BIBLICAL VERSE PARAPHRASE

OF THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE:

A STUDY IN LITERARY AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the literary genre of biblical verse paraphrase as practised in England between 1550 and 1640, and focuses on the social setting and function of such works from the last decade of Elizabeth's reign to the Civil War. The little attention that these works have received has generally been hampered by a desire to ascertain their poetic worth rather than recognize their historical importance. This thesis attempts to redress that tendency by considering the social conditions out of which these paraphrases arose: such aspects as the publication and patronage of them, and what part they played in a poet's career; whether that career was literary, courtly or clerical. Such an approach recognizes the paraphrases as religious, social and political, as well as poetic activities. It also examines the literary context of these paraphrases: that is, not only what part they played in the individual poetic career, but how they functioned in the development of sacred poetry in English. The thesis concludes that biblical verse paraphrase, especially in the reign of King James I, was recognized as a literary task of public as well as religious importance. The thesis proceeds by considering a broad range of paraphrasers, from such well-known poets as Michael Drayton, Thomas Middleton and John Donne, to many obscure ones, some of whose work has never reached print.

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Foreword

Biblical verse paraphrase of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has received little attention from literary historians and critics. Douglas Bush, in his influential volume in the Oxford History of English Literature, refers to it as "a chain of foothills, or an ant-hill, which cannot be altogether ignored"[1]. Even in the mere two pages he devotes to the genre his focus is not on English paraphrases, but the French ones of du Bartas. Most scholars, whether writing general literary histories of the period or studies of individual poets, have shared in Bush's downplaying of biblical paraphrase. However, a reexamination of this genre shows that it was not a "series of foothills" or an "anthill", but in fact a significant part of the cultural landscape of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The genre has received insufficient attention for two reasons. First, as acts of translation or imitation verse paraphrases have not been highly regarded by the many nineteenth and twentieth-century critics who have unquestioningly accepted the Romantic criterion of

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[1]Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century, 1600-1660, 2nd ed., (New York: Oxford UP, 1962), p. 72.

originality in considering earlier poetry. Second, their religious nature has predisposed some critics against them, and even though there has been an increasing recognition of the centrality of sacred verse in the seventeenth century, the paraphrases have generally not been included in this reevaluation. However, the sheer number of paraphrases produced demands we recognize that the Renaissance reader did not value originality in the way that we might, and that sacred verse, at its best, was seen as the "highest matter in the noblest form".[2] This thesis, then, attempts to contribute to the literary history of renaissance England by focusing on biblical verse paraphrase in its literary, religious and political context from the last decade of Elizabeth's reign to the Civil War.

A brief survey of the scholarship in the field will show that little has been done. Early studies, such as John Holland's The Psalmists of Britain (1843), Thomas Young's The Metrical Psalms and Paraphrases (1909) and Philipp von Rohr-Sauer's English Metrical Psalms from 1600 to 1660 (1938) were on the Psalms only, and more concerned with evaluating the poetic quality of individual paraphrases, than writing literary history. More recently, David Stephen Greenwood

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[2]John Donne, "Upon the translation of the Psalmes by Sir Philip Sydney, and the Countesse of Pembroke his Sister", Divine Poems, ed. Helen Gardner, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978).

has made a significant contribution to our understanding of the relationship of both verse and prose paraphrases to renaissance biblical scholarship.[3] I find, however, that the verse paraphrases are first and foremost poetry, and need to be considered as part of literary, rather than intellectual or theological, history. My work also goes beyond that of Greenwood in considering the political and social contexts of the genre. Recently, Rivkah Zim has published a detailed study of Psalm paraphrases in the sixteenth century (English Metrical Psalms: Poetry as Praise and Prayer, 1535-1601 (Cambridge UP, 1987), which goes far in considering the social and religious contexts of the metrical Psalms. Of individual paraphrasers, only Mary and Philip Sidney have received detailed attention. Such scholars as Margaret P. Hannay and Gary Waller have asserted the importance of the Sidney Psalm paraphrases and considered their work from a variety of angles.[4] The work of these

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[3]David Stephen Greenwood, "The Seventeenth-Century English Poetic Biblical Paraphrase: Practitioners, Texts and Contexts", University of Cambridge, 1985.

[4]Margaret P. Hannay, "'Doo What Men May Sing': Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication", Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators and Writers of Religious Works, ed. Margaret P. Hannay, (Kent, Ohio: Kent UP, 1985); and Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, (New York, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990). Gary F. Waller, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke: A Critical Study of her Writings and Literary Milieu, (Salzburg: U of Salzburg, 1979).

last three scholars has allowed me to focus more on biblical verse paraphrase as it developed after the influence of the Sidneys became a factor in the 1590's.

My study takes its bearings from a number of key concerns. First among these is the place of paraphrase in the literary career, especially for those poets who aspired to a "laureate" career. I frequently address the importance of the genre in establishing poetry as an honourable and christian vocation or activity; clearly, even more so than original devotional poetry, these works were an unassailable illustration that poetry could be turned to good ends. I also outline the importance of patronage, especially royal patronage, in the development of the genre. Arising from the latter is the theme of biblical paraphrase as a public or national service; for a number of the paraphrasers their work was to the honour of both God and the king, and the tension between the religious and the political is addressed at a number of points. A further issue that I return to repeatedly is the tension between fidelity to the original sacred text and poetic beauty or technique.

In addition to those paraphrases which reached print, there is a rich store surviving that circulated (some quite widely) in manuscript, but have remained unread and largely unnoticed for the past three

hundred years. The examination of some of these held in the British and Bodleian Libraries has added another dimension to my study, as I have been able to illustrate the stages a poet went through in attempting to establish his paraphrase as a work of public and national importance. Even these manuscript works were largely public, rather than private, enterprises. They were written for others to read, not just for their writers' edification. The distinction between public and private domains has sharpened in the past few centuries, with more and more activities coming under the private.[5] It will be helpful if we keep in mind the largely public nature of poetry, and particularly devotional poetry, in the Renaissance.

As the verse paraphrases of the Renaissance reflect the atmosphere of the royal court, I have chosen to organize this thesis roughly in terms of the reigns of the English monarchs. The first chapter will describe the development of verse paraphrase from the Reformation under Henry VIII and Edward VI through to the latter part of Elizabeth's reign. To give a broader scope I also discuss the influential French and neo-Latin paraphrases of the period. In the

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[5]A History of the Private Life: III. Passions of the Renaissance, ed. Roger Chartier, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap P, 1989).

second chapter I consider the practice of the genre in the 1590's; that is, after it had been established as an important activity by George Buchanan, the Sidneys and du Bartas. This last decade of Elizabeth's reign also reflects the changes that came about in literary fashion as poets began to anticipate the coming to the throne of a new king. In the third chapter I turn to the reign of James I proper, and give particular attention to the special task of producing an English Psalter, undertaken by such men as John Harington, Joseph Hall, George Wither and King James himself. The career of George Wither provides a unique opportunity to examine the complexities of writing and publishing biblical verse paraphrase in the period. The thesis concludes with a consideration of the reign of Charles I and the continuing importance of the court for this sort of poetry. Here I focus on Charles' efforts to make his father's Psalter the authorized English version, and the paraphrases of George Sandys in their relation to the court, Great Tew, and the literary and liturgical tendencies of the 1630's.

A Note on Conventions and Abbreviations

In citing books published before 1700 I have followed the convention of including the place of publication only if it is not London. In a few instances where there were a number of books with similar titles I have included STC numbers in order to distinguish them.

The following abbreviations have been used:

BL	British Library
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
DNB	The Dictionary of National Biography
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
PL	Patrologiae Latinae. Ed. Migne.

STC — Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland 1475-1640. Ed. Pollard and Redgrave.

Chapter 1

"The Highest Matter in the Noblest Form": Verse Paraphrase in the Sixteenth Century

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, verse paraphrase of various parts of scripture was a well-established literary practice both on the continent and in England. It had been practised by Protestants and Catholics, professional poets and amateurs, in Latin, Greek, Italian, French, German and English. Those poets most likely to be named in a sixteenth-century list of great English poets, Wyatt, Surrey, Spenser and Sidney, had all made some attempt at creating English versions of Hebrew poetry. A list of continental paraphrasers is equally impressive: Luther, Beza, Buchanan, Marot, du Bartas, Malherbe, and Diodati were all well-known as verse paraphrasers. While verse paraphrase was a well-established genre by the turn of the century, this is not to say that the fruit of these endeavours was at all homogeneous, either in quality of verse or in the function that they were written to fulfill. Writing in the late 1560's, Archbishop Matthew Parker noted the wide variety of Biblical paraphrase taking place at the time:

As some beforne: the lyke hath playde,
of Psalmes to pike their choyce:
And them in ryme: so fyne have layde,
to sing with musikes voyce.

Then some in prose: most learnedly,
have tourned the phrase and worde:
Some glose have made: full diversly,
yet sang in good accorde.

That some in verse: right latenly,
have strunged Davids harpe:
They have their laudes: most worthely,
their paynes ought no man carpe.

Herein because: all mens delight,
bene diverse founde in mynde:
I tourned the Psalmes: all whole in sight,
in rythmes of divers kynde.[1]

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[1]"Of the vertue of the Psalmes", The Whole Psalter, [1567], sig. B2r-v.

Unlike some of his contemporaries, Parker is not disturbed by this variety of paraphrases: whether they are in prose or verse, whether a faithful reproduction or a gloss, he sees them as useful and worthy of praise.[2]

Throughout this thesis I will use the term "paraphrase" to refer to this wide range of verse renderings of scripture. The works were described with a number of different terms in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: "paraphrase", "metaphrase", "imitation", and "descant" among others. Rivkah Zim has tried to show how these terms reflect various rhetorical exercises of the period.[3] Her discussion is largely based upon Roger Ascham's description of those translating activities in his short rhetorical handbook The Scholemaster (1570). However, it seems that Ascham's differentiation among paraphrasis, metaphrasis, and imitatio seems not to have had much effect on

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[2]Parker seems to be making a distinction between "rhyming" (verse 1) and "versifying" (verse 3): by rhyming he seems to mean works composed for singing, by "versifying", a more literary approach by men who achieve literary fame, "laudes", and perhaps Latin unrhymed versions, rather than English paraphrases. In a letter to Gabriel Harvey from 1579, Spenser writes that he has become "more in love wyth my Englishe versifying, than with Ryming" (Works 9:6). By "versifying", Spenser may have meant attempts to write English poetry with quantitative metrics.

[3]Rivkah Zim, English Metrical Psalms: Poetry as Praise and Prayer, 1535-1601, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987), pp. 1-42.

common usage of those terms, at least until the end of the century. Rather, various terms to describe what was essentially the same literary genre went in and out of fashion: around 1550 many works were presented as being "translated (or drawen) into English meter", a Latin version was often called "paraphrasis", and this term in an anglicized form began to show up on title pages in the 1590's. Henry Lok's Ecclesiastes (1597), although described on its title page as "paraphrastically dilated in English poesie", is generally more faithful to the original than Wyatt's Certayne Psalmes (1549), which were "drawen into englyshe meter". The shift in terminology does not concern fidelity, but reflects a change in how the poets and readers perceived what was being done. Generally, paraphrase seems to suggest more originality on the part of the poet, that the work is of a literary nature, whereas references to "English meter" point towards a use of the material as song. Of greater importance than such terminology is what literary tradition the paraphraser thought himself to be working out of, and what function his versification was written to fulfill.

The sixteenth-century versifier of Scripture often found it necessary to defend his art. This was most often done by arguing that parts of the Old Testament were Hebrew poetry, and that these could only be adequately reproduced in meter, not prose. In this, paraphrasers were

following an argument that had been put forward as early as the fourth century by St. Jerome:

> Holy Scripture is like a beautiful body concealed by a dirty gown. The Psalms are as well-sounding as the songs of Pindar and Horace. The writings of Solomon have dignity, the book of Job is perfect. All these books are composed in hexameters and pentameters in the Hebrew original. But we read them in prose! Consider how much Homer would lose in prose![4]

The preface to the 1556 edition of Sternhold and Hopkins presents this argument: "they that are skilfull in the hebrewe tounge by compringe the psalmes with the reste of the scriptures easelie may perceyve the metre"(20); a marginal note directs readers to the Rabbinic commentator Moses Chabib. Bishop Parker defends English verse by citing church

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[4]Sancti Hieronymi Praefatio in Librum II Chronicorum Eusebii. PL, vol. 27, pp. 223-24, trans. in Ernst Robert Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, trans. Willard R. Trask, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1953), p. 46.

fathers, as well as the Bible:

And who that noth: and hath it waighde,
how Psalmes by Metre go:
Can blame no art: by rythme so layde,
nor musicke squard therto.

Thus Bernard sweete: in holy rede,
Christes death revolved in rythme:
So Ambrose sage: and worthy Bede,
thought this no shame or cryme.

And what is verse: but rythme to name,
in Lattine, Frenche, or Greeke:
Our English verse: I count the same,
though all men hit not leke.[5]

For the poetic nature of scripture Josephus and Origen were frequently

[5]"Of the Vertue of the Psalmes", The Whole Psalter, [1570], sig. B1v.

cited, as were contemporary scholars like Junius and Tremellius, translators of a Protestant Latin Bible.[6]

However, the exact nature of Hebrew verse was disputed: Puttenham believed it was rhymed, but most suggested that meter distinguished it as verse, and looked for Greek and Roman verse forms in the Hebrew text. Thus, it was widely thought that David's Psalms were in iambic hexameter and Jeremiah's Lamentations in sapphic.[7] Especially toward the end of the century the idea that poetry originated in Israel came to prominence. The Greeks and Romans had learned the poetic meters and genres from the Hebrews, rather than the other way around.[8] Thus, scripture came to be seen as not only the fountain of divinity, but also of poetry. If a late sixteenth-century poet paraphrased

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[6]See Lodge, "Defence of Poetry", in G. Gregory Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1904), vol. 1, p. 71; Philip Sidney "A Defence of Poetry", in Miscellaneous Prose. Ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan van Dorsten. (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1973), p. 80.

[7]At least one writer, Abraham Fraunce, attempted to write English psalms in rhyming hexameter (The Countesse of Pembrokes Emanuel, 1591). Fraunce was best known for Arcadian Rhetorick, a rhetorical handbook.

[8]Two articles of Israel Baroway, "The Bible as Poetry in the English Renaissance: An Introduction," JEGP 32 (1933), pp. 447-80; and "'The Lyre of David': A Further Study in Renaissance Interpretation of Biblical Form", ELH 8 (1941), pp. 119-42, provide the best account of understandings of Hebrew prosody in the late sixteenth century.

part of scripture into classical meters he could argue that he was merely returning it to the equivalent of its original form, which had been lost in the Vulgate and other prose translations.

The verse paraphrasers of the sixteenth century were primarily poets rather than translators or theologians; they usually worked from a Latin or English prose text rather than the Hebrew or Greek. Some sought to put the words of scripture in a more appropriate form, or a more singable one; others used the act of paraphrasing to apply the words of scripture, especially the Psalms, to their own situation. With prose translations there was much concern with not adding anything to the original text; some believed that each Greek or Hebrew word ought to be replaced with exactly one English. Jerome had stressed the importance of "sense for sense" rather than "word for word" for all translation, "absque scripturis sanctis, ubi et verborum ordo mysterium est".[9] In response to this dilemma, both the Geneva and King James Bibles were published with added words in italics.[10] Obviously, such a scrupulous concern would be somewhat frustrated by English meter.

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[9]Epistula 57.5 (Ad Pammachium), Lettres, ed. Jérôme Lebourt, 8 vols., (Paris: l'Association Guillaume Budé, 1951), vol. 3, p. 59.

[10]John Holland, The Psalmists of Britain, (London, 1843), pp. vii-viii, mentions that there were metrical versions that did the same but gives no examples: John Milton did this in his second group of Psalms from 1648.

For those concerned with producing an English Psalter for worship, poetic decorum was of far less importance than clarity and fidelity to the authoritative text.[11] The Genevan publishers of the first edition of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter (1556) widely amended Sternhold's work to correct those liberties he had taken with the original:

> we thoght it better to frame the ryme to
> the Hebrew sense, then to bynde that
> sense to the Englishe meter and so either
> altered for the better in such places as
> he had not attayned unto, or els where he
> had escaped part of the verse.[12]

Archbishop Parker placed the competing concerns in this hierarchy:

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[11]Generally in this thesis I use "Psalter" to refer to any complete versification of the Psalms which was intended for, or actually used, in worship. Although some medieval Psalters did not include all one hundred and fifty Psalms, all discussed in this thesis do unless otherwise noted.

[12]p. 21.

Verse cleare to frame: was first pretence,
I followed Hierome next:
Third Chaldey glose: fourth seventie sence,
rythme, tyme, were fift and sext.[13]

The sixteenth century was the great age of classical as well as biblical verse paraphrase, and a brief comparison of how the original works were used by translators or versifiers may be helpful. While a sixteenth-century translator felt called upon to be more faithful to his original text than his medieval counterpart, he was still quite willing to alter it to fit his own time and situation. Thomas Drant (d.1578?), best known for his attempts to bring classical meters and quantitative

[13]"Of the vertue of the Psalmes", sig. B2v. By "Chaldey" Parker means the Targum, an Aramaic translation and interpretation of the Hebrew Bible; it was quite well known among Renaissance gentiles and was generally called the "Chaldee Paraphrase". The "seventy" was a common way of referring to the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, translated between the third century B.C. and second century A.D.

scansion to bear on English verse,[14] presents a unique opportunity to contrast the degree of liberty taken with classical and Biblical translation or paraphrase. His A Medicinable Moral (1566) includes translations of both the Satires of Horace and The Wailings of Jeremiah (a paraphrase of Lamentations). Some of the other sixteenth-century paraphrasers also worked from classical or secular originals: Wyatt imitated the sonnets of Petrarch, and Surrey translated the first four books of the Aeneid, but neither of these commented upon their work in the way that Drant does. Drant presents the two works as fulfilling similar functions: both are to correct human sin, but each in its own fashion. However, his treatment of them is markedly different. In rendering the Satires, Drant went beyond Horace's own injunction, "Nec verbo verbum curabis reddere fidus interpres".[15] In fact, Drant had little interest in being a "fidus interpres" at all:

I have done as the people of god were

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[14]Spenser mentions "Drant's rules" in a letter to Harvey, Oct. 5, 1579. See Leicester Bradner Musae Anglicanae, (New York: MLA, 1940, rpt. New York: Kraus, 1966), p. 58, and John Buxton, Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance. (London: Macmillan, 1964), pp.116-18. A number of poems in Thomae Drantae Advordinganii Praesul. Eiusdem sylva (1576) refer to Drant's paraphrase of Job (possibly in Latin) which is not extant.

[15]Ars Poetica, l. 133.

commanded to do with their captive women
that were hansome and beautifull: I have
shaved off his heare and pared of his
nailes & (that is) I have wyped awaye all his
vanitie and superfluitie of matter.
Further, I have for the moste part drawen
his private carpyng of this or that man
to a general moral.[16]

Here Drant is echoing Jerome's reading of Deuteronomy 21:12, which the church father saw as a justification for the "use" of pagan culture.[17] Pagan art is thus made to serve a Christian purpose; the paraphraser's goal is not fidelity to Horace, but to the spirit of Christ.

However, with scripture Drant can play the faithful interpreter and downplay his own role in producing the work; he has "desired to jumpe so nigh with the Hebrue, y^{t} it doth erewhile deforme the vayn of the english".[18] Drant's claim about the fidelity of his text to the biblical

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[16]sig. A3v.

[17]Epistula 70.2, Lettres, vol. 3, p. 210.

[18]sig. I7v.

original is typical, as is the difference in approach to classical and biblical material. In an earlier translation of Horace, Drant put forth his classical work as a preliminary exercise before the more important task of scriptural paraphrase:

> so to cum to be able utterers of the
> gospell, whiche is the top, and tip of
> our climing, we must learne out of men to
> speake according to the man, (which is a
> bystep from the pathe of divinitye,) yet
> very, and moste necessarye for that we
> lyve with men, speake with men, and
> preache to men. Thus therefore for me to
> step asyde by melling with humanitye, is
> not to treade out of my way, or lose my
> way, but to fynde my waye more apparaunte
> reddie before me.[19]

Such a synthesis of classical learning and Christian divinity was

[19]Horace His arte of Poetrie, pistles, and Satyrs Englished 1567, sig. *iiiiv.

flourishing in the French Academies of the time, and was to become a prominent feature of the English literary scene, including biblical paraphrase, by the end of the century. Zim argues that with renaissance versions of biblical texts there is much more "familiarity and continuity-in-change" rather than the sort of reaction or even inversion of the original sometimes taking place in the imitation of classical models.[20]

While the different versions of Scripture, both in prose and poetry, certainly competed for readers, there is no indication that the multitude of these in any way threw into doubt the authority and sole sense of Scripture, or the plausibility of translating that work into English. St. Augustine's approval of a diversity of translations was invoked repeatedly in the sixteenth century.[21] Throughout the Middle Ages the variety of prose Psalm versions: Psalterium Romanum, Psalterium Gallicanum, Psalterium Ambrosianum, had not damaged their credibility.[22] The preface to the Geneva Bible suggests that "all

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[20]p. 26.

[21]Flora Ross Amos, Early Theories of Translation, (New York: Columbia UP, 1920), p. 50.

[22]J.A. Gaertner, "Latin Verse Translations of the Psalms", Harvard Theological Review, 4 (1956), p. 273.

[translations] may serve to good purpose and edification".[23] While some paraphrasers might present their version as superior to that of a rival poet, and most often that rival was the Old Version of Sternhold and Hopkins, they did not suggest that their own version superseded all previous attempts, nor rendered future ones unnecessary. In fact, it was commonplace to claim that the new version in question had only entered the already crowded public light because of friends' urgings, and the poet hoped that someone in the future might provide a better version. In this way one paraphrase led to the writing and publication of others.

Apart from Miles Coverdale and Bishop Matthew Parker, sixteenth-century English translators were not involved in producing both prose and poetic versions of scripture. The first major work of translation was William Tyndale's version of the New Testament, written in 1524-5 and published at Cologne and Worms in 1525.[24] He followed with the Pentateuch five years later, and Miles

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[23]A. W. Pollard, Records of the English Bible 1525-1611, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1911), p. 281.

[24]These early translations were published on the continent due to Henry VIII's suppression of vernacular translations. In 1536 Henry approved the placing of English Bibles in churches, but withheld from authorizing any particular version. A Royal Injunction came in September 1538 requiring the use of the Bible in English. By 1539 Henry's movement toward an autonomous English Church made him much more accepting of vernacular translation.

Coverdale completed the earlier translator's work in 1535 with the publication of a complete English Bible on the continent, which was republished in England in 1539 as the Great Bible. All of this work was in prose, as were Matthew's Bible (1537) and Taverner's Bible (1539). Coverdale's Psalms in the Great Bible, while not in verse, became well-known because of their inclusion in the Book of Common Prayer.

In the same period Coverdale was busy with two other versions of the Psalms. He was most likely responsible for a translation of Johannes Campensis' Psalmorum omnium (A Paraphrase upon all the Psalmes of David, 1535). It was probably in the same year that his own Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes drawen out of the holy Scripture, which consisted of metrical versions of some of the Psalms, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, and some hymns, was published. Although Coverdale's was not the first poetic rendering of Scripture in English, it did lie at the beginning of the verse paraphrase tradition of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[25] Rivkah Zim's admittedly incomplete bibliography of

[25]Holland in The Psalmists of Britain notes two metrical Psalms from the 13th or early 14th century which are a translation of St. Jerome's Gallican Psalter. Coburn Freer, Music for a King, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1972) notes Thomas Brampton's paraphrase of the Seven Penitential Psalms in 1414; there also remains an Anglo-Saxon

sixteenth-century Psalm paraphrases lists 86 different extant works, most of which are in verse. While the Psalms were the most often versified of Biblical texts, the Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and Lamentations were also frequently rendered as poetry. The Old Testament songs of Moses, Deborah, Hannah and Habakkuk, and from the New Testament the Nunc Dimittis, Magnificat, and Lord's Prayer were also set in meter for choral or congregational singing. More unusual were Christopher Tye's paraphrase of Acts (1553), and William Samuel's The Abridgement of Goddes Statutes in Myter (1551), a paraphrase of the Pentateuch.

In spite of their poetic nature, the Prophets were rarely paraphrased, for two reasons. First, they were not widely recognized to be in verse. And secondly, they did not express a support for monarchic government in the way that the Wisdom Literature did. Given the close connection of royal courts and biblical paraphrasers, it is not surprising that they turned to the Wisdom Literature which presents an era in Israel's history when it was under kings, rather than the Prophets which are much more likely to criticize monarchs. It was not until the mid-17th century that the Prophets were widely used as a

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Psalter which some have ascribed to Bp. Aldhelm of Sherborne (Julian, p. 916).

source for paraphrase.[26]

Those verse paraphrases that were intended as instruction or commentary on the text had as their targeted audience those with little education, and often children. These paraphrases thus continued a tradition reaching back into the medieval period in which vernacular works were perceived as for the unlearned.[27] Even prose translations like the Geneva Bible were presented in this way; the preface to that work indicates that it was intended primarily for

> the simple lambes, which partely are already in the folde of Christ, and so heare willingly their Shepeherds voyce, and partly wandering astray by ignorance, tray the tyme

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[26]Similarly, Henry Lathrop notes that 16th-century classical translators turned to Imperial Rome rather than democratic Greece: "the sixteenth century was one of autocracy and of large territorial states, and the minds of students turned naturally to the imperial period first of Rome, secondarily of Greece. The lesson the translators never weary of insisting upon is the evil of rebellion against the Prince. The Greek city-state and the conflicts of democracy and oligarchy were shocking and even unintelligible to them". (Translations from the Classics into English from Caxton to Chapman, (New York: Octagon, 1967).

[27]For instance, the prefatory poem to Ship of Fools notes that it was translated for "rude people" (Sebastian Brant, Shyp of Folys, trans. Alexander Barclay, 1509, (fasc. repr., New York: Da Capo, 1970), sig. A1v.

tyll the Shepherd fynde them and bring them unto his flocke.[28]

Paraphrases, whether in verse or prose, could help make the scriptures more accessible and entertaining. The New Testament prose paraphrases of Erasmus, many of which were translated by Nicholas Udall, were ordered to be placed in every English church in 1548. In the same period, paraphrases of the Psalms, most notably those of George Joy, came to be used as primers in the schools, and thus played a role in English education analogous to that of Buchanan's paraphrase in Latin.[29] However, the use of such paraphrases as educational material does not necessarily mean that such was their original function. Like Buchanan's Psalms they were most likely composed as literary or devotional pieces and only later put to an educational use by others.[30] Most of the early English poetic renderings were not for

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[28]Pollard, p. 276.

[29]H.A. Mason, Sir Thomas Wyatt: A Literary Portrait, (Bristol: Bristol Classical P, 1986), p. 156; Zim, p. 212.

[30]The popularity of Biblical material for humanist instruction is manifest also by Castelio's Four Books of Sacred Dialogues, a primer which contained episodes from the Old Testament and New in simple Latin and French for the instruction of young English students, that

instructional purposes, but seem to have been an attempt to satisfy Erasmus' wish that

> the ploughman holdynge the plough did synge somewhat of the mystycall Psalmes in his owne mother tonge. Yea, and yf the weaver, sytting at his worke, dyd synge somewhat of the gospell, for his solace & conforte in his labours.[31]

The title of the first complete metrical Psalter, that of Robert Crowley in 1549, announced that it was translated in order "that it [the Psalter] maye the more decently, and wyth more delyte of the mynde, be reade and songe of all men". Like Coverdale's paraphrases and most of the English Psalters that were to come, Crowley's followed the Latin liturgical tradition by including canticles such as the Nunc Dimittis.[32]

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went through at least 47 editions.

[31]Paraclesis or An Exhortacyon to the Study of the Gospell, trans. William Roy, (1540), sig. G2r-v.

[32]F.F. Bruce suggests that the English Psalters followed Calvin's Geneva Psalter of 1542 in including these hymns (The English Bible: A History of Translations, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1961), p. 27).

The work begins with a table of movable feasts and explains how to use it. Although he does not explicitly advise singing a certain Psalm on a certain day, the presentation invites such a use. These early verse paraphrases were part of the general Reformation movement to make the scriptures accessible, and did so by exploiting the popular medium of song. The movement reached its culmination in The Whole Psalm Book, (best known as "Sternhold and Hopkins", and later as the "Old Version"), which was the standard Psalter used in English churches until the late seventeenth century. This Psalter, a compilation of many versifiers' work, was gradually assembled over a period of 13 years; the first Psalms by Thomas Sternhold appeared in 1549. Other biblical paraphrases were also set to tunes, but these did not become prominent in worship like the Psalms. The Song of Solomon was used liturgically, but was more often sung by the choir than the congregation.

The Psalter known as "Sternhold and Hopkins" became an integral part of English life by serving as the established Psalter for congregational singing until 1689. Since hymns did not play a major part in British worship until after 1700, these Psalms became the basis of English congregational singing. Although the service rendered to England by the versifiers of the "Old Version" was not always appreciated by the generations that followed -- there were numerous

attempts to improve or replace Sternhold and Hopkins -- for well over a century tradition proved stronger than innovation, and in some rural parishes the "Old Version" Psalms continued to be sung until the middle of the nineteenth century.[33]

The name of Thomas Sternhold is inevitably linked with the "Old Version", but it is only in hindsight that he can be described as the founder of the English Psalter for congregational use. Sternhold did think of his versifying as a public service, but by this he would have meant that they were composed for the king and court. As Clément Marot's French metrical Psalms were written for the court of François I, and only later came to be the core of the Genevan Psalter, so Sternhold's Psalms were dedicated to Henry VIII and Edward VI, and intended for private reading or singing.[34] Others were doing the same thing in the royal court of the 1540's: Catherine Parr had encouraged devotional writing and sacred song, and the young Elizabeth also paraphrased at least one Psalm. Sternhold's Psalms differed in that they moved beyond the court because of publication and became enormously popular, running through twelve editions by the time of Edward VI's death. Sternhold, who may not have been familiar with

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[33]Benson, p. 50.

[34]Certayne psalmes chosen out of the psalter of David, [1547-8?].

Coverdale's versification, established a precedent which other versifiers found useful to invoke.[35] Thus, William Baldwyn in the preface to King Edward of his 1549 edition of the Song of Songs cites Sternhold's work:

> Your Majesty hath alredy geven a notable ensample in causying the psalmes brought in to fine Englysh meter, by youre godly disposed servant Thomas Sternholde, to be song openly before your grace in the hearyng of all your subjectes. Whiche good example, I beseche God all your subjectes may have grace to follow.[36]

A flurry of publication followed in the years of Edward's reign, 1549-55, with many of the paraphrases written by members of the Chapel Royal. As with the courts of François I and Henry III in France,

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[35]Zim, p. 113. The earlier versifications by Coverdale, Becon and Wisdom were more firmly in the Lutheran tradition, and borrowed meters and tunes from the German reformers. However, these did not seem to have much influence on the Psalm versions of Sternhold and Hopkins, nor on the tradition that followed them (Julian, pp. 344 and 916).

[36]sig. A3v.

and both the Scottish and English courts of James VI and I, the royal court of the young Edward provided an atmosphere which fostered the writing and publication of sacred verse.[37] Catherine Parr, Henry's last wife, was influential in setting this tone at court.[38] The Psalm paraphrases of William Hunnis, musician of the Chapel Royal appeared under the same title as Sternhold's work: Certayne psalmes chosen out of the psalter (STC 2727); Francis Seagar's work adapted the title slightly: Certayne Psalmes select out of the Psalter (1553) (STC 2728);[39] another work, Certayne Chapters of the proverbes of Salomon drawen into metre by Thomas Sterneholde, appeared under Sternhold's name, but it is probable that he composed none of it, and parts have been shown to be by Surrey.[40]

Sternhold established another important precedent by putting his Psalms in common meter (alternating tetrameter and trimeter lines rhyming abcb). Many ballads took this form, and there were numerous

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[37]Lily B. Campbell, Divine Poetry and Drama, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1959), p.45.

[38]See John King, "Patronage and Piety: the Influence of Catherine Parr", Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators and Writers of Religious Works, ed. Margaret Hannay, (Kent, Ohio: Kent UP, 1985).

[39]It is unclear how many of the these are actually Seagar's.

[40]Zim, pp. 125-6.

popular tunes that could be used in singing it. In choosing a meter associated with popular song, Sternhold was following the lead of Luther who had taken the tunes for such psalm paraphrases as "A Mighty Fortress" from German popular or folk songs, and the French Psalmists who had set their work to the popular tunes of the time.[41] Those poets who added to Sternhold's Psalter, John Hopkins, Robin Wisdom and William Whittingham among others, rendered their Psalms in common meter, or the very similar long meter, which consisted of four lines of tetrameter, rhyming abcb. In the mid-sixteenth century the fourteen-syllable line was the most common English poetic line, and not restricted to hymns or ballads. It could be used for even the highest sort of literature: Thomas Phaer used it for his translation of the Aeneid (1558), and Abraham Fleming for the Bucolics in 1575.[42] Lathrop notes that as a verse form for translation,

> the fourteener is especially liable to dilution, the shortness of English words making it difficult to fill fourteen syllables with the material of one classic line. In

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[41]Zim, p. 122; it cannot be proven that Sternhold was familiar with either the hymns of Luther or the Psalms of Marot, but Zim has shown that he may have come to know the latter through the influence of Nicolas Denisot, a French courtier and poet who visited the English court in the late 1540's.

[42]Lathrop, pp. 109-113.

> expository passages, it is difficult to keep the fourteener from prosaic commonness, not to say from doggerel jog-trot, as in any page of the sober-minded writers of the first part of the reign of Elizabeth.[43]

George Gascoigne wrote in "Certayne Notes of Instruction" that "the long verse of twelve or fourtene sillables, although it be now adayes used in all Theames, yet in my judgement it would serve best for Psalmes and Himpnes".[44] By the seventeenth century Gascoigne's wish was fulfilled: common meter was associated almost exclusively with the sung Psalms, but unfortunately it was no longer respected. However, even many of those seventeenth-century poets who were unhappy with the "Old Version" and sought to compose a new version imitated their sixteenth-century predecessors by writing their new versions in common meter.

