Meditative Textual Practices in England, 1661 – 1678

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines late seventeenth-century meditation as a textual practice in manuscript and print. It considers textual meditations, prayers, scriptural paraphrases, letters, memoirs, and verse, which appear in miscellanies in the period of the Cavalier Parliament, 1661 – 1678. It argues that texts were essential to meditative practice, and these texts were composed either for the practitioner or with distinct readerships in mind. Therefore the project examines the complex and shifting triad of writer, reader, and text in each instance. In addition, it shows how notions of completion, privacy, publication, literariness, and singular authorship are not fully compatible with the iterativity of the textual practices associated with meditation.

The study considers five meditative writers, found across social and confessional spectra: Katherine Austen, John Flavel, Elizabeth Delaval, Susanna Hopton, and Thomas Traherne. Each writer collates and composes texts – originated by themselves and others – into their miscellanies; and – often over long periods of time – edits, amends, or repurposes these texts according to individual circumstance. The writers deploy diverse devotional practices and textual genres including emblem, romantic fiction, and essay. Each chapter shows how differently these writers realise the general pattern described by the thesis

The thesis offers a new appreciation of the diversity of meditative practices and the textual practices associated with them. It challenges earlier perceptions of meditation as an isolated, private, devotional practice, and of meditative texts as a separate literary product of meditative thought. The thesis describes meditation as a textual habit of thought, and a rich source of knowledge, which underpinned, theological, mercantile, social, and philosophical thought. In addition, the thesis demonstrates the value of interpreting meditative texts in their material, textual, biographical, and cultural contexts, and offers a reassessment of the critical and contemporary values placed on verse and prose forms in devotional writing.

For Katie, Betty, Jack, Susie, Tommy, and me, and for everyone like us

Tis use alone
That Maketh Mony not a contemptible Stone.
One useful Sand if it were Sold
Is worth ten thousand Worlds of useless Gold.
Use gives to things their Worth, and makes the Treasure:
Tis Life alone that gives to things their Pleasure.

Thomas Traherne, found in *The Kingdom of God*, chapter thirty-one (c. 1670)

Acknowledgements

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Psa. 19:14

This thesis, like many theses, stretches far back across my academic journey, and is indebted to a great many people both directly, and indirectly involved in the project. In these acknowledgements I have attempted to thank all those people who have had a part in the development, progress, or administration of the project; however, just as it takes a village to raise a child, so too a small town has raised this project, and me, and I gave my thanks to all those who have touched on my life in recent years whether named or silent in these acknowledgments.

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Continuing my institutional thanks, I thank my home of five years at The University of Birmingham, the College of Arts and Law, the School of English, the Library, Welfare, Careers Guidance, Counselling, and the Birmingham International Academy each of whom have provided me variously with academic, organisational, emotional, financial, and employment support during good times and bad. Throughout my time I have found the staff unendingly warm, energetic, and encouraging. The door is always open. Particular thanks in the School of English are due to Victoria Flood and Gillian Wright without whom this project would have ended prematurely, and I am eternally grateful their quiet supervision of my welfare, and Gillian's keen interest in my project, and in promoting me at conferences. Administratively Jason Doolan, Edward Mushett-Cole, and Rachal Soron have frequently and timely provided reminders and useful information, and I owe each of them a coffee. More broadly the research groups in the College of Arts foster an incredibly diverse research culture; CREMS and CLEMT have been particularly instrumental in my experience hearing several of my early thoughts on Katherine Austen. In particular I thank Oliver Herford and Louise Curran for giving me a job, and being incredibly good fun. Similarly, the Rainbow Network gave me the opportunity to explore a different side of academia, and to contribute to issues facing LGBTQ+, minority, and indeed all employees in academia during a time of great challenges to our industry. In the university library I am grateful to the staff for answering and resolving too many IT and borrowing

conundrums; and I look forward to be addressed 'Dr. Clifton' by Jamie who has always been able to bypass cataloguing paradoxes. Elsa Braeken-Payne showed early interest in my project, and gave me inspiring insight into her practical and creative methods of research and teaching which have, in their own way, fed into my work, and I hope to expand on Elsa's methods in my future career. I would also like to thank the cleaning, catering, security, and maintenance staff who run our beautiful campus, and keep Old Joe smiling. As well as a UOB project, this is also an M4C project, and I am indebted to M4C for seeing the promise in my project, funding me through my second, third, and third-and-a-half years, and providing outstanding opportunities to expand my skills, and my research network. M4C graciously freed up funding for extensions, and the purchase of hard to access resources during the Covid19 pandemic. Without the M4C stipend I would not have had the necessary financial and domestic security I needed in order to continue the project.

More broadly I should like to thank the invaluable contributions made to our field by so many databases and libraries. EEBO and Early Modern Women's Research Network were particularly useful during the closures as a consequence of the Covid19 pandemic. The Bodleian Libraries, The Cadbury Research Library, and the British Library institutionally and individually have been welcoming, and always happy to accommodate an extra hour, an extra book, and an extra visit the following morning. I have had the good fortune to share my work at several conferences and symposia large and small, and I thank all those who have attended my papers, given papers, asked questions, and discussed work during tea breaks. Rethinking Objects, Newcastle heard material on Katherine Austen and my attempts to write my own meditations; the TIDE Project, Oxford, heard material on John Flavel; the RSA annual conference, Dublin, heard material on Elizabeth Delaval and loneliness; Doing Things with Early Modern Words, heard an update on Austen and my further attempts at meditation. The Thomas Traherne Association has given a home to some of my material on Traherne and Delaval; and it was a pleasure finally to meet with the association at the much postponed Traherne Festival in 2022 to share my research on late seventeenth century meditation. Secretary, Hilary Rosankiewicz's friendly emails have always arrived at the most welcome moments. Through the Association I am also indebted to the legacy of Denise Inge, and John Inge, Bishop of Worcestor, from whom I have inherited many valuable books on Thomas Traherne and Susanna Hopton; I hope I can add to and pass on this legacy in time. The Birmingham branch of the Student Christian Movement heard an earlier version of that shared with the Traherne Association, and I am grateful to Reverend Mindy Bell for enabling this experience, and for the lively discussion which ensued. Rising out of these conferences, and networks of academics, I should also like to thank Danielle Clark, Suzanne Trill, and Jacob Blevins for their interest in my project; I hope in time to be able to work with each of them.

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time of great pressure on our health services, and increasing mental disquiet in response to global and national crises, I have been privileged with access to extensive mental care, instruction, and support; although the project is in its infancy, I hope to return my gratitude by encouraging others to see the value in early modern meditative practices as a form of low level mental wellbeing.

Lastly, I give thanks to the friends I have accumulated along the journey who have shared this experience, and who have offered great encouragement, advice, consolation, and laughter throughout the last few years. Firstly, I thank the LEMMAEs for creating a wonderful space in which to discuss research, and Charlotte Palmer for taking on the mantel of Lord Protector which I began. I also thank Eva Momtaz, for whom the motto multum in parvo is most appropriate, for her energy, joy, and curiosity; and Tom Evans, my 'mentee' has returned as many favours as he has asked. Angus, though pursuing a wildly different post-doc has brought the fun and reality to all things PhD. In my cohort, Hannah Yip, my academic wife, has been an outstanding inspiration, and she is yet to accept how great her contribution has been to the dissemination of my work; I hope we can continue to explore issues of loneliness in the early modern period beyond our current publication project; additionally, I am grateful for the enthusiasm of our contributors, and I hope we can do them proud, and to UOB and The Lancet Psychiatry for publishing articles on our collaboration. Yasmin has continued our friendship despite her own difficulties, and I look forward to a tour of Frankfurt. Alex Hewitt, Hannah Spruce, and Michele 'M' Piscitelli 'The Writing Retreat Gang' who have shared tears, fears, laughter, and inspiration. I am eternally grateful for their distant faces 'Zooming' away the loneliness and anxiety of writing during a pandemic. It was a great joy to witness M's marriage, and I look forward to his marriage, and our friendship, enduring. Beyond academic friends, my 'adoptive sisters' Vicky and Lisa have always been a phone call away with cakes, cuddles, and conversation; and I thank Sarah Azeez for recognising my strengths, and for giving me a job; I look forward to my Monday evenings tutoring school pupils. Stephen has been a bastion of encouragement and curiosity. Lastly, but by no means least, I thank my Robbie-Bob, my very own seraph, who has shown me what love and poetry can be, and who has negotiated a relationship with an emotional academic, and his five dead poet friends.

I dedicated my masters dissertation to my maternal grandmother, Betty May, who passed away during this project, as did my paternal grandmother, June Louis, two years later; and I give special mention to both of my foremothers. However, on the advice of several close friends, I have taken the unusual, and not intentionally egotistical, decision to dedicate this thesis to me and to people like me in recognition of the extraordinary external and internalised obstacles, adversities, transformations, and doubts we face and overcome. As a child, one of my first books repeated the message 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again', or, in the spirit of UoB:

Per Ardua ad Alta

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Note on Scholarly Conventions

All translations from Latin are my own unless otherwise stated.

Only early modern uses of the long 's' have been modernised, and superscript abbreviations have been moved into the line. Early Modern spellings, punctuation, and irregularities are retained and reproduced as near as modern word processing will allow. Quotations from modern publications are reproduced as they appear.

Biblical texts are quoted from the *King James Authorised Version* (1611 abbreviated as KJV) or *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662) unless otherwise stated.

Footnotes conform to the third edition of the *MHRA Style Guide*

Page numbers of frequently referenced texts are given in parentheses.

Texts are introduced in full in the first instance and in abbreviation subsequently.

Dates are Old Style.

Archive Libraries are referred to by standard abbreviations.

The Oxford English Dictionary is abbreviated to OED.

Note on Gender and Pronoun Use

Names are updated to the most recent available with the exception of Elizabeth Delaval who is known to scholarship as such, and for whom there is some dispute over the authenticity of her second marriage. Pronoun use is kept to a minimum, and apologies are implied where the pronoun used makes an assumption as to gender identity; titles and styles, where these imply gender patriarchal relationships, and social privilege, are retained only in quotation and citation. The reader, and at times the writer, is referred to as 'they' in recognition of the singularity and plurality of reader and writer, and the reader's.

Introduction: Meditative Textual Practices in the Seventeenth Century

This thesis examines the textual processes and concomitant meditative practices of five English writers across social and confessional strata. These writers collated and composed a variety of prose and verse forms in manuscript and print, often with specific readers and functions in mind, in the period 1661 – 1678. As a dialogical, intellectual practice, this thesis argues text was essential to meditation – as it was practised in Early Modern Christianity – and that these texts were multiply iterative. The thesis views the extant texts as artefacts of intellectual processes whereby practitioners collated, amended, and adapted meditative thought for themselves and others – where previous large scale studies have tended to interpret the text as a literary product of meditation.[1] The thesis examines the temporality and materiality of these texts which see multiple forms and genres, decades of composition, multiple authorial sources, and complex patterns of publication. The thesis pays particular attention to the contextualisation and function of verse forms which appear in prose and demonstrates the value of studying verse forms in these prose contexts where scholarship and anthologising practices have tended to divorce verse forms from their material contexts.[2] In the wake of scholarship which has recovered manuscript writing from the period, especially that of women, the thesis is the first multi-author assessment of meditative

[1] Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation* (London: Yale University Press, 1962); Louis L. Martz, *The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964); Barbara Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1979); U. Milo Kaufmann, *The Pilgrim's Progress and Traditions in Puritan Meditation* (London: Yale University Press, 1966).

[2] Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (London: Cornell University Press, 1995), p. xiii; *Early Modern Women Poets (1520 – 1700): An Anthology*, ed. by Jane Stevenson & Peter Davidson (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2001); Mary Hobbs, *Early Seventeenth-Century Verse Miscellany Manuscripts* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1992); *Early Modern Women's Manuscript poetry*, ed. by Jill Seal Millman, Gillian Wright, Victoria E. Burke, and Marie-Louise Coolahan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); *Love's Redeeming Work: The Anglican Quest for Holiness*, ed. by Geoffrey Rowell, Kenneth Stevenson, and Rowan Williams (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Thomas Traherne, *Happiness and Holiness: Thomas Traherne and His Writings*, ed. by Denise Inge (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2008); Thomas Traherne, *Selected Poems and Prose*, ed. by Alan Bradford (London: Penguin Books, 1991); Thomas Traherne, *Centuries, Poems, and Thanksgivings*, ed. by HM. Margoliuth, (2 Vols.) (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1958); Thomas Traherne, *Poems, Centuries and Three Thanksgivings,* ed. by Anne Ridler (London: Oxford University Press, 1966); Thomas Traherne, *Centuries*, ed. by Hilda Vaughan (London: The Faith Press, 1960); *Metaphysical Poetry*, ed. by Colin Burrow (London: Penguin Books, 2006); *The Metaphysical Poets*, ed. by Helen Gardner (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); *Kissing the Rod: An Anthology of 17th Century Women's Verse*, ed. by Germaine Greer, Jeslyn Medoff, Melinda Sansone, and Susan Hastings (London: Virago Press, 1988); Thomas Traherne, *Landscapes of Glory: Daily Readings with Thomas Traherne*, ed. by AM. Allchin (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1989); Thomas Traherne, *Selected Writings*, ed. by Dick Davis (Manchester: Carcanet, 1988); *English Family Life, 1576-1716 An Anthology from Diaries*, ed. by Ralph Houlbrooke (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp. 27 – 32.

practices by men and women writers. It is the first multi-author study to begin from a position of diversity where practices are recovered on individual circumstances rather than evaluated against a perceived paradigm.[3]

The thesis comprises five chapters each of which assesses the practices and contexts of a single writer. Combined, the chapters describe a broad assessment of the place of meditation in late seventeenth-century culture. Individually, the chapters offer interpretation of the nuances of practice idiosyncratic to each writer in light of the biographical, confessional, political, geographical, and social contexts of the writer and the material contexts of the text.[4] Taken together, the chapters offer new readings of the writers within wider readings of meditative textual practice. Thus the manuscript writers Katherine Austen (1629 – c. 1683) and Elizabeth Delaval (c. 1648 – 1717) have been studied as historical women in terms of widowhood and socio-politics, and their texts have been viewed as largely biographical and secular. The print writer John Flavel (c. 1627 – 1691) has received minimal critical attention. The attention Flavel's work has received has been exclusively as a

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[3] *Her Own Life: Autobiographical Writings by Seventeenth-Century Englishwomen*, ed. by Elspeth Graham, Hilary Hinds, Elaine Hobby, and Helen Wilcox (London: Routledge, 1989). Perdita Manuscripts <https://www.perditamanuscripts.amdigital.co.uk/> [accessed 11 August 2022]; *English Manuscript Studies, 1100-1700*, ed. by Peter Beal, Jeremy Griffiths, Margaret JM. Ezell, (8 Vols.) (London: British Library, 1990 – 2000); Peter Beal, *Index of English Literary Manuscripts* (London: Mansell, 1993); Peter Beal, '"Notions in Garrison": The Seventeenth-Century Commonplace Book', *The Renaissance English Text Society*, Newberry Lecture for 1987, Newberry Library (2 April 1987); Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Margaret JM. Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); Margaret JM. Ezell, *Writing Women's Literary History* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Adam Smyth, *Material Texts in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Adam Smyth, 'Money, Accounting, and Life-Writing, 1600 – 1700: Balancing a Life', in *A History of English Autobiography*, ed. by Adam Smyth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 86 – 100; Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); James Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[4] London, British Library, Additional Manuscript, 4454; Katherine Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, ed. by Sarah C.E. Ross. (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011); Katherine Austen, *Book M: A London Widow's Life Writings*, ed. by Pamela S. Hammons (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2013). All references are to Ross' scholarly diplomatic edition unless otherwise stated. Where my interpretation deviates from Ross additional reference is made to the MS and to Pamela Hammons student edition; citations in both MS. and Ross are given inline in parentheses. For examples of studies of Austen as an historical figure see: Pamela S. Hammons, 'Despised Creatures: The Illusion of Maternal Self-Effacement in Seventeenth Century Child Loss Poetry', in *English Literary History*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Spring, 1999), pp. 25 – 49; Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print*.
Oxford, Bodleian, Bodl. Oxf., MS. Rawl.D.78; Elizabeth Delaval, *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval*, ed. by Douglas G. Greene (Durham: The Surtees Society, 1978); unless stated all citations are made to this edition inline in parentheses. A digitised copy and textual description of the manuscript can be found at: Early Modern Women Research Network, 'Elizabeth Delaval' <https://c21ch.newcastle.edu.au/emwrn/index.php?p=memoirs> [accessed 11 August 2022].

religious figure despite an extensive corpus of literary and religious writing.[5] Susanna Hopton (1627 – 1709) has largely been studied in relation to religious and authorial controversies.[6] She has received limited attention as a writer in the late seventeenth century context of her composition and publication. Thomas Traherne (c. 1636 - 1674) has received a wide variety of critical attention across his extant manuscript and print works. This has been largely in terms of single texts or intellectual pursuits. Importantly, no large scale study has reconsidered the place of meditation in light of his wider corpus since the discovery of *Select Meditations* (1964).[7] These writers composed and collated meditative miscellanies containing recognisable devotional forms including textual meditations, prayers, devotions, and scriptural paraphrases as well as the secular textual forms available to them such as letters, memoirs, mothers advice, financial accounts, and verse forms such as elegy, amatory poetry, and country-estate poetry. These texts afforded means to record, organise, amend, and

[5] John Flavel, *A New Compass for Seamen Consisting of XXXII Points of Pleasant Observations, Profitable Applications, and Serious Reflections: All Concluded with Many Spiritual Poems* (London: Richard Tomlins, 1664) later retitled and more popularly known as *Navigation Spiritualized* (Henceforth *Navigation Spiritualized* or *NS*); *Husbandry Spiritualized, or The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things, in which Husbandmen are Directed to an Excellent Improvement of their Common Employments. Whereunto are Added, Occasional Meditations upon Birds, Trees, Flowers, &c*. (London: Robert Boulter, 1669) (henceforth *Husbandry Spiritualized* or *HS*). All references are to these first editions unless stated. Citations are given in parentheses.

[6] Susanna Hopton, *Daily Devotions: Consisting of Thanksgiving, Confessions, and Prayers* (London: Jonathan Edwin, 1673). Throughout this thesis references are made to the first edition of *Daily Devotions* held at the Cranston Library, Reigate as available in Julia J. Smith's facsimile edition: *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1 (of 2) (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. i – 164. Citations to this edition are given in parentheses in the body of the text. *Daily Devotions* is also found in: Susanna Hopton (attrib), *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions, In Three Parts* (Nathanial Spinckes: London, 1717) as Part Two. These pages are not reproduced in Smith's facsimile of *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions, In Three Parts*; *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith (2 Vols.) (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).
For examples of studies of Hopton as a controversial religious figure see: Julia J. Smith, 'Susanna Hopton: A Biographical Account', in *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (1991), pp. 165 – 172; Julia J. Smith, 'Attitudes towards Conformity and Nonconformity in Thomas Traherne', *Bunyan Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1988); Julia J. Smith, 'Thomas Traherne and the Restoration', in *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1988), pp. 203 – 222.

[7] Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Eng.poet.c.42 'Poems', 'The Dobell Manuscript' or 'Thomas Traherne's Commonplace Book'; MS.Eng.th.e.50 *Centuries of Meditations* (henceforth *Centuries* or *CM* in citation); MS Eng.th.e 51: *Church's Year-Book*; New Haven, Beinecke Library, Osborn MS b. 308 *Select Meditations*; Thomas Traherne, *Christian Ethicks, or, Divine Morality Opening the Way to Blessedness* (London: Jonathan Edwin, 1675).
Unless otherwise stated this thesis refers to the following editions: Thomas Traherne, 'Poems from the Dobell Folio', in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. VI (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2014), pp. 1 – 77 (henceforth *Commonplace*); Thomas Traherne, *Centuries of Meditations* in, *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. V (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2013), pp. 1 – 249 (henceforth *Centuries*); Thomas Traherne, *Select Meditations*, in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. V (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2013), pp. 251 – 467; Traherne, 'The Church's Year-Book', in *The Works of Thomas Traherne Works*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. IV (of 8)(Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2009), pp. 1 – 311; Thomas Traherne, *Christian Ethicks*, ed. by Carol L. Marks Sichernan and George Robert Guffey (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968). Citations are given in parentheses in the body of the text except where this would cause confusion. I use Ross' method of referencing individual meditations in *Centuries and Select* (eg: CM I. 1 or SM I. 1) which is now recognisable in Traherne studies. The prose section of Bodleian MS. Eng.poet.c.42 also known as 'Traherne's Commonplace Book' is expected to be published in the eighth volume in this series, and is otherwise unavailable in print.

present meditative thought for themselves and selected readers and communities. The thesis, therefore, unites several small scale studies of individual writers and textual practices and builds on large scale studies which have tended to focus on male writers and on the literariness of meditative texts.[8] The present chapter sets out the historical, critical, and methodological frameworks of the thesis. The initial sections assess the plurality of Early Modern meditation in terms of its devotional and confessional aspects, practice, spirituality, and textuality. These draw attention to contemporary examples of theorists and practitioners which demonstrate the pervasiveness and variety of meditation in the Early Modern period. I argue throughout that there is no one paradigm of meditation and that practice and the textual forms practitioners employed were contingent on multiple factors including historical and geographical circumstance, confession, biography, profession, and social status. In addition, I examine the anti-tolerationism of the Cavalier Parliament which, I argue, coincides with the last flowering of meditation in England. These readings provide a broad contextual narrative of meditation within which to locate the thesis. In the final sections I establish an interpretive framework founded in historico-formalist approaches and built on scholarship of Early Modern textual and manuscript practices. Finally, I outline the selection and justification of individual writers and chapters against these contextual and methodological frameworks.

[8] Raymond A. Anselment, 'Feminine Self-Reflection and the Seventeenth-Century Occasional Meditation', in *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2011), pp. 69 – 93; Raymond A. Anselment, 'Robert Boyle and the Art of Occasional Meditation', in *Renaissance and Reformation*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (2009), pp. 73 – 92; Mary Rich, *The Occasional Meditations of Mary Rich Countess of Warwick*, ed. by Raymond Anselment (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2009); Suzanne Trill, 'Re-Writing Revolution: Life-Writing in the Civil *Wars',* in *A History of English Biography*, ed. by Adam Smyth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 70 – 85; Suzanne Trill, 'Beyond Romance? Re-Reading the 'Lives' of Anne, Lady Halkett (1621/2?-1699)', in *Literature Compass*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2009), pp. 446 – 495; Anne Halkett, *Anne Halkett: Selected Self-Writings*, ed. by Suzanne Trill (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); Marie-Louise Coolahan, 'Redeeming Parcels of Time: Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', in *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2007), pp. 124 – 143; Femke Molekamp, *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England: Religious Reading and Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Meditation in The Early Modern Period

> Gen. 24:63: And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.
>
> Php. 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Since Biblical times there have existed in Christianity traditions of meditation, introspection, and affectivity, of some form or another, complementary to devotional practices performed within and without church settings.[9] This thesis argues there is no one paradigm of meditation from which to define the practice and each example is historically, biographically, and materially contingent. Nevertheless there are practices and processes which are found to some degree across a wide variety of examples. These practices outline a fundamentally simple, accessible, and flexible habit of thought which proliferated across social, confessional, textual, intellectual, and disciplinary boundaries with increasing frequency throughout the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries.

In the Early Modern period, the Reformation and Counter Reformation reinvigorated the meditative tradition within a wider reclamation of Primitive church practices on both sides of the confessional divide. Meditation was seen as a means to strengthen religious resolve, replace lost ritual and practices, and imbue an increasingly secular world with spiritual meaning.[10] Two related Roman Catholic and Protestant branches of the meditative tradition emerged. Firstly Counter Reformation Roman Catholic clerics codified methods of meditation in the Sixteenth Century. Secondly Protestant and non-conformist theorists responded in the Seventeenth Century often adapting existing Roman Catholic methods to suit their individual confession. The interrelatedness of

[9] Keifer Lewalski argues there are no classical models of introspection: Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, p. 31.

[10] Green, Ian: 'Varieties of Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain', in *Private and Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain*, ed. by Jessica Martin and Alec Ryrie (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 9 – 32 (p. 22); John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (London: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 234 – 287; Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, p. 7; Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 124.

these two branches illustrates the religio-politics of early modern meditation and significantly, the plurality of practices and the cross-pollination of their development.[11] Recent studies have shown the interrelatedness of the two branches particularly where Protestant practitioners translated aspects of the Roman Catholic branch into their confessional contexts.[12] Therefore attempts to categorise the confession of meditative practices according to one convention or another become strained given the mutability and flux of the tradition. For instance Hopton translates Roman Catholic and Primitive church sources into her High-Church, late seventeenth century context. Thus, this thesis avoids fixed definitions of practice and rhetorical form by type and instead describes practice according to the function, style, and context of the individual writer.

