The historian Antony Milton has called for scholars of the early modern to look beyond 'the occasional use of a language of binary opposition between the forces of Protestantism and Catholicism, and alarmist talk of religious contagion.'¹⁴ Inquiry into the historical resonances of Gabriel's argument with Satan over 'discipline' can further substantiate this more nuanced historiographical position. Holding fast to the 'fides et mores' of scripture is held by Milton to legitimate dissenting faith and practice conclusively in the face of Roman Catholic counter-argument: the formula was the binding principle of a non-coercive, diverse, and largely tolerant discipline.

¹⁰ Cf. Hill, *Experience of Defeat*, p. 214.

¹¹ Arthur F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), p. 165. Also cf. Marotti, 'The Intolerability of English Catholicism', in *Writing and Religion in England, 1558-1689*, eds. Roger D. Sell and Anthony W. Johnson.

¹² John N. King, *Milton and Religious Controversy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 1.

¹³ Cf. Poole, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall*; Bauman, *Milton's Arianism*; Michael Lieb, *Theological Milton* (Pittsburgh, PE: Duquesne University Press, 2006); Nigel Smith, 'Heresy in *Paradise Lost*', in *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*.

¹⁴ Anthony Milton, 'A Qualified Intolerance: the Limits and Ambiguities of Early Stuart Anti-Catholicism', in *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts*, ed. Arthur F. Marotti (Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1999), p. 86. This is, in part, a response to the ideological analysis of English Protestant anti-Catholicism that followed Peter Lake's 'Anti-Popery: the Structure of a Prejudice', in *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, eds. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (Harlow: Longman, 1989), pp. 72-106.

Working towards an understanding of the concept of discipline in *Paradise Lost*, this chapter falls into three sections. The immediate priority is to lay the contextual foundations for reading the use of the formula '*fides et mores*' in Gabriel's derision of Satan's 'discipline and faith' and in Michael's portrayal of humanity 'disciplined [...] from works of law to works of faith.' This will involve a return to this thesis's introductory discussion of the influence of Counter-Reformation controversial writing and of Paolo Sarpi's critique of institutional religion on Milton's thought. The particular focus will be the several occasions at which Milton alludes to '*fides et mores*' in his prose: in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1644), *Areopagitica* (1644), and *De Doctrina Christiana* (1659?). The semantic and lexical changes that are evident over the course of these three examples indicate how Milton's understanding of the formula – particularly '*mores*' – was developing. The second section takes the form of a brief case study of a particular Restoration dispute over '*fides et mores*' issues, which was started by an *Epistle* (1664) addressed to English Nonconformists from the Roman Catholic convert Robert Everard. In setting Everard's language and ideas in contrast to those of his respondents, the affair serves as a window through which to view the disguised iterations of '*fides et mores*' in *Paradise Lost*. The final part of the chapter will then contemplate the discipline espoused by Gabriel and Michael in the context established in the two previous sections. Whilst not primarily concerned with the nature of Milton's angels,¹⁵ the ensuing contemplation takes as significant the fact that it is angelic voices that utter the formula of '*fides et mores*':

¹⁵ Several works have been published on this subject recently, following a lengthy drought. Most noteworthy is Joad Raymond's full-length *Milton's Angels* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). The problematic material properties of Milton's angels have been considered in Stephen M. Fallon's *Milton Among the Philosophers* (London: Cornell University Press, 1991). Milton's critique of the neo-platonic angelic hierarchy of Pseudo-Dionysius has been considered at length by Feisal G. Mohamed, in *In the Anteroom of Divinity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008). All these works, to some extent, benefit from exchange with the much earlier work of Robert H. West, *Milton and the Angels* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1955).

angels, as has been pointed out elsewhere, 'are necessary to Milton.'¹⁶ This understanding helps to reveal the representational shift in how Milton perceived the concept of discipline in *Paradise Lost*. The admonitory voices of Gabriel and Michael incorporate elements from the heroic mode that extols the discipline of the poet and the Church in *Of Reformation*, as well as the vehement apologetic of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*. However, within the literary medium of the epic, there is also a considerable difference at play. One step removed from the bard's voice that narrates the epic, these angels are fraught with the responsibility of mediating between the divine and the fallen, between Milton and the reader. In the description of the loyal angels standing together against Satan in the epic and apocalyptic stand-off at the end of the fourth book, and in the stern words of Gabriel and Michael, Milton's dissenting discipline is given form and voice.

* * *

Milton refers to 'faith and manners' twice in his English prose, first in the revised edition of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, and then in *Areopagitica*. Both works were published in 1644, and in both his acquaintance with the use of '*fides et mores*' in Protestant-Catholic theological controversy is apparent, as is his understanding of the issues of translation that came with the formula. First, in the prefatory address to Parliament at the start of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644), Milton 'not untruly' suggests that it is 'Custome' that 'hath drawn the most Disciples after him, both in Religion, and in manners.' 'Religion' and 'manners' here function similarly to the 'Doctrine and Discipline' of the tract's title: the distinction is between what is believed and how one should behave. Rather than serving as innocuous synonyms, however, Milton's choice of

¹⁶ Joad Raymond, "With the tongues of angels': angelic conversations in *Paradise Lost* and seventeenth-century England', in *Angels in the Early Modern World*, eds. Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 256.

'Religion' and 'manners' serves a purpose that is subtly controversial. Although 'Religion' may serve straightforwardly as a synonym for 'faith,' or '*fides*,' Milton's distinction between 'Custom' and 'Manners' is truly striking. The difference between Augustine's (and others's) '*mores*,' Sarpi's '*costume*,' and English Protestants's '*maners*,' is very fine. To set 'Custom' apart from 'manners' turns the ecclesiastical against the moral sense of '*mores*,' which accords with the interpretation of *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) set out in the second chapter of this thesis. Milton depicts 'Custom' as a deceptive instructor, in that it is not clear 'whether it be the secret of divine will, or the original blindness we are born in.'¹⁷ It then follows that manners learnt from 'Custom' are unthinking and therefore morally ambivalent. This depiction is in contrast to the other instructors: 'virtue,' which is persuasive; and 'Conscience,' which is 'most evincing.' This introductory allegory prepares the way for the main body of the tract, the thrust of which is aimed at condemning the Presbyterian's false and coercive concept of discipline with the taint of 'Custom,' which implies ecclesiastical tyranny. On the other hand, Milton's own proposals, through careful exegetical treatment of scripture, are proven to be without contradiction to 'religion' or 'manners.'

Unlike *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644), the formula in *Areopagitica* straightforwardly translates '*fides et mores*' as 'faith or maners,' and as such is linked more clearly to the Counter-Reformation context previously outlined.¹⁸ It appears in the significant passage

¹⁷ John Milton, *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, YP 2.222. On contemporary discourse on 'Custom,' the editor Lowell W. Coolidge refers to Meric Casaubon's *A Treatise of Use and Custome* (1638) (n. 1). Also, 'The secret of divine will' hints at the validity of 'unwritten traditions' in the Tridentine decrees.

¹⁸ It is an interesting coincidence that Nathaniel Brent, the translator of Sarpi, was Parliament's 'licenser for books on legal and other matters' at the time that the unlicensed, unregistered *Areopagitica* appeared. Four years after the publication of his version of the *History*, his patron Abbot made him Vicar General. Brent continued in this position under Abbot's successor, William Laud; in this capacity, he was 'in the visitation of the southern province between 1634 and 1637 the chief visible agent of the implementation of the Laudian programme.' At the end of that decade, however, the working relationship between Brent and his employer broke down over accusations regarding irregularities in his administration of Merton College, where he was elected Warden in 1622. This led to him aligning with Philip Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, who headed the anti-

in which Milton qualifies his call for toleration by noting those things that should be excluded. Of greatest danger, he argues, is 'Popery and open superstition,' on the grounds that

as it extirpats all religions and civill supremacies, so it self should be extirpat, provided first that all charitable and compassionat means be us'd to win and regain the weak and the misled: that also which is impious or evil absolutely either against faith or maners no law can possibly permit, that intends not to unlaw it self.¹⁹

Critics responding to this deeply prejudicial attitude to Roman Catholicism have noted that Milton is here specifically refuting the Tridentine elevation of Church tradition alongside scripture as a 'second, equivalent, and in fact superior (because interpretative) authority.'²⁰ Against the Tridentine understanding, the authority of Scripture as a rule of ecclesiastical practice is a central facet of Truth, which Milton imagines as once absolute and absolutely knowable, but in the present age has become fragmented and scattered. In an additional interpretation, Thomas Corns has argued that the passage denies toleration to radical antinomian groups as well as Catholics: he proposes that whereas the clause mentioning 'extirpation' pertains to 'Popery,' Milton's use of 'maners [...] hints at acts of outrageous behaviour against accepted standards of propriety, a phenomenon which does not really suggest Catholic practices.'²¹ While Corns is correct to identify this double focus in the passage, his interpretation of 'maners' as 'acceptable standards of propriety' fails to contextualise Milton's phrasing as a use and reinterpretation of the '*fides et mores*' formula. Given the language of Milton's discussion of that which is *against* 'faith or maners,' and his playful assertion that 'neighboring differences, or rather *indifferences*'

Laudian faction within Oxford, and ultimately to his decision to side with Parliament in 1642. In 1643 he was appointed Parliament's licenser for books. Cf. Hegarty, *DNB*.

¹⁹ *YP* 2.565.

²⁰ Sirluck, 'Introduction', *YP* 2.181.

²¹ Thomas N. Corns, 'John Milton, Roger Williams, and the Limits of Toleration', in *Milton and Toleration*, eds. Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer (Oxford Scholarship Online: subscriber access 29 May 2012), pp. 2-3.

need not interrupt '*unity of Spirit*,' it is clear that the influence of Augustine's Letters to Januarius is at the fore of the passage. In the light of Milton's engagement with '*fides et mores*' and Catholic-Protestant controversial writing, it may be said that there is more to his 'maners' than polite behaviour: the passage invokes '*fides et mores*' as a principle of ecclesiastical order which had its basis in the tenets of scripture. This represents an attempt to imbue the call for limited toleration that precedes it with a sense of Protestant orthodoxy. The formula's iteration summons patristic authority through implication, which accords with other favourable mentions of the Fathers elsewhere in the text, and suggests that Milton was engaging in a pre-emptive defence against potential accusations of granting licence to depravity and disorder. The rule of '*fides et mores*' is proposed as the way of preventing the toleration of that 'which is impious or evil absolutely.' In stating that practices contrary to the Scriptures will not be tolerated, Milton was trying to set the bar too high for both disruptive radical antinomian groups and Catholics.

By proposing the rule of 'faith and manners' as a safeguard for limited toleration in *Areopagitica*, Milton sought to reconfigure the formula's coercive Counter-Reformation associations. Speaking to the Presbyterians in the Assembly and in Parliament who were seeking the uniformity of ecclesiastical discipline in 1644, Milton was arguing that any pretensions of temporal authority that the Church—or churches—had over what constituted '*fides et mores*' needed to be effaced in order for scriptural truth to reign.²² The influence of Sarpi is worth noting in this respect, even though *Areopagitica* does not link Milton's use of the formula to any single source. Nigel Smith has written of Sarpi's *History* as a vital context for the tract, and as such an influence on its espousal of an 'activist ethics.'²³ However, the tangled tradition of early modern '*fides et mores*' indicates that his ethical position was framed by certain theological and political considerations. Following Sarpi, Milton was aware that for those who mistakenly considered magisterial

²² See above, Chapter 2, *passim*.

²³ Nigel Smith, '*Areopagitica*: Voicing Contexts 1643-45', p. 113.

coercion to be a necessary support for the Church, the sanctity of '*fides et mores*' was the cause of the Index and the Inquisition, the model of '*Trent and Sevil*' (YP II.529). Similarly, the plea for indifferent Church practices to be exempt from legislation rebuffs those who treated Augustine's pronouncement in his Letters to Januarius as a justification for imposing uniformity through supremacy.²⁴ This suggests that Milton thought '*fides et mores*' to be worthy of being repurposed as one of 'those unwritt'n, or at least unconstraining laws of vertuous education, religious and civill nurture, which *Plato* there mentions, as the bonds and ligaments of the Commonwealth, the pillars and the sustainers of every writt'n Statute' (YP 2.526). The distinction between 'unwritt'n [...] laws' and 'writt'n Statute,' and the role of the former as the 'sustainers' of the latter, implies that Saint Augustine's formula was to be thought of as a principle to be upheld through vigorous argument and strong discernment, rather than forming the basis for legislation to be imposed upon the nation. Furthermore, Milton argues that this appropriation of '*fides et mores*' as the proper basis for a limited ecclesiastical toleration is fit for the strengthening of a commonwealth in 'this world of evill,' and not just for an abstract picture of a State in the manner of the '*Atlantick* and *Eutopian* polities' (YP 2.526). This is yet another sign of Milton's disenchantment with the Presbyterian concept of discipline as an idealised, rule-bound society.²⁵ Similarly in *Areopagitica*, his appropriation of Augustine's formula for broadly tolerationist ends indicates that his own understanding of discipline was changing: he urged that it was not the rules themselves that made a society virtuous, but the principles that guided those who crafted the rules.

²⁴ Prior to the Presbyterian party's efforts in the 1640s, strong advocates of uniformity and conformity in the Church of England included John Whitgift and Thomas Bell. See above, Introduction, n. 94, n. 95.

²⁵ The point that *Areopagitica* represents 'a full-scale deconstruction of the theopolitical elements of Calvinism' is made by Fulton, pp. 93-4.

Milton's use of '*fides et mores*' is demonstrated a third time in his unfinished Latin systematic theology, *De Doctrina Christiana*.²⁶ The formula is invoked for apologetic purposes in the thirteenth chapter of the first book, which is entitled '**On the DEATH** which is called **Bodily**.'²⁷ As with the rendition of the formula in *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1644) as 'religion and manners,' in *De Doctrina* '*fides et mores*' is put in synonymous terms that do not match Augustine's own. Milton states that the question '*Whether [after death] the whole person, or simply and solely the body, is deprived of life?*', can be 'tossed about with no diminution of faith or piety [*Quae quoniam citra fidei aut pietatis detrimentum agitari potest*'], whether one were to maintain this or that opinion.'²⁸ Again, referring to the sense of Augustine's letter to Januarius, Milton declares that any position taken with regard to the question of whether it is the 'whole person' or just the body that dies when a life ends is indifferent: the implication is that open discussion of the topic will not lead to the corruption of the '*gravi prudentique christiano*.'²⁹ In order to prove this, he goes on to argue the mortalist position of thnetopsychism with reference to nine passages from scripture, as well as additional biblical citations and a brief quotation from Euripides' *Suppliant Women*.³⁰ Given how sensitive Milton's argument was to accusations of heresy, it is important to note that he provides it with the prefatory claim that those either for or against mortalism could dispute the issue without diminishing 'faith or piety.' This sets him within the prescribed bounds of ecclesiastical and theological propriety that he established in *Areopagitica*, and therefore exempts him from the charge of scandal.

²⁶ On the unfinished status of *De Doctrina*, cf. above, 'Introduction', n. 5.

²⁷ John Milton, *De Doctrina Christiana*, in OCW VIII.1.440-1. Also note that '*fides et mores*' is included and explained in one of the two principal models for Milton's systematic work, William Ames's *Medulla*, in the chapter on Holy Scripture.

²⁸ OCW, VIII.1.440-43.

²⁹ See above, Introduction, n. 92, n. 93.

³⁰ Campbell and Corns state that Milton's 'pugnacious' advocacy of thnetopsychism in *De Doctrina* aligned him with 'Arminian theologians such as Stephanus Curcellaeus' (C&C, JM, p. 275). For more on Milton's mortalism, cf. Norman T. Burns, *Christian Mortalism from Tyndale to Milton* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972).

Also noteworthy in this passage from *De Doctrina* is Milton's choice of 'pietas,' or piety, as the synonym for 'mores' in the formula '*fides et mores*.' In the context of the genre of *De Doctrina*, the choice is consistent with its Ramist-systematic approach, which necessitated a bolder, more precise approach to lexical and semantic differentiation than is found in Milton's English prose: the meaning and application of 'piety' in the text is distinct from that of 'manners' or 'discipline.' The strictly limited use of 'discipline' by Milton in *De Doctrina* was discussed at the beginning of this thesis's introduction: it refers only to the practice of one particular congregation, and not the ideal state of a Christian commonwealth.³¹ Regarding 'mores,' the chapter 'On Church Discipline' indicates that Milton used the term as a neutral means of denoting ecclesiastical 'custom' rather than moral behaviour. This is clear in the passage arguing that all the faithful of a particular congregation are permitted to speak at meetings: 'Copying this custom from the Jewish synagogue, the apostles retained it in the churches ['Quem morem ab Iudaica synagoga imitate apostolic, in ecclesiis retinuerunt'].³² In contrast to these uses, Milton's declaration about faith and piety in his chapter on the death of the body implies that he considered 'pietas,' rather than 'mores,' to denote those godly human actions that were a sign of and a guarantee for the salvation of any individual. The substitution of 'mores' with 'pietas,' then, perhaps implies a subtle change in Milton's thinking since his pamphleteering in 1644. In *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) and *Areopagitica*, Milton was still expressly concerned with ecclesiastical reform and its consequences for national wellbeing, using 'manners' to translate 'mores' in order to engage more fully with contemporary debate. By 1659, the year in which *De Doctrina* came closest to being ready for publication,³³ however, he considered pious behaviour, rather than properly formulated ecclesiastical 'manners,' to be the true measure of an individual and a

³¹ See above, Introduction, pp. 1-4.

³² OCW VIII.2.856-7 (my emphasis).

³³ 'Introduction', in OCW, VIII.1.xxv-xxvii.

congregation and a nation. This would appear to prefigure the emphasis on piety that Milton advances in *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, which will be covered at length in the fourth chapter of this thesis. It also intimates Milton's increasingly ambivalent understanding of the ecclesiastical sense denoted by 'mores': the concluding part of this chapter considers how this ambivalence was made manifest in the two uses of the term 'discipline' in *Paradise Lost*.

* * *

In order to establish the immediate context of inter-confessional controversy in which Milton's epic emerged, this section will employ a brief case study of the pamphlet debate amongst Dissenters that ensued after the conversion of Robert Everard to Roman Catholicism, as announced in his *An Epistle to the Several Congregations of the Non-conformists*, published in 1664.³⁴ Milton was aware of Everard both as an individual holding deeply controversial religious views and as a soldier, since his collection of 'Letters and Papers of State' included a letter addressed to Cromwell from a group of presbyterian clergy based in Newcastle in 1651; it is therefore likely that he followed the controversy over Everard's conversion to Catholicism which forms part of the ecclesio-political background to Gabriel's admonition of Satan in *Paradise Lost*. The Everard controversy, like this section of *Paradise Lost*, demonstrates the continuation of the Counter-Reformation dispute over tradition in the early years of the Restoration. Additionally, it shows that 'faith and manners' was still used as a formula in these

³⁴ Robert Everard, *An Epistle to the Several Congregations* (Paris: [s.n.] printed 1664). Cf. George Southcombe, 'Everard, Robert (fl. 1647-1664)', *DNB*, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9000>, accessed 28 May 2012]. The notion that this work was actually printed in Paris has been rebutted: it is a blind for a London publication. Also cf. Stephen Wright, *The Early English Baptists, 1603-1649* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006).

disputes, both in defence of *sola scriptura* and against the decrees of the Council of Trent.³⁵ It gives examples of the way in which military language and memories of the New Model Army were co-opted in order to refute Apostates such as Everard, prefiguring Milton's use of a similar military setting for Gabriel's rebuke of Satan. Finally, it testifies to the continued apocalyptic dread of the Roman Catholic Church and its armed might amongst Nonconformists in the 1660s. The *Epistle* controversy therefore provides an immediate context in which to study the discipline espoused by Gabriel and Michael in *Paradise Lost*, as well as the troubling depiction of Satan in terms that resonate with an antipathy towards the doctrinal and ecclesiastical tenets of the Roman Catholic Church after Trent.