Sternhold died in 1549, but the following years saw continual additions made to his work with the Psalms, especially by John Hopkins

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[43]Lathrop, p. 110.

[44]Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, vol. 1, p. 57.

who first added seven of his own paraphrases to the edition that followed shortly upon Sternhold's death. Zim takes pains to argue that Sternhold's Psalms are superior to those added by his imitators;[45] she also notes that even those Psalms in the Old Version which are Sternhold's were modified by the Reformers in Geneva who put out the first Psalter with music upon which all later editions were based: The forme of prayers and ministration of the Sacraments..., 1556.[46] This edition contained 51 Psalms, and, more so than Sternhold's first publication of 1549, can be looked upon as the first of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalters. It reached its final and complete form in 1562. The Sternhold and Hopkins anthology differed from collections of neo-Latin Psalms being published at the same time, in that it was compiled specifically for communal worship rather than for literary comparison.

The Sternhold and Hopkins Psalms were not used in public worship until after the accession of Elizabeth to the throne in 1558. The Protestant exiles in Geneva had joined the Calvinist congregations there in singing the Psalms of Marot and Beza as part of the liturgy, and

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[45]pp. 120-21.

[46]Zim, pp. 141-44. Similarly, Surrey's few Psalms were revised by Francis Seagar, a later publisher, to make them less personal and more singable (see Zim, pp. 145-49 for an illustration of this).

encouraged a similar use of English Psalms upon their return. The title of the 1562 edition of Sternhold and Hopkins suggests that it was intended for private devotion; however, the 1566 title claimed authorization for public use: they were "allowed to be soong...before and after morning and evening prayer: as also before and after the Sermon".[47] Elizabeth had approved the use of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter in the first year of her reign, provided that it did not interfere with the forms of Morning and Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer, (Elizabeth's 49th Injunction,June 1559). This authorization proved to be controversial for years to come: did it mean that the Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter could be used, or must be used rather than any other? Most later poets who were interested in replacing the Old Version argued that it had simply been allowed.[48]

Verse paraphrasing followed roughly the same course in Scotland as in England, and the first complete Scottish Psalter, which appeared in 1564, relied heavily on Sternhold and Hopkins.[49] Over the next eighty years it aroused the same criticism as its English counterpart,

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[47]Qtd. in John Julian, A Dictionary of Hymnology, 2nd ed., (London: John Murray, 1907), p. 864.

[48]Julian, pp. 563-5.

[49]Philipp von Rohr-Sauer, English Metrical Psalms from 1600 to 1660, (Freiburg: Poppen and Ortmann, 1938), p. 44.

and there were many attempts to replace it.[50] Not one was successful until 1650, when the Scottish Assembly approved a much revised version of Francis Rous's Psalms. Apart from this authorized Psalter, the most important Scottish versification was an anthology produced by the three Wedderburn brothers: Ane Compendius Buik of Godly and Spirituall Sangis (1567), which drew its inspiration from Lutheran Psalters and hymnals.[51] From these works sprang a long Scottish tradition of verse paraphrase, especially of the Psalms, which reached its apex at the court of King James VI.

Already in the sixteenth century new versions of the Psalter were produced in England as alternatives to that of Sternhold and Hopkins. The most noteworthy of these is that of Bishop Matthew Parker, probably published in 1567. While his position in the Church and the fact that he was one of the few verse paraphrasers of the century who worked from the original Hebrew might seem to lend his 1567 Psalter a certain authority, it seems not to have been used in the Church. His claim that it was written only for private use but made public by "frendes requestes" may be conventional literary modesty:

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[50]Thomas Young, The Metrical Psalms and Paraphrases, (London: A. & C. Black, 1909), pp. 50-1.

[51]Zim, p. 236.

And wher at first: I secret ment,
but them my selfe to sing:
Yet frendes requestes: made me relent,
thus them abrode to bring.[52]

However, the gap of at least ten years between their composition and publication in 1569 may support Parker's claim. They were presented in a more liturgically complex form than those of Sternhold and Hopkins: the music by Thomas Tallis is more sophisticated, and there is a variety of stanza forms, and instructions for antiphonal singing in some cases.[53] While Parker's versification was at least as good as that in Sternhold and Hopkins, his Psalms were never widely used.

While many versions of the Psalms came to be used as songs for public worship, most sixteenth-century paraphrases at least began as private devotional exercises. The Psalms reflected a wide range of

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[52]"Of the vertue of the Psalmes", sig. B2v.

[53]Zim, p. 135.

human situations and emotional states; it was a commonplace saying that there was an appropriate Psalm for every occasion. Changes stemming from humanism and the Reformation encouraged individuals to apply the Psalms to their own lives, to see what happened to David repeated in themselves. The act of paraphrasing was well-suited to this paralleling of lives; in what Terence Cave has called "devotional paraphrasing", the words of David could become the words of the contemporary poet.[54] In reference to the French paraphrases of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Leblanc has suggested that they, more than any other poetry of the period, were used to express personal sentiments:

> le genre très impersonnel de la
> paraphrase biblique est probablement l'un
> de ceux qui contiennent le plus de
> confidences personelles.[55]

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[54]Devotional Poetry in France. 1570-1613, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1969), pp. 99-104.

[55]Paulette Leblanc, Les Paraphrases FranÇaises des Psaumes à la Fin de la Période Baroque (1610-60), Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de l'Université de Clermont, 2e séries,

He also argues that the same can be said of Latin paraphrases of the period. Similar assertions about the English paraphrases have often been made, but recently Rivkah Zim has challenged such an identification of the poet with the Psalmist.[56]

Central to the devotional approach were the seven Penitential Psalms (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143) which had traditionally been recited as an act of penance.[57] The Psalms in general, but these in particular had long been associated with certain events in David's life, as they are in Caxton's Golden Legend and Aretino's Parafrasis. The Penitential Psalms are frequently found together in Books of Hours from the fifteenth century, and such paraphrases as Aretino's strung the seven Psalms together with prologues to form a complete narrative. The numerous commentaries and prefaces to paraphrases did not always agree about what circumstances David wrote them under; most often it

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fasc. 9, (Paris, 1960), p. 265.

[56]Zim, p. 79.

[57]Mason, p. 16. In France the nine leçons des vigiles, passages from Job which were read in the funeral service, were often used for devotional paraphrase (Cave 97); I have not come across such use in English.

was suggested that he sang them as a repentance for his love affair with Bathsheba.[58] In this way secular love gave way to spiritual devotion: for a poet who had been writing amorous verse, a switch to paraphrasing the Psalms nicely paralleled the conversion in David's life.

Wyatt used Aretino's Parafrasis as a basis for his own verse paraphrase, and like Aretino's, his Psalms are greatly amplified and include narrative details not in the original.[59] For example, Psalm 6 is only 10 verses long in the Bible; Wyatt's paraphrase runs to 112 lines. However, it is primarily the verse prologues, which Wyatt also derived from Aretino's version, that give his Psalms their distinct flavour. They tell a unified story of David's retreat to a cave where he repents of his adulterous and murderous affair with Bathsheba by singing these seven Psalms. The prologues are in the third person, and each ends with

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[58]In the Bible itself there is no basis for the connection of these Psalms with certain events. However, readers of the Bible could find other instances where Psalms were given a particular context: for example, in I Chronicles 16:8-36 David sings a song in celebration of the ark's arrival in Jerusalem which is comprised of passages from Psalms 105, 96, and 106.

[59]Mason, Zim, Sergio Baldi, La Poesia di Sir Thomas Wyatt, (Firenze: F. Le Monnier, 1953), and Robert G. Twombley, "Thomas Wyatt's Paraphrases of the Penitential Psalms of David", TSLL, 12 (1970): pp. 345-80, have all discussed the relationship of Wyatt's work with Aretino's.

David picking up his harp and singing, or sighing, the Psalm that follows. The first tells the story of David's indirect murder of Uriah and Nathan's charge against David. It begins with the conventional imagery of a lover tormented by the beauty of a woman's eyes: "Love to give law unto his subject hearts/Stood in the eyes of Barsabe the bright".[60] The other prologues do not move beyond the cave, but show stages in David's inner progress toward penitence. In places the Psalms have been rewritten to refer to the individual believer rather than Israel: at the end of Psalm 51 David does not pray "O be favorable and gracious unto Sion, that the walles of jerusalem may be builded" as in the Coverdale Bible, but that God might "Make Sion, Lord, according to thy will,/Inward Sion, the Sion of the ghost: Of hearts Jerusalem strength the walls still".[61] For both his Psalms and prologues, Wyatt chose to use terza rima, a meter not well suited to the parallel structure of the original Psalms, but certainly one that allowed for a narrative flow and continuity. Emphasis is on David's penitence, not his poetry, and the role of the poet, which increasingly became associated with David later

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[60]Collected Poems, ed. Joost Daalder, (London: Oxford UP, 1975), p. 113. Daalder takes his text from the BL Egerton MS 2711; the text published in 1549 was altered after Wyatt's death.

[61]Collected Poems, p. 131.

in the century, is here overshadowed by the roles of lover, penitent and king. Many critics have discussed Wyatt's paraphrase as a personal work, or act of repentance, but the fact that many poets in the sixteenth century did use the seven Penitential Psalms as a form of devotion does not mean that this was necessarily the case with Wyatt. H.A. Mason interprets Wyatt's Psalms as a personal lament stemming from his relationship with Anne Boleyn, a clouded affair which left Wyatt imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1536.[62] Kenneth Muir has suggested that they were written at Allington after the death of Cromwell in 1540.[63] Rivkah Zim rejects these readings: "there is no evidence to suggest that Wyatt sought to identify himself with the

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[62]An impressive anthology of paraphrases written in the Tower could be compiled. In addition to those of Wyatt and Surrey discussed here, Sir Thomas Smith's Certaigne Psalmes or Songues of David translated into Englishe meter (BL MS Royal 17Axvii) was written when Smith, a secretary of state to Edward VI, spent a year in the tower for his association with the Protector Somerset (Zim, pp. 75-9). Andrew Melville composed Latin psalms there in 1609, and John Glanville, former Speaker of the House, found time to complete his English Psalter while imprisoned there during the Civil War (BL MS Egerton 2590). With all of these the
question of the relation between the poet's personal situation and the words of the Psalms could be raised; however, the very fact that such a list can be compiled shows that paraphrasing them in the Tower was at least as much a conventional literary gesture as a sincere act of devotion.

[63]p. xiii.

persona of David".[64] She sees the sequence as "an exemplum for the instruction of his readers, not a model for their devotions".[65] However, she does consider Wyatt's Psalm 37 (not one of the penitentials) as possibly an expression of Wyatt's disaffection with the life of the court.[66] Surrey's poem on Wyatt's translation of the Psalms ("The great Macedon that out of Persia chased") suggests that it is kings in particular who must take instruction from David's sins and repentance: there

> Rulers may see in a mirror clear
> The bitter fruit of false concupicense;
> How Jewry bought Urias' death full dear;
> In Princes' hearts God's scourge y-printed depe
> Might them awake out of their sinful sleap.[67]

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[64]p. 71.

[65]Zim, p. 70.

[66]p. 72.

[67]Works of Henry Howard: Earl of Surrey, and of Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder, ed. George F. Nott, 2 vols. (rpt. New York: AMS, 1965), p. 45.

While these lines would reflect Surrey's view of Henry rather than Wyatt's, we must consider the possibility that Wyatt also had the parallel of Henry and David in mind when he wrote the paraphrase. Such a parallel was common in the Tudor period, but usually the positive similarities of David and the contemporary monarch were stressed. In one of the prologues, Wyatt describes David as having a "faire, hore berd of reverent gravite" (53). No such detail is found in John Hawkins' translation of Aretino (Paraphrase upon the Seaven Penitentiall Psalmes of the Kingly Prophet, (1635)), and such an insertion would certainly point toward King Henry. If the rumours about Wyatt having an affair with Anne Boleyn before her marriage to the King are true, the poet could certainly have identified with the husband Uriah who had his wife stolen by the King. In Renaissance Self-Fashioning Stephen Greenblatt suggests that the Psalms involve "secular self-fashioning" as much as "theological" with David providing a mask that protects Wyatt from further arousal of the King's wrath.[68] However, in Greenblatt's argument it remains unclear whether the penitent David represents the King or Wyatt himself, and towards the

[68]Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare, (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980), p. 116.

end of Greenblatt's analysis the divine power of God's wrath has become equated with the King's own anger.

Such a personal use certainly seems likely with what are thought to be Surrey's paraphrases of Psalms 88, 73, 55, and part of 118. Surrey also composed a verse paraphrase of Psalm 8, but as a song of praise there was less room in that work for personal expression. These paraphrases never appeared under Surrey's name in the sixteenth century: they were first attributed to Sternhold in Certayne Chapters of the proverbes of Salomon (1549-50), and three or four years later they were published under the name of Francis Seager who adapted them to common meter by adding two syllables to every other line. The traditional attribution of them to Surrey is based on their appearance in the Arundel Harington manuscript and personal details in the Psalms and prologues that would seem to reflect the events of Surrey's last years.[69] Edwin Casady argues that they were written while Surrey was in prison awaiting execution, and considers them to be the most personal of Surrey's poems.[70] While other critics may not be as

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[69]See M. Rudick, "Two Notes on Surrey's Psalms", notes and Queries, n.s. xii (1975), pp. 291-94, and Ruth Hughey The Arundel Harington Manuscript of Tudor Poetry. (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1960), vol. ii, pp. 99-110.

[70]Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, (New York: MLA, 1938), pp. 207-10.

confident in giving these Psalms a specific time and place as context, they agree that Surrey has paraphrased them at a time when he was under persecution.[71] With two of these Psalms (73 and 88) Surrey includes a preface that establishes a context of personal repentance: he would have despaired, "Had not David, the perfect warrior taught,/ That of my fault thus pardon should be sought".[72] That Surrey chose to present David as a warrior, rather than as the archetypal king, lover or poet as he was more usually seen, suggests that the preface may refer to Surrey's military blunder at the siege of Boulogne in January 1546, where the English were slaughtered, an event that marked the beginning of Surrey's fall from grace. Sessions argues that Surrey's paraphrase of Ecclesiastes is highly personal as well: in the first five chapters, which was all that he completed, Surrey found opportunity to express his despair at the vanity of fame, works, and achievements at court; and repentance for his trust in such things of the world. However, Sessions offers little proof to support his claim that they are topical or autobiographical. I would argue that an historical context may very well

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[71]William A. Sessions, Henry Howard: Earl of Surrey. (Boston: Twayne, 1986), pp. 107-115; The Works of Henry Howard: Earl of Surrey, and of Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder, ed. George F. Nott, 2 vols. (rpt. New York: AMS, 1965).

[72]Pref. to Psalm 88.

play a part, but that the potential penitent is not Surrey himself, but King Henry VIII. The original text of Ecclesiastes presents King Solomon repenting of his trust in human endeavour; Surrey stresses that this is a king's repentance. Since Surrey's poem on Wyatt's Psalms shows that he understood them to be a corrective or mirror for kings, it is reasonable to suggest that he intended his paraphrase of Ecclesiastes to work in the same way. The first two chapters could be Henry speaking as they tell of indulgence in excess of wine and women. The next two are more detached; the speaker finds guilt, not so much in himself, as in the world he sees around him. What is presented simply as the corrupted place of judgement in the original is made more specifically "a royal throne where as pure Justice should have sit;/ In stead of whom I saw, with fierce and cruel mood,/ Where Wrong was set, that bloody beast, that drank the guiltless blood".[73]

While paraphrases by poets such as Wyatt, Surrey and Smith manifest a possible political slant in their depiction of the poet's personal situation, they must be differentiated from those works in which scripture was more openly rewritten to refer to the current political or court situation. Such a use of scripture was to become more common in the interregnum period of the seventeenth century when the

[73]Surrey, p. 72.

Cavaliers and Roundheads both managed to find their leaders analogous to David and Solomon, and their enemies to Saul, but it had its beginnings in the sixteenth century.[74] The commentaries of Calvin and Melanchthon both linked the sufferings of David and Israel with contemporary events, those of the latter tended to be more specific.[75] The religious conflicts of France in the latter half of the century provoked more of the same, as Beza, for example, equated Henry of Navarre with the reigning David.[76] The Psalms in particular came to be associated with militant Calvinism, as they virtually became Protestant anthems which called on God to vindicate their singers from the Catholic oppressors.[77] Beza in his commentaries on the Psalms

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[74]While Puritans were more likely to invoke such analogies, Royalists also turned to them in times of persecution. Clarendon in exile in Jersey wrote: "Methought I found so many lively Descriptions of our selves, and our condition, and so many lively Promises of Comfort and Assistance, as if some of them had been prophecies concerning us" ("Contemplations and Reflections Upon the Psalms of David", A Collection of Several Tracts (1727), p. 370. The work is subtitled, "Applying those Devotions to the Troubles of the Times".

[75]E.A. Gosselin, The King's Progress to Jerusalem: some Interpretations of David during the Reformation Period, (Los Angeles: Undena, 1976), pp. 91-3.

[76]Gosselin, p. 104; Leblanc, p. 267. The French paraphrases and their influence will be discussed in the next chapter.

[77]W. Stanford Reid, "The Battle Hymns of the Lord: Calvinist Psalmody of the Sixteenth Century", Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, 2 (1971), pp. 43-53. The Marot-Beza Psalter evoked a Catholic

went so far as to find sanction for revolution against a monarch in the Psalms.[78] Thus, any paraphrase of them could be a political act as well: Du Bartas found it necessary to make clear that he was not sanctioning violent political action in his depiction of the beheading of King Holofernes:

> they doe greatly wrong mee, who thinks that in discriving the Catastrophe of this Historie (truly tragicall) I am becomme a voluntarie Advocate to these troublesome and seditious spirites, who for to serve their temerarious passions, and private inspirations conspires [sic] against the lives of placed princes.[79]

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reaction in the form of Artus Desire's Le Contrepoison des Cinquante-Deux Chansons de Clement Marot, faulsement intitlees par luy "Psalmes de David" (1566) Fasc. Rpt. Textes Littéraires FranÇais, (Geneva: Libraire Droz SA, 1977) which parodied Marot's Psalms in the same meters (Hannay, "'Doo What Men May Sing': Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication", Silent but for the Word, p. 163.

[78]Edward A. Gosselin, "David in Tempore Belli: Beza's David in the Service of the Huguenots", Sixteenth-Century Journal, 7 (1976), p. 40.

[79]"The Authors Admonition to the Reader", History of Judith, trans. Thomas Hudson, (1608), p. 8.

In some cases the dedications to paraphrases suggested a political dimension. The dedications of Christopher Featherstone's Lamentation of Jeremie (1588) to Francois Hotman, and Dudley Fenner's Song of Songs (1587) "To the right worshippful companie of the Marchaunt adventurers", both exhibit a strong allegiance to the Protestant cause in the Lowlands. Fenner was a Puritan divine and a noted follower of Thomas Cartwright. Of a less inflammatory nature were those poetic paraphrases in which a section of scripture was redirected in order to praise a reigning monarch. William Patten composed a paraphrase of Psalm 72 to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Elizabeth's accession in 1583, and in 1598 one of Psalm 21 to mark her fortieth.[80]

French and Latin Verse Paraphrases

To understand the literary context of the late sixteenth-century paraphrase we must consider not only the translation of biblical

[80]See also Thomas Bownell's Godly Psalme of Marye Queene (1553), Thomas Bentley's Ps. 118 in Monument of Matrones (1582) which was also on Elizabeth's accession, Richard Robinson's Ps. 6 in A Golden Mirror (1589) and Andrew Willet's Ecclesia Triumphans on James I. Such parallels were also common in the drama of the period: see for example Godly Queene Hester (1561).

material into English prose or verse, but also the tradition of verse paraphrases in French and Latin, which generally predated and influenced developments in England. Tracing of specific influence is difficult in any literary genre; with scriptural paraphrase there is the additional problem of all poets working from the same, or variations of the same, source. Even with verse structure it is difficult to trace influence: Mary and Philip Sidney were clearly indebted to the French poet Marot for the variety of their verse and stanzas, but did Francis Davison writing at the turn of the century owe his verse structures to the Sidney Psalms or a direct acquaintance with Marot's?[81] However, from references in prefaces and commendatory poems it is clear that Latin and French paraphrases in general, and especially those of George Buchanan and Clément Marot, provided a general influence or inspiration for the English paraphrasers of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Between 1530 and 1600 at least eighty different Latin verse paraphrases of the Psalms were published in Europe, and a lesser, but

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[81]Apart from H.A. Mason's work in Sir Thomas Wyatt: A Literary Portrait, (Bristol: Bristol Classical P, 1986), and Gary Waller on the Sidney Psalms in Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke: A Critical Study of her Writings and Literary Milieu, (Salzburg:, U of Salzburg, 1979), there has been little study of the influence or sources of sixteenth and seventeenth-century verse paraphrases.

still significant, number of paraphrases of other books of the Bible.[82] These paraphrases were written and read by both Catholics and Protestants, and published in centres across the continent. However, as the century went on these endeavours came to be concentrated in the more heavily Protestant northern countries.[83] After the Psalms, the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes were most often versified: Grant lists six published versions of the former between 1570 and 1600 (208). The historical books of the Old Testament frequently came in for epic treatment; among the Prophets, Jeremiah and Jonah were most likely to be paraphrased. There were relatively few attempts to versify parts of the New Testament. A number of condensed verse paraphrases, or epitomes, of the whole Bible were published in the sixteenth century, most often as a memory aid.[84]

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[82]For a list of neo-Latin Psalm paraphrases see J.A. Gaertner, "Latin Verse Translations of the Psalms", Harvard Theological Review, 4 (1956), pp. 293-300; for a list of of paraphrases of other parts of the Bible see W.L. Grant "Neo-Latin Verse-Translations of the Bible", HTR, 52 (1959), pp. 205-11.

[83]See Gaertner's table, pp. 300-2.

[84]Memoriale Biblicum (1544) by Petrus de Rosenheim, Johann Lauterbach's Enchiridion veteris et novi Testamenti (1573); for a discussion of these see Grant, p. 206. These found their English imitators in Henoch Clapham's A Brief of the Bible (1596) and Simon Wastell's Microbiblion (1623) (Arnold Williams, The Common Expositor: An Account of the Commentaries on Genesis, 1527-1633, (Chapel Hill:

The task of paraphrasing the poetic parts of scripture attracted some of the best scholars and neo-Latin poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although these poets came from different nations, they frequently moved in the same circles of the European courts and universities, and a certain line of influence can be traced.[85] Most famous among neo-Latin paraphrases were the Psalms of George Buchanan, the Scottish scholar and statesman. First published in 1556, his work passed through at least 28 editions by 1600,[86] and his became the standard which other poets, writing in both Latin and the vernacular languages, tried to match. Other popular neo-Latin versions of the Psalms and Song of Songs were composed by Theodore Beza, whom Buchanan knew well, Eobanus Hesse, referred to by his friend Erasmus as "Ovidus Christianus", Jacobus Latenus Junior and Peter Nannius. Although a number of Scottish paraphrasers followed Buchanan's lead, including his pupil Andrew Melville, relatively few neo-Latin paraphrases were written by poets of English origin.[87]

U of North Carolina P, 1948), p. 29.

[85]Gaertner, p. 281-2.

[86]Gaertner, p. 276.

[87]Among these were Andrew Melville, Carmen Mosis (Basel, 1573), Carmina Sacra duo (Geneva, 1590) which included the Song of Songs, and "Paraphrasis Epistolae ad Hebraeos Andreae Melvini" (Harl. MSS

These Latin paraphrases, and a few in Greek verse, seem to have stemmed from the humanist endeavour of the early century, and showed an attempt to wed Christian content with classical forms.[88] A wide variety of verse forms was used, but early in the century the elegiac couplet was most popular. Buchanan used a number of different meters and attempted to match them to the tone of the Psalm in question. In his book Buchanan McFarlane uses the introduction to Jean de Ganay's Psalmi Davidici Septuaginta quinque (1547) to suggest that intelligibility and a lyric quality attractive to readers were the paraphrasers' chief concerns.[89] J.A. Gaertner has argued that the

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6947 (9)). Patrick Adamson, Threnorum Sive Lamentationum Ieremiae Prophetae F. Elciae Libellus, Latino Carmine redditus (London, 1618). Adamson, Archbishop of St. Andrews, lived from 1537-1592; he also wrote a Latin paraphrase of Job which appeared in Poemata Sacra (1619) and paraphrases of Daniel, Ecclesiastes and the Minor Prophets which survive in manuscript (DNB, vol. 1, p. 115). William Vaughan, Εφετο παιγνιον [EROTOPAIGNION] pium: Continens Canticum Canticorum Salomonis, et Psalmos aliquot selectiones, Part I, (London, 1597), Part II, (London, 1598). Arthur Johnston, Cantici Salomonis Paraphrasis Poetica (London, 1633), Psalmorum Davidis Paraphrasis Poetica et Canticorum Evangelicorum (Aberdeen, 1637; London, 1637).

[88]This movement extended beyond the use of Latin verse: Sebastian Castellio rendered the whole Bible in Ciceronian Latin prose. Over a hundred years later Samuel Woodford would still refer to the Latin version of Castellio and the Italian of Diodati as "shin[ing] with a Ray only second to what they receiv'd upon their immediate Inspiration" (Paraphrase upon the Psalms (1667), sig. C8r).

[89]I.D. McFarlane, Buchanan, (London: Duckworth, 1981), p. 279.

Psalms are chiefly literary exercises or endeavours since their devotional aspect could have been easily presented in prose. They delight by inviting comparison between translation and original, or competing translations: the Psalms were appropriate for this because they were so well-known and easily recognized.[90] McFarlane, however, denies that eloquence and piety could be separated in such a way in the sixteenth century:

> eloquence was connected in the humanist mind with moral progress, and second, in a period of high religious strife and ferment, it would be difficult for a genre like the Psalm paraphrase to remain a purely literary affair.[91]

However, the comparisons of different versions most often centred on their quality as Latin verse, not the soundness of their theology of

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[90]Gaertner, p. 274.

[91]McFarlane, p. 279.

fidelity to the original. These latter concerns were to be much more important for paraphrasers of scripture into English. Neo-Latin poets debated whether the elegiac or hexameter was best-suited to the Psalms, but this was considered with little reference to the original forms of the Hebrew poetry. An imitation of Hebrew verse was not much discussed before the beginning of the seventeenth century, and not really possible until the pioneering studies of Bishop Lowth in the eighteenth century showed that parallelism was the dominant feature of Hebrew verse. Buchanan and his imitators wrote firmly within the Latin, rather than the Hebrew, tradition; his psalms are "cultu donata Latino/ Carmina".[92]

While literary craftsmanship was highly regarded by the paraphrasers themselves, their work was frequently turned to didactic use by others. The Reformer Philip Melanchthon said of Hessus' Psalms that they were written "ad pietatem, et ad formenda iudicia studiosae iuventutis, deinde etiam ad incitandas generosas naturas ad studium

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[92]From Buchanan's dedicatory poem to Queen Mary, "Nympha, Caledoniae quae nunc feliciter orae", prefatory to the 1566 edition of his Psalms. Reprinted in Leicester Bradner, Musae Anglicanae, (New York: MLA, 1940; rpt. New York: Kraus, 1966), p. 138. This line is echoed in a description of Buchanan's work written a half century later: "Vatis Jessiadae cultu donata Latino/Carmina sunt illo judice digna focis" (Consilium Collegii Medici Parisiensis de Maria G. Eglishemii, (1619), p. 4).

poetices".[93] Buchanan's Psalms became a standard feature in elementary primers throughout Europe, including England and Scotland: they provided for students both an example of Latin poetic style and practical devotion. Such educational use helped to make biblical paraphrase a widely-known literary genre and Buchanan's work the model which later poets would attempt to outgo.

Commonly, a neo-Latin paraphrase was published, not by itself, but along with paraphrases by one or more other poets. Such anthologies seemed to encourage a comparison of different poets' attempts. In some a complete Psalter would be compiled by drawing from a number of authors; in others the same Psalm would be paraphrased by different poets. The first of Buchanan's Psalms appeared in a volume published by Estienne in 1556 which also included versions by Flaminio, Hessus, and Macri.[94] The first complete edition of Buchanan's Psalms, that of 1566, was published alongside those of Beza. Such anthologies invited readers, either implicitly or explicitly, to compare the different writers' poetic skill; the common subject matter

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[93]Quoted in Grant, p. 206.

[94]Davidis psalmi aliquot Latino carmine expressi a quatuor illustribus poetis, quos quatuor regiones, Gallia, Italia, Germania, Scotia, genuerunt... (1556).

constituted a "level playing field", on which the better poet could easily be recognized.[95] Competition or comparison involving paraphrases in different languages was possible as well: an early seventeenth-century manuscript (BL MS Royal 18A. viii) presents Buchanan's paraphrase on the verso of each leaf and an anonymous English version on each recto. The author claims that it is done "out of my obedience to command, and not to compare wth so excellent a Poet", but once again the layout clearly invites comparison. An extreme case of this sort of competition is found in a series of books beginning with Duellum Poeticum, a volume published in London in 1618, in which the versions of Psalm 104 by George Buchanan and George Eglishem are presented, with the publisher, William Barclay, demonstrating the superiority of Buchanan's poetry.[96] The debate continued in Guil. Barclayi...judicium, de certamine G. Eglishemii cum G. Buchanano, pro dignitate paraphraseos psalmi CIIII (1620) which includes another version of the same Psalm by T. Reid, and in Arthur Johnston's Consilium Collegii Medici

[95]See Gaertner, pp. 274-5. Such anthologies were also put together for French paraphrases: a collection of versions of Psalm 137 was published in 1606 (Cave, p. 97).

[96]Gaertner, p. 282.

Parisiensis de Mania G. Eglishemii (Edinburgh and Paris, 1619).[97]

The royal courts of Europe played an important role in fostering the development of poetic paraphrase as a literary genre. At the court of François I in Paris Clément Marot turned from courtly and pastoral works to the Psalm paraphrases in the 1530's, but continued to dedicate his poetry to royal figures and rely on their patronage. The members of the court enthusiastically took up Marot's Psalms, with many of them selecting one as a personal Psalm or motto.[98] Only later did Marot's Psalms assume a more popular role, as they were adapted for use as the Calvinist Psalter. The Psalms, of course, were thought to depict the experiences of David as king, and therefore were most appropriate for royal use. Beza in his argument to Les Psaumes de David emphasized David's experiences at Saul's court; in that way the Psalms became a model for the courtier as well.[99]

Buchanan also frequented the French court at different points in his career, although he was not dependent on royal patronage in the

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[97]A somewhat similar controversy took place over a century later in Scotland, when scholars and schoolmasters debated which of Buchanan's and Johnstone's psalms were best for use in the schools; see especially William Benson, "A Prefatory Discourse" to the 1740 edition of Arthur Johnstone's Psalms.

[98]Campbell, p. 37.

[99]Gosselin, p. 102.

way that Marot was.[100] By 1563 Buchanan was back in Scotland and serving as an unofficial Latin court poet;[101] about this time he wrote the famous dedication of his Psalms to Queen Mary. Charles Utenhove, a contemporary, presents Buchanan as a court singer of a special kind: "Et elle [Mary] heureuse aussi d'avoir celuy chez soy/Qui fait que de David l'harmonie ne meure".[102] The political function is not separate from the literary or devotional; the three come together in the figure of David, who, even more than Solomon, was the Renaissance epitome of kingship in all its facets. McFarlane suggests that Buchanan would have been among those who believed that "serious poetry, rather than frivolous verse, could contribute to a restoration of harmony at [the] political level".[103] After the murder of Darnley in 1567 Buchanan turned against Queen Mary, but as tutor to James VI from 1570-78 he

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[100]Buchanan wrote the bulk of his Psalms while sequestered in a Portuguese monastery in the early 1550's. Although the poet may have found his precarious situation analogous to that of David, McFarlane suggests that the impetus for the paraphrases came much earlier when Buchanan was in France in the early 1530's and moved in court circles in which both Latin and French paraphrasing was being practised.

[101]McFarlane, p. 228.

[102] McFarlane, p. 227

[103]p. 285.

helped to mold a King whose commitment to biblical poetry would prompt a wide range of English poets to attempt Psalm paraphrases in the first quarter of the next century. In a commendatory poem to Sandys' Christ's Passion (1640) Falkland pays the poet the highest compliment by assigning him "The title of the English Buchanan". It was a title to which many of Sandys' fellow paraphrasers aspired.

Among the approximately sixty poets who attempted a French paraphrase of the Psalms we find men of both literary and theological fame: Beza, Calvin, Philippe Desportes, Jean de La Ceppede, François de Malherbe, Marot, and Honor Racan.[104] As with the Latin paraphrasers, the Psalms proved the most popular of the poetic books to be frequently versified. To explain this popularity Jeanneret cites "valeur de l'imitation dans la création littéraire et multiplicité des significations religieuses du psautier",[105] but adds that we must also

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[104]This tradition has received much more attention from scholars than its English counterpart. See especially Michel Jeanneret Poésie et Tradition Biblique au XVI[e] Siècle. (Paris: Librairie Jos Corti, 1969) which traces the genre of verse paraphrases from Marot to Malherbe; and Paulette LeBlanc Les Paraphrases Francaises des Psaumes à la Fin de la Période Baroque (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1960) which treats the period 1610-60 in considerable detail. For a more general overview see Terence C. Cave, Devotional Poetry in France, c. 1570-1613, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1969. For a complete list of French psalm paraphrasers see Jeanneret, pp. 563-64.

[105]p. 524.

consider the various impulses at work in the different periods: that of Calvinism or evangelical humanism in the period 1535-60, of the aestheticism of the Academies Parisiennes in the 1560's, of the new devotional modes in the 1570's, and at the end of the century the new aestheticism of such poets as Malherbe.[106] We will see that the English paraphrase tradition was subject to such a variety of impulses as well.

Among non-English influences on seventeenth- century paraphrases the French Psalms of Clément Marot rank just behind those of Buchanan. In his poem "Upon the translation of the Psalmes by Sir Philip Sydney, and the Countesse of Pembroke his sister" Donne's reference to the Psalms being "So well attyr'd abroad" is most likely about the Psalter begun by Marot and completed by Beza for use as the Huguenot Psalter. Marot did not set out to write a Psalter for the new Calvinist church, although he seems not to have been averse to his poetry coming to play that role.[107] He began paraphrasing in the early 1530's for the royal court: at a later point he met Calvin who included some of his Psalm translations in Aulcuns Pseaulmes et cantiques mys en chant (Strasbourg, 1539). When Marot died in 1544, his work was

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[106]pp. 9, 524-5.