Nevertheless, as a basis for understanding late seventeenth century meditative practice, a brief overview of the two branches of the tradition outlines the underpinning practices and parameters of meditation. In the Sixteenth Century the Jesuit order and, most prominently, its founder St Ignatius of Loyola (1491– 1556), codified a rigorous, imaginative, Christological, and affective schema of meditation focussed exclusively on scripture. This was predominantly aimed at strengthening the resolve of clergy working in hostile environments. In *Spiritual Exercises* (c. 1522) Loyola prescribed regular practice and a strict schema of subject matter.[13] At its heart, Loyola described a three-fold process of thought heavily based in the imagination as a means to experience and understand Christ's life. Firstly, the practitioner undergoes *compositio loci* thereby imagining and describing an image. In a Loyolan context the practitioner imagines him or herself into a scene of the Bible using sense data; in a Protestant context the practitioner is free to describe a concrete or abstract image more broadly. The use of imagery in this manner is comparable to Christ's habit of

[11] Richard McCabe, *Joseph Hall: A Study in Satire and Meditation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 145; Frank Livingston-Huntley, *Bishop Joseph Hall and Protestant Meditation in Seventeenth-Century England: A Study with the Texts of The Arte of Divine Meditation (1606 and Occasional Meditations (1633)* (Binghampton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1981), p. 3.

[12] Livingston-Huntley finds philosophical, psychological, theological differences between Roman Catholic and Protestant practices. The most significant difference he finds is in subject matter. In Roman Catholic practices this is limited to scripture. In Protestant practices this is expanded to include all three of the books of God: Livingston-Huntley, *Bishop Joseph Hall,* p. 4 – 7.

[13] Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, pp. xxi, 26 – 28, 30, 33 – 37, 39; Martz, *Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton*, pp. 34 – 39; Livingston-Huntley, *Bishop Joseph Hall*, p. 9.

analogy and has been compared to the emblem tradition in Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. I explore this relationship more thoroughly in my third chapter.[14] Secondly, *considerationes puncta*: the practitioner analyses the image at times employing lengthy divisions and comparisons. Thirdly, the practitioner composes a *colloquium* or petition of prayer, praise, and penitence according to the spiritual lesson derived. Though Jesuit, the influence of this form on English Protestants can be seen in the availability of texts in English; for instance Louis L. Martz describes translations of Luis de Granada's *Book of Prayer and Meditation* by Richard Hopkins (1582) as a rich source of rhetorical structures for English devotional poets including the Roman Catholic poets Robert Southey and Richard Crashaw and the Church of England poets John Donne and George Herbert.[15] Nevertheless, Martz's and Barbara Keifer Lewalski's studies of these literary and rhetorical influences describe the broader influences of Protestant piety and religious practice on meditative writing and tend to overlook the place of textual practice within the meditative process.[16]

In England the Protestant branch of meditation was given renewed vigour by Katherine Parr's (1512 – 1548) publication of *Prayers or Meditations* (1545) as a complement to Archbishop Thomas Cranmer's (1489 – 1556) *Exhortation and Litany* (1544).[17] Together these publications locate devotion, meditation, and textuality at the heart of the emerging Church of England – both in sacred and secular spaces. Significantly, Janel Mueller and Kimberley Ann Coles observe *Prayers or Meditations* consists largely of extensive abridgement and depersonalisation of Richard Whitford's translation of the third book of *Imitatio Christi* (1530), a source for Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*.[18] Thus Parr adapts an earlier source into a Church of England context, and the Protestant branch is a continuation or appropriation of rather than a schism from the Roman Catholic branch and its

[14] McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 158 – 161, 172; see also: Anselment, 'Robert Boyle and the Art of Occasional Meditation', p. 3; Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 132.
[15] Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, pp. 6 – 7.
[16] Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*; Martz, *Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton*; Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, p. ix.
[17] Janel Mueller observes five editions published during Elizabeth I's reign bound in with Cranmer's *The Kings Primer*: Janel Mueller, 'Devotion as Difference: Intertextuality in Queen Katherine Parr's *Prayers or Meditations* (1545)', in *Huntington Quarterly*, 53 (University of California Press, 1990), pp. 171 – 197 (p. 175).
[18] Ibid, p. 175, 177 – 179; Kimberley Ann Coles, *Religion, Reform, and Women's Writing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 46; Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, pp. 5 – 6, p. 25.

Primitive roots. This branch was further popularised and adapted by generations of Church of England and non-conformist clergy. Most prominently, Bishop Joseph Hall's (1574 – 1676) flexible, rhetorical approach to meditation influenced theory and practice for much of the Seventeenth Century.

English Meditative Practices after the Manner of Joseph Hall

As the Seventeenth Century dawned, Hall published *The Arte of Divine Meditation* (1606).[19] This text, and Hall's subsequent works on meditation, *Three Centuries of Meditations and Vowes, Divine and Morall* (1606) and *Occasional Meditations* (1630), strongly influenced and inspired the flexibility and rhetoric of the English branch of meditation for at least the first three quarters of the Seventeenth Century.[20] Other writers such as Richard Baxter (1615 –1691), in his *The Saints Everlasting* Rest (1650), continued to refine and develop meditative methods according to individual confession.[21] This section examines the practices of the Protestant branch of meditation in England as described by theorists of the Seventeenth Century. Richard A. McCabe, Hall's biographer, argues that *The Arte of Divine Meditation* was written to displace religious writing of the time which tended to enflame controversy thereby signalling a turn to religious piety and devotional introspection as an antidote to continuing religio-political unrest. The popularity of Hall, and of meditation therefore, was in his focus on spirituality. Effie Botonaki summarises: The abandonment of most church rites and the elimination of the priest as mediator between God and His people that took place with the transition

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[19] Joseph Hall, *The Arte of Diuine Meditation: profitable for all Christians to know and practice; exemplified with a large meditation of eternall life* (London: Samuel Macham and Mathew Cooke, 1606).

[20] McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 144 – 145, 151; Kauffman, *The Pilgrims Progress and Traditions in Puritan Meditation*, p. 120; Joseph Hall, *The Arte of Diuine Meditation Profitable for all Christians to Knowe and Practise* (London: Samuel Macham and Matthew Cooke, 1606); Joseph Hall, *Meditations and Vowes, Diuine and Morall: A Third Century.* (London: Iohn Porter, 1606); Joseph Hall, *Occasionall Meditations* (London: Nathanial Butter, 1630). See also: Frank Livingston Huntley, *Bishop Joseph Hall and Protestant Meditation in Seventeenth-Century England: A Study with the Texts of The Arte of Divine Meditation (1606 and Occasional Meditations (1633)* (Binghampton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1981).

[21] Richard Baxter, *The Saints Everlasting Rest, or, A treatise of the blessed state of the saints in their enjoyment of God in glory wherein is shewed its excellency and certainty, the misery of those that lose it, the way to attain it, and assurance of it, and how to live in the continual delightful forecasts of it* (London: Thomas Underhill and Francis Tyton, 1650).

from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism left believers on their own.[22] Textually, therefore, meditation filled a dialogical void. Narveson has written on the consequent clerical anxiety concerning unsupervised spirituality and on the textual leads practitioners adopted. This thesis offers insight into the interpretations and practices writers adopted.[23] Aware of the potential for unsupervised interpretation of scripture, theorists, including Hall, took pains to limit practice and provide approachable yet authoritative guidance. Hall's popularity, therefore, is founded in his method which focuses on practice over theory and on recognisable though flexible rhetorical forms which guide this practice. Where Loyola draws on imagination, Hall's method centres on reason and observation of the created world as a foundation for affection.[24] U. Milo Kaufmann argues Hall is not in opposition to Loyola but rather Hall and Protestant theorists viewed the imagination with suspicion.[25] Hall's process of meditation is similarly three-fold when compared to Loyola's *composition loci, considerationes puncta*, and *colloquium* though rhetorically more flexible. Livingston-Huntley summarises Hall's method as a sequence of rhetorical acts where the first begins in an image, the central portion analyses this image, and the final two stages move from reason to affection. Livingston-Huntley labels this sequence as: describe, divide into parts, discover causes, weigh effects, find how it is employed, list qualities, contraries, similitudes, oppositions, names, testament in scripture, thanks for what is, and recommendations for future.[26] Livingston-Huntley's stages can be broadly mapped onto the extant textual record at least in terms of their objectives in discursively dissecting and interpreting a given spiritual topic.

[22] Botonaki, *Seventeenth-Century English Women's Autobiographical Writings: Disclosing Enclosures* (London: Edwin Mellon Press, 2004), p. 44.
[23] Kate Narveson, '"Their Practice Bringeth little Profit': Clerical Anxieties about Lay Scripture Reading in Early Modern England', in *Private and Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain*, ed. by Jessica Martin and Alec Ryrie (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 165 – 187 (pp. 180 – 181); Kate Narveson, *Bible Readers and Lay Writers in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 3. See also: Green, 'Private and Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain', pp. 19 – 20.
[24] McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 175; Kaufmann, *The Pilgrims Progress and Traditions in Puritan Meditation,* p. 123, 126; Livingston-Huntley, *Bishop Joseph Hall*, p. 20; Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, p. 38.
[25] Kaufmann, *The Pilgrims Progress and Traditions in Puritan Meditation,* pp. 121 – 126. See also: McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 175.
[26] Livingston-Huntley, *Bishop Joseph Hall*, pp. 5 – 6, 23.

Nevertheless several critics have commented on Hall's exemplar meditations found in his subsequent publications such as *Occasional Meditations* (1606) which stress the pre-eminence of learning by example yet rarely conform to his sequence of stages in its entirety.[27] This dissonance between meditative theory and the textual record is a common feature of meditative writing. Hall adapts, exemplifies, and passes on a framework for meditation and he encourages his followers to refine the method according to individual need. For instance Suzanne Trill finds Anne Halkett's (1623 – 1699) prose meditations, written over two decades, diverge significantly from Hall's model and show developments in style and subject matter over time. Trill notes Halkett's process transitions into a more personal form which underscores the interrelatedness of life-writing forms: 'Although Halkett begins her writing for her own personal use and spiritual development, the volumes become increasingly self-reflective and autobiographical, this epitomises the intersection between the practice of self-examination and the development of autobiography as a distinct genre'.[28] Halkett wrote a combination of scriptural and occasional meditations, and a biography throughout much of her adult life which invite further investigation into the iteration of meditation between her forms. My second chapter asks similar questions about the iteration of meditation and memoir. Nevertheless, Halkett wrote entirely in prose, and the size of Halkett's corpus, over twenty manuscripts, leaves this work overwhelmingly large for a multi-author study. To date there is no published edition of Halkett's meditations in full.[29] In light of this variety of rhetorical forms and the opportunity to indulge in personal reflection Marie-Louise Coolahan concludes: 'The emphasis on practice over method is enabling, and suggestive of an attainable means of self-improvement'.[30]

Hall adds further flexibility to the meditative tradition by defining two types of meditation. These are the deliberate and the extempore meditation. Though his definition suggests an inspirational rather than temporal divide in practice the two types often appear to have been

[27] Ibid, pp. 7, 42; McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 154; *Coolahan*, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 125 – 126.
[28] Suzanne Trill, 'Introduction', in Anne Halkett, *Selected Self Writings*, ed. by Suzanne Trill (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. xvii – xlii (pp. xxxv – xxxvi).
[29] Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MSS. 6489 – 6502. See: Suzanne Trill, 'Introduction', p. xviii.
[30] Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 124.

blended making for a remarkably varied textual record and a tradition which resists the categorisation theorists and academics have imposed upon it. Thus Hall writes meditation is:

> Extemporall, and occasioned by outwarde occurrences offred to the minde, or Deliberate, and wrought out of our owne hearte; which againe is either in Matter of Knowledge for the finding out of some hidden truth, and convincing of a heresie by profound traverssing of reason, or in Matter of Affection, for the enkindling of our love to God: the former of these two last wee sending to the Schooles & masters of Controversies, search after the later; which is both of larger use, and such as no Christian can reject, as either unnecessary, or over-difficult.[31]

Hall invites his practitioners to meditate on concrete, outward occurrences, as well as matters of conscience, with a focus on affection and devotion which is immediately applicable to individual circumstances – rather than matters of dogma and controversy. Unlike Loyola, Hall and Protestant theorists recommended broader subject matter for meditation grouped into a trinity of interrelated 'books' which record the full gamut of spiritual knowledge. Thus in *Resolves: A Duple Century* (1631) Owen Feltham (1602 – 1668) states:

> God hath left three books to the World in each of which hee may easily be found: The Booke of the Creatures, the Booke of Conscience, and his written Word.[32]

Feltham's metaphor of the book stresses the dialogic nature of meditation as a habit of reading and interpreting a text – or indeed The Word. For Feltham, all things are an inspiration to meditate. Practitioners embraced spiritual and scriptural topics as well as every day occurrences and natural phenomenon as inspiration. In *Inducements to Retirednes*, an unfinished treatise on the benefits of meditation, Traherne suggests beginning meditative practice with scripture before more base and earthly objects:

> When Thou retirest to Eternity, chuse at first those objects in it, that are most Excellent. Namely those Things wherein God hath Manifested Him self

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[31] Hall, *The Arte of Divine Meditation*, p. 7.

[32] Owen Fletham, *Resolves: A Duple Century*, 4th edn. (London: Henry Seile, 1631), 2nd century, No. 68; Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, p. 159; Tom Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy: Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (1996), pp. 33 – 56 (p. 37).

> most Glorious. His Works, His Laws, His Ways, His Word, His Attributes, etc. for these Well understood will make Thee most Blessed. When Thou Knowest these, then mayest Thou Meditat upon lesser Things, as He doth: Namely, upon the Thoughts and Works of Men. And when Thou understandest them as | He doth, they Shall pleas Thee as they do Him, and be in the End, thy Certain Joys, and Endless Treasures.[33]

Traherne models meditation as an attainable means to embrace and understand creation in a Godlike manner and to imbue all things with spiritual meaning. Hopton's *Meditations on the Creation* (or *Hexameron*) comprises vivid meditations on the created world – which this thesis does not examine owing to space. Critics have used the labels deliberate and extempore interchangeably with occasional, Loyolan, and scriptural according to subject matter or method. The difficulty of categorising meditations clearly attests to the blended manner in which practitioners approached these two types.[34] Practice akin to Hall's deliberate meditation can be seen in Hopton's *Daily Devotions* and *Meditations and Devotions upon the Life of Christ* – where the later does not include verse forms. These meditations are written in correspondence with scripture, church worship, and the canonical hours of prayer. Similarly, Delaval's habit of meditating intensively during Lent and of appending textual meditations with textual prayers suggests she sets aside time to examine her conscience. Nevertheless Delaval's meditative stimuli includes external events in her life and often these stimuli are intertwined with consideration of her conscience such as her meditation 'upon the sight off a very poor old man at chruch who was a Roman Catholick' in which she compares her hypocrisy to man who attends church in order to avoid a fine.[35]

The uncertain boundary between the deliberate and the occasional meditation is more apparent in light of the temporality of the occasional meditation. Coolahan describes the occasional

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[33] London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS.1360; Thomas Traherne, *Inducements to Retirednes*, in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol I. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2005), pp. 3 – 43 (pp. 7 – 8).

[34] Tara Hamling, 'Old Robert's Girdle: Visual and material Props for Protestant Peity in Post-Reformation England', in *Early Modern England', in Private and Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain*, ed. by Jessica Martin and Alec Ryrie (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 135 – 163 (p. 142 – 143); Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 124.

[35] Elizabeth Delaval, *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval*, pp. 76 – 77.

meditation temporally by comparing its spontaneity with ejaculatory prayer.[36] Both of which she describes as means to occupy idle time. The brevity and aphoristic nature of this type of meditation can be seen in examples by Hall, Flavel, and Rich which are remarkably similar in form though inflected by the character and lifestyle of the individual: for instance, Rich's 'Upon being awalkeing and feeling a few drops of raine fall upon my fase, and in a good time noe more, but at last a great showere falowde'.[37] Trill points to the determiner 'Upon' in the titles of many of these examples as a convention of occasional meditation.[38] However, as with most conventions allied to meditation, there are as many examples which conform to a perceived standard as examples which diverge. Rich's process mirrors Loyola's three-fold path and Hall's rhetorical divisions and comparisons. She captures the ephemerality of the moment, relates it to her conscience, and looks to a future of penitence:

> These few drops I felte fall upon my fase made me aprehend being sone wett, an therefore resolve to keepe neare shelltar, and so continued my Walke as long as I could. Which I did much longer without interuption then I expected, but at last a great and violent showre falowde those small dropes. Which made me compare my own condition, which I thought might not very unfittly be so to what had lately hapned. For when I have sett a day aparte from all other imploymentes to humble my soule before God and have indeavered to awaken it by the startling consideration of Godes judgments against impenitent sinnares and what he has prepared for the punishing of the presumptuous despisers of his comandes, these thoughtes have made me a prospecte of a life full of unmerited mersyes uninterupted by all my disingenuous backslidinges from him, this has so thoroughly worked upon my harde and unsensible heart that, as if God had made a sprituall thawe upon my heart, I have shed showres of teares and have powred out my heart like water before the Lord.

Rich's meditation records four moments on or in which she reflects: the first and second shower, what 'had lately hapned', and her composition of the prose meditation. Given this compositional time frame of textual meditation, particularly meditation in verse, the spontaneity of the moment becomes increasingly constrained and it is difficult to imagine Rich composing her meditation

[36] Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', 126.
[37] Mary Rich, *The Occasional Meditations of Mary Rich Countess of Warwick*, pp. 63 – 64.
[38] Trill, 'Introduction', p. xxxvi.

between showers. Likewise Donne's *Devotions on Emergent Occasions* (1624) combines the external stimuli and spontaneity of sickness and isolated observations with the deliberateness and extenuation of rhetorical form and Donne's continuing illness.[39] Anthony Raspa stresses the individuality of Donne's meditative method which does not wholly conform to any single contemporary theoretical model.[40] Though Donne's copmbinative singularity is arguably a convention of meditation given its diversity of textual practices. Similarly, the textual practices of the three manuscript writers in this thesis in particular point to a process whereby initial brief meditations are continually augmented, amended, and reframed – sometimes over decades of activity. Though initially inspired by an external occasion, over time the spiritual import of the meditation is increasingly disassociated with the contextual moment. Thus, meditation was rarely a single isolated act and was at times occasioned by spontaneous external stimuli, by deliberate periods of introspection or scriptural study, or, more frequently, iterated through a combination of spontaneous and deliberate activity. This thesis argues meditation was a habit of thought which enabled writers to accumulate scriptural, spiritual, and self-knowledge in a flexible, accessible, and religio-politically approved manner which is by its nature at odds with attempts to categorise by convention or confession. Nevertheless a basic proforma of observation, analysis, finding the spiritual import, and, in general, appending some form of prayer, can be ascribed to most meditative practice.

Meditation as Spiritual and Mental Exercise

In the introduction to *The Arte of Divine Meditation* (1606), Hall expounds at length on the affective, enlightening, and edifying properties of meditation. In addition to spiritual understanding, Hall describes meditation as a spiritual and mental exercise or preparedness undertaken during repeated periods of exertion which, if the practitioner invests sufficient effort, reaps extensive reward. In light

[39] John Donne, *Devotions on Emergent Occasions* and *Seuerall Steps in My Sicknes* (London: Thomas Jones, 1624).
[40] Anthony Raspa, 'Introduction', in John Donne, *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasion*, ed. by Anthony Raspa (London: McGill-Queens University Press, 1975), pp. xiii – lvi (p. xiii).

of Hall's concept, therefore, meditation was intended to develop the cognitive and emotional faculties of practitioners, and this objective of meditation speaks to its appeal in a variety of intellectual and personal settings:

> by this, doe we ransack our deepe & false harts, find out our secret enemies, buckle them with them, expel them, arme our selves against their re-entrance. By this, wee make use of all good meanes, fit our selves to all good dueties; by this we descrie our weake-nesse, obtaine redresse, prevēt temptatiōs, cheere up our | solitariness, temper our occasions of delight; get more light unto our knowledge, more heate to our affections, more life to our devotion: by this we growe to be (as we are) strangers upon earth; and out of a right estimation of all earthly things, into a sweet fruitiō of invisible comforts: by this we see our Saviour with Steven, we talke with God as Moses, and by this we are ravished with blessed | Paul into Paradise; and see that heaven which wee are loath to leave.[41]

Hall's list of verbs defines meditation as a form of spiritual exercise and exertion intended to prepare the soul for duty and weed out weaknesses. However, he also describes the spiritual rewards of meditation as both an earthly comfort during periods of physical, spiritual or emotional isolation and as a gateway to heavenly bliss.[42] Periods of turmoil appear to have inspired several meditative writers. Though, too late for the thesis, Charles Howe's (1661 – 1742) *Devout Meditations* (1754) contains a series of meditations inspired by his grief which points to close associations between meditation, loss, and personal crisis. Similarly Edward Taylor (1642 – 1729) began writing meditations in earnest after the death of his young daughters.[43] In the thesis, Austen began writing after the death of her husband and Flavel began writing after the crisis of his expulsion from his ministry. In *Inducements to Retirednes* Traherne finds solace in isolation and compares the spiritual exercise Hall finds to professional development:

> If in any Thing you would be Excellent, you must be much alone. Historians, Philosophers, Physicians and Divines, acquire the Excellencies of their Degree in Retirement. […] If thou wouldst be Excellent in Wisdom and

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[41] Joseph Hall, *The Arte of Divine* Meditation (London: Samuel Macham, 1607), pp. 2 – 4.

[42] See: Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, pp. 153, 160, 163.

[43] Thomas M. Davis, 'Edward Taylor's "Occasional Meditations", in Early American Literature, Vol. 5, No. 3 (University of North Carolina Press: Winter, 1971), pp. 17 – 29 (p. 21 – 22); New Haven, CT, Beinecke Library, GEN MSS. 1476 'Edward Taylor's Manuscripts'; Charles Howe, *Devout Meditations, or, A Collection of Thoughts upon Religious and Philosophical Subjects* (Dublin: C. Wynne, 1754).

> Glory, thou also must spend many Days to Adorn thy self with those in Retirement. (p. 12).

Traherne compares the time, commitment, and private study, or 'Retirement' necessary to grow professionally to spiritual growth. Furthermore, Traherne's analogy between professional training and meditation suggests an interaction between private study, practice, and public engagement where meditation is figured not as an isolated form of devotion but a habit of mind which is carried into all corners of life. Robert Boyle, a contemporary of Traherne, also stresses meditation as a form of spiritual and mental exercise.[44] In addition to mental exercise, Baxter laments meditation performed without rigour or conviction:

> I Call it the acting of [*All*] the powers of the soul, To difference it from the common Meditation of Students, which is usually the meer imployment of the Brain. It is not a bare thinking, that I mean, nor the meer use of Invention or Memory; but a business of a higher and more excellent nature: when Truth is apprehended only as Truth.[45]

Martz clarifies these 'powers of the soul' as the three faculties of memory, will, and understanding.[46] Baxter emphasises the spiritual dimension of meditation as an exercise of the soul and not simply the intellect. In addition, Baxter implies the insincerity of at least some practitioners. Though authenticity is difficult to ascertain, each of the writers in the thesis expresses some concern for the validity of his or her own spiritual conviction, or that of others and, for Delaval in particular, the iterativity of meditation enables her to confront and correct the performativity of her devotion. Baxter continues by describing meditation as a process of taking spiritual knowledge from the head to the heart or soul:

> to get these Truths from thy head to thy heart, and that all Sermons which thou hast heard of Heaven, and all notions that thou hast conceived of this Rest, may be turned into blood and spirits of Affection.[47]

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[44] Anselment, 'Robert Boyle and the Art of Occasional Meditation', p. 79 – 81.
[45] Baxter, *The Saints Everlasting* Rest, p. 691.
[46] Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, pp. 13, 20.
[47] Baxter, *The Saints Everlasting Rest,* p. 692.

For Baxter, meditation processes the reason and rhetoric of spiritual thought into the will and conviction of the conscience. Francois de Sales similarly describes meditation as a mechanism for transmitting understanding and affection to the soul. In *A Treatise on the Love of God* (1616) he describes meditation as a source of spiritual lessons derived from spontaneous or deliberate thought:

> meditation in our present sense, hath reference onely to those obiectes, whose consideration tend's to make vs good and deuote. So that meditation is an attentiue thought iterated, or voluntarily intertained in the mynd, to excitate the will to holy affections and resolutions.[48]

Sales' stress on resolutions, marking a change in character and behaviour, points to meditation as spiritually and intellectually transformational. Delaval appears particularly attracted to transformation in her composition of her 'resolutions', short statements in which she declares the behavioural changes she will make. Thus more than interpreting and remembering, meditation was a means to assess the conscience in relation to the cosmos, motivate spiritual correction, and develop the mental faculties.