The doctrinal ideas and arguments tied to the Augustinian formula '*fides et mores*' did not recede either with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, or with the return of the Stuart monarchy in 1660. The ecclesiastical fall-out of this latter event in England, of which the creation of Dissent in law was a principal part, put new and acute pressures on Protestant divines of different alignments to defend their faith and practice against those who sought to discredit them. The re-settlement of the Church of England following the Restoration imposed a clear division between conformity and dissent, which must not, however, occlude the polyvalence of dissenting groups. Roman Catholic argumentation responded to sectarian polyvalence by attacking its lack of 'discipline' as false Christianity.³⁶ In response to these Catholic accusations, dissenters rejected the Catholic doctrine of tradition, instead agreeing that the ground of legitimacy was Scripture. The Nonconformist responses to Everard's Catholic pamphleteering demonstrate this focus on Scripture as the ground of true religion and discipline. The same focus is evident in

³⁵ This was particularly noticeable in Matthew Poole's *Nullity of the Romish Faith*, which will be treated below.

³⁶ For example, the Franciscan Vincent Canes's *Fiat Lux* (1661), which contrasted the peacefulness of Catholicism with the violence of Protestant sectarianism; this attracted two vehement responses from John Owen, as well as ones from the conformist clergymen Daniel Whitby and Edward Stillingfleet.

Paradise Lost, where the argument between Gabriel and Satan re-envisioned the debate over Scripture and tradition as a struggle over 'discipline and faith.'

Against this background, the pamphlet debate sparked by Everard's conversion is one of several iterations of Protestant-Catholic argument over scripture and tradition that occurred following the Act of Uniformity in 1662. It is particularly significant, however, in that it attracted replies from a broad range of Dissenters, while no Conformist clergymen deigned to discuss it. There are three extant replies to Everard's *Epistle: Rome is no Rule* (1664), by Jeremiah Ives, a Baptist who had served as a chaplain in the New Model Army and – as with Everard – participated in the Leveller movement;³⁷ *The True Rule, Judge, and Guide* (1665), written by Francis Howgill, a Quaker with clerical training;³⁸ and *The Nullity of the Romish Faith* (1666), written by the academic *jure divino* presbyterian minister Matthew Poole.³⁹ Although Christopher Hill has denied that Everard's *Epistle* was 'directed to the specific problems of post-revolutionary England,'⁴⁰ these heterogeneous responses suggest that its publication was timed to cause maximum discomfort to persecuted, disparate post-Restoration English Nonconformity.⁴¹ They exemplify different sectarian approaches to refuting what they all agreed to be a hazardous and corrupting publication.

³⁷ Stephen Wright, 'Ives, Jeremiah (fl. 1646–1674)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/14500>, accessed 19 June 2012]. The role of the chaplains of the New Model Army is closely analysed in Anne Laurence, *Parliamentary Army Chaplains 1642–1651* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1990).

³⁸ Catie Gill, 'Howgill, Francis (1618?–1669)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/13990>, accessed 19 June 2012].

³⁹ Nicholas Keene, 'Poole, Matthew (1624?–1679)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/22518>, accessed 19 June 2012]. Note that Ives and Poole both claim that Everard's pamphlet steals its main points from *Fiat Lux*. Poole also cites in his favour anti-Catholic works by conformist divines including Henry Hammond, William Chillingworth, and Edward Stillingfleet.

⁴⁰ Hill, p. 20.

⁴¹ Of the literature generated by this general context, cf. Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*; and Keeble, *Literary Culture of Nonconformity*.

The reception of Everard's *Epistle* is also significant due to the character and past actions of Everard himself. His notoriety was double. He was known first for his radical Protestantism: as a General Baptist he had argued against infant baptism and had publically denounced the concept of original sin in *The Creation and Fall of Adam*, initially published in 1649. The second edition of this book, released in 1652, also came with an appendix entitled *The Faith and Practice of Thirty Congregations*, which laid out the beliefs of Baptists largely based in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire. Secondly, as his description of himself as 'cap.' on the title page of the *Epistle* demonstrates, he was known as a captain in the New Model Army, an organisation that left a complex legacy for those who, prior to the Restoration, had supported the Commonwealth regime.⁴² In the letter to Cromwell mentioned above, the authors complain of a 'Robert Averard (a Captain lately reduced since Worcester feight)' that had 'crept into Newcastle amongst our flocks, indeavouring by all meanes and wayes, in publique and private, to seduce them, (as well as the garrison) by his pernicious errors.' Later in the letter they compare his own heterodox views to 'Popery'; suggesting that both are as dangerous as each other.⁴³ Poole, Howgill, and Ives would also argue this long-term acquaintance with spiritual and political rebellion was the cause of Everard's conversion to Roman Catholicism, and his abandonment of those persecuted for their nonconformist faith and practice. To this extent, the *Epistle* may be seen as occasioning an unprecedented, albeit fleeting, unity among a broad spectrum of those labelled nonconformists, who would otherwise be engaged in disputing the legitimacy of all other sects but their own.

There are two significant aspects to the language and ideas contained in Everard's *Epistle* and the refutations that it provoked. The first is Everard's reiteration of the

⁴² Cf. Gentles, *The New Model Army*.

⁴³ *Original Letters and Papers of State Addressed to Oliver Cromwell... Found among the Political Collections of Mr. John Milton*, ed. John Nickolls (London: William Bowyer, 1743), pp. 81-2.

Tridentine conception of the Church's authority as propagated in the '*fides et mores*' decrees. The faith of Roman Catholics, he writes, is infallible because they reasonably

rely upon the Authority of General Councils, consisting of the ablest and most Learned men of all Nations, which is the greatest Authority to be found on earth, especially if they have the assistance of the Holy Ghost, as it appears they have both by the testimony of Scripture, and the constant tradition of all Ages.⁴⁴

It is this sense of tradition that forms the best '*Rule or Judge*' of faith; it exercises 'such reasonable diligence, as is very tollerable to humane frailty.'⁴⁵ Everard goes on to write that this 'Rule' is the surest means to overcome the ignorance that blights the world's population. The ignorant, amongst whom he includes himself prior to his conversion, 'are infinitely the greater part of those for whom Christ dyed.'⁴⁶ In support of this declaration in favour of Roman Catholic tradition, Everard also works to undermine the notion that scripture is plain. On the contrary, he argues, without the Church as a mediator, scripture is occluded. If scripture was intended by God to be the true Rule by which humanity might attain salvation, then 'it must have followed in all probability, that our Lord Christ would have left his own law and doctrines in writing under his own hand which he hath not done.'⁴⁷

The principal retort to this line of argument, besides accusing Everard of ignorance (as many of his respondents did), was to insist that the General Councils were a far less clear guide than scripture. This is the position upheld by Matthew Poole, who also, it must be noted, is the only Nonconformist respondent to make specific use of 'faith and manners' as part of his defence of the plainness of scripture, and also to reference the '*fides et mores*' decrees of the Council of Trent: citing Trent as arguing that both the 'Canonicall Scriptures' and 'Traditions' '*together are the Canon or rule of Faith and manners*, and to both

⁴⁴ Everard, p. 13.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 10.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 19.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 25.

they allow equall Piety and reverence as I said before.' Against this Tridentine understanding of Scripture and Tradition, Poole argues for the Protestant understanding of Augustine's '*fides et mores*' formula:

The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Infallible rule and ground and touchstone of Faith, by which both Churches and all particular persons are to be regulated in their faith and manners, from which all controversies of Faith are to be decided and judged, to which all are perfectly subordinate.⁴⁸

It is clear from this passage that Poole held Augustine's formula to be central to both ecclesial practice and individual morality, 'both Churches and all particular persons'; and to refer solely to Scripture in the resolution of controversy. Further, Poole emphasises the importance of the believer's use of their own reason to reach the truth contained in Scripture:

When Protestants say Scripture is cleare, they do not meane it is so to those that are blind, or to them that shut their Eyes, or have discoloured Eyes, (and such are they of whom those things are said) but unto such as are humble, and diligent in the use of means to find out the Truth⁴⁹

Most important in this sentence is the term 'means': *what* means are necessary to 'find out the Truth'? This is answered earlier in Poole's *Nullity*: Everard, in a state of perplexity prior to his conversion, should have 'addressed himself to some able Protestant Minister or Scholar,' or 'spent that time in the reading of the solid Books of excellent Protestant Authors, and grounding himselfe in the Principles of Religion.'⁵⁰ Importantly, given Poole's *jure divino* presbyterianism, this allows a role for the true visible Church as a reliable – although not infallible – expositor of scripture.

⁴⁸ Matthew Poole, 'An Appendix by way of a reflection upon Captain Robert Everards *Epistle*', in *The Nullity of the Romish Faith* (Oxford: Richard Davis, 1666), pp. 73, 41

⁴⁹ Poole, p. 52.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

The second significant aspect of the *Epistle* controversy is the extent to which military language was used by the respondents to ridicule Everard personally and undermine his argument. As we shall see, Francis Howgill and Jeremiah Ives each make a serious point about the unjust armed might of the Papacy. Poole, however, wittily compares his opponent's conversion to surrender on the battlefield. In the *Epistle*, Everard describes himself as one who 'had run through almost (if not altogether) all the several Professions of Christianity then appearing in this Kingdome' until he came into conversation with a Catholic 'Lay Gentleman,' who offered him some Roman Catholic tracts, including *Fiat Lux*, which convinced him of his errors.⁵¹ Noting how unconvincing he finds these same tracts to be, Poole writes:

It is very observable how easily he gives up the cause, how valiantly the Captaine fought in the field I know not, but sure I am, if he fought at the same rate that here he disputes, no man could desire an easier adversary: Happily because he was about to commence into a beliefe of the unbloody Sacrifice of the Masse, he was resolved his Antagonist should not have a bloody victory⁵²

Poole's tone is jocular, and the punch-line of his joke is firmly doctrinal in its scope. The military language in his tract does not go much further, in part because his 'Appendix' on Everard was at the same time attempting to refute the Benedictine Hugh Cressy's *Exomologesis* (1647).⁵³

The approaches of Ives and Howgill to Everard's military past are based around more violent understandings of the Roman Catholic Church. In *Rome is no Rule*, Jeremiah Ives uses his opponent's service in the New Model Army as a means to accuse him of

⁵¹ Everard, p. 2.

⁵² Poole, p. 5.

⁵³ Cressy was formerly a Canon of Windsor, and a member of the Great Tew circle. According to his account in *Exomologesis*, his conversion was due to disillusionment with the Civil War 'and by what he considered the failure of the Church of England.' Cf. Patricia C. Brückmann, 'Cressy, Hugh Paulinus (1605–1674)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/6676>, accessed 19 June 2012]. Also, Trevor-Roper, 'The Great Tew Circle', in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans*, pp. 166–230.

submission to Jesuit conspiracy. Early on, the pamphlet points out that Everard had styled himself as a captain on the title-page whilst also bewailing in the 'Postscript' his time at the 'head of a Troop of Horse in the Rebellious Army' as 'a sin which I hope my dearest Saviour hath forgiven me, I having heartily asked pardon of my God as I here do of my Sovereign for the same.'⁵⁴ On this apparent contradiction, Ives writes:

But what a shame is this, that this Honour [i.e. the rank and title of Captain in the New Model Army] was not laid in the dust, rather then prefixed in the Title of a Book? Surely had you been truly humbled for that Rebellion, as you pretend, you would have said of all the honour that you acquired thereby, as *Ephraim* said of his Idols; *What have I to do any more with you?*⁵⁵

The fact of Everard's military service is later reiterated in order to highlight his continued hypocrisy. Everard's conversion is questioned through a comparison between the actions of the New Model Army and those of the Jesuits: he has joined, he writes, 'with a people whose Principle is to Depose and Destroy Kings.'⁵⁶ In contrast, Howgill, in *The True Rule*, points to the apocalyptic purposes of the Roman Catholic Church by seizing on Everard's conflation of Church Militant and the Church Triumphant.⁵⁷ In citing this tenet in order to refute it, Howgill refers to 'thy visible and militant Church.'⁵⁸ By changing the canonical phrase from 'Church Militant' to 'militant Church,' the violence latent in the phrase is highlighted as, it is implied, an integral part of the Roman Catholic Church. Later in the same passage, he confirms this suggestion with an apocalyptic denunciation: 'you are necessitated to take up force and violence, the *Dragons* power to compell all to

⁵⁴ Everard, p. 40

⁵⁵ Jeremiah Ives, *Rome is no rule* (London: Printed by T.M. for Livewel Chapman, 1664), p. 3.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁷ Everard, p. 32: 'For certainly did you apprehend that God had a Church in this world, that is, a visible body politique distinct from that invisible Church which is Christs Mistical body Triumphant, you would not (as I in Charity beleive) divide your selves into so many Congregations, independent of each other or any other body or Government whatsoever in relation to Religion.'

⁵⁸ Francis Howgill, *The True Rule, Judge, and Guide* (London: 1665), p. 52.

come to your Church.’⁵⁹ What is distinctive about Howgill’s pamphlet in the context of the *Epistle* controversy is his claim that the Roman Catholic Church could claim ‘a good part of [the Church of England’s] Discipline to be theirs.’⁶⁰ Unlike Poole, Howgill was convinced that any notion of a visible Church was inevitably steeped in institutional and hierarchical thinking: offensive, and ultimately dangerous.

The variety of responses to Everard’s *Epistle* indicate not only the breadth of the Dissenting spectrum in the 1660s, but also the common ground between them. In particular, their responses to Everard’s claims of the authority of Trent and tradition emphasise the shared Protestant conviction that authority, and therefore the authoritative rule of life, faith and discipline, was found simply and solely in Scripture. This was the context for the writing and publication of *Paradise Lost*, and hence for Milton’s reiteration of the understanding of Scripture as the true rule of ‘faith and manners.’ As well as referring to their martial activity, the different disciplines of his angels—loyal and fallen—also figure the competing claims to authority found in contemporary Protestant-Catholic debate.

Milton’s conviction of the necessity of answering the Counter-Reformation claims of the Roman Catholic Church remained important for him up to and after the Restoration, even though the events of 1660 had changed the parameters of the debate and despite his mockery in *Animadversions* of Joseph Hall as one of those ‘hot Volumists and cold Bishops’ who let the Church of England fall into ruin whilst spending all their time ‘thundering upon the steele cap of *Baronius* or *Bellarmino*.’⁶¹ This is apparent in the ‘Epistle’ of his *De Doctrina Christiana*, which hails ‘the stronghold of reformed religion [...]’

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 63.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 4.

⁶¹ John Milton, *Animadversions*, YP 1.731. That Milton remained interested in this strand of controversial theology, whilst no longer being interested in composing a lengthy polemical work against Bellarmine, is a point made by Miller, ‘Reconstructing Milton’s Lost *Index theologicus*’, p. 215-6.

adequately fortified as regards the Pontificians,' whilst also noting neglect 'in numerous other directions' by Protestant divines.⁶² His theological writing is couched as being vigilant in correcting the weaknesses of '**the churches of Christ**,'⁶³ whilst also mindful of the errors of Rome. The same can be said of *Paradise Lost*, as the next section of this chapter will argue.

* * *

The recurrence of '*fides et mores*' in the fourth and twelfth books of *Paradise Lost* reveals Milton's continued concern for the theological controversies of the Counter-Reformation, and the implications that this had for his poetic practice. Heavy with ethical and ecclesiological significance, as the context detailed above has proven, this thesis argues that the admonitory words of Gabriel and Michael present readers and critics with a fresh means of approaching the poem's central theme of obedience. This also impacts the understanding of Milton's concept of discipline in the years after the Restoration. Whereas Milton's tracts on divorce betrayed a lack of confidence in the cause of ecclesiastical reform along Calvinist theopolitical lines as a straightforward means of disciplining the nation, the loyal angels in *Paradise Lost* testify to Milton's developed conceptualisation of discipline as properly situated in the faithful actions of individuals: the words and actions of Gabriel and Michael show his belief that the 'works of faith' of particular persons are the main precondition for any true form of communal, ecclesial organisation.

The first thing considered in this section is Gabriel's exchange with Satan towards the end of Book IV. The accusatory line 'Was this your discipline and faith engaged,' read with reference to '*fides et mores*,' establishes within the poem's text a hermeneutical means

⁶² OCW, VIII.1.6-7.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

by which the words and actions of its characters may be judged. In the armed confrontation that concludes the episode, which is charged with political significance invoking notions of allegiance and treachery, the implications of this hermeneutic are formalised: the loyal angels fall in with one another, whilst Satan stands alone and monstrous. After this passage from Book IV has been discussed in depth, the chapter will conclude with a reading of Michael's homily on Hebrew law and discipline in Book XII. Whereas Gabriel in his chastisement of Satan only implies, Michael for Adam's benefit actually confirms what true discipline and faith are. In these two moments, the loyal angels's voices harmonise the different elements of the controversial context examined in this chapter and elsewhere: Augustine, early modern reformed divinity, Bellarmine's *Disputationes*, the edicts of the Council of Trent, Sarpi's *History*, and the tracts of dissenters desperate to defend their practice and faith under threat of persecution and subversion. *Paradise Lost* is — in part — the result Milton's engagement with these materials, wrought on the basis of his own distinctive '*fides et mores*.'

It must, of course, be acknowledged that treating the two references to 'discipline and faith' in *Paradise Lost* as synonymous with '*fides et mores*' attributes to Milton a certain freedom in translating the formula's semantics. This was, however, Milton's general practice; the examples provided above from *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) and *De Doctrina Christiana* both demonstrated affinities with Augustine's phrase whilst also employing different words.⁶⁴ The unifying feature of each example is the formula's binary construction, with one abstract noun denoting belief conjoined to another denoting praxis.⁶⁵ Together they signify that which is fundamental to existence: unique to *Paradise Lost* is its extended meditation on how the abuse or disregard of that which is fundamental will lead inevitably to a fall. Alongside line 954 of Book IV, there are several

⁶⁴ For further examples, see above, Introduction, particularly Willet's *Synopsis Papisimi* (n. 91), and Sarpi's *History* (n. 115).

⁶⁵ Regarding the gradual change through the early modern period and the Enlightenment in what 'faith' and 'praxis/manners/discipline' denoted, see above, Introduction, n. 83.

other moments in *Paradise Lost* that highlight this by containing a similar two-part construction. In these cases, the word 'faith' does not change, but the words signifying 'mores' do vary, as does word order (i.e. '[...] and faith,' or 'faith and [...]'). Through these variations Milton is able to play with the formula's semantics, exploiting its ambivalent meaning and shaping it to particular moments of the poem. As examples of the liberties taken by Milton in translating '*fides et mores*,' these passages demonstrate his skilful ability of accenting characters's speech in order to construct coherently the poem's ethical and ecclesiological position. In the two versions of *Doctrine and Discipline* discussed in this thesis's second chapter, Milton's overtly masculine and liberty-focused conception of individual discipline stemmed from his awkward attempt to combine a call for domestic freedom with a second agenda of ecclesiastical accommodation. In contrast, the qualities of masculinity and innate liberty are secondary in the conceptualization of discipline conveyed in *Paradise Lost*, which operates in terms exclusively related to each character's obedience to God – or lack thereof.

Before commenting on Gabriel's iteration 'discipline and faith engaged,' it is necessary to examine another distinctive deployment of '*fides et mores*' in synonymous terms earlier in Book IV, as a further demonstration of Milton's use of the formula. This is in Satan's monologue, provoked by his first, hateful sight of Adam and Eve, 'Imparadised in one another's arms' (IV.506), in which he plots their ruin. It is the book's 'crucial narrative action,' setting out the epic's course.⁶⁶ Perplexed by the existence of the tree of knowledge, Satan wonders why it is forbidden to the lovers:

Can it be sin to know,
Can it be death? And do they only stand
By ignorance, is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith? (IV.517-20)

⁶⁶ Marshall Grossman, '*Authors to Themselves*' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 87.

As well as the semantic similarities between ‘obedience and faith’ and ‘*fides et mores*,’ Satan’s conflation of the innocents’s perceived ‘ignorance’ with ‘their obedience and their faith’ is striking. This is why he conceives the innocence of Adam and Eve as the ‘fair foundation laid whereon to build | Their ruin!’ (ll. 521-2), and therefore plans to excite their minds ‘With more desire to know, and to reject | Envious commands’ (ll. 523-4). Satan construes the couple’s abiding by this command as the product of ignorance, in that they do not comprehend any further duties implicit in God’s commandment. Use of the word ‘proof’ here also subtly alludes to Adam and Eve’s dependency on God’s spoken commands, without the mediation of the written word. Before Satan’s soliloquy, Adam tells Eve that God’s pronouncement against eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge is ‘The only sign of our obedience left’ (IV.428). It is this restraining condition, which Adam calls an ‘easy prohibition’ (l. 433) that serves as the only indispensable discipline necessitated by their prelapsarian ‘*fides et mores*’: there are no indifferent practices in Paradise.