[107]Holland, p. 45; Jeanneret p. 525.

taken up by Calvin's follower Theodore Beza.[108] The first complete Marot-Beza (or Huguenot) Psalter was published in 1562, and frequently reprinted after that; in addition, some of Marot's Psalms seem to have circulated in manuscript.[109] While Du Bellay dismissed Marot's poetry as old-fashioned as early as 1549,[110] his work, especially the Psalms, remained popular and influential in England. The Psalms of Marot and Beza were sung in the churches of Huguenot refugees in England, and copies were readily available from booksellers:[111] Samuel Pepys mentions buying a copy with the music in four parts in a 1660 diary entry.[112] The most distinctive feature of Marot's Psalms, especially in contrast to the English psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins which shortly

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[108]Freer, p. 26.

[109]BL MS Harley 6915 contains thirty of Marot's Psalms.

[110]In La Deffence et illustration de la langue francoise, cited in Anna Lake Prescott, French Poets and the English Renaissance, (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1978), p. 1.

[111]Prescott, p. 16.

[112]He claims that it was bought "for the love of the binding" (The Diary of Samuel Pepys, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1970-83), vol. 1, p. 140 , May 15, 1660); he was in the habit of singing a Psalm before retiring for the night (see, for example, vol. 1, pp. 111 and 215). For this he used a number of different Psalm versions and musical settings. In 1662 he mentions singing the French Psalms (vol. 3, p. 99).

followed, is their metrical variety. Their complex stanza forms provided a model which many later English psalmists would try to imitate.

Many noteworthy French paraphrases followed closely upon the work of Marot and Beza. Jean-Antoine de Baïf composed four different versions of the Psalms in French, of which one was in quantitative measure, and one was presented to Pope Gregory XIII as a Catholic alternative to the Protestant Psalter.[113] The French paraphrases of the 1570's and 1580's, which Jeanneret argues were spawned by the devotional practices of the Counter-Reformation,[114] are much freer than the Marot-Beza Psalter in their rendering of scripture, with a melding of the classical and Christian.[115] He also argues that they show the influence of the neo-platonic syncretism which was dominating the French academies at the time. Many of the poets of the 1570's, such as Desportes and Belleau, had established reputations as secular poets before turning to the devotional in what Terence Cave has called "the increasingly devotional atmosphere of Henry III's reign".[116] As we

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[113]Francis Yates The French Academies in the Sixteenth Century, (London: The Warburg Institute, 1947; Kraus reprint 1973), p. 71.

[114]p. 526.

[115]Jeanneret, pp. 526-8.

[116]p. 75.

shall see, this pattern of moving from secular to sacred became the dominant one for many English poets of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Jeanneret finds that toward the end of the century the French poets become less concerned with the devotional dimension of Biblical paraphrase: "l'original est soumis à de vastes remaniements et le style répond aux lois d'une esthétique raffinée et sûre de ses moyens".[117]

Although Guillaume de Salluste, Sieur du Bartas' claim that he was "the first in Fraunce, who in a just Poeme hath treated in our tongue of sacred things",[118] is a false one, he was viewed to have done just that by many English readers and poets. His famous La Création du Monde (1578) (the first part of his major project Les Semaines) is paraphrase taken to an extreme: the seven days of creation described in thousands of lines. It was best known in England through the translation of Joshua Sylvester. His La Judit, translated by Thomas Hudson, a courtier of King James, in 1584, is closer to the form taken by some English paraphrases, and Drayton invoked it as a precedent for his ornamenting of Moses (1604) with non-scriptural, especially

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[117]p. 528.

[118]"The Authors Admonition to the Reader", History of Judith, trans. Thomas Hudson, (1608), p. 8.

classical, material.[119] In "The Authors Admonition to the Reader", Du Bartas advised,

> I have not so much aimed to follow the phrase or text of the Bible, as I have preased (without wandering from the veritie of the Historie) to imitate Homer in his Iliades, and Virgil in his Aeneidos, and others who hath left to us workes of such like matter, thereby to render my worke so much the more delectable.[120]

He also played another, more indirect, role in fostering English verse paraphrases in the next century, for it was largely from him that English devotional poets became familiar with the idea of a Christian poetry, based on a divine poetic furor, Urania as the Christian muse, and David as the model of the ideal poet. L'Uranie, a defence of divine poetry, was published along with Le Judit in the 1574 volume La Muse Chrestienne and became well-known in England, partly through King

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[119]Preface to Moses, cited in Prescott, p. 209.

[120]History of Judith, trans. Thomas Hudson, p. 8.

James's translation of it.[121] Over the next century many English poets were to invoke the name of Urania before embarking on an attempt at sacred verse. Bartas' high view of the poet's role also influenced the best-known work of Elizabethan criticism, Sidney's Apology for Poetry.[122] Through Les Semaines and Le Judit Du Bartas himself served as a model of the sacred poet, fulfilling that which was only promised in the short life of Philip Sidney. Through him and his French contemporaries the belief became established that the writing of sacred verse was a high calling, worthy of any Christian. Without such a belief sacred poetry, including paraphrases, would not have attracted the great English writers that it did. It was not only a high calling, but one that would result in immortal poetry, the success aimed at, but never achieved, by secular verse.[123]

Apart from Du Bartas, how well-known and influential were these French works in England? From the preliminaries of English paraphrases we know that the works of Marot and Beza were widely known and admired. However, about other French paraphrases we can only make some speculations based upon English familiarity with

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[121]Campbell, pp. 74-83.

[122]Campbell, pp. 85-86.

[123]Campbell, p. 79.

French poetry of other genres. The love poetry of Desportes, for example, was imitated by Daniel and Drayton among others,[124] and given that his sacred verses were often published in the same volumes as his secular, we can assume that the English poets of the 1590's would know them as well. While such does not constitute an argument for French influence on English paraphrases, the general lines of influence run in that direction: far more French works were translated into English, than vice versa. So it is likely that the renewed English interest in paraphrases at the turn of the century owes something to their French predecessors.

The Psalms of the Sidneys

After the flurry of English paraphrases written in the 1550's, there were few noteworthy endeavours in the field until Sidney and Spenser in the 1580's. The paraphrases produced in between, generally followed patterns described above: they were either written to instruct, for

[124]Anne Lake Prescott, French Poets and the English Renaissance, (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1978), pp. 135-37.

singing, or to comment on a personal or political situation. In this period it became increasingly commonplace for poets to present devotional poetry or paraphrases as a replacement for secular love poetry. Baldwin prays in the preface to his Canticles or Balades of Salomon (1549): "would god that suche songes myght once drive out of office the baudy balades of lecherous love that commonly are indited and song of idle courtyers in princes and noble mens houses".[125] The best-known example of this approach to verse is John Hall's The Court of Vertue; a collection of sacred verse compiled in response to the miscellany The Court of Venus. In addition to Biblical paraphrases it includes spiritualized versions of such secular songs as Wyatt's "My Lute Awake".[126]

In addition to replacing secular verse, a paraphrase, as distinct from original devotional poetry or allegory, escaped the charges of "feigning" raised by some critics of poetry. However, other writers, like Puttenham and Sidney argued that "feigning", or "making", was an essential part of poetry: "even so the very Poet makes and contrives out

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[125]sig. Aiiiv

[126]John N. King traces the origin of this "sacralizing" back to Ambrose, "who parodied secular lyrics in order to keep the attention of his Milan congregation", English Reformation Literature: Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1982), p. 215.

of his owne braine, both the verse and matter of his poem, and not by any foreine copie or example, as doth the translator, who therefore may well be sayd a versifier, but not a Poet".[127] However, John Harington, who translated both Ariosto and the Psalms, argued that the examples of Surrey and Wyatt's translations from the Italian proved that a translator could be a poet or "maker".[128] If both invention and translation could be seen as "imitation", which was the essence of poetry, then biblical paraphrase could be seen as poetry rather than mere rhyming.[129] That is, if it were translation of a certain type. Sidney hoped that "the diligent imitators of Tully and Demosthenes .... [would] by attentive translation (as it were) devour them whole, and make them wholly theirs".[130] It would seem that a loose paraphrase, such as Du Bartas' Le Judit, would satisfy Sidney's requirements that the highest poetry would be about the divine, and yet made by the poet himself. Jonson, however, thought "not Bartas a poet but a verser,

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[127]The Arte of English Poesie, p. 3.

[128]A Brief Apologie of Poetrie, 1591, in G. Gregory Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, 2:219.

[129]Zim, pp. 23-4.

[130]A Defence of Poetry, p. 117.

because he wrote not fiction".[131] Later, the debate over paraphrase as poetry would take on a different cast as "wit" became one of the defining features of poetry.

Sidney and Spenser, the most important poets of the latter part of the century, both versified scripture although neither's work was published. The only reference to Spenser's paraphrases is in the printer Ponsonbie's address to the reader prefacing Complaints (1591) in which volume he had hoped to include them. However, they "were dispert abroad in sundrie hands, and not easie to bee come by, by himselfe [Spenser]; some of them having bene diverslie inbeziled and purloyned from him, since his departure over Sea". Ponsonbie suggests that at least Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs were intended for publication; those two with A Senights slumber and The hell of lovers, his Purgatorie, were "all dedicated to Ladies; so as it may seeme he ment them all to one volume". As the first English poet who attempted to live out a poetic career along the lines of Virgil or Ariosto,[132] Spenser's composition of paraphrases raises some interesting questions about

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[131]Ben Jonson's Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden, ed. R.F. Patterson, (London: Blackie and Son, 1924), p. 6.

[132]Richard Helgerson, Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton, and the Literary System, (Berkeley: U of California P, 1983), pp. 62-63.

where they would have figured in his progress from pastoral to epic. From his first letter to Gabriel Harvey it seems that A Senight Slumbers was written before 1579, but then turned away from as Spenser became more interested in "English versifying" than "rhyming". If the paraphrases date from this period as well, it would seem that Spenser saw them as preliminary exercises rather than the culmination of a poetic career, as they were to become for some seventeenth-century poets. A later date of composition would suggest a more prominent role for them; however, it would seem that Spenser found a heroic poetry of high Christian purpose in the Faerie Queene. Biblical paraphrase, because of its source could not easily be published as "miscellaneous work". Any poet who attempted to publish his paraphrase would nearly be forced to admit that they were the most important work he could be doing.[133]

While the people of the late sixteenth century may have sung the Psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins, and admired the Latin versions of Buchanan, the paraphrases of Philip and Mary Sidney were of the most

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[133]Quite a number of critics suggest that Spenser was heavily involved in the publication of the Complaints, and that he was using Ponsonbie as a screen. E.G. Harman believes that the "lost works" mentioned are a fabrication "with the object of conciliating the prejudice which existed against poetry" (Edmund Spenser (London: Constable, 1914), p. 160.

importance for English poets and the development of the genre in English. Sidney himself held the Psalms in very high regard. In An Apology for Poetry he groups the Psalms and the other poetic sections of the Bible with that poetry of the classical tradition "that did imitate the inconceivable excellencies of GOD"; the subject matter of these works gave them an importance beyond that of any other genre:

> Against these none will speak that
> hath the Holy Ghost in due reverence.
> (In this kind, though in full wrong
> divinity, were Orpheus, Amphion, Homer
> in his Hymns, and many other, both
> Greeks and Romans). And this poesy
> must be used by whosoever will follow
> St. James's counsel in singing psalms
> when they are merry, and I know is used
> with the fruit of comfort by some, when,
> in sorrowful pangs of their death-
> bringing sins, they find the consolation
> of the never-leaving goodness.[134]

[134] A Defence of Poetry, p. 80.

In this passage Sidney brings together the unique combination of qualities of the Psalms: they are both the highest sort of poetry, and also comforting to the lowly sinner.

Philip Sidney finished only the first 43 Psalms before his death; his sister Mary, the Countess of Pembroke, took great pains in revising and completing them, and the resulting collection circulated widely in manuscript.[135] At what point in his career Sir Philip composed his Psalms is unclear; Mary had finished a draft of the whole by 1594.[136] In her use of sources, especially Calvin's Commentary and Beza's paraphrase, and her variety of verse form, Mary followed the model established by her brother.[137] The Psalms of both Philip and Mary owe much to the French Psalms of Marot and Beza (1562), especially for

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[135]There are sixteen MSS of the collection extant. See W. Ringler, The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, p.500 for an account of the manuscripts and Mary's amendments to her brother's Psalms. See also Gary F. Waller, "The Text and Manuscript Variants of the Countess of Pembroke's Psalms", Review of English Studies, n.s., xxvi (1975), pp. 1-18; Margaret P. Hannay, "'Doo What Men May Sing': Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication", Silent but for the Word, pp. 150-165; and Beth Wynne Fisken, "Mary Sidney's Psalmes: Education and Wisdom", Silent but for the Word, pp. 166-183.

[136]Michael G. Brennan, "The Date of the Countess of Pembroke's Translation of the Psalms", Review of English Studies, 33 (1982), pp. 434-36, shows through an allusion in Henry Parry's Victoria Christiana that Mary had finished a draft by this date.

[137]Zim, p. 187.

their stanza forms. Unlike many English Psalters, that of the Sidneys used a variety of line lengths; Philip's rendering of Psalm 23 is typical:

> The lord the lord my shepheard is,
>
> And so can never I
>
> Tast misery
>
> He rests me in green pasture his
>
> By waters still and sweet
>
> He guides my feet.[138]

the English prose translations of the Book of Common Prayer and the Geneva Bible were also consulted by Sidney.[139] He may also have been influenced by Buchanan's version, with which he was familiar, and the German Psalter of 1572, composed by his friend Melissus.[140]

Although limited to manuscript circulation the Sidney Psalms were well-known and widely praised in the late 1590's and early part of the seventeenth century. Typical is the comment by John Harington:

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[138]Poems, ed. Ringler, p. 301.

[139]Ringler, pp. 505-6.

[140]Ringler, p. 507.

> it is already prophecied those precious leaves (those hims that she doth consecrate to Heaven) shall outlast Wilton walls, meethinke it is pitty they are unpublyshed, but lye still inclosed within those walls lyke prisoners, though many have made great suyt for theyr liberty;[141]

Many others were to lament the failure of the Sidney Psalms to reach print. It is surprising considering Sidney's fame, and the plentiful publications of his other work. Mary and her circle may have feared that their publication would be taken as an affront by James, the self-styled Davidic poet-king who was busy with a version of his own.[142] Roger Howell has argued that a similar reason lay behind the

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[141]"A Treatise on Play", (1597) printed in Nugae Antiquae (1792), vol. 3, p. 159.

[142]Previously unnoticed has been the publication, in a heavily amended form, of two of the Sidney Psalms in All the French Psalm Tunes with English Words, (1632). This work, which consists of unattributed versions collected by John Standish, a London bookseller, is referred to by William Drummond of Hawthornden, who lists Joshua Sylvester, Francis Davison, John Vicars, Thomas Salisbury, Steven Bradwell [?], and Standish himself as the other poets (National Library of Scotland MS 2060, f. 150). Psalms 40 and 42 in those collection are by Sidney, and the versions of Psalms 41 and 97 are dependent upon the Sidney versions for some of their phrases. All the French Psalm Tunes was republished in 1650.

failure of Sidney's translation of du Bartas' Les Semaines to reach print. Again with that work James "had established something of a proprietary right".[143]

Like the earlier paraphrases by Dudley Fenner and Christopher Featherstone, the Sidney Psalms came to fulfill a political function. A 1599 manuscript of the work is dedicated to Elizabeth, and Margaret Hannay has shown that behind this dedication and the poem to her brother, "To the Angell Spirit" lay a desire to encourage the Queen to support the Protestant cause on the continent.[144]

Rivkah Zim has tried to show that Wyatt, Surrey, Sidney and Spenser "did not repudiate their amatory and classical verse in order to write imitations of biblical verse". Most of the better sixteenth-century paraphrasers wrote secular verse as well: Marot wrote pastorals, elegies, and translations from Ovid and Petrarch. He claims a sort of conversion from profane love songs to holy ones in the preface to his

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A manuscript of the Sidney Psalms from the 1640's (Trinity College, Cambridge MS R.3.16) has a note by John Langley authorizing its printing, but no publication seems to have resulted. See Michael G. Brennan, "Licensing the Sidney Psalms for the Press in the 1640's", Notes and Queries, Sept. 1984, pp. 304-5.

[143]Sir Philip Sidney: the Shepherd Knight. (London: Hutchinson, 1968), p. 117.

[144]Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, (New York, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990), pp. 90-91.

Psalms. Wyatt and Surrey were best-known in their own century as well as ours as love poets of the court. Zim is right in saying that these two never repudiated amatory verse, but none of their verse was published while they were alive. Therefore, they could not engage in the more typically seventeenth-century habit of presenting devotional or Biblical verse as a new phase in the poet's life or career.

The contemporary biographers of Sidney certainly suggest a rejection of secular verse. The earliest of these, Thomas Moffet, suggests that the poet turned to the Psalms in searching for a worthier subject than that of Astrophil and Stella or The Arcadia, and that, in effect, poetry could be as fit a seat as "churches, schools, or Cato's breast" for the scepter of virtue. Once again, the paraphrasing of scripture is presented as the fit poetic task:

> Having come to fear, however, that his
> Stella and Arcadia might render the souls
> of readers more yielding instead of
> better, and having turned to worthier
> subjects, he very much wished to sing
> something which would abide the censure

of the most austere Cato. For, truly,
let us read the Week of the great Bartas,
made English by Sidney; let us
contemplate the psalms of the Hebrew
poet, ah, how choicely set forth, first
explicitly and then paraphrastically, and
distinguished, each one, by a new meter![145]

These two translations and his incomplete rendering of de Mornay's De La Vérité de la religion chretienne (completed by Golding) constitute the extent of Sidney's religious poetry.[146] For subsequent generations the Psalms showed that Sidney could have been a master of devotional poetry, as he was of all other worthy endeavours. Whether or not his rejection of secular verse is only part of the Renaissance idealization of Sidney is unimportant for our concerns; he himself may not have

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[145]Thomas Moffett, Nobilis, or a View of the Life and Death of a Sidney, trans. and ed. Virgil B. Heltzel and Hoyt H. Hudson, (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1940), p. 74. Moffet's biography was probably written about 1593.

[146]Sidney at least began a translation of Du Bartàs' Premiere Semaine, but it was never published and no manuscript of it is known. However, that he composed such a work was well-known to his contemporaries (Ringler 339).

actually felt a need to reject his amatory verse, but his followers in the next century saw his life as playing out the conventional movement from secular to sacred, and the influence of Sidney on such devotional poets as Herbert has been well-documented.[147] Moffet does not suggest that Sidney underwent a spiritual conversion, like that of Eliot or Auden for example. As with later devotional poets like Herbert, Wither, and John Davies of Hereford, sacred verse was the fruit of a conversion of poetry or the poetic career, rather than a conversion of the soul.

Even more than Philip, Mary Sidney was responsible for establishing the fashion of biblical verse paraphrase in England. The importance of the Psalms for her identity as a literary figure is illustrated by a 1618 portrait that shows her holding a volume clearly entitled "the Psalms".[148] As both poet and patron she, like her brother, inspired poets to attempt similar works of biblical verse. Mary Wroth, the niece of Philip and Mary was encouraged by Lord Edward Denny to abandon secular work to follow "the pious example of your vertuous and learned Aunt, who translated so many godly books and

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[147]Louis L. Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, (New Haven: Yale UP, 1954), pp. 259-273.

[148]See appendix.

especially the holly psalmes of David".[149] Also, as the generous patron of a wide circle of poets, Mary's commitment to biblical paraphrase and devotional poetry surely played a major role in the development of those genres in the 1590's and early seventeenth century.

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[149]Hannay, "Doo What Men May Sing", Silent but for the Word, p. 8, quoting Salisbury MS. 130/118-119. Feb. 26, 1621/22. Printed in Josephine A. Roberts, ed., The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1983), pp. 237-41.

Chapter 2

The Poetry of Solomon:

Verse Paraphrases of the 1590's

The flurry of paraphrasing that went on in the 1590's and through the first quarter of the seventeenth century would suggest that the Sidney Psalter served as a catalyst to imitation rather than as a masterpiece that discouraged others from attempting similar poetic work. C.S. Lewis sees this repetition of success as characteristic of the 1590's or "golden" age of English poetry:

> Men have at last learned how to write; for a few years nothing more is needed than to play out again and again the strong, simple music of the uncontorted and to load one's poem with all that is naturally delightful,[1]

[1]C.S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1954), p. 65.

Apart from a few moments, the verse paraphrases of this period did not attain the ease Lewis is describing. All might agree that Sidney's work was the paradigm to follow, but to attain such grace over the course of a whole book of the Bible, rather than a sonnet or lyric, was a skill none fully mastered. Rivkah Zim is right in arguing that "Sidney's psalms practically exhausted the formal possibilities for new developments in the metrical psalm as a literary kind".[2] Poets did not try to compete with the Sidney Psalter, but attempted to imitate indirectly by paraphrasing other parts of the Bible or Apocrypha rather than the Psalms. Thus, we have Michael Drayton's Harmonie of the Church (1591), which consists of a complete version of the Song of Songs as well as songs gleaned from various Old Testament books; Gervase Markham's Poem of Poems (1596), a version of the Song of Songs; Henry Lok's Ecclesiastes (1597); Thomas Middleton's Wisdom (1597), a paraphrase of the Apocryphal book The Wisdom of Solomon;[3] and

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[2]p. 207.

[3]I include Wisdom in this group, although it is an apocryphal, rather than canonical, book. The paraphrase, while somewhat freer than most others of the time, clearly drew its inspiration from biblical paraphrase. Nearly all Bibles of the period included the Apocrypha, and for those in the Established Church the distinction between apocryphal and canonical Old Testament books was not as strict as it was later to become. See articles by H.H. Howorth "The Origin and Authority of the Biblical Canon in the Anglican Church", JTS 8 (1906-7), pp. 1-40; "The

Donne's Lamentations of Jeremy[4]. These five works comprise a discernible group: they were all written by courtiers or professional poets, rather than divines or biblical translators, and as a group the poets showed little interest in theological matters or devotional poetry apart from their verse paraphrases. All sought advancement, usually at the court, by cultivating the favour of such prominent figures as the Countess of Pembroke or the Earl of Essex.

The poets of the 1590's largely ignored the Psalms as the source of paraphrases -- or at least did not publish their work. The two that

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Origin and Authority of the Biblical Canon according to the Continental Reformers", JTS, 8 (1906-7), pp. 321-65; "The Canon of the Bible Among the Later Reformers", JTS, 10 (1908-9), pp. 183-232.

[4]Like most of Donne's poetry The Lamentations of Jeremy was not published until 1633 in Poems. Gardner and Grierson date the poem to a time after his ordination in 1615 (Divine Poems, ed. Helen Gardner, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), p. lxiii). R.C. Bald notes the lack of evidence for such a dating (John Donne: A Life, (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1970), p. 327), and this late dating of Donne's Jeremy seems solely based on a rake/divine biographical reading of his poetry. Marotti, in John Donne: Coterie Poet, while recognizing the part it may have played in furthering Donne's ambition, gives it a similar date (p. 276). The four manuscripts in which Lamentations is found all contain poetry usually assigned to the 1590's, and the work is more likely to have been written at that time when other ambitious courtiers like Markham, Lok and Middleton were writing similar paraphrases in the hope of advancement. That Donne was also writing amorous verse at the time does not rule out the 1590's as a date for his paraphrase: Fraunce, Lok, Markham, and Middleton were all writing both secular and divine poetry in this period.

reached print were only partial and supplementary to other major works. Abraham Fraunce, best-known for his rhetoric book and experiments with English hexameter, published a few Psalm paraphrases at the end of his The Countesse of Pembroke's Emanuel (1591), a life of Christ in hexameter. Similarly, Lok included paraphrases of some of the Psalms in his Ecclesiastes (1597). Other versions of the Psalms were written, but not published. The Psalms in manuscript of Michael Cosowarth, a kinsman of Lok, likely date from the 1590's. It seems that he was attempting to replace the Sternhold and Hopkins versification: his Psalms are in common and long meter, and in a commendatory poem Richard Carew of Anthony presents them as improvements on earlier barbaric attempts:

> These psalmes w^{ch} from ther native sense exild
> in soyle of Barburisme tounge woud [?] arise
> Coswarth calls hours wth hy tuned voyce of his
> and for such Dwellers doth meet pallaces build.[5]

[5]MS. Harl. 6906, British Library, fol. 2r.

At least some of the Psalms found in MS Harl. 6930 and MS Rawl. Poet. 61 by Francis Davison, his brother Christopher, Richard Gipp, Joseph Bryan and Donne were probably written in this period, but again never reached print as a complete collection; they largely imitate Sidney's choice of verse forms. The only major publication of a psalm collection in the period was that by the Catholic Richard Rowlands (also known as Verstegan) whcse meditative version of the seven Penitential Psalms was published in Antwerp in 1601.

The paraphrases of the 1590's were largely written by poets, not clergymen, and their interest seems to be more poetic than theological or sectarian. The middle course that Elizabeth was determined to pursue was evident to all, the English religious struggles of the mid-century were long over, and Elizabeth had no desire to become involved with the conflicts on the continent. The Puritan agitations of the late 1580's and early 1590's, including the Martin Marprelate tracts, had been suppressed. With the deaths of Sidney in 1586 and Leicester in 1587, and the arrest of Wentworth in 1593, the Puritan party in England had suffered a considerable setback. This crushing of Puritan aspirations is reflected in both the 1590's paraphrases and their

preliminaries.[6] Henry Lok came from a decidedly Calvinist family: his mother had translated Calvin's Sermons upon the Songe that Ezechias made after he had bene sicke (1560). After the death of Henry's father she married Edward Dering, a Puritan preacher.[7] However, the text of Ecclesiastes shows little theology of a sectarian nature, and Lok's dedications cover the range of English Protestantism of the time. It can be contrasted to the decidedly Puritan thrust of Fenner's Song of Songs (1587).

The Song of Songs was usually given a carefully explained allegorical reading to show that it was a dialogue between God and his

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[6]A 1599 manuscript of the Sidney Psalms includes a dedication to Queen Elizabeth: Margaret Hannay argues that the juxtaposition of this poem with Mary's epitaph to Philip was meant to serve as a reminder to Elizabeth of her duties to Protestant Europe ("'Doo What Men May Sing': Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication", p. 152). As such it is not surprising that the work never received Elizabeth's support nor reached print. This manuscript is owned B.E. Jue-Jensen of Oxford; the dedicatory poem is included in Gary F. Waller, ed., The Triumph of Death and Other Unpublished and Uncollected Poems by Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke (1561-1621), (Salzburg: U of Salzburg, 1977).

[7]John N. King, "Patronage and Piety: The Influence of Catherine Parr", Silent but for the Word, ed. Margaret P. Hannay, p. 59. In 1583 John Field's edition of Knox's Notable Exposition upon the Fourth of Mathew was dedicated to her (King 59). See also Patrick Collinson, "The Role of Women in the English Reformation illustrated by the Life and Friendships of Anne Locke." Studies in Church History, 2 (1965), pp. 261, 266-67.

church or God and the individual believer. In his "To the Reader" Markham presents no such explanation or justification for the seemingly erotic subject matter. He goes no further than to name the speakers Ecclesia and Thaumastos, the latter a Greek adjective meaning "wonderful" or "marvellous", which assumes that his readers are familiar with the usual reading of the book. Fenner, in contrast had shown a real concern to explain the theological meaning of the allegory. While Middleton's concerns in paraphrasing Wisdom were not chiefly theological, Shand argues that his Calvinist beliefs are discernible: he refers to the "anti-Catholic implications" and "generally Calvinist flavour" of the work"[8]

How did these paraphrases stand in relationship to the wealth of poetry being produced in the 1590's? Richard Helgerson argues that in the mid-1590's poets realized that "the golden poetry of Sidney and Spenser was played out", and began casting about for new material.[9] Biblical paraphrase as practised by Markham, Middleton and Lok was one of those new fields. The poet Richard Barnfield lamented that in turning away from love poetry, he "could think of nothing, but either it

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[8]G.B. Shand, "The Elizabethan Aim of the Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased", Accompaninge the Players, ed. K. Friedenreich, (New York: AMS, 1983), p. 71.

[9]p. 108.

was common, or not at all in request".[10] Biblical paraphrase certainly was not common, but neither was it much in request: none of these made it to a second edition. However, they did attract enough attention to be among the eight types of poetry satirized in the first book of Joseph Hall's Vergidemiarum (1597); in his view paraphrases and other sorts of biblical poetry have gone too far in mixing the classical and Christian. The details of his attack on Markham will be discussed later in this chapter. In Meres' Palladis Tamia (1598) biblical paraphrase is included in the section on poetry where English poets are compared to earlier, usually classical writers:

> As Nonnus Panapolyta writ the Gospell of saint John in Greeke Hexameters: so Jervis Markham hath written Salomons Canticles in English verse.[11]

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[10] Poems, 1594-98, ed. Edward Arber in The English Scholar's Library of Old and Modern Works, (Birmingham, 1896), (rpt. New York: AMS, 1967), vol. 3, p. 83.

[11] Francis Meres, Palladis Tamia, Wit's Treasury (1598), fol. 285v.

Thus, biblical paraphrase was recognized in the 1590's as a distinct literary genre; unfortunately, literary scholarship since that time has overlooked these works and their place in the literary history of the rich late Elizabethan period.

Paraphrase and the Poetic Career

For poets such as Henry Lok, verse paraphrase was clearly auxiliary to another kind of career. However, for Drayton, Fraunce and Middleton their paraphrases took a place in a career that was chiefly literary. A consideration of how this work related to their other poetic attempts should tell us something about how biblical paraphrase stood as poetry, and the relationship between divine and secular verse in the late Elizabethan period.

The very matter of paraphrase gave it a central place in any poet's endeavours. Mary Ellen Lamb uses John Florio's dedication to his translation of Montaigne's Essaies to argue that at the time translation was seen as "feminine" and degrading work.[12] Florio certainly does

[12]"The Cooke Sisters: Attitudes toward Learned Women in the Renaissance", Silent but for the Word, ed. Margaret Hannay, p. 116.

deride the work of the translator, saying that "all translations are reputed femalls".[13] However, his contemporaries would not have extended this sentiment to the translation of biblical material, whether in verse or prose. As we saw with Buchanan, Marot and Sidney in Chapter 1, such work was usually seen as noble and worthwhile because of its subject matter. Margaret Hannay is right in arguing that women like Mary Wroth were encouraged to forsake writing original secular material for the translation of scripture and commentaries,[14] but this does not make it a distinctly feminine genre: male writers of the period were being encouraged to do the same thing, and none of those who composed biblical paraphrase saw it as a secondary poetic task.

Spenser, it is generally agreed, was the first English poet to attempt to live a life primarily devoted to the writing of poetry. As noted above, he shaped this career on the Vergilian model, a model which, in its movement from eclogue through georgic to epic, included no place for divine verse or paraphrase. In the generation that followed Spenser, many more men devoted themselves to this type of poetical career, but worked variations upon it in which biblical verse could find

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[13]John Florio, in his translation of Montaigne's Essayes, (London, 1603), sig. A2r.

[14]p. 5.

a place. Michael Drayton and Thomas Middleton both set out on a career with a work of paraphrase, but the latter never returned to such a work later in his career, and the former only occasionally, in Moses in a Map of his Miracles (1604), which was reprinted along with Noah's Floud, a much-embellished versifying of the story of Noah, in Muses Elizium (1630). Tillotson and Newdigate argue that The Harmonie of the Church is consistent with the rest of Drayton's early work in that it depends upon a source, rather than being an original work. While Drayton claims his work is to be judged "not as Poems of Poets, but praiers of Prophets", his declaration, "I speak not of Mars, the god of Wars, nor of Venus, the goddesse of love, but of the Lord of Hostes, that made heaven and earth: Not of Toyes in Mount Ida, but of triumphes in Mount Sion: Not of Vanitie, but of Veritie: not of Tales, but of Truethes",[15] with its explicit echo and rejection of Virgil's often-imitated "Arma virumque cano," suggests that Drayton did want his work to be considered on the same grounds as classical and secular verse, and then be recognized as the apt and superior alternative. However, within three years Drayton was publishing the sort of secular verse rejected in Harmonie of the Church. The publication of Idea The

[15]"To the Curteous Reader", Works, vol. 1, p. 3.

Shepheards Garland, a collection of nine eclogues, constituted a more conventional signalling of a laureate career.[16] About that time Thomas Lodge encouraged Drayton to continue to follow "a blessed muse" of divine poetry in spite of the success of others' wanton poetry:

> Oh let that star, which shining, never ceast
> To guide the Sages of balme-breathing East,
> Conduct thy Muse unto that loftie pitch,
> Which may thy style with praises more enritch.[17]

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[16]Jean R. Brink, Michael Drayton Revisited, (Boston: Twayne, 1990), p. 25.

[17]"To Master Michael Drayton", Works, 1883. (rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1963). In a letter of June 1593 Barnaby Barnes recommends to Gabriel Harvey that he too turn to "the highest treasury of heavenly Muses", and ends with a sonnet to that "Muse, that honoreth the Urany of du Bartas, and yourself" ("To the Right Worshipfull, his especiall deare frend, M. Gabriell Harvey, Doctour of Lawe", prefatory epistle to Harvey's Pierces Supererogation (1593), sig. ***2v). At this time Barnes himself moved from the secular verse of Parthenophil and Parthenophe (1593) to the sacred mode of A Divine Centurie of Spirituall Sonnets (1595).

However, Drayton did not return to biblical paraphrase until 1604 in what may have been a response to the coming of James to the crown, an occasion loudly heralded by Drayton. As we shall see, many poets believed that the high subject matter of scripture would appeal to the new king. Thus, Drayton's career seems to have been shaped by occasion and opportunity with only the nationalist poem Polyolbion as a constant goal.

That Middleton should begin his career with a biblical paraphrase may strike many readers as odd, and critics of the last century were tempted to reject Middleton's authorship of it.[18] His only other religious work is The Two Gates of Salvation, "a sort of handbook of typological readings" , first published in 1609.[19] However, Middleton's authorship of such a work is consistent with the way in which many poets of the 1590's attempted a variety of genres or tones, in response to fashion, the inclinations of patrons, or the unfavourable reception of an earlier work. Middleton uses the last reason to explain his turning

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[18]See H. Dugdale Sykes, "Thomas Middleton's Early Non-Dramatic Works", NQ, 148 (1925), p. 435.