As both a means to examine the conscience and a means to analyse the cosmos, meditation implies both a sense of selfhood and a movement beyond the self. This invitation to indulge in self-reflection engenders the emotional richness and insight extant meditative texts offer. McCabe concludes on the epistemological and internalising action of meditation: 'the meditation contrives to include its moral criticism within the pattern of its own private speculation thereby arriving at a personal moral resolution'.[49] This combination of personal and moral resolve is particularly evident in Austen's speculation on her material and spiritual worth, Delaval's presentation of her moral failings in light of her peers, and Traherne's early attempts to bridge professional morality and societal corruption. Evidently meditative thought afforded opportunities to contemplate the self.

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[48] St Francois de Sales, *A Treatise of the Loue of God*, trans. by Miles Car, 18th edn. (Douay: Gerard Pinchon, 1630).
[49] McCabe, *Joseph* Hall, p. 143.

Nevertheless, Catherine Field observes self is a negative in the Early Modern period as it is the individual in thrall to the flesh.[50] Coolahan argues meditation allows the practitioner to take oneself outside of the moment into the eternity of moving time.[51] On the other hand, Anselment finds religious praise and devotion are inseparable from a sense of the self and its place in the cosmos. With reference to the textuality of identity Helen Wilcox proposes: 'Selfhood is undoubtedly best understood as a plural rather than singular concept and as a creative and expressive process rather than a series of fixed entities'.[52] This combined agential subjectivity and textual objectivity which early modern life-writing enabled is neatly summarised with reference to Jacques Lacan in *Her Own Life*.[53]. Psychologically, therefore, meditative practice as a textual practice afforded meditative writers opportunities to present, encounter, and interpret aspects of themselves.

Meditation as a Textual Practice

In addition to the diversity of meditative practices, this thesis argues that meditation was essentially textual and it examines the plurality of textual practices and forms practitioners employed. It challenges earlier studies which have tended to stress 'the meditation' as a literary form inspired by strict meditative schema derived from confessional pro forma resulting in a focus on the rhetorical and literary qualities of the text and on the confessional peculiarities of the writer.[54] Tom Webster stresses the centrality of text to the process of meditation both as inspiration for meditation and as a means to record and process meditation and Coolahan implies the reciprocity of a process which

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[50] Catherine Field, '"Many hands hands": Writing the Self in Early Modern Women's' Recipe Books', in *Genre and Women's Life Writing in Early Modern England*, ed. by Michelle M. Dowd and Julie A. Eckerle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 49 – 63 (p. 49). See also: Katherine Hodgkin, *Madness in Seventeenth-Century Autobiography* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 23.
[51] Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 125.
[52] Anselment, 'Feminine Self-Reflection and the Seventeenth-Century Occasional Meditation', p. 71, 76; Helen Wilcox, '"Free and Easy as ones discourse"?: Genre and Self-Expression in the Poems and Letters of Early Modern Englishwomen', in *Genre and Women's Life Writing in Early Modern England*, ed. by Michelle M. Dowd and Julie A. Eckerle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 15 – 32 (p. 16).
[53] Elspeth Graham, et al, 'Introduction', in *Her Own Life*, pp. 1 – 27 (pp. 18 – 21).
[54] Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, pp. 1 – 2, 13; Louis L. Martz, *The Poem of the Mind: Essays on Poetry English and American* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966); Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant* Poetics, pp. ix, 9, 10; Raspa, 'Introduction', p. xiii.

necessitates reading and writing.[55] Coolahan argues that the accumulation of texts recorded the spiritual progress of the individual and rereading textual meditations would redeem the act of writing. Meditations were not written or read in isolation but rather recorded instances in an ongoing dialogue with the soul. Thus in his *Journal or Diary of a Thankful Christian* (1656) John Beadle recommends the practitioner should 'Look often into this Journall, and read it over.'[56] Meditation is therefore multiply and textually iterative and its iterations mirror the maturation of the soul. This textual ability to measure the soul leads Adam Smyth and Effie Botonaki to compare spiritual diaries to account keeping given both forms weigh up the value of a person temporally or spiritually.[57] Austen, Delaval, and Traherne each compare material and spiritual worth in this manner though with radically different styles and conclusions. Reading, writing, collating, and editing meditative texts engenders moral and spiritual development and these textual processes are performed in dynamic patterns. As an introduction to these processes, this section discusses the textuality of meditation including the interrelated roles of writer, reader, and text in relation to the meditative miscellany where these roles at times coincide. Individual chapters describe more nuanced textual processes using the examples within such as iteration, in the example of Delaval, mediation, in the example of Flavel, and adaptation, in the example of Hopton. Though three of the chapters of the thesis discuss printed texts, and two of the writers are found exclusively in print, the iterativity and materiality of manuscripts and the wealth of research in this field aids the description of much of the textual processes of meditation.

Several critics have commented on the distinctions of form and subject matter in meditations written by men and women, and women writers have in part been maligned by these

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[55] Tom Webster, 'Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', p. 37; Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 131.

[56] John Beadle, *The Journal or Diary of a Thankful Christian: Presented in Some Meditations upon Numb. 33:*2 (London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1656), p. 101.

[57] Adam Smyth, 'Money, Accounting, and Life-Writing, 1600 – 1700', pp. 86 – 100; Effie Botonaki, *Seventeenth-Century English Women's Autobiographical Writings*, pp. 38 – 39; Effie Botonaki, 'Seventeenth-Century Englishwomen's Spiritual Diaries: Self-Examination, Covenanting, and Account Keeping', in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Spring, 1999), pp. 2 – 21.

evaluations. Nevertheless the theoretical focus on the practitioner selecting the subject matter which he or she finds most accessible, in the examples above of Feltham and Traherne, stresses the diversity of meditation according to the circumstances of its practitioners. Moreover, in *The Arte of Meditation* Hall recommends recording the outcome of meditation as an integral part of the meditative process though Hall gives no pro-forma for writing. In practice meditations took a wide variety of textual forms. Elizabeth Clarke and Jonathan Gibson note women drew on forms afforded them by their education and social circle just as men drew on forms associated with their professions.[58] This has resulted in an apparent disparity between men's and women's meditative writing where men tended to opt for more easily recognisable forms – in a modern scholarly sense – such as lyric and essay where women wrote discontinuous, blended forms such as correspondence, memoir, and account books.[59] Delaval's meditations in particular have been read in light of the secular forms she selects. Excluded from university, women learned textual practices and rhetoric at one remove from and often mediated by their male counterparts. Austen writes very little of her education though she does mention relationships with university educated men, Hopton writes of her education by Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy, and, as an example of intergenerational learning, Delaval notes her grandmother and governess as the principal source of her moral and textual education to the exclusion of male input. In contrast Carol L. Marks Sichernan and George Robert Guffey's edition of Traherne's *Christian Ethicks* provides an overview of the uniform education available to men of Traherne and Flavel's standing at Oxford University during the later seventeenth century.[60] They point to the predominance of Aristotelian philosophy and universally understood rhetorical processes such as those employed by Hall. On the other hand, Scott Baumann, suggests, where women did write poetry, this too was limited by modesty and a lack of formal instruction: 'Women, in their poetry, exhibit a plain style owing to their different training in rhetoric

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[58] Elizabeth Clarke and Jonathan Gibson, 'Introduction', in *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Poetry*, ed. by Jill Seal Millman, Gillian Wright, Victoria E. Burke, and Marie-Louise Coolahan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 1 – 10 (p. 3).
[59] Estelle C. Jelineh, *Women's Autobiography: Essays in Criticism* (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1980), p. xxi .
[60] Marks Sichernan and Guffey, 'General Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *Christian Ethicks* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968), pp. xi – l (pp. xv – xxii).

to men, and their response, for instance, to writers such as George Herbert who provides an appealing model'.[61] Moreover, Coolahan notes, of meditative texts, theorists were keen to stress a plain style and spiritual authenticity over literary elegance.[62] Writing within the affordances of their education and social standing, therefore, men and women writers were encouraged to produce meditations which prioritised authenticity over literary style – though modern day scholarship has at times favoured male writers who had access to both skills. In terms of subject matter, Anselment describes women's writing as more personal adding in his introduction to Rich's work: 'Many of the meditations written by women focus on scriptural passages or religious topics; others tend toward prayers and thanksgivings related to events such as births, illness, and death'[63] Though this too tends to bias women writers in favour of their more worldly male counterparts. Nevertheless, though women did frequently meditate on their domestic concerns these meditations only serve to highlight the meditative impetus to interpret ones place in the cosmos. Thus because of, rather than in spite of their varied education and textual histories, women writers greatly contribute to the richness and variety of the meditative tradition and the forms in which it was written. In bringing together canonical and non-canoical writers, men, women, and writers across social strata this thesis demonstrates the usefulness of meditation as a lens through which to interpret Early Modern textual and devotional practices and questions assumptions and biases of form which have tended to privilege educated, male writers, such as Traherne and overlook the innovation and experiment of less well known writers.

In addition to diversity of form, meditations are often found in a diversity of collation blended alongside other forms and genres. With reference to textual prayer, a form closely associated with textual meditation, Green finds textual prayers were rarely written in isolation and

[61] Elizabeth Scott-Baumann, *Forms of Engagement: Women, Poetry and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 14.
[62] Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 129.
[63] Raymond A. Anselment, 'Introduction', in *The Occasional Meditations of Mary Rich Countess of Warwick*, ed. by Raymond Anselment (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2009), pp. 1 – 39 (p. 1 – 2); Anselment, 'Feminine Self-Reflection and the Seventeenth-Century Occasional Meditation', p. 69.

are commonly found in association with other forms.[64] Anselment adds 'meditations gain significance from context'.[65] This aspect of meditative context and Coolahan's observation of the accrual of a meditative record emphasise a key argument of this thesis in proposing that textual meditations, textual prayers, devotional forms, and secular forms when they appear together gain – and indeed generate – spiritual meaning. These multi-diverse texts extend meditative textual practice beyond the parameters of the individual meditation to a wider habit of meditatively processing text and, with reference to this process I use Jan Blommaert's term 'entextualisation' to describe the act of bringing together texts as a means to engender contextual meaning.[66] Additionally I favour meditative miscellany to describe these forms in recognition of their miscellany of prose and verse forms within one document though I acknowledge that this term is loosely defined and shares conventions with spiritual journal, commonplace book, and conversion narrative. Smyth and Webster have written on the difficulty of defining commonplace books, miscellanies, and spiritual journals concluding that the terms are concomitantly too rigid and too loose. John Frow and Alastair Fowler have noted the inherent instability and fluidity of these multiple genres.[67] As a locus and indeed a context for meditation these miscellanies collaborate with the process of meditation.

Several critics have written on the notebook culture of the early modern period, and on the notebook as a physical space for organising, recording, and developing thought. The meditative miscellany participates in this culture.[68] Catherine Field describes the variety of sources compilers curated including the Bible, sermons, poetry, devotions, philosophy, natural history, and rhetoric.

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[64] Green, 'Varieties of Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain', p. 10.
[65] Anselment, 'Feminine Self-Reflection and the Seventeenth-Century Occasional Meditation', p. 76.
[66] Jan Blommaert, *Discourse: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 47.
[67] Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England*, p. 123; Angus Vine, *Miscellaneous Order: Manuscript Culture and the Early Modern Organization of Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 7 – 8; Webster, 'Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', p. 35; Adam Smyth, 'Printed Miscellanies in England 1640 – 1682: "store-house[s] of wit"', in *Criticism*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Spring, 2000), pp. 151 – 184 (p. 152); Kevin Chovanec, '"Various expressions in a Various matter": The Unity in Hybridity of William Leighton's Devotional Miscellany', in *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 112, No. 4 (Autumn, 2015), pp. 741 – 773 (p. 742); John Frow, *Genre* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 2; Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and modes* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 2002), p. 39 – 54.
[68] Beal, 'The Seventeenth-Century Commonplace Book', p. 1. See also: Ann Blair, 'The Rise of Note-Taking in Early Modern Europe' in *Intellectual History Review*, 20 (2010), pp. 303 – 316 (p. 303 – 305); Richard Yeo, 'Between Memory and Paperbooks: Baconian and Natural History in Seventeenth-Century England', in *History of Science*, Vol. 45 (2007) pp. 1 – 46.

This scholarship demonstrates the interdisciplinarity of thought in the Early Modern period and the fluidity with which meditation was able to underpin knowledge far removed from its spiritual origins to which the present thesis contributes.[69] Field's commonplace can easily be mapped onto *Book M* and more broadly onto Traherne's writing across several works. Traherne's texts in particular describe a mind reading, writing, editing, and working across several documents and several disciplines at once. Thus Jeremy Schildt observes the transmissibility of thought in miscellanies and the manner in which early modern epistemology blurred the lines between disciplines: notetaking 'encouraged careful observation, selection and gathering and supported the bespoke and practical application of God's Word. Its widespread use in the fields of literature and law, science and theology is revealing of the transactions that were taking place in this period between different forms of literacy'.[70] The extent to which a meditative miscellany is or is not meditative, therefore, is defined more so in its function than in its textual content and the extant document may fit into several modern day disciplinary categories. Thus Austen's letters to counsel, Delaval's memoirs of her childhood, and Flavel's borrowings from Ovid each point to spiritual lessons or moral points the writer considers within a meditative context. Meditative miscellanies, therefore, contain a variety of devotional, meditative, and secular writing compiled for the purposes of meditation though the precise function or functions of the text may at times overlap or appear contradictory.

Moreover, these texts were not static but rather in a continual state of curation and iteration as writers collected, wrote, updated, and reorganised texts according to changing interests, changing concepts of selfhood, or the whims of serendipity. Thus Angus Vine observes: 'individuals commonly maintained a series of manuscripts and notebooks, entering information in one order in their first book, only for that information to be reordered and reformulated, digested and

[69] Field, 'Writing the Self in Women's Recipe Books', p. 51.
[70] Jeremy Schildt, "In my private reading of the scriptures': Protestant Bible-reading in England, circa 1580 – 1720', in *Private and Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain*, ed. by Jessica Martin and Alec Ryrie (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012) p. 189 – 209 (p. 200).

transformed, in subsequent books'.[71] More than a store of data, therefore, the miscellany is a site for the manufacture and processing of ideas. Where these ideas pertain to the self and identity the text is a site for personal interpretation. Megan Matchinske notes this transformative quality of self-writing with reference to spiritual diaries: 'iteration as it is construed in early modern women's diary writing also seems to be responding to something else – to a history that is in need of active and continual remediation'.[72] This personal and textual iterativity is particularly evident in Delaval's writing. In her introduction she writes of the emotional distress of encountering past iterations of her self. More than a vessel of thought, the meditative text at times allows Delaval to engage in a form of reflective dialogue with earlier iterations of her self. The text performs the role of an iteration of the writer. Similarly, Austen's and Traherne's manuscripts witness copious emendations, and deletions which preserve these writers encountering and rewriting themselves and, as I discuss in the fifth chapter, critics have noted both the similarities and differences between texts in Traherne's corpus which suggest the development of his character over successive textual iterations. These glimpses of former textual and personal iterations that the extant text encodes are emblematic of the conscience which is composed of layers of selfhood. In addition, G. Thomas Tanselle draws attention to the miscellany itself as an inspiration for further thought noting: texts 'at any given past time, constituted the inanimate environment and influenced what was being thought'.[73] That is, the accumulated and accumulating meditations and texts in the miscellany influence the compiler in the act of further meditation. Writing, in this sense is an integral and iterative textual part of meditation whereby practitioners review, evaluate, and amend their meditation. It allows the individual to iterate or construct their personality at least on paper.

[71] Angus Vine, *Miscellaneous Order: Manuscript Culture and the Early Modern Organisation of Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 23. Stephen Dobranksi describes this habit of continually moving data between and within texts as 'transactional reading': Stephen Dobranksi, *Readers and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 28.
[72] Megan Matchinske, 'Serial Identity: History, Gender, and Form in the Diary Writing of Lady Anne Clifford', in *Genre and Women's Life Writing in Early Modern* England, ed. by Michelle M. Dowd and Julie Eckerle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 65 – 80 (p. 76). See also: Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England*, p. 2 – 3.
[73] G. Thomas Tanselle, 'Printing History and Other History', *Studies in Bibliography* , Vol. 48 (Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, 1995), pp. 269 – 289 (p.271).

Nevertheless, writing is only one part of the textual processes associated with these texts and reading as a consequence and an impetus to write feature heavily in the meditative process. The chapters of the thesis illustrate the duality of meditative miscellanies as a synthesis of an individual's reading and writing wherein notions of individual authorship and textual authority are displaced by idiosyncrasy and textual function. Narveson has described the duality of notebook culture as both a writing and a reading habit with particular reference to both processes as a means to digest the Bible, and Margaret JM. Ezell locates these habits in wider textual and devotional culture noting: 'reading, recording, and meditating on even minor daily events was part of the daily spiritual exercises performed by many early modern women'.[74] All three manuscript writers in the thesis show evidence of having reread their textual meditations; in addition, Flavel evidently intended both *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized* to be reread by his readers; Hopton's extraction from her sources demonstrates a complex process of rereading and adapting texts. In the example of Delaval in particular her manuscript suggests she reread her meditations in full several times and iteration was both a reading and a writing process through which she confronted her spiritual development. Similarly Trill finds evidence that Halkett reread all her meditations – a substantial task given the size of Halkett's corpus.[75] Austen's manuscript strongly implies she wrote, edited, read, and reread in a remarkably dynamic manner which saw her find connections between disparate parts of the text and between her other manuscripts. Reading and writing, therefore, did not happen in a simple linear or chronological manner through the text. Smyth reaches a similar conclusion in reference to the dynamic composition and recomposition of miscellanies: 'If we, as contemporary readers, are interested in studying texts as they might have been read in early modern England, then the exclusive pursuit of textual coherence, or linear readings, may, in some cases, be an

[74] Margaret Ezell, 'Domestic Papers: Manuscript Culture and Early Modern Women's Life Writing', in *Genre and Women's Life Writing in Early Modern England*, ed. by Michelle M. Dowd and Julia A. Eckerle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 33 – 48 (p. 36); Narveson, *Bible Readers and Lay Writers*, pp. 3, 12 – 13. See also: C. John Somerville, *Popular Religion in Restoration England* (Gainsville: The University of Florida, 1977), p. 2 – 32; Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 133.
[75] Suzanne Trill, 'Notes to Chapter One', in *Lady Anne Halkett: Selected Self-Writings*, ed. by Suzanne Trill (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 1 – 3 (p. 1).

anachronistic way to think about these books'.[76] With the possible exception of Delaval, none of the texts in this thesis invites a strictly linear reading and it is unlikely that they were composed in a linear fashion – though Traherne likely composed his *Centuries of Meditations* and *Select Meditations* in a linear manner only later to revisit and edit the text substantially. Moreover, where readers are implied the writers routinely direct individuals and distinct groups around the text – according to privilege and need – using paratexts and internal citations. This is particularly apparent in Flavel's presentation of his text for readers of varying literacy abilities including the provision of verse forms to be rehearsed for those unable to read in the most fundamental sense of interpreting letters on a page. Reading, writing, rereading, and editing meditations was, therefore, an integral part of the meditative process and it is important to acknowledge the dynamism and cyclicality by which these texts were composed and consumed.

With an eye to wider devotional culture as expressed in text, Richard Rogers' (c. 1550–1618) *Seven Treatises* (1603) describes the centrality of meditation in devotional praxis: 'this spiritual exercise of meditation is even that what putteth life and strength into all other duties'.[77] Hopton's work in particular combines meditation, prayer, and scripture and each of the writers incorporates evidence of these wider devotional practices into their meditative miscellanies. Austen paraphrases her readings from published sermons into her *Book M*. In addition, several theorists recommended meditation as a means to reinforce the message of sermons which suggests complementary spiritual functions in sermons and meditation. Edmund Calamy 'The Elder' (1600 – 1666) emphasises the spiritual power of sermons as a tool for understanding in his *The Arte of Divine Meditation* (1634): 'one Sermon well digested, well meditated upon, is better than twenty Sermons without

[76] Adam Smyth, ''Rend and teare in peeces': Textual Fragmentation in Seventeenth-Century England', in *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 19 (2004), pp. 36 – 52 (p. 44).
[77] Richard Rogers, *Seuen treatises containing such direction as is gathered out of the Holie Scriptures, leading and guiding to true happines, both in this life, and in the life to come: and may be called the practise of Christianitie. Profitable for all such as heartily desire the same: in the which, more particularly true Christians may learne how to leade a godly and comfortable life euery day* (London: Thomas Man and Robert Dexter ,1603), p. 235.

meditation'.[78] Calamy's digestive metaphor describes an internalising and refining process. James Ussher (1581 – 1656) describes a complementary and reciprocating relationship between meditation and sermons as a process of spiritual learning in *A Method for Meditation* (1657): 'every Sermon is but a preparation for meditation'.[79] Ussher's assertion stresses the locus of meditation as an extension of liturgical worship and the textuality of meditation as a practice linked to sermons and scripture. Kaufmann collapses the distinction between sermon and meditation by describing meditation as sermonizing to the soul from scripture.[80] In Kaufmann's definition the sermon is an intermediary in the meditative process. On the other hand, Daniel Patterson and Donald E. Stanford have suggested an opposite relationship between meditation and sermons in the example of Edward Taylor (c. 1642 – 1729), colonial Presbyterian minister, who apparently wrote verse meditations as inspiration for his sermons. [81] In their model of Taylor's practice, meditation underpins worship in church and mirrors Loyola's concept of meditation as a means to strengthen the minds of clergy. Similarly, Traherne's *Church's Year-Book*, which this thesis does not study in detail, contains prose meditations, prayers, and readings which appear to have been composed preparative to liturgical worship.[82] Taylors work falls too late for the thesis and his meditations are entirely in verse; however, the methodology of the thesis might usefully be extended into Taylor's period, and combined with scholarship on sermons, to examine the reciprocating transmission of ideas from meditation to sermon and back to meditation. Meditation, therefore, was part of a wider devotional culture which included what might be considered public and private forms of worship, and, in the

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[78] Edmund Calamy, *The art of divine meditation, or, A discourse of the nature, necessity, and excellency thereof with motives to, and rules for the better performance of that most important Christian duty: in several sermons on Gen. 24:63* (London: Thomas Parkhurst and J Collier, 1680), p. 31.
[79] James Ussher, *A Method for Meditation, or, A manuall of divine duties, fit for every Christians practice* (London: John Place, 1657), p. 49. On the complementary relationship between meditation and church worship see: Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 127.
[80] Kaufmann, *The Pilgrim's Progress and Traditions in Puritan Meditation*, p. 120.
[81] Daniel Patterson, 'Introduction', in Edward Taylor, *Gods Determinations and Preparatory Meditations: A Critical Edition*, ed. by Daniel Patterson (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2003) pp. 1 – 46 (pp. 19 – 27); Donald E. Stanford, 'Introduction', in Edward Taylor, *The Poems of Edward Taylor*, ed. by Donald E. Stanford (London: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), pp. xvii – xli (p. xxxv).
[82] Traherne, 'The Church's Year-Book', p. 148.

example of sermons, meditation was part of a wider system of processing and, at times, authoring spiritual knowledge.

Nevertheless, meditation practitioners apparently prioritised spiritual knowledge and its devotional value over the acknowledgement of authorship. Many of the writers in the thesis, notably the women writers, construct modest and effacing authorial personae or the writers blend the voices of several sources including scripture. The thesis therefore examines these authorial personae and the manner by which the writers ascribed textual authority to their works. With reference to a manuscript compiled by John Gibson (1601 – 1665) from printed texts (1655 – 1660) Smyth points to the interrelatedness of reading, collecting, and writing and to a less pervasive sense of authorship than we have today: 'Gibson's manuscript implies a conception of printed books as resources from which excerpts might be taken; as collectives of potential fragments. The manuscript suggests an interest in moments of a text, much more than a coherent whole […] there is little sense of looking back to origins.'[83] Each of the writers in this thesis shows an apparent disregard for the cohesion and authority of the source text even where the source is their own writing. As a pursuit of spiritual meaning, meditative textual practice places an emphasis on meaning over authorship – and often over grammatical cohesion where extracts are inelegantly transcribed into the manuscript. Webster argues agency and authority are vested in the writer of the text who turns external authority to personal ends.[84] That is, removing material to the new context of the meditative miscellany, and its attendant functions, is an authorising act. Nevertheless, Hopton in particular effaces her authorial presence and that of her sources in favour of the higher authority of God and the edification of her readers. That is, the authority of her text rests in its approval and use by her readers. Moreover, Hopton and Traherne's writing may have been composed collaboratively thereby challenging the singularity of authorship and Hopton's adaptation of sources is arguably a form of collaboration. Eckerle defines Hopton's recessive approach to authorship as a 'humility topos'

[83] Smyth, 'Textual Fragmentation in Seventeenth-Century England', p. 43.
[84] Webster, 'Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', p. 36.

commonly found in women's writing.[85] Nevertheless, though certainly more felt in the women's writing in this thesis, each of the writers retreats to some extent behind the edification and functionality of their texts. Thus in meditative miscellanies, writer, form, discipline, and textual authority serve the devotional and epistemological functions of the text and its reader.