Gabriel’s denunciation of Satan’s ‘discipline and faith’ at the book’s end forms an extensive development of this earlier subtle reference to contemporary debates over faith and manners as based on scripture or tradition. In particular, it echoes Satan’s rhetorical dismissal of Adam and Eve’s ‘obedience and faith,’ with Gabriel’s ‘Was this your discipline and faith engaged’ also posed as a question. However, in switching the pronoun from ‘their’ to ‘your,’ from third to second-person, and from present to past tense, the effect of this re-iteration is to direct scrutiny onto Satan’s previous actions. In place of the theological ‘ignorance’ that the fallen angel detected as the evidence of the ‘happy state’ of Adam and Eve, Gabriel highlights that Satan’s rebelliousness is proof of his apostate ‘discipline and faith.’ The whole aim here is to refute Satan’s notion of himself as ‘A faithful leader’ (l. 933). ‘Was this your discipline and faith engaged’ is the first clause of a series of rhetorical questions designed to enact this refutation. In order to

challenge Satan's exclusively military understanding of his faithful leadership, Gabriel plays on the double meaning of certain words, or juxtaposes religious terms with military ones. He repeatedly chips at the word 'faithful': 'Satan, and couldst thou faithful add?' (l. 950); 'Oh sacred name of faithfulness profaned!' (l. 951); 'Faithful to whom? To thy rebellious crew?' (l. 952). Gabriel's repetition of 'faithful' at this moment is echoed later in Raphael's War in Heaven narrative, in the characterisation of Abdiel as a seraph 'faithful found, | Among the faithless, faithful only he' (V.896-7).⁶⁷ That Gabriel's words resonate with Satan's earlier rhetorical assessment of Adam and Eve suggests an urgent need to rebuff polemically the aspersions cast on the prelapsarian first parents.⁶⁸ Particularly peculiar in this respect, however, is that Gabriel did not actually hear the words of his adversary.⁶⁹ In this echo of Satan's soliloquy, therefore, the loyal angel's office as a mouthpiece for the divine comes to the fore.⁷⁰ It has additionally been noted elsewhere that Gabriel is granted by Milton a unique perspicacity in that he is the first speaker in the poem to call Satan by name: 'Why hast thou, *Satan*, broke the bounds prescrib'd | To thy transgressions?' (IV.878-9).⁷¹ This is quite unlike Uriel, who without further detail can only tell Paradise's chief warden that the disguised visitor who came to him was 'one of the banished crew' (IV.573). With this quasi-divine insight into Satan's identity and

⁶⁷ Notably, it is in Raphael's account of Abdiel's dissenting speech before the rebel angels that Satan is termed 'apostate' (PL V.852).

⁶⁸ This accords with Mary Ann Radzinowicz' understanding of the Fall in *Paradise Lost* as a 'sequential pattern,' in which each proposal of a 'coercive fixed meaning' is met with a 'radical corrective' (cf. 'The Politics of *Paradise Lost*', in *Politics of Discourse*, eds. Sharpe and Zwicker, p. 229).

⁶⁹ There is a critical precedent for this understanding of Milton's angels in Raymond's *Milton's Angels*. In this, Raymond cites Abdiel's departure from Satan, and his attempt to bring news of the rebellion to God: 'bringing news was an activity in which truth and lies competed, as the pamphleteer Milton well knew.' (p. 219). Raymond is also clear on the way in which Milton's angels are bound materially by limited sensory powers, including sight (as Uriel's experience testifies).

⁷⁰ Although Gabriel features within the narrative in the aspect of the warrior, perhaps his unerring comprehension of Satan accords with his role in Luke's Gospel as God's messenger, naming Mary as the Lord's 'highly favoured' (Luke 1:28).

⁷¹ John Leonard, *Naming in Paradise* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 126.

actions, Gabriel's judgment on Satan's 'discipline and faith' is thus marked as authoritative.

The choice of 'discipline and faith' as the synonymous formulation of '*fides et mores*' also encapsulates the shift of tone from Satan's malcontent plotting to the martial circumstances of Gabriel's challenge. Specifically, Gabriel's mention of 'discipline' chimes with the other military language deployed elsewhere in his altercation with Satan, which is at once the spoken component of a tense armed stand-off, and an admonition based on theological grounds. 'Discipline' fits neatly with 'engaged,' to engage being a manoeuvre resulting in close-quarters combat. Alastair Fowler has also noted the double-meaning of this passage in his edition of *Paradise Lost*. He picks up on the moment in which Satan pours scorn on the loyal angels for merely existing to serve God 'High up in heaven, with songs to hymn his throne, | And practised distances to cringe, not fight.' (ll. 944-5). The key phrase here is 'practised distances,' which, Fowler notes, 'belong both to the footwork of combat and the ceremonies of obedience.'⁷² Fowler is correct to identify the double sense of Milton's military language in this passage: the martial lexis appropriate to the episode carries a second, ecclesiastical sense, the key to which lies in reading the word 'discipline' as freighted with both warlike and ecclesiastical meaning.⁷³ Thus, although 'traditional ideas' of warfare do indeed 'serve as essential (and almost forgotten)

⁷² Alastair Fowler, in *PL*, p. 274, note for IV.945.

⁷³ This ecclesiastical sense was missed in the debate over the poetic purpose of military topoi in *Paradise Lost* conducted between Stella Revard, James Freeman, and Robert Thomas Fallon in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In summary, Revard and Freeman considered the portrayal of warfare in *Paradise Lost* as an implicit, even ironical, critique of the views of Milton's contemporaries that war was at once a ruinous and a glorious enterprise. To Fallon, this conclusion smacks of an anachronistic desire to accommodate Milton within contemporary concerns about warfare, in which soldiers become the objects of 'scornful laughter and derision.' See Stella Revard, 'Milton's Critique of Heroic Warfare in *Paradise Lost* V and VI', in *SEL*, 7.1 (Winter, 1967), 119-39; Freeman, *Milton and the Martial Muse*; Fallon, *Captain or Colonel*, p. 5. The argument on this particular subject has since died down. More recently the war in Heaven in *Paradise Lost* has been instructively considered in the light of readers during the Whig ascendancy by Nicholas Von Maltzahn, in 'The War in Heaven and the Miltonic Sublime', in *A Nation Transformed: England after the Restoration*, eds. Alan Houston and Steven Pincus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 154-79.

passwords into *Paradise Lost*,⁷⁴ those who have focussed on this aspect of the text have not taken into account that these ideas as deployed by Milton, just as in the Everard controversy, point beyond early modern notions of martial virtue and towards the burning religious problems of the time.

The verbal skirmish between Gabriel and Satan indicates that the loyal angels perceive the conflict with their fallen opposites as being due to a theological dispute, as is also evident in Raphael's later narration of the War in Heaven.⁷⁵ Their steadfast obedience to God is at the root of their disciplined stance. It is in this aspect that Milton's antipathy to the Roman Catholic Church – and to ecclesiastical malpractice and tyranny in general – becomes incorporated into the verbal texture of the passage. This is subtly evident in the structure of Gabriel's question, 'Was this your discipline and faith engaged, | Your military obedience.' The syntax here is ambivalent with regards to whether or not 'military obedience' is analogous to or distinct from 'discipline and faith.' Its effect is to mark Satan's martial actions as the corollary of the erroneous principles with which he justified turning against God. As such, it recalls Francis Howgill's punning reply to Everard's acclamation of 'the church militant' in *The True Rule* as the 'visible and militant church': the 'military obedience' of Satan and his 'Army of fiends' is merely the product of misled violence and coercion. The question that ends 'to dissolve | Allegiance to the acknowledged power supreme?', is followed by another:

And thou sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored
Heaven's awful monarch? (PL IV.957-60)

The talk of cringing here recalls Satan's dismissal of the loyalist angels's 'practised distances.' Fowler links this to a passage from 'Democritus to the Reader' in Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, which mocks Roman Catholic piety as 'such kissing of

⁷⁴ Freeman, *Milton and the Martial Muse*, p. 5.

⁷⁵ Cf. above, n. 67.

paxes, crucifixes, cringes, duckings.’⁷⁶ Furthermore, it is clear that Gabriel aims to distinguish his true adoration and service from Satan’s in his use of the adverb ‘servilely.’ These slight allusions to contemporary anti-Catholic rhetoric represent more than an attempt by Milton to daub Satan with the brush of popery. Rather, as is indicated by what follows in the discussion between the loyalist and rebel angels, this characterisation aims to mark Satan’s Fall as the origin of all false belief and praxis.

The apocalyptic conclusion of Book IV brings together in concrete imagery the two semantic strands, the martial and the ecclesial, which Milton has built up in the preceding argument. It is in this moment that Milton comes closest to adopting a neo-platonic understanding of his angelic creations, formally treating the postures that each side adopts as indicative of their respective disciplines, the loyalists representing the ideal, and Satan its antithesis.⁷⁷ Satan’s condescending description of Gabriel as ‘Proud limitary cherub’ (971), provoked by the loyal angel’s query of his faithfulness, is in turn answered by the ‘angelic squadron bright’ turning ‘fiery red,’ ‘sharpening in moonèd horns | Their phalanx’ (977-9). Milton’s selection of this defensive formation is apt. The phalanx made the individual soldier responsible for shielding the person next to him; emphasising the ongoing depiction of the loyal angels as united by their faith, which becomes a communal discipline in which one is responsible for another. The phalanx is invoked again in Raphael’s description in Book VI of the great battle in heaven, in which the loyalist angels ‘In cubic phalanx firm advanced entire, | Invulnerable, impenetrably armed’ (VI.399-400). There is a precedent for this also in Milton’s comparative description of presbyterian and prelatical church-government in *The Reason of Church-Government*: whereas the latter is

⁷⁶ Fowler, *PL*, p. 275, note for IV.957-61.

⁷⁷ This is the understanding advocated by Feisal G. Mohamad, who interprets in the angelic orders of *Paradise Lost* a radically reformed ecclesiological ideal utterly different to that found in Pseudo-Dionysius’ *Celestial Hierarchy* (cf. *Anteroom of Divinity*, chs. 4, 5, 6). However, Raymond’s critique of Mohamad’s approach stands: this is not all there is to Milton’s angels, or early modern angels in general: ‘angels are not only other, superior creatures whose duties involve ministering to humans and worshipping God; they are also a means of understanding and describing human creation and salvation.’ (Raymond, ‘With the tongues of angels’, pp. 256-7).

defined as a 'pyramidal structure,' the former is formally 'inglobe[d], or incube[d].'⁷⁸ This depiction of organisational error in the form of a pyramid pertains to the image of Satan at the end of Book IV: the rebel angel is described as standing alarmed and dilated, 'Like Teneriff or Atlas unremoved' (987),⁷⁹ which is no coincidence given that the highest peak on the Canary Island of Tenerife, Mount Teide, is pyramidal. Satan's lone stance, confronted by the loyalist phalanx, mirrors Raphael's later representation of the 'singular' (V.851) Abdiel's stand amongst the rebel angels.⁸⁰ In the former case, however, there is a sense of aberrant swolleness communicated in the adjective 'dilated' that makes Satan's stature seem monstrous.

The figure of the loyalist angels's phalanx may be read as an attempt by Milton to advance a model of discipline for Restoration England's divided Protestant dissenters. As such, this would present a slightly different perspective on those critical readings of Dissent in *Paradise Lost* that have focused on Abdiel's singular stand.⁸¹ In their interdependent formation, the loyal angels depicted in Book IV present a positive image of unity that can be read alongside the sole strident voice of their comrade at the end of Book V. At a deeper level, though, the loyalists's co-operation may also be understood as grounded on the principle of '*fides et mores*' that Gabriel's speech introduces. The formula stands as a cue for the reader on how to determine which of the two opposing formations is 'against faith or maners,' as Milton renders Augustine's formula in *Areopagitica*. Intending to demean their practice (or 'practised distances'), Satan sneers at the loyalists for bearing the yoke of 'heaven's king' (IV.973). With utter self-centredness, he lauds his

⁷⁸ YP 1.790. This early instance of phalanx-like formations as ecclesiologically virtuous is picked up by Christopher Tilmouth as one of the 'the *leitmotifs* of [Milton's] imagination' (Tilmouth, 'Early Poems and Prose', in *Young Milton*, p. 281, 301).

⁷⁹ Cf. Fowler, *PL*, p. 277, note to ll. 985-7.

⁸⁰ Milton's adoption of the 'singular' as a mark of virtue rather than foolish nonconformity is the basis of Colin Burrow's 2008 Lady Margaret lecture entitled 'Milton's Singularity'. The podcast for Burrow's lecture is available at http://milton.christs.cam.ac.uk/podcasts/burrow_milton.mp3 (address last checked June 1st, 2013).

⁸¹ Cf. Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*, pp. 120-21. This can also be seen in Fallon, *Milton's Peculiar Grace*, pp. 203-210. Fallon focuses in particular on the parallels between the characterisation of Abdiel and Milton's own self-representations.

own 'prevailing arm' and martial valour as sufficient without the help of God. This monstrous parody of martial heroism, and the apocalyptic background on which it appears, is to an extent redolent of the solitary 'triple Tyrant' that features in the sonnet 'On the late Massacre in Piedmont' (1655?). In this, Milton identifies the temporal machinations of the Papacy as the root cause of the slaughter of the Waldensians. Although this identification is only revealed in the second half of the concluding sestet, through the metonymic papal three-tiered crown, the message that the Pope is Antichrist is explicit.⁸² In the passage at the end of Book IV of *Paradise Lost*, however, the hints of prejudicial anti-Catholic rhetoric form part of a greater burden, which is to present to the reader a very stark question: who or what in this scene is 'neque contra fidem, neque contra bonos mores'?⁸³

The co-operative concept of discipline embodied by the loyal angels at the end of Book IV, which is grounded on their unanimous obedience and faith in God, is developed further in the post-lapsarian vision described in Books XI and XII of *Paradise Lost*, in which the formula is reiterated. Although this second iteration of the formula is in different terms and applies its content to human rather than angelic life, the concept of discipline which emerges from Milton's use of the formula is the same. Whereas Gabriel's appropriation of '*fides et mores*' in the skirmish that ends Book IV invites the reader to discern the righteousness of the opposing parties, these latter books switch the reader's focus to the vagaries of human history. The formula itself is seen subtly in Michael's discussion of the purpose of Mosaic Law in his homily to Adam:

So law appears imperfect, and but given
With purpose to resign them in full time
Up to a better covenant, disciplined

⁸² John Milton, 'On the late Massacre in Piedmont (Sonnet XV)', in *Complete Shorter Poems*, l. 12.

⁸³ Augustine, 'First Letter to Januarius (CXVIII)' (see above, Introduction, n. 92).

From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,
 From imposition of strict laws, to free
 Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear
 To filial, works of law to works of faith.
 (XII.300-6)

The transition 'From shadowy types to truth' is customarily glossed in relation to Christian typology.⁸⁴ Milton's language at this point is certainly indebted to the passage in St Paul's *Letter to the Galatians*, in which the Law is portrayed as 'our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.' (Galatians 3:24). However, in the use of 'disciplined' as the sentence's main verb, and in the concluding sub-clause 'works of law to works of faith,' the earlier hermeneutic question posed by 'Was this your discipline and faith' in Book IV is revived. Michael's reiteration is didactic in purpose, rather than polemical, as it is in the dialogue between Gabriel and Satan. It is also delivered without the threat of impending violence that runs through the earlier episode, as is fitting given the epic's shift into the subject of unsung 'patience and heroic martyrdom' (IX.32).

The principal difference between Gabriel's iteration of '*fides et mores*' and Michael's is that where Gabriel uses the simple construction 'discipline and faith,' Michael incorporates a string of 'From [...] to' sub-clauses between the two key words – 'disciplined | From shadowy types to truth [...] to works of faith' – which disrupts any attempt to read them as closely related, in line with Augustine's well-known formulation. This ultimately presents Adam with a choice between the understandings connoted by 'discipline' and 'works of faith.' This distinction is made more acute by the semantic closeness of the two terms; indeed, the first and second chapters of this thesis indicate that Milton himself, during the 1640s, would have failed to distinguish between them.⁸⁵ In Michael's homily, however, there is a difference. Discipline is used to describe the

⁸⁴ Cf. William G. Madsen, *From Shadowy Types to Truth* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 75-7. For critique of Milton's typological practices, and his debt to Paul, cf. Jason P. Rosenblatt, *Torah and Law in Paradise Lost* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 149.

⁸⁵ However, none of the works by Milton studied in these chapters use the phrase 'works of faith.'

procedure through which Law works to prepare humanity for Jesus' better covenant, the narration of which follows immediately after the end of the quoted sentence. Discipline also denotes the Mosaic Law's flaws as well as its transformative power: 'the law by ceremonies | Cannot appease, nor man the moral part | Perform, and performing cannot live' (XII.297-99). As such, it is distinguishable from 'works of faith.' Through the use of the preposition, this latter phrase determines 'works' (indicating praxis) as the product of 'faith' (indicating assent to Christian doctrine). This represents a significant revision of '*fides et mores*,' in that through rejecting the use of a simple conjunction, 'works' and 'faith' are pulled together in a way that reveals the fullness and complexity of their relationship in Milton's thinking. True Christian praxis stems from belief in the claims of the Gospel, yet it also allows this belief to have meaning in human interaction: in line with Milton's Arminian soteriology, this belief is nothing without its expression in action. This understanding should, first and foremost, inform the behaviour of the individual; it is only by the virtuous actions of the individual that the practice of a congregation and the organisation of a society are made virtuous.

The distinction made in this passage between 'discipline' and 'works of faith' also intimates a considerable development in Milton's concept of discipline. Tying the word itself to the concept of the Law, in a Pauline homily working towards the triumph of the Gospel, Milton places the ideal of discipline on the wrong side of his salvation history. In its place, Michael's 'works of faith' would seem to indicate how Milton understood what was signified by the '*mores*' (or, as in *De Doctrina*, '*pietas*') that is required alongside '*fides*.' Michael emphasises the need for faithfulness and patience as being of a higher priority than merely church practice, which reflects how Milton's thinking on the matter had changed since, in *Doctrine and Discipline* (1644) and *Areopagitica*, he had translated '*mores*' as 'maners' to participate in a specifically ecclesial debate. This can be seen when the phrase recurs at the point in the angel's narrative at which the Son's apocalyptic return is

imminent, when due to persecution 'works of faith | [shall] rarely be found' (XII.536-7). Upheld as distinct from 'outward rites and specious forms' (XII.534), this confirms the development of Milton's thought since 1644. Where in the tracts of that year his concept of discipline, shaped by its context, reflected a number of potentially contradictory elements, by 1667 his argument displays the unmixed conviction that 'works of faith' had superseded discipline as the true sign of faithful Christian praxis. Following Augustine's advice to Januarius to its radical conclusion, everything else – covenant, congregation, all aspects of the visible Church beside ethical behaviour – was indifferent, and therefore not to be upheld through coercion.⁸⁶

Milton's radical revision of his own understanding of discipline, as it is presented in Michael's homily to Adam, gives reason for a brief re-evaluation of the argument between Gabriel and Satan at the end of Book IV, and the contemporary ecclesiastical anxieties that it implies. The contrast in the passage between the 'discipline and faith' of Gabriel and that of Satan seems initially to be starkly straightforward. The rebel angel's seductive rhetoric is subverted by his own monstrous pride, whereas Gabriel's inhuman vehemence and the unbreakable martial order of his loyalist comrades represent an awe-inspiring though unattainable ideal. The tone of ironic incredulity that laces Gabriel's question 'Was this your discipline and faith' suggests that very little consideration is necessary in judging Satan's actions according to '*fides et mores*.' With regard to Gabriel's actions, however, as well as those of his peers, Michael's words indicate that what Milton truly values in the loyal angels is not their discipline, so much as the faithfulness from which their discipline stems. Although 'the angelic squadron bright' are well-drilled and ordered in their phalanx, their rout of Satan is due to their faith in God. This is certainly Gabriel's interpretation of the allegorical golden scales that appear above the two parties:

⁸⁶ David Loewenstein has read the same passage of *Paradise Lost* with reference to attacks on spiritual tyranny in Milton's prose (cf. *Milton and the Drama of History*, p. 118).