[19]Paul Mulholland, "The Two Gates of Salvation: Typology, and Thomas Middleton's Bibles", ELN, (1985), p. 27.

to satire in Micro-Cynicon (1599), his next work: he has "dismounted from the high-aspiring hills" and is now

> veild with a stony sanctuary
> To save my ire-stuft soul, lest it miscarry,
> From threatening storms, o'erturning verity,
> That shames to see truth's refin'd purity;[20]

A quotation at the end of the work also refers to the change in Middleton's poetry: "Qui color albus erat, nunc est contrarius albo" [That colour that was white, is now the opposite of white].[21] However, Middleton's moral program may be consistent: Wisdom, the satires and drama all present a critique of human folly.

More usual than Drayton's and Middleton's beginning with scriptural paraphrase and then a move away from it, was a beginning in secular verse, which was then rejected by the poet in favour of the

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[20]"Author's Prologue", Micro-Cynicon, in Works, vol. 8, p. 115.

[21]Micro-Cynicon, in Works, vol. 8, p. 136.

worthier divine muse.[22] As noted in chapter 1, verse paraphrase of scripture was frequently presented as an antidote to amorous song. The 1590's, the "golden age" of English poetry, was the great period of amorous Ovidean song: because of that it is not surprising that verse paraphrase was being promoted as an alternative. Such is the case with Henry Lok; although none of his secular poetry is extant, that he wrote such work is clear from a number of the dedicatory sonnets at the end of Ecclesiastes. He explains his change of style to Lady Hobbye:

> When scorne of hap, did force my hope to shift,
> The place where in felicitie I sought,
> As tyr'd on Earth, to heaven my thoughts I lift,
> Which in me this strange metamorphos wrought:[23]

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[22]The fullest depiction of this move from secular to divine poetry is found in the preface to a poem published some twenty-five years later, Robert Aylett's The Bride's Ornaments. To date this work has received little attention from critics of seventeenth-century devotional poetry.

[23]Grosart, Miscellanies of Fuller's Worthies, p. 444.

Many poets attempted divine verse in the hope of success, but few are as blunt as Lok in admitting that this is what they are doing. In the sonnet "To the Right Honourable, the Ladie of Hunsdon", he tries to reconcile his new style of verse with the earlier secular work by alluding to the relationship of body and soul:

> Thinke you not strange, these passions new to see,
> Which to my wonted humors different seeme,
> They both are frute of one and selfe same tree:
> The first by younger hold, this elder deeme.[24]

Lok's commendatory poem to Cosowarth's Psalms makes a far greater distinction between sacred and secular verse:

> I muse to see the modern wanton muse
> to glory in those borowed fablinge toyes

[24]Grosart, Miscellanies of Fuller's Worthies, p. 438.

Whilst they the Muse of Muses all abbuse

W^ch^ frees the eare and hart w^th^ perfect joyes.[25]

In the prefatory epistle "To the Christian Reader" in Ecclesiastes, Lok makes reference to the devotional nature of his work, an aspect which other paraphrasers of the 1590's ignored, and which Lok shared with more radical Protestants both of an earlier time in his own century, and those of the middle of the next. He wrote that such verse as his Sundry Christian Passions "ought to be the common action in some measure of all men, as oft as necessary affaires of this life will permit them".[26] He did not see that publishing contradicted this devotional aspect of the poetry:

> I take it not to be alwaies a token of pride or vaine-glory, to make knowne for a common good to others, that which

[25]MS Harl. 6906, British Library, fol. 2v.

[26]"To the Christian Reader", Grosart, Miscellanies of Fuller's Worthies, p. 146.

> may breed a suspect of ambition in the Author, among the prophane or cavelling multitude; though how herein I am caried my selfe, I leave to God the searcher of hearts to judge.[27]

Such statements are difficult to reconcile with Lok's obvious grasping for patronage and position, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Of course there were also those paraphrasers whose work never reached print: was this because they could not find a patron to support them, or a printer to risk publishing? Or were they writing verse paraphrase for a different end: the circulation of their work in manuscript within a select circle of friends, or presented as a single gift to a patron? By this time print no longer carried the stigma it once had, but it was still considered ungentlemanly by some for their work to be published within their lifetimes.[28] This is most likely the case with Donne's Lamentations; at the likely time of its composition Donne was

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[27]"To the Christian Reader", Grosart, Miscellanies of Fuller's Worthies pp. 146-7.

[28]See J.W. Saunders, "The Stigma of Print", Essays in Criticism 1 (1951), 139-164.

climbing the social-court ladder, but, as Marotti puts it, "scorn[ing] the dependency of the artist-client".[29]

Markham argues that his Poem of Poems was originally meant to be "reserved for a private Consort, onely nowe commaunded by those which may compell, it is made publique".[30] As Markham had published a fair number of works before, it is likely that this reflects a conventional modesty rather than the actual course of events; however, he does not explicitly reject his earlier poem, Thyrsis and Daphne, a work referred to in the Stationers' Reg. 23 April 1593, but of which no copy exists.[31] In his preface "To the Reader" Markham relates how he became enamoured of the muses by reading "the excellencies of our English Poets, whose wondred spirits have made wonderfull the workes of prophane love".[32] However, he finds he is not of the right temperament for that sort of poetry:

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[29]"John Donne and Patronage", in Patronage in the Renaissance, eds. Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981), p. 209.

[30]sig. A5v.

[31]DNB, vol. 12, p. 1051.

[32]sig. A4r.

> finding Nature an enemy to mine Arte, denying mee those affections, which in others make more then immortall the most earthly imaginations; I betooke mee to Divinitie, in which labouring my sunne-burnt conceits, I found Poesie which I so much reverenced, created but a hand-maide to attend Divinitie.[33]

Thus poetry leads him to divinity, and that to a divine poetry: "as Poesie gave grace to vulgar subjects, so Divinitie gave glorie to the best part of a Poets invention".[34] And so poetry and divinity are wed.

However, Markham did not consistently write divine verse from this point: Devoreux, a poem on the deaths of King Henry III of France and Walter Devoreux, followed in 1597; he returned to devotional poetry in The Tears of the Beloved (1600), an account of Christ, and especially his trial and crucifixion, based loosely on the Gospel of John, and in Mary Magdalen's Lamentations (1601). These works are more in the vein of meditations than story-telling. After the change in Markham's

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[33]sig. A4v.

[34]sig. A4v.

fortunes that came with the botched rebellion of Essex in 1601, Markham published no more divine poetry. When his uncle referred to him as a "poeticall and lyinge knave" in a letter from 1600/01,[35] Markham responded by claiming to "loathe and utterlye abhorr it [poetry]", although he notes that there are "many noble personages who wth greater desyer, and more fervencie have contynued and boasted in y^{e} humor".[36] However, his literary endeavours continued with The English Arcadia (1607-13), a novel, and The True Tragedy of Herod and Antipater, a play written sometime before 1613 and based on Josephus rather than Biblical texts. Markham found his greatest success, however, with a series of books on horsemanship and husbandry.[37]

Finally, we must note that while biblical paraphrase would seem to be a suitable activity for someone set on a clerical career, it did not play this role in the 1590's. The works discussed here were all written by laymen who hoped for a career apart from the church. Verse paraphrase was chiefly a poetic task, not a theological or liturgical one.

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[35]A.B. Grosart, Miscellanies of Fuller's Worthies, p. 475.

[36]A.B. Grosart, Miscellanies of Fuller's Worthies, p. 471.

[37]F.N.L. Poynter, "Gervase Markham", Essays and Studies, new series 15 (1962), pp. 27-39.

Thus, Marotti's and Novarr's argument that Donne's Lamentations was part of his attempt to secure the position of Dean of St. Paul's, does not take into account the way other poets made use of paraphrase.[38]

"Our most usuall stanzaes": Poetic Forms

The paraphrases I am discussing in this chapter are more literary than those of forty years earlier in that they were not written to be sung, and in that the writers showed a greater interest in metrical variation and innovation. Notably, Drayton's Harmonie of the Church (1591) was the only published work that contained new paraphrases set in common meter. Common meter was a home-grown, nearly folk style of verse; the paraphrasers of the 1590's turned largely to classical or Italian models for their verse forms. There was no attempt at this time to develop a verse form specifically suited for Biblical verse or particular books of the Bible; the same verse form might be used for pastoral, translations of Greek or Latin heroic literature, and a version of Ecclesiastes. Those who wrote in common meter, in both the sixteenth

[38]See Arthur Marotti, John Donne, Coterie Poet, (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1986), pp. 283-83.

and seventeenth centuries, seem to have been oblivious to changes in literary fashion. In contrast, Markham's work, in the way it is divided into "Eclogues" and in its use of classical and pastoral allusion, has all the marks of 1590's, "Golden Age" verse.

Abraham Fraunce attempted to use a quantitative English hexameter for both his secular and sacred work.[39] This verse form was in some respects more liberating than most others used by biblical paraphrasers: the poet is not constrained by attempts to rhyme in very short lines, and the long lines allowed freedom to paraphrase and digress. At times, Fraunce's attention to stress and sound, and his use of alliteration, pay rich dividends, with lines that do not have the usual Elizabethan regularity:

Sinners are not soe; they and theyrs all in a moment
All in a moment passe past hope, grace, mercy, recov'ry,
As weight-wanting chaffe that scattreth in every corner,

[39] Jonson was later to ridicule these: "That Abram Francis in his English hexameters was a fool", "Conversations with Drummond".

Whyrled away fro the earth, hence, thence, by a blast, by a wyndepuffe.[40]

Unfortunately, at other times the space seems to leave Fraunce scrambling to fill up a line through repetition: "Thou hast man, this man, this blest man mightyly framed".[41]

Middleton, Markham and Lok all use longer stanza forms and one or two stanzas per Biblical verse. In Wisdom Middleton uses the familiar verse form usually known as the Venus and Adonis stanza (ababcc). This move placed him squarely in the mainstream of poetic fashion: the stanza "had the current sanction of the best poets, particularly for serious and substantial poems."[42] In Shakespeare's

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[40]"The first Psalme". This piling on of imagery and detail may owe something to the rhetorical habits of preachers of the time: the sermons of Donne or Thomas Adams come to mind. Compare this passage from Adams: "Dust, the matter of our substance, the house of our soules, the originall graines whereof we were made, the top of all our kinred. The glory of the strongest man, the beautie of the fairest woman; all is but dust." (from The Sinner's Mourning Habit, quoted in Bush, p. 299.

[41]"The eygth Psalme".

[42] Norman A. Brittin "The Early Career of Thomas Middleton", (Ph.D. diss. University of Washington, 1946), p.7. Brittin notes that Middleton could have known the verse form from such works as The Shepheards Calender (1579), Astrophel or The Tears of the Muses,

poem, published four years before Middleton's, the couplet is often reserved for witty or epigrammatic comment;[43] in Middleton, the final couplet is also syntactically isolated, but used to a different end. At times it is used to summarize the four preceding lines, at other times it is closer to being a direct translation of the verse, to which the quatrain leads up through imagery or digression:

Here let the monuments of wanton sports
Be seated in a wantonness' disguise;
Clos'd in the circuit of venereal forts,
To feed the long-starv'd sight of amour's eyes;
Be this the chronicle of our content,
How we did sport on earth, 'till sport was spent.[44]

Lodge's Glaucus and Scilla (1589), Southwell's Saint Peter's Complaint (1595), Christopher Middleton's Historie of Heaven (1596), Copley's A Fig for Fortune (1596) and even some of the songs in Drayton's The Harmonie of the Church, as well as Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis.

[43] Paul Fussell, Jr. Poetic Meter and Poetic Form, (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 152.

[44] Middleton, The Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased, in The Works of Middleton, ed. A.H. Bullen. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1886), p. 154. In the final line Bullen reads "still"; I have amended this

In cases like this the verse form works fairly well, but there is always the danger that either the quatrain or couplet will seem redundant. In his use of such rhetorical techniques as antithesis, parallelism and conceits Middleton is firmly working within the fashionable tradition of Lyly, Greene, Southwell's Saint Peter's Complaint, and Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece.[45] That his work was not comprised of original subject matter would not have concerned Middleton; neither were Shakespeare's two poems, nor much of the poetry of the period. What counted was the use of the rhetorical elements of amplification and ornamentation.[46] Brittin argues that Middleton fails, not because of his subject matter, but because at times he loses control of his excessive rhetorical ploys.[47] As the individual Psalms could stand as separate entities to a certain extent, a versifier of them was not constrained to use a single stanza form throughout.

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to "'till".

[45]Norman A. Brittin, "The Early Career of Thomas Middleton (1597-1604)", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, (University of Washington, 1946), p. 8.

[46]Brittin, p. 11.

[47]Brittin, p. 50.

For the paraphrasers of more unified books like Ecclesiastes or Wisdom, metrical uniformity seemed to be unavoidable. Even the slight change from one stanza form to another in the course of Lok's' Ecclesiastes is abrupt and disconcerting. In his Poem of Poems Markham got around this problem by dividing the work into eight eclogues corresponding to the eight chapters of the Biblical book. For each there is a different stanza form used, all of which are, according to Markham, "our most usuall stanzaes".[48] These "most usuall stanzaes" are all pentameter stanzas of varying numbers of lines. Generally, both his lines and stanzas are fairly long; for example, in the seventh he uses ottava rima:

> Thy mountaine navell, holie hill of peace,
> Is like a globie cup made Sphearie round,
> In which celestiall liquor doth increase.
> Thy belly as faire heapes of wheate abound,
> So is the rysing and the downe release,
> Whilst pale-facst Lillies it impalleth round.
> Thy two deere brests, chast cabinets of power,

[48]sig. A5v.

Are like two Roes twinn'd in a happy hower.[49]

At about the same time this verse form was employed by Harington in Ariosto, and also by Sidney, Spenser, Drayton, and Daniel.[50] Like Middleton, Markham was clearly in step with the fashion of 1590's verse, and he saw no reason not to bring these fashions to bear on sacred verse.

Henry Lok seems to become exhausted in his paraphrasing of Ecclesiastes as he gradually moves from 7-line stanzas to 5-line, and takes on a less inflated style. Throughout the first third, for every Biblical verse he uses two stanzas of rime royal, a verse form associated with heroic or high matters in the sixteenth century.[51] Again the relatively long verses provide ample scope for expansion: "A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather together" (Ecc. 3:5), becomes

There is a time when we the quarries draw

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[49]"Ecloga Septima".

[50]Paul Fussell, Jr. Poetic Meter and Poetic Form, (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 157.

[51]Fussell, p. 156.

And from the bowels of the earth full deepe,
Rayse up her bones, the stones which never saw
The lightsome aire, and them we carved keepe,
To rayse with them our towers, to heaven which peepe,
Which afterward decay, and we are faine,
Their ruines to transport abrode againe.

Thus, in these six lines Lok expands the verse beyond the original to incorporate the theme of Ecclesiastes as a whole: the vanity of human endeavour. In fact, the passsage echoes other Biblical passages that present the same theme: the description of mining owes more to Job 28 than it does to anything in Ecclesiastes; and line 4 is clearly an allusion to the story of Babel. Here Lok has not reached the level of mingling found in mid-seventeenth century Puritan tracts; this is still a paraphrase of Ecclesiastes, but one composed in the light of the whole scriptures.

At the beginning of chapter five he turns to six-line stanzas, and with chapter 10 to one five-line stanza (ababb) and one six-line stanza per verse. Lok explains that he "not altogether unfitly distributed [Ecclesiastes] into three Sermons, each one containing foure Chapters

a peece".[52] As these match the changes in verse form, it may be that the change in verse form inspired the division rather than the other way around. Most of the various paraphrases in The Harmonie of the Church are in common meter, described by Tillotson and Newdigate as "old-fashioned in 1590".[53] However, in the collection Drayton also includes songs from the Old Testament and Apocrypha, some in the Venus and Adonis stanza, others in pentameter quatrains (abba). These works have a flavour much more consistent with the other paraphrases of the 1590's. However, they follow the original as closely as Drayton's paraphrases in common meter, and the paraphrases as a whole elicit Lewis' judgement that they are "wooden without being regular".[54]

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[52]"To the Christian Reader", p. 108.

[53]Michael Drayton, Complete Works, ed. J. William Hebel, Kathleen Tillotson and Bernard H. Newdigate, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1941), vol. 5, p.2.

[54]English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama, (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1954), p.531.

Parnassus and Sion Hill: The Classicizing of Biblical Verse

The versifiers of the mid-century, and such later ones as Sidney and Donne, maintained a high degree of faithfulness to the original text. The paraphrasers of the 1590's generally moved further away from a strict fidelity; they expanded biblical images, or introduced new ones. Most frequently these added images were drawn from Greek and Latin myth and history. In a sense some of these Biblical books or passages were "classicized" as classical references were incorporated, in a way similar to du Bartas' use of Urania as the Christian muse, and Milton's later use of classical myth in Paradise Lost. Fraunce refers to the seat of God as "Olympus", rather than Zion (Ps. 1:4), and for Middleton the sun is "Phoebus' face".[55] Olympus seemed poetic in a way that Zion did not. These classical references provided an established framework for new poetry; by making such a reference, a poet established himself in a literary tradition reaching back to Virgil and Homer: writers at the time were just beginning to construct a similar frame from the biblical example of David. It is this mingling of the classical and biblical in paraphrase that Hall found most worthy of satirizing in Virgidemiarum:

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[55]p. 160.

Parnassus is transform'd to Sion hill,

And Iu'ry-palmes her steep ascents done fill.

Now good Saint Peter weeps pure Helicon,

And both the Maries make a Musick mone:[56]

While the reference in the first two lines is probably general, that in the latter two is to Southwell's St. Peter's Complaint and Saint Marie Magdalens funeral teares.[57] Hall then goes on to satirize Markham:

Great Salomon, sings in the English Quire,

And is become a newfound Sonetist,

Singing his love, the holy spouse of Christ:

Like as she were some light-skirts of the rest,

In mightiest Ink-hornismes he can thither wrest.[58]

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[56]Collected Poems, Book 1, Satire 8, ll. 3-6.

[57]Collected Poems, ed. Arnold Davenport, (Liverpool, 1949), p. 170n.

[58]1.8. 8-11. Although Marston's response to this satire in his 1598 Certaine Satyres (Satire IV Reactio pp. 81-86 in Poems, ed. Arnold Davenport, (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1961)) shows that he understood Hall to be attacking sacred verse in general, it seems clear that Hall is only attacking the tendency to trivialize the subject matter.

Other paraphrasers rejected such classical embellishment: Lok for instance claims that his work is "not artificially clothed with borowed bewties from my barren braine".[59] Markham, in a later work, Tears of the Beloved, suggests that comparison of Christ to classical figures is inappropriate because insufficient; it is a case of comparing the shadow to the substance.[60] However, Markham himself referred to God as "Thaumastos", a Greek name for god, throughout his paraphrase.

The most literal of the paraphrasers of the 1590's was John Donne; his work is no longer than the original -- even images are not expanded -- and there is no evidence of classical influence. At times he has simply taken the very words of the Geneva Bible and cast them in verse. For example, Lamentations 3:15 in the Geneva version reads "He hathe filled me with bitternes, & made me drunken with wormewood." Donne casts this in verse: "Hee hath fill'd mee with bitternesse, and he/Hath made me drunke with wormewood."[61]

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[59]"Epistle-Dedicatory", 41.

[60]Miscellanies of the Fuller Worthies' Library, ed. Grosart, vol.2, p. 35.

[61]The Divine Poems, ed. Helen Gardner, (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1952), p. 42.

In the other paraphrasers we frequently find epic similes: where the Geneva version reads "Our life shal passe as the trace of a cloude, & come to naught as the mist that is driven away with y^{e} beames of the sunne, and cast down with the heat thereof" (2:4), Middleton supplies

> Like as the traces of appearing clouds
> Gives way when Titan re-salutes the sea,
> With new-chang'd flames gilding the ocean's
> floods,
> Kissing the cabinet where Thetis lay:
> So fares our life, when deth doth give the wound,
> Our life is led by death, a captive bound.[62]

This is classical in both spirit and reference, and the closest we come to the level of syncretism found in French paraphrases of the period.

Most interesting is the way in which Middleton develops a consistent set of imagery within the poem, that is the imagery of

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[62]p. 151.

gardening and growth, so common in the late sixteenth century in such works as Richard II. He introduces the image already in the two prefatory epistles to the work where he compares his poetry to a seed, a seed thrown to the ground in the hope that it will later flourish and bring forth fruit, but with the fear that it will be eaten or die before it can even sprout: "My seeds as yet lodge in the bosom of the earth, like infants upon the lap of a favourite, wanting the budding spring-time of their growth".[63]

Early in the text, it is wisdom that has been planted and awaits harvest, while threatened by a variety of calamities:

> For wisdom's harvest is with folly nipt,
> And with the winter of your vice's frost,
> Her fruit all scatter'd, her implanting ript,
> Her name decay'd , her fruition lost:
> Nor can she prosper in a plot of vice,
> Gaining no summer's warmth, but winter's ice. (1:4)

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[63]"To the Right Honourable and my very good Lord, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex and Ewe", Works of Middleton, vol. 8, p. 141.

All this without any suggestion of the image in the original.[64] By repeating the image from the prefatory letters, Middleton has managed to equate his poetic work with wisdom; both have been attacked and need protection from the "elements". A few stanzas later Middleton contrasts righteousness, the "fruitful tree, whose root is always green", with unrighteousness, the "hateful plant, whose root is always dry".[65]

In Middleton's Wisdom a whole section is devoted to the praise of Astraea, a figure of wisdom. While the name "Astraea" is classical in origin, it is more important as part of a contemporary English mythology which involved the equation of Elizabeth with the figure of Astraea, most notably in Sir John Davies' Astraea, a collection of acrostics on the name of Elizabeth.[66] Astraea had been traditionally known as the goddess of Justice, and it is as such that Middleton includes her in his paraphrase. While Middleton never specifically equates her with Elizabeth, such a comparison was so common in the

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[64]Brittin has shown that Middleton relied on the Geneva Bible and the Junius-Tremellius Latin Bible in preparing his paraphrase (pp. 53 ff.).

[65]Wisdom, p. 149.

[66]See Frances Yates, "Elizabeth as Astraea", JWCI, 10 (1941), pp. 27-82; and Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975).

period that it would be assumed by readers. The references are rather fluid and nothing like a consistent allegory is developed; while female, Astraea is nevertheless equated with Solomon and Wisdom, yet can announce the birth of Wisdom.[67] She is initially presented as the wife of Justice: "Virtue is chief, and virtue will be chief,/ Chief good, and chief Astraea, justice' mate,".[68] Later in the chapter, Astraea is equated with chastity as well, an emendation no doubt inspired by the cult of the Virgin Queen:

> She is not coyish she, won by delay,
> With sighes and passions, which all lovers use,
> With hot affection, death, or life's decay,
> With lover's toys, which might their loves excuse:
> Wisdom is poor, her dowry is content;
> She nothing hath, because she nothing spent.[69]

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[67]Wisdom, p. 183.

[68]p. 162.

[69]p. 186.

Her chastity is not coyly alluring, but temperate and wise: "She loves, she likes, and yet not lustful blind."[70]

Middleton seems to have reinterpreted sections of the book in the direction of contemptus mundi. In the Geneva Bible, chapter 4, verse 7 reads "But though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shal he be in rest", Middleton writes "Happy is he that lives, twice he that dies,/Thrice happy he which neither liv'd nor died". Thus, not only the imagery or allusions of Wisdom owe something to the classical tradition, but also the "wisdom" it presents.

Lok is quite explicit in setting out the moral or theological goals of his work: in their prosperous age, his paraphrase of Solomon was to remind readers of the vanity of earthly wealth.[71] However, to achieve this Lok does not substantially add to the original text of Ecclesiastes. But the social goal of his work, to praise Elizabeth, was the same as Middleton's and Lok achieves this in his "Epistle-Dedicatory" and dedicatory poem to Elizabeth. He points toward "the perfect resemblance your highnes hath of him [Solomon] in name, disposition,

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[70]p. 186.

[71]"Epistle-Dedicatory", p. 46

and fortune: and we with his subjects in honor, prosperitie and peace".[72] The peace and prosperity of Elizabeth's reign naturally invited comparisons to that of Solomon. Thus, the whole work Ecclesiastes indirectly presents Elizabeth in a positive light. Lok does not dare to praise directly, but leaves that to "bordering Princes and attendant Peeres".[73] His paraphrase, like many religious works of the period, serves as an encomium as well, one that he hoped would bring him to that inner circle of the court, where he too might praise Elizabeth directly.

Gervase Markham refers to the eight chapters in his Poem of Poems as eclogues, and while the rural imagery of the Song of Songs certainly lends itself well to a pastoral treatment, Markham was at least as much influenced by the pastoral vogue of the late sixteenth century in shaping his work in that way. The pastoral tone achieved by Markham, can best be illustrated by comparing his paraphrase with that of Drayton. Markham presents the description of the maiden's breasts in chapter 4 in this way:

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[72]"Epistle-Dedicatory", p.41.

[73]"Epistle-Dedicatory" p. 42.

Thy two faire breasts, imboasted circular
The cabinets of knowledge, and pure zeale,
As two young twinned roes, such like they are,
Feeding where sweetning Lillies sweetes reveale.
Thy breasts are like two infant twinned Roes,
Grassing where all the white-facst Lillies growes.

"The cabinets of knowledge", the repeated references to "sweet", and "white-facst" are all ornamental.[74] In contrast, Drayton's rendering is more plain and direct: "Thy brests like twinned Roes, in prime and youthfull age,/Which feed among the Lillies sweet, their hunger to asswage".[75] In addition, the passage from Markham shows how the choice of verse form leads to repetition and ornamentation: the final couplet here is simply a rewording of lines three and four.

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[74]"imboasted" is from "emboss", to adorn.

[75]Works, p. 14.

Paraphrase and Patronage

Patricia Thomson has described much of the literature of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean periods as a "literature of patronage"; although some writers were beginning to establish a wide enough public audience to forego the support of a private patron, most writers still relied on a combination of personal favour and sales through publication.[76] All of the biblical paraphrases discussed in this chapter were dedicated to one or more prominent public figures, and sought, if they did not already assume, his or her support. By the time of King James, a dedication to a published work was so conventional that to be without one would seem curious, and might lead readers to suspect that the poet could not find a patron.[77] Not all literary genres were suitable for such patronage; satire, because of its vitriolic nature, and drama, because of its low status, were rarely dedicated. However, that King

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[76]"The Literature of Patronage, 1580-1630", Essays in Criticism, 2 (1952), pp. 267-284. See also Arthur F. Marotti, "John Donne and the Rewards of Patronage", in Patronage in the Renaissance, p. 207.

[77]H.S. Bennett, English Books and Readers, 1603-40. (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 23-25.

James began to support the King's Men in 1603 would suggest that drama was quickly rising in prestige.

From a patron, a poet would normally hope for three things: financial support, protection from criticism, and advancement in his non-poetic career.[78] This last aspect of the patron's role was the most important for all but those who saw poetry as their chief occupation, and is too often overlooked. Eleanor Rosenberg writes of patronage in the Elizabethan period:

> numerous examples indicate that the writers themselves were more interested in obtaining preferments as the rewards of their labors than in gifts of money or other forms of direct support. Once appointed to a clerical or governmental post, a writer might utilize his leisure and security for further literary endeavor -- and perhaps obtain further advancement as a result. Since composition was seldom merely an end in itself, an author would naturally adapt his production to the causes which his patron backed

[78]Thomson, p. 274; see also Eleanor Rosenberg, Leicester, Patron of Letters, (New York: Columbia UP, 1955), pp. xvii-xviii.

or else seek a patron reputedly devoted to the subject dear
to his heart.[79]

Frequently, reference to the patron's protection of the work will be made in the dedicatory poem or epistle. While Michael Brennan is right in suggesting that these appeals "were intended not to be interpreted literally but rather taken as tokens of allegiance",[80] the name of a prominent figure like Essex or Elizabeth might discourage critics.

As a genre of high purpose, and one that seemed beyond reproach, biblical paraphrase was well-suited to those interested in career advancement. And the particular books chosen by the poets of the 1590's were eminently suited to appeal for and receive patronage from those well-placed in society. The Psalms, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs were all not only divine scripture, but also the works of kings. What nobleman would presume to refuse the connection of his name with such a work? Its subject matter was of the highest nature, and could hardly be controversial if the paraphraser remained fairly faithful

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[79]p. xvii.

[80]Literary Patronage in the English Renaissance: the Pembroke Family, (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 13.

to the original. Most often the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament provided support for the idea of monarchy, and such support was among those things which a royal patron hoped a supported work might achieve.[81] The latter part of Elizabeth's reign was dominated by love poetry in the style of Petrarch, a style which became, in Leonard Tennenhouse's words, "her personal metaphor for rule, and a vocabulary used to "express the economic transactions of patronage".[82] However, the very nature of devotional poetry in general and biblical paraphrase in particular did not allow for this sort of personal flattery: it always pointed beyond the patron to a higher duty and relationship.

Our paraphrasers were ambitious enough to appeal to the most powerful potential patrons of the time. Chief among these were the members of the Sidney family. Sir Philip had been both a promising Virgil and a generous Maecenas of Elizabethan poetry; his sister Mary, the Countess of Pembroke, and daughter Elizabeth, later the Countess of Rutland, although both had recognized poetic talent, were better known for their fostering of both secular and divine poetry. Mary's own

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[81]Eleanor Rosenberg, Leicester, Patron of Letters, (New York: Columbia UP, 1955), pp. 4-5.

[82]"Sir Walter Ralegh and the Literature of Clientage", Patronage in the Renaissance, ed. Lytel and Orgel, p. 246.

Psalms were not published, but she lent her support to the publication of Fraunce's psalms, as well as his other divine and secular works. Gervase Markham dedicated his version of the Song of Songs to Elizabeth Sidney, but the praise in its dedicatory epistle extends to others in the Sidney family, her grandfather and especially her "adored father". For Markham, whose chief passions were poetry and horsemanship, Sir Philip would be a model of perfection. In spite of their subject matter, these paraphrasers generally did not appeal to ecclesiastical figures for support. And only the Countess of Pembroke and Countess of Bedford were what we would think of as literary rather than court patrons. Even they, because of family connections, might provide assistance in advancement at court.

Since we largely rely on the dedications included by poets in their published or presentation manuscript works, we are in danger of only seeing part of the picture. The response of those powerful figures whom the poets wished to have as their patrons is difficult to ascertain. H.S. Bennett has argued that a dedication to a royal or noble figure was included with the approval of that person.[83] However, Thomas Dekker's satire Lanthorne and Candlelight suggests that nobles were besieged by masses of mediocre poets unknown to them. He mocks

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[83]pp. 4-5.

writers who obtain a list of nobles' names and then print "so many Epistles as they have names; y^{e} epistles Dedicatory being all one, and vary in nothing but in the titles of their patrons".[84] The multitude of poets and scarcity of patrons would suggest that a dedication was not always welcome. Thus, we must take care in basing any arguments on the appearance of a dedication in any particular work, for they illustrated only what a poet hoped to achieve. Failure to gain a patron's approval beforehand could rouse animosity if the patron did not want his name connected with the work.[85] Such was the case with Stephen Gosson's unauthorized dedication of The School of Abuse (1579) to Sir Philip Sidney, from whom he received nothing more than the response of the Apology for Poetry. Of that affair, Spenser wrote that Gosson

> was for hys labor scorned; if at least it be in the goodnesse of that nature to scorne. Suche follie it is, not to regard

[84]Thomas Dekker, Lanthorne and Candlelight, Non-Dramatic Works, ed. A.B. Grosart, 5 vols. (1884-6). vol. 3, p. 244. Middleton's Father Hubburd's Tale (1604) includes a mock dedication to Sir Christopher Clutchfist, and satirizes both those who dedicate poems and their reluctant patrons.

[85]Bennett, p. 4.

aforehande the inclination and qualitie of him, to whom we dedicate oure Bookes.[86]

However, a paraphraser of scripture might more safely be bold: to reject what the poet might present as a gift of scripture would not be easy, and prefatory material often emphasizes the universally recognized value of the work at hand.

As Queen, Elizabeth was the most desirable patron for an aspiring poet/courtier; yet to dedicate a work to her required that the poet either already have a position close to her or considerable audacity. Many, therefore, chose to dedicate works to members of her privy council, both for the favours they themselves could bestow, and also for the possible influence they might have with the Queen. Thus, Middleton, like many other poets of the 1590's, sought the patronage of the Earl of Essex, who was quickly rising to the foremost position in the court of Elizabeth. As a beginner in poetry and at the court, Middleton, like Essex, placed his hope in the future: "The husbandman observes the courses of the moon,

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[86]"To the Worshipfull his very singular good friend Maister G.H., Fellow of trinitie Hall in Cambridge", Variorum Works, (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1949), vol. 9, p. 6.

I the forces of your favour; he desireth sunshine, I cheerful countenance, which once obtained, my harvest of joy will soon be ripened".[87] The Wisdom of Solomon seems not to have borne fruit; within a few years Middleton was planting the seeds of satire and drama instead: the sort of work that did not require the sunshine of courtly favour. In the late 1590's Essex's increasing inclination to follow his own judgement rather than the wishes of the Queen, was making him a threatening rival, rather than a supporting courtier to Elizabeth. Many of his followers paid dearly for their support of the botched uprising of February 1600/01. However, by that point Middleton was no longer seeking his patronage, but writing satires that could defend themselves.

We find the most extraordinary pursuit of patronage in the collection of dedicatory poems, called "Extra Sonnets", at the end of Henry Lok's Ecclesiastes. At the front of the volume there is an "Epistle-Dedicatory" to Elizabeth and a single dedicatory poem "To the Queene's Most Excellent Maiestie".[88] However, at the end, the printer

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[87]p. 141.