In addition to collaboration and the blending of authorial voices many practitioners took part in communities of practice. These social aspects of meditation shed doubt on earlier binary classifications of meditation as the private counterpart to liturgical worship. Moreover practitioners apparently fostered a process whereby meditative practices were passed on and developed intergenerationally. In his own words, Hall passes on the tradition to his readers directing the reader: 'to make mee, and himselfe so happie, as to take out my lesson, and to learne how to read Gods great Booke, by mine'.[86] Flavel and Traherne give similar directions to their readers in the hope of edifying themselves and their readers. These instructions stress the textuality of the transmission of learning. Likewise, some groups wrote material for each other, in apparent like manner to the devotional community at Little Gidding, and meditative writing was frequently published with specific readers and dedicatees in mind. Some critics have suggested Hopton was a member of a devotional community which I discuss in chapter four with reference to ideas of textual agency and authorship. Molekamp observes women as the conduits of meditative practice and of the inherent textuality of practice: 'Many printed books of devotional meditations were dedicated to women, just as women who could write were frequently authors of manuscript meditation books for their own use'.[87] Too early for the thesis, Elizabeth Grimestone (1563 – c. 1603) shows remarkable parallels to Austen, who wrote sixty years later, in her *Miscellanea. Meditations. Memoratives* (1604).[88] Grimestone intermingles devotional, personal, and memorial forms which show the relatedness of

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[85] Julie A. Eckerle, 'Prefacing Texts, Authorizing Authors, and Constructing Selves: The Preface as Autobiographical Space', in *Genre and Women's Life Writing in Early Modern England*, ed. by Michele M. Dowd and Julie Eckerle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 97 – 113 (p. 101).
[86] Hall, *Occasionall Meditations*, p. xxiii.
[87] Molekamp, *Religious Reading and Writing,* p. 119.
[88] Elizabeth Grymeston, *Miscelanea. Meditations. Memoratiues* (London: Felix Norton, 1604).

these practices. Moreover, her publication originally for her son, Bernye, who later published the text for a wider audience, illustrates the manner in which meditative writing was transmitted within family and community. Falling just prior to the period studied by the thesis, Constance Aston Fowler's (1621 – 1664) meditative compilation contains verse meditations which, like Grimestones, bridge the Protestant and Roman Catholic branches of the meditative tradition showing the blurring of confessional lines in favour of devotional function in meditative compilation.[89] Contemporary to the thesis, though writing in prose only, Robert Boyle wrote *Occasional Reflections upon Several Subjects* (1665) for his sister Katherine Jones (Lady Ranelagh, 1615 – 1691). Their sister, Mary Rich (1625 –1678), wrote an autobiography, meditations and diaries (1666 - 1677)[90]. Boyle's and Rich's strong adherence to the style and imagery of Hall's exemplar occasional meditations makes them interesting candidates for studying a distinctly Hallian tradition of meditative analogy. Moreover, Rich composed a manuscript guide to meditation on George Berkeley's (1st Earl Berkeley, 1628 – 1698) request.[91] Berkeley in turn published *Historical Applications and Occasional Meditations* (1667).[92] The complex network of texts this group deployed describes the transmission of meditation within a social class through the industry of men and women. Similarly, though less collaboratively, Flavel overtly positions his verse and prose meditations as an expansion of the earlier prose meditations of John Durant's (1620 - 1689) *The Christians Compass* (1654).[93] Thus the textuality of meditation facilitated its transmission between and within generations of writers, and the tradition was continually developed and adapted by each new practitioner.

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[89] San Marino, CA, Huntington Library, HM 904 'Verse Miscellany of Constance Aston Fowler'.
[90] Robert Boyle, *Occasional Reflections upon Several Subjects, whereto is premis'd a Discourse about Such Kind of Thoughts* (London: Henry Herringham, 1665) also available in: Robert Boyle, *The Works of Robert Boyle*, ed. by Michael Hunter and Edward B. Davis, Vol. 5 (of 14)(London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), pp. 3 – 189; London, British Library, Additional Manuscript 27356 also available in: Mary Rich, *The Occasional Meditations of Mary Rich Countess of Warwick*, ed. by Raymond A. Anselment (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2009).
[91] Coolahan, 'Redeeming Parcels of Time: Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 131.
[92] George Berkeley, *Historical Applications and Occasional Meditations upon Several Subjects Written by a Person of Honour* (London: R. Royston, 1667).
[93] John Durant, *Christian's Compass , or, The Mariner's Companion: Being a Brief Compendium of the Principles of Religion, in the things which are necessary to be known and practised by all who profess the name of Christ* (London: TL., 1658).

Late Seventeen-Century Meditation Practitioners and Historical Contexts

Meditation was practised by men and women across confessions, social strata, geographical regions, and political boundaries. The tradition of meditation examined in the thesis was popular between approximately the English Reformation (c. 1532), which instigated a great need for devotional writing, and the Hanoverian ascendancy (1714), which coincided with social and political changes in attitudes towards religion and a rise in the popularity of autobiographical writing and journaling which eclipsed meditative writing.[94] Written at this later juncture, Jonathan Swift's *A Meditation on a Broomstick* (1710), which satirizes meditative conceits, mocks a tradition which was increasingly seen as out-moded.[95] The popularity of meditation in the Sixteenth Century and increasingly so in the Seventeenth Century coincided with the religio-political imposition of the Reformation and later wars of religion. Martz notes the marked interiority of the Seventeenth Century as a response to the ongoing external pressures of religious conflict:

> by the opening of the seventeenth century a large proportion of the English public had taken to its heart the fruits of the Counter Reformation in the realm of inward devotion. These continental practices of meditation combined with the older traditions of primer and private prayer, and with the inward surge of Puritanism, to produce in the seventeenth century an era of religious fervour unmatched in English history.[96]

Moreover both John Spur and C. John Somerville find the religious fervour of the later Seventeenth Century more heavily marked by introspection, isolation, and a move to practical over experiential devotion and an outpouring of texts in support of these habits.[97] The outpouring of religious texts coincided with increases in literacy rates. The extant record of meditative practice is therefore skewed toward the latter end of the Seventeenth Century as literacy rose and interiority peaked and

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[94] Coolahan, 'Aesthetics and Practice of Occasional Meditation', p. 125).
[95] Jonathan Swift, 'Meditation on a Broomstick', in *Parodies, Hoaxes, Mock Treatises Polite Conversation, Directions to Servants and Other Works*, ed. by Valerie Rumbold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 1 – 15.
[96] Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, revised edn. (London: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 9; Somerville, *Popular Religion in Restoration England*, p. 5.
[97] John Spur, *The Restoration Church of England,* p. 286; Somerville, *Popular Religion in Restoration England*, p. 5.

toward writers in the middle and upper classes of society who had the time and resources to undertake and record meditation. Indeed, Delaval defines her obligation to be pious by her social standing.[98] Nevertheless, women writers of the early modern period were particularly noted for destroying their manuscripts and the extant record is therefore likely skewed by these habits.[99] Austen's *Book M* has been sliced from its original binding and there is evidence in the manuscript that she worked across several now lost manuscripts; more emphatic of the precarity of manuscripts, Denise Inge's description of Traherne's manuscripts illustrates their poor condition and often serendipitous discovery stories.[100] Nevertheless, extant meditative texts in publication and archives are substantial. Narrowing the focus of the thesis to texts composed during the later Seventeenth Century enables concentration on a peak period of activity and extant writing and on a period when the individual conscience was under pressure from the anti-tolerationist stance of the Cavalier Parliament (1661 – 1678). This section describes the historical contexts of the Cavalier Parliament and examines the broader arc of seventeenth century meditation practitioners in order to demonstrate the selection of the five writers.

The Cavalier Parliament encompassed a long period of religio-political intransigence following the Restoration of the English, Irish, and Scottish monarchies. The Cavalier Parliament saw intense debates over religious freedoms under the so called Clarendon Code of anti-tolerationist penal laws.[101] Several laws enacted during this period restricted freedom of religious expression and placed heavy geographical and financial constraints on non-conformist ministers. Firstly, the Corporation Act (1661) excluded non-conformists from public office creating a politically

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[98] See, Delaval, *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval*, p. 106: 'Certenly I who have so much time given to my own dispose ought to imploy much more of it upon my knee's then poor laboururs are requier'd to do, who are obliged to worke for there bread in the sweat of there brow's, and whose hearty (though short) ejaculations no doubt are accepted'.
[99] Effie Botonaki, *Seventeenth-Century English Women's Autobiographical* Writings, pp. 91 – 92.
[100] Sarah CE. Ross, 'Textual Introduction', in Katherine Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, ed. by Sarah C.E. Ross. (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011), pp. 41 – 47 (p. 43); Denise Inge, 'Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *Happiness and Holiness: Thomas Traherne and His Writings*, ed. by Denise Inge (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2008), pp. 1 – 64 (pp. 23 – 49); see also: HM. Margoliuth, 'Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *Centuries, Poems, and Thanksgivings*, ed. by HM Margoliuth, Vol. 1 (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. ix – xli (pp. x – xxii).
[101] John Miller, *Restoration England: The Reign of Charles II* (London: Longman, 1985), pp. 44 – 46; Neil Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987), p. 45 – 58.

marginalised minority. The Act of Uniformity (1662) reissued the Book of Common Prayer as the state mandated liturgy. Approximately three thousand clergy were displaced in the aftermath of the Act of Uniformity, and the Act of Establishing Ministers (1660). These clergy either resigned in refusal to conform, were ejected, retired, or were replaced by ministers who had held the post prior to the Interregnum.[102] The distribution of ministers evicted from their livings was uneven and politically marginal areas including urban and coastal areas of Devon, home to John Flavel, were particularly affected.[103] The Conventicle Act (1664) prohibited unauthorised meetings for worship of more than five people who were not members of the same household thereby limiting the ability of ejected ministers to meet in private residences. Moreover, The Five Mile Act (1665) forbade non-conformist ministers from living within five miles of the parishes from which they had been expelled and from teaching in schools. This law forced many ministers, including Flavel, into itinerancy. The starkest difference in the livelihoods and writing of the five writers in this thesis is between Flavel, who, forced out of his parish, turned to meditation as a means to cultivate a community through text, and Traherne, who appears to have retreated into a small circle of likeminded individuals often lamenting the apparent difference between himself and the wider corruptions of society. Delaval's work shows similar conflicts between her devotional interiority and the expectations of her society. In her writing she contrasts the femininity, piety, and seclusion of her aunt's home at Nocton Hall with the corruption and sexuality of the court, and she struggles to find her place in either community. More daringly, Hopton embraces perceived Roman Catholic practices most notably in her reclamation of canonical hours. Moreover, both these women writers later identified with the non-juring community. For each of these writers, therefore, meditation described communities of practice and the boundaries between interiority and wider society. Thus, though seemingly apolitical, the meditative texts featured in this thesis encode acts of ostracism, exile, rebellion,

[102] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, pp. 31 – 32.
[103] Ian Gowers, 'The Clergy in Devon 1641 – 1662', in *The New Maritime History of Devon*, ed. by Michael Duffy, Stephen Fisher, Basil Greenhill, David J. Starkey, Joyce Youings, Vol. 1 (of 2)(Conway Maritime Press: London, 1992), p. 200 – 209 (pp. 200 – 225); Mark Stoyle, *Loyalty and Locality: Popular Allegiance in Devon During the English Civil* War (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1994), pp. 197, 254; HPR Finberg, 'A Chapter of Religious History', in *Devonshire Studies*, ed. by WG. Hoskins and HPR. Finberg (London: Jonathan Cape, 1952), pp. 366 – 395 (pp. 366 – 373).

othering, and the difficulty of retreating from the world whilst continuing to reside within its corruptions. The texts demonstrate the impact of and response to an intense period of religious intolerance which saw a turn to introspection, community, and writing for solace.

Textually and socially, the period of the Cavalier Parliament has been identified as a period which saw an increase in publication – disproportionately so by non-conformist writers across a spectrum of non-conforming communities, an increase in the visibility of women writers in publishing and religio-political discourse, and the birth of modern concepts of privacy, individuality, and self-hood – which John Locke describes in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) which observes the secularisation of the self.[104] Seemingly paradoxically, these movements toward a more diverse and secular culture occurred during the last attempt by an English government to coerce the conscience of the nation to conformity through the imposition of penal laws, extradition, and control of the press.[105] The Cavalier Parliament both failed in its goal to eradicate or rehabilitate non-conformity and failed to control the textual discourses which fuelled dissent and emphasised the strength of individual conscience.[106] Notably, Keeble has argued that the form of non-conformity seen under the Cavalier Parliament showed a marked difference to that before the Restoration, and Keeble's observation underlines the stress on individual conscience during this period.[107] Prior to the imposition of the Clarendon Code, as far back as the Elizabethan settlement, occasional forms of non-conformity had existed and it was still possible to conform by an agreement to acknowledge worship as set out in the *Book of Common Prayer* if not in principal or action. Under the Clarendon

[104] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, pp. 24, 210, p. 686; George Southcombe, *The Culture of Dissent in Restoration England: The Wonders of the Lord* (Martlesham: Boydell & Brewer, 2019), p. 5; Jason McElligott, 'The Book Trade, Licensing, and Censorship', in *The Oxford Handbook of Literature and The English Revolution*, ed. by Laura Lunger Knoppers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 135 – 153 (p. 136); Gillian Wright, *The Restoration Transposed: Poetry, Place and History, 1660 – 1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 3; W. Scott Howard, 'Prophecy, Power, and Religious Dissent', in *A History of Early Modern Women's Writing*, ed. by Patricia Phillippy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 315 – 331 (p. 315); John Baker, Marion Leclair, and Allan Ingram, 'Introduction', in *Writing and Constructing the Self in Great Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century*, ed. by John Baker, Marion Leclair, and Allan Ingram (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), pp. 1 – 24 (pp. 2 – 3).
[105] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, p. 15 – 18.
[106] JR. Jones, 'Introduction', in *The Restored Monarchy 1660 – 1688*, ed. by JR. Jones (London: Macmillan Press, 1979), pp. 1 – 29 (p. 28); Jason McElligott, 'The Book Trade, Licensing, and Censorship', p. 136.
[107] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, pp. 39, 31, 41 – 42.

Code conformity became an issue of conscience, not least in the imposition of the Act of Uniformity which now required clergy to pledge their conformity to a text, the reissued *Book of Common Prayer*, which in most part they had not read. Moreover, though legally cast together, non-conformity was not a single identity but rather a spectrum from Presbyterians – who opposed episcopal church governance and retained a hope of readmission into a reformed Church of England – to Quakers who believed no monarch or state could dictate the conscience of individual Christians.[108] Thus conformity, or non-conformity, was transformed from outward expression of allegiance to the state church to an inward examination of the conscience.[109] Distinctly, Keeble observes the publication of such canonical texts as *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) occur following the Restoration, and not during the puritan ascendancy.[110] He argues that literary texts such as these observe both the loss and failure of the republican regime but also a turn from the goal of creating an earthly paradise to cultivating an inward experience of faith: 'The millenarianism of the Interregnum was transmuted into what a modern theologian would call 'realized eschatology', the doctrine that the kingdom of God belongs not to the future nor to the world but is founded within each believer who possesses, in Milton's phrase, 'a paradise within''.[111] Thus, though all sides published politically motivated texts in favour of or against conformity, the vast majority of religious writing consisted of devotional instruction, catechism, and biographical accounts of religious experience. These texts stress the lived experience of faith over and above the religio-politics of confession or theological debate which belonged to the earlier years of the century. Both personal and instructive meditative texts fit into this landscape of inward looking devotional writing. The practical, spiritual, non-controversial nature of meditation coupled with its approval by clergy across confessions made it appealing both for textual production and textual

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[108] Paul Seward, *The Restoration* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 41; Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, pp. 14 – 15, 33 – 36, 58.
[109] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, p. 208.
[110] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, p. 22. Keeble notes that many of Bunyan's texts circulated in manuscript during his lifetime in avoidance of press censorship, p. 689.
[111] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987), pp. 23 – 24, 40, 83, 205 – 209.

consumption. Hopton's simply titled *Daily Devotions Consisting of Thanksgivings, Confessions, and Prayers* stresses the practicality and cross confessional acceptability of these forms. Commercially, 'meditations' could be packaged both for the target confessional readership and a broader readership of the faithful at large. Flavel's selection of the meditation as a rhetorical form as a means to remediate his ministry in the 1660s arguably buys into the popularity and marketability of meditative texts in this period, and of each of the writers in this thesis Flavel most emphatically selects textual forms, particularly his verse forms and the mediation, according to their popular appeal. In a period which stressed conscience and lived experience of faith, for all confessions, the devotional practicality of the text apparently could outweighed the religio-political allegiances of its author and did appeal to a public eager to address their consciences.

In addition to a change in the devotional landscape which influenced a change in the form and type of religious writing produced, political, economic, and social influences dictated the availability and distribution of texts. On the same day as the enactment of the Act of Uniformity the Licensing Act reimposed censorship and control of the publication industry by the Stationers Company.[112] These laws lapsed in 1679, at which time they were deemed unnecessary as anti-sedition and treason laws were as effective; the laws were re-enacted later in the century (1693) only to lapse again in 1695. Thus, as with the Clarendon Code's attempt to coerce conscience, the Licensing Act attempted to coerce communication. In principle these laws put a monopoly on the church and state as censors and on the Stationers Company as overseers of the right to publication: copyright was given into possession of the individual printers, and printers were licensed by the Stationers Company. Printers, as the owners of copyright, and writers were on occasion arrested and imprisoned, and, as in all aspects of society, fear pervaded the industry.[113] Nevertheless, Censorship was concerned largely with sedition and heresy, rather than practical matters of devotion.

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[112] Thomas N. Corns, *A History of Seventeenth-Century English Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), p. 26; Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, pp. 96, 687.
[113] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, pp. 112 – 113, 120.

Moreover, in practice neither church, state, nor Stationers Company had the necessary means to control the industry and printing houses were set up clandestinely or openly in contravention of the Stationers Company.[114] Whilst the quality and consistency of these publications was at times poor, not least the pagination of Flavel's writing, they nevertheless made texts available to a wide readership.[115] The Quakers in particular kept a record of all publications made about Quakers and by Quakers, and all Quaker ministers participated in the distribution of texts – each of which contravened the Licensing Act on the basis that Quakers believed the government had no justification to control publication.[116] Nevertheless, despite extensive distribution networks all but the cheapest and poorest quality chapbooks were available to the labouring poor, and, though evidently of a lower publication quality 'I am aware of many defects in these Papers', labourers were unlikely to afford Flavel's *Husbandry Spritualized* – though Baxter writes of extensive contributions of his own money to support the lower cost of his publications.[117] Jason McElligott observes a lively second-hand market which he points out makes it near impossible to determine the reach and popularity of Early Modern books, and in his prefatory material Flavel suggests farmers and landowners might read to their illiterate labouring employees thereby extending the reach beyond possession of the physical text or literacy in its historical sense: 'I hope the Children at home, and the Servants in the fields | will learn to exercise themselves this way also'.[118] At the other end of the social scale, publication by manuscript was still available and often preferable as a means to control access or circumvent censorship. Ezell argues with reference to Austen's country-house poem 'On the Situation of Highbury' (*Book* M, 104^{r}, pp. 158 – 159) that Austen sought a higher social rank of and that she pursued scribal publication of her poetry as a means to attain this. Anonymity was also a possibility although many writers published under their own names and accepted the very real risk

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[114] Southcombe, *The Culture of Dissent in Restoration England*, p. 6; Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, pp. 111 – 113, 688.
[115] Corns, *Seventeenth-Century English Literature*, p. 25.
[116] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, p. 111.
[117] Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized*, p. vii.
[118] Flavel, *Husbandry* Spiritualized, pp. 8 – 9; Jason McElligott, 'The Book Trade, Licensing, and Censorship', p. 137. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity*, pp. 82, 110, 113 – 133, 688.

of doing so. Hopton's publication, mediated by male clergy with the elision of her name, circumvents perceptions of her class and gender by presenting her as predominantly a pious individual apparently free of the political allegiances of her time. Wealth also bought space and newly available closets in which writers could compose private prayers and meditations or keep spiritual diaries, and Hopton's prayers written for use within and without the church along with her 'Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward' (*Daily Devotions*, pp. 138 – 143) reveal an at times porous but nevertheless present boundary between public and private worship.[119] On the other hand, Traherne's decision to publish *The Roman Forgeries* (1673) is an explicit intervention in the religio-political events of his time and a clear indication of his allegiance to his employer, Sir Orlando Bridgeman (1606 – 1674), who had relinquished his position as Lord Privy Seal in opposition to the 1672 Act of Indulgence on the grounds of his opposition to Roman Catholicism.[120] Nevertheless, the relative privacy of Traherne's meditations underlines the confessional questionability of a clergy with financial ties to a politically influential individual. His publication of thought developed in meditation in *Christian Ethicks* (1675) targeted at an educated class of reader and consisting of instruction in Christian virtue circumvents political debate in favour of spiritual knowledge. During the period of the Cavalier Parliament, therefore, there was still hope for some form of religious conformity within the state church by parties on both sides of the legal divide and extensive political and legal capital was expended on coercion and on negotiating a settlement which ultimately failed.[121] On the other hand, a lively and extensive print and manuscript publishing industry enabled the production of religious and literary writing largely on matters of devotion which fuelled a turn to matters of individual conscience – which in turn was analysed, and at times published, in public and private

[119] Erica Longfellow, "My now solitary prayers': *Eikon basilike* and Changing Attitudes toward Religious Solitude', in *political Turmoil: Early Modern British Literature in Transition, 1623 – 1660*, Vol. 2, ed. by Stephen Dobranski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 53 – 72 (pp. 53 – 54).
[120] Howard Nenner, 'Bridgeman, Sir Orlando, first baronet (1609–1674)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2014), available online at < https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/3392> [accessed 24/12/2022].
[121] JR. Jones, 'Introduction', p. 22.

meditations – and which only served to perpetuate the spectrum of positions between outright conformity and non-conformity.

Methodology and Chapter Outlines

The thesis locates meditation in broader devotional and textual practices performed individually, domestically, and communally whereby the text is essential to the process of meditation. It challenges conceptions of meditation as an isolated devotional practice or of the meditative text as a literary product of meditation. This section outlines the methodological approach to the thesis and locates the five chapters in relation to the preceding meditative and religio-political contexts described in this chapter. The thesis takes an historico-formalist approach to the individual textual and material contexts of the text. Opposing the study of verse divorced from its material context, Love argues the miscellanies in which many verse forms are found describe the social, historical, and transmission context of the poems themselves.[122] That is, the component texts and the manuscript itself are important contexts. Moreover, Ezell warns against broad brush readings of genre which ignore the nuances of form and context arguing: a female tradition 'implies the existence of a common ground and continuity in literary works – in terms of subject, genre, style – and in the writers' lives, their education, social class, and literary activity'.[123] Likewise the two male writers inhabit different contexts despite their shared education and profession and in each of the five examples textual choices are influenced by a variety of factors beyond simple binaries of gender and class. Thus the thesis studies each writer in their individual contexts as a means to derive a richer understanding of the writer and a broader reading of meditative practices. Elizabeth Scott-Baumann produces similar arguments on the recovery of women's writing and notes attentiveness to the individuality and materiality of the text gives insight into the evolving and reciprocating relationship between the writer and the text: 'to understand women's place in literary history, we need to

[122] Harold Love, *Scribal Publication*, p. 6.
[123] Ezell, *Writing Women's Literary History*, p. 19.

excavate and analyse their dialogue with existing traditions'.[124] The thesis triangulates the relationship between writer and text by interpreting the triad of writer, reader, and text as a complex and shifting relationship in the process of knowledge production and dissemination. Moreover, the thesis argues that at times parts of the text were composed principally for the writer and, therefore, that the individual roles in the triad of writer, reader, and text are also shifting. For instance Austen writes principally to understand herself, and, even in the example of Flavel who published for a community, writing has a personal function in edification and in rehabilitating his role as a minister. In addition, the focus on life-writing in many studies of early modern women's writing, in particular by Julie Eckerle, collapses the boundary between devotional, domestic, and biographical forms, and advances a concept of textual form whereby writers mediated thought across devotional and fictional form and genre as a means to generate self-knowledge.[125] An historico-formalist approach therefore allows the thesis to interpret the intricate nuances of the psychological relationship between the writer and the text and broader religio-political and biographical influences which impact on individual choices.