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowst mine,
 Neither our own but given; what folly then
 To boast what arms can do, since thine no more
 Than heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now
 To trample thee as mire (IV.1006-10)

This idealistic image of angelic order reflects back onto the distinction made between 'works of faith' and 'discipline' in Book XII. As has been stated, the earlier passage seems to have been written to resonate with the threat of joint religious and military coercion and persecution that Milton's first readers would have recognised. Subtly invoking the fear of 'Popery' suited this end, as does the expressed urge to unite and strike back with force against the enemy. But, with reference to Michael's hermeneutic of true 'works of faith,' the message communicated to English dissenters in Book IV is to co-operate patiently with one another and to be faithful.⁸⁷

* * *

Through its careful semantic distinction between 'discipline' and 'works of faith,' *Paradise Lost* marks a critical departure in terms of the development of Milton's concept of discipline. It has been stated elsewhere that the epic stands as the Protestant ethic re-written; with reference to Weber's theory, it has been read as replacing corporal punishment and other external methods of control with a mandate for 'a particular kind of inner discipline.'⁸⁸ A similar conclusion is reached when contemplating the representation of the concept in its ecclesial sense. Milton's anti-prelatical tracts and his writings on divorce cleave to 'discipline' as the descriptor of an idealized state of reform,

⁸⁷ This conclusion lends further weight to Achinstein's reading of Milton's Christianity as not exclusively rational or voluntarist: 'Milton is just as committed to a dependency upon that which is beyond human capacity, upon the affective experience of the regenerative power of divine grace. Milton's emphasis on works and faith have led many to align him with a voluntarist theology, but, in the matter of faith, "works" for Milton are not autonomous; that is, they cannot be fully "owned" by their doers.' (Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*, p. 145).

⁸⁸ Knoppers's 'Rewriting the Protestant Ethic: Discipline and Love in *Paradise Lost*', p. 555.

despite the contrary totalitarian conception of the term emanating from the Scottish Kirk and other quarters. Although it presses for the orthodoxy of its own position, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* actually concedes coercive powers to the Church in order to prevent 'open vice, and frantic heresy, or else inward[...] repining and blasphemous thoughts.' This earlier mixed conception of discipline was simultaneously enamoured with the organizational virtues of Reformed church government, and repulsed by its prurient concern for the regulation of the domestic sphere. *Paradise Lost* resolves this conflict in the two moments in which the word 'discipline' is used: Gabriel's admonition of Satan and the confrontation that ensues, and Michael's discourse to Adam on how the Law works to discipline humanity in preparation for the Gospel. Without abandoning his conviction of the importance of ecclesiastical order, Milton nevertheless stresses in the poem that such a state is worthless without the faithfulness of those within that order. From such a perspective all forms of coercion are to be considered as antithetical to this ideal of faithfulness; instead, restraint is to be treated as an ethical imperative, the maintenance of which is the responsibility of each individual. Of particular interest here is how this ethos is communicated through the appropriation of Augustine's hermeneutic formula '*fides et mores*.' Over the last two decades, scholars of the early modern have come to understand that 'the history of orthodox ideologies and cultural practices in England needs to be understood in terms of a dynamic process of dialogue with heterodoxy.'⁸⁹ In this light, we may also see Milton's engagement with Counter-Reformation notions of orthopraxy as resulting in a liberated form of heteropraxy. As the next chapter demonstrates, the concept of discipline endured as an expression of individual godly piety in Milton's works published after the Act of Uniformity in 1662, but the word that had previously signified it did not.

⁸⁹ McDowell, *English Radical Imagination*, p. 9. At this point, McDowell is referring to the understanding communicated in Roger D. Lund's 'Introduction' and J.G.A. Pocock's essay 'Within the Margins: the Definitions of Orthodoxy' in Lund, ed., *The Margins of Orthodoxy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

4. *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*: Milton's Piety in Restoration England

How to signify the concept of discipline when—for reasons of circumstance, conscience or otherwise—the word 'discipline' itself no longer serves as a suitable signifier? As the previous chapter of this thesis argues, this is one of the problems that Milton articulates in *Paradise Lost*. Clearly Milton could no longer say, as he does in *The Reason of Church-government* (1642) with brash confidence, through a meld of the classical exemplars Cyrus and Scipio and the fervent rhetoric once employed by the Elizabethan puritans, that 'discipline is not only the removall of disorder, but if any visible shape can be given to divine things, the very visible shape and image of virtue.'¹ The second and third chapters of this thesis offer a context-based account for how he may have arrived at this point. Whilst not reticent in appropriating the word to describe its own position, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1644) scorns the notion of discipline adhered to by Scottish and English Presbyterian ultras as nourishing 'violent affections in youth, by cockring and wanton indulgences,' and then chastising them 'in mature age with a boyish rod of correction.'² Mindful of the Index and the Inquisition, and of the persecution of Dissenters after the Act of Uniformity in 1662 by the Established Church of England, *Paradise Lost* goes further than Milton's early vernacular prose in carefully distinguishing between 'discipline' itself and 'works of faith.' These works track the formation of an association in Milton's imagination and thought between the word 'discipline' and coercive ecclesiastical practice. Even though *De Doctrina Christiana* (1659?) makes use of 'church Discipline' ['*Disciplina ecclesiastica*'] to denote the principles of a loosely Congregationalist and non-coercive form of government, it does so in a strictly limited way; the term is not freighted with the same level of semantic and conceptual complexity

¹ YP 1.751.

² YP 2.352-53. Specifically, the passage quoted here refers to the theologian Paraeus.

as it is in the anti-prelatical tracts.³ *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, the two works that comprise the 1671 volume, would seem to confirm this problematic association, given that the word 'discipline' does not appear in either. Rather than intimating a complete retreat from the concept of discipline itself, however, these late poems show Milton engaging with it in new terms that better engage with his Restoration circumstances.⁴

Instead of 'discipline,' 'piety' is the pre-eminent term through which Milton's 1671 volume maintains its engagement with the concept, and builds this new lexis on the understanding of 'works of faith' proclaimed by Michael in *Paradise Lost*.⁵ The figures of Jesus and Samson are depicted as acting according to their own respective notions of piety, as well as being moved to teach it to—or defend it against—others. Thus, in *Paradise Regained*, Jesus' notion of piety is bound up with the burgeoning awareness of his own messianic vocation: he declares the cessation of all oracles with the statement that God has sent 'his spirit of truth henceforth to dwell | In pious hearts, an inward oracle | To all truth requisite for men to know.'⁶ Furthermore, these notions of piety are examined dialectically through the contrary views of those with whom the poems's protagonists converse. For example, in *Samson Agonistes*, Dalila leaves her husband with the boast that the Philistine public will honour and reward her for 'the piety | Which to my country I was judged to have shown.'⁷ In the contrast between Samson and Dalila (and Jesus and

³ Cf. above, Introduction, pp. 1-3.

⁴ To an extent this can be said regardless of the dispute over when each poem was originally composed. Nevertheless, there is no reason to discount the estimations made by John Carey in his Longman edition: '1665-7?' for *Samson Agonistes*, and '1667-70' for *Paradise Regained*. Cf. *Complete Shorter Poems*, p. 349, 417. Indeed, the 1671 volume's recent editor for the OCW, Knoppers, places much greater interpretative emphasis on the publication date. Cf. 'General Introduction', in OCW II.

⁵ Cf. above, in Ch. 3, Milton's use of 'pietatis' in *De Doctrina Christiana*.

⁶ PR, I.462-4. From henceforth, the line references for the quotations taken from this volume shall be noted parenthetically in the text.

⁷ SA, II.993-4. As stated in the previous footnote, from this point on the line references for the quotations taken from this volume shall be noted parenthetically in the text.

Satan), and through comparison between *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*,⁸ a distinctive approach to the discourse of piety may be discerned, on which Milton bases much of his ethical and poetical stance. To an extent this emphasis on 'piety' has been marked by scholars and critics interested in the Stoic, or anti-Stoic, principles exhibited in these works. On the critical understanding that Milton was unable to balance adequately the Classical and Christian elements of his poetic genius, Milton's late poems have been categorised as evidence that his ethical position was essentially Stoic.⁹ As this chapter will demonstrate, however, this understanding must be qualified with reference to the volume's evident interaction with the predominant contemporary discourse of Christian piety, or 'holy living,' following the Restoration that proceeds from Milton's diminished use of the term 'discipline.'

'Holy living' was the popular refrain of a significant and powerful portion of the restored Church of England, denoting the form of piety that was judged to be warranted by the miraculous return of the Stuart monarchy and episcopal government. Its foundations were laid during the First Civil War and the Interregnum in a number of works by High Church divines including Henry Hammond, Jeremy Taylor and Richard Allestree. Piety manuals such as *The Whole Duty of Man* characteristically emphasised moral obedience to God, manifested in pious behaviour, as a prerequisite to attaining salvation. This approach clearly contradicted contemporary orthodox Calvinist teaching on predestination and justification by faith alone. In *The Restoration Church of England*, John Spurr has argued that the new piety was taken up by conformist clergy following the Restoration in order 'to fill a gap in the church's pastoral discipline,' and thereby bolster

⁸ A prime example of the adoption and exploration of this comparative critical lens is the collection of essays edited by Balachandra Rajan, *The Prison and the Pinnacle*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973).

⁹ This is the position espoused eloquently by Richard Strier, 'Milton against humility'. A similar one is taken up by Andrew Shifflett, in *Stoicism, politics, and literature in the age of Milton*, esp. ch. 5: 'John Milton: the Stoicism of history and providence'. Rivers argues vociferously against such a reading in *The Poetry of Conservatism*.

parochial ministry.¹⁰ Written in an uncontroversial tone, these works aimed to reach out and engender moral and spiritual improvement in the individual believer in a way that preaching and liturgy could not. It has been argued elsewhere that the promotion of holy living by the Church of England's hierarchy was an instrumental part of the Restoration regime's attempt to control the populace: in conformist piety manuals religious and political duty 'became indistinguishable (just as religious dissent became indistinguishable from sedition): good Christians [were] loyal subjects.'¹¹ However, although loyalty to the magistrate is certainly of great importance in works written by the divines named above, this emphasis was only a part of the 'holy living' phenomenon, and to focus on it reduces the works of Hammond, Taylor and Allestree to mere state propaganda. Indeed, the number of popular Nonconformist imitations of these ostensibly Anglican piety manuals is testimony to the breadth and depth of their reception in English society.¹²

The following study of the depiction of piety in *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, in this context, serves to shed new light on Milton's ongoing entanglement with ecclesiastical affairs in Restoration England, Dissenting and otherwise. Recent studies of the 1671 volume have successfully reacquainted scholars with the poems's place as part of the culture of Dissent.¹³ This chapter provides further detail of this culture's bounds, and what lies beyond them, by reading Milton's piety through its relationship with the 'holy living' phenomenon. It instantiates the critical perception of the 1671 volume as

¹⁰ Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England*, p. 286. Also cf. Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment*, esp. pp. 20-22.

¹¹ Keeble, *The Restoration*, p. 128.

¹² Citing the additional influence of earlier Calvinist piety manuals by Lewis Bayly and Thomas Becon, Ian Green marks out Thomas Gouge's *Christian directions* (1661) and Richard Alleine's *Vindiciae pietatis* (1663) as the particular Nonconformist beneficiaries of Allestree's *The Whole Duty of Man*. Richard Baxter also endorsed this work, as did the puritan turned conformist John Rawlet, who wrote his own proselytising manual, *The Christian Monitor* (1686). Cf. Green, *Print and Protestantism*, p. 353. Green's attitude to popular religion after the Restoration is guided by Sommerville, *Popular Religion*.

¹³ Cf. Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*; Keeble, *Literary Culture of Nonconformity*; and also Knoppers, *Historicizing Milton*.

containing 'divergent political and religious responses' that exceed the interpretations of those who have read *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* in the light of post-Restoration Quakerism, and other radical religious contexts.¹⁴ The stance towards 'holy living' projected in the 1671 volume, it is argued here, can be characterised as one of outspoken disgust for the Anglican political application of piety, but also of a concurrent – if conflicted – sympathy with the theological and moral principles with which this piety was informed. This conflicted understanding of 'holy living' can be seen in the poems's anticlerical rhetoric, railing against the material excesses of 'the well-feasted priest,' as well as in those passages that deal with the notions of piety, duty and zeal. Together *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* refine and tease apart elements of the dominant Anglican ideology of piety, which essentially amalgamated political and religious duty, in order to reveal the nature of 'true' piety – purely spiritual and without obligation to the magistrate – through the poetic medium.

This chapter therefore considers not only Milton's concept of piety, but how this piety is made manifest in his poetical practice. As was shown in the first chapter of this thesis, Milton had long embraced literary form as a method of disciplining his readers and provoking spiritual engagement. The piety manuals of Hammond, Taylor and Allestree employed a different approach to the same endeavour, in that their literary form sought to bring about moral change in their readers through instructions on how often and when they should be read, and broke their content down through regular divisions and subheadings, but even so there are commonalities between their approach and that of Milton. The poems of the 1671 volume may be understood as engaging with this catechetical style through their structure and distinctive use of dialogic forms.¹⁵ Analysis

¹⁴ Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution*, p. 294. Campbell and Corns also identify a 'Quakerish pacifism' in the Son's responses to Satan in *Paradise Regained* (C&C, JM, p. 364).

¹⁵ Regarding the enormous range of English Protestant catechisms, and the centrality of this written form (and its spoken counterpart) to the progress of the Reformation in England, see Ian Green,

of this feature indicates the contemporary polemical and ecclesiological edge to Milton's 'textual ethics,' which has been defined as 'the perseverant and transformative performance of texts in and on those who produce and consume them, and the relative openness of readers and writers to transformation.'¹⁶ Milton's poetics of piety, as displayed in his later poems, re-imagines his career-long concept of discipline, but also harks back to the polemical practices that he had adopted in *Of Reformation* and the other anti-prelatical tracts. Although concerned primarily with persuading the reader to change his moral behaviour on an individual level, this is not to say that *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* are proof of Milton's quietist transcendence over controversial political and ecclesiological issues.¹⁷ On the contrary, in their critique of Anglican 'holy living,' with its emphasis on pious quiescence, the two poems depict piety as a radical choice to live exclusively under one's own—and God's—restraints. Furthermore, they mark out truly pious action as the inalienable condition for ecclesiological organization.¹⁸

The aim of this chapter is to deliver a reading of Milton's poetics of piety in the 1671 volume, and how this emerged from his intensive critique of Anglican 'holy living.' In order to reach this, it first establishes the basic theological principles that were propounded in the 'holy living' piety manuals, as well as their generic and formal

The Christian's ABC: Catechisms and Catechizing in England c. 1530-1740 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

¹⁶ Marshall Grossman, 'Textual ethics: Reading Transference in *Samson Agonistes*', in *Reading Renaissance Ethics*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p. 85. The critical issue of Milton's ethical humanism as expressed in his poetry (in particular *Paradise Lost*), and how this pertains to the moral thought of his contemporaries (in particular Richard Baxter), is covered in Paul Cefalu's essay 'Moral Pragmatism in the Theology of Milton and his Contemporaries, or *Habitus* Historicized', in *MS 39* (2000), 129-66.

¹⁷ Cf. Samuel Taylor Coleridge's appraisal of *Paradise Lost*: 'In [Milton's] mind itself there were purity and piety absolute; an imagination to which neither the past nor the present were interesting, except as far as they called forth and enlivened the great ideal in which and for which he lived' (in James Thorpe, ed., *Milton Criticism: Selections from Four Centuries* [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951], p. 97).

¹⁸ In this point, the ensuing chapter bears some similarity to the argument advanced by Ken Simpson, *Spiritual Architecture and Paradise Regained: Milton's Literary Ecclesiology* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2007). However, this chapter, and indeed this thesis, takes a different course to that of Simpson, in that it does not see in *Paradise Regained* the continuation of Milton's civil war and interregnum ecclesiological thought. Rather, it considers the two poems of the 1671 volume as signs of an inextricable change in Milton's stance on discipline and the Church.

features. This expository task is done with particular reference to the phenomenon's originary texts: Allestree's *The Whole Duty of Man*, Taylor's *Holy Living* and Hammond's *Practicall Catechisme*. Next, the chapter moves on to outline the ways in which these works were used by the Anglican hierarchy during the 1660s and 70s, with reference to contemporary sermons and anti-Nonconformist polemics. Of particular interest here is the canon of works published and re-printed during the first two decades after 1660 and attributed to the author of *The Whole Duty of Man*. This franchise indicates the ideological proximity between 'holy living' and certain senior members of the Anglican hierarchy, who prefaced its various works with sincere recommendations, despite the fact that the author's name was a very well kept secret.¹⁹ It was this political appropriation of 'holy living' that attracted Milton's ire in his 1671 volume, which rejects utterly the link between piety and State. Having established this context, the chapter's third section considers how *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* each negotiate with the soteriology and style of the 'holy living' corpus, and also with its function as a component of the restored Anglican hierarchy's aggressive ideology. Through his dawning understanding of his own messianic office and through Satan's testing – from both of which the poem's dramatic interest stems²⁰ – Jesus in *Paradise Regained* stands as the exemplar of true piety. In being placed after the brief epic, *Samson Agonistes* tests Jesus' pious example by presenting the reader with a series of dilemmas. The conversation between Samson and Dalila, which dwells on their respective and conflicting notions of piety, prepares the way for the contemplation of Samson's final act, demanding that the reader judge whether it is truly ordained by God, or the result of erroneous self-discernment. Milton's poetics of piety stands out as a crucial and previously unacknowledged component of the 1671

¹⁹ The case for Allestree as the author of *The Whole Duty of Man* is made conclusively by Paul Elmen, 'Richard Allestree and *The Whole Duty of Man*', in *LIB* 1 (1951), 19-27.

²⁰ This is the position articulated forcefully by Teskey, *Delirious Milton*, p.157.

volume's 'print event.'²¹ *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* work to resist the poisonous aspects of contemporary mores, as embodied by the official piety of the established Church. In one sense, their complicated engagement speaks of the emergent disentanglement of 'the doctrine and practice of religion [...] from the business of politics' in the late seventeenth century and the early Enlightenment.²² More importantly, though, it intimates Milton's lingering conviction that Christian practice and the politics of religion were inextricable, entangled by dire necessity.

* * *

Henry Hammond's *Practicall Catechisme* (1644/45), Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living* (1650), and Richard Allestree's *The Whole Duty of Man* (1657) represent the founding canon of Restoration conformist piety. They were 'indispensable books required by the devout Anglican, to be found in the student's chamber or in the prisoner's cell,'²³ and as such formed a culture of Anglican piety with which Milton, even if he had not read the three works, necessarily engaged. Each of the three works may be characterised as advancing a theological outlook that combined Arminian doctrine with a common set of moral imperatives. Current historiography sees this as arising from a severe anti-Calvinist reaction brought on by the authors's experiences during and after the civil wars. Isabel Rivers marks Hammond as the progenitor of this approach, with Taylor and Allestree as his apostles: '[Hammond's] characteristic terms – condition, repentance, duty, obedience, and performance – are central to the enormously popular and influential handbooks of

²¹ Knoppers, OCW II.iii. To be clear, however, Knoppers's main focus is on Milton's and his publisher John Starkey's engagement with the controversial parliamentary business of the time, namely Lord Roos's Divorce Bill, and the renewal of the Conventicles Bill.

²² Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*, p. 4. The beginnings of this 'disentanglement' have been considered by Mark Goldie, 'Priestcraft and the birth of Whiggism', pp. 209-31. Goldie's important essay is focused in particular on explicating the transmutation of mid-seventeenth century Puritanism into enlightenment Whiggery.

²³ *Restoration Church of England*, p. 283.

the 1650s, *Holy Living* and *The Whole Duty of Man*.²⁴ As if to confirm this link, Hammond penned a foreword for Allestree's *Whole Duty of Man*, despite apparently not knowing the connection between the text and its anonymous author. To aid in differentiating these works from their application by the restored Anglican hierarchy in the decades after 1660, and therefore to establish the basic understanding of Anglican piety with which Milton engaged in the 1671 volume, this expository section will outline the theological and moral principles that unite them in concise terms, without going into lengthy detail. It will also consider the literary forms that Hammond, Taylor and Allestree adopted in order to articulate these principles.

The chief theological element that binds *Practicall Catechisme*, *Holy Living* and *Whole Duty of Man* together is their distinctive Arminian soteriology. Each work insists, in one way or another, that salvation is conditional on the continued good behaviour of the regenerate Christian. This important common feature set them against the Calvinist inheritance of the early Stuart Church, which thought in distinct terms of justification and sanctification. Denying human agency in the actual attainment of salvation, Reformed theology taught that Christians are freely justified 'by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and we are thereby established in a relationship to God which enables us to perform the works of sanctification.'²⁵ It was only once the believer was assured of their justification that they could perform 'the works of salvation.'²⁶ The shock of the novel 'moral' theology espoused by the 'holy living' divines thus lies in the way in which it blurs the theological bounds between justification and sanctification. Described as reconciling James with Paul – the good works of the former with the saving faith of the

²⁴ Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment*, p. 21. Green has written that Hammond's *Practicall Catechisme* should be distinguished from its imitators on the grounds that it was written specifically for a small but influential constituency of 'students completing a university course and well exercised in the more advanced catechistical works of the day' (*Christian's ABC*, p. 203). On the prevalence of Calvinist theology in Early Stuart England, cf. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants*.