[88]In the epistle Lok says that he has based the present dedication to Elizabeth on her "gracious acceptance of my former Passionate present" (p. 43) which refers to the earlier edition of Sundry Christian Passions (1593).

presents 61 dedicatory poems under the title "Sonnets of the Author to Divers, collected by the Printer". The extra sonnets are all in the form of the Spenserian sonnet, used by Spenser in the Amoretti and in the dedicatory sonnets at the end of the 1590 edition of the Faerie Queene, and by many of the Scottish poets in the court of James VI.[89] Lok could have been familiar with the form from either of these sources. The 61 sonnets are divided into two sections: the first to "The Lords of her Majestie's Privie Councell", the second "To other Lords, Ladies, and approved friends". No person of note in the 1590's seems to have been excluded: we find sonnets to Essex, Burghley, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord North, treasurer to the Queen, Henry Wriothesley, and Mary Sidney among many others.

Although a poet might receive financial support from a number of different patrons for the same work,[90] it is inconceivable that Lok had received, or hoped to receive, patronage from all these figures. The praise is spread so thinly that it seems unlikely it could have any positive effect: his repeated claims that a dedicatee has inspired the

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[89]Westcott, pp. l-li.

[90]Brennan, pp. 13-6, discusses the case of Richard Robinson's Eupolemia, for which there is manuscript evidence that he received money from three different patrons.

work would arouse incredulity, if not outright hostility. Some figures are presented as the light which has illuminated his work, or compared to Solomon, its author. In the initial dedication Elizabeth is the "true type of happiest king" (54), but in another sonnet it is Burleigh who is "our Salomon" (p. 337). However, in more cases the sonnet ultimately, if indirectly, points back to Elizabeth: Lok was asking these courtiers to play Maecenas to her Augustus.

Just how these poems came to be collected and printed here is not altogether clear. Those which can be dated seem to have been written between the years 1595 and 1597, and a good number of them make reference to the volume Ecclesiastes or King Solomon, while none seem to refer to Sundry Christian Passions, a collection of holy sonnets first published in 1593, and included with the paraphrase of Ecclesiastes; however, many of the sonnets do not make direct appeals for support of this particular work, but are in praise of the patron, and make no reference to the poet or his work.

One possible explanation for the inclusion of all these sonnets is that each had been attached to a single manuscript copy or a single print copy of an earlier, and now lost, edition. It is clear that at least some of the sonnets were written to grace presentation copies, since these sonnets are not found in all the copies of Ecclesiastes now extant:

a copy in the British Library has only the sonnet to Archbishop Whitgift at the front, and no others. The copy at the Houghton Library at Harvard is missing twelve of the sixty-one. The Bridgewater copy has the sonnet "To...Lady Woollie" included in Lok's hand at the beginning of the work.[91] The printer may have collected these presentation sonnets and printed them without the participation of Lok, but given the number that would have been difficult. James Scanlon has shown that Lok made revisions for the second edition of Sundry Christian Passions which also appeared in this volume,[92] and this would suggest that he was taking a fairly active part in the publication of it. One sonnet, entitled "To all other his Honourable and beloved friends in generall", suggests that he did intend to have them all published together, for it is an apology to those friends for whom he has not included an individual sonnet. But if these were originally intended for individual presentation copies why would Lok include all the other sonnets at the back as well? The best explanation is that Lok was putting the readers of his work among very good company, that he

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[91]Grosart, p. 444; DNB, vol. 12, p. 92; Pollard and Redgrave, A Short-Title Catalogue, vol. 2, p. 110.

[92]"Henry Lok's Sundry Christian Passions: A Critical Edition", Ph. D. Dissertation, Brown University, 1971.

hoped to convince them that this was the work everyone at court was reading. Lok suggests in a number of sonnets that the patron's reading of the work will set a good example for others, and in the second last sonnet "To the Honorable Ladies and Gentlewomen attendants in the Court" he advises "It can no whit disparage your degree,/ To looke on that is likd of the best".[93] Here the reference is primarily to Elizabeth's patronage of the poem, but the idea of patron as example would hold for the other dedicatees as well.

A similar, but less extreme, case of multiple dedications can be found in the 1590 edition of The Faerie Queene; like Lok's Ecclesiastes, it was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, but included 17 additional sonnets addressed to members of the privy council and other noted patrons.[94] Of those addressed by Spenser, only the Earle of Ormond and Ossory, the lieutenant-general of the army in Ireland; Lord Grey of Wilton, Walsingham and the Lord of Hunsdon are not addressed by Lok seven

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[93]p. 388.

[94]Comparison can also be made to Chapman's The Twelve Books of the Iliads, (1610), which, while dedicated to Queen Anne and Prince Henry, included sixteen additional dedicatory sonnets. Prefatory to Joshua Sylvester's Second Week of du Bartas (1605) are found 14 dedicatory sonnets to buttress the main dedication to King James. From these examples it would seem that such a collection of dedicatory sonnets was used with a major serious work, of either a secular or divine nature, dedicated to a member of the royal family.

years later: the latter two had died, but Hunsdon's son was among Lok's dedicatees. The early copies of The Faerie Queene have only ten of the seventeen sonnets: that to Burleigh was added along with six others midway through the printing run:[95]. Chief among those addressed by both Spenser and Lok are people close to Elizabeth, whom the poets hoped would act as Maecenas, presenting the works of the ambitious poet to Augustus. For this reason, most of the poems point ultimately to the Faerie Queene, Elizabeth herself, and such a collection would not seem to be possible if anyone but the Queen were the main dedicatee of the poem. From the similar tone of the poems, the nearly complete duplication of figures addressed by Spenser, the imitation of his verse form, and the ending of the series with a general sonnet to the ladies of the court, we can conclude that Lok modeled his collection on that of Spenser. Helgerson describes Spenser as the first English professional poet, but clearly the works of dedication were little different from those

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[95]While most critics have treated this addition as the correction of an oversight, recently Wayne Erickson has treated it as an intentional subversive act. ("Assertive and Submissive Strategies in the Dedicatory Sonnets to the 1590 Faerie Queene", unpublished paper presented at the 25th International Congress on Medieval Studies, May 12, 1990, Kalamazoo, Michigan). See also Carol Stillman, "Politics, Precedence, and the Order of the Dedicatory Sonnets in The Faerie Queene", Spenser Studies, vol. 5 (1984), pp. 143-9; and David Lee Miller, "Figuring Hierarchy: the Dedicatory Sonnets to The Faerie Queene", Renaissance Papers (1987), pp. 49-59.

of Lok, who was chiefly using poetry to pursue a court career. The example of the 1590 Faerie Queene shows that the inclusion of extra "dedicatory" poems would not necessarily damage the reception of a work. Nevertheless, Lok's absurdly broad sweep, the attempt to include anyone who might help, cannot help but bring to mind the unscrupulous poet in Dekker's Lanthorn and Candlelight.

For only Walsingham and Essex does Spenser hold out a tentative promise that they too will be praised later in The Faerie Queene. In contrast, Lok's sonnets frequently praise their addressees in their own right. They are held up with Elizabeth as latter-day Solomons, in what would seem to present a threatening rivalry to the Queen. Would this reflect a decline in the cult of Elizabeth, as such courtiers as Essex became more popular? Spenser felt called upon to downplay his more popular work, refering to it as "ydle rymes" and "wilde fruit", where Lok's subject matter needed no such apology: as scripture, regardless of the paraphraser's skill, it deserved approval and support.

Westcott describes Lok's entire career as primarily that of "an envoy or political intelligencer"; it began early in the 1580's and in 1591 he was sent to Scotland to work at the subversion of the King.[96] When

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[96]Westcott, p. xlii.

Ecclesiastes was published in 1597 Lok was petitioning various government figures in London, including Robert Cecil, whom he called "Kind foster-father of deserving sprights" in one of the extra sonnets. By 1598 Lok had established a career as an envoy or spy for Elizabeth, working in various European cities. From the evidence of one sonnet it seems that Lok considered divine poetry to be important for such advancement at court: in "To the Honorable Ladies and Gentlewomen attendants in the Court", he presents three reasons why they should accept his poetry. First, it is "liked of the best", second, it constitutes the words of a king, and thirdly it leads to favour at court: "For king's words, these, do guid to blisse you crave,/The fruit of favour which you strive to have." The whole sentence is complex and ambiguous: by "king's words" does Lok mean Solomon's wisdom, that is, the advice contained in Ecclesiastes, his particular poetic paraphrase of the work, or the act of paraphrasing itself? Is he encouraging ladies of the court to follow Solomon's advice, read and promote his particular paraphrase, or engage in paraphrasing themselves? Is the "bliss" and "favour" promised of the earthly or heavenly variety?

While Henry Lok saw poetic paraphrase and divine verse in general to be helpful to his secular career, in the dedicatory epistle the tension between the two becomes apparent. Lok was not a full-time

poet, and he found that his other work frequently impinged on the time available for these higher matters. He compares himself to Nehemiah, rebuilding Jerusalem, "who being oftentimes disturbed therein by the practise and malice of "Sanballet, Tobia and Geshem", was sometimes forced to desist from his attempt, and in the end to effect it with sword in one hand and mattock in the other".[97] "Sanballet, Tobia, and Geshem" are not jealous rivals of Lok, but "common cares and domestick duties" which did "utterly disable my disposition for so waighty an affaire" (41). In addition to excusing the insufficiencies of his paraphrase, such an argument on Lok's part stresses his unceasing labour on behalf of the Queen. After all, Lok was not seeking to become a full-time poet, but to rise to a place in the court, where he would have no time at all left for poetry.

Among Lok's "Extra Sonnets" appears one to James VI which had originally appeared as a commendatory poem to the Scottish King's Exercises at vacant houres (1591); the other commendatory poems to that work were by Constable and William Fowler, both fairly close to the King at the time. Lok's exact standing in the Scottish court at that time is unclear; he may have been closer to a spy than an envoy, but

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[97]"Epistle-Dedicatory", p. 40.

James' inclusion of the poem shows that the poet had achieved a certain place in the literary circles around the King. Lok's writing of it, and the republication of it in his own work shows his willingness to cultivate any possible ground for favour. By 1597 the favour of James was even more important than it had been six years earlier: he seemed destined to be the next English monarch, and from his time at the Scottish court Lok would have known of the King's inclination toward divine and biblical verse.

The Threat of Momus and Zoilus

In the 1590's writers in all genres feared the possibility of public censure and derision that came with publication. Momus and Zoilus, two figures derived from classical sources, came to represent the threat of criticism which many poets feared. Momus was a minor classical god, used as the voice of satire by Callimachus and Lucian, while Zoilus had been a Cynic rhetorician and severe critic of Homer. Poets would frequently lament that their works had been savaged, or their careers

destroyed by these figures.[98] While written works, like Hall's Virgidemiarum (1597), posed a satiric threat, poets seem to have more fearful of verbal ridicule and censure. In spite of its sacred subject matter biblical paraphrase was also susceptible to such attacks, and a number of paraphrases make reference to the fear of such in their preliminary material. As works of translation they could easily be criticized for insufficiently reproducing the original. Bennett notes that translators were particularly likely to be censured: "there would be many to remind him that his work was as if one should view a tapestry the wrong side round, and worthy of much disgrace if not well done; but if done well, not greatly commending the doer"(23).

Biblical paraphrasers were likely to admit their own ineptitude, and also detach themselves from the work by pointing out that they were merely translators: if they could not be praised for the work, neither could they be entirely blamed. They were only responsible for the form, not the matter, of the work. Gervase Markham presents this most explicitly:

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[98]See especially Thomas Lodge's A Fig for Momus (1598) for a depiction of the threat these figures posed.

> If the manner displease, the matter was Salomons, if the descant dislike, the plaine-song was Salomons, if the lines bee unsmooth, the words were Salomons, & howe ever set foorth, the invention was Salomons. Be Salomon then my Rock, to defend me from the rayling of the envious; and my mediator to purchase favour with the curteous, so shall the one kicke against the pricks, and the other bring grace to themselves in being gracious.[99]

Drayton puts the same idea in more positive terms: "(if thou shalt be the same in hart thou art in name, I mean a Christian) I doubt not, but thou wilt take as great delight in these, as in any Poetical fiction."[100] Thus, any rejection of Drayton's paraphrase puts the reader's faith in question: the critical reader, rather than the poet, is put on the defensive. In a similar vein, Lok asserts that it is not "in the nature of suche a worke, to go a begging for grace".[101]

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[99]"To the Reader".

[100]"To the Curteous Reader", p. 3.

[101]"To the Christian Reader", Grosart, p. 110.

Paraphrasers hoped that the reputations of their powerful patrons would also discourage any critics. Michael Drayton asks Jane Devereaux, aunt of Essex, to be the "gracious Patronesse against any gracelesse Parasite" that attacks his Harmonie of the Church. Middleton's work is threatened, not by a parasite, but the ravens Momus and Zoilus, and he masterfully connects them with the imagery of his poetry as a newly planted seed:

> Momus and Zolus, those two ravens, devour my seed, because I lack a scarecrow; indeed, so I may have less than I have, when such foul-gutted ravens swallow up my portion: if you gape for stuffing, hie you to dead carrion carcasses, and make them your ordinaries. I beseech you, gentlemen, let me have your aid; and as you have seen the first practice of my husbandry in sowing, so let me have your helping hands unto my reaping.[102]

[102]"To the Gentlemen-Readers", p. 142.

Similar fears are less graphically presented in Lok's dedicatory poems:

> Least that this worke too rashly be suppresst,
> Untried, halfe understood, disgracd quight,
> I needfull thinke it be to some addrest,
> Who can and will protect from causelesse spight:
> Which that you will vouchsafe, I nothing feare,
> Since to the matter, you such zeale do beare.[103]

What exactly did Lok fear? "Suppresst" would seem to refer to an actual prevention of publication or circulation, but there would seem to be little in Ecclesiastes to provoke any sort of official suppression. As discussed above, a supporting patron could do much to dispell a poet's fears of Momus and Zoilus; as the reign of Elizabeth wound down, divine poets looked toward James, King of Scotland and soon to be King of England, hoping that he would be that sort of patron.

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[103] "To the vertuous Lady the Lady Layton", Grosart, p. 444.

Chapter 3

"To gods honor and the kings":
King James and the English Psalter

The proclamation of James as the new King of England on March 24, 1603 set off widespread celebration. The lack of an heir to Elizabeth had caused considerable anxiety in the years leading up to her death, but the machinations of Robert Cecil allowed James to take control quickly and assuredly. James brought not only the certainty of stable government, but for many individuals the hope of fresh prospects of patronage or a career at court. He quickly established a reputation for his free-spending ways: a contemporary had described the Queen as "strict in geving, which age, & her sex inclyned her unto", and James as "most bountifull, seldom denying any sute".[1] His arrival sparked fresh hopes in all factions: "These bountiful beginnings raise all men's spirits

[1]From the journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham, in James I by His Contemporaries, ed. Robert Ashton, (London: Hutchinson, 1969), p. 6. Although undated, this journal entry likely dates from between April and July, 1603, and thus reflects the early enthusiasm for the new reign. The King knighted Wilbraham in May of 1603.

and put them in great hopes, insomuch that not only protestants, but papests and puritans and the very poets with their idle pamphlets promise themselves great part in his favor".[2] Also raised were the spirits of poets and scholars, as James's interest in poetry and learning led many to hope that a new golden age of letters might be dawning.

For many, the distinction between James's reign and that of Elizabeth was dependent on a Biblical analogy. While Middleton and Lok had made the link between Elizabeth and Solomon, just as often she had been compared to David, a monarch willing to engage in battle and build up the kingdom. In contrast, James was nearly always depicted as a new Solomon, a thoughtful king, reigning in a time of peace. When James did invoke the parallel to David, it was in the context of poetry and Psalm-making rather than war. His task would be to build up the church, in the way that Solomon had built the temple. In fact, his rebuilding of St Paul's was often compared to Solomon's building of the temple.[3] Such an analogy was encouraged by James, as

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[2]John Chamberlain, The Chamberlain Letters, ed. Elizabeth McClure Thomson, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1965), p. 25.

[3]R. Malcolm Smuts, Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England, (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1987), p. 25. Some, such as Henry IV of France, joked that James was "Solomon", son of David, because of the speculation that he was really the son of David Rizzio, Queen Mary's Italian secretary at the time of his conception. See Charles Williams, James I, (London: Arthur Barker,

in the choosing of his motto: "Beati pacifici".[4] Writers used his interests in scholarship and poetry to develop this new iconography of James as the scholar or poet-king:

> God hath given unto us a wise and judiciall king, whose princely writings do give him the preheminence before all his predecessors: another Salomon, a king and yet an Ecclesiastes, a learned writer; such an one as Gratian the Emperour was:[5]

This connection to Solomon was maintained throughout his reign: the title page to his Works of 1616 includes these words of God to Solomon: "Loe have I given thee a wise and an understanding heart" (I Kings 3:12), and the King's funeral sermon by John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, was entitled "Great Britain's Salomon". In invoking an era of

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1934), p. 3.

[4]Graham Parry, The Golden Age Restored, (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1981), p. 21.

[5]Andrew Willet, "The Preface to the Reader", Ecclesia Triumphans, (Cambridge, 1603), sig. [special sign] 6^{r}.

sacred poetry, besides the reign of Solomon, many turned to the more recent past, and hoped for a reign like that of the French Henry III (1574-89), in which devotional poetry had flourished.[6]

The greatest outpouring of enthusiasm for the new king came with his progress south from Scotland to London in March of 1603. Many did not wait for him to arrive in London, but rushed northward to meet him and be among the first to pledge their service. That James knighted some such men on the spot did nothing to discourage others from imitating this mad rush northward. John Chamberlain writes that they went,"as yf yt were nothing els but first come first served, or that preferment were a goale to be got by footmanship".[7] Throughout the year much poetry was written and published to celebrate the new reign: the title of one volume, Sorrowes Joy, reflects the tension between lament for the dead queen and heralding of the new king which

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[6]A scene from Samuel Rowley's play When You See Me, You Know Me (1605) about the reign of Henry VIII includes a scene in which Christopher Tye asks the young Prince Edward to patronise his verse paraphrase Acts of the Apostles. Edward responds, "Ile peruse them, and satisfie your paines,/And have them sung within my fathers Chappell". Was Rowley in this scene holding up a model of what he thought royal patronage should be, in a way similar to Hamlet's enthusiastic treatment of the players?

[7]Chamberlain, vol. 1, p. 189.

pervaded these works.[8] Many make reference to James's interests in poetry.

One of the more explicit expressions of these hopes is found in Thomas Greene's A Poets Vision and a Princes Glorie (1603):

> Here Poets might extoll their excellence,
> If Barbarisme have not exil'd them hence,
> If other Landes injoy not their blest sight
> Whome barking ignorance hath put to flight.[9]

Greene is not referring to any specific literal expulsion, but a metaphorical one, caused by a disrespect for the poetic task. The satires discussed in Chapter 2 show that any poet had reason to fear disparagement. Elizabeth's reign had been dominated by amorous Petrarchan verse which had been suitable for approaching a female

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[8]Many poems celebrating the new king survive. Some have been collected in Nichols, Progresses, and some in Fugitive Poetical Tracts, series 2 (1875). See also Frederick Hard, "Two Spenserian Imitations, by 'T.W.'", ELH, 2 (1938), and TLS, 14 Aug., and 25 Dec., 1937. From Cambridge came the collection of Latin verse, Threno-Thriambeuticon.

[9]p. 33v.

monarch. Clearly such would not serve with a king on the throne, and so attention turned to those sorts of poetry which interested James, and which he himself wrote: sacred verse.[10] It was to be a golden age of that sort of verse. This establishing of a new fashion is referred to in Sir John Harington's poem on the accession of James:

List he to write or study sacred writte;
To heere, reade, learn, my breeding made me fitt.
What he commaunds, I'le act without excuse,
That's full resolvd: farewell, sweet wanton Muse![11]

[10]Leonard Tennenhouse, "Sir Walter Raleigh and the Literature of Clientage", Patronage in the Renaissance, ed. Guy F. Lytle and Stephen Orgel, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981), p. 246.

[11]"The Farewell To His Muse", Nugae Antiquae, ed. T. Park, (1804), p. 334. This is part of a longer presentation to James, A New Yeares Guift at Christmass, 1602, in which Harington anticipated the coming of James to the throne. The gift consisted of his epigrams in MS and a lantern engraved with the motto, "Lord, remember me when thow comest into thie kingdom". An engraving of the lantern is found in a manuscript of Harington's epigrams (Folger MS V. a. 249). Both James and his followers were inclined to apply Biblical language about God or Christ to the king in this way.

James' Interest in Sacred Poetry

If James turned out to be not quite the Augustus expected, his reign did signal the beginning of new fashions in the arts in general. Parry and Smuts both note the increasing continental influence in English arts, represented not so much by James himself, but by his son Prince Henry and the Earl of Arundel.[12] The hopes placed in the new king were not without a realistic basis, as his keen interest in theology and poetry is also manifest by his own work: his early verse was published in The Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Art of Poesie (1584) and His Maiesties Poeticall Exercises at Vacant Houres (1591), and in 1589 he had published Ane Meditatioun upon the First Buke of the Chronicles of Kings (1589). He also wrote a prose paraphrase on Revelation at a young age. Contemporary accounts present him as a serious student of both literature and theology:

> He discusses literary matters, and especially Theology, willingly. He is a great lover of subtle conceits, and his

[12]Parry, p. xi; and Smuts, p. 1.

> own discourse has much of the learned and even more of the eloquent about it.[13]

While his duties as king prevented James from giving a lot of his time to poetry, he was still approached by poets as a fellow-poet rather than a mere patron. It was in this way Phineas Fletcher approached him in an untitled poem from Sorrowes Joy: "Then will I sing, and yet who better sings/ Of thee, then thine owne oft-tride Muse?".[14]

With George Buchanan as his boyhood tutor, James would have been exposed to sacred poetry early in life. As a young man in the 1580's he surrounded himself with a group of poets, who came to be known as the Castalian Band, after a spring on Parnassus.[15] Ian Ross has shown that verse translation of both secular and sacred works held a central place in the activities of this group, and that it was seen as an

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[13]Henry Wotton to Belisario Vinta (June 1602?) in James I by his Contemporaries, ed. Robert Ashton, (London: Hutchinson, 1969), p. 4.

[14]Rpt. Poetical Works of Giles and Phineas Fletcher, ed. F.S. Boas, 2 vols. Cambridge, 1908-9. vol. 1, pp. 93-94.

[15]Ian Ross, "Verse Translation at the Court of King James VI of Scotland", Texas Studies in Language and Literature, 4 (1962/63), p.252.

important way of "raising" the vernacular languages.[16] The group included John Stewart of Baldynneis, who composed an abridged translation of Orlando Furioso, Alexander Montgomerie, William Fowler, who translated Petrarch's I Trionfi, and Thomas Hudson, a composer of both divine and secular verse. This circle of poets looked to du Bartas as a model for their work: James himself translated parts of the French poet's Urania, and Furies, and his challenge moved Thomas Hudson to translate La Judit.[17] In the dedicatory epistle of the 1608 edition he claims that James was responsible for correcting his errors in translating as well.[18] James's paraphrase from du Bartas, along with some of his verse translations of the Psalms were published in His Majesty's Poetical Exercises at Vacant Hours in 1591. In the 1580's Patrick Adamson, Archbishop of St. Andrews was writing neo-Latin paraphrases of Scripture as well, and James likely would have been familiar with these. His court became something of a international poetic centre as foreign monarchs appealed to James' interest in

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[16]p. 253. See also Sandra Bell, "Perspectives on King James VI and I's Influence on the Literature of his Reign", unpublished M.A. Dissertation, (McMaster University, 1989), pp. 3-5.

[17]Ross, pp. 252-67; see also David Harris Willson, King James VI and I, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), pp. 59-62.

[18]The Historie of Judith, in Forme of a Poeme, sig. Ppp2v.

scholarship by sending such men as du Bartas, Henry Wotton and Sidney as diplomats and envoys.[19]

That the King himself was a devotional poet had two important repercussions for other poets. First, it elevated poetry in general, and divine poetry in particular, to a higher status. That James not only wrote poetry, but also published it, would help to dispel the lingering idea that men of note pursued the muse only as a casual recreation. Secondly, James could not be approached simply as a potential patron: he was also a fellow poet, and one with a fairly high regard for his own work. Thus, he was likely to see those petitioning him as rivals as well as courtiers, and a certain deference to the king's own accomplishments in the field had to be maintained. It is in these terms that Ben Jonson appeals to him in an epigram: "Whom should my muse then fly to, but the best/ Of kings for grace, of poets for my test?"[20] Thus, even Jonson, who generally promoted himself as a laureate figure, here presents himself as a follower of the King in poetic fashions.

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[19]Allan F. Westcott, New Poems by James I of England, (New York: Columbia UP, 1911), p. xlii.

[20]Epigram 4, Poems, ed. Ian Donaldson, (London: Oxford UP, 1975).

James and the Translation of the Bible

On his progress down from Scotland, James was met with a petition signed by nearly a thousand clergymen calling for a less Romish liturgy. This request, which came to be known as the Millenary Petition, resulted in a meeting of the English Bishops, assorted scholars, and the Privy Council at Hampton Court in February of the following year.[21] James, however, had no intention of being dictated to, by Puritans or anyone else; at the conference he claimed that it was "according to the example of all Christian princes, for Kings to take the first course for the establishing of the Church in doctrine and policy".[22] Thus, James rejected the main requests of the Millenary Petitioners, but responded positively to the suggestion of John Rainolds, their main spokesman, that a new translation of the Bible be made. This work, finally published seven years later, proved to be James's most lasting legacy to the Church.

At the time, the Bishops' Bible of 1568 was officially recognized, but many people read the Geneva Bible of 1560 with its decidedly

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[21]Olga Opfell, The King James Bible Translators, (Jefferson and London: McFarland, 1982), p.2.

[22]Quoted in Caroline Bingham, James I of England, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981), p. 29.

Calvinist marginalia. Already late in Elizabeth's reign the need for a new translation had been recognized: an unedited "Draft for an Act of Parliament for a New Version of the Bible" is extant from the time when Whitgift was Archbishop.[23] In Scotland, James had suggested a new translation at the General Assembly at Bruntisland in 1601.[24] Thus, neither Rainolds' suggestion, nor James' decision at Hampton, was particularly radical. At the Hampton Court Conference the work was assigned to six teams of scholars, two each in Oxford, Cambridge and Westminster. These fifty or so men reflected a fairly broad range of Protestant views, but militantly puritan scholars like Hugh Broughton were not included.

Throughout the process of translation James himself took a keen interest in its progress, and his enthusiasm was sufficient to compel others to support the work as well. When Bancroft sought the Archbishopric of Canterbury after the death of Whitgift, he gave up his earlier opposition to the new translation in order to please the King.[25] In spite of James' promotion and approval of the translation, it

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[23]British Library, Add. MS. 34729, fol. 77, rpt. Pollard, Records of the English Bible, p. 329.

[24]Westcott, lxxxviii

[25]Opfell, p. 7.

encountered the censure that was the lot of any translation or paraphrase in the period.[26] The Preface to the Authorized Version considers such abuse to be due to the fact " that Envie striketh most spitefully at the fairest and at the chiefest".[27]

The translators of the Authorized Version did not maintain a strict pedantry in their work: unlike some earlier translators they did not always use the same English word to translate a certain Greek or Hebrew, and refused to "bee in bondage" to words or syllables.[28] Their claim that "niceness in words was always counted the next step to trifling", has in the past been misinterpreted to mean they eschewed beauty;[29] in fact, they were claiming to be neither pedantic or overcurious in selecting words. This example of flexibility was important for verse paraphrasers of the Bible, who could appeal to it to justify their own versions.

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[26]See, for example, Hugh Broughton's A Censure of the late translation, (ca. 1612).

[27]A.W. Pollard, ed., Records of the English Bible 1525-1611, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1911), p. 342.

[28]Preface, in Pollard, p. 374.

[29]Flora Ross Amos, Early Theories of Translation, (New York: Columbia UP, 1920), p. 61.

James and the Versification of the Psalms

John Spottiswoode, Archbishop of St. Andrews and early Scottish historian, writes that when James commissioned the new translation, "the revising of the Psalms he made his own labour, and... went through a number of them, commending the rest to a faithful and learned servant, who hath therein answered his M. expectation."[30] However, the Psalms were included in the revisions made by a committee of translators; what James concerned himself with was the versification of the Psalms. James had been instrumental in reviving music and singing in the Scottish Church,[31] but still found the Scottish Psalter of 1564, which was the basis of congregational song, to be unsatisfactory. At the Scottish General Assembly of 1601 James read selections from the Scottish Psalter to illustrate its deficiencies.[32] At that asssembly Robert Pont was appointed to revise the Psalter, but nothing seems to have come of this.[33] James thought no more highly of the English Old

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[30]History of the Church of Scotland, ed. 1847, vol. 3, p. 99. cited in Westcott, p. lxxxviii. Spottiswoode's history was first published in 1655.

[31]Ross, p. 254.

[32]von Rohr-Sauer, pp. 44-45.

[33]David Calderwood, "Reasons against the reception of King James's metaphrase of the Psalms", 1631, first published in Bannatyne

Version, and hoped for a new metrical translation, composed either by himself or another worthy poet, which could be used in both the English and Scottish Churches. James had versified some of the Psalms as early as 1591 when they appeared in Essays of a Prentice, and at the time expressed the hope that he would translate them all.[34] A manuscript in the British Library (Old Royal MS. 18B. XVI), which includes Psalms 1-7, 9-21, 29, 47, 100, 125, 128, 133,148 and 150; Ecclesiastes 12, the Lord's Prayer and Deuteronomy 32 (the Song of Moses), would seem to date from before James came to the English throne, if the signature at the end of some Psalms, J.D.R.S., means "Jacobus Dominus Rex Scotia".[35]

In the early seventeenth century it became increasingly fashionable to criticize, if not deride, the Old Psalter, especially for its barbarous language and "galloping" rhythm. Those Psalms were also becoming associated with Puritans of the lower classes. Sir Thomas Overbury described a Precisian as one who "thinks every Organist is in the state of damnation, and had rather heare one of Robert Wisdom's Psalmes,

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Miscellany, vol. 1, ed. Sir W. Scott and D. Laing, (Edinburgh, 1827), p. 235.

[34]Willson, p. 215.

[35]Westcott, p. lxxxviii; this manuscript is in a number of different hands, one probably of James and two others of scribes.

than the best Hymne a Cherubin can sing."[36] Although Robert Wisdom had only translated one of the Psalms in the Old Psalter, his name more than any other became associated with the doggerel verse of that volume.[37]

The most complete critique of the Old Psalter was provided by George Wither:

> no man of understanding can sing many of those Psalmes, but with trouble to his devotion. And I dare undertake to demonstrate, thay they are not onely full of absurdityes, scoeloscismes, improprietyes, non-sence, and impertinent circumlocutions (to more then twice the length of their originalles in some places) but that there are in them many

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[36]The "Conceited News" of Sir Thomas Overbury And His Friends, (1616), fasc. rpt. (Gainesville, Florida: Scholars' Fascimiles & Reprints, 1968), p. 144.

[37]See Holland, The Psalmists of Britain, vol. 1, p. 129. Holland notes that Bishop Corbet referred to Wither as the "Arch-botcher of a Psalm or Prayer".

> expressions also, quite beside if not
> quite contrary, to the meaning of the
> Text. Which I would not thus openly have
> declared, but that even schoole boys perceive it.[38]

It was seen by many as an archaic work, conceived in a time before English had become a poetic language. Thus, Wither recognizes the effort of Sternhold and his contemporaries, but believes that his own age is much better able to translate the Psalms: he does

> acknowledg, that (considering the tymes they lived in, and of what quallity they were) they made soe worthye an attempt; as may justly shame us whoe came after, to see it no better seconded during all the flourishing tymes which have followed their troublesome Age: especially, seeing howe curiously our language and expressiones are refined in our triviall Discourses.[39]

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[38]Schollers Purgatory, Works, Spenser Society Reprint, (New York: Burt Franklin, 1871-2, rpt. 1967), vol.1, pp. 37-38.

[39]Schollers Purgatory, p. 38.

Wither would seem to be referring to the tumultuous religious upheavels of the 1550's, as well as the lowly status of the poets involved in the work. Since their time, biblical song, the most important kind of poetry, had failed to keep up with the advancements in English verse. Wither observed,

> that we make use of the most excelent expressions of the holy ghost in rude, and barbarous Numbers, whilst our own wanton fancies were paynted, & trymed out in the most mooving languag. Me thought it fared with us, as with those agaynst whom the Prophet Hosea complayned, that dwelt in sieled houses themselves, whilst the Temple of God lay wast.[40]

John Donne criticized the Old Version by contrasting it to the French and Dutch Psalters:

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[40]Schollers Purgatory, p. 12.

Psalmes are become

So well attyr'd abroad, so ill at home,

So well in Chambers, in thy Church so ill,

As I can scarce call that reform'd untill

This be reform'd;[41]

The translators of the Authorized Version did not reject the work of earlier men, but "endeavour[ed] to make that better which they left so good".[42] In contrast, the Psalm versifiers of the early seventeenth century claimed to be breaking with the past. In spite of their claims, they owed a great deal to the Old Psalter: they maintained its meters, and its fairly strict adherence to the original text.

While many poets and clerics agreed that a new Psalter was necessary, the Psalms of Sternhold, Hopkins and their contemporaries had laid hold of the sentiments of many. It would not easily be displaced. Some believed that Elizabeth had actually commanded that those specific Psalms (and no others) be used in worship, and were

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[41]"Upon the translation of the Psalmes by Sir Philip Svdney, The Divine Poems, p. 34.

[42]Preface, Pollard, Records of the English Bible, p. 360.

suspicious of any attempts at "newfangleness". Not until the final decade of the century was the Psalter of Sternhold and Hopkins replaced, in spite of the many attempts to do so throughout the century.

Given the widespread dissatisfaction with the Old Version, and the interest of King James in a new Psalter, it is surprising that so few new versions actually reached print in the first quarter of the century. Two factors are likely responsible for this situation: first, the desire of James himself to be the author of a new version, and secondly, the monopoly the Stationers Company enjoyed for the printing of metrical Psalters. That authorization, either from James or the Stationers Company, is necessary to proceed in such work is clear from the letter of an anonymous respondent to George Wither:

> there are soe many Reverend and learned Men, that have desired to doe the same thing that you doe; but out of respect they had to authoritie would not proceed, except they had bene imployed by publique authoritie would not proceed, except they had bene imployed by publique Commaund".[43]

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[43]BL MS. Add. 18648, fol. 19r. Rptd. by Allen Pritchard, "George Wither's Quarrel with the Stationers: An Anonymous Reply to The Schollers Purgatory", SB, 16 (1963), pp. 27-42.