From the meditation practitioners mentioned thus far, the thesis selects five and examines their textual practices during the period of the Cavalier Parliament; though the thesis recognises that as life-writing these texts often continued to resonate for decades and the iterativity of meditation renders the text inherently unstable in terms of temporal and material fixity. The individual chapters of this thesis describe the textual processes engendered by meditation. The thesis moves in a general pattern from more easily described practices and processes to more complex; from egocentric to more religio-politicallly engaged texts; and from smaller to larger corpuses of work. Each chapter is roughly equal in size in order to give fair coverage to each writer with the exception of Chapter Five which accommodates the larger expanse of Traherne's critical history and four of his texts. The chapters follow comparable structures. Each chapter begins with an assessment of the

[124] Scott-Baumann, *Forms of Engagement*, p. 9 – 11, 16.
[125] Julie A. Eckerle, *Romancing the Self in Early Modern Englishwomen's Life Writing* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

critical and biographical literature on the writer. These assessments locate the text or texts in their historical and formal frameworks and demonstrate the need for further assessment of the meditative practices embodied in the texts. Next, the chapters describe and assess the meditative model and textual practices in the extant text and using this text first approach demonstrate the great variety of meditative textual practices employed during the late Seventeenth Century. As a means to interpret the individual relationships in the triad of writer, reader, and text each of the chapters pays attention to the prefatory material the writers produce, noting, with Anne R. Larson: '[the preface] negotiates a place for the work, and its author, in the public realm'.[126] Finally, case studies on discrete verse and prose forms and genres found within the text demonstrate distinct textual practices.

The thesis begins with the personal, devotional, financial, and domestic meditations of Katherine Austen (1629 – c. 1683) described in her extant manuscript *Book M* which she largely composed between 1664 – 1666 with additions and emendations dated infrequently up to 1682. Austen used *Book M* and evidently several further now lost manuscripts to record her original meditations and to organise and combine these meditations with extracts from her wider devotional reading and secular concerns. Austen composed and responded to a rich web of texts. These include: textual meditations, letters, psalm paraphrases, poems, dream readings, and '[pre]monitions' on a variety of subjects including spirituality, secular concerns, and potentially contentious topics such as the intercession of angels. The extant text documents approximately twenty years of Austen's life and bears witness to the centrality of meditation as a means to understand of herself and her spiritual and secular worlds. The chapter builds on studies which have tended to assess Austen's historical and social contexts. Notably, Sarah CE. Ross and Pamela Hammons both edit editions of *Book M* which locate Katherine Austen in her biographical and theological context as a widow and describe her as a firm believer in the materialistic theology of

[126] Anne R. Larsen, '"Un honneste passetems": Strategies of Legitimation in French Renaissance Women's Prefaces', in *L'Esprit Créateur*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Winter, 1990), pp. 11 – 22 (p. 12).

providence and affliction.[127] The chapter argues that meditation was not a private devotional activity but a system of thought with which Austen interpreted and negotiated her life. This is apparent in her entextualisation of a wide variety of forms and topics in her *Book M*. Secondly, the chapter stresses the iterativity and discontinuity of *Book M* and argues that Austen's manuscripts enabled her to manage the conflicting concerns of her life.

In comparison to Austen's discontinuous, episodic iterativity and overtly intertextual compositional practice, Elizabeth Delaval's *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval* encodes a series of distinct narrative iterations and meditative acts whereby Delaval wrote loose meditations, collected these meditations, and at least twice transcribed and reframed the meditations alongside additional memoir, biographical commentary, and generic conventions derived from early modern romantic fiction. The second chapter centres on Delaval's 1670 iteration of the document with which she appears to have reviewed her character prior to marriage. This iteration can be recovered in the extant document which the widowed Delaval rewrote in the early Eighteenth Century. The chapter argues that these iterative processes witness a meditative pattern whereby Delaval set moral objectives, reviewed these objectives, and repeated the process with the aim of resolving her character. Secondly, the chapter argues that the extant biographical narrative embodies a further cycle of review in which the later memoirs fill gaps in Delaval's meditative record. The chapter builds on studies by Ezell, Molekamp, and Eckerle which have focused on Delaval's use of the romantic fiction genre.[128] The chapter argues that, whilst the biographical and narrative elements imply a reader and suggest the secularity of romantic fiction text, they nevertheless represent Delaval's use of available textual forms as a means to present and review her character. In addition, this practice

[127] Katherine Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, ed. By Sarah CE. Ross (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medival and Renaisance Studies, 2011); Katherine Austen, *Book M: A London Widow's Life Writings*, ed. by Pamela S. Hammons (Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2013); Pamela S. Hammons, 'Despised Creatures: The Illusion of Maternal Self-Effacement in Seventeenth Century Child Loss Poetry', in *English Literary History*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Spring, 1999), pp. 25 – 49.
[128] Molekamp, *Religious Reading and Writing*; Eckerle, *Romancing the Self in Early Modern Englishwomen's Life Writing*; Margaret JM. Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine: Thoughts on Redefining manuscript Texts by Early Modern Women Writers', in *English Manuscript Studies 1100 – 1700*, Vol. 3, ed. by Peter Beal and Jeremy Griffiths (London: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 1992), pp. 216 – 237.

points to the close affinity of textual meditation, romantic fiction, and memoir as means to interpret a character.

Beginning with the third chapter, the thesis explores texts which are overtly addressed to a defined reader or readership. Chapter three examines John Flavel's presentation of meditative writing principally for the maritime community of South Devon in his *Navigation Spiritualized* (1664) and his provision of textual forms for readers across social strata and with varying literacy abilities. Flavel makes extensive use of verse forms to address and delineate his readers, facilitate learning and memory, and organise his text. In addition, he composes unique 'reflections' whereby readers are encouraged to rehearse prayers according to the status of their conscience. The chapter offers the first literary readings of Flavel. It demonstrates the value of Flavel's poetry as an example of verse composed for didactic purposes for a distinct community and considers Flavel's location in a tradition of plain style religious poetry which responds to the model of George Herbert. In addition, it locates Flavel's frontispiece in the emblem tradition. Therefore it considers the place of meditation in a variety of devotional genres. The chapter argues that Flavel adopts meditative writing as a means to mediate his ministry on paper and his repetitively structured text presents meditative thought as lived devotion. In addition, the chapter describes the process whereby Flavel overtly adapted and expanded an earlier text, *The Christian's Compass* (1654) by John Durant (1620 – 1689), as the basis for *Navigation Spiritualized* and his further refinement of this project in *Husbandry Spiritualized* (1669). Thus, the chapter argues that Flavel locates his work in an evolving tradition of writing.

In contrast to Flavel's Presbyterian texts, Hopton's writing was adopted by the similarly marginalised non-juring community during the early Eighteenth Century. Hopton's publishers and critics have repeatedly sought to minimise her literary contributions in favour of stronger, male authorial voices. The fourth chapter examines Hopton's *Daily Devotions* (1673) in the Seventeenth Century context of Hopton's composition of this text. The chapter argues that Hopton's elision of her

own voice and that of the sources she adapts is intended to foreground the meditative text as a locus for meditation by the reader. It argues that Hopton's role as writer, curator, and editor of meditative texts demonstrates the function of the text as an intermediary for meditation between writer and reader. Like Flavel, therefore, Hopton anticipates a defined community of practice. In addition, the chapter examines Hopton's recovery of Roman Catholic and Primitive devotional practices and her positioning of *Daily Devotions* as a supplement to liturgical worship.

The final chapter builds on recent discoveries and research on the work of Thomas Traherne (c. 1636 – 1674) which have demonstrated the breadth and complexity of Traherne's writing across literary and non-literary forms and across a wealth of intellectual interests including devotion, morality, natural science, and philosophy. By returning to Traherne's core canonical text, *Centuries of Meditations* (c. 1670), the chapter argues that meditation underpinned much of Traherne's works – in addition to his meditative output. The chapter examines Traherne's distinct habit of embedding fragments of verse which appear in two or more manuscripts as artefacts of this habit of recontextualising meditation for a variety of readerships and functions. The chapter argues most prominently for a reassessment of meditation as a system of thought which underpinned the manner by which writers across social strata interpreted and understood themselves and their world and, in the late Seventeenth Century at least, co-existed with emergent empiricist thought. Taken together, the thesis argues that there was no one paradigm of meditation and the textual practices of meditation were as plural and diverse as its practitioners. Meditation offered a flexible, adaptable, and accessible habit of thought and these habits were in their essence textual. Beyond understanding the message of The Word, meditation enabled practitioners to interpret and iterate themselves and their place in Christian cosmology. Meditative texts provided a platform to present and analyse spiritual knowledge and aspects of identity and the extant texts offer rich insight into the emotional, intellectual, and devotional activities of men and women as they negotiated the religio-political turbulence of the late Seventeenth Century and the competing concerns of their spiritual and secular lives.

Chapter One: Katherine Austen's Entextualisation of Social, Legal, Mercantile, Domestic, and Literary Forms in *Book M* (1664 – c. 1682)

This chapter reconstructs Katherine Austen's (nee Wilson, 1629 – c. 1683) meditative processes and her entextualisation of meditative and non-meditative texts in a variety of forms in her extant *Book M* (British Library, Additional Manuscript 4454).[1] *Book M* is an autograph manuscript composed largely during 1664 – 1666 though intermittently updated until at least January 1683 just prior to Austen's death. As the curator of the manuscript, Austen selected, edited, and combined texts of her origination and of others' origination in prose and a large quantity of verse. The chapter argues that Austen frequently reshaped and reframed her manuscript with the addition of new texts drawn from her personal experience or by editing and excising existing texts. The separate texts in *Book M* became more or less significant to Austen as the circumstances of her life changed. Moreover, this process of entextualisation removed these texts from their original contexts and from the social conventions her forms imply into a more personal meditative mode. The chapter challenges earlier readings of the manuscript which have argued for Austen's intention to publish owing to the presence of genres which imply social interaction such as correspondence, mother's advice, elegy, and country estate poetry. Thus, Pamela S. Hammons examines examples of social presentation, particularly in Austen's original verse forms, as evidence of a readership.[2] Similarly, Sarah CE. Ross interprets *Book M* as a 'complete piece of life writing' most likely intended for Austen's children.[3]

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[1] Katherine Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, ed. by Sarah C.E. Ross. (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011). All references are to Ross' scholarly diplomatic edition unless otherwise stated. Where my interpretation deviates from Ross, additional reference is made to the MS: British Library, Additional Manuscript, 4454, and to Pamela Hammons student edition: Katherine Austen, *Book M: A London Widow's Life Writings*, ed. by Pamela S. Hammons (Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies: Toronto, 2013). Direct quotations in both Ross and MS. are cited in parentheses. For Austen's biography see: Sarah CE. Ross, 'Austen [née Wilson], Katherine (b. 1629, d. in or before 1683)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2008), available online at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/68248> [accessed 9 February 2022]; Sarah CE. Ross, 'Introduction', in Katherine Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, ed. by Sarah CE. Ross (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval Renaissance Studies, 2011), pp. 1 – 39 (pp. 6 – 15); Pamela S. Hammons, 'Introduction', in Katherine Austen, *Book M: A London Widow's Life Writings*, ed. by Pamela S. Hammons (Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies: Toronto, 2013), pp. 1 – 37 (pp. 1 – 11).

[2] Pamela S. Hammons, *Poetic Resistance: English Women Writers and the Early Modern Lyric* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 107, 109.

[3] Ross, 'Introduction' p. 5. See also: Sarah CE. Ross, "Like Penelope, always employed': Reading, Life-Writing, and the Early Modern Female Self in Katherine Austen's *Book M*', in *Literature Compass*, 9/4, (2012), pp. 306 – 316; Sarah CE. Ross, "And Trophes of his praises make': Providence and Poetry in Katherine Austen's *Book M*, 1664 – 1668', in *Early Modern Women's*

Though these readings have also acknowledged the meditative and reflective functions of the text, they stress, albeit at times cautiously, an anticipated reader.[4] My reading challenges these accounts by examining the personal meditative contexts of *Book M* and its principal function as a site for Austen to record, compose, and manage her meditation intermingled as it is with spiritual, secular, and familial concerns where Austen is the writer and the principal reader. Thus the chapter challenges readings of the individual texts of which *Book M* is composed and the social, devotional, or secular functions these texts imply in favour of a reading of the manuscript as a meditative context within which Austen composed, entextualised, and edited a wide variety of texts principally for meditative purposes.

Text and Contexts

Katherine Austen was preoccupied throughout her adult life with financial, social, legal, moral, and familial successes, failures, and inheritances against a backdrop of sickness, death, and grief – not least among these the early death of her only husband, Thomas Austen (1622 – 1658), and her precarious position as a wealthy widow. Historical and biographical studies of Austen have documented Austen's at times conflicting identity as a widow in light of these stresses.[5] Austen's many interests are reflected in the textual forms she collates in *Book M*. In combination, these texts reflect an ever expanding and shifting personal discourse. Austen entextualises, in full, or more often as extracts: notes of her secular and religious reading; at least eleven letters to family and legal

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Manuscript Writing: Selected Papers from the Trinity/Trent Colloquium, ed. by Jonathan Gibson and Victoria E. Burke (London: Routledge, 2004) pp. 181 – 204.

[4] Ross, 'Introduction', pp. 27 – 32; Susan Wiseman, 'The Contemplative Woman's Recreation? Katherine Austen and the Estate Poem', in *Early Modern Women and the Poem*, ed. by Sue Wiseman (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 220 – 243 (p. 221).

[5] On the legal and social contradictions of English widowhood see: Raymond A. Anselment, 'Katherine Austen and the Widow's Might', in *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring – Summer, 2005), pp. 5 – 25; Jennifer Panek, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) particularly chapter one 'The Widow's Choice: Female Remarriage in Early Modern England', pp. 13 – 45; Effie Botonaki, *Seventeenth Century English Women's Autobiographical Writings: Disclosing Enclosures* (Lampeter: The Edwin Mellon Press, 2004); Barbara J. Todd, "I Do No Injury by not Loving': Katherine Austen, A Young Widow of London', in *Women & History: Voices of Early Modern England*, ed. by Valerie Firth (Toronto: Coach House Press, 1995), pp. 207 – 37; Barbara J. Todd, "The Remarrying Widow: A Stereotype Reconsidered," in *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. by Mary Prior (New York: Methuen, 1985), pp. 54 – 92; Barbara J. Todd, 'Demographic Determinism and Female Agency: The Remarrying Widow Reconsidered . . . again', in *Continuity and* Change, Vol. 9, No. 3 (1994); Sara Heller Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), pp. 184, 308.

counsel; textual meditations and prayers; financial accounts; and thirty-four secular and devotional poems and verses largely of her own origination. Combined, she uses these forms variously to inspire, record, perform, and review her meditative practice.[6] The discontinuity of the manuscript and the variety of its forms attest to the inconsistencies of Austen's meditative practice which often seems to have been motivated by periods of distress. Thus *Book M* witnesses the interrelatedness of Austen's devotional and secular practices, her use of diverse textual forms, and the pervasiveness with which meditative thought underpinned her management of her life.[7] Moreover, textual evidence in *Book M* implies the existence of several related, though lost, manuscripts and a system of knowledge production and management across manuscripts which saw textual production and management central to her negotiation of life's afflictions.[8]

This chapter examines four loose categories of texts which occur in four distinct material locations in the manuscript and it evaluates Austen's attendant textual and meditative practices. These witness the continually evolving functions and contexts of the manuscript during the eighteen years that Austen worked on it. Firstly, it addresses Austen's paratexts, and the manner in which these shape and reshape the manuscript in relation to Austen and in relation to a potential reader. Secondly, it considers Austen's social forms, which are most frequently discussed by scholars, and their meditative function within the meditative context of the manuscript. Thirdly, it describes Austen's apparent earlier use of the manuscript as a repository of her reading and contemplates evidence of a shift in function around late 1664 from the manuscript as a locus of reading practices to the manuscript in its extant state as a tool for meditation and life management. Finally, it analyses Austen's practice of entextualising her readings of scripture into her verse and prose and her use of verse as a consolidation of prose which implies a process of review and representation. Each of these examples describes the richness of Austen's text, and the variety, experiment, and

[6] Arthur F. Marotti lists Austen as owning a manuscript collection of verse in a personal miscellany: Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), p. 50.
[7] Sarah CE. Ross, 'Introduction', pp. 15 – 20.
[8] See: 35v, p. 79.

inconsistency of her meditative and textual practices as she sought means to manage her spiritual and secular triumphs and afflictions.

The Genre, Readership, and Organisation of Book M

Austen's paratexts variously imply and exclude a reader in their forms, tone, and materiality. Where critics have sought to justify Austen's two title pages, contents list prefatory poem, and 'disclaimer' individually or in combination, I argue that taken together Austen's paratexts signal her multiple and changing conceptions of the text and ultimately herself as its principal reader.

My Hus was born Sunday e 11 August 1622
He died 31 Oct 1658 being 36 yeares 2 moths 21 da (1^{r}, p. 51).

From its outset, *Book M* had functions for Austen as a site of memorial and meditation on life events. Throughout much of the text Austen evaluates events in her life, her anticipation of events, her material wealth, and her resulting sense of her virtue and spiritual worth in accordance with her sense of what Ross deems her 'providences'.[9] Central themes of death, virtue, and legacy materially, socially, and physically personal to Austen are apparent throughout. Thus, Austen's first title page, above, notes the dates of her husband's birth and death. Her second title page (2^{r}, p. 51) records the date Austen began writing *Book M*: 'Katherine Austen 1664:/Appriel:'. The second title page also lists the deaths of Austen's close family members and includes a motto: 'Ma defence consiste, assouoir endurir [my defence is to sit and endure]'. Translations of Austen's motto are difficult owing to Austen's spelling. Elizabeth Kelley Bowman summarises several interpretations which each point to Austen's perseverance in adversity.[10] Next, the inclusion of an incomplete contents list (3^{r} - 4^{r}, pp. 52 – 53)

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[9] Ross, 'Introduction', pp. 28 – 29.
[10] Elizabeth Kelley Bowman, 'Book M: A London Widow's Life Writings, review', in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Fall 2015), pp. 734 – 736 (p. 735): 'three different possible interpretations of "assouoir," including "knowing," but also "patiently," and even "surfeiting on"; one of "consiste," "consists of/in" (although Austen uses no such preposition as "dans" or "à," and "involves" might be a nearer meaning); and one of "endurir," "suffering" (41, n3). One might also consider the possibility of a near-homophone such as "asseoir" (which could have meant "to rest" in the legal sense, "to besiege," "to establish," or "to set the stage"), "assouvir," or the more obscure "assovoir," as well as translations of

is similarly peculiar to Austen's meaning and use. Her citations largely concern personal significances, are brief, at times vague, and have the appearance of being aids to recollection and reference rather than functioning as a useful index for a reader. For instance she cites: 'Serm[on] of Last Iudgem[ent]: D Taylor…/How ill to desire to know our Fortune…/Some Dreames not to be slighted: of S: of Serpent' (3^r, p. 52). Austen's contents list does not itemise every entry, does not itemise every page, and falls short of the complete text by thirteen pages which suggests she ultimately abandoned this method of organisation. Nevertheless, in my readings below Austen's contents list offers useful interpretations of her conception of the value of and relationship between individual texts in *Book M* – particularly in instances where several texts appear on one page. Elsewhere changes in Austen's pagination of rectos and versos suggest Austen experimented with alternative methods of organising her manuscript as she accumulated texts.[11] These paratextual items suggest a text which is personal, if not entirely private, functional, and a locus for the documentation and memorialisation of texts which signify Austen's character and perseverance.

Austen's two title pages and contents list occur at the head of the first five leaves of *Book M*. They contain paratexts which also feature what Ross dubs the 'disclaimer' and a large meditative poem 'On [th]e Birds Singing in my Garden' (4^v – 5^r, pp. 53 – 54, henceforth 'On the Birds') which further cement the sense of *Book M* as a personal if not entirely private text.[12] Austen's disclaimer is, however, small, somewhat obscure, and found at the top of verso four. That is, the disclaimer is on the reverse side and after the final page of the contents list. The majority of Austen's paratexts and much of her earlier entries in *Book M* are found on rectos which suggests in contrast the disclaimer's perfunctoriness and relative insignificance. Nevertheless, its ambiguity both invites a reading of *Book M* and dismisses the worth of a reading, and it is difficult to determine the severity of Austen's tone and assertion:

> Whoso euer shal look in these papers and shal take notice of these personal occurrences: wil easily discerne it concerned none but my self: and was a

"endurir" including "to hold out against" (a pun on "to besiege"?) or "to persevere." The original of or inspiration for the epigraph has not been traced'.

[11] See; Ross, 'Textual Introduction', in Katherine Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, ed. by Sarah CE. Ross (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011), pp. 41 – 47 (pp. 41 – 42).

[12] Ross, 'Introduction', p. 35.

> private exercise directed to my self. The singularity of these conceptions doth not aduantaige any. (4^{v}, p. 53).

Austen's inquisitorial reader is both invited to 'look in these' papers and directed to the 'singularity' of the contents.[13] Austen's use of singularity stresses both the text's peculiarity to herself in terms of its content and purpose and its cohesiveness as a collation of smaller texts. Moreover, subsequent to the disclaimer a small cipher lends further obscurity to this section of the manuscript. This material context of the disclaimer suggests its significance in inviting a reader or in establishing the nature of *Book M* should be tempered by its obscurity and ambiguity. Furthermore, the thick, dark lettering of Austen's prefatory poem 'On the Birds' partially obscures the disclaimer. This suggests that Austen later, at least in part, dismissed the function of the disclaimer as she re-evaluated her relationship with *Book M*.

As a prefatory poem and a meditative poem 'On the Birds' imposes a personal voice, a meditative mode, and a note of earthly ephemerality and precarity onto *Book* M. I argue that when read in light of the *Book M* in its entirety 'On the Birds' more fully summarises the enduring voice and themes of the extant text, and the poem is likely the last and lasting paratext Austen appended to *Book M* as a mark of her concept of *Book M* as a whole. Relatedly, Ross suggests 'On the Birds' was added to the manuscript at a later date than the preceding paratexts and possibly after much of *Book M* was composed.[14] If so, and Ross' suggestion is compelling, then this implies that Austen left space available with the intention of framing *Book M* with a text which suitably set the tone for her manuscript once she had compiled the contents. Moreover, Ross' reading supports my assertion that Austen began writing in verse with increasing frequency later in her composition of *Book M* signalling her experimentation with textual forms particularly as a means to summarise or distil several meditations into a smaller and perhaps more presentable textual vessel – which I discuss below and which I argue further in relation to Delaval and Traherne.

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[13] Harold Love finds a similarly ambiguous invitation to read and dismiss an unauthorised print edition of Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici* (1642): Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 41.

[14] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 11, p. 53.

'On the Birds' contains none of Austen's frequent and biographical concerns for her triumphs and afflictions, and, if added later as Ross proposes, its themes suggest that Austen reviewed and reframed her manuscript along eschatological lines of thought. Structurally 'On the Birds' follows an identifiably meditative proforma. It begins with a *compositio loci* in the speaker's description of a garden and a reflection on the sensory qualities of its sweetness. The central body of the poem comprises a *considerationes puncta* or disposition of parts. That is, the central body comprises a detailed analysis of the spiritual analogues and significance of the observed garden. Finally a *colloquium* or prayer of praise. Lines one through eight describe the observation of the garden:

> Nature provides a Harmony for me
> This Airy quire, chanting out Mellody
> So sweet, so pleasant by zephires pride,
> I haue a satisfaction here t'abide,
> But, what's this Nature, wch such order keepes,
> That every plant, in its due season peepes,
> Tis from 'theternal order which imprintes
> Their Annual virtue, And then gives their Stintes. (ll. 1 – 8).

At line four the observation expands into a disposition of parts signalled by the interrogative contraction 'what's'. The disposition of seasons, the annual cycle of growth, and 'theternal order' of creation establishes a theme of the passage of earthly and human time which is later compared to heavenly eternity – Delaval similarly employs seasonal metaphors as a means to describe the arc of her life. The following six lines, therefore, develop the disposition of parts by comparing the passage of seasons to the growth of the soul:

> When they haue flourisht, then for to decline,
> Such is the Nature, God has made to mine,
> I haue my flourish too, And I must fade,
> I must returne to an Etternal shade.
> And leaue these harmonies & pleasant thinges,
> The end of wch, much greater Joyes bringes. (ll. 9 – 14).