²⁵ Allison, *The Rise of Moralism*, p. 186.

²⁶ Scholarship on the damaging psychological effects of this indelibly Calvinist theological system has been neatly summarised by Martin, *Milton among the Puritans* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 175-211.

latter²⁷ – this can be seen as early as Hammond's *Practicall Catechisme*, in a passage outlining the conditions of salvation. Catechist instructs Scholler that these conditions are not

1. *perfect, exact, unsinning obedience*, never to offend at all in any kinde of sinne, [...] nor 2 is it never to *have* committed any deliberate sinne in the former life, nor 3 never to have gone on or continued in any habituall or customary sinne for the time past, but it is positively the new creature, or renewed sincere honest faithfull obedience to the whole Gospell, giving up the whole heart unto Christ, the performing of that which God enables us to performe, and bewailing our infirmities, and frailties, and sinnes, both of the past & present life, and beseeching Gods pardon in Christ for all such; and sincerely labouring to mortify every sin, and performe uniforme obedience to God, and from every fall rising again by repentance and reformation.²⁸

Catechist's answer here betrays a note of trepidation in the way that it is first given in the negative, before moving on to the positive. It acknowledges that the soteriological doctrine espoused here will be considered by convinced Calvinists to be dangerously novel.²⁹ The precise, enumerated structure of the first part of the sentence is clarificatory, in that it pre-empts accusations that in determining salvation as conditional on good behaviour, the bar is being set impossibly high. This is then powerfully underscored by the movement into the sentence's second part following the 'but.' The enumeration ceases and Catechist's positive argument tumbles out, its clauses and sub-clauses building up to posit that regenerate Christians, incapable of moral perfection by themselves, may attain salvation by aspiring to moral perfection through God's enabling grace and by a continued cycle of 'repentance and reformation.' A further indication of Hammond's soteriology lies in the sentence's syntactic ordering, which places 'sincere honest faithfull

²⁷ This is the position of George Bull in his *Harmonica Apostolica* (1669): cf. *Restoration Church of England*, p. 312; also Nicholas Tyacke, 'Religious controversy during the seventeenth century: the case of Oxford', in *Aspects of English Protestantism*, p. 297.

²⁸ Henry Hammond, *A practicall catechisme* (Oxford: 1645), pp. 12-13.

²⁹ Relevant here is the common use of 'Arminian' and 'Socinian' as polemical barbs used by Calvinist divines against their opponents, and the distorting effect this has on the understanding of those to whom the barbs were applied. Cf. Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2010), p. 7; and Tyacke, *Aspects*, pp. 322-23.

obedience to the whole Gospell' before 'pardon of sins.' As with the other 'holy living' handbooks, this dismisses any notion of double predestination: rather than attaining salvation by God flexing his arbitrary will, the individual must actively choose to be saved.³⁰

This variety of Arminian soteriology directly informs the predominant moral content of the 'holy living' handbooks, in that satisfying its terms is treated as being dependent on the believer's religious, personal and neighbourly conduct. It is this aspect that was most congenial to those in the Restoration Church of England seeking to uphold the new regime, and against which Milton reacted most strongly in the 1671 volume. The division of morality into these three distinct spheres is derived from the three divines's shared interpretation of the following passage in the Epistle to Titus:

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. (Titus 2:11-15)

In their own distinct ways, Hammond, Taylor, and Allestree apply these verses to their elucidation of 'holy living.' This is made particularly plain in the introduction of *Whole Duty of Man*, which seizes on the terms 'soberly,' 'righteously' and 'godly,' interpreting them as follows: 'where the word *soberly* contains our *duty* to our *selves*, *righteously*, our duty to our *neighbour*, and *Godly*, our *duty* to *God*.' He continues: 'these therefore shall be the heads of my discourse, our *duty* to *God*, our *selves*, and our *neighbour*.'³¹ In that his work seizes on these words as the main structural principle of his work, Allestree alludes to its immediate literary predecessor, Taylor's *Holy Living*. This earlier handbook's branching explication of the moral parts of Christianity, which is set out under the chapter

³⁰ Cf. Mortimer, pp. 124-5.

³¹ Richard Allestree (?), *The practice of Christian graces, or, The whole duty of man* (London: T. Garthwaite, 1658), p. 4.

heading 'Of Christian Sobriety,' commences with the same passage from Titus, which Taylor refers to as 'the Apostles Arithmetick.'³² Both Allestree's and Taylor's works are indebted to Hammond's *Practicall Catechisme* in this regard, which declares that in the epistle 'it is mentioned as a speciall designe and end of the appearing of *Christ*, that we should be instructed to walke *justly, and piously, and soberly in this present world* [...] in those three the whole duty of man [is] comprized.'³³ What sets Hammond's use of Titus apart from his imitators, however, is that it comes towards the end of the work, under the heading 'Of Sobriety,' as the culmination of Scholler's catechism. Rather than use the apostle's words as the reader's way in to the comprehension of piety, *Practicall Catechisme* partitions its exposition of Christian morality on the basis of the virtues preached by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

Underlying this Pauline categorisation of ethics is a common concern with the relationship between natural law and the law that Christ revealed through his teaching and example. The extent to which Hammond, Taylor and Allestree considered the two to be related varied, although in general their works depict Christ's revelation as being the truer, higher, greater manifestation of the law of nature. This link was congenial to their High Church convictions, in that it functioned as a rationale for refuting the antinomian position which argues that those justified by God receive dispensation from the moral – or natural – law (which they perceived as the hallmark of the sects).³⁴ Hammond's Catechist describes the Sermon on the Mount as 'raising nature to a higher pitch.'³⁵ Allestree writes that 'though *Christ* have brought greater light into the world, yet he never meant by it to put out any of that *Natural* light, which God had set up in our *souls*.'³⁶ Taylor went further than either of the other two 'holy living' divines in that he makes almost no distinction

³² Jeremy Taylor, *Holy Living*, 5th ed. (London: Richard Royston, 1655), p. 64.

³³ Hammond, p. 291.

³⁴ Cf. *Restoration Church of England*, p. 304.

³⁵ Hammond, p. 53.

³⁶ Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, p. 2.

between nature and revelation: 'Christian Religion in all its moral parts is nothing else but the Law of Nature and great Reason.'³⁷ The caveat 'in all its moral parts' leaves room for Christ's revelation, but his writing on the subject in other works was enough to draw the ire of Hammond, who held as a point of Royalist policy that the maintenance of a distinction between nature and revelation was essential.³⁸

Inseparable from this anti-Calvinist emphasis on moral behaviour as a condition for salvation in the 'holy living' manuals is the matter of style, which includes the reading practices that the texts advocate. In making their appeals to the reader through demonstrable, reasonable, and simple argument, the works of the 'holy living' corpus further demonstrate their reliance on the concept of humanity's natural reason. This can be seen in Allestree's preface, which declares that the use of his book 'needs no deep learning, or extraordinary parts, the simplest man living [...] hath understanding enough for it if he will but act in this by the same rules of common reason, whereby he proceeds in his worldly business.'³⁹ This form of 'plain style' may have roots in the writings of Laud as well as those of the Great Tew circle.⁴⁰ Other influential predecessors include those works of explicitly Calvinist-conformist piety by Lewis Bayly and Thomas Becon which make use of dialogic techniques and emphasise the plainness of scripture above all things.⁴¹ The 'holy living' manuals of Hammond, Taylor, and Allestree may be distinguished in the way in which they advance their soteriology reliant on natural reason by adapting styles previously associated with the apparently contradictory theological

³⁷ Taylor, p. 64.

³⁸ Along with his fellow Royalist Dudley Digges, Hammond held that 'it had been important to preserve a contrast between the rights of nature and the laws of Christ; this contrast strengthened their critique of Parliamentary resistance theories and Erastian ecclesiology which, they felt, were based upon false ideas about natural law.' (Mortimer, p. 143).

³⁹ Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, sig. a^r.

⁴⁰ Roger Pooley, 'Anglicans, Puritans and Plain Style', in *1642: Literature and Power in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Francis Barker (Colchester: University of Essex, 1981), pp. 198-9.

⁴¹ Green, *Print and Protestantism*. Also cf. Kenneth J.E. Graham, *The Performance of Conviction* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

outlooks of their antecedents. There are three principal aspects in which this can be seen, each of which is explored below.

The first common feature is the enumeration and advocacy of spiritual virtues by demonstrating the undesirability and inefficacy of contrary human vices. This can be seen in *Whole Duty of Man*, in the partition entitled 'Of Duties to ourselves,' when it discusses the merits of humility and meekness:

And to prove that it brings us this great *advantage*, I need say no more, but that this *meekness* is that to which Christ hath pronounced a blessing, *Mat. 5. 5. Blessed are the meek*, and not onely in the next world, but even in this too, *they shall inherit the earth*; Indeed none but the *meek* person hath the true enjoyment of any thing in the world, for the angry, and impatient are like such people, who we use to say, cannot enjoy the greatest prosperities; For let things be never so fair without, they will raise storms within their own breasts.⁴²

Allestree balances the eternal advantages of scriptural virtues with temporal ones. The two, indeed, are contiguous: not only is meekness necessary to salvation, it is also the means to 'the true enjoyment of any thing in the world.' In the same manner, the opposite of meekness, impatience, is shown to lead to unhappiness. This deployment of the language of moral contraries can also be seen in Taylor's section on meekness, which begins with a list of nine arguments against pride and moves to detail how to be humble and how to increase in humility.⁴³

The second formal aspect of the natural-reason soteriology of Anglican 'holy living' pertains to the structures in which the authors outline their notions of piety. This is an issue that relates directly to the reading practices advocated in these works. Hammond's foreword to *Whole Duty of Man* sets out what he considered to be a requisite for this variety of book. He praises the way in which it sets down

⁴² Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, p. 150.

⁴³ Taylor, pp. 106-125.

in all the Branches, with those advantages of brevity and Partitions, to invite, and support, and engage the Reader, *That* Condescension to the meanest capacities, but with all, *That* weight of Spiritual Arguments, wherein the best proficient will be glad to be assisted, that it seems to me equally fitted for both sorts of Readers, which shall bring with them a sincere desire of their own, either present or future advantages.⁴⁴

Treated as a set of criteria, Hammond's words mark out *Whole Duty of Man* as the definitive text of Anglican piety, in that its method and structure cohere so closely with the reasonable approach to soteriology that he pioneered. In the same way that *Whole Duty of Man* taught that the good deeds of the regenerate Christian were to be repeated over and over in order to build up a store in heaven, so too is the manual designed to be read over and over.⁴⁵ The frontispiece of Allestree's manual specifically advertises that it is divided into seventeen chapters so that 'ONE whereof being read every LORDS DAY the Whole may be read over THRICE in the YEAR.'⁴⁶ Allestree also includes at the end of his manual a range of prayers and pious ejaculations suitable to be uttered on any occasion. *Holy Living* probably set the immediate precedent for this, in that it intersperses instructional prose with occasional prayers. Taylor's work, however, is looser in its structure, containing four chapters: the first being a general introduction to 'holy living,' and the following three adhering to the divisions derived from the passage of Titus quoted above. Each of these chapters contains a number of sections, which vary significantly in length. The prayers are also interspersed throughout the work, rather than being appended after the manner of Allestree. In this way, Taylor credits the reader of his manual with a higher capacity for reasoning than that of Allestree's projected reader.

Standing apart from these later works in terms of formal structure is Hammond's originary *Practical Catechisme*, with a dialogic structure, as derived from the catechism

⁴⁴ Hammond, 'Letter to Mr Garthwait', in Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, sig. -

⁴⁵ In its understanding of virtue being learned through habituation, this accords with the English variety of mid-seventeenth century moral pragmatism identified by Cefalu (cf. above, n. 16).

⁴⁶ Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, frontispiece.

included in the 1604 Book of Common Prayer, and only a single prayer at the very end. This stylistic connection with the Established Church to which Hammond belonged, which was under considerable strain at the time of the work's publication, is brought to the fore at the beginning when Scholler speaks to Catechist:

*I Have by the grace of God, and your help and care, attained in some measure to the understanding of the principles of Religion, proposed to those of my age by our Church-Catechisme; and should in modesty content my selfe with those rudiments, but that I finde my selfe, as a Christian, not only invited, but obliged to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*⁴⁷

The reference here to a work other than scripture is suggestive of Hammond's own intentions for the works. His piety is built to rely on and strengthen the existing structures of the Church of England, rather than to consider the institution as of secondary importance in the struggle for salvation. Hammond's catechetical style also points out another stylistic instrument that is common to all three works, which is the technique of direct address. This simple device is the chief means by which Hammond, Taylor and Allestree attempt to work their piety into the private lives of their readership.

The third key formal aspect of these works is their use and presentation of scripture. Given their overarching preference for simple argumentation in order to persuade learned and unlearned readers alike, it is to be expected that Hammond, Taylor and Allestree would share a common, simple approach to the interpretation of scripture. Taylor dedicates a whole section of *Holy Living* to how it should be heard and read, emphasising its plainness:

What can be plainer spoken then this (*Thou shalt not kill. Be not drunk with wine. Husbands love your Wives. Whatsoever ye would that men should doe to you, doe ye so to them?*) The wit of man cannot more plainly tell us our duty, or more fully, then the Holy Ghost hath done already.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Hammond, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Taylor, p. 278.

It is Hammond alone who demonstrates a more advanced interpretative approach, although very rarely. The clearest example occurs in his passage on meekness, when Catechiste interprets Christ's pronouncement that the meek shall inherit the earth through the lens of the motive clause which is added to the fifth commandment (*'that thy dayes may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee'*). In this light, he argues that the 'earth' of the meek and the 'land' of those who honour their father and mother are one:

i.e. a prosperous long life here is ordinarily the meek man's portion, which he, that shall compare and observe the ordinary dispensations of God's providence, shall find to be most remarkeably true, especially if compared with the contrary fate of turbulent seditious persons.⁴⁹

Hammond's treatment of scripture has been linked to that of Hugo Grotius, who approached his 'subject-matter philologically and historically rather than regarding it as an arsenal of dogmatic truths.'⁵⁰ The passage above is a lone, slightly oblique example of this philological, historical method. Elsewhere, whilst not abundant in dogmatic truths, these works ransack the New Testament, particularly Paul's letters, in search of straightforward moral commands.

This brief outline of these three foundational works of Restoration Anglican piety has attempted to give an impression of their distinctive theological content and presentational style. At times it seems that in Hammond, Taylor and Allestree's approach to persuasion there is a suggestion that man's ability to choose to be saved is extremely frail, more frail than their soteriological statements can sometimes indicate. Even so, their emphasis on 'holy living' led these authors to some doctrinal conclusions that seem shockingly heterodox, and were taken as such by many of their contemporaries. The proximity of Socinianism to Milton's own theological writings has been considered

⁴⁹ Hammond, p. 134. In the margin next to this passage, Hammond writes in Greek: 'ἡ γῆ', or 'earth.'

⁵⁰ Tyacke, *Asepts*, pp. 290-91.

elsewhere, and will be discussed further at a later point in this chapter.⁵¹ With regard to ‘holy living,’ it has been noted that Hammond’s and Taylor’s interactions with Socinian thought both demonstrate the problems implicit in articulating a form of religious practice centred on the believer’s own choice:

the more one emphasised religious belief as a human choice based upon Christ’s revelation in time, and upheld by a Church based upon that revelation, the harder it was to find a place for the pre-existent Christ or, indeed, the Holy Ghost. And the more one emphasised the need for individuals to live virtuous lives, the more difficult it was to find a place for the doctrine of atonement.⁵²

As the rest of this chapter will show, the same problems of reason, nature and soteriology form the locus of Milton’s development of doctrinal thought in the poems of his 1671 volume, particularly in the Son’s debate in the desert with Satan in *Paradise Regained*. Writing from a dissenting perspective, Milton’s negotiation with the consciously Anglican ‘holy living’ phenomenon was necessarily somewhat hostile. Unlike Hammond, Taylor and Allestree, Milton rejects the need for piety to uphold the existing order of the established Church; and his style allows far more freedom to his readers than the directive structures of ‘holy living’ manuals. Yet Milton’s appropriation of other stylistic features akin to those employed by the ‘holy living’ divines, and his attempts to articulate a broadly Arminian soteriology indicate that his poetics of piety – and therefore his developed concept of discipline – was the result of close critique of Restoration Anglicanism according to its most ubiquitous written form.

* * *

⁵¹ Cf. Poole, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall*. Poole relates Milton’s own thinking on original sin in *Paradise Lost* to Taylor’s rejection of the doctrine in *Unum Necessarium* (1655), which provoked Hammond’s considerable disapproval. For illuminating notes and animadversions on Jeremy Taylor, and on his theological leanings, also cf. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Notes on English Divines* (London: Edward Moxon, 1853), vol. 1.

⁵² Mortimer, p. 128.

The extent to which 'holy living' became synonymous with Restoration Anglicanism is evident in the huge popularity of Allestree's *Whole Duty of Man*: this is the primary test of the relevancy of this oeuvre of piety manuals to the study of Milton's later poems and their milieu. According to one estimate, it has been claimed that *Whole Duty of Man* 'enjoyed the greatest number of editions between 1660 and 1711, perhaps forty-five in all, again probably enough copies (135,000) for every tenth family';⁵³ and three further works between 1662 and 1667 were attributed to the same anonymous author.⁵⁴ Even without other indications, this level of market saturation alone stands as compelling circumstantial evidence for Milton's awareness of the 'holy living' handbooks.

In order to support further the case for Milton's critical engagement with Anglican piety in the 1671 poems, it is important to build up a picture of how the 'holy living' manuals of Hammond, Taylor and Allestree became associated with the ecclesiastical policies and political prejudices of the Restoration Church of England.⁵⁵ Given continued conformist support for Calvinism in the University of Oxford and amongst dissenters, it is important to refrain from considering the Arminianism of 'holy living' piety as a 'new theological consensus'.⁵⁶ However, it is apparent that the antipathy to Puritanism and Reformed doctrine implicit in *Practicall Catechisme*, *Holy Living* and *Whole Duty of Man* was

⁵³ Sommerville, p. 29. These figures have led to historical scrutiny, with the most credible proposition being that its popularity was due to its value amongst the population as an appropriate gift for confirmation candidates, the young and the deserving poor (Green, *Print and Protestantism*, p. 355). These figures are further compounded by the existence of various other moral works published during the first decade of the Restoration regime which bore *Whole Duty of Man* as a trademark, and as such followed in the wake of the original's market success.

⁵⁴ *The Gentleman's Calling* (1662), *The causes of the decay of Christian piety* (1667), and *The Government of the Tongue* (1667).

⁵⁵ It should be noted, however, that the lines between Anglicanism and Dissent were not fixed at this point, and the 'holy living' manuals and their authors were linked to both groups. Future Nonconformists grieved the death of Hammond in 1660, as well as those who had remained loyal to Laud's vision of the Church of England. Citing Richard Baxter's example, Hugh de Quehen writes: 'Despite his dislike of Hammond's 'New Prelatical way' Richard Baxter took his death 'for a very great loss; for his Piety and Wisdom would have hindered much of the Violence which after followed.' See Hugh de Quehen, 'Hammond, Henry (1605-1660)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/12157>, accessed 11 June 2013].

⁵⁶ Tyacke, *Aspects*, pp. 322-23.

a common sentiment amongst certain influential groups of conforming divines, particularly the 'Latitudinarians',⁵⁷ but also among many within the episcopal hierarchy. Again focusing on the example of Allestree's work, this can be demonstrated with reference to the various prefatory texts that graced those works published under the banner of *Whole Duty of Man*, a display of support by a number of important divines unusual for a pseudonymous work.⁵⁸ Most significantly, the brief Latin imprimatur of *The Causes of the Decay of Christian piety* was composed by Thomas Tomkins, who was chaplain to Archbishop Gilbert Sheldon and responsible for licensing books.⁵⁹ This latter piece indicates the congeniality of 'holy living' piety with the priorities of the restored Anglican hierarchy:

*Hic liber vere Christianus qui si Primaevam spectes pietatem, Summam Eloquentiam, Rationum pondus nihil in eo deest quo minus possit nos Omnes quales tam accurate describit, vere Christianos efficere; Puriori aevo sane dignissimus est nisi quod tam potens sit qui vel nostrum Saeculum transformaret in melius. Benedicat Deus Operi & Authori.*⁶⁰

Tomkins's endorsement seeks to link the 'truly Christian' book's transformative qualities of primitive piety, great eloquence and weighty reasoning with the new Anglican hierarchy. This is especially emphasised since its function as an imprimatur speaks of the

⁵⁷ John Spurr, 'Latitudinarianism' and the Restoration Church', in *HJ* 31.1 (March, 1988), 69.