New versions of the Psalms were written, but publication was difficult and even dangerous. Joseph Hall noted already in 1608 that "Many great wits have undertaken this taske; which yet have either not effected it, or have smothered it in their private desks, and denied it the common light".[44] George Wither made a similar comment eleven years later, adding that censurers also worked to prevent new Psalters from seeing the light of day.[45] The situation in Scotland was somewhat different, as there the privilege of publishing Psalms belonged to the King's printer, and James allowed a number of new partial versions of the Psalms early in the century. Henry Dod published Certaine Psalmes of David in 1603, "Cum Privilegio Regiae Majestatis". Two years later Alexander Montgomery put forward his The Mindes Melodie. Contayning Certayne Psalmes of the Kinglie Prophete David, again "Cum Privilegio Regali". At that point James was willing to encourage others to attempt new versions of the Psalms, at least where it could be done without infringing on the rights of the Stationers Company.

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[44]"To M. Hugh Cholmley. Ep. V. Concerning the Metaphrase of the Psalms", in Poems, ed. Davenport, p. 271.

[45]A Preparation to the Psalter, sig. B2r.

In England a few poets did attempt to publish their Psalm versions and have them achieve official status. With a few exceptions, those who attempted this task had or sought some place at the court. Clearly, they were attempting to appeal to the King's interests, while at the same time avoiding the jealousy of James and the persecution of the Stationers Company. What characterizes many of these attempts then is their ambiguous relation to King James, who was both their rival and potential patron. As Sir John Harington put it, the poet needed to keep in mind that James was "not willinge a subjecte should be wiser than his Prince, nor even appeare so".[46] Psalm paraphrases thus provide an example of the intricacies of a court where the King was both poet and patron. Even with these two obstacles, many poets were attracted to the task of versifying the Psalms: as a service to the King and country, it was an important poetic task, and one that would seem to offer great rewards if done successfully. The public nature of such poetic work was generally recognized, and for George Wither it could even fill an important role in what he hoped would be a laureate career. What we find, then, in the first quarter of the seventeenth century is a number of Psalm versions, some incomplete, some which never reached print,

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[46]Letters and Epigrams, pp. 109-111, cited by D.H. Craig, Sir John Harington, (Boston: Twayne, 1985), p. 26.

but all sharing a certain tentativeness in the way that they are publicly presented.

These attempts share a number of other features. For them, fidelity to the original was far more important than it had been for the paraphrasers of the books of Solomon in the 1590's. They were versifications more than paraphrases, and as works meant to serve public worship, idiosyncratic interpretations or additions were generally excluded. While not all used the long and common meter of the Old Version, none came close to the metrical variation and experimentation of the Sidneys. Again their public function limited them to the sort of verses suitable for congregational song. Most eased into the project: poets such as Joseph Hall and Henry Dod begin by just versifying and publishing a few Psalms, to assess their reception. I will discuss most of these attempts briefly, and give the bulk of attention to George Wither's strenuous work in the field.

Sir John Harington

Harington had a well-established place in both the literary and court world of the early 1590's. His well-known translation of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso had been commissioned by his godmother, Queen Elizabeth herself, and his Epigrams, though not yet published, had gained him a reputation as a court wit. This reputation was furthered by his satiric work on plumbing, Metamorphosis of Ajax. The offence that this work caused, along with a too close association with the unpredictable Earl of Essex, plunged Harington into disfavour with the Queen. However, by the time of Essex's uprising, Harington had carefully removed himself from the circle of the rebel.[47] Although Harington expressed sorrow at the death of Elizabeth, and vowed to leave London: "I will keepe companie with none but my oves and boves, and go to Bathe and drinke sacke, and wash awaie remembrances of past times in the stream of Lethe",[48] like many others, he hoped for a new start with the coming of James to the crown. As he writes in a

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[47]J.E. Neale, Queen Elizabeth I, (New York: Doubleday, 1957) p. 379 and 385.

[48]"From Sir John Harinton's Papers, called his Breefe Notes and Remembrances", Nugae Antiquae, (1792), vol. 3, p. 206. Unfortunately, Nugae Antiquae gives no information on the source of these "Breefe Notes".

letter from April, 1603: "a new Kynge will have new soldiers, and god knowethe what men they will be."[49] In Self-Crowned Laureates Helgerson argues that "on the accession of James, he [Harington] bid his 'sweet wanton Muse' farewell, recognizing that poetry, especially for a man no longer young, stood in the way of political advancement".[50] However, in that poem he was only dismissing the wanton muse, in order to embrace a sacred one: "Now to more serious thoughts my soule aspyers,/ This age, this minde, a Muse awsteare requiers".[51] It was not poetry itself that stood in the way of advancement, but a particular sort of amorous poetry, one more suited to the previous reign. Harington hoped that a more reverent verse might appeal to James and lead to favour. While he may have set out to paraphrase and publish the Psalms in response to the new reign, as early as 1597 he had referred

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[49]Letter to Lord Thomas Howarde [later Earl of Suffolk], Nugae Antiquae, p. 337. Cf. the prevenient gift of Harington to James discussed above.

[50]Richard Helgerson, Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton and the Literary System, (Berkeley: U of California P, 1983), p. 56.

[51]"The Farewel to his Muse", Nugae Antiquae, p. 333.

to the versifying and singing of Psalms as "the fyrste and moste excellent play or recreacion".[52]

However, in the years 1603 and 1604 Harington's fortunes reached a nadir, not because of his poetry, but because of the problems of his kinsmen, the Markhams. From May to October of 1603 Harington was imprisoned for having guaranteed a loan defaulted by his cousin Thomas Markham.[53] Another cousin, Griffin Markham, was implicated in the Bye plot to place Arabella Stuart on the throne, and he appealed to Harington for help. Ironically, Harington received the forfeiture of Griffin's lands, and used them to pay Sir Thomas' debts.[54] In the following year he became embroiled in a suit with Edward Rogers, his brother-in-law, over the estate of Rogers' mother (Harington's mother-in-law) who had died in 1601.

After his troubles were largely settled Harington looked to gain either a place in the circle of instructors around Prince Henry, or the Chancellorship of Ireland. To further his chances for the latter he wrote A View of the State of Ireland in 1605, but it was never published. He

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[52]"A Treatise on Play", rptd. in Nugae Antiquae, (1792), vol. 3, p. 158.

[53]Craig, p. 25.

[54]Craig, p. 26.

sent to Prince Henry in 1605 a verse translation of Book 6 of the Aeneid. The "muse awsteare" led him to write A Supplie or Addicion to the Catalogue of Bishops to the yeare 1608, a collection of lives of Elizabethan bishops, but the primary poetic activity of Harington in this time was his versifying of the Psalms which he presented to James about 1607. In spite of Harington's request for James' aid in their publication, they never reached print. We cannot be certain of exactly when he began work on them; however, that he presented his sister, Lucy, Countess of Bedford with a copy of three of Sidney's Psalms, numbers 51, 104, and 137, in 1600 would suggest that he had not yet composed his own.[55] An undated letter survives in which he asks for James' approval and support:

> That your Majestie will be pleased to referr the examynacion of this woorke of the Psalms drawing so nere to an end to some of your learned chaplains now resyding abowt London, and the resolucion of all doubtfull places to

[55]The manuscript is in the Library of the Inner Temple, Petyt MS 538, vol. 43, f. 303b. The letter accompanying them is reprinted in Letters and Epigrams, ed. McClure, p. 87. Also included in the presentation manuscript are some of Harington's own "shallowe meditations" [epigrams].

> my Lord Bishop of Elie. And whereas I fynde Master Aton your Majesties servant very judicious in this kynde and by whose advyce I must ingenuously acknowledge I have receaved some furtherance in this worck, yt may please your Majestie to joyne him also as well as for the review of the same as for the ordring of the convenyent publishing of yt to your Majesties best lykinge.[56]

While McClure assigns a tentative date of 1612 to this letter, the reference to Martin Heton (also spelled Eaton and Aton) makes clear that it was written before 1609, the year of Heton's death. Harington had disparaged Heton in A Supplie or Addicion to the Catalogue of Bishops, thus making it unlikely that he suggested Heton review his Psalms after that year. I would suggest that Harington composed the Psalms between 1605 and 1607, that period when he was courting the favour of Prince Henry. Thus, they are products of the court setting, not "those final quieter years of his life spent at Kelston with his wife and family", as Schmutzler suggests.[57]

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[56]Letters and Epigrams, ed. McClure, pp. 143-44.

[57]Karl E. Schmutzler, "Harington's Metrical Paraphrases of the

Another of Harington's letters asks for patronage and help in publishing his work. It is addressed to no one more specific than "your Grace", from whom he asks "direction for publishing all or some of these selected psalms"[58]. That it is of "selected psalms" would suggest that this letter accompanied a manuscript which no longer survives. In the letter Harington presents himself as an ill man whose last wish is that these Psalms be published:

> Yet I desire ere I dy to have this revenge to see the work published to gods honor and the kings, having no thought of any privat ambition to my selfe, and doubting greatly least if I dy the rashnes of som, and zeale of gaine rather than of godlines, will precipitat the publishing of them, which I would as much as I could prevent by your graces good favour.

Seven Penitential Psalms: Three Manuscript Versions", PBSA, 53 (1959), p. 240.

[58]Letter 61, McClure, pp. 142-43.

His fear of someone else publishing them after his death casts into doubt his claims of altruism in seeking publication. Why would he be concerned if they were brought out for the wrong reason? More likely he feared that they would not see the light of day at all, for as he claimed earlier in the letter, "I have rais'd my selfe a mighty enmitie by offering my service in this kynd". We cannot tell whether this "enmitie" was that of the King or of other rival poets, but the adjective "mighty" would suggest it was a figure of high rank, either the King himself or a member of his court.

It seems that Harington began by paraphrasing the seven Penitential Psalms, and only later incorporated these into a complete Psalter. The Penitential Psalms appear in British Library MS Egerton 2711, a manuscript owned by the Harington family which included Wyatt's Psalms. Harington's work in the same vein appears quite a bit further on in the manuscript, but clearly he was aware of and influenced by Wyatt's work. Complete versions of his Psalms are found in manuscripts at Ohio State University English Department Library, and British Library MS Douce MS 361.[59] Schmutzler demonstrates that the Egerton manuscript is the earliest of the three.

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[59]This manuscript has been examined and discussed by Schmutzler, p. 243.

The Psalms are not in long or common meter, but a variety of stanza forms of three to fourteen lines, with most in a 6 to 8 line pentameter stanza, concluding in a rhyming couplet. Psalm 102 is typical:

> Lord lend thine eare unto my pray'r & crying
> nor hide thy face when hasty helpe I need
> I waste as smoke, my bones within are frying
> my stomack faynts, I ev'n forget to feed
> my hart is wither'd like a fading weed
> my gutts so gryp'd with greivance of my grones
> that ev'n my skinn doth cleave unto my bones.[60]

He also often uses ottava rima, the verse form which he had used throughout his translations of Orlando Furioso and book 6 of The Aeneid. With those two works, Harington had been both translator and commentator, as he included marginal notes on the poems. He did not presume to such commentary with the Psalms. The only marginal

[60]BL MS Egerton 2711, rptd. Schmutzler, pp. 245-6.

material is the marking of some as designated for morning or evening prayer on certain days. He does, however, allow himself a certain expansion within the text of his versification. Thus, "I was the song of the drunkards" (Ps. 69:12) becomes "to my reproch the drunkards publish rymes/in tavernes bace and ordinary Tables".[61] However, such expansion is limited and would not in itself have prevented Harington's work from serving as a public Psalter. That they failed to achieve such a position must mean that James never offered the support for them which Harington had requested. The reign of the new king did not fulfill its promise for the poet, and already by 1606 he was looking back to that of Elizabeth with fondness.[62]

[61]Craig, p. 110.

[62]See the letter to Mr. Secretary Barlow, [from London,] 1606, Nugae Antiquae, pp. 348-353, where Harington expresses his disgust at the excesses of drink and wantonness that marked the visit of the Danish king in 1606.

Joseph Hall

In chapter 2 I discussed Joseph Hall as a satirist, one who attacked verse paraphrase for its mistreatment of scripture. Nearly ten years later in 1607 he was himself publishing a work of paraphrase, Some Few of David's Psalms. It was not that Hall now set out to correct the mistakes of others, that he had turned from negative criticism to the positive activity of showing how it was to be done. Rather, his situation was very different than it had been when he had written Virgidemiarum. The student and satirist had become a priest in 1600 with a living at Hawstead under the patronage of Sir Robert Drury. Finding that position unsatisfactory, by 1605 he was looking for a more rewarding living, and he hoped one connected to the court.[63] The desire to attain a better position may have motivated him to the impressive literary output of the years 1606-08, much of which was directed toward James and Prince Henry.[64] In 1607 he became an occasional chaplain to Prince Henry.

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[63]Richard A. McCabe, Joseph Hall: A Study in Satire and Meditation, (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1982), pp. 10-11.

[64]Ronald J. Corthell, "Joseph Hall and Seventeenth-Century Literature", JDJ, 3 (1984), p. 258-59.

Hall's writing in these years reflects his changing position in society, and Corthell suggests that his career has much to "tell us about relationships between political, religious and literary practices" of the period. His last work of verse, The Kings Prophecie, published in 1603 itself shows a "changed stile" on the part of Hall: satire is no longer appropriate.[65] His Latin satire Mundus Alter et Idem was published in 1605, but without the author's name attached to it. Like many others Hall anticipated that James' taste would establish sacred verse as the literary fashion:

> So may thy [K. James'] worth my lowly Muse upraise,
> So may mine hie-up-raised thoughts aspire
> That not thy Bartas selfe, whose sacred layes
> The yeelding world doth thy selfe admire,
> Shall passe my song, which nought can reare so hye,
> Save the sweet influence of thy glorious eyes.[66]

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[65]The Kings Prophecie, l. 317, Collected Poems, ed. Arnold Davenport, (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1949, rpt. 1969), p. 116.

[66]The Kings Prophecie, ll. 115-120, Collected Poems, p. 113.

Hall thus alludes to and compliments James' poetic endeavours, but makes clear that he himself is to be the poet and James the inspiration and patron. Note, however, that Hall refrains from presenting his poetry as work written for or to the King; his "vulgar verse shall feed plebeian eies", he claims, "nor prease into the presence of my King".[67] Davenport suggests in his introduction that these lines of praise to King James were due to his "remembering that Marston had falsely accused him of railing at them [James' Psalms], and prudently considering that James was now King of England".[68] Davenport is referring to Marston's Satire IV Reactio where he suggests that Hall's criticism in Virgidemiarum went beyond sacred poetry in general and did "raile impudent/ At Hopkins, Sternhold, and the Scottish King,/ At all Translators that doe strive to bring/ That stranger language to our vulgar tongue".[69]

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[67]ll.123-4.

[68]Davenport, p. xxxviii.

[69]John Marston, Poems, ed. Arnold Davenport, (Liverpool, 1961), ll. 40-43, p. 82. Marston's satire goes on to become a defense of sacred verse. Frank Livingstone Huntley, Bishop Joseph Hall: A Biographical and Critical Study, (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1979), suggests that Marston was responding not only to Virgidemiarum, but to the comments in Return to Parnassus, a satirical play to which Hall might have contributed (pp. 37-38).

Hall's versification of the Psalms was only a minor part of the literary activity he pursued in the period 1605 to 1610: these works were all largely theological in the broad sense of that word, and, like the Psalms, apt to appeal to James' interests. Corthell writes, "Hall's attraction to Proverbial models was also, perhaps primarily, motivated by his "almost sycophantic admiration" of the learning and sententious style of the English Solomon",[70] and this was manifest in such works as Solomon's Divine Arts (1609), which included a prose paraphrase of the Song of Songs.

Hall's nine Psalms were published at the end of his Holy Observations (1607), under the tentative title Some Few of Davids Psalms Metaphrased for a Taste of the Rest. Hall claims in his dedicatory epistle that he has "been solicited by som revered friends to undertake this taske; as that which seemed well to accord with the former exercises of my youth, and my present profession",[71] and that he is willing to continue if he "shall be imployed by authoritie".[72] At the beginning of the dedicatory epistle Hall claims for himself the

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[70]Corthell, p. 258. He cites Huntley, p. 53.

[71]"To my Loving and learned Cosen, Mr. Samuel Burton, Archdeacon of Glocester. Collected Poems, p. 128.

[72]p. 128.

conventional conversion to higher endeavours: "Indeed, my Poetrie was sithence out of date, yielded her place to graver studies: but whose vaine would it not revive to looke into these heavenly songs?"[73] Being a David-like poet and a Divine are compatible, and the Psalms fit in well with the career change that Hall has undergone since the satires.

The preface to Hall's Psalms and an epistle to Hugh Cholmley, published in 1608, show his concern for fidelity to the original, and an admiration for the French and Dutch Psalms. He found the long and common meters of Sternhold and Hopkins and most other English Psalms unworkable: "I never could see good verse written in the wonted measures. I ever thought them most easie, and least Poeticall".[74] In his own version of the Psalms Hall did not abandon rhyme, but like Sidney attempted a variety of verse forms.

The ten Psalms published in 1607 remained simply a "taste" of a full meal which was never served. Hall would have been well-qualified

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[73]Collected Poems, p. 127.

[74]Letter to Hugh Cholmley, Collected Poems, ed. Davenport, p. 271. His disdain for common meter may be part of a larger antipathy toward English poetry. He found rhyme to be an obstacle in the writing of satire, and challenges others to attempt a translation of Persius' satires without it. He holds up the example of Ariosto's satires, in which the rhyming "maie well afford a pleasing harmony to the eare, so can it yeeld nothing but a flashy and loose conceyt to the judgement."("A Post-script to the Reader", Virgidemiarum in Collected Poems, p. 99).

to compose a new Psalter, and those presented in the volume of 1607 are better than most attempts of the time. In the Epistle to Cholmley, Hall recognizes the public nature of the task, and the need for the poet to aim neither too high nor too low, "with numbers neither lofty, nor slubbred". A "higher straine" is inappropriate not only because its readers will include the simple, but also because of "the grave majestie of the subject". This aesthetic was consistent with Hall's other work. For him plainness was essential for literary art: above all he detested affectation.

George Wither and Biblical Versification

While George Wither is best known now for the Puritan prophetic works which he poured out in the latter half of his life, until the late 1620's his career was solely that of a poet, one who wrote satire and pastoral as well as religious verse. As such he was one of the most popular poets in the years 1611-25. Unfortunately, our view of him has been too largely shaped by his later work, and such comments as that by Denham, that he saved Wither's life during the civil war in order

that he himself would not be the worst poet in England.[75] It is within the context of his early career, not that of his later Puritan prophetic stance, that Wither's versification of the Psalms and other Old Testament songs should be seen. Until about 1630 Wither was clearly trying to establish what Helgerson has described as a "laureate career", that is one in which the primary occupation is being a poet, and one in which the poetry, while making "a contribution to the order and improvement of the state", is self-consciously shaped into a career.[76] I would argue that Wither attempted this sort of career, and intended that biblical versification, especially of the Psalms, would be his main contribution to English life.

Unlike some earlier paraphrasers, Wither did not reject outright his earlier work when turning to biblical paraphrase. He continued to address the same patrons and readers, and maintained that he would at some point return to satire. The collection and publication of his Juvenilia in 1622, which Helgerson describes as a signal of laureate ambitions, shows that Wither did not abandon his poetic career when he

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[75]The Little, Brown Book of Anecdotes, ed. Clifton Fadiman, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1985), p. 163.

[76]Helgerson, p. 29.

turned to biblical verse.[77] It is only in retrospect that Wither's paraphrases can be seen as a turning point in his career; at the time they were to serve as a movement into a more serious vein, a work of service to God and the King. While Wither's later writings railed at the court and established church, with all his poetry up until 1625 he was working toward acceptance within those establishments.[78]

Wither began his poetic career with the satire Abuses Stript and Whipt in 1611, which went through eight editions in the years that followed. Princess Elizabeth, whose patronage Wither had cultivated, helped him avoid trouble when it was first published, but at its republication in 1614 she was no longer in England and Wither was sent to the Marshalsea prison. What offense the satire caused is now unclear.[79] In 1612 Wither wrote verses on the death of Prince Henry (Prince Henry Obsequies), and the marriage of Elizabeth (Epithalamia). He used his time in the Marshalsea to compose a pastoral, The Shepherd's Hunting. The satire Wither's Motto, or Nec habeo, nec

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[77]Helgerson, p. 255.

[78]Wither moved in literary circles that included William Browne of Tavistock, Davies of Hereford and Drayton. All of these were frustrated in their attempts to achieve offical recognition or patronage.

[79]J. Milton French, "George Wither in Prison", PMLA, 45 (1930), p. 959.

careo, nec curo, once again landed him in the Marshalsea in 1621. Whether Wither actually tried to get himself imprisoned in order to attract attention as John Taylor argued, is doubtful, but by 1621 his fame and popularity were well-established.[80]

As Spenser had doffed his "lowly Shepheards weeds", in turning from pastoral to the more important task of epic, so did Wither present himself as having outgrown his early works of satire and pastoral when he began his works of Biblical versification at the beginning of the 1620's. This was not a rejection of that earlier work, but an establishing of it as "Juvenilia", preparatory work to a greater task. Wither presents the Psalms as a work of maturity while he mildly repents for the errors of his earlier poetry. However, he does not deny the intent of his satire:

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[80]Taylor presented this argument in Aqua-Musae (1645), which was a response to Wither's Campo-Musae:

> 'Tis knowne that once within these thirt
> yeares,
> Thou was in Jayle for scandalling some Peeres,
> And 'tis not lawfull for a Satyres Pen,
> To wrong the Honours of particular Men,
> Which you did, not for any hate you bore
> To Vice or Villany, but that therefore
> You would be famous, and to Prizen Committed,
> Whereby you seem'd most wonderfully Witted.
> (p. 7)

> And so much was my over-earnest longing to be doing, that I must confesse, it grew ripe, before my discretion; which made me busie, before I knew how to do anything well: as too apparantly appeared in those my Satyricall Poems. For, in them, you may perceive (sure I am, I find there) so many childish over-sights and absurdities, that if then I had not the fewnesse of my years to have excused the greennesse of my wit, with the testimony of my owne knowledge that my zeale was to doe well; I should long before this time have beene ashamed of them, as ridiculous.[81]

He is not rejecting satire, but suggests, "a time may come, when I shall in another kinde revisite their Augean stables",[82] and makes clear that an attack on his Psalms would occasion more satire on his part.[83]

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[81] A Preparation to the Psalter, B1r-v. See also A Preparation, pp. 69-70.

[82] A Preparation, sig. B2r.

[83] A Preparation, p.139.

However, in the early 1620's he was trying to show that he had reached a new stage in his career: in "The Stationer to the Reader" of the pastoral work Faire-Virtue it is argued that Wither was reluctant to publish it "lest the seeming lightness of such a subject might somewhat disparage the more serious studies which he hath since undertaken".[84] The poetic career as established by Virgil and followed by Spenser entailed a movement from pastoral eclogues to the more serious epic; Wither adapted this pattern by substituting Biblical song for epic. Thus, Wither saw the Psalms as a progression rather than a break in his career, and goes so far as to describe the Psalmist as satirical when "he takes occasion to set forth the malicious conditions of the enemies the Messias, and his kingdome".[85] It was not until the later prophetic works that Wither abandoned the model of the poetic career. That Wither was only paraphrasing, or as he himself described it, merely rearranging the English translation of scripture into verse form, did not make it a less important task in his eyes, or any less worthy to be the central work in a poetic career. Once again, the subject matter elevated the work to the highest status.

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[84]Poetry of George Wither, ed. Frank Sidgwick, 2 vols. 1902. vol. 2, p. 3. A further comment in this preface makes clear that Wither himself was the author of it.

[85]A Preparation, p. 77.

Most of Wither's work on Biblical versification was directed toward King James or Prince Charles, and Wither hoped the work would achieve official status at court and in the church. While his earlier works had sometimes been directed toward the King and the royal family, Wither recognized that such trivialities as pastoral and satire were not fit matter for a king. In an epigram to King James at the end of the 1614 Abuses Stript and Whipt he writes, "I doe not make thee Patron of my Booke;/ For, 'tis not fit our Faiths-Defender (still)/Take the protection of each trifling quill".[86] In the dedicatory preface to A Preparation to the Psalter Wither promises Charles that in the work he will "raise a sacred Trophee to your Name; which shall more truely honour it, thean a thousand Monuments of farre greater cost".[87] Like earlier paraphrasers he argues that the subject itself "deserves the favour and encouragement of a Prince".[88]

Wither signalled the new stage in his career by publishing A Preparation to the Psalter in 1619, a substantial volume outlining his view of the Psalms and the approach he would take in versifying them. This is a unique document in that it offers a full explanation of the

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[86]Spenser Soc. Rept. #10, Part 2, p. 349.

[87]sig. A1r

[88]sig. A1v

reasoning behind a poet's approach to the Psalms, including a defence of the versifying and singing of Psalms, and a discussion of how they are to be used.[89] Wither's Preparation is nearly a learned commentary: he makes much use of earlier commentators, and his goal is to help the reader understand and use that book which is "so frequently read or sung", and yet " so little understood".[90] At the beginning he lists some 67 scholars whom he has consulted in writing the Preparation; these range from Augustine to the 16th-century rabbinic scholar David Kimchi to King James himself. Wither, a layman, is in effect expounding scripture, for which he anticipated censure.[91] In his belief "that everyman is bound, so far as God shal enable him, to apply himselfe unto the study of his word, & to impart unto others according unto that

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[89]However, we must keep in mind that what Wither argues in A Preparation is not always borne out in the Psalms published thirteen years later, as his view of the Psalms changed over that period of time. To give just one example: in A Preparation he argues that psalms like Psalm 7 ought not to be applied to ourselves: David is speaking as a type of Christ. However, the prose introduction to it in the 1632 publication says that "it may be used, when the true Church or any members thereof, are slandered by their foes &c." It strikes me that this is an illustration of the increasing tendency to apply the words of scripture to contemporary events and figures.

[90]A Preparation, p. 19.

[91]A Preparation, p. 19.

which he hath received"[92] we can understand how Wither later became a member of the Puritan party. Wither's exposition of scripture continued in a work published the next year, Exercises upon the first psalme.

Wither conceived his work to be more than versifying: he originally planned to include a prose introduction, "severall Readings" from the ancient languages, a commentary or exposition, the prose translation from the Authorized Version, verse meditations on the Psalm, and a prayer with each Psalm. All this from a man who was primarily a poet. Thus, his Psalms was to be a complete instructional and devotional volume. This ambitious project was reduced to a short prose introduction and prayer with each Psalm when the work was finally published in 1632. As A Preparation to the Psalter runs to 139 pages, Wither feared that some might think that "the Porch is too great for the House",[93] but he feels that the general public is so ignorant of the proper use of the Psalms that it is necessary. A Preparation to the Psalter is an impressive folio volume with a richly detailed title page in some copies that shows a group of musicians beneath a tree -- David is in the foreground with the harp -- surrounded

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[92]A Preparation, p. 19.

[93]sig. A2r.

by animals and birds. The border surrounding this illustration has "LAUDENT NOMEN [יהוה] QUIA EXCELSUM est nomen eius solius/ LAUS EIUS SUPRA TERRAM & COELAS (Psalm 148:13).[94] A prefatory poem picks up this theme, with echoes throughout of Psalm 148. The work as a whole is a very large and ornate "porch", and this suggests that the "house", that is, the Psalter itself, was to be even more impressive. Helgerson argues that the great care for the physical appearance of Wither's early works is evidence of his laureate ambitions;[95] if this is so, the handsomeness of this volume clearly heralds what would have constituted the central work in his career.

By comparing the 1632 edition with the few Psalms quoted in A Preparation and a manuscript version dating from the late 1620's (BL MS. Egerton 2404), we can see that Wither considerably amended his versification of the Psalms over the years. A. Pritchard notes that the manuscript correction of the Psalms in MS Egerton 2404 show "evidence of the great pains which Wither took with his Psalms, perhaps more indeed than he took with any other work during the course of his long

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[94]See Appendix. According to DNB, there was originally also a portrait of Wither, which is no longer in most copies.

[95]Helgerson, p. 37.

and prolific career".[96] However, he did not delay publication in order to make changes; other obstacles prevented the publication which A Preparation heralded. It finally appeared thirteen years later in an unimpressive 16° volume printed in Holland. At least in presentation the house did not match the porch, and most critics have found the poetry of Wither's Psalms fairly unimpressive as well.

Wither had planned to issue his Psalms over a period of time in groups of ten or "decades" with the first decade to be included in A Preparation. However, he holds back from doing so in order to see how the prefatory work will be received: "I have now for some good causes delayed it, untill I see how my purpose shall in this beginning receive your approbation. If I perceive it likely to finde favourable acceptance, I will shortly present you with the first Ten".[97] He does, however, use sections from some of his versified Psalms to illustrate his points, and it is clear from other references that he had already completed a good number of them. He refrained from including them for two reasons: first, the tenacity with which the Stationers Company maintained their sole right to the printing of the Psalms; and secondly, and more

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[96]A. Pritchard, "A Manuscript of Wither's Psalms", Huntington Library Quarterly, 27 (1963), p. 73.

[97]sig. A2v.

importantly, the desire on the part of King James to himself be the author the English Psalter for the Church.

The right to the Psalms in Metre had been bought by the Stationers Company in 1603, and renewed in 1616 and 1634.[98] The stationers saw any new version of the Psalms, or even some of the Psalms, as a threat to their monopoly on the Psalter, and tightly controlled the printing of Psalters. Each year one or more printers would be assigned the task of printing them on behalf of the company. They would be given a quantity of paper to do the job, of which each sheet had to be returned to the company, whether used or not. Numerous entries in the Records of the Stationers Court deal with minor infringements of these regulations. The stationers were printing the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter; however, they felt that their patent extended unto "all manner of books of that nature"[99], or in other words, any collection of Psalms in English meter. Thus, in 1632 when John Standish collected English metrical Psalms written for the Genevan tunes, he had to approach the Stationers Company for special permission: they limited him to making one impression of a thousand

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[98]William A. Jackson, Preface to Records of the Court of the Stationers Company, 1602-40, 2 vols., (1957), p. viii.

[99]Records of the Court of the Stationers Company, 5 Sept. 1631, p. 231.

copies.[100] The Stationers extended this authority even to a paraphrase of a collection of fifty Psalms by either Edwin Sandys or Joyce Taylor in 1615.[101] Between 1625 and 1635 about sixty editions of the Psalter were published by the Stationers Company. Any work that displaced such a perennial source of revenue could expect to meet the greatest hostility. The treatment of another potential Psalter, that of Henry Dod, published in 1620 illustrates this.

Henry Dod had written and published Certain Psalmes of David, heretofore much out of use... in 1603; this was one of the earliest attempts to replace or correct Sternhold and Hopkin's Old Version. By 1620 he had rendered the rest of the Psalms metrically, and attempted publication in a volume entitled All the Psalmes of David, with certeine songs and canticles...; Pollard and Redgrave have suggested that it was printed in Amsterdam, possibly by G. Thorp. This contained not only

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[100]Records of the Court of the Stationers Company, 5 September 1631, p. 231. Similar rulings about the printing on psalters other than the Sternhold and Hopkins version are found in Records 1605, p. 15; 7 September, 1635, p. 271; and 7 December 1640, p. 338.

[101]Records of the Court of the Stationers Company, 17 June 1615, p. 456: "R[eceived]d of Thomas Snodam for a license to print a booke called sacrid himmes by Joyce Taylor taken out of the psalmes which belong to the Company". The title of the publication gives no indication of author, but notes that the tunes are by Robert Taylor. The Register of the Stationers Company mentions his name as well (Arber, iii, 568). Pollard and Redgrave, STC ascribe the work to Edwin Sandys.

a version of the Psalms and the Song of Songs, but also a versification of the Act of Parliament enjoining a Public Thanksgiving on the Fifth of November. The work met a rough reception. Wither, ironically, shows no sympathy for his fellow poet when he described the incident in Schollers Purgatory; he refers to "Dod the silke-mans late ridiculous translation of the Psalmes, which was by authority worthily condemned to the fire".[102] In the preface to the work Dod harks back to the support of James for his 1603 work, but does not suggest that the King is supporting this attempt. Rather he refers to the encouragements of various unidentified clergymen. The clandestine printing of the work supports the argument that it constituted a violation of the Stationers monopoly, even though it was not the English Psalter. Considering the power of the Stationers Company, it is not surprising that the Psalms of Harington and Sidney never reached print.

Clearly to have them published would have required a considerable effort and diplomacy in placating the Stationers. George Wither made the effort but lacked the diplomatic skills, as he ended up antagonizing the Stationers with his other works published in the early 1620's. Between A Preparation and publication of The Psalmes of David, Wither published a number of collections of other hymns and

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[102]p. 33.

Biblical paraphrases, culminating in Hymnes and Songs of the Church. This work was granted a special patent by the King, giving Wither "during the Terme of 51. yeares, full License and Authoritie to imprint the said Booke, either with, or without Arguments and Musicall notes (and to utter and sell the same in any of His Dominions)", and also requiring "that no English Psalme-Booke in Meeter, shall be bound up alone, or with any other Booke or Bookes, unlesse the said Hymnes and Songs of the Church be annexed thereunto".[103] That Wither, who two years earlier had been imprisoned for his Motto, should now enjoy such an exceptional privilege from the King, was later explained by the poet himself as due to the intervention of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke.[104]

The patent began a long feud between Wither and the Stationers Company, who especially resented Wither's authority to seize any Psalter published without his Hymns. The antagonism between Wither and the Stationers had begun two years earlier with the unlicensed publication of Wither's Motto, which resulted in Wither's imprisonment

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[103]An Abstract of His Maiesties Royall Priviledge, STC 8704.5. Rpt. in W.W. Greg Companion to Arber, pp. 212-13.