The speaker compares the seasonality of the garden to the seasonality of the body and soul and their eternity in Heaven. The analytical core of the poem (ll. 15 – 24) re-examines the garden as a symbol of earthly pleasure which both sweetens the journey through life and offers lessons to the maturing

soul. After the manner of the occasional meditation upon creation, ‘Nature’ is defined as a ‘Glas’ or mirror of God’s instruction and therefore as an inspiration to further meditation:

> Yet as an Antepast of those to com:
> by Earthly Ioyes, those future are begun
> By humaine Ioyes, prepaires us for Divine
> The Deity in outward thinges doe shine
> The works of a great Master does appeare
> Through out the Current of each day and yeare
> Natures a Glas, of his supernal hand
> In it we comprehend, and Vnderstand
> His power, his loue, wch dus all thinges Create
> And of his Glory to participate.
> (O) ^Lord^ raise my soul, from earth vnto the sky
> My Great Creator I may magnify
> And see beyond the glas of finet thinges,
> A Future state, Aduance me with those winges
> Of Faith, and hope, I may fly up to thee.
> Then shal be perfect, their perfection see (ll. 15 – 30).

The concluding prayer (ll. 25 – 30), which Austen has later emphasised with an address to the Lord ‘(O) ^Lord^’ (ln. 25), turns from the earthly garden to a future state of heavenly perfection and Divine communion. As a meditative poem, ‘On the Birds’ imposes onto *Book M* a mode of meditation and a motif of temporality whereby the soul is conceived as being on a journey to spiritual perfection by way of the pleasures and lessons of earthly life or Austen’s triumphs and afflictions. These in turn are reflected in the discrete texts on Austen’s triumphs and afflictions found throughout *Book M*. Austen’s title pages, contents list, disclaimer, and prefatory poem frame *Book M* largely as a personal and memorial body of writing. They announce it to be textually diverse and somewhat experimental, meditative, and concerned with spiritual legacy.

Social Forms and Personal Resonances

Book M contains a considerable quantity of texts which have been noted for their ‘social’ conventions, such as letters – which imply correspondence, mother’s advice – which imply family and legacy, elegy – which implies memorial and relationships with the survivors of the deceased, and child-loss poetry – which implies a relationship with the child or parents. Prominently, Austen

includes a country-house poem 'On the Situation of Highbury'; this form implies a relationship of preferment between the writer of the poem and the owner of the property – to whom the writer appeals. Though in Austen's example she fulfils the roles of both writer and recipient. Nevertheless, owing to the implied relationships and conventions of these forms and in particular to the Early Modern coterie culture of circulating and exchanging poetry critics have speculated on these forms as evidence of Austen's engagement with literary culture, and as a justification for arguments for the publication, circulation, or sharing of *Book M* with Austen's family, friends, and wider circle.[15] Moreover, Austen's habit of numbering most of her poems has been looked to as evidence of her preparation of these poems for publication.[16] However, it may be that Austen wished to preserve her poems separately or that she used numbers as a means to organise her text in a similar manner to her contents list.[17] Of thirty-five poems twenty-three are numbered sequentially: 'On the Situation of Highbury' is numbered '23'.[18] Three further poems bear numbers which have been crossed through up to '26'. Austen most likely numbered her original poems although her crossings confuse this assumption. Similarly, Traherne's *Commonplace* or *Dobell Manuscript*, which I discuss in chapter five, contains a catalogue of twenty-two poems arranged in columns. This cataloguing of poetry may compare to Austen's intentions. Thus, whilst the conventions and material contexts of much of Austen's poetry invite speculation as to publication, Austen may have been experimenting with means to organise and preserve her poetry separately to *Book M*. Moreover, the afterlife of her poetry outside of *Book M* does not undermine its integrity and meditative context within the manuscript. In the following case studies, I examine three of Austen's social forms: her country-house poem, letters, and her child-loss. I argue that whilst these texts may have had some limited readership outside of *Book M*, within *Book M* Austen adapts their conventions and edits their

[15] Ross, 'Introduction' p. 34 – 39. *Early Modern Women Poets (1520 – 1700): An Anthology*, ed. by Jane Stevenson and Peter Davidson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 314.
[16] Ross, 'Introduction' p. 39.
[17] See for instance: Love, *Scribal Publication*, pp. 79 – 80; Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, And the English Renaissance Lyric*, pp. 14 – 23.
[18] Austen inserts two couplets extracted from Samuel Daniel's sonnet sequence 'The Complaint of Rosamund' onto the final page of *Book M*, 114^{v}, p. 171.

content to such an extent that they are rendered primarily functional to Austen as an opportunity to meditate upon her character, triumphs, and afflictions.

'On the Situation of Highbury'

The Highbury Estate (also Newington Barrow), the jewel in Austen's property portfolio, features prominently in *Book M* as Austen writes of her providence in its abundance and her affliction in legal battles over her right to possession.[19] Austen's original country-house poem 'On the Situation of Highbury' (104^{r}, pp. 158 – 159) exemplifies these conflicts, and meditatively records Austen's sense of her virtue and God's favour[20]:

So fairely mounted in a fertile Soile
Affordes the dweller plesure, without Toile
Th'adjacent prospects gives so sweet ^rare^ a sight
That Nature did resolue to frame delight
On this faire Hill, and with a bountious load
Produce rich Burthens, makeing the aboad
As full of joy, as where fat vallies smile
And greater far, here Sickenes doth exhile.
Tis an vnhappy fate to paint that place
By my vnpollishet Lines, with so bad grace
Amidst its beauty, if a streame did rise
To clear my mudy braine and misty eyes
And find a Hellicon t'enlarge my muse
Then I noe better place then this wud choose
In such a Laver and on this bright Hill
I wish parnassus to adorne my quill.

'On the Situation of Highbury' has been studied as a social and secular poem which lacks the devotional concerns of meditative writing. Hammons examines both this poem and 'On my Neece Grace Ashe' (53^{v}, p. 96) in terms of their conformity to and digression from generic conventions.[21] Hammons notes Austen's amalgamation of speaker and proprietor, and perhaps for this reason or for its obscurity, anthologies of country-house poetry have tended to overlook 'On the Situation of

[19] See: Ross, 'Introduction', pp. 8 – 15.
[20] Ross provides a useful list of critical discussions, see: Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 499, p. 158.
[21] Pamela S. Hammons, 'Katherine Austen's Country-House Innovations', in *Studies in English literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2000), pp.123 – 137.

Highbury'.[22] The poem is an unconventional example of the form. I argue Austen demonstrates her adaptation of a literary form into the meditative contexts of *Book M* by effectively writing to herself in preferment, thereby configuring herself as the principal reader, and choosing the topic of her sense of her right to her wealth. In addition, Hammons notes the transactional social function of the country-house poem as a means to preferment is weakened in 'On the Situation of Highbury' owing to Austen's collapsing of speaker and proprietor into one entity, and I argue that this weakness puts into question the likelihood that Austen would share a poem which could be interpreted as conceited. With an eye to its meditative context, Sue Wiseman locates 'On the Situation of Highbury' in 'several interlocking discourses of land, property, place and money', and defines its function in *Book M* as 'a process of spiritual assay'.[23] Thus the meditative context of *Book M* animates the meditative qualities of the poem. 'On the Situation of Highbury' draws on the shared conventions of country-house poem and meditative poem in describing an object of creation and relating its personal, moral, or spiritual significances to individual circumstances. Hence Austen's deviation from the formal convention of the country-house poem in writing of herself as a patron. Meditatively, 'On the Situation of Highbury' illustrates the Highbury Estate's earthiness and the role of the proprietor as a fleeting custodian of moral and material wealth. Describing its material wealth Austen notes the singularity, bounty, and fertility of the 'fat vallies' (ln. 7). Nevertheless the fungibility inherent in the indefinite article 'the dweller' (ln. 2) draws attention to the earthly, and therefore fleeting, pleasure of a property which outlives its proprietors.[24] Thus, in its meditative context, Austen's country-house poem celebrates the property not as the embodiment of its proprietor's virtue or wealth, where the proprietor is inconstant, but as a fleeting symbol of God's providence.

[22] Alastair Fowler, *The Country House Poem: A Cabinet of Seventeenth-Century Estate Poems and Related Items* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994). See also: Hugh Jenkins, *Feigned Commonwealths: The Country-House Poem and the Fashioning of the Ideal Community* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1998); William A. Mclung, *The Country House in English Renaissance Poetry* (Berkeley, CA: University of California press, 1977).
[23] Sue Wiseman, 'Katherine Austen and the Estate Poem', p. 220, 235. See also: Ross, 'Introduction', p. 34.
[24] On the 'dweller' see: Hammons, 'Country-House Innovations' (2000), pp.125 – 127. Wiseman notes the absence of a house on the property at the time and Austen's somewhat contentious role as a property developer which undermines the organic ideal: Wiseman, 'Katherine Austen and the Estate Poem', p. 226.

In *Book M* Highbury and Austen's trials in securing it together embody Austen's triumphs and virtue and her sense of her legacy, and the plethora of forms pertaining to Highbury attest to its persistent symbolism in Austen's meditative practice; Austen similarly finds spiritual symbolism in her 'Iewel'.[25] Though Austen does group material in *Book* M by related themes and topics, Highbury interacts with several of these, and *Book M* as a whole can be considered a context for 'On the Situation of Highbury'. Throughout the central portion of *Book M* in particular Austen incorporates epistles to counsel and to her children and records several dreams and meditations on her wishes for Highbury. These describe her interweaving of meditative and non-mediative discourses. For instance, 'On the Situation of Highbury' follows a similar prose textual meditation 'On that day Highbury came out of Lease. Mic[ealmas] 1665' (103^{v}, pp. 157 – 158). The meditation records Austen's thoughts on coming into possession of the property in similarly providential terms to 'On the Situation of Highbury', and Austen uses these terms to consider the financial, familial, and moral implications of earthly possessions:

> Am I the person am to reap the first fruites of that long expectation, and enter into those pleasant feedles of a faire inheritance. And that it should be appointed for my Children. Tis a blesing I know not how to receive. Yet let me and mine ever remember, That we receive our prosperity, and enter into a Lardge revennue through the Iawes of death, and by the heapes of Mortality. That we | maybe instructed always to be ready to part from it, as readily as we doe receive it. And not to set up a rest in a Earthly Paradice. I and let the name bear the same remembrance. Highbury: To bury those that are mounted never so high in this World.

Austen describes her thoughts on herself as a conduit of inheritance 'appointed for my Children' and a model of morality 'as readily as we doe receive it'. Austen's concluding moral motto which puns on Highbury as a site of memorial illustrates her sense of fleeting possession and legacy and the symbolic stature of Highbury in her thoughts. Delaval similarly views her debts and inheritances as a symbol of her lost and recovered virtue.

[25] See: 12^{r}, p. 61; 74^{v}, p. 124; 92^{r}, p. 142; 108^{v} – 109^{r}, 163 – 164.

Austen also interweaves legal and spiritual concerns, and the iterativity of her process can be seen in an earlier textual meditation 'Of New[ington] Barrow: hazard: 1665' (72^{v} – 73^{r}, pp. 121 – 122). In this example, over time, Austen has combined her scriptural reading and her secular concerns through a meditative framework as a means to interpret her triumphs and afflictions. Thus following the original textual meditation on her strength of will undergirded by God's blessing and in the face of financial ruin Austen has added at least five entries including references to Psalms and a record of a dream which iteratively expand the scope of the original. For instance a large textual prayer 'Lord hide thy servant from Insurrection of vnjust men' (72^{v} – 73^{r}, p. 122) asks for God's guidance and 'refuge'. Distinctly, Austen has appended Psalm 3:1 to the top of this prayer, perhaps at a later date: 'Lord how are they increased that trouble me?' (72^{v}, p. 122). Austen thus combines her readings of scripture with interpretations of her providence.[26] Moreover in a note added after the conclusion of this prayer, that is after Austen's characteristic use of solidi to mark the end of a unit of text, Austen has added a reminder to './. read 27 Salme./.'. Austen's reminder here and her poem 'Read Salme 27: of Supportation' (henceforth 'Of Supportation', 57^{v} – 58^{r}, pp. 103 - 104) attest to the prominence of Psalm 27 in her devotional practice and the ease with which Austen combines her reading of scripture, meditative practice, and reflections on secular concerns within the context of *Book M*. In addition, Austen concludes her iterative meditation 'Of New[ington] Barrow' with a cross reference to a dream in which she foresaw the restoration of the monarchy. This she has evidently recorded in a further, now lost, manuscript 'B[ook] K: pag 207' (73^{r}, p. 122).[27] That is, the dream must have been recorded in *Book K* previous to 1660 and prior to the inception of *Book M.*[28] In her recollection of the dream in *Book M* Austen notes her conflicted affiliation as a Royalist and as the moral and financial heart of her family where the Crown opposes her claim to Highbury: 'shal it be that my Lord and Kings coming in must prove a fatal blast to our Estate'. This entextualisation of

[26] See: Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 316, p. 122.
[27] See also: Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 321, p. 122.
[28] *Book M* contains no reference to a hypothetical *Book L*. Ross has suggested Austen may have lettered her manuscripts alphabetically, and Austen therefore had an extensive network of manuscripts in her possession. See: Ross, 'Introduction', p. 43.

meditation, prayer, Psalm, instruction to read a Psalm, and recollections of her dream illustrates the complex temporal and material iterativity of Austen's thoughts on her financial, spiritual, and political providences and afflictions and describes the manner in which Austen underpins her secular endeavours with her meditative and textual practices.

Correspondence

Austen's combination of short texts rooted in meditative, social, and legal concerns is perpetuated in her use of extracts from correspondence both on Highbury and separate topics. This textual practice underscores Austen's incorporation of socially transactional forms which imply a reader into the personal, meditative context of *Book M*. Moreover, Austen's extracts from correspondence to legal counsel points to their meditative function as records of her spiritual character. Thus, 'Discourse to: L: vpon the New[ington] Barrow' (48^{r} - 49^{r}, pp. 90 – 91) is, in my estimation, an amalgamation of fragments of at least two epistles to Austen's counsel notably without her counsel's reply. Austen's title emphasises the original dialogic nature of the letter and she retains the salutation signalling the epistle form from which she extracts details: 'My Lord' (48^{r}, p. 90). That is, though she extracts the relevant data, Austen retains a sense of the original form as a reference to the original social and textual context from which it is extracted. The first extant section of Austen's epistle describes her as ideally suited to managing property as, unlike men, she is not victim to the 'Tyrant appetite taken in the Fetters of a ruinateing love' (p. 91). After a space suggesting elision the next section, most likely taken from a second epistle, begins again 'My L[ord]' (49^{r}). Here Austen describes the legal trial in terms of her triumphs and afflictions: 'I hope we shal reap the Harvest […] which has tried the virtue of our disposition'. The fragmented parts are testament to Austen's character rather than a preservation of the discourse in its entirety. Wiseman suggests Austen copied her correspondence into the manuscript following composition or drafted it in the manuscript prior to re-composition in presentable form. Though the terse, disjointed style of the extant example suggests extensive editing necessary to a final draft. Moreover, Wiseman's

reading does not disallow the retention of the epistles as items for record and meditation.[29] Thus, though implying correspondence, the epistles take on new resonances as records of character, providence, and affliction where they are located in *Book M*. Likewise, in addition to her fragmentary epistles to counsel, Austen incorporates, more completely, five epistles addressed to her children in the mode of mothers advice written during a life-threatening period of plague during July and August 1665 (92[r] – 94[r], pp. 142 – 144). The final epistle, 'my wishes' (p. 144, 94[r]), advises 'all my Deare children' to be grateful for their material, social, and spiritual inheritances and to sustain the legacies they inherit through Austen:

> if you doe yo parts by leading ~~a~~ commendable and vseful lifes. and that you set vertuous exsamples: God will to every Genneration continue his Favour.

The letter preserves Austen's affection for and instruction to her children in this moment of adversity and, in figuring herself as a generation which has received favour, she preserves a note of her virtue. Stevenson and Davidson refer to these letters in suggesting that *Book M* was 'intended to be read by [Austen's] children after her death'.[30] Nevertheless the epistles contain remarkably little evidence of having been drafted or edited in their extant location, and Austen's survival for a further eighteen years implies the epistles were redundant as last testaments yet they continued to have resonances as a mark of her character. Thus there is a strong case that Austen entextualised letter forms into *Book M* as a record of character, moral thoughts, and of her intended legacy during precarious periods of her life.

Austen evidently appreciated the letter form as a textual meditation distinctly on those occasions when the letter was never intended to be read by a recipient. That is, like her country-house poem, 'On the Situation of Highbury', Austen adapted a social form for its convenience and meditative function. Highbury is central to an epistle addressed to the 'memory' of Austen's step-

[29] Wiseman, 'Katherine Austen and the Estate Poem', p. 221. See also: Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 171, p. 90. Ross describes this letter as Austen's first instance of meditation upon Highbury.

[30] Stevenson and Davidson, *Early Modern Women Poets (1520 – 1700)*, p. 314. See also: Todd, 'Katherine Austen, A Young Widow of London', p. 207.

father, John Highlord: 'May. 20 If the parliam takes away our estate. who are to sit in Iune next' (79^{v}, pp. 129 – 130).[31] That Highlord is deceased and the letter is addressed to his memory breaks the social convention of an implied recipient and reader of the letter. In the letter Austen numerically compares her precarious claim to Highbury, and her inheritance from Highlord:

> by God's prosperous blesing by the second addition I received. will make repaire if the violence of vnjust persons bereave this Family wch I am grafted in, of at is their Iust due, and Honourable expectation. If they take away 40ty pleasant Fields from us. Situated in a Fertile Soile. We have about 40 Considerable Houses placed in an aduantagious ground' (p. 129).

In addition to Highbury, Austen notes a separate inheritance of urban property which serves to counterbalance the threat to her wealth and symbolically her virtue should she lose Highbury. Wiseman notes Austen's use of financial accounting as a means to interpret her providence.[32] Austen's weighing up of forty fields inherited from Highlord against forty tenements inherited from her father, Robert Wilson, whilst simplistic demonstrates her feelings of moral and financial debt to the Austen family, into which she is 'grafted', and the financial and spiritual fungibility of her properties as icons of wealth and virtue. Moreover, Austen's appeal to Highlord and her use of collective pronouns underscores her self-perception as a conduit through which material and moral wealth is secured, improved, and made legacy. Ross notes the reuse of 'Situated in a Fertile Soile' in the first line of 'On the Situation of Highbury'.[33] Additionally, Austen uses the metaphor of reaping to capture her providence in 'On that day Highbury came out of Lease Mic[haelmas] 1665' (103^{v}, p. 156 – 158) and 'On the Situation of Highbury'. These echoes suggest Austen reread earlier entries as she continued to write on Highbury. Thus, Austen appropriates and combines textual meditation, prayers, Psalm reading, epistles, dreams, and verse in a complex textual web, temporally and

[31] For more information on Austen's relationship with Highlord see: Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 358 – 359, p. 129; Ross, 'Introduction', pp. 6 – 8.
[32] Wiseman, 'Katherine Austen and the Estate Poem', p. 225; Austen most notably entextualises a financial account sheet into 'Meditations on the Sickenes and of Highbury' (99^{v} – 100^{r}, pp. 151 – 153).
[33] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book* M, fn. 362, p. 129, and fn. 500, p. 158.

materially. This textual web records legal, financial, spiritual, familial, and ultimately personal concerns and describes pervasive meditative processes as a means through which she interpreted and managed her life.

Child-loss Poetry

Austen's two child-loss poems 'Dec 5t: 1664 vpon Robin Austins recovery of the smal pox. and Coronal Popons son Iohn diing of them. a Youth of a very forward growth. their ages the same. Pop 3 yeares for growth more' (46^r – 47^r, pp. 89 – 90, henceforth 'John Popons') and 'On the Death of my Neece Grace Ashe. 4 years old' (53^v, p. 96, henceforth 'Grace Ashe') have been isolated by Hammons as important examples of the genre of child-loss poetry in terms of their conformity to and deviation from convention.[34] Austen's entextualisation of these two poems alongside material on sickness and family loss transforms them from socially circulated memorials of the loss of an individual to accumulated records of precarity, affliction, and providence personally significant to Austen. As examples of Austen's use of social forms – in addition to country-house poetry and correspondence – these poems illustrate the memorial function of the manuscript alongside its meditative context and the discontinuous iterativity with which *Book M* accrued spiritual meaning for Austen.

'John Popons' describes Austen's composition and use of poetry as a locus for textual meditation in addition to the inherent memorial functions of the form. The poem memorialises the death of a family friend and the survival of Austen's son, Robin, after bouts of the same sickness, and consequently provides an opportunity for Austen to reflect on the spiritual resonances of Popons' death and Robin's survival in relation to herself. Unlike 'Grace Ashe' and many child-loss poems 'John Popons' does not include a conventional note of consolation for the parents which would ordinarily imply a reader.[35] Hammon's reading of the two child-loss poems in *Book M* points to this social function: 'One can reasonably speculate, for instance, that Austen might have at least shown her

[34] Pamela S. Hammons, 'Despised Creatures: The Illusion of Maternal Self-Effacement in Seventeenth Century Child Loss Poetry', in *English Literary History*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Spring, 1999), pp. 25 – 49.
[35] Ibid, pp. 29 – 30.

sister Lady Mary Ashe the poem that she wrote when her niece Grace [Ashe] died. Likewise, she may have intended for her children to read her poem, "Meditation on my death"' (see: p. 90).[36] However, as in the example of Austen's correspondence, this readership need not apply to the entirety of *Book M* or indeed to *Book M* where an additional copy of the child-loss poems – for instance – existed external to *Book M*. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine Austen's blunt conclusion in 'John Popons' on God's mercies and mysteries being well received by the grieving parents:

> O noe my Lord. with ^(my)^ hands (I doe) vphold.
> It was thy will, nor dare be bold
> To search thy secrets. or Ask why
> My week Son liv'd, a strong did dye.
> Thy glory, and thy mercy too,
> As well in death. as life in sue./ (ll. 25 – 30).

Austen's concluding prayer more accurately captures her confusion and unwillingness to question God's will than any sense of consolation or goodwill expressed to the parents. It seems more likely that this poem was written not on Popon's death for social circulation but as a personal meditation on Austen's conflicting sense of imputed virtue and providence as the mother to a surviving son – intensified by the death of the seemingly physically stronger Popons. Austen's concluding self-directed interrogatives express her equivocation: 'Was it his sin, or my [^own^] desert' (ln. 23). Moreover, Hammons notes Austen's self-censure at the impossibility of questioning God's ordination of life and death: 'It was thy will, nor dare be bold / To search thy secrets.' (ln. 25).[37] This self-censure elucidates the paradox of Austen's meditative practice which on the one hand searches for valediction of her perceived destiny as a conduit of wealth and virtue and on the other hand recognises the serendipity and arbitrariness of her life as she accumulates a textual record of her losses and gains. In addition, the opening interrogatives question the incomprehensibility of God's providence – 'How does thy mercies stil renew. / How does thy benefites pursue.' (ll. 1 – 2) – and Austen's repeated addresses to God 'thy mercies' imply the meditative mode of the poem and her

[36] Pamela S. Hammons, *Poetic Resistance*, p. 109.
[37] Hammons, 'The Illusion of Maternal Self-Effacement in Seventeenth-Century Child Loss Poetry', p. 38.

stress on her relationship with God and not Popons. Moreover, immediately following ‘John Popons’ Austen has entextualised a further poem on death ‘Meditation on my death’ (46^{v} – 47^{r}, p. 90) which amplifies the meditative function of ‘John Popons’ and its focus on imputed virtue and eschatology: ‘Let thy Eternal pity on me streame / And by my sauiours merits me redeeme’ (‘Meditation on my death’, ll. 3 – 4). Thus in addition to ‘John Popons itself, Austen’s entextualisation of the poem frames the survival of her son in terms of her precarity, legacy, and moral worth.