⁵⁸ John Spurr, 'Allestree, Richard (1621/2-1681)', in *DNB*, [http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/395, accessed 15 June 2012]. As has already been noted, Henry Hammond put his name to the prefatory epistle of *Whole Duty of Man*; Humphrey Henchman, who was Hammond's executor, did the same for *The Gentleman's Calling* in 1662 whilst he was Bishop of Salisbury.

⁵⁹ Cf. E. I. Carlyle, 'Tomkins, Thomas (1637/8-1675)', rev. Sean Kelsey, *DNB*, [http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/27516, accessed 17 June 2012].

⁶⁰ Thomas Tomkins, 'Imprimatur', in Richard Allestree (?), *The causes of the decay of Christian Piety* (London: T. Garthwait, 1667) ['This book is truly Christian. If you consider its primitive piety, its great eloquence, the weight of its reasoning, it lacks nothing with which to make all of us into such people as it so accurately describes - that is, true Christians. It is most appropriate for a purer age; except that it is powerful enough to transform even our own era for the better. May God bless the work and its author.']. Translation thanks to Dr Nick Hardy (Trinity College, Cambridge). Regarding the history of the work's composition, Sommerville believes it to have been written 'under Puritan rule' (Sommerville, p. 50).

instrumentality of licensing in defending the established Church through the repression of alternative viewpoints.⁶¹

The association between *Whole Duty of Man* and the revived Anglican hierarchy of the Restoration period can also be substantiated with reference to contemporary speculation over the identity of the handbook's author, which indicates a general assumption that the author was a senior clergyman of Laudian or High Church sympathies.⁶² Moreover, the printer of *Whole Duty of Man* and some of its successors, Timothy Garthwait, was a popular publisher for Anglican clergy.⁶³ The current consensus over Allestree's authorship indicates that the author, as well as Oxford regius professor of divinity, Provost of Eton, and canon of Christ Church after the Restoration, was a Royalist agent during the Interregnum.⁶⁴

In order to establish a context for Milton's turn to piety in his 1671 poems, it is necessary to discern the reasoning behind the restored Church of England's endorsement of *Whole Duty of Man* and its precursors with reference to these works's theological and moral emphasis on obedience. The observation that 'holy living,' in its 'stress on godliness as a way of life, not a mode of being,' was highly congenial to and actually coextensive with the persecutory policies of the establishment forms a starting point for

⁶¹ The contrast between this Latin preface and the English discourse of moral improvement that follows also seems to support Green's understanding of the book's social value as a gift: the Imprimatur serves to confirm to clergy and gentry proficient in Latin that the work was suitable for those under their charge.

⁶² The evidence for contemporary speculation resides in readers's annotations of various copies: a note on the frontispiece of the Huntingdon Library's *Whole Duty of Man* attributes the work to Brian Walton, who had compiled the London polyglot Bible; an unknown hand writing on the frontispiece of the Yale University Library's 1667 copy of *The Decay of Christian Piety* suggests William Sancroft, at the time Dean of St Paul's, as a possible author.

⁶³ Garthwait's popularity with Anglican clergy is plain, given that during the Interregnum he produced editions of Herbert and polemical works arguing for the Book of Common Prayer. During the Restoration, as well as issuing many sermons by conformist divines, he was employed several times by the Church to publish various articles to be distributed to different dioceses and archdeacons.

⁶⁴ Cf. above, n. 19. Elmen lists other potential authors before dismissing them in favour of Allestree. Amongst the more ridiculous candidates, his list includes John Fell (who was himself a great friend of Allestree), Richard Sterne, and Isaac Barrow. All three associated themselves with Laud's legacy, and as Bishops of the Restored Church were vigorous upholders of the Act of Uniformity.

this exploration.⁶⁵ There are plentiful examples in Hammond, Taylor and Allestree's works to support, without controversy, a general form of authoritarian government that would have aroused as little suspicion under Cromwell's commonwealth as it would under the regimes of Charles II or his father. The political conservatism of *Whole Duty of Man* is demonstrated in its section on submission and obedience to one's parents, and to the magistrate and the minister (parents '*Civil, the Spiritual, the Natural*').⁶⁶ The manual defines obedience to the magistrate as part of the whole duty that must be fulfilled in order to meet the conditions of one's salvation.⁶⁷ However, a degree of discernment is expected and encouraged: only lawful magisterial commands were to be carried out.⁶⁸ This moderating aspect does not lessen the authoritarian overtones of this part of Allestree's scheme. It does, however, provide some flexibility within the scheme that permits salvation for those that fulfil all the duties of man, yet doubt the legality of certain magisterial commands. Of course, given that *Whole Duty of Man* was composed and published during the Interregnum, the pertinence of this message to disappointed Royalist conformists would have been particularly clear.

Those from within the Anglican establishment who advocated the piety formulated by Hammond, Taylor and Allestree following the Restoration tend to amplify its authoritarian aspects, and diminish the cautionary flexibility with which these aspects were infused in the original. The openness of the piety manuals to this sort of partisan interpretation can be seen in the triumphalist sermons that accompanied the restoration of Charles II. Thomas Pierce's *England's Season for Reformation of Life* has been cited as the

⁶⁵ Keeble, *The Restoration*, p. 127.

⁶⁶ Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, p. 278.

⁶⁷ '*Honour and Reverence*, looking on him, as upon one, on whom God hath stamped much of his own power and authority, and therefore paying him all honour and esteem, never daring, upon any pretence whatsoever, to *speak evil of the ruler of our people*, Acts 23. 5.' (Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, p. 278.)

⁶⁸ Commands issued by the magistrate that were contrary to God's laws should be neither *actively* obeyed nor actively resisted; they provide 'a season for the *passive* obedience, we must patiently suffer, what he inflicts on us.' (Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, p. 280).

foremost example of this.⁶⁹ Pierce, an ardent royalist and friend of Henry Hammond,⁷⁰ delivered this sermon in St Paul's Cathedral on the Sunday following Charles's restoration. The text for the sermon is Romans 13:12: '*The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*' Having discoursed on the logic and rhetoric of this text, Pierce begins to discuss its theological importance, at which point his debt to the 'holy living' of Hammond, Taylor and Allestree becomes apparent. Paul's epistle to the Romans, he claims, contains the 'whole body of (...) practical divinity':

For the whole Duty of a Christian doth consist in two things; first (by way of privation) in casting off the works of Darkness, in denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; next (by way of Acquisition) in putting on the armour of light; Living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Tit. 2. 12.⁷¹

Again, the oft-repeated verse from Titus reappears at this point to support Pierce's point. What comes after this is a remarkable reworking of the ethos of 'holy living' to suit the political aims of the new regime. In the same way that in the 'holy living' manuals pious action is encouraged as the way to meet the conditions of salvation, in this sermon, reformed manners are depicted as 'the properest *Answer*' to the blessing of national deliverance.⁷² The careful soteriological schemes of Hammond, Taylor and Allestree are ransacked in order to press home aggressively a new political vision, which consists of the King and his Bishops ('untill our *Bishops* receive their *Right*, though we are glad to *have* our King, we may rationally fear we shall not *hold* him') working in harmony to correct the deleterious effects of the previous rebellion and 'tyranny.'⁷³

⁶⁹ Keeble, *The Restoration*, pp. 126-27. Also cf. *The Restoration Church of England*, pp. 238-44.

⁷⁰ Cf. Jon Parkin, 'Pierce [Peirse], Thomas (1621/2-1691)', *DNB*, [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/22226>, accessed 19 June 2012].

⁷¹ Thomas Pierce, *England's Season for Reformation of Life* (London: Timothy Garthwait, 1660), pp. 5-6.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 14; 13.

The historiographical problem in taking this sermon – and others of the same time that are like it – as depicting a set form of Restoration Anglican ideology is that they were composed and delivered before the Church had actually been settled. They are intent on lobbying for change, rather than actually setting out to describe what has been established. Current historical scholarship emphasises how different the ecclesiastical settlement of Charles II was from that which existed prior to the Civil War: ‘The will to return to a Hookerian ideal of a national church in which Christian allegiance was no more a matter of choice for individuals than their citizenship was gone for good, destroyed forever by the experiences of 1642-60.’⁷⁴ In other words, although Nonconformity was heavily penalised under the new regime, its actual existence was not under threat. The punitive apparatus that preserved the Church of England’s ecclesiastical monopoly has been described as a variety of ‘ideological containment.’ Through the Act of Uniformity and the Licensing Act, the Anglican hierarchy was given ‘control of information and belief’ to aid in the quarantining of unpalatable ideologies for the prevention of disorder, rather than to actively change the views of those that held those ideologies.⁷⁵ This had the effect of permanently changing the role of the established Church, as well as giving rise to the new culture of Dissent, even though it may not have been an entirely desirable state of affairs for those surviving Laudians who sought conclusive revenge on their former Puritan persecutors.

The pertinence of ‘holy living’ to this new task of ideological containment is amply demonstrated by those works actively involved in repressing or disparaging Dissent after the imposition of Uniformity in 1662. In particular, Hammond and his successors’s soteriology may be detected at the root of those tracts of the 1660s that oppose toleration on the grounds that Reformed soteriology was actually morally dangerous. This is the

⁷⁴ Judith Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 235.

⁷⁵ Jonathan Scott, *England’s Troubles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 422.

case with *A Friendly Debate*, written by Simon Patrick, Rector of St Paul's Covent Garden, and known as a Latitudinarian.⁷⁶ *A Friendly Debate* is the first of several polemical dialogues between two neighbours: Conformist and Nonconformist. Patrick aims to meet his polemical objective to explode 'hopes of a "comprehension"' by exposing Nonconformist disloyalty and hypocrisy.⁷⁷ Of particular note is a passage at the start of the work, when Conformist takes it upon himself to ridicule Nonconformist's repetition of the doctrines of grace and justification taught to him by 'many a Godly Divine':

C. I am loath to say, that those Godly Divines did not mind what they said, because I ought in modesty to suspect my own understanding, rather than theirs: But to me it seems a strange thing, that they should not observe *Salvation* to be nothing else but our final and absolute *justification* at the day of Judgement. And when I am sure our Saviour saith he will examine what men have done; and according as he finds it good or bad, pronounce the sentence of Absolution or Condemnation. Read the 25. of *S. Matthew*, from 31. verse to the end.⁷⁸

To believe oneself utterly justified in this life, without consideration of one's good works, is not only without 'Reason and Judgement,' but it also leads to antinomian 'Libertinism.'⁷⁹ That this criticism is positioned as part of the beginning of Patrick's work indicates that he considered Nonconformist's general faults to stem from an inconsistent, irrational soteriology. The influence of Hammond's emphasis on the importance of natural moral law is apparent here: Conformist's soteriology is derived straight from Hammond's *Practicall Catechisme*. Furthermore, the dialogic form adopted by Patrick also suggests that *A Friendly Debate* was in part composed as a witty homage to Hammond's catechetical work.

⁷⁶ Spurr, 'Latitudinarianism' and the Restoration Church', p. 69. Unlike Hammond, Taylor and Allestree, Patrick had conformed to the Interregnum settlement, obtaining Presbyterian ordination whilst serving as a fellow of Queen's College Cambridge. In addition to this, however, he had also covertly sought out episcopal ordination from Bishop Joseph Hall, and gained a reputation in the University as an Arminian, due to his use of Hammond's *Practicall Catechisme* in his teaching. See Jon Parkin, 'Patrick, Simon [Symon] (1626–1707)', in *DNB*, online ed., Jan 2008 [<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2117/view/article/21568>, accessed 18 June 2012].

⁷⁷ Spurr, 'Latitudinarianism' and the Restoration Church', p. 49.

⁷⁸ Simon Patrick, *A Friendly Debate Betwixt Two Neighbours* (London: 1668), pp. 13–14.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15, 12.

As the next section of this chapter will demonstrate, the false piety of the characters of Satan and Dalila in Milton's *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* may be understood as an implicit criticism of the political appropriations of 'holy living' seen in Pierce's sermon and Patrick's polemic.⁸⁰ These publications indicate why the doctrinal and formal features of 'holy living' manuals were congenial to the Church of England's role in instilling civil obedience and religious uniformity among the wider populace. Hammond, Taylor and Allestree had provided a theological rationale for the maintenance of the ideological edifice that Dissenters and early radical Whigs termed the 'church-state'.⁸¹ When read in this context, Milton's 1671 volume can be seen to contest actively the notion of the 'truly Christian' book that Tomkins perceived in *Whole Duty of Man* and *The Causes of the Decay of Christian Piety*, arguing that obedience to the magistrate and the established Church was secondary to obedience to God. Milton recognised that the 'holy living' manual served as a profoundly popular instrument through which to instil obedience in the nation, and sought in his poetry to question whether this popularity was ultimately desirable.

* * *

The distinctive poetics of piety articulated in the two poems of Milton's 1671 volume is – to a significant degree – the product of trenchant engagement with this Anglican programme of 'holy living.' Jesus and Satan's dialogue in *Paradise Regained*, and that of Samson and Dalila in *Samson Agonistes* demonstrate this: in the former, Satan is depicted

⁸⁰ Nor was this Milton's first assault on the false piety propagated by staunch Episcopalians. His *Eikonoklastes* relentlessly attacks the figure of royal piety used to denote Charles I in *Eikon Basilike*. At one point Milton likens the private devotion contained in the first part of *Eikon* to the 'strain of pietie, and mortification' uttered by Richard III in Shakespeare's play (YP 3.361). The later Anglican cult of Charles as King and Martyr, which associated his sufferings with those of Christ, is examined as the object of Milton's criticism in his later *Paradise Regained* by Knoppers in *Historicizing Milton*, in the chapter entitled 'Paradise Regained and Royal Martyrdom'.

⁸¹ Mark Knights, "'Meer religion' and the 'church-state' of Restoration England: the impact and ideology of James II's declarations of indulgence", in *A Nation Transformed*, pp. 41-2.

as one who misconstrues Jesus' pious words and self-restraint as aesthetically pleasing but not persuasive enough to convince him to change; and in the latter, Dalila's piety is shown to be based on a dangerously erroneous conception of civil and ecclesiastical obedience that erodes the subject's liberties. Milton's own conception of true piety can be glimpsed in his negative depiction of his protagonists's hostile interlocutors, both of whom speak in tones that recall the triumphal sermons and polemics of 'holy living' stemming from the first decade following the Restoration.

This section will discuss these exemplary passages in detail in order to progress towards contemplating the deeper formal engagement of the 1671 volume with 'holy living.' Milton negotiates with the same issues of Arminian soteriology and textual-ethical practice that are found in the manuals of Hammond, Taylor and Allestree, as can be seen in Jesus' meditation on his own triple office as prophet, priest and king in *Paradise Regained*, as well as in the steady refinement of his self-understanding through his secluded encounter with Satan, which incorporates his crucial rejection of stoicism. The mixture of prayerful monologue and edificatory dialogue displayed in the poem, combined with the overarching and self-conscious narrative voice of the poet 'who erewhile the happy garden sung' (I.1), draws on catechetical forms also adopted by the 'holy living' divines, depicting Milton himself as one with a catechist's authority. Positioned second in the 1671 volume, *Samson Agonistes* proceeds to test the reader's comprehension of the lessons of *Paradise Regained*:⁸² its protagonist is mired in human frailty and dire necessity, but still bound to do 'Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy | Our God, our Law, my nation or myself' (ll. 1424-5). Whether or not Samson's murderous final deed satisfies the criteria of discipline as true piety is left to the reader's

⁸² In making this point this chapter follows the shared critical convictions of both Mary Ann Radzinowicz and Joseph Wittreich. See Radzinowicz, *Toward Samson Agonistes* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 230; and Wittreich, *Interpreting Samson Agonistes* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 332.

discernment, without the assistance of an omniscient narrator, which is denied by the drama's tragic form.

Insofar as it is not comprehensive, the course of this analysis of the 1671 volume which I have described is intended to nuance rather than refute the current critical bias towards perceiving the later Milton's religious context as polarised against Anglicanism and defending Dissent. The literature of Nonconformity has been thought of as modelling a 'religious life which demands the full responsiveness of emotional and sentient beings' that sits in stark contrast with 'the sober moralizings of Richard Allestree's *Whole Duty of Man*.'⁸³ However, in advancing this claim, the textual canon of 'holy living' has been denied its proper claim as a sign of 'complex theological and devotional enterprise.'⁸⁴ To fully comprehend *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* as works within the Dissenting tradition, therefore, it is important that discussion of these texts does not fail to engage with that which the tradition was formed to resist. As such, the critical method in this section depends on judicious juxtaposition of Milton's poetry with extracts from the piety manuals discussed earlier in this chapter. As has been demonstrated, Hammond, Taylor and Allestree's 'holy living' texts were very popular,⁸⁵ and the ideas that they advanced were also appropriated by Anglican clergy to support the claims of the revived and newly powerful Restoration Church of England. Despite the elite nature of its expression within the 1671 volume,⁸⁶ Milton's grappling with these two linked phenomena may be read as 'radical action' produced within a previously unexplored 'social setting':⁸⁷ the private study of the pious reader, and the world beyond it. As mediated through *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*'s distinctive poetics,

⁸³ Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, p. 213.

⁸⁴ *The Restoration Church of England*, p. 374.

⁸⁵ Popular in two senses: first, as best-selling material objects (cf. above, n. 12); and second, in the sense articulated by C. John Sommerville, who defined "popular religion" in Restoration England as 'those religious beliefs and attitudes favoured by the lay public, as shown in the favourite reading of a literate society with a cheap and prolific religious press.' (Sommerville, p. 1).

⁸⁶ As is argued by Campbell and Corns in their discussion of how the 1671 poems evaded the censor (C&C, *JM*, p. 336).

⁸⁷ Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*, p. 9.

Milton's piety negotiates the fault-line between inward faith and outward behaviour, from which stems 'works of faith.'⁸⁸ In so doing, he perpetuates and complicates his long-lived concept of discipline, but without recourse to the term itself; instead, 'piety' carries part of the concept's weight.

In *Paradise Regained*, true piety is positively defined in the self-meditation and self-restraint of Jesus, whom Milton subtly identifies as the Christ.⁸⁹ Christology is the first means through which the poem engages with 'holy living,' in that it forms the basis of Milton's notion of piety as well as that of Hammond, Taylor and Allestree. The two camps are united in their shared adherence to the doctrinal tenet of Christ's threefold office: he is a prophet in his teaching, a priest in his sacrifice and a king in his rule.⁹⁰ Furthermore, Milton in *Paradise Regained* and his Anglican interlocutors all consider their respective soteriological formulations and pieties as stemming from this Christological conception, and structure their works accordingly. In the preface to *Whole Duty of Man*, for example, Allestree clearly defines the Son of God as the second Adam, who institutes the second covenant between God and humanity and opens the way towards salvation through his three offices. As prophet, the Son preaches 'the whole will of his Father [...] it

⁸⁸ See above, Ch. 3, *passim*.

⁸⁹ Curiously, Milton never once uses the word 'Christ' in *Paradise Regained*. However, this section is not concerned with Milton's interaction with – and, quite possibly, limited approval for – Socinian theology. On that subject, see Michael Lieb, 'Milton and the Socinian Heresy', in *Milton and the Grounds of Contention*, eds. Mark R. Kelley, Michael Lieb and John T. Shawcross (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2003); also, H. John McLachlan, *The Religious Opinions of Milton, Locke and Newton* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1941). Barbara Kiefer Lewalski has written that Milton's *De Doctrina* rejects the Socinian claim that 'the Son came into existence only at the birth of Christ' (Lewalski, *Milton's Brief Epic* [London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1966], p. 152).