[104]"To the Right Honourable Phillip, Earle of Pembroke", A Collection of Emblems, (1635). This appears before the fourth section of the book on an unnumbered page. William Herbert died in 1630, at which time his brother Philip became the fourth Earl of Pembroke.

in the Marshalsea once again.[105] In spite of the bookbinders' protests, Parliament allowed the patent to stand. Nevertheless, such hostility from the Stationers made the work difficult to publish and distribute.[106] Not until the Emblems of 1635 was any work of Wither's again printed and distributed in England in the normal way.[107] Such a strained relationship certainly contributed to the delay in the publication of his Psalms. From our viewpoint the most interesting fruit of this dispute was Wither's 1624 work Schollers Purgatorie where he defended himself against the charges of the Stationers, who had not only objected to the infringement of their rights, but had accused Wither of a variety of sins ranging from blasphemy to Popery to incompetence.[108]

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[105]Jocelyn Creigh, "George Wither and the Stationers: Facts and Fiction" PBSA 74 (1980), pp. 49-57. Unfortunately, throughout this article Creigh confuses Wither's Psalms with his Hymns and Songs of the Church.

[106]Pritchard, "Wither's Quarrel", p. 29.

[107]Pritchard, "Wither's Quarrel", p. 30.

[108]Concerning the conflict between Wither and the Stationers Company there is a fair amount of primary material. We have Wither's lengthy defence in The Schollers Purgatory, an unpublished response to this defence (printed and discussed by Allan Pritchard in "George Wither's Quarrel with the Stationers: An Anonymous Reply to The Schollers Purgatory", SB 16 (1963), pp. 27-42; a preface to the Psalms by Wither, written about 1625 and never published (BL, MS Egerton 2404), and various official documents, including the patent given to Wither by King James (collected in Greg's Companion to Arber, pp. 212-17. See also Norman E. Carlson, "Wither and the Stationers", SB, 19

Throughout Wither tries to show that it is his opponents who are schismatics, and that both the crown and church hierarchy approve of his work:

> Now, that they have abused my Lo: Grace of Canterburye, by pretendinge his dislike of my booke, (to the disparagement thereof) I shal make yt very apparant. For, his Grace tooke notise that my booke was perused and allowed by his Majestie himselfe; and worthily approved his Royall judgement both in Divinity and Poetry, the Stationers beeing present: he was informed likewise, concerning every perticuler circumstance in the Grant, and how it was his Majesties pleasure my book should be anexed to the metricall Psalmes; and thereupon both illustrated the reasonablenesse thereof to the sayd stationers, and gave them and me incouragment to proceed to composition touching the same.[109]

(1966), pp. 210-215, for a succinct account of the feud.

[109]Schollers Purgatory, p. 46.

Further on in the same passage he claims that the Archbishop himself has perused the entire work, "and, giving me order to alter one word only, hath permitted al the rest to have free passage without controwle."[110] The anonymous reply to Wither confirms that in late 1623 four clergymen were appointed to review Wither's work.[111] That Wither's patent was upheld suggests that they found it acceptable. It cannot be asserted that the dispute was solely between the Stationers and Wither; the Stationers certainly did resent the king's intrusion into what they considered their jurisdiction.

> For, some of them [the stationers] dare already tell me to my face, that if the King had not peremptorely commanded the addition of my Hymns to the metricall Psalmbooke, they would have the sooner anexed them; but by compulsion they will not.[112]

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[110]p. 47.

[111]Pritchard, "Wither's Quarrel", p. 28.

[112]Schollers Purgatory, p. 65.

They eventually turned to Parliament for help in reestablishing their rights. In turn Wither made a number of appeals to the Privy Council for help to support his patent: a 1626 entry in the Record of the Stationers Court suggests that they were complying.[113]

Wither's hymns deserve some comment in their own right. As with the Psalms, Wither proceeded cautiously. The preface of Songs of the Old Testament (1621) is addressed to George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in particular, and the clergy of the Church of England in general. Wither seems to be seeking approval, although he claims that "this Booke hath already the allowance appointed by Authority, and so much the approbation of many other good men, as that they desire it generally published (at least) for their private devotions".[114] However, Wither is clearly intent that his songs serve public worship as well, that the old testament songs be part of worship as they were in the early church.[115] His appeals to the clergy show a desire for church approval not found with earlier paraphrasers. Like A Preparation, Songs of the Old Testament seems to be a testing of the waters; Wither has had it printed only "to be distributed among your RR^{ces} [Right Reverences] and

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[113]Records of the Court of the Stationers Company, p. 112.

[114]sig. A4v.

[115]"Epistle", Songs of the Old Testament, sig. A2v.

other speciall friends" in order that they might correct it and make suggestions.[116]

In "The Epistle to the Cleargie" that precedes the fourteen songs in Songs of the Old Testament Wither suggests that his approach to them has been in keeping with that outlined in A Preparation to the Psalter; for Wither there seems to be no distinction between Psalms and other old testament songs: all were used in worship by the primitive church and are applicable to the present situation of the church. To illustrate this Wither includes a brief prologue to each song, wherein he establishes the original context of the song, and also how it is applicable in his own time. Thus, the Song of Moses may be sung since the exodus out of Egypt "was a tipe of our deliverance from the bondage of our Spirituall Adversaries".[117] Wither's next publication, Cantica Sacra, contained the fourteen songs of the previous work as well as 27 new ones, including the Song of Songs. These songs were then published along with hymns for the church calendar in the 1623 volume Hymns and Songs of the Church. Like the two collections that preceded it, this one did not include any Psalms.[118] Louis Benson has noted the

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[116]sig. A4r.

[117]p. 2.

[118]There seems to be some confusion about this; Creigh (p. 53) has

importance of this volume as the first attempt to establish an English hymnal. However, Wither's hymns found no place in the congregational worship of the church, either in his own or later times. Their failure stemmed from the unassailable position of the Psalter as the basis of congregational worship; freely composed hymns were not to figure largely in English worship until the introduction of Watts's hymns in the early eighteenth century. As Benson notes, Calvin's injunction to sing the songs of scripture rather than those of man's making still held sway. This and the problems of publication, rather than any defect in the hymns themselves, explain their failure. They consist of acceptable, if not particularly noteworthy poetry, and the accompanying tunes by Gibbons have since found their way into other hymnals.[119]

While the problems surrounding Hymns and Songs of the Church may have absorbed Wither's energies for a time, he never gave up in his foremost wish to put forth an English Psalter. He seems to have attempted to have his Psalter printed in 1625 in Cambridge. Rev. Joseph Mead writes on April 23, 1625, a few days after the King's death,

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the impression that the Psalms were part of the work, as does Benson (p. 47).

[119]See P. Vining, "Wither and Gibbons: A Prelude to the First English Hymn Book", Musical Times, 120 (1979), pp. 245-6.

"Mr. Withers is come to Cambridge to print his psalms, whereof he showed the old king an hundred in Christmas time, who then told him himself had done fifty, but meant not now to go on."[120] The manuscript discussed above was likely prepared for this attempted publication. While Wither may have repaired to Cambridge to avoid the plague that was ravaging London, it is more likely he did so to avoid further conflicts with the Stationers Company, or to find allies in his struggles against the stationers. Cambridge printers had also been involved in a long running feud with the Company.[121] Cambridge had established the right to have one press printing Psalters in spite of the Stationers Company's patent. When the Stationers complained to the Privy Council in 1623 that a Cambridge printer, Cantrell Legge, was printing Psalms, Cambridge invoked a patent given to them by Henry VIII. The Privy Council ruled that one press in Cambridge could be used for printing Bibles, Grammars and Psalters.[122] Wither would have had a better chance at publication there under that provision, and

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[120]Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, in Thomas Birch, Court and Times of Charles I, (1848), pp. 12-13.

[121]See M.H. Black, Cambridge University Press, 1584-1984, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), pp. 57-60.

[122]Records of the Court of the Stationers Company, 10 December 1623, pp. 382-3.

perhaps hoped to exploit the antagonism between the London and Cambridge stationers. However, there is no indication that the printers in Cambridge exercised their right to print a Psalter between 1623 and 1628.[123]

The Stationers Company by itself could not have prevented the publication of Wither's Psalms. The poet's doggedness is clear in all he did, and in the 1620's he did manage to publish Hymns and Songs of the Church, The Schollers Purgatory, and Britains Remembrancer without their cooperation. In delaying publication Wither was deferring to the ambition of James to be the author of the new English Psalter himself. Along with the allusions in A Preparation to the Psalter noted above, Wither made similar oblique references to the King's work in later works. He describes his work on the Psalms in The Schollers Purgatory:

> But before I had halfe ended them [the Psalms] I heard that one of much better sufficiency had made a long, and happy progresse into that worke: and thereupon in expectation of his more able performance delayed to

[123]In 1628 Cambridge was given a new printing charter which gave them free rein in printing such works as the Psalter. See Black, p. 60.

> proceed with what I had begunne, untill such tyme as I was informed that the other was by the multiplicity of weighty Affayres compelled to give over his laborious Attempt. And then, I thought my selfe engaged agayne, to proceed.[124]

Nowhere in this work does he make explicit the reference to the king, but the details of the latter part of the passage and the date confirm that he is the one referred to. The prefatory letter "To the Reader" in MS Eg. 2404 confirms this reference is to James.[125] There he refers to "y^{e} late Soveraigne of happie memory: who having worthely begunn ye same taske himself and finding that the multitude of his royall and waightie affaires threatned to prevent his p[er]sonall performance thereof, was lately mooved, through an earnest desire of adding a

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[124]pp. 12-13.

[125]This manuscript of Wither's psalms is in a scribe's hand and contains a version of the psalms different from those in the final printed version of 1632. The preface was also replaced in the printed work. The manuscript likely dates from 1625 when Wither attempted to have the Psalms printed at Cambridge. See Allan Pritchard, "A Manuscript of George Wither's Psalms", MP, 77 (1980): 370-81.

reformed version of y^e^ metricall Psalmes unto y^e^ translation of y^e^ Bible to hearten on many of those in this undertaking, who had discovered themselves voluntarily enclined thereunto."[126]

Wither visited James a few months before the King's death in 1625, and in the preface to his 1632 publication he claims that it was specifically he himself who was thus encouraged by James: "I was commanded to perfect a Translation of the Psalmes, which he understood I had begunn; & by his encouragment, I finished the same about the tyme of his Translation to a better Kingdome." His claim is substantiated by the letter of Mead quoted above. In the preface to the 1632 Psalms, Wither once again makes reference to James' work on the Psalms:

> I waited long, to see a more exact performance:
> But, none appearing, answerable to the dignitie
> of our English-Muses, I have sent forth my Essay,
> to provoke others, to discover their endeavours,
> on this subject; the best might receive the best
> Approbation.[127]

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[126]"To the Reader", sig. 4r.

[127]sig. A6r.

It would seem that about 1624 James recognized that he himself would not complete a Psalter, and became more open to others, like Wither, attempting to do so. That Francis Bacon and Sir John Davies both published versions of some of the Psalms in that year would support this as well.

Wither was not the only poet of the time who withheld his attempts at Psalm-making out of deference to the King. Henry Dod explains that the seventeen-year gap between his initial sample and his complete Psalter is due to his waiting "for the performance of this worthie worke, by some godly learned, whom I hoped wold have donne it in manner better beseemeing the same".[128] William Alexander, who was later to complete the King's Psalms, explicitly warned Drummond of Hawthornden of James's jealousy in the area of the Psalms: "Brother, I received your last letter, with the Psalm you sent, which I think very well done; I had done the same long before it came; but He [King James] prefers his own to all else; tho' perchance, when you see it, you will think it the worst of the the three. No men must meddle with that subject, and, therefore, I advise you to take no more pains therein".[129]

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[128]All the Psalmes of David, sig. 6r.

[129]Drummond Works, (1711), p. 151.

If the Psalm translations of James' close friends were being rejected in such a fashion, it is not surprising that Wither, who had on a number of occasions already experienced the King's wrath, refrained from presenting his Psalms too forwardly.[130]

By the time Wither's Psalms were finally published, King Charles had authorized an edition of his father's Psalms, as The Psalms of King David, translated by King James (1631). The title-page reflects James'lifelong desire to be the Christian king-poet as it shows Kings David and James on either side of a Psalter.[131] King Charles was determined that his father's Psalter should become the standard one for

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[130]Reference to the jealous competitiveness of James is made in a poem by Wither's friend Drayton; in reference to the "swine" that are attacking him and his friends (the western dogs), Drayton writes,

> Angry OLCON sets them on,
> And against us part doth take
> Ever since he was out-gone,
> Offring Rymes with us to make.
> (Shepheards Sirena, ll. 368-71)

Tillotson identifies "OLCON" as James and suggests that the poem refers to a struggle between the Drayton circle (which included Wither, Browne, Brooke, Sylvester and Davies of Hereford), and poets closer to the king. Tillotson notes that Wither and Browne also use "swine" to designate their foes. Although not published until 1627, the poem may have been written as early as 1615. See Complete Works of Michael Drayton, ed. Tillotson and Newdigate, vol. 5, pp. 206-209.

[131]See appendix.

church use, and his preface to the volume encourages such a use: "CHARLES R. Haveing caused this Translation of the Psalmes (whereof oure late deare Father was Author) to be perused, and it being found to be exactly and truely done wee doe hereby authorize the same to be Imprinted according to the Patent graunted thereupon: and doe allow them to be song in all the Churches of our Dominiones, recommending them to all oure goode subjects for that effect."[132] The majority of these Psalms were not the work of King James, but his longtime friend William Alexander. The King had only completed thirty of the Psalms by the time of his death in 1625. Bishop Williams in the funeral sermon Great Britains Salomon says that "This translation he was in hand with, when God called him to sing Psalms with the angels. He intended to have finished and dedicated it to the only saint of his devotion -- the Church of Great Britain and that of Ireland. This work was staid in the one and thirty Psalm".[133] Alexander took these completed Psalms, greatly revised them, and added versions of the remaining one hundred and twenty, and published the whole in 1631 as The Psalms of King

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[132]Opposite title-page in The Psalmes of King David, Translated by King James, (Oxford: W. Turner, 1631), STC 2732. The same is included in the 1637 edition of the same work.

[133]Quoted in Holland, vol. 1, p. 253.

David, translated by King James.[134] In 1627 already he had been given a patent on the work by Charles.

Wither likely was aware of this publication, but the deference afforded to King James did not extend to his posthumous work or his son. Or did he consider it not "answerable to the dignitie of our English-Muses" as he describes attempts other than his?[135] That he chose to dedicate his Psalms to Elizabeth rather than King Charles suggests that he no longer hoped that his work would become the standard in England, at least not in the England of Charles. The dedication to Elizabeth at this point could only be construed as an espousal of a more Protestant vision of England.[136] By this point he had begun to take on the role of a prophet who exhorted and cajoled from the margins of society, and given up that of a poet seeking a central place in it. The church which he had meant his Psalter to serve was quickly disintegrating into rival factions, each with its own preferred version of the Psalms.

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[134]The controversy which the authorization of this Psalter provoked will be considered in the next chapter.

[135]"A Preface to the Reader", sig. A6r.

[136]In the preface he mentions that he went and presented it to her personally. sig. A5r.

Wither's Approach to Biblical Versification

In an earlier chapter I noted the constraints of fidelity to an original and set verse form which biblical verse paraphrasers faced. In addition to these Wither was burdened by a strictly literal attempt to versify scripture, and the desire that his works could be easily sung. He clearly considered himself to be writing words for music, rather than poetry which might later be set to a tune, and knew "how harsh the Musicke will be, if the Pauses be not usually reduced unto the same place, which they have in the first Stanza of the Song".[137] This ruled out enjambment and metrical variation. All songwriters of the period faced these problems, but Wither also confined himself to a strict adherence to the original text. His early attempts at the Psalms were in variety of meters rather than the long and common meter most often associated with, as "it were absurde to imagine that so many sundry passions, and such different inventions may be expressed so naturallie in one or some few kinds of Verse, as in many".[138] By the 1632 publication he had changed them to those meters which had become

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[137]"Epistle to the Cleargie", Songs of the Old Testament, sig. A4r.

[138]A Preparation, p. 16.

associated with psalmody in Britain. Thus, Psalm 149 appears in long meter:

> In songs-newe made, your voice employ,
> God's praise among his Saints to sing:
> Let Isr'el in his maker joye,
> And, Syon tryumph in her king.[139]

From the approximately fifty tunes used with the Old Psalter, Wither did not always choose the same tune for his Psalm that had been used traditionally with that Psalm. Since the Psalms in the Old Version were all in either long or common metre, tunes were readily interchangeable.

Wither devotes a chapter of A Preparation to what sort of music should be used with the Psalms. In 1619 he refrained from including any music for an unspecified reason:

> I have also determined, though for some reasons (which I thinke not pertinent to publish) I omit them, that apt and easie tunes shall be sett to these Psalmes, and (as neere as

[139]The Psalmes of David , p. 293.

> I can) agreeable to their natures; that those who have a desire so to doe, may in their Families, or by themselves, sing them to the prayse of God, and the comfort of their soules.[140]

Repeatedly Wither stresses the plainness and naturalness of Biblical song and hopes that he has reproduced it:

> I value not how the wits of our age shall censure the Stile I have used; for though many of them are well acquainted with the raptures in Hero and Leander, the expressions in Venus and Adonis, and with the elegancies becomming a wanton Sonnet; yet in these Lyricks, in the naturall straine of these Poems, in the power of these voyces, and in the proprieties befitting these spirituall things, their sensuall capacities, are as ignorant as meere Ideots: and had it the

[140]A Preparation, p. 26.

> Poeticall phrases they fancy, I should hate it; or were it such as they might praise, I would burne it.[141]

While other versifiers of the Bible had made claims of faithfulness, none fulfilled these claims as consistently as Wither. He did not work from the Hebrew, but the English prose of the Authorized Version, "keeping (so neere as I could doe) even the very words of our English Translation".[142] He has tried to avoid interpretation, even if the original was ambiguous: "if the words in the Prose were of that nature (or so placed) as they might seeme to bear a double Interpretation, I have laboured so to turn them into Verse, that I have not confined them to any one sense, but preserved the liberty of a two-fold understanding".[143] However, he does read some Psalms as typological or prophetic of Christ, and includes these readings in his versifying.[144]

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[141]"Epistle to the Cleargie", Songs of the Old Testament, sig. A5r. Wither's espousal of plain style likely went beyond a desire to mirror scripture; already in the preface to Abuses Stript and Whipt he was stressing the deliberate plainness of his style.

[142]A Preparation, p. 22.

[143]pp. 22-23.

[144]A Preparation, p. 24.

As for beauty, Wither believed that Scripture needed no ornamenting.[145]

[145]A Preparation, p. 15-16.

Chapter 4

"Decent Vestures": Paraphrase in the Reign of Charles I

King Charles was a great patron of the arts, especially the visual arts, but not particularly of sacred poetry. Devotional poetry was no longer a likely avenue to the King's favour: masques and painting served far better. Writers were not moved to invoke Biblical parallels for Charles as they had for James.[1] And where the old King had been concerned with theology, liturgy was more likely to capture the attention of his son, and it was in this way that paraphrase continued to play a role at court, in the attempts of Charles to promote his father's Psalter and in the paraphrases of George Sandys, Gentleman to the Privy Chamber. However, sacred poetry no longer found its centre predominantly at court, and in the 1630's we see biblical paraphrase being written to a variety of ends and often as a more private activity. Contention continued to surround Psalm versification; many were produced that were a challenge to the reigning church establishment,

[1]Smuts, p. 242.

rather than an attempt to find a place in it. By the 1640's the Scriptures themselves had become heavily politicized as both sides found their enemies to be like the Philistines or Babylonians, and themselves like beleaguered Israel.

Ironically, the Psalter which James had hoped would be used throughout both his kingdoms and play a part in the unified church came to represent the ecclesiastical and political divisions which led to the civil war. Soon after his father's death Charles began a long campaign to have James' Psalms completed and used in worship in the English and Scottish Churches. The task of completing and revising this work was given to William Alexander, the long-time friend of James and Charles' secretary for Scotland, to whom was granted a 31-year patent on the work in December of 1627.[2] On August 25, 1626 Charles wrote the Archbishop of St. Andrews, ostensibly to ask for advice in the matter:

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[2]"To our right trustie and weelbeloved Cousen and Counseller the Erle of Marleburh, our Thesaurer [sic] of England", 28 December 1627 Earl of Stirling's Register of Royal Letters, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1885), vol. 1, pp. 240-41. In this letter Charles asks the Earl to make arrangements for the patent. It was actually granted on Jan. 21 1628, (CSPD, 1627-28, p. 524).

> So our pleasour is, that zow and some of the most learned divynes in that our kingdome confer them with the originall text, and with the most exact translations, and thairefter certifie back zour opinions unto us concerning the same, whether it be fitting that they be published and sung in churches, instead of the old translation, or not;[3]

The archbishops and bishops of England, to whom similar requests were made, clearly found themselves in a difficult situation: they had to review the work of the late king, and Charles was promoting the work not just on the basis of its quality, but as "a perpetuall monument to his [James'] memorie".[4] The many delays in the publication and distribution of the Psalter may have reflected the bishops' uncertainty about how to promote a work they knew would arouse the hostility of many within the Scottish church, and make the already distrusted bishops even less popular. This is just one instance of Charles' tendency

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[3]Letter of Charles to the Archbp. of St. Andrews. Earl of Stirling's Register of Royal Letters, vol. 1, p. 73.

[4]Letter to the Archbishops and Bishops, 14 June 1631, Earl of Stirling's Register of Royal Letters, vol. 2, p. 538.

to conduct his Scottish affairs without consulting those who knew the country well.

In 1632 the Psalms of James and William Alexander were finally published with a preface by Charles stating that he did "allow them to be song in all the Churches of oure Dominiones, recommending them to all oure goode Subjects for that effect".[5] The same authorization was included with the 1636 edition. Coinciding with the first publication, Charles called upon the Bishops to introduce the Psalter into the churches. At the same time he sent letters to the "Ministerie" and "Burgh" of Edinburgh asking for their support in the endeavour.[6] An undated letter to the Privy Council of Scotland orders "that no other Psalmes of aney edition whatsoever be aither printed heirafter within that our kingdome, or imported thither, aither bund by themselffs or otherwayes from any forrayne port".[7]

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[5]There seems to have been some limited manuscript circulation of this Psalter between 1627 and 1632; in a letter from August 12, 1628 Henry Wotton writes, "I have gotten with much adoe, some of the Psalms, translated by my late most blessed Master, for the young Prince of Bohemia". (Reliquiae Wottonianae, (1685), p. 558.)

[6]Earl of Stirling's Register of Royal Letters, vol.2, pp. 581, 591-2, 605, 621.

[7]Earl of Stirling's Register of Royal Letters, vol. 2, p. 815. A similar letter to the Archbishop of St. Andrews appears on the next page. David Stevenson, The Scottish Revolution, 1637-1644: The Triumph of the Covenanters, (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1973), p. 58 writes

Increasingly Charles seems to have become focussed on the use of the Psalter as part of his "reform" of the Scottish liturgy. There is no indication that he tried to enforce its use upon the English churches; that the Stationers Company continued to print officially the Old Version throughout the 1630's would suggest that Charles was following a different policy in that country. David Calderwood, in his argument against James' version, suggests that the English Bishops had rejected the work, but no other evidence has been found to confirm this.[8] Charles' injunction against the publishing in Scotland of the traditional Psalter was largely respected: only one edition of the Scottish Psalter appeared between 1634 and 1639.

Charles' insistence on the use of the new Psalter met with fierce opposition, as many within the Scottish Church resented it as part of an English attempt to interfere with their worship. Charles' coronation as King of Scotland did not take place until the summer of 1633, as he had not visited Scotland since his father's death. For that occasion he

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that the order from Charles to use the new Psalter came early in 1637. He cites BL MS Add. 23,112, Register of the Secretary of State of Scotland, f. 51 and Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, 2nd ser., ed. P. H. Brown, (Edinburgh, 1899-1908), 1635-37, pp. 409-10.

[8]David Calderwood, "Reasons against the reception of King James's metaphrase of the Psalms", 1631, rpt. in Bannatyne Miscellany, vol. 1, ed. Sir W. Scott and D. Laing, (Edinburgh, 1827), p. 238.

introduced a completely Anglican liturgy into the chapel at Holyrood.[9] In 1635 Charles introduced a new Book of Canons to replace Knox's Book of Discipline concerning duties and conduct of ministers.[10] This was only the beginning of Charles' campaign which was to culminate in the 1637 introduction of a new Prayer Book for the Church in Scotland, modeled by Laud on the English Prayer Book. That Charles coupled his father's Psalter with the new Prayer Book only increased Scottish hostility toward it. The Scots objected to the Prayer Book which they saw as "Romish" in its emphasis on sacrament and ritual over preaching. They also objected to the way in which it was imposed by Charles through the Bishops without being approved by either a Parliament or Assembly of the Church. The Prayer Book was "taken as symbolic of the whole religious policy of the king and his father",[11] and derisively referred to as "Laud's Liturgy".[12] The association of James' name with the Psalter would not have endeared it to those more Puritan

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[9]Maurice Lee, Jr., The Road to Revolution: Scotland under Charles I, 1625-37, (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1985), p. 2.

[10]Stevenson, p. 45.

[11]Stevenson, p. 47.

[12]Horton Davies, Worship and Theology in England, 5 vols. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1975), vol. 2, p. 341.

in their approach to liturgy; James, after all, had pushed through the Five Articles of Perth in 1621 which many had attacked for their Roman tendencies. While James had never enforced the articles, Charles seemed to go beyond them in his attempts to change the Scottish liturgy.[13]

The anti-episcopal David Calderwood responded to Charles' attempts by writing a long explanation of why the version should not be used.[14] While the Scottish divine seems to have been most strongly motivated by a loyalty to the Scottish Psalter and antagonism towards any changes not initiated by the Kirk itself, he gives some further objections. He argues that such work should be done by clergy rather than "a courteour or commone poet". He recognizes that Alexander was responsible for much of it, and notes that "the people call them Menstries Psalmes", after Alexander's manor house, Menstrie.[15] He

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[13]Stevenson, 24. See also I.B. Cowan, "The Five Articles of Perth", Reformation and Revolution, ed. D. Shaw, (Edinburgh, 1967), pp. 160-177.

[14]"Reasons against the reception of King James's metaphrase of the Psalms" in Bannatyne Miscellany, vol. 1, ed. Sir Walter Scott and D. Laing, (Edinburgh, 1827). This attack on James' Psalter was not published in the seventeenth century, but survives in a number of different versions in manuscript. Calderwood and the King had quarreled as early as James' visit to Scotland in 1617.

[15]p. 237.

also objects that the metaphrase, as he calls it, is full of "heathenish libertie and poeticall conceats" and uses too many hard and foreign words. He fears that to change will make the Scottish church seem "inconstand and unsetled in our our orders", and balks at the cost of replacing the old Psalters. Calderwood's argument reflects significant divisions within the British Churches. Put briefly, Calderwood was among those who espoused a plain style of worship centred upon the preaching of the Word, and who saw themselves as opposing an increasingly powerful Arminian and sacramental group that dominated the Church and court. While such open divisions were relatively new in England, they had been prevalent in Scotland throughout James' reign. He had managed to maintain control by proceeding cautiously, and playing off various factions within Scotland. However, Charles seemed to lack a sound understanding of his native country, and reliable servants to manage his affairs there.

The controversy reached its crisis on July 23, 1637 when the new liturgy was introduced at a number of Edinburgh churches. The long delays in introducing the new Prayer Book and Psalter gave those opposed to it ample time to organize resistance. Thus, the uprisings at St. Giles and other Edinburgh churches on July 23 were less than spontaneous events, but nevertheless reflected widespread opposition to

the new liturgy. The work of James and William Alexander, work which stretched back to at least the early 1590's, ultimately came to have no place in either the English or Scottish Church. In the 1640's both churches would consider more moderate emendations of the Old Version, with the English and Scottish Assemblies of Divines being unable to agree on a joint revision.

George Sandys

The traveller and poet George Sandys was responsible for the greatest extended endeavour in Biblical paraphrase in the 1630's. This followed upon the earlier successful works A Relation of a Journey begun An: Dom: 1610 (1615) and Ovid's Metamorphosis (1626). In 1636 he published A Paraphrase upon the Psalms of David, his first work in the field of sacred poetry; this work also included paraphrases of various old testament songs as well as the original devotional poem "Deo Opt. Max.". To the second edition, published in 1638 in folio, he added versions of Job, Ecclesiastes and Lamentations. By that point his paraphrase of the Song of Songs had also been completed, but it was not

published until 1641.[16] More so than with any other paraphraser considered to this point, Sandys' works show a concern for style, and his friend Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland, writes that for his paraphrases

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[16]The preponderance of manuscript copies of the Song of Solomon would suggest that such was its means of circulation for a considerable period before its publication. In a number of cases, copies of the 1638 A Paraphrase upon the Divine Poems had the manuscript Song of Solomon bound with it.

Sidney Godolphin's dedicatory poem to the 1638 collection indicates Sandys had completed the Song of Solomon paraphrase at that time. He has presented the Solomon's Ecclesiastes, rather than

> that ardent course, as where He woes
> The Sacred Spouse, and her chast Love pursues,
> With brighter flames, and with a higher Muse.
>
> This Work had beene proportion'd to our Sight,
> Had you but knowne with some allay to Write,
> And not preserv'd your Authors Strength and Light.
>
> But you so crush those Odors, so dispense
> Those rich perfumes, you make them too intense
> And such (alas) as too much please our Sense.

A marginal note at this point reads, "Canticles not Printed". Basically, Godolphin is saying that the Song was not published because Sandys had done too good a job of reproducing the brilliance of the original. Given the subject matter, this created too much of a temptation.

he won "the title of the English Buchanan".[17] Like the earlier Scottish poet he brought a classical decorum to the Hebrew songs.

Sandys was praised for his poetry by figures as diverse as Wither, Dryden and Baxter, for his skill in poetry, and especially for his use of the heroic couplet. Most of this praise was based on his two main projects, his translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses and the Biblical paraphrases. Sandys' Metamorphoses was a very popular work, with editions published in 1626, 1628, 1632, 1638, 1640 and at least five more before the end of the century. It was praised by many for achieving the right balance between beauty and fidelity to the original text. Thomas Fuller wrote,

> He was a servant, but no slave, to his subject; well knowing that a translator is a person in free custody; custody, being bound to give the true sense of the author he translated; free, left at liberty to clothe it in his own expression.[18]

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[17]"To the Author", Christ's Passion, (1640).

[18]The Worthies of England, ed. John Freeman, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952), p. 661.

In the 1632 edition of the Metamorphoses Sandys also included a verse translation of the first book of the Aeneid. However, he never went on to finish that work, as he turned his talents to scriptural paraphrase. While Sandys' move from translating Ovid to translating Scripture might at first appear an extreme one, his approach to Ovid was consistent with his later work.[19] For Sandys largely partook of the traditional allegorical reading of the Metamorphoses; his commentaries on each book took up as much room as the translation itself, and through them the erotic tales of Ovid became a work of moral instruction. He further tries to reconcile Ovid with Christian morality by pointing out those places where the allegorical reading of Ovid coincides with scripture.[20] For Sandys the myths reflected ancient truths that stretched far back before Ovid's own time.

Thus, Sandys did not need to reject his earlier work when turning to scriptural paraphrase; he was now simply turning to his "graver

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[19]It is worth noting that Sandys' contemporaries Cowley and Denham also combined paraphrase of Scripture and the classics in their careers.

[20]Lee T. Pearcey. The Mediated Muse: English Translations of Ovid, 1560-1700, (Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1984), p. 54

muse".[21] In a dedicatory poem Sidney Godolphin presents the earlier work as part of that preparation which made Sandys "Seeme Borne and Bred for what you now have done". He has travelled in the east and thus knows the physical setting of the biblical songs. Similarly, Francis Wiatt presents Sandys' career more as a progress than a conversion: "Nor art thou to be blam'd, for having past/Pernassus hill, and come to Sion last". Sandys' writing has followed a worthy pattern: "Well did'st thou from the East thy entrance make,/From whence the light of Poetry first brake."[22]

While Sandys' paraphrases were not as popular or influential as the Metamorphoses, they received much praise in the decades that followed, especially for their use of the decasyllabic couplet. That he used the decasyllabic couplet for both his secular and much of his sacred verse illustrates the continuity between the two stages of his career. The Metamorphoses could be regarded as practice for his later, more important, work. He used decasyllabic couplets throughout Job, Ecclesiastes and Lamentations, all of which were additions to the 1638 edition.[23] For the Psalms Sandys used a variety of line lengths and

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[21]"To the King", A Paraphrase upon the Psalms of David, (1636).

[22]A Paraphrase upon the Divine Poems, (1638), sig. ***2r

[23]In Sandys' latest work Christ's Passion (1641), a translation of

stanza forms, more of which were based on an eight-syllable rather than a ten-syllable line. Octosyllabic couplets were used in the Song of Solomon. Throughout these works Sandys exhibits a fine ear for balance and cadence. Von Rohr-Sauer notes that Sandys frequently used couplets for epigrammatic or narrative material and that they well reflected Hebrew parallelism.[24]

From a commendatory poem by Falkland we know that Sandys used a Latin version of the Bible as his source: by a Bible for "polite-pagan-Christians" Falkland probably means that by Sebastien Castalio, a work first published in 1551 and noted for its elegant classical Latin style. Davies suggests that he also may have used the Latin version of Junius and Tremellius.[25] Fidelity to that version, or any other, was not Sandys' chief concern. In regard to his later translation of Grotius' Christus Patiens Sandys wrote, "in this change of language I am no

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Hugo Grotius' sacred drama Christus Patiens uses decasyllabic and octosyllabic couplets.

[24]p.108. von Rohr-Sauer gives the following breakdown of verse forms used by Sandys in the Psalms: heroic couplets, 19 psalms; octosbyllabic couplets, 28; octosyllabic stanzas with various rhymes, 36; trochaic heptasyllabic couplets, 16; iambic hexameter couplets, 5; stanzas having lines of 8 mixed with lines of 6 or 4 or both, 37; stanzas having quatrains of 6 syllable lines followed by quatrains of 4 syllables; series of quatrains or decasyllabic lines, 2.

[25]p. 241.

punctual interpreter: a way as servile as ungraceful. There is a fault, which painters call, too much to the life. Quintillian censures one, that he more affected similitude than beauty, who would have shown greater skill, if less of resemblance".[26] Among those poets whom Sandys counted as his friends we generally find a greater confidence in the English language, and an impetus toward making ancient works "new", rather than simply being pale shadows of the original. Denham, for instance, argues in his preface to the Second Book of Virgil's Aeneid that translators should not "affect being Fidus Interpres".[27] While Sandys is fairly faithful to the original, he at no point expresses great concern or interest in the matter as Wither had. Nor do the commendatory poems which preface his work praise faithfulness as one of its virtues.