Similarly, the entextualisation of ‘Grace Ashe’ alongside extensive memorials to family and acquaintances multiplies its significance in the context of memorial and mortality and demonstrates the concomitant function of *Book M* as a site of meditation and memorial. ‘On the Death: of Mr Franceis Duffeild my Husbands Cosen Germaine’ (54^{r}, pp. 96 – 97) occurs on the recto side of the opening at which ‘Grace Ashe’ appears. This comprises a textual meditation written around an extensive list of memorials to several members of Austen’s family:

> How many Young persons are dead since I had my Dreame gave me intimation of mine. And when I related the time to them, it appeared very short: ~~And~~ Whether I shal finish up my Course then I know not. This I am sure, They have theres. who did not think should be so soone, As my worthy Friends. (54^{r}, p. 96 - 97).[38]

As in the conclusion of ‘John Popons’ Austen’s tone is hardly one of consolation, and she skirts the justification for her own survival in the face of so many deaths. The central portion comprises a large list of family and acquaintances including a note linking the sudden death of her similarly physically strong cousin at around the same time as Popons. This coincidence thereby intensifies the sense of unavoidable death to which Austen appears drawn: ‘My Cosen Duffeild [th]e Darling of the Family, a Lusty proper man. wel and dead. in a week, (about that time Coronal Popons son died.)’. The stress on Duffeild’s sudden turn from full health within a week speaks to the accumulated note of fate and uncertainty. Austen concludes her meditation with a spiritual lesson to herself to prepare for her own death: ‘These may be preparations to me […] And if my part is next to be acted. I may not shrink

[38] On Austen’s dreams and premonitions see: Ross, ‘Introduction’, pp. 20 – 26.

by fear, But learne to render up my self to e Almightys pleasure.' (p. 97). A similar exercise can be found in the prose of '9 Nov 1664' (38^{v}, pp. 82 – 83) which affectionately and intimately describes the death of Austen's 'honest' servant Williame Chandeler and the 'breach' in Austen's family. That is Austen reflects on the effect of the loss to herself. Thus Austen's entextualisation of memorial in verse – in the example of child-loss poetry – and prose coincided with meditation on her mortality and preparedness for death. Thus, Austen's social forms in the examples of the estate poem, letters, and child-loss poem may have had discrete readerships exterior to *Book M* – though the absence of consolation in Austen's writing leads me to question the reception of these texts. Nevertheless, in the context of *Book M*, Austen adapts and entextualises these forms alongside memorial and meditative writing which, taken together, stress her consideration of her virtue before God and her preparedness for death in light of her very real sense of its imminence.

Reading and Writing in *Book M*

Thus far, this chapter has questioned the presence and function of social forms of verse and prose – originated by Austen – located largely in the central and latter portions of *Book M*. In addition to her practice as a writer and compiler of meditative and memorial texts, *Book M* demonstrates Austen's engagement with devotional forms particularly her reading of scripture – most frequently the Psalms – sermons, poetry, and miscellanea. Austen uses these materials both as inspiration for her meditative practice and as justification for often pre-existing conceptions of herself. This section of the chapter examines Austen as a reader and the function of *Book M* as a site for Austen to record and reflect on her reading. Firstly, I assess the first twenty-eight pages of *Book M* (6^{r} – 34^{r}, pp. 54 – 79) which largely comprise extracts and paraphrases of Austen's secular and, less frequently, devotional reading. This front section has more in keeping with a commonplace, and I argue Austen began composition of *Book M* as a repository of her reading on controversial topics including the intercession of angels and divination by dreams. I argue Austen later expanded *Book M* to include her meditations and original compositions – though these new additions did not fully displace the

original function of the manuscript. Indeed, the last dateable entry in *Book M* '1682 Sr Edward Thurland dreamet' (10^{v}, p. 59) occurs in these earlier sections, and evidently Austen continued to review and update the entirety of *Book* M throughout her eighteen years of composition.[39] Secondly, I examine Austen's meditative poem 'Of Supportation' (57^{v} – 58^{r}, pp. 103 – 104) and its prose context which exemplify Austen's reading and interpretation of the Psalms often as a justification for her interpretations of herself.

The relative absence of Austen's voice from the first twenty-eight pages of the manscript – following the prefatory material – including the limited number of textual meditations and the absence of any entries in verse, strongly implies that, in the early stages of compilation, Austen viewed *Book M* as a repository of reading. Austen fills the first twenty-eight pages of the manuscript with paraphrases and extractions from a variety of historical, religious, and secular sources on the themes of dreams, premonitions, and intercession by angels. The text is written in a terse report style, and includes minimal commentary or authorial presence by Austen. Thus, Austen's first entry, 'Of Angeles' (6^{r}, p. 54), observes 'That every man hath a particular Angel'. This is derived from the work of Church of England controversialist Daniel Featley (1578 – 1645). These notes justify Austen's views that angels minister to people. It may be that this early material was intended to be organised alphabetically: the next entry is 'Assistances by Ang[els]'.[40] However, it seems more likely that the material gathered here was organised by topic after the manner of a commonplace book. Though Austen does not use subheadings and her style may be serendipitous.[41] The subsequent material is extracted on the topic of divination by dreams: 'Doc: Hammonds Dreame' and 'When D Dun [John Donne] was in France, with Sr Henery Wotten' – extracted from Izaak Walton's *Lives*.[42] Similarly she includes a note on Archbishop William Laud's deposition on the account of his dreams.[43] In addition,

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[39] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 38, p. 59.
[40] 6^{r} – 9^{r} excluding versos, pp. 55 – 56.
[41] Angus Vine, *Miscellaneous Order: Manuscript Culture and the Early Modern Organisation of Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 14.
[42] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 42 – 45 & 49, pp. 59 – 60.
[43] 10^{r}, pp. 56 – 57; 11^{r} – 12^{r}, pp. 59 – 60; 12^{r} & 13^{r}, pp. 61 – 62.

a citation to ‘See the Dreame of Lady Burtons Cosen […] in book of Browne paper’ (10^{v}, p. 57), on an aunt of Austen’s husband, is interposed between sections of ‘Doc: Hammonds Dreame’. Following these entries, the texts on dreams are crowded out by extracts on ‘Of the Feare of God’ largely paraphrased, asynchronously, from Jeremy Taylor’s sermons which suggests Austen began to weigh up the spiritual implications of her divination by dreams: ‘to these trifling superstions, may be reduced observations of Dreams’.[44] Although it is also clear that Austen is selective and at times reframes material to suit her interpretations such as her sermon paraphrase ‘The Fathers observe the Sybels’ in which Austen enfolds paraphrases from John Gauden’s *A Sermon Preached in the Temple-Chappel*, *at the Funeral of the Right Reverend . . . Dr. Brownrigg* (1660) and brief extracts from Jeremy Taylor, and John Donne. Ross describes these extractions as ‘clearly enabling’ for Austen in terms of Austen’s views on intercession.[45] These texts, therefore, witness the function of the first twenty-eight pages of *Book M* as largely a repository of Austen’s reading on divination and intercession and not the meditative and memorial text of the latter portions of the manuscript.

Despite Austen’s occasional use of paraphrase in this section her own voice intrudes infrequently, and what little evidence of Austen’s voice there is demonstrates her dependency on her sources and a sense of uncertainty and equivocation. Nevertheless, the presentation of Austen’s equivocation demonstrates the continued relevance of this material to her as she composed her original meditations and the likelihood that she frequently reread earlier entries as she added new material to *Book M*. The only prominent examples of Austen’s voice occur toward the end of the section in ‘Observation on my Dream. of Monition’ (21^{r} & 22^{r}, p. 67 – 68) and the textual meditation ‘Stil Look at God Almighty does for thee’ (23^{r}, p. 69). This last describes Austen’s sense of her husband’s intercession from beyond the grave and her equivocation on the controversy of this position. Austen’s later citation of this meditation in *Book M* illustrate its continued significance as a

[44] 25^{r} – 29^{r} excluding versos, p. 70 – 73; 25^{r}, p. 71; fn. 96, 98, 100, 102 – 104, 106 – 109, p.70 – 76.
[45] pp. 62 – 65, 13^{r} – 17^{r}; fn. 55 55 – 58, 61 – 70, pp. 62 – 65.

basis for her later meditation. Concluding 'I Cant but recite to my selfe my former sweetnes of life', Austen notes the controversial nature of her views on intercession:

> And I cannot but perswade my selfe. I have stil influence by his desiers for my perfection from him who bore me that regard when he was on earth. Nay I cannot tel but that his love to his relative may not be of a far more excellent nature and effect to me then before. Tis problematical, therefore I dare not be too presumptuous. in the beleeve. Tho some providences and marks have gave me some demonstrations (23^{r}, p. 69).

Austen self-censures her thinking as 'problematical' and 'presumptuous' though she also reassures herself of the palpability of her feelings 'some providences and marks have gave me some demonstrations'. The candour and self-censure of this textual meditation suggests the privacy of *Book M* and Austen's use of the manuscript as a locus for rehearsing personal thought.

Evidently, however, 'I Cant but recite to my selfe my former sweetnes of life' continued to have relevance to Austen's meditation and composition. Austen has added a cross reference to this meditation alongside a later entry in *Book M.* Thus, Austen footnotes 'I Cant but recite to my selfe my former sweetnes of life' with 'see pag; 85:'. At Austen's corresponding page '85' a comparable note 'See pag: 18' (71^{r}, p. 120) describes the connection in the opposite direction, and Austen's management of cross references elsewhere is comprehensive in this manner.[46] In both meditations Austen expounds her views on the intercession of her husband. It is evident, therefore, that in her management of the manuscript Austen was keen to draw thematic links between items, and that her composition does not only occur in a linear framework but in a more dynamically hypertextual manner which also considers external manuscripts.[47] Ross too has commented on Austen's seeming organisation of the material in *Book M* and her cross referencing habit. For instance a further cross-reference at the bottom of 71^{v} cites 'See pag 170' (p. 120). Austen's early recordings of her reading and later cross referencing back to these readings suggests a dynamic habit of reading, digesting,

[46] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 91, p. 69; fn. 306, p. 120.
[47] See: Ross, 'Introduction', pp. 42 – 43.

rereading, and writing and it demonstrates Austen's use of external textual authority to underpin and justify her personal writing.

The somewhat questionable nature of Austen's sources and her habit of interpreting sources according to her needs is most clearly exemplified in her entry on her page '85' (71^{v}, p. 120,) to which she cross references 'I Cant but recite to my selfe my former sweetnes of life'. Here, Austen extracts lines twenty-three to thirty of Henry King's (1592 – 1669) 'The Legacy', a sixty line amatory exequy which reflects on the value of leaving a moral rather than material inheritance and urges the surviving wife to remarry.[48] Austen has appended to her extract from 'The Legacy' the erroneous title: 'Out of a poeme of Doc Corbets: to his Friend: when she might be a widow'. Austen misattributes the extract to Richard Corbett (1582 – 1635). 'The Legacy' was published in 1657 although it had circulated in manuscript prior to publication. It is possible Austen had an intermediary or pirated manuscript source which omitted important details or lines from the poem and Austen, therefore, was unaware of its provenance or its instruction to remarry.[49] Likewise, Ross finds several discrepancies in Austen's sources in the earlier sections of the manuscript, and she attributes these discrepancies to Austen's 'manuscript' sources.[50] Austen's reading of 'The Legacy' in her subsequent textual meditation 'Certainly if there was such a story' (71^{v}, p. 120) describes her remarkably opposite views against remarriage as those described in 'The Legacy'. Thus, in addition to witnessing Austen's continued sense of her husband's intercession, the acuity with which Austen connects texts within and beyond *Book M* and the texts on 71^{r} illustrate the insecurity of some of Austen's sources and her focus on the text's meaning for herself, over interpretative accuracy.

Austen's Transition from Reader to Writer

[48] Henry King, *Poems, Elegies, Paradoxes, and Sonnets* (London: Richard Marriot and Henry Herringham, 1657), pp. 26 – 28.
[49] See Hammons interpretation of Austen's use of an amatory poem not written by herself: Hammons, *Poetic Resistance*, p. 121.
[50] Ross, 'Introduction', pp. 32 – 33.

Though I argue that Austen began *Book M* largely as a repository for her reading, she evidently later began to compose original material alongside these readings. The precise point at which Austen began writing her own text is uncertain owing to the discontinuity and organisation of the manuscript. However, the entries beginning at 35v (p. 79) describe this transition, and the pages following these suggest that by late 1664 Austen had transitioned to writing more personal and meditative material. Following the opening twenty-eight pages on angels and dreams, the discrete texts on 35^{v} – 38^{r} (pp. 79 - 82) describe Austen's belief in affliction's benefit as a means to correct spiritual weaknesses which subsequently dominates Austen's world view as expressed in the textual meditations after these earlier sections of the manuscript. These texts include: a textual meditation, 'Surely my God is prepairing for me Halcione daies' (henceforth 'Halcione daies'); a quatrain; extensive paraphrases of Jeremy Taylor beginning: 'Waight on Gods time for thy delieveranc out of trouble. either in this life, or by a Freedome by Death' on the recurring theme of triumph and affliction; and a small quantity of obscure sententia on the intervening versos.[51] Austen's paraphrase of Taylor was likely the first material added to this section of the manuscript, and in keeping with the earlier sections it is largely derived from her reading as a means to justify herself. Nevertheless, at the bottom of 38^{r} Austen has inserted reflections into the paraphrase of Jeremy Taylor on her losses, family, and wealth, and on the personal significance of the passage of six years between the death of her husband. Austen's composition of the text describes her blending of consumption and production into a recognisably meditative framework:

> I may say for these 6 yeares that are past I have never been off from the waters of peril. from one danger, one violence, one oppresion, one deserment. one Crose or another. And stil o God thou hast converted every allay, every rebuke. to see thy mercy in. to tel me thou hast not forsaken me. Thou o God wilt doe a miracle rather then forsake thy children in their distres: Hast not thou sumed up all thy promises in one. I will never leave thee nor for sake thee. Friends, and estate may, thou wilt never. see B[ook] A: 143: (p. 82).

[51] p. 79, 35^{v}; pp. 79 – 80, 35^{v}; pp. 80 – 82, 36^{r}, 37^{r}, 38^{r}. Ross cites, Austen's textual sources in Taylor are derived from *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* (London: Richard Royston, 1650) and sermon XXV 'The Miracles of Divine Mercy'. Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 134, 136 – 138, 141, pp. 80 – 82.

Austen's reflection takes the form of a prayer, and her observations of God's consistent mercy seemingly justify her interpretation of her triumphs and afflictions. Austen's final remarks on her friends and 'estate' suggests an early concern for her close relationships and properties. Following an assumption that Austen refers to her husband, '6 yeares' dates this reflection to 1664 when Austen began writing and, therefore, early in her composition of the manuscript, and its themes of affliction may well have inspired much of the subsequent meditations. On the other hand, 'Halcione daies', which occurs at the bottom of the verso at the beginning of the section (35v, pp. 79 - 80), was likely added later to the verso 35v (p. 79). A series of citations to external manuscripts found ahead of 'Halcione daies' signal a sense of equivocation, transitoriness, and a writer in search of the best location for her work, and an organising principle to follow:

> B[ook] I: pag 87: Here ade this to B[ook] C: 131: or
> B[ook] F: pag 79: (ibid).

This suggests that the initial pages were rapidly filled with extracts of Austen's reading, before a transition to more productive and personal writing practices. Moreover, a quatrain appended below 'Halcione daies', and likely temporally later still, suggests a further transition from prose to verse composition. Austen does not number this quatrain as she does the bulk of her poetry, and this at least suggest that it is not her original composition. Its message is applicable to the topic of triumph and affliction though there is no detail peculiar to Austen in the poem beyond the presence of personal pronouns:

> My think's this text speakes much to me.
> What waight I for. my hopes in thee.
> Then why disquieted. Then why opprest.
> While in the living fountaine be refreshet (35v, p. 79 – 80).

Austen appends a title to the poem which implies the indexical 'this text' is a sermon though she gives no further detail on the content of this text: 'Salm. When D[octor] Hobson preachet at

Twic[enham]'.[52] The entries in this section, therefore, witness the iterativity of form, function, and composition in *Book M*, and thus describe the apparent serendipity with which Austen's reading, experiences, and meditation influenced the evolving shape of *Book M*.

Moreover, the pages which follow the extracts of Taylor (beginning 38ᵛ, p. 82) describe a text in flux and a more pronounced transition at some point in 1664.[53] The material found here is more pronouncedly meditative in form. Two textual meditations, '9 Nov 1664' and '27 Nov 64', describe Austen's sense of affliction brought about by the death of her servant 'Williame Chandeler'. Moreover, these occur on versos either side of a further, presumably earlier, textual meditation on a financial loss brought about by a house collapse 'Vpon paying for the fal of Mr Riches house' (39ʳ, p. 83). In addition a note on the subsequent page (40ʳ, p. 84) suggests Austen is heavily inspired by personal losses and by numerological connections to her pagination '37': '(+ writing this pag: 37: makes me think I am in the 7th year of my widowhood:)(and in the 37th year of my age. this Nov: Last: 1664)'. Six years after Thomas Austen's death, October 1658, Austen begins her seventh year of widowhood.[54] As in previous examples the passage of time, memorial, loss, and personal significance inspire Austen's writing. These pages 35ᵛ – 40ʳ (pp. 79 – 84) chart a move to a more responsive form of compilation in which Austen blends her reflections into her composition and begins to compose material which is later more recognisable as meditation. Moreover, perhaps as a sign of growing confidence or personal significance Austen began experimenting with forms, and it is from this point forward that she incorporates her verse forms into *Book M* beginning with 'Lord lend me thy supporting grace' (p. 85, 41ʳ).[55]

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[52] I have been unable to verify the sermon to which Austen refers. The most likely Hobson to which Austen refers is William, Guiliemus, or Williemus Hobson MA, rector, 03/10/1639, and later vicar of St George the Martyr, Southwark, until his death in September 1668. There is a reference to his becoming a Doctor of Divinity in 1660; however, the data is incomplete. Southwark is twelve miles from Twickenham and within the same historic diocese of Winchester. My research through Early English Books Online has not uncovered any published sermons of William Hobson. See Clergy of the Church of England Database: HRO 21 M65/F1/2.

[53] 38ᵛ, pp. 82 – 83; 39ᵛ, pp. 83 – 84.

[54] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 153, p. 84.

[55] Austen has written 'First' in the margin alongside this poem which suggests it is her original and that she may have intended to copy this poem into a further verse only manuscript. See: Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 156, p. 85; Ross, 'Introduction', p. 39.

Reading, Writing, and Versifying Scripture in Book M: 'Psalm 27 of Supportation'

Between the first twenty-eight pages on angels and dreams and the climax of Austen's triumphs and afflictions recorded in 'On The Situation of Highbury' the central portion of *Book M* contains the bulk of Austen's textual and verse meditations – including the child-loss poems and correspondence. In these texts, Austen meditates on her triumphs and afflictions, losses, memorial, and scripture. In this section of the manuscript, Austen includes several verses which consolidate or summarise prose and sometimes other verse meditations. Austen's poems are less systematic than Flavel's summary poems which perform prescribed didactic functions; nevertheless, in *Book M* these poems describe Austen's textual processes of reading, meditation, and consolidation in verse. Where she refers to scripture, Austen's source for her meditations is most frequently her readings of the Psalms. Although Austen does refer to scripture elsewhere in *Book M*, Ross provides a useful concordance to these references.[56] Ross suggests that Austen's use of the Psalms is as a means to present herself as a second David.[57] However, like many women of her period – and each of the writers in the thesis – the Psalms provide ample inspiration for an emotional and spiritual relationship with God.[58] Moreover, as with her justification of her views on angels, though Austen frequently integrates her voice with psalm paraphrase these are largely in affirmation of her interpretations of herself. Austen's original poem 'Of Supportation' illustrates her practices of consolidating meditation and adopting the voice of David. I begin, however, more simplistically, with a demonstration of Austen's process in prose only in a series of textual meditations on one of her legal trials.

A series of textual meditations on Austen's legal claim to a property 'the Red Lion' (pp. 131 – 134, 81^{r} – 83^{v}) include echoes and citations of the Psalms which witness Austen's recall. The first of these, 'Vpon 25 May 1665. The receiving a writ to goe to trial' (81^{r} – 81^{v}, pp. 131 – 132) is inspired by Austen's reading of the Psalms as a comfort:

[56] Ross, 'Concordance to Biblical References, in Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, ed. by Sarah CE. Ross (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011), pp. 217 – 218.
[57] Ross, 'Introduction', pp. 26 – 32.
[58] Hannibal Hamlin, *Psalm Culture and Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 257.

> A while after, I was reading the 120 Salme. In my distress I cried to the Lord and he heard me [120:1]. And doe these words relate any thing to me in this occasion. Is a shuite of Law? properly a distres? (81r, p. 131).

Austen meditates on the definition of 'distres' in relation to experience, concluding positively:

> Now surely tis by this way holy David prescribes me if I wud have a blesing in my distres tis to cry to the Lord (p. 132, 81v).

Austen positions David as a rhetorical, devotional, and moral model. Psalm 120 continues to inspire Austen's meditation as she applies her own experience to the interpretation: 'My God hath heard me in my many former distreses' (ibid). Furthermore, in a concluding paragraph of this entry, possibly added later, Austen uses the language of Psalm 120:2 (Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue) as justification of her application to God:

> Verse : : Not without ground may I continue my praier with David. to be delivered from a deceitful tongue.

Austen's elision of a citation for the verse suggests she recalled David's metaphor in the moment of composition and intended to update the entry later; that is, she both meditates from reading and recall. The following scriptural meditation 'CXXI: Salme' (pp. 132 – 133, 82r) suggests Austen works systematically at least in this instance.[59] Though, taken as a whole, Austen's use of the Pslams appears infrequent and serendipitous, and her meditation is influenced by the pattern of her devotional reading and her recall of scripture according to her rhetorical and emotional need.

'Of Supportation' (57v – 58r, pp. 103 – 104) is a typical example of Austen's verse style which is far plainer than her child-loss and country-house poems which is in part indicative of Austen's attention to, and deviation from, the conventions of her social poems against the summary functionality of those poems which are not written in light of the conventions of, for instance, elegy, epitaph, or child-loss and the interpretation of 'Of Supportation' is intimately folded in with interpretation of its prose context (which I will go on to describe). For interpretative purposes, 'Of

[59] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 383, p. 132.

Supportation' can be subdivided into two parts each having its own functions relative to Psalm 27 and to the prose meditations on Austen's feelings of oppression and affliction and her desire to spend time in devotion which precede it. The first fourteen lines function as a prayer of supplication for spiritual support in response to the preceding prose:

> In this time Lord support me through.
> Who now have much. now much to doe
> Lend me thy Hand, Lend me thy guide
> And if things faile, doe thou abide.
> Lord compose my troubled minde
> Safety in thy selfe may finde
> Then if affaires doe prese and waigh
> My Heavenly Father be my stay.
> Thou never layst so much on thine
> But thy succour will Consigne
> Surely when we have much to beare
> Relive from thee will come and share,
> Then pity me Thou Heavenly aide
> And be my shield now I have praid (ll. 1 – 14).

These lines summarise the diverse prose prior to the poem, using the Psalm as a scriptural authority. Austen's full title embodies an instruction to read the poem in light of Psalm 27: 'Red Salme 27: of Supportation'. Critics have debated the extent to which Austen's reading of Psalm 27 influenced 'Of Supportation'.[60] In my assessment Austen's supplications suggest she derives inspiration from Psalm 27 and that she works at times from scriptural sources and at times from memory. Thus, the first four lines ask for God's guidance 'Lend me thy Hand, Lend me thy guide' (ln. 3) drawing on Psalm 27:11: 'Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path'. Further supplications in line six 'Safety in thy selfe may finde' mirror 27:5 in which David describes concealment and security as a form of safety: 'For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me'. Line ten 'But thy succour will Consigne' mirrors the distinct use of 'succour' in Psalm 27:11 as it occurs in *The Book of Common Prayer*: 'Thou hast been my succour:

[60] Raymond A. Anselment, 'Katherine Austen and the Widow's Might', p. 15. Ross fn. 234, p. 103.

leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation' but not in KJV. This suggests Austen works from both sources and from memory given her frequent inaccuracies. Moreover, the manner by which she captures the tone and theme of the Psalm though not always a specific verse suggests she works from the accumulated knowledge of sermons, study, and devotional practice. These opening lines of prayer are brought to an explicit close in the present perfect: 'And be by shield now I have praid' (ln. 14) before a notable change in the tone of 'Of Supportation'.

The second twenty lines of 'Of Supportation' are more overtly plaintive and personal though still influenced by the Psalm, and Austen returns to her feelings of earthly affliction with particular reference to her widowhood:

> Now stormes of difficultes arise
> Give me Wisedome, make me wise
> And that which is my part to doe,
> Assist with blessings doe endue,
> I'have often found thy shining beame,
> Then Come and help in my extreame.
> My strength is not compos'd so strong
> But subtile violence will wrong.
> And in this world shall be prey,
> Vnles the aid of widdowes stay
> Vnles thy blessings doe concur
> Shall find all comforts to demur
> And since thou wilt acceptance find
> When we quiese a quiet mind
> Such meek deportement to thy will
> In every accident be still
> For then noe crosse can intervene
> Where condescends to thee'are seene
> Not Crose. nor trouble can arise.
> If thou beholdes me with thy eyes. (ll. 15 – 34).