⁹⁰ Similarly, in *De Doctrina Christiana*, Book I, Ch. XV, Milton describes the office of Christ as that of 'mediator,' ['Officio mediatorio'], which is comprised of a 'Threefold function' ['Triplici munere'] that is 'prophetic, priestly, [and] kingly' ['propheticum, sacerdotale, regium']. (OCW VIII.1.494-5, 496-7). Although this is slightly different to Allestree's account of Christ in *Whole Duty of Man*, which determines each of the three functions identified by Milton as a distinct office, the threefold nature (whether function or office) is the most important aspect. Lewalski also makes the claim that the notion of the threefold office, which she proves to be at the centre of Calvin's theology, is crucial to understanding Milton's depiction of the Son in *Paradise Regained* (*Milton's Brief Epic*, pp. 182-3, chapters VIII to XII, *passim*.).

being the work of a prophet of old not only to foretell, but to teach.’⁹¹ As priest, he satisfies ‘God for our sins [...] & by this means to obtain for us forgiveness of sins.’⁹² And as king, he works to ‘enable us, or give us strength to do what God requires of us [...] it being the office of a King to govern, and rule, & to subdue enemies.’⁹³ In this schema, each office is distinct yet balanced proportionately, and each deliberately prefigures the moral content that follows, in that they pertain to personal, religious and neighbourly duties. Allestree’s example is Anglican *imitatio Christi* at its purest.

As with *Whole Duty of Man*, the Christology of *Paradise Regained* is broached near the beginning, but in this case it is elaborated through the prism of the Son of God’s autobiographical monologue in Book I, which is delivered as he enters the wilderness. Although it has been drolly argued that – in a quite shocking reversal of the *imitatio Christi* tradition – the monologue sees ‘the Son of God describe his own life in ways that imitate Milton’s life,’⁹⁴ it is important to note that the monologue also cleaves to the doctrine of the threefold office as a means of character exposition. The poem’s narrative alludes to this, prior to its commencement, by framing Jesus’ words as musing on how first to ‘Publish his godlike office now mature’ (I.188). In the ensuing soliloquy, which is primarily derived from the Gospel of Luke, Milton substantiates the notion of the threefold office of Christ in those segments in which he interpolates his own theological digressions. The lengthy sentence in which Jesus recalls his childhood, in particular his youthful aspiration to overthrow Roman tyranny through ‘heroic acts,’ he concludes with an emphatic qualification:

Yet held it more humane, more heavenly first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make persuasion do the work of fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring soul

⁹¹ *Whole Duty of Man*, Sig. a4^{2v}.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Sigs. a4^{2v-2r}.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Sigs. a4^{2r-3v}.

⁹⁴ Fallon, *Milton’s Peculiar Grace*, p. 242.

Not wilfully misdoing, but unaware
 Misled, the stubborn only to subdue. (I.221-6)

Here Jesus' discussion of his own convictions encompasses both his prophetic ability and his notion of proper kingly rule. Truly distinctive, when compared to Allestree's Christology, is the way in which the two offices are melded together in the proposal that teaching conquers the hearts of all but the stubborn.⁹⁵ To some extent this indicates the certainty of Milton's Arminian conviction that humanity is not so depraved as to be unable to heed Christ's lessons and therefore find salvation.

Even so, the caveat 'At least to try' indicates less than complete confidence in the Son's ability 'To earn salvation for the sons of men' (I.167) exclusively through his prophetic and kingly functions. As such it predicts the separate exposition within the monologue of the Son's priestly, sacrificial role, as embodied in his crucifixion. This other office is signified in Jesus' description of his thinking in response to his mother's revelation of the identity of his divine father:

my way must lie
 Through many a hard assay even to the death,
 Ere I the promised kingdom can attain,
 Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins'
 Full weight must be transferred upon my head. (I.263-7)

The Son's description of his sacrificial destiny through atonement sits awkwardly with his earlier fusion of prophetic and kingly functions. This is indicative of the entire poem's idiosyncratic emphasis on the temptation in the wilderness as the manifestation of Jesus' 'firm obedience,' rather than as the predecessor to a greater act of obedience in death on the cross. Equally, it reflects the influence of Milton's radical Arminian soteriology on his

⁹⁵ Noting that the 'Errata' to the 1671 volume substitutes 'subdue' for 'destroy,' it is worth contrasting Allestree's own use of 'subdue' to describe Christ's kingship with Hammond's use of 'destroy': Catechiste tells Scholler that Christ as king will destroy 'All wicked and ungodly men, that after all his methods of recalling them to amendment, doe still persevere in impenitent rebellions, to whom eternall perdition belongs by the sentence of this King.' (Hammond, pp. 25-6).

Christology,⁹⁶ in that heeding Christ's teaching and consequently choosing to repent must precede the acceptance of the benefits of his sacrifice. In this Milton was not alone: for Jeremy Taylor, the most heterodox of the 'holy living' divines,⁹⁷ 'Christ's role as atoning saviour must be situated within an economy that traces the origin of sin to a rational choice made by individuals, and the receipt of salvation again to a rational choice open to all individuals today.'⁹⁸ There is also a suggestion of this in *Paradise Regained*: Jesus' choice in the wilderness of *how* to publish his office, and *how* best to begin 'the mighty work' of salvation is important in its chronological primacy.

So, in Milton's initial Christological exposition in *Paradise Regained* there can be detected a degree of theological and stylistic proximity with 'holy living.' However, it is in the refinement of Jesus' character through his encounter with Satan that Milton's distinctive piety takes shape. The catechetical tone to the dialogic element through which the gradual revelation of Jesus as Christ occurs is reminiscent of Hammond's *Practical Catechisme*, as well as Patrick's mordant *Friendly Debate*; the Greek etymology of 'catechesis' — to instruct by mouth⁹⁹ — marks that term as a particularly apt descriptor of Milton's stylistic experimentation in the poem. This catechetically framed experimentation allows Milton to express his antipathy to the abuse of piety embodied in Restoration Anglicanism's appropriation of 'holy living.' Read as such, this gives further depth to the case for the poem being 'read as something of a handbook for talking back to

⁹⁶ It may also, perhaps, be indicative of the effect of Milton's anti-Trinitarian convictions on his Christology.

⁹⁷ Cf. above, n. 51. Also, Mortimer, p. 140-43 (on Taylor's indebtedness to Hammond, but also the great distance, theologically, between the two).

⁹⁸ Poole, p. 54.

⁹⁹ The Latin term is derived from the Greek 'κατήχησις instruction by word of mouth.' Cf. "catechesis, n.", *OED*

[<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2277/view/Entry/28841?redirectedFrom=catechesis> (accessed July 30, 2013)].

the ungodly,' in light of the anticlerical rhetoric woven into Milton's depiction of Satan in *Paradise Regained*, and in Jesus' vehement rebuttals.¹⁰⁰

The opening phase of the poem-long duel between the two main characters, at the conclusion of Book I, indicates Milton's concern over the way in which schemes of piety mediated through published texts can be aesthetically pleasing in their espousal of the ethos of 'holy living,' but ultimately unpersuasive in their efforts to encourage penitence and pious action. This becomes particularly clear upon the Son's reproving of Satan's 'abuse' of the Gentiles through 'oracling' (I.455), and ends with the declaration that believers's 'pious hearts' are the prerequisite for the reception of the 'spirit of truth' (I.462-3). The depiction of Satan changes in this passage: from the false priest typed by his costume of 'Rural weeds,' this passage renders him as something just as ungodly, which is the false auditor, unable to properly digest his Teacher's lesson. In the first section of the reply he casts himself as sinning out of misery, rather than any 'wilful misdoing.' Satan's reply is dissembling: although 'inly stung with anger and disdain' (I.466), outwardly he lauds his critic's virtuous speech and responds with gladness to his rebuke, finding in it a perversely pleasurable aesthetic appeal:

Hard are the ways of truth and rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue discoursed, pleasing to the ear,
And tunable as sylvan pipe or song;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth? Most men admire
Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
To hear thee when I come (since no man comes)
And talk at least, though I despair to attain. (I.478-85)

Satan's speech here is strikingly passive, likening his critic's virtuous speech to the 'pleasing' sound of 'sylvan pipe or song': he suggests that one cannot but 'admire' such a magisterial performance when it is witnessed. Yet in contrast to his feigned delight in the pious aesthetic that he reads in Jesus' reproof, he suggests that actively following the

¹⁰⁰ Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*, p. 133. The 'withered sticks' that Satan carries whilst in his guise as 'an aged man in rural weeds' (cf. *PR*, I.314-6) could be construed as punning on the 'branches' into which Allestree's discourse is delineated (cf. John 15:6; also Numbers 15:32-6).

'lore' of Virtue is onerous in the extreme: thus, to choose to learn from Jesus' words rather than simply to admire their artistry is undesirable. Jesus' rhetoric here may be compared to the 'holy living' manuals's appeal to the reader's reason; but where these manuals stress that pious living is a means to 'true enjoyment,'¹⁰¹ Satan's interpretation of Jesus' teaching emphasises the difficulty of pious living. It is possible to detect Milton warming to his self-appointed 'role of oppositional educator'¹⁰² in his depiction of Satan's conceited preoccupation with his own pleasure, and the pleasure that he takes in hearing – but not responding to – his critic's rebuke. From the mouth of his poem's antagonist he is able to dismiss any association between pleasure and virtue: the life-transforming reaction that Jesus actually desires from his auditor is instead likened to arduous journeying and strenuous effort: 'Hard are the ways of truth and rough to walk.' These lines convey scepticism about the saving efficacy of persuasion which echoes the lack of complete confidence in the Son's prophetic and kingly office which was intimated in the earlier autobiographical monologue, and is revisited in the poem's fourth book.

Milton develops this theme of false piety as a performance in the second section of Satan's reply, which focuses on clerical abuse by referring to 'the hypocrite or atheous priest' (ll. 487):

Thy father, who is holy, wise and pure,
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
To tread his sacred courts, and minister
About his altar, handling holy things,
Praying or vowing, and vouchsafed his voice
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
Inspired; disdain not such access to me.' (l.486-92).

Satan's use of 'hypocrite' as an epithet again points to Milton's distrust of performance: the word itself derives from 'hypocrita,' from ecclesiastical Latin, based on the Greek

¹⁰¹ See, for example, the advice on humility in *Whole Duty of Man* mentioned in the first section of this chapter, which states that 'the meek person hath the true enjoyment of any thing in the world.' (see above, n. 42)

¹⁰² Lewalski, "To try, and teach the erring Soul", p. 175.

‘ὕποκριτής,’ meaning ‘an actor on the stage, pretender, dissembler.’¹⁰³ A different sense is carried by the alternate epithet, ‘Atheous,’ which implies that the priest is impious, rather than an atheist. Echoing his earlier comparison between the ‘Smooth’ discourse of virtue and the recital of music, Satan’s point here is that there is no harm in priests who are not inwardly pious performing outward religious duties. In a final phrase marked off by a semicolon, Milton associates this state of affairs with Satan himself: ‘disdain not such access [i.e. to ‘holy things’] to me.’ The passage as a whole develops what has been said before, explicitly linking aestheticized piety with ecclesiastical hypocrisy. The blessings uttered aloud by the inwardly reprobate Balaam flatly contradict Jesus’ talk of the ‘spirit of truth’ dwelling in ‘pious hearts, an inward oracle | To all truth requisite for men to know’ (I.462-4). As Satan is unable to comprehend the difference and proper relation between outer action and inner faith, so too are the fine words of ‘holy living’ a hollow sign of the actual piety of those who advocate it.

The erroneous aesthetic appreciation of ‘piety’ voiced by Satan in Book I is expanded in the poem’s final book, in which Jesus denounces the Greek arts and in so doing raises the issue of how efficacious moral action can be if discerned only from natural reason. This serves to critique Satan’s lack of aesthetic discrimination. In a variation on earlier distinctions in the poem between outer and inner qualities, he says that the works of the Greeks are ‘Thin-sown with aught of profit or delight’ beneath ‘their swelling epithets thick-laid | As varnish on a harlot’s cheek’ (IV.345, 343-4). Crucially, Milton also includes a caveat at the end of this sentence. Immediately preceded by a semicolon, the last two lines suggest that Jesus’ dismissal of Greek writing is not absolutely total: ‘Unless where moral virtue is expressed | By light of nature not in all

¹⁰³ Cf. “hypocrite, n.”, *OED Online*, [http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2277/view/Entry/90493?redirectedFrom=hypocrite (accessed July 29, 2013)]. Again, to return briefly to *Eikonoklastes* as a precedent for Milton’s assault on false piety in *Paradise Regained*, it may be noted that Milton used the figure of the ‘Masking Scene’ to lambast the explicitly devotional literary medium of Charles’s *Eikon* (YP 3.342).

quite lost.' (IV.351-2). It is suggested here that Satan is unable to detect – amongst the mass of shallow Classical eloquence – the small but vital number of pagan works espousing natural goodness.

This attack on pagan eloquence may also be read as a subtle rebuke of the type of 'great eloquence' that Tomkins in his imprimatur considered praiseworthy in Allestree's 'truly Christian' book, *The Causes of the Decay of Christian Piety*.¹⁰⁴ This volume, unlike its predecessor *Whole Duty of Man*, is riddled with allusions to Classical history and fable. This is also the case with Taylor's *Holy Living*, as well as Pierce's triumphant Restoration sermon, but not common to the whole 'holy living' canon. The theological point underpinning this stylistic vein is the interrelatedness of the natural law and Christ's revealed law: the classics were on a par with Scripture, except the revelation of the Gospels and Paul's letters. Taylor, for example, illustrates the office of humility with the example of 'Agathocles by the furniture of his Table confessed, that from a Potter he was raised to be the King of Sicily.'¹⁰⁵ In Jesus' denunciation of the Greek arts, and in his caveat, Satan is rebuked for his undiscerning reading habits. Again, it is possible to detect in this passage Milton's criticism of the indiscriminate use of classical fable and imagery in the Restoration books and sermons advocating conformist 'holy living.' The act of discussing virtue with this false eloquence can be utterly unvirtuous, in that it does not depend on Christ's revelation through scripture for authority.

In its focus on the aesthetics of piety and the relative merits of action inspired by the lights of Revelation and Nature, Milton's ongoing debate with 'holy living' asks questions of those who conclude that *Paradise Regained* is a Stoic work, rather than a

¹⁰⁴ Tomkins's confidence in the disposition of eloquence towards the attainment of moral good follows Sir Francis Bacon's noted declaration that 'no man can speake faire of Courses sordide and base.' (Bacon, *Of the Proficiency and Advancement of Learning, Divine and Humane* [London: Henry Tomes, 1605], p. 67).

¹⁰⁵ Taylor, p. 111.

Christian one.¹⁰⁶ It suggests that the '*pietas*' of the Stoics and the varieties of Protestant piety promulgated before and after the Restoration are closer together than has been acknowledged. This is expressed in *Paradise Regained* itself in the union between the 'spirit of truth' and 'pious hearts' espoused by Jesus, which may in turn be interpreted with reference to his dismissal of the Stoic as 'last in philosophic pride, | By him called virtue' (IV.300-1). It has been argued that this statement, contrary to its surface meaning, is actually proof that Milton's Jesus is informed by a 'logic of Stoic indifference': his denunciation is an espousal of stoicism which is so ingrained that it rejects any attempt to define itself doctrinally.¹⁰⁷ In focusing on Jesus' indifference to Satan's arguments, however, this argument misses the lack of indifference that the other voices in *Paradise Regained* display towards the protagonist. To return briefly to Jesus' momentous cessation of oracles speech, it is of note that Milton's narrative voice indicates that in response Satan is 'inly stung with anger and disdain' (I.466), despite his vocal patter on the delights of virtue. This forges a split between interior repulsion and exterior smoothness which contributes to his characterisation throughout the poem as a deeply divided figure, in stark contrast to the Son, whose faith and actions are one.

It is through his protagonist's compelling voice that Milton proceeds to build his poetics of piety. With the emphasis on the Son's jointly prophetic and kingly role having been established within the Christological element of Book I, the other human voices in *Paradise Regained*, including the Disciples and Mary, affirm this compelling quality in their dependence on his words and actions. Although this is alien to Stoicism, this feature is again redolent of the piety that is set out in 'holy living,' in which there can be no

¹⁰⁶ Cf. above, n. 9.

¹⁰⁷ Shifflett, p. 147. This account builds on Malcolm Kelsall's essay 'The Historicity of *Paradise Regained*', which argues that 'What [Milton] has appreciated is that Christ's dilemma is neo-Stoic. Of course Christ is *not* a Stoic. Nor is Milton. But the situation at once recalls the tradition, and the problem.' See *MS 12* (1978), 241.

indifferent response to that which is virtuous. Consider this discussion of how to respond to praise in *Whole Duty of Man*:

If at any time thou art praised, do not be much overjoyed with it, nor think a jot the better of thy self, but if it be vertue thou art praised for, remember it was God, that wrought it in thee, and give him the glory, never thinking any part of it belongs to thee¹⁰⁸

The Christian virtue of humility outlined here is something other than the Christian humility that has been described by those arguing for *Paradise Regained* to be seen in Stoic terms. This stereotypical characterisation of Christian humility, it has been said, defines love ‘against rather than in terms of justice, and in which abjection and scandal are embraced.’¹⁰⁹ If *Whole Duty of Man* may be called a work of Christian piety, and yet hold up duty and obedience as a model for virtue rather than abjection and scandal, then this might alter critical analyses of *Paradise Regained*. The words of Milton’s Jesus indicate a conviction in the merits of speaking for others. In the lines ‘Who best | Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first | Well hath obeyed’ (III.194-6), Isabel Rivers argues convincingly that Milton ‘strenuously attacks the idea that at a time of political repression and social decadence the individual should turn back on himself as the only fixed point of value.’¹¹⁰ As with the repudiation of Satan’s aestheticized piety, this tacit rejection of Stoicism represents a further negative refinement of Milton’s piety. Taken together, these elements work to create in the figure of Jesus a paragon of true piety that holds itself distinct from the contemporary values of ‘holy living,’ whilst also acknowledging a degree of affinity with that cause.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, p. 149.

¹⁰⁹ Strier, p. 274.

¹¹⁰ Rivers, *The Poetry of Conservatism*, p. 99.

¹¹¹ This conclusion is reminiscent of Ashraf Rushdy’s understanding of Milton in the light of *Paradise Regained*: he is caught ‘between a faint desire for a community of faith and an unrelenting inability to accept the institutions forming such a community.’ (Ashraf H.A. Rushdy, *The Empty Garden* [Pittsburgh, PA: Pittsburgh University Press, 1992], p. 381).

Whereas the encounter between Jesus and Satan in *Paradise Regained* occurs in the wilderness, much of the drama of *Samson Agonistes* occurs in public, before Samson's Danite kinsmen. The first poem of the 1671 volume formulates the philosophical and theological tenets of its piety in a setting apart from the world, thus allowing the Son and Satan to range in their catechetical discourse through the linked issues of Stoicism, aesthetics and Christology. The latter poem, however, through its tragic-dramatic form, sets out to test this abstracted vision of piety against the dire material and spiritual circumstances of its protagonist. This act of testing is not merely in order to confirm the moral 'integrity' reached in the figure of Jesus in *Paradise Regained*.¹¹² Samson's final act of slaughter, arrived at through opaque 'rousing motions' (ll. 1382), is too morally troubling to merit unreservedly this understanding. Rather, Milton tests the piety elaborated in *Paradise Regained*, and that familiar to his reader, by transposing it into his poem's tragic form, without the use of an explanatory narrative voice. In this way, his focus is on dramatising the setting in which his protagonist's choices are made, in order to present the reader with the task of discerning whether or not those choices are made according to the dictates of a truly pious heart.¹¹³ Dialogue functions within this tragic format as the primary means of establishing this setting, and as such it forms the medium through which Milton continues his close textual engagement with 'holy living.' This lends the poem's scenario a distinct contemporary resonance that jars with the ostensibly biblical aspects of its setting, raising contrasting forms of piety as potential solutions to the protagonist's dilemma.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Radzinowicz, hails what she perceives as the succession of moral choices made by Samson in *Samson Agonistes* as the crowning achievement of Milton's career (*Towards Samson Agonistes*, p. 230).

¹¹³ In making this point on the reader's interaction with the poem, the chapter is indebted to Grossman's psychoanalytic reading of the ethical textuality of *Samson Agonistes*: 'the ethical moment of a text, as opposed to the determinative moment of choice depicted in the text, lies not in choosing a reading but in deferring that choice, not in generating a mythos to fill the silence, but in holding its space sublimely open.' (Grossman, 'Textual Ethics', p. 98).