Unlike George Wither, Sandys does not seem to have been vying to have his Psalms used in the English church at large; rather, they seem targetted for a more private chapel use. That they were not written to the common and long meter of the Old Version made it unlikely that they would come to replace it; Henry King noted that it was "too elegant for the vulgar use, changing both the metre and tunes

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[26]"To the King's Most Excellent Majesty", Christs Passion.

[27]"The Preface", The Destruction of Troy, Poetical Works, ed. Theodore Howard Banks, jr., (New Haven: Yale UP, 1928), p. 159.

wherewith they had long been acquainted".[28] In the dedicatory poem to the Queen in the 1636 edition Sandys expresses the hope that she will utter and sing them:

> O should you with your voice infuse
> Perfection, and create a Muse!
> Though mean our verse, such excellence
> At once would ravish soul and sense;

In reference to the tunes of Henry Lawes which were added to the Psalms in the second edition, McClung notes that they were "simple enough for anyone to read at sight".[29] However, it seems that the work itself was directed mainly toward the court and its circles; thirty years later Samuel Woodford, another paraphraser wrote,

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[28]Letter to Archbishop Usher, Oct. 30, 1651, quoted in Sandys Poetical Works, ed. Richard Hooper, 2 vols., (1872), vol. 1, p. xv. By this time the English Church had been disestablished, and it was the Puritans who were more interested in developing a new Psalter.

[29]Willa McClung Evans, Henry Lawes: Musician and Friend of Poets, (1941, rpt. New York: Kraus, 1966), p. 142.

> the generally approved Mr. George Sandy's, who first under so Excellent a Prince, opened the way to Divine Poesy in this Nation, and gave it more than ordinary Credit; from whose Hands, as not unbecoming His Royal Self, He vouchsafed to accept a short Paraphrase upon the Canticles; not long after the time that the Pious Sieur Godeau had with much success made a Dedication of the same Divine Song, under the Title of Sacred Eclogues, with some few other Religious Stanzas to the great Cardinal Richelieu of France.[30]

While Sandys' paraphrases were not presented as a national Psalter, he nevertheless clearly hoped that they would be granted some royal recognition and place at the court. Added to the title-page of the 1638 edition were the lines

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[30]"Epistle Dedicatory", Paraphrase upon the Canticles, (1679), sig. A2v-A3r. The reference is to Antoine Godeau's Poésies Chrestiennes (Paris, 1646). Godeau, wrote a wide range of biblical paraphrase in the 1630's and 1640's, and established a pattern for such other French poets as Racan, Corneille and Racine (LeBlanc, p. 167). His first work of biblical poetry was Oeuvres Chrestiennes (1633), which consisted of the Psalms and was dedicated to Richelieu as well (LeBlanc, p. 158).

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Set to new Tunes for private Devotion:

And a thorow Base, for Voice,

or Instrument.

by

HENRY LAWES Gentleman of His

Majesties Chappell Royall

The Psalms very likely were sung in the Chapel Royal at some point, and tradition has it that Charles himself used them for private devotion while imprisoned at Carisbrooke Castle.[31]

Lawes had established himself as an important musician, attaining a post among the Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal already in 1628. To have Lawes set one's sacred poems to music helped to bring them to the King's attention, since they were likely to eventually be sung by the choir at the Chapel Royal. Herrick's poems received exposure in this way in 1629.[32] In 1633 Lawes became a member of

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[31]Sir Thomas Herbert, Memoirs of the Last Two Years of the Reign of King Charles I, (London, 1839), orig. published 1702, p. 61. Cited in Davis, p. 243. Hooker gives Anthony à Wood as source.

[32]Evans, p. 54-55. According to McClung Sandys also set at least one of Carew's version of Psalm 137 to music: "Sitting by the streams that

the King's Private Musicke as well, in which capacity he was involved in both the composing and performing of masques and other entertainments.[33] Regarding the place of Lawes' music in Charles' court, Helgerson has written, "In no earlier generation had the marriage of poetry and music been so conspicuously advertised, and in none was the courtly function of both so much a matter of course".[34] The best known of these was the masque, later known as "Comus", performed at Ludlow Castle in 1634. In its first published form only Lawes', not Milton's, name was mentioned.

Lawes and his brother William wrote more complex three-part music for thirty of Sandys' Psalms and published the work in 1648 as Choice Psalms Put Into Musick For Three Voices; this volume included the famous commendatory sonnet by Milton. In 1657 Walter Porter another Gentleman of the Chapel Royal set fifteen of Sandys' Psalms to music in Mottets of Two Voyces. At some point, probably early in the 1640's, Lawes set one of Sandys' paraphrase of David's lament over Saul and Jonathan (II Samuel 1) to music. McClung suggests that Lawes saw in the song an analogy to the situation of the Royalists in England:

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glide", BL, MS. Add. 31434.

[33]Evans, p. 57-58.

[34]Helgerson, p. 257.

"Thy beauty, Israell is fled,/Sunke to the deade, how are the valiant faln,/ the slaine thy Mountaines stayne".[35]

Beginning already with his earliest work, Relations of a Journey (1615) Sandys directed all his work toward Charles. The King certainly helped Sandys by giving him an exclusive patent on his Metamorphoses for twenty-one years (granted April 24, 1621). Charles blessed Sandys' first work of paraphrase by giving him an exclusive fourteen-year patent for Paraphrase upon the Psalmes and upon the Hymnes dispersed throughout the Old and New Testaments published in 1636.[36] Sandys responded by including dedicatory poems to both the King and Queen. In the one to the King, Sandys mingles praise of God with praise of the King in a way reminiscent of the poets of James' court: his Muse may "oblations bring/ To God, and tribute to a god-like king."[37] One of the dedicatory poems to the 1638 edition encourages Charles to grant further favour to the poet:

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[35]McClung, p. 161. Lawes' setting is found on page 102 of Lawes' autograph manuscript collection of songs.

[36]Davis, 236. This work also included his original devotional poem "Deo Opt. Max.".

[37]"To the King", A Paraphrase upon the Psalms of David.

May our great Master, to whose sacred Name
Thy Studious Houres such usuall Gifts direct,
As Caesar to his Maro, prove the Same;
And equall Beames upon thy Muse reflect.[38]

Sandys directed his Paraphrase upon the Song of Solomon to Queen Henrietta Maria, both in the manuscript circulation of the work, and when it was published in 1641. In the dedicatory poem he takes the opportunity to compare the Queen to to the sponsa of the Song: "In this cleare Myror you shall find,/Y^e^ Image of yr owne fayre mind".[39] The dedicatory epistle to the King in that work suggests that it will be Sandys' last:

> Let me find your pardon for thus long continuing to make my alloy current by the impression of your name. Directd by your propitious aspect, have I safely steered between so

[38]Wintoure Grant, "To my worthy Friend Mr. George Sandys".

[39]BL MS Sloane 1009, fol. 376v.

many rocks; and now, arrived at my last harbour, have broken up my ruinous vessel.

Sandys was among the group of Falkland's friends who became known as the Great Tew group, after the name of Falkland's home, and it is important to see Sandys' paraphrases within the context of this liberal Anglican group. Sandys most likely became a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber between 1626 and 1628, in which position he became friends with Carew and Wintoure Grant, men, who would, like him, later form part of the literary and theological circle at Great Tew. Sandys split his time in the 1630's between Great Tew and Boxley Abbey, near Maidstone in Kent, which was the home of his niece Margaret, wife of Sir Francis Wyatt, Governor of Virginia. Davis suggests that the better part of the paraphrases were composed in Oxfordshire (at Great Tew or the nearby home of Francis Wenman) rather than at Boxley Abbey.[33] The theological and poetic discussions of the people who gathered at Great Tew would have provided stimulus to Sandys in his work.[34] His contacts with Great Tew would also have

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[33]Davis, p. 228.

[34]See R.M. Krapp, Liberal Anglicanism, 1633-1646, (Ridgefield,

put him in the company of such later Royalists as Clarendon, and a number of men who wavered between the Roman and English Church. Later Puritans who admired Sandys tend to ignore his Great Tew connections. Richard Baxter notes that he visited Boxley Abbey and saw "upon the old stone wall in the garden a summer-house with this inscription in great golden letters, that in this place Mr. G. Sandys, after his travaile over the world, retired himself for his poetry and contemplations".[35] The reference is likely to Christ's Passion, Sandys' last work.[36] While praising Sandys' devotion, Baxter may have wished to downplay his connections with Great Tew, a group with which Baxter himself would have had few sympathies.

The Commendatory Poems to Sandys' Paraphrases

Preceding Sandys' 1636 collection of paraphrases are commendatory poems by Falkland and Dudley Digges; in the 1638 edition these are

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Conn.: R.M. Krapp, 1944).

[35]Poetical Fragments, (1681), sig. A8. J. Cave-Browne, The History of Boxley Parish, (1892), p. 150, directs the reader to Sylvester's Reliquiae Baxterianae.

[36]Davis, p. 266.

replaced by nine commendatory poems by friends and fellow poets, many of whom were attached to the literary circle at Great Tew.[37] As a group these eleven poems deserve comment in their own right, whether they present an accurate assessment of Sandys' poetry or not, for they lend us an insight into how devotional poetry and paraphrase specifically was viewed by those in the most prominent literary circles of the 1630's. Generally, these commendatory poems reflect a greater consciousness of translation as a distinct poetic task than did earlier commentators on Biblical paraphrase, and show an appreciation for the poetic craft that Sandys employed.[38]

For Falkland the paraphrases are the culmination of an already illustrious poetic career. He praises the Travels and Metamorphoses at considerable length, but then notes that "Perfection still was wanting in thy choice". Sandys' biblical paraphrases constitute a movement to a higher plane, rather than the rejection of earlier work:

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[37]These poems may have played some part in establishing conventional ways of praising divine poets. Walton compiled a list of works to consult for writing the Life of Donne; among these is "verses before Sandys Psalms". There is no mention of Donne in these poems; it is most likely that Walton was interested in how they praised a sacred poet. Carew's poem which focuses closely on a conversion from secular to divine poetry would seem to have been most influential.

[38]Davis suggests that the group, rather than just Sandys, were important in developing the decasyllabic couplet in English (p. 233).

But though thy Muse were ethnically chaste,
When most fault could be found; yet now thou hast
Diverted to a purer path thy quill,
And chang'd Parnassus mount to Sion's hill;[39]

Falkland is echoing Sandys' own assertion in the dedicatory poem to the 1636 edition that

Our graver Muse from her long dream awakes,
Peneian groves and Cirrha's caves forsakes;
Inspir'd with zeal, she climbs th'etherial hills
Of Solyma, where bleeding balm distills;[40]

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[39]"To My Noble Friend Mr. George Sandys, Upon His Excellent Paraphrase of the Psalms", A Paraphrase Upon the Psalms of David, (1636).

[40]"To the King". Solyma refers to Jerusalem.

In the dedicatory poems it is more often Sandys' poetic talents rather than any quality of faith that make him an appropriate man to versify Scripture. In Sidney Godolphin's poem it is the music of Sandys rather than the sentiment of scripture which will dispell "All disproportion'd, harsh, disorder'd Cares,/ Unequall Thoughts, vaine Hopes, and low Despaires". Godolphin raises Sandys above the level of a mere conduit, or faulty vessel;

> Others translate, but you the Beames collect
> Of your inspired Authors, and reflect
> Those heavenly Rai's with new and strong effect.

Of course, the extravagant praising of a poet is nothing new, but to discuss a biblical paraphraser in this way, with such an emphasis on personal skill, is something we did not find with earlier paraphrasers, even such praised ones as the Sidneys. Only in the poems of Francis Wiatt and Henry Rainsford is there much attention given to Scripture itself. A Paraphrase upon the Divine Poems is a work of wit: of that of Job Dudley Digges goes so far as to write "Here Griefe is witty". Digges

goes on, "How vainly doe they erre, who thinke it fit/A sacred Subject should be void of Wit?". These poets saw Sandys as worthy of all the glory of an inspired poet. Edmund Waller recognizes the paraphrases as a highly ambitious poetic endeavor; in the first two verses of his poems he describes the inspiration of the original writers of scripture. In the third and final verse he turns to commend Sandys' daring in attempting such a work:

> Say (Sacred Bard) what could bestow
> Courage on thee to soare so high?
> Tell mee (Brave Friend) what help'd thee so
> To shake off all Mortalitie?
> To Light this Torch thou hast climb'd higher
> Then he who stole caelestiall Fire.

The comparison of Sandys to Prometheus in the final line underscores the way in which Sandys and his admirers saw poetry as a coming together of the classical and biblical. However, to compare a paraphraser to Prometheus who stole fire from the gods is to present the

poet as a far more daring and creative figure than was usual in praise of this sort. Wintoure Grant puts the sacred poet, inspired by God, above his classical counterparts:

> Not crown'd with Ivy, or neglected Baies;
> But with a sacred Light, which doth infuse
> Into our Soules her intellectuall Raies:[41]

Sandys has "soared high" not only with his style, but with his choice of subject matter. Henry King's poem balances his praise of Sandys's skill with praise of the matter of the poem: "And wheresoe're the Subjects Best, the Sense/ Is better'd by the Speakers Eloquence." The poet's fame and immortality are assured because he has attached his name to "such a Pyramid". King alludes to the competitive nature of paraphrasing scripture, but lifts Sandys' work above such controversy. He will not praise the present work by detracting from others, and affirms that any opponents' attacks will actually "Confesse this Worke of Yours Canonicall".

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[41]"To my worthy Friend Mr. George Sandys".

Many of the commendatory poems focus on the effect that Sandys' numbers have on readers; and with these it is his verse rather than scripture itself which is held up as the influencing factor. For Digges, Sandys is like Amphion,

> But your divinely-tuned air
>
> Doth repair
>
> Ev'n man himself, whose stony heart,
>
> By this art,
>
> Rebuildeth of its own accord,
>
> To the Lord,
>
> A temple breathing holy songs,
>
> In strange tongues[42]

Here Digges has drawn upon the imagery of stone and temple, familiar from Herbert's poetry and dependent upon the New Testament replacement of the temple with Christ. Sandys' songs form listeners

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[42]"An Ode to my Worthy Kinsman, Mr. George Sandys, upon his Excellent Paraphrase on the Psalms", (1636).

into fit building blocks within that temple of which Christ is the cornerstone. Further on he recalls Psalm 137 when he suggests that Sandys' version of the Psalms makes us "From the tree/ Take down the Hebrew harps," Through Sandys repentance comes: "Thus unto you we owe the joy,/The sweet noise/Of our ravish'd souls". Carew suggests that the paraphrases have affected him, if not in the direction of personal piety, at least in the direction of writing devotional verse himself. Martine Watson Brownley notes that a number of the members of the Great Tew group, including Falkland, turned from poetry to more serious endeavours in the late 1630's;[43] for Sandys and Carew, divine poetry, including paraphrase, offered an opportunity to continue writing and publishing poetry, because its seriousness and worthiness was beyond reproach.

An unpublished poem in tribute to Sandys compares his work favorably to earlier versions of the Psalms which "scarce appear poetic", and while championing the refined nature of Sandys' poetry notes that "The most have souls to save, the most are rude,/And Heav'n must stoop to save the multitude".[44] Falkland, however, presents the high music

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[43]Clarendon and the Rhetoric of Historical Form, (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1985), pp. 12-21.

[44]"To Mr. George Sandys", Bodleian Ashmole MS 47, no. 180.

of Sandys' work as being able to convert through its beauty even those who do not understand the sense.[45] This liturgical dimension to Sandys' paraphrases is picked up by Digges as well, as his discussion of "wit" leads him to fit Sandys' work into the realm of Laudian liturgy: "Religion is a Matron, whose grave Face/ From Decent Vestures doth receive more Grace".[46] From this point the poem intertwines a Laudian approach to worship and a divine poetry in which beauty is a primary consideration. The manner or style is not indifferent, and Digges decries those who think divinity must be decked in rudeness to be authentic.

they not love

The Body lesse, who doe the Clothes approve.

So we upon this Jewell doe not set

Lesse price, because we praise the Cabinet.

[45]"To my noble friend, Mr. George Sandys,", A Paraphrase upon the Psalmes, (1636).

[46]"To my worthy Kinsman Mr. George Sandys", A Paraphrase upon the Divine Poems, sig. ***r.

Falkland makes a similar connection between church architecture and the beauty of Sandys' work, but begins by assuming that church ornament is accepted: "as the Church with ornaments is fraught,/ Why may not that be too which there is taught". Falkland goes so far as to assert that for some such "eloquence" and "pleasure" is the only way to faith. At this point it is appropriate to remember Calderwood's objections to the poetic nature of James' Psalms. Digges and Falkland are praising in Sandys the very attributes which Calderwood deplored in the King's work, and promoting a Laudian approach to religious matters, one in which form is valued as an important means of stimulating religious response. While the poem reflects Digges' views, we can add that Sandys himself valued form and beauty, and shared Charles' and Laud's view of the relationship between art and worship. Sandys' paraphrases and the commendatory poems that accompanied them reflect then the artistic and liturgical tendencies of that group which would later be identified as Cavalier.

Other Psalters

Not all biblical paraphrases of the 1630's and early 1640's came out of the court or Cavalier group. In fact, the range of men who wrote paraphrases in this period is quite striking. While there is not room to consider these paraphrases at any length, a brief look at some of the Psalm paraphrases that arose outside the court will give some indication of the variety of men involved.

As in the reign of James, Psalm versions that were not officially sanctioned were difficult to publish in England in the 1630's and 1640's. A few were printed in Holland and shipped over: such was the case with Henry Ainsworth's The Booke of Psalmes in English Metre (1632) and the collection of Psalms fitted to the Genevan tunes put together by John Standish, All the French Psalm Tunes with English Words (1632). John Vicars (1580?-1652), a fiercely anti-Roman poet and polemicist, also used the French meters in a number of Psalms that appeared appended to his Hallelujah for God's Gratious Benediction (1631). Thus, those who in the 1630's were more decidedly Calvinist seemed to want to reform English Psalmody to fit the tunes of continental Calvinism, from which they so largely drew their inspiration. Richard Brathwaithe (1588-1673), a life-long poet and early friend of Wither, published a

partial Psalter (Pss. 1-33) in 1638, The Psalmes of David the King and of Other Holy Prophets, Paraphras'd in English. These did not enjoy the support of powerful patrons, and seem to have achieved little success.

Many more versions of the Psalms never reached print: British Library Add. MS. 30270 comprises a complete Psalter that was never published. Clearly, this manuscript was meant for publication: it has a detailed outline for a title page which lays out where particular illustrations of David with a harp, Salomon with a coronet, etc. are to be placed. The name given at the end has been vigorously scratched out by a later hand: it most likely reads "A. Hughes".[47] In an appendix entitled "Of the Use and Excillency of the Psalmes" he notes that he has used the latest translation in his versifying and pursued a simple style since the "plainest words & style ... be most suitable to the serious & mysterious matter of holy writ".[48]

The manuscript is most interesting in that it shows the influence of the Psalms of Sandys and Lawes. Many of these Psalms have written beside them such things as "as y^{e} 3d in Mr. Sands"; clearly the

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[47]The manuscript has been tentatively assigned to John Hughes; at the time there was a Welsh Jesuit by that name but it is unlikely that he is the author of this work, since it holds up Luther and Melanchthon as examples.

[48]sig. 127v.

tunes of the 1638 edition are being referred to. Other Psalms refer the potential singer to tunes from the Old Version or the French Psalter. It received an imprimatur from Ed. Reynolds, vice chancellor at Oxford from 1649 on, but seems not to have reached print.

Note should also be made of Milton's attempts at the Psalms as a youth; according to his own account he composed the paraphrases of Psalms 114 and 136 at the age of 15, and they were presented as part of his juvenilia in Poems (1645). Although he did further work on the Psalms, versifying nos. 80-88 in April 1648, and nos. 1-8 in August 1653, there is no indication that he envisioned composing a complete Psalter himself.

The Interregnum brought forth a great number of new Psalm versions and various emendations of the Old Version, especially toward the end of the 1640's as both the English and Scottish Churches considered a reformation of Psalmody. In the civil war period paraphrasers continued to seek patronage, but now turned to men of Parliament and the new Roundhead authorities to fill that role. For example, in 1652 Thomas Manley dedicated his paraphrase of Job to Thomas Challoner, M.P. and member of the Council of State. It was in this period that biblical paraphrases, especially of the Psalms, became predominantly associated with Puritan or non-Conformist groups in

England. The close link between biblical paraphrase and the royal court was broken; it did not seem to have played a large part in the poetic activities of the Cavaliers in their exile on the continent, and unlike the monarchy it was not restored in 1660.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have not been able to consider anywhere near all the biblical verse paraphrases that were written in the period. The ones I have discussed are those which best illustrate the complexities of a genre which played a part in the worlds of literature, the church and the court. Also I have generally limited myself to biblical paraphrase proper and not dealt with those works in which paraphrase shades off into something else. These paraphrase-related genres all share the feature of beginning with the biblical text or texts, but then moving beyond it. They could best be divided into biblical heroic verse, neo-typological paraphrase, and devotional paraphrase.

Francis Quarles wrote a series of biblical poems in the 1620's, each based on an Old Testament book.[1] These biblical heroic poems are much indebted to the model established by du Bartas in Les Semaines

[1]A Feast for Worms (1620) on Jonah, Hadassa (1621) on Esther, Sion's Elegies, wept by Jeremie (1624) on Lamentations, Job Militant (1624), Sions Sonets (1625) on the song of Songs, and The Historie of samson (1631). Salmons Recantation Entituled Ecclesiastes although not published until 1645, may have been written in the 1620's as well. See Kenneth L. Taylor, "Francis Quarles and the Renaissance Heroic-Biblical Poem", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1970.

in the way that they combine a retelling of the biblical story with meditations upon that story. The anonymous work David's Troubles Remembered (1638) combines Biblical heroic verse with paraphrase as each of the six sections of the poem ends with a paraphrase of a Psalm; for example, the third section, "Bathsheba bathing" concludes with the penitential Psalm 51. Such attempts as these culminated later in the century in Abraham Cowley's Davideis, in both its Latin and English forms, and the three major works of Milton.[2] Toward the middle of the century poetic imitations, primarily of classical authors, became fashionable. Later, in distinguishing between translation and imitation, Dryden described the latter in this way:

> I take Imitation of an Author in their sense to be an Endeavour of a later Poet to write like one who has written before him, on the same Subject: that is, not to Translate his words, or be Confin'd to his Sense, but only to set him as a Patern, and to write, as he supposes, that Author

[2]Cowley also paraphrased Isaiah 34 (about the destruction of the nations) and Exodus 7 - 11 (the Plagues of Egypt).

would have done, had he liv'd in our Age and in our Country.[3]

Such an approach was not common in biblical paraphrase, where the desire was not to bring the author of the original up to date, but to bring the work itself to comment upon the contemporary situation. This was most frequently done through what has been called neo-typology, where current figures and events were interpreted as latter day embodiments of Biblical counterparts.[4] While this usage was most frequently seen in Puritan tracts of the civil-war period, it is also reflected in some paraphrases of the period. There certainly had been earlier cases of the use of such analogies -- Wither had applied the suffering king passages from the Psalms to Elizabeth in his preface --but they seemed to escalate with the religious struggles of the mid-century. Lawes had promoted just such an application of the Psalms to the contemporary situation in the dedicatory epistle to Choice Psalmes put

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[3]Preface to Ovid's Epistles, (1680), The Works, eds. Edward Niles Hooker, H.T. Swedenberg, Jr., et al., 19 vols., (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1956-79), vol. 1, p. 116.

[4]The term "neo-typology" was coined by Ira Clark in Christ Revealed: The History of the Neotypological Lyric in the English Renaissance, (Gainesville: U of Florida P, 1982).

into Musick, (1648): "much of Your Majesties present condition, is lively described by King David's pen."[5] One of the more extreme examples of this tendency is found in MS Sloane 1199 at the British Library, entitled "A Most hellish and blasphemous paraphrase made/by the Jesuits upon the first and second psalmes".[6] It links the Psalms to the conflicts of the Thirty Years War: the first verse of Psalm 1 becomes, "Blessed is y^{e} man that doth not walke in y^{e} counsell of the king of Denmarke".

The Song of Solomon, which had traditionally been read allegorically or typologically, was most popular for this sort of neo-typological reading. An unascribed paraphrase of the work held in the British Library reflects the readings of the song as an allegory about the English Church that were current in some circles in the 1640's.[7] The equating of the sponsa in the song with the church was a common

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[5]Such a linking of Charles' situation with scripture was promoted by John Wilson in Psalterium Carolinum: The Devotion of his Sacred Majestie in his Solitudes and Sufferings, Rendered in verse. Set to Musick for 3 voices and an Organ or Theorbo. Wilson was a Royalist musician, professor at Oxford.

[6]This work is found stuck in the middle of a commentary on Amos 5:4-22. Whether the work was actually by Jesuits, or was constructed by Protestants hoping to incite anti-Catholicism is unclear. Either way they showed no compunction about transcribing and circulating such "blasphemy".

[7]MS Rawl. poet. 67.

feature of allegorical readings, but this work follows some commentaries of the 1640's in understanding it to represent the British Church in specific. Thus, "Forreigne Congregations" address the Church asking for the secrets of its beauties,

> O thou y^{e} Fairest amongst Woemen, tell
> What Excellencies in thy Faire one dwell,
> W^{ch} in another Beautie are not found.

The final two chapters largely consist of a dialogue between the Jews and the Church, a reading that reflects a common understanding of the sister with no breasts of Cant. 8:8 as a reference to the Jewish faith.

Some paraphrases of the 1620's and 30's can best be described as devotional, either in the way they were written, or in how they were meant to be read. Psalm-singing had long been seen as an essential part of private devotion: von Rohr-Sauer notes that it is mentioned in conduct books from as early as Stubb's A Perfect Pathway to Felicity (1592).[8] John Hawkins encouraged readers of his translation of

[8]p. 35-36.

Aretino's paraphrase of the seven Penitential Psalms, to "convert it to thy use".[9]

There is no clear dividing line between devotional paraphrase and "original" devotional material that is heavily dependent upon scripture. An anonymous manuscript version of the Psalms (BL Harley MS 6637) concludes with a section entitled "Songs of my particular concernment Taken out of the Psalmes". These differ from the main body of the text only in being somewhat freer in their use of Psalms and that each song draws on a number of different Psalms.[10] Henry Herbert's Golden Harpe consists of prayers in prose composed by borrowing heavily from different sections of the Bible.[11] Herbert noted his sources for the wording in the margins of his manuscript. In this way paraphrase forged a link between scripture itself and personal experience.

A certain genre of poetry related to paraphrase can best be described as meditational verse. This sort of poetry begins with a single

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[9]"The Preface", Paraphrase upon the Seaven Pententiall [sic] Psalmes of the Kingly Prophet, (1635).

[10]The work is dated 1651-52 in the hand of the manuscript.

[11]Golden Harpe is found only in manuscript: Bodleian MS Don f, and Huntington HM 85. Similar works called the "Harmonies" were composed at Little Gidding and are described in Stanley Stewart, "Herbert and the 'Harmonies' of Little Gidding", Cithara, 24 (1984), pp. 3-26.

Biblical text, usually a single verse, and greatly expand or develop it. Such is the form of Joseph Beaumont' "Jesus inter ubera Mariae", a meditation upon Cant. 6:2 based on a Marian allegorical reading of the Song, and "What name of comfort can returne" in which each phrase of II Sam. 1:26 is expanded into a four-line stanza.[12] In a similar way, John Saltmarsh's Poems upon some of the holy raptures of David (1636) each take a verse from a Psalm as their starting point for meditation, meditation which in some cases takes a political turn.

Amateurs and Paraphrase

This thesis has largely been concerned with poets who saw their work if not as professional in itself, as at least having some relation to their careers as courtier or cleric. Through the first half of the seventeenth century there were numerous other attempts at paraphrase which can best be described as amateur in that they seem to have sought no public audience. Many manuscripts have survived, but that by Sir John Glanville, Speaker of the House, is unique in that it

[12]Both of these are found in Bodl. MS. Rawl. poet. 62, printed in The Minor Poems of Joseph Beaumont D.D., ed. Eloise Robinson, (London: Constable, 1914).

includes a long letter to his wife describing the part the psalm paraphrase played in his life and how he went about it.[13] The letter shows his work on the Psalms to be a life-long task, begun in 1608, "at the request of my dearest sister, M^{ris} Alice Glanvill". He worked on them intermittently until the civil war; at that time he was imprisoned at Oxford and took the opportunity to finish it. He hoped to present it to his wife "as a better testimony of my love then myne uxoriall w^{ch} I gave you in my youth".[14] He continued to revise until 1645, and his letter shows that he rewrote many of the Psalms. While Glanvill presents his work as largely a gift to others, he notes the spiritual solace the exercise provided for himself:

> I took much comfort in doeing the work: more in reading and meditating on it since it was done: in this time of severall afflictions through gods fatherly correction lighting uppon me;[15]

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[13]BL MS Egerton 2590.

[14]sig. 4r.

[15]sig. 6v.

Such personal devotional use of paraphrase would continue in the decades that followed. However, we must carefully distinguish such devotional exercises from the bulk of paraphrases which have been the subject of this thesis. Those discussed in the chapters above were public works, which, while they may have been a blessing to the poet, in their publication or circulation were primarily directed toward the interests or benefit of their readers. For most writers any attempt at biblical verse paraphrase was part of a complicated web of literary, courtly and church ambitions. With those who were primarily poets, versifying scripture helped to show that poetry was more than a pagan pastime: the waters of inspiration flowed from Jordan as well as Helicon. Thus, for these writers, it seemed the most important poetic task possible, and a locus in which the classical and Christian, the poetic and the religious, and service to God and the King, could all meet.

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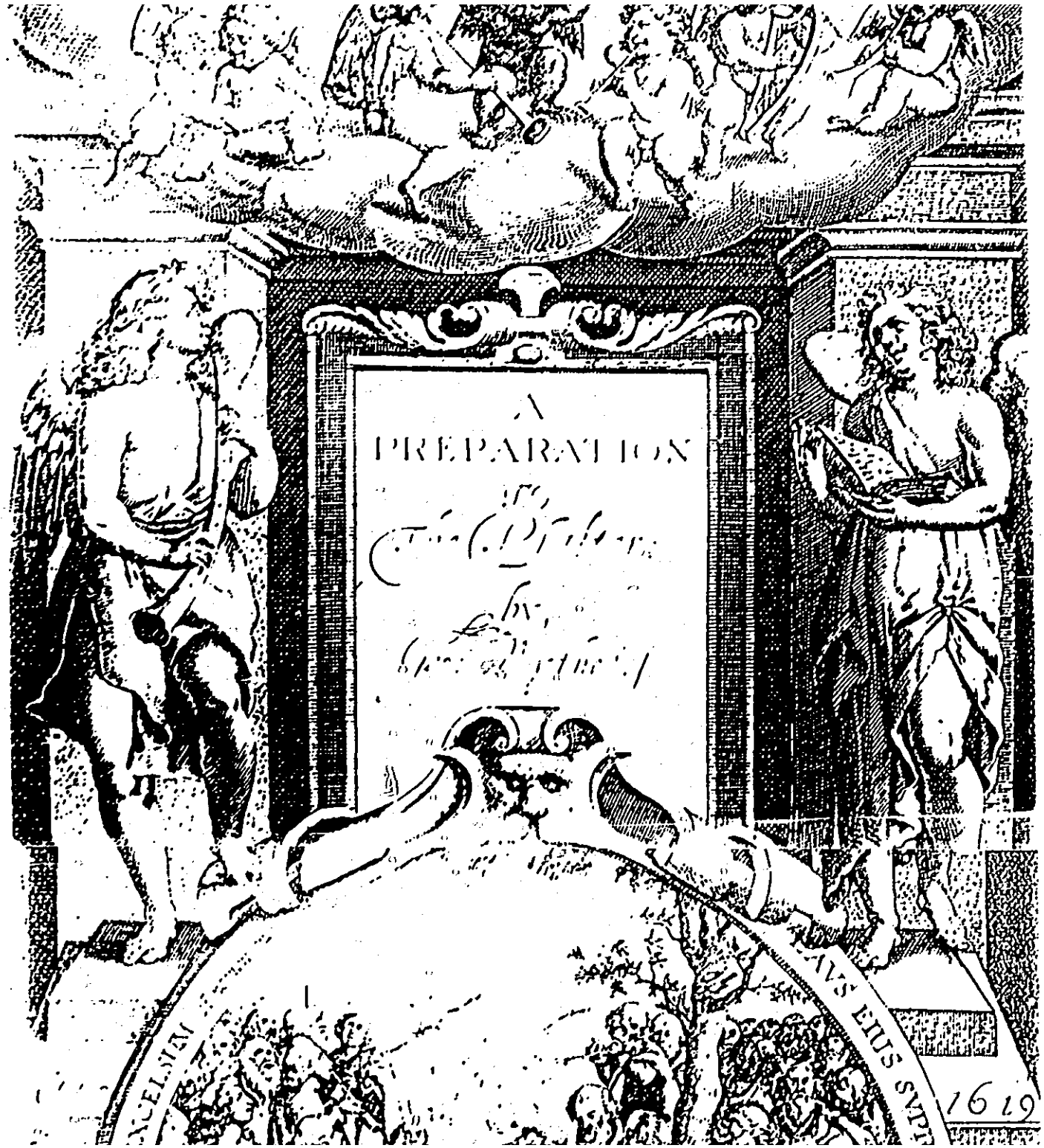
A
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1619


LAVS EIUS SVPRA TERRAM & COELI
1619
...ncisco Delaram
Fecit et Sculp...

Charles R.

Haveing caused this Translation [illegible] the Psalmes [illegible]

thereof our late deare [illegible] father [illegible] to be

perused, and it being found to be exactly and [illegible]

done wee doe hereby authorize the same to be Imprin[ted]

according to the Patent graunted thereupon, and doe [illegible]

them to be song in all the Churches of our Domin[ions]

recommending them to all our good Subjects [illegible]

that effect. /

Will Marshall. Sculpsit