Lines fifteen to eighteen mark a change in tone taken at this juncture in the poem. There is a sense of urgency and prescience in Austen's metaphor 'Now stormes of difficultes' (ln. 15) and in her supplication for 'Wisedome' (ln. 16), instruction, and 'blessinges' (ln. 18). The following line 'often found thy shining beame' (ln. 19) echoes the metaphor of light found in the first verse of Psalm 27: 'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?'. With this, and subsequent lines, Austen

establishes God as her 'supportation' through her afflictions. This conception of God as an assistance in times of need is repeated in line twenty 'Come and help' and twenty-four 'the aid of widdowes stay' in which Austen appeals directly to the assurance of the 'widow's might' (Mark 12: 38 – 44).[61] Moreover, Austen intensifies her sense of her afflictions: 'my extreame' (ln. 20), 'subtile violence will wrong' (ln. 22), and 'in this world shall be a prey' (ln. 23). In the final six lines Austen describes her part in her relationship with God. She will be quiet and compliant and a model of meekness – after the model of David: 'Such meek deportement to thy will' (ln. 29). These two 'halves' of 'Of Supportation' which first ask for support and secondly plead more emphatically, are more apparent in light of the prose context after which they occur.

As a consolidation of the devotional thrust of the textual meditations recorded on the preceding pages, 'Of Supportation' draws attention to two periods in the Spring of 1664 and 1665 which describe the apparent intensity with which Austen meditated on the psalms as a model of affliction. The prose context of 'Of Supportation' is, in large part, a mix of textual prayers and meditations dated to January and February 1664 beginning with the prayer 'On my troubles: in 1664' (p. 98, 55v) and ending in a scriptural meditation on deliverance derived from Psalm 17 'I here David pray to be delivered' (p. 101, 57v). In these pieces, Austen reflects on her afflictions in the preceding year. Cumulatively, Austen draws a distinction between secular and spiritual troubles and looks to David as a model of suffering and fortitude as described in the second part of 'Of Supportation'. Beginning with 'On my troubles: in 1664' Austen records the distinction between her socio-political strength and her spiritual strength: 'My troubles may be above the strength of Nature, Not above my spiritual strength, is of high Ioy to me'(p. 98, 55v). She asks for the opportunity to serve God away from her public obligations: 'Give me the oppertunities of serveing thee, from the perturbations and proseqution of Covetious Men'. This distinction between public obligation and private devotion is more pronounced in Delaval and Traherne's writing though each writer in this thesis deals with this

[61] See: Anselment, 'Katherine Austen and the Widow's Might'; Hammons, *Poetic Resistance*, pp. 111 – 128.

conflict of social and spiritual life. Beneath 'On my troubles: in 1664' Austen has added a footnote 'This 5th May. 1666 my multitude of busines & of crose affaires' (ibid). Evidently Austen's afflictions continued, and reviewing her manuscript one year later, she sought to add an addendum to the existing sequence on the matter as a note of prescience and intensity which is underscored in the urgency of the second part of 'Of Supportation'.

The following passages (pp. 56r – 57v, 99 – 101) are more heavily derived from scripture with a particularly strong emphasis on the Psalms which suggests Austen increasingly turned to meditation on the Psalms as her discomforts intensified – and this pattern of turning to meditation in times of stress can also be seen in Delaval, Flavel, and Traherne . In her foot notes Ross observes references to Psalms 132, 31, 51, 146 and 17 in these meditations.[62] Evidently Austen sees David as a model for her experience of affliction. Thus, in 'Jan 28: 1664: Troubles'(56v, p. 99) Austen supplicates:

> Remember David And all His afflic: Remember thy Servant, and all her afflictions to: And if it be thy will, to say itis enough: Thou Lord knowes how to deliever the Godly out of temptation.

Austen directly compares herself to David as a model of affliction and prays for guidance. Next, the textual meditations 'Feb 10th' (p. 100, 56v) and '10 Feb' (p. 101, 57r) appear across the same opening of the manuscript bisected by a textual prayer 'O that my heart might be a humble heart' (p. 57r, 100) and these three exemplify Austen's complex organisation of the manuscript at this juncture as she seeks to present all of her meditations made over a twelve month interval in a coherent manner indicative of the continuation and intensity of her feelings:

> + Make thy Face to shine upon thy servant, save me For they mercies sake. Make me to heare Ioy and gladnes, that the bones wch thou hast broken may rejoice. +
>
> O that my heart might be a humble heart. That tho I am in intricacies, my sins deserve far more, Blessed Lord sanctify wt is upon me, And give me Courage and prudence, Wisdome and patience, to over come them to thy

[62] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 214, 217 – 218, 220 – 223, 226 – 228, 231 – 232, pp. 99 – 101.

> Glory. then shal I lay thy delieverances, or supportations. either to ease me, or Free me. Wch o my God as may be most to thy will and thy Honour. I shal lay them on thy Alter of prais, and thanksgiveing, all the days of my life.
>
> make thy Face. &c
> + (ibid).

In the body of her prayer, Austen supplicates for virtues and she offers her praise and thanksgiving. Hammons suggests the crosses mark the component parts of the first meditation 'Feb 10th' as they fall either side of the page break, and she suggests that Austen added the lines of the Psalms later during review.[63] On the other hand, Ross suggests both meditations were written during a particularly intense day.[64] Both suggestions point to Austen's extempore writing style at this juncture and to her textual choices as she incorporated new texts and retroactively organised existing texts in tight spaces. The meditations prior to 'Of Supportation' are evocative of a soul contemplating the earthly and spiritual dimensions of affliction and searching for an appropriate relationship with God in the model of David. Whilst not a summary of Austen's afflictions and feelings, 'Of Supportation' nevertheless encapsulates the intensity, and urgency of Austen's feelings of affliction, her supplication of God, and her intention to devote herself to prayer, and quietude after the model of David. In both prose and verse, Austen draws on the Psalms as comfort, instruction, and exemplar of devotion. Nevertheless, her meditative practice is governed by her earthly and secular afflictions for which she draws on the Psalms as a resource in like manner to her use of secular texts.

Conclusion

From the outset, *Book M* functioned as a memorial to Austen's husband. This memorial function continued throughout Austen's lengthy period of composition, and her frequent memorials of friends and family speak to her fears and sense of precarity. Nevertheless, over time the manuscript accrued additional functions, and Austen used *Book M* as a textual locus through which to conduct

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[63] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M,* fn. 307, p. 107. Hammons does not reproduce the refrain, the crosses, or the page break in her edition though she does acknowledge these in her footnote.
[64] Austen, *Katherine Austen's Book M*, fn. 224, p. 100.

her meditations and manage her life. Labelling *Book M* as commonplace, life-writing, mother's advice, or a book for drafting and composition is difficult to justify given that parts of the text fulfil conventions accorded to each of these categories. The chapter has argued that, as a meditative miscellany, *Book M* demonstrates Austen's combination of a variety of texts and textual functions within an overarching meditative framework and that this meditative framework suffuses Austen's interpretation of personal, social, devotional, and secular occurrences. *Book M* is a discontinuous, iterative, and miscellaneous manuscript into which she paraphrased, transcribed, composed, and cited a wealth of secular and devotional sources, and social and personal forms. Austen recorded, contemplated, and reviewed domestic, financial, spiritual, familial, and personal concerns, including frequent encounters with personal and material loss. Meditation, as a means to observe, assess, and understand her concerns in a spiritual and at times scriptural framework shapes Austen's perception of herself, her world, and the problems she faces. Textually, Austen draws on a large variety of devotional and secular forms. Several of these forms imply readerships and relationships in their conventions. Austen adapts, edits, and augments these forms into the meditative mode of *Book M*, and her habit of entextualisation illustrates the manner in which her manuscript serves as both a context for individual texts and individual texts continually reshape this context. Alongside Austen's wider, lost, collection of manuscripts and her readings of scripture and sermons, *Book M* preserves a complex and dynamic dialogue of texts which at some time or other held personal, memorial, and meditative resonances for Austen.

Chapter Two: Remediation and Iteration in *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval*

This chapter argues that Elizabeth Delaval's (née Livingston, 1648-9 – 1717) remediation of her meditations and self-writing into a biographical text framed in the conventions of Early Modern romantic fiction whilst implying secular readings also had functions as an iteration of her meditation. The frameworks of memoir, romantic fiction, and meditation intersect. Elizabeth Delaval was a Jacobite, Church of England, courtier – some critics prefer Jacobite agent.[1] Her life was split between often conflicting professional, social, and spiritual demands.[2] This chapter will examine how she reconciled her secular profligacy and vanity derived from her experiences at court and her spiritual aspirations as a pious, aristocratic woman, in her extant meditative miscellany Bodl. Oxf., MS Rawl. D. 78., *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval* (also *Meditations and Memoirs*, henceforth *Meditations*).[3] The manuscript witnesses Delaval's meditative cycle of self-assessment often against

[1] Femke Molekamp, *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England: Religious Reading and Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 207.

[2] See for instance: Molekamp, *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England*, p. 215; Sara Read, 'Lady Elizabeth Delaval (1648/9 – 1717): Toothworms and Intertextuailty', in *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 64, Iss. 3 (September, 2017), pp. 458 – 464 (p. 458).

[3] Unless otherwise indicated, all references are made to: Elizabeth Delaval, *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval*, ed. by Douglas G. Greene (Durham: The Surtees Society, 1978). Citations are given in parentheses. A digitised copy and textual description of the manuscript can be found at: Early Modern Women Research Network, 'Elizabeth Delaval' <https://c21ch.newcastle.edu.au/emwrn/index.php?p=memoirs> [accessed 11 August 2022]. For biographical details of Delaval's life including the difficulty of dating her birth see: Douglas Greene, 'Introduction' in Lady Elizabeth Delaval, *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval*, ed. by Douglas G. Greene (Durham: The Surtees Society, 1978) pp. 1 – 25; Margaret JM. Ezell, 'Delaval [née Livingston], Lady Elizabeth (1648? – 1717)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn (2004), available online at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/68215> [accessed 27/08/2022]. Greene, cites Delaval's birth year as 1648: 'Introduction', p. 1; Ezell, cites Delaval's birth year as 1649: Margaret JM. Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine: Thoughts on Redefining manuscript Texts by Early Modern Women Writers', in *English Manuscript Studies 1100 – 1700*, Vol. 3, ed. by Peter Beal and Jeremy Griffiths (London: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 1992), pp. 216 – 237, p. 219. The title of Delaval's meditation '*Meditation's upon the sunden change off a glryous bright day by a storm of snow and raine, writ in the begining of September, 7 week's before I was sixteen year's old.*' (pp. 57 – 59) implies Delaval's birthday occurs in the second half of October. The titles used to describe the manuscript, and its author, shed light on the importance critics placed on the individual forms within the manuscript and its enduring association with the Delaval name: Richard Rawlinson (1690 –1755), who purchased the manuscript in obscure circumstances in Rouen sometime after Delaval's death, described it as 'Mrs Delaval's Meditations and Memoirs'; H. Craster, historian of the Delaval family of Northumberland, describes the manuscript as a 'Commonplace Book' (c. 1903); Clare Kirchberger, cataloguer at the Bodleian Library, describes the manuscript as a 'religious diary' (1949) within the category of 'Mystical Theology'; Greene, Delaval's editor, on behalf of the Surtees Society of Northumberland, uses *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval* (1978); Ezell describes the manuscript as memoirs and meditations and Delaval as a 'memoirist'; The Early Modern Women's Research Network uses *Meditations and Memoirs*, see: Ezell, 'Delaval [née Delaval], Lady Elizabeth'; H. Craster, 'Notes from a Delaval Diary', Proceedings of the Society of Antiquarians of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 3rd

a familial, social, or scriptural model. The repetitiveness of this process attests to Delaval's frequent return to former habits and increasing disappointment with herself. This meditative cycle is observable at multiple levels of the text. It can be observed in the individual textual meditations, their attendant prayers, and unique textual resolutions; in annual periods of retrospection dictated in part by the liturgical calendar which give structure to the text; and in moments of irreversible life transition, including Delaval's transition from childhood to maid-to-the-privy-chamber, from maid to wife, and from wife to widow which coincide with transitions in the composition or iteration of the manuscript.

The chapter presents the iterativity of Delaval's *Meditations* as central to Delaval's process of meditation with a particular focus on Delaval's wholesale remediation of her textual meditations from loose papers into the 1670 iteration of the manuscript ostensibly as a private means to confront the status of her soul – likely in preparation for her marriage to Robert Delaval (m. 1670 – d. 1681 - 1682). The extant manuscript derives from the early eighteenth century but comprises transcriptions and reiterations of earlier (c. 1664 – 1672) textual meditations, prayers, three poems, and five letters. These, Delaval has reframed beginning around the time of her marriage with the addition of sections of memoir and marginal commentary into a narrative, biographical text which incorporates conventions recognisable to the early modern romance-fiction. The extant manuscript encodes evidence of at least two (1670 and c. 1682 – 1703) wholesale reiterations of the content by which Delaval organised, blended, and augmented intermediate manuscripts. These intermediate iterations coincide with significant periods of transition and retrospection in Delaval's life: her

ser. (1903 – 4), 149 – 53 (p. 149); Clare Kirchberger, 'A catalogue of Bodleian Manuscripts Relating to Mystical Theology, 16th – 18th century', Bodl. Oxf., MS Eng. misc. d. 312, p. 59.
In the interests of academic continuity, this chapter refers to Lady Elizabeth Delaval as 'Delaval' throughout. It should be acknowledged that patronymic naming practices mask the identity of many women writers. Delaval does not provide an autograph title nor signature to her manuscript. Throughout her life she was known as Lady Elizabeth Livingston, Lady Elizabeth Delaval, and likely Lady or Mrs. Elizabeth Hatcher. Ezell suggests a marriage recorded between Delaval and William Hatcher may have been another Delaval widow; however, Ezell concludes that the evidence for Elizabeth Delaval's second marriage is compelling: Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine', p. 221. Rawlinson preferred 'Mrs. Elizabeth Delaval' as a mark of Delaval's fallen social status. There is no extant record of how Delaval may have referred to herself or described herself as the author of her manuscript, and in her letters she largely refers to herself according to her relationship to the recipient of the text.

marriage and her period in exile in the Jacobite court (c. 1689 – 1717).[4] Firstly the chapter examines the organisation of the manuscript and its 1670 iteration by paying particularly attention to Delaval's memoirs and commentary, the introduction which she appends to the front of the text, and the meditation's derived from her eighteenth year which illustrate the competing chronological, liturgical, and thematic organisational schema Delaval deployed at different times of composition. Secondly, the chapter examines the five letters from Delaval's paternal grandmother, Jane Gorges, and an attendant memoir of Gorges which demonstrate Delaval's entextualisation of the letters to fill a narrative lacuna and her framing of Gorges as a model of piety. Thirdly, the chapter examines Delaval's use of meditative poetry in the example of 'Who ever think's most certenly must prize' (pp. 120 – 121, henceforth 'Who ever think's') one of the three poems, which have never been studied, placing it in its prose context. These poems were likely added to a later iteration of Meditations but nevertheless demonstrate Delaval's use of textual forms as part of her cyclical meditative process of reflection and review.

Social, Religio-Political and Critical Contexts

Delaval's *Meditations* has much in common with Austen's *Book M* in terms of its core composition of meditations supplemented by life-writing, the absence of a clearly defined reader or contemporary reception, and a long period of composition – intermittently throughout the entirety of Delaval's adult life. The provenance of the text immediately after Delaval's death is similarly uncertain, and its acquisition by the bibliophile Richard Rawlinson soon Delaval's death suggests Delaval had not left instructions for circulation or publication – though she may have had this in mind for the future. Recent studies have speculated on this intention and on a potential readership, based on its extant

[4] Susan Wiseman, 'Elizabeth Delaval's *Memoirs and Meditations*: Textual Transmission and Jacobite Context', in *Early Modern Women an Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Autumn, 2015), pp. 68 – 92 (pp. 10 – 11, 22); Douglas G. Greene, 'Notes to Text' in Lady Elizabeth Delaval, *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval*, ed. by Douglas G. Greene (Durham: The Surtees Society, 1978), pp. 213 – 218 (en. 134 – 136, p. 218). With reference to the interweaving of meditative and biographical forms in *Meditations*, Wiseman notes: 'the text ends in the meditational mode and apparently with transcribed rather than rewritten material composed after Elizabeth Livingston's marriage to Robert Delaval'. That is, Wiseman infers the final textual meditations were composed directly into the manuscript. However, Wiseman overlooks the eighteenth century materiality of the extant manuscript which strongly implies these meditations were reiterated a second time: Wiseman, 'Textual Transmission and Jacobite Context', p. 74.

remediation into a romantic-fiction and in light of Delaval's social and religio-political contexts later in life as a precarious Church of England Jacobite in exile (c. 1689 – 1717).[5] Thus Margaret JM. Ezell argues: 'it is the conventions of romance, of fiction, not of spiritual meditation, which she utilizes to manage her grief through her writings, writings which in their nature make it clear she wishes for readers other than God to share her passion and her emotions'.[6] Delaval's textual meditations, prayer, and resolutions, are transcribed into the manuscript in informal chapters, collated, ostensibly at least, according to the biographical year of Delaval's life in which they were composed, or according to the year in which the events they describe occurred between the ages of fourteen, and twenty-two (though as Molekamp and Wiseman have noted, at times original meditations have been augmented by the objective voice of an older Delaval reiterating her texts).[7] In particular Ezell looks to this biographical structure and assesses the 'marriage plots' found in the final two years of material and the largest memoir 'Here ends the prayers and meditations writ from my 14th yeare to my 20th' (pp. 165 – 174). This memoir acknowledges the 1670 reiteration and encodes later reiteration between 1679 – 1703.[8] Ezell therefore centres her reading on a later iteration of the text and a relatively small aspect of it. Similarly, with reference to Delaval's marginal commentaries, made in the eighteenth century, which update the identity of Jacobite allies and emphasise Delaval's ill treatment at the hands of Williamite supporters, Susan Wiseman assesses Delaval's combination of textual meditation and romantic-fiction as a means to justify her precarious religio-politics: '[Delaval] uses features of the romance genre in her text to express sexual and political morality as naturally coinciding. In doing so, Delaval is writing a "life" as a narrative and devotions which tested

[5] Wiseman, 'Textual Transmission and Jacobite Context', p 91; Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine', p. 236. There is no evidence of a reader of the MS. beyond speculation as to the literary function of *Meditations* and infrequent addresses to 'you': Greene, 'Introduction', p. 18. Richard Rawlinson's purchase of the MS shortly after Delaval's death suggests it never reached a reader: Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine', pp. 221, 224 – 225.
[6] Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine', p. 236.
[7] Wiseman, 'Textual Transmission and Jacobite Context', p. 78; Molekamp, *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England*, p. 78.
[8] Greene, 'Notes to Text', en. 10, p. 213 & en. 127, p. 218. During this time John Manners, 1st Duke of Rutland (1638 – 1711), a married suitor of Delaval and later Williamite, held the title of earl: 'The Earle of Rutland (who at that time was only Lord Roos, his father being yet liveing)': Lady Elizabeth Delaval, *Meditations*, p. 166. Wiseman suggests the list of romance fictions was added to a later iteration of the text. This allows for the possibility that Delaval was inspired by the texts listed during a later transcription of the manuscript: Wiseman, 'Textual Transmission and Jacobite Context', p. 78.

itself against concepts of Anglican truth, loyalty (even in adversity), and survival of hardship as preferable to a wavering faith'.[9] Moreover, Wiseman suggests Delaval's retained textual meditations: 'had politicized implications as Anglican forms, since they were a devotional practice linked to a church which became divided and embattled. Throughout her later life, Delaval evidently claimed a place in that divided church, and her practices are, in a way, proof of that allegiance'. Wiseman does not clarify the discrete Anglicanism of Delaval's textual meditations. In light of the plurality of meditative practices and confessions in this thesis, it is difficult to determine how any single meditative practice could be labelled by its religio-politics. Similarly Ezell suggests Delaval's reader will 'admire the piety expressed in prayers'.[10] In acknowledging Delaval's retention of her earlier textual meditations in the extant manuscript, Wiseman and Ezell underline their perceived value to Delaval as a record of piety whilst insisting on the socio-politics of a readership. Moreover these readings describe a shared function of romantic fiction, religio-political confession in life-writing, and meditation as a presentation of a character for analysis – be that by a reader, the writer, God, or some combination.

Building on research into the similarities and fluidities of early modern life-writing and fictional forms, particularly those forms available to women, the chapter argues that, like *Book M*, whilst aspects of *Meditations* imply a reader and an intention to publish, in combination the romantic-fiction and underlying meditative forms imply the analysis of Delaval's conscience as it encountered secular and devotional conflicts. Biblical characters, secular forms including romantic-fiction characters, and the character of her grandmother as expressed in correspondence, provide Delaval with recognisable types against which to judge herself. Thus Suzanne Trill argues: 'generic unfixity and experimentation[…]was a defining characteristic of early modern autobiography' stressing the blurred boundaries of early modern life-writing forms including meditation, memoir, and biography, and Julie A. Eckerle observes the similarities between the framework of romantic-

[9] Wiseman, 'Textual Transmission and Jacobite Context', p. 91 – 92.
[10] Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine', p. 236.

fiction, life-writing, and meditative writing, as means to describe a character. Eckerle suggests that the fluidity of Early Modern genre provided women with ‘a form and model for life writing’, and that this offered a means of self-representation and interpretation particularly as romantic fiction gained respectability during the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Century. Thus, the narrative structure of the romantic-fiction aids both meditative and biographical readings of the text which need not be exclusive of each other. In this broader sense *Meditations* provides a chronological narrative against which Delaval could evaluate the progress of her spiritual wellbeing against the elaborated events of her secular life. Eckerle points to Mary Rich as an example of a writer who presented two versions of her personality in a spiritual diary and in an autobiography based in romance-fiction. However, in the example of *Meditations* the two selves are overlaid. Thus, the duality of Delaval’s and Rich’s texts and textual practices point to an iterative process of understanding whereby spiritual moments or observations, are reorganised according to biographical chronology – quite apart from their presentation for potentially very different audiences.

Organisational Schema

I begin with an overview of the organisation of the manuscript which underscores Delaval’s concomitant spiritual, secular, and biographical schema within a meditative framework. Delaval’s introduction describes the meditative function of *Meditations* as a means to describe, encounter, and resolve her perceived immorality. Moreover the introduction describes many of the themes and patterns found throughout *Meditations* which point to the meditative underpinnings of Delaval’s writing, and provide a useful starting point for analysis:

> An introduction to some meditation’s and prayr’s which I writ from the age of forteen year’s old to that of twenty, which introduction was writ in Lent when I was 4 month’s past twenty.
>
> Haveing from the time of entering into my 14th yeare kept in scater’d paper’s most of those resolution’s I have made against the evill’s of my life, I am now resolved by the Grace of God to collect them alltogether, it being (in my opinion) an imployment very proper for this season of the yeare which the

> church has particularly aponyted for a time of fasting and repentance. For what can be more mortifying to a Christian then fresh and lively representation's of those sin's they have been guilty of, in spight of all God's wining method's to incline our heart's aright. In oposition also to many holy vow's have I imbraced variety of evill's, and from one stage to another of my journy through this valey of tear's have I ether willfully or negligently entertained such companion's as have still guided me contrary to that narow paith which lead's to the Heavenly Jerusalem.
>
> My passion's and my sences have resisted my reason and led my will captive. Sometimes one sometimes another of those unruly rebell's have through the whole course of my life strove to govern me, in which strife they have to, to oft prevaled. In these folowing meditation's there victory's are recorded from yeare to yeare, victory's which at once make me blush and tremble: Blush at my own cowardise, who haveing so many powerfull asistances to resist the Devill shou'd yet rather basely yield to his temptations then by holy art's force him to fly me. This we have a certenty may be done, for St James (guided by the spirit of God) dos not say in vaine—Resist the Devill, and he will fly from you. [James 4:7] (p. 26).

Delaval's introduction to her *Meditations* (pp. 26 – 28) originated circa 1670 when Delaval was aged 'twenty'. It describes the original motivation for the first meditative iteration of the text as a unified whole collated from discrete meditations; and this core of meditations forms the bulk of the extant text into which Delaval has added her memoirs. In my assessment, the later paragraphs of the introduction suggest Delaval likely expanded it into its extant state during a subsequent reiteration of the text. Therefore, Delaval retained the impetus of the 1670 introduction whilst adding additional material and functions. As her title indicates, Delaval performed the 1670 collation and transcription of the introduction and her meditations during Lent immediately prior to her marriage deeming its retrospection 'an imployment very proper for this season of the yeare'. Throughout *Meditations* Delaval records frequent periods of retrospection encouraged by Lent and the liturgical year. Moreover, Delaval's stress on Lent in terms of repentance and mortification emphasises the principal textual function of the 1670 iteration, and potentially all her reiterations, as a personal project of recording, acknowledging, and understanding her spiritual history which she figures as a 'narow paith' or journey to Heaven.

Delaval's introduction encodes several meditative and textual processes which she performed whilst composing the 1670 iteration and which underscore its spiritual value. Delaval first writes, then collects, reads, organises, and transcribes her meditations and later adds the introduction. The process entails multiple oscillating encounters with her meditative texts as a writer and as a reader. In so doing, the process follows a recognisable meditative framework of