¹¹⁴ Despite Keeble's emphasis on the interior focus of Nonconformist piety (cf. above, n. 83), it has been demonstrated that the poems of the 1671 volume are consumed by the exploration of 'the

Milton's continued grapple with the issue of piety and 'holy living' is at the forefront of the dialogue between Samson and Dalila. The scene (ll. 732-996) demonstrates again how Milton's use of ostensibly anticlerical rhetoric in the 1671 volume generates resistance to contemporary popular attitudes derived from those manuals, sermons and polemics most closely associated with the Restoration Church of England.¹¹⁵ The whole exchange between the two characters stands as a bitter caricature of a state-endorsed piety that constantly emphasises its shallowness and falsity. The full movement of the scene smacks of the zealous civic piety exemplified by Thomas Pierce's triumphal Restoration sermon, from Dalila's opening claim to be repentant, to her admittance of being persuaded by 'the bonds of civil duty | And of religion' (ll. 853-4), to her final triumph in 'The public marks of honour and reward | Conferred upon me for the piety | Which to my country I was judged to have shown' (ll. 992-4).

The specifically 'Anglican' texture of Dalila's characterisation as a 'pious' Philistine is first suggested in her initial creeping approach to Samson: 'yet if tears | May expiate [...] | [...] | My penance hath not slackened, though my pardon | No way assured.' (ll. 735-9). The terminology of expiation used here denotes the religious, ceremonial purpose of Dalila's tears. As a signifier of repentance, tears hold an ambiguous position in the 'holy living' canon. A suspicious understanding of tears as unreliable is demonstrated in Taylor's *Holy Living* which insists that 'repentance is not to be estimated by the tears, but by the grief; and the grief is to be valued not by the sensitive trouble, but

nature of conscientious performance' (Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*, p. 131), in order to resist the 'spectacles of state' on which the Restoration regime was founded (Knoppers, *Historicizing Milton*, p. 7). Also cf. Victoria Kahn, 'Aesthetics as critique: Tragedy and *Trauerspiel* in *Samson Agonistes*', in *Reading Renaissance Ethics*, pp. 104-127.

¹¹⁵ Recently Achsah Guibbory has argued that *Samson Agonistes* advocates a radically Protestant, masculine form of Christianity in opposition to an effeminised and effeminising Hebrew. In this understanding 'Dalila embodies the twinned seductions of false religion and monarchy.' However, this argument is focused on Milton's Puritan interpretation of Paul, rather than on the exact ecclesiastical circumstances in which he may have written *Samson Agonistes*. Cf. Guibbory, "'The Jewish Question" and "The Woman Question" in *Samson Agonistes*: Gender, religion, and nation', in *Milton and Gender*, ed. Catherine Gimelli Martin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 195.

by the cordial hatred of the sin and ready actual dereliction of it.’¹¹⁶ However, in the collect for contrition at the end of *Whole Duty of Man*, tears serve as a useful metaphor positively associated with repentance: the reader at prayer calls for God to strike at his stony heart, ‘that the waters may flow out, even floods of tears, to wash my polluted conscience.’¹¹⁷ While Samson scoffs at the expiatory property of Dalila’s tears as a token of her ‘wonted arts’ (ll. 748), the continuation of the phrase in her speech strengthens the link with shallow piety. ‘My penance hath not slackened, though my pardon | No way assured’ emulates the conditional soteriology at the heart of Anglican ‘holy living,’ in which pardon of sins is earned by an unstinting cycle of penitence and moral reformation: ‘no man shall be pardoned or saved, but he that observes this condition.’¹¹⁸

This initial suggestion is sustained and confirmed by Milton’s inventive introduction of a Philistine priest persuading Dalila to betray her husband. As John Carey succinctly notes regarding line 857, ‘No priest is mentioned in the biblical account.’ In addition, whilst Samson in the poem, and the biblical account (Judges 16:5), depict Dalila as being bribed with money, in her own description she is moved by an appeal to something else entirely. In Dalila’s account, her compliance is attained first by representations from ‘the magistrates | And princes of my county’ (ll. 850-51), who

Solicited, commanded, threatened, urged,
Adjured by all the bonds of civil duty
And of religion, pressed how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious to entrap
A common enemy, who had destroyed
Such numbers of our nation (ll. 852-57)

All the powers available to the magistrate are laid out before Dalila. The first line of the passage quoted above suggests a wheedling vacillation as they work to press her to their

¹¹⁶ Taylor, p. 356.

¹¹⁷ Allestree, *Whole Duty of Man*, p. 584.

¹¹⁸ Hammond, p. 13.

cause. Religion, too, is considered their responsibility, which makes what follows yet more relevant to the discourse of 'holy living' appropriated by Restoration Anglicans:

and the priest
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching now how meritorious with the gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of Dagon: what had I
To oppose against such powerful arguments? (ll. 857-62)

To say that the priest was forward, rather than 'behind,' in supporting the adjurations of Dalila's magistrates indicates direct collaboration within the Philistine commonwealth between Church and State. The homiletic role of the priest exposes how the classification of an act as meritorious can be bent out of shape by the dictates of the State. With magistrate and priest in harness together, their reasoning informed by 'that grounded maxim,' 'that to the public good | Private respects must yield' (ll. 865, 867-8), Dalila's love for Samson is overcome.

Dalila's account of her persuasion marks her as a character in thrall, quite anachronistically, to the Royalist authoritarianism of works such as *Whole Duty of Man*. A further example of this aspect of the new Anglican piety can be seen in *The causes of the decay of Christian piety*, in the chapter entitled 'A survey of the Mischiefs arising from Disputes, as they engage upon ill Arts and Scandalous Practices, to sustain the espoused Cause and Party.' In this, Allestree complains of 'all the *unchristian practices*, that have on this score been made, not only *lawful* but *meritorious*'; as examples he lists 'Perjury, Sacriledge, Murder, Regicide.'¹¹⁹ Considering violent passions to be a further cause for public dispute, it continues by saying that when 'private Animosities are any thing *violent*, they usually beat down all Consideration of *publick good*.'¹²⁰ Milton co-opts this language, which originates from loyal Anglicans's experiences during the Civil War and

¹¹⁹ Allestree, *Decay*, p. 289, 292, 291.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

Interregnum,¹²¹ and allocates it to Dalila. His depiction of the Philistine priest's role in enjoining in Dalila 'Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty' (ll. 870) amounts to a scathing indictment of the secular disease afflicting the solely pastoral role of the clergy. Samson's enraged reply to Dalila's self-justification does not distinguish between magistrate and priest, rather, they are all one: 'an impious crew | Of men conspiring to uphold their state | By worse than hostile deeds' (ll. 891-93). Upholding 'their state' deliberately meshes the good of the Philistine commonwealth with the 'crew's' own material welfare.

Even though it serves to establish Samson's adverse circumstances, the fabricated state-piety that invests the character of Dalila does not lessen the ethical ambiguity of his last act against the Philistines. His own potentiality as an exemplar of piety is deeply unstable for Milton, as it was for his 'holy living' contemporaries, particularly Hammond.¹²² Samson throws into relief the difference between the old covenant and the new. This is particularly clear in the poem's climacteric moment, in which Samson decides to go with the Public Officer and perform for the heathen worshippers of Dagon, as well as in the bloody fall-out provoked by this decision. Although the 'rousing motions' Samson experiences have been interpreted as rendering his '*emotion or passion in the form of action*,'¹²³ the opaque manner in which they 'dispose | To something extraordinary' (ll. 1382-3) Samson's thoughts invites a comparison with Hammond's *Practicall Catechisme*. In that catechetical work, Samson features in a question of Scholler's in response to Catechiste's argument forbidding suicide on the grounds that a man's life is in the power of God, rather than himself:

¹²¹ On the estimated date of composition for *Decay* as prior to the Restoration, cf. above, n. 60. That it was first printed after the Restoration illustrates its less-than-irenic qualities with regard to the regicide.

¹²² This is not the case, however, in Allestree's use of Samson's example in the rousing conclusion to *Decay*. Once the reasons for the nation's slide into impiety have been listed, Samson is cast unambiguously as a figure for the reader to emulate once they have taken heed of their own failings: 'let him make no delay to rescue himself from their *Treacheries*, but manfully break those *withs* and *cords* (which are too weak to hold any that will but in earnest remember, he is a *Nazarite*, a Person consecrate to God) resolutely resist the *insidious caresses* of those *Dalilah's*, which will deliver not *Himself* only, but the *Ark* to the *Philistines*.' (*Decay*, pp. 433-34).

¹²³ Kahn, 'Aesthetics as critique: Tragedy and *Trauerspiel* in *Samson Agonistes*', pp. 115-6.

S. What is to be said of Sampson, who killed so many by pulling away the pillars, and involved himselfe in the same destruction?

C. He was a Judge in Israel; and such in those daies, (and particularly him) did God ordinarily move by his spirit to doe some extraordinary things; and it is to be imagined, that God incited him to do this; or if he did not, he were not not [sic.] be excused in it.¹²⁴

The concluding sub-clause — ‘or if he did not’ — indicates a low-level uncertainty on Hammond’s part of the exact nature of Samson’s last action. Scholler’s interest is evidently piqued by Catechiste’s answer, as he proceeds to ask whether or not those in the primitive church who killed themselves rather than offer sacrifices to idols were still martyrs, to which his teacher replies:

*If the same could be affirmed of them which was of *Sampson*, that God incited them to doe this, they should by this be justified also; but having under the Gospell no authority to justifie such pretence of divine incitation, it will be safest to affirme, that this was a fault in them, which their love of God and feare that they should be polluted by Idolls was the cause of¹²⁵*

Again, Catechiste’s answer is qualified, in this case by the conditional ‘If’ at the start of the sentence, but also in the qualification regarding the ‘pretence of divine incitation.’ The example of the biblical ‘*Sampson*,’ Hammond suggests, is misleading when used in relation to the actions of those under the authority of the Gospel.

Milton’s Samson provides a similarly knotty crux within the scheme of piety that threads through the 1671 volume: depending on the reader’s discernment, his last actions are either a sign of his truly pious heart, or of his tragic slide into abject impiety. Having risen from the depths of despair in which he is discovered at the beginning of *Samson Agonistes*, Samson’s last words to the Chorus before departing to the theatre are brimming with confidence:

¹²⁴ Hammond, p. 166.

¹²⁵ Hammond, pp. 166-7.

Happen what may, of me expect to hear
 Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
 Our God, our Law, my nation, or myself,
 The last of me or no I cannot warrant. (ll. 1423-6)

In these words Samson pithily sets out those principal duties of which his Israelite piety is comprised. Yet these words become fundamentally distanced from Samson's subsequent actions, given the brutal act that claims his life and those of his tormentors. This is not to say that Milton condemns Samson's last actions, but that he renders them as almost entirely alien, to an extent unintelligible within the framework of the Christ-centred piety formulated in *Paradise Regained*, and therefore presenting the reader with a hard task of discernment. Manoa's valedictory eulogy confirms the distance between the two poems in its description of how the valiant youth will 'inflammeth their breasts | To matchless valour, and adventures high' (ll. 1739-40) at the memory of Samson. There is a sense of dramatic irony here, in the recollection of Dalila's premonition of her own posterity as one whose name will be 'sung at solemn festivals,' (l. 983) and have her tomb dressed annually with flowers. More significant here, however, is the clash with Jesus' rejection in *Paradise Regained* of the thought of martial heroism, which briefly 'Flamed' in his heart (l.216), in favour of the use of winning words as a means of bringing lasting salvation. In this way Samson's actions form an intractable crux throughout the course of the dramatic poem's narrative, one that tests the reader's own piety at every step. Thus *Samson Agonistes* lays claim to satisfying its own tragic criteria as 'the gravest, moralist, and most profitable of all other poems.'¹²⁶

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¹²⁶ John Milton, 'OF THAT SORT OF DRAMATIC POEM WHICH IS CALLED TRAGEDY', in *Complete Shorter Poems*, p. 355.

It has been suggested recently that Milton was personally acquainted with his clerical licenser Thomas Tomkins, Archbishop Sheldon's chaplain, and the author of the laudatory Imprimature for Allestree's *Causes of the decay of Christian Piety*.¹²⁷ Although this learned speculation does not go so far as to characterise the relationship as one of friendship, it does cast in a different light the inherited historiographical impression of the Restoration period as being one of intensely hostile ideological divisions. In John Toland's narration of the difficulties faced by Milton in getting *Paradise Lost* licensed in his biography *Amyntor*, Tomkins is depicted as threatening to deprive the public of Milton's epic on the grounds of 'imaginary Treason' in the poem's first book.¹²⁸ However, in contrast to this, it is also notable that Tomkins let the 1671 volume through without any recorded qualms. Despite the many indications of political and religious dissent that have of late been identified within *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, it has been argued that 'creative writing, to be read by a small cultural elite, was a low priority for government authorities much more concerned with managing news and suppressing open sedition.'¹²⁹ We might also speculate, on the grounds outlined in this chapter, that Milton's adoption and adaptation of the pious rhetoric and reasoning found in the 'holy living' corpus also contributed to Tomkins awarding a license to the 1671 volume. This may be thought of as the corollary of Milton's full exploitation of 'functional ambiguity [...] the indeterminacy inveterate to language.'¹³⁰ At the least, the poems give the impression of 'occasional conformity,' even if their lines at times burst with Dissenting fervour and heterodox conviction.

Regardless of this speculation, it is clear that reading the poems of the 1671 volume through the prism of its complex engagement with the devotional culture of 'holy living' reaffirms the critical tradition that marks them as actively if not explicitly

¹²⁷ C&C, JM, pp. 336-7.

¹²⁸ Darbishire, *Early Lives of Milton*, p. 180; also cf. PL I.594-9 for the offending lines.

¹²⁹ C&C, JM, p. 336.

¹³⁰ Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation*, p. 18.

participating in the political and ecclesiological vicissitudes of early Restoration England. The particular contribution of this chapter lies in its attempt to situate *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* in a contemporary discourse of Christian praxis that crossed the party lines of Anglican and Nonconformist. As such, it attempts to heed the historiographical attitude to religion in the Restoration that seeks to identify and interpret those articles of faith that indicate 'striking agreement' between Anglicans and mainstream religious Dissenters.¹³¹ Despite his antipathy to the use of piety to inculcate and ameliorate civil servitude, Milton too displays striking agreement with the manuals of Hammond, Taylor and Allestree. *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* also adhere to an ideal of plainness in addressing the reader, to the self-sufficiency of scripture, and to the necessity of moral rectitude as a condition for salvation. They share with 'holy living' a similarly rational and benign Arminian soteriology, even though the vision of practical virtue that they draw from it is wholly subversive to the conventional piety advocated by the Restoration Church of England. Milton and Hammond, Taylor and Allestree, considered together in their respective works of piety, represent a decisive development in England's post-Reformation settlement: the diminution of coercive church government, and the correlative rise of a religious ethos of self-restraint.¹³² In ideological, ecclesiological, and semantic terms, discipline was transforming; the poems of the 1671 volume indicate that Milton's own concept of discipline was transforming decisively too.

¹³¹ Sommerville, p. 72.

¹³² In resorting to this larger historical perspective, this point relies on Trevor-Roper's discussion of the Erasmian Arminianism of the 'Left' and 'Right' of England's post-Reformation settlement, in 'The Religious Origins of the Enlightenment', in *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change*, p. 217.

Conclusion

In the four chapters of this thesis, the shift over time in Milton's concept of discipline from the ecclesiastical to the pious and individual is quite clear. *Of Reformation* (1641) was just one amongst many contemporary tracts expressing a general desire for a reformation of Church discipline as a means towards England's betterment, even if its bold stylistic emphasis on poetry's capability to discipline the nation in virtue was utterly distinctive, and despite its avoidance of describing in detail the sort of Church settlement that Milton desired at the time. Written during the first months of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, the two versions of *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643 and 1644) continued to conceptualize discipline in terms that denoted Milton's belief that ecclesiastical reform would improve the people's 'faith and manners,' particularly if the laws regarding the institution of marriage were changed. However, these works also indicate that his concept was starting to shift. The understanding of the Church – and therefore of discipline – that they propagate was defined in opposition to the current Presbyterian obsession with ecclesial uniformity as the only basis for national discipline, as well as in response to harsh criticism that Milton was attracting for his controversial advocacy of divorce. The true basis of discipline, they argue, resided in man's domestic, familial liberty: all other social units, Church and State, rested on this central principle.

Though written much later than this period in Milton's writing, *Paradise Lost* (1667), *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* (1671) extensively develop the switch within his concept of discipline to a focus on the primacy of the individual, and the individual's self-willed ability to be moral in action. It is from this developed perspective that these poems engage with the ecclesiological issues of the era in which they were written. *Paradise Lost* proves that the Counter-Reformation debate over scripture and tradition, tied up with Augustine's formula '*fides et mores*,' did not abate with the return of

the Stuart monarchy and the ensuing birth of Dissenting culture: in the poem the words of Gabriel and Michael subtly draw an acute distinction between ‘discipline’ understood as mere order, and true discipline, denoted by ‘works of faith,’ which was to be practiced in faithfulness and co-operation. Milton’s brief epic *Paradise Regained*, and the dramatic poem with which it was originally bound, reject the word ‘discipline’ altogether, but still articulate the concept in terms of ‘piety’: as such they demonstrate his eagerness to grapple with the ‘holy living’ of the Restoration Church of England. In their ecclesiological aspect, these later works intimate the reversal in Milton’s conception of discipline that had occurred since the release of his first polemical tract: whereas in *Of Reformation*, an individual’s virtue is comprehended as the product of the Church’s (and the poet’s) discipline, in the later poetry, an individual’s virtue is upheld as the irrevocable precondition for the manifestation of true discipline in any larger social unit—family, gathered church, nation. We might speculate that this corroborates the lack of information that we have about Milton’s church attendance:¹ the fact that there are no written records of his participation in a particular congregation perhaps indicates that he did not believe that signing up to a covenant was a necessary means for the attainment of personal piety, inward and outwards.

Milton’s shifting concept of discipline is evident in these works, but thirty years span the gap between the publication of his *Of Reformation* and his 1671 volume, and to an extent this thesis’s divided focus on two distinct periods obscures how some of the finer details of this shift occurred. Works written in the second half of the 1640s and in the era of the Commonwealth have not been discussed, but would shed more light on the transformation. Further attention could be given to Milton’s conceptualization of discipline in *De Doctrina Christiana*, particularly its division between church discipline as an item pertaining to ‘the knowledge of God,’ and good works as categorised under the

¹ See Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*, pp. 116-7.

heading of ‘the worship of God,’² which was dictated by the proprieties of the genre of systematic theology. This categorical separation implies a split in Milton’s overall understanding of Christian praxis as discipline: if credence is given to the proposition that great efforts were taken by Milton and his amanuenses in 1659 to prepare *De Doctrina* for publication,³ this might be analysed and explained with reference to the English pamphlets that he wrote and published at the time, particularly the ecclesiology-focused *The likeliest means to remove Hirelings out of the church*. Another point of inquiry could be *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649), which invokes ‘the very discipline of Church’ to goad Milton’s Presbyterian interlocutors.⁴ In this, the concept of discipline had become a component of the argument over England’s future as a monarchy, marking the intersection between religious allegiance and political conviction, and therefore at a remove from exclusively moral matters. These examples indicate that the subject of Milton’s concept of discipline is not yet fully mapped out: his works hold much more as yet untouched material that would be pertinent to any expansion of this thesis’s project.

These other areas of the Miltonic corpus identified for further discussion also point to Milton’s enduring engagement with the concept of discipline. In its analysis of this topic, this thesis has urged that Milton’s works be re-examined in terms of their interaction with mainstream Protestant ideas, rather than just with early modern ‘puritanism’ and ‘radicalism.’⁵ It has also sought to establish a critical dialogue with those who have interpreted Milton’s ‘activist ethics’ as a derivation from his republican and Stoic convictions, advancing the claim that early modern – and consequently Milton’s own – notions of Christian praxis were far more complex than has previously been allowed. In addition, this thesis has highlighted Milton’s practical approach to doctrinal thought, as demonstrated in chapter four, which discusses how he developed his

² OCW VIII.1.20-21. Cf. above, Introduction, n. 31.

³ See ‘Introduction’, in OCW VIII.1.xxv-xxvii.

⁴ YP 3.217.

⁵ See above, Introduction, n. 24, n. 69.

soteriology through a critical engagement with popular contemporary notions of piety in the form of Anglican 'holy living.' The concept of discipline is a crucial lens through which to consider Milton's works. As his poetry stands, Janus-faced, between the early modern and the modern,⁶ so too stands his concept of discipline, articulating the ever-shifting line between his ecclesiology and his ethics.

⁶ See above, Introduction, n. 35.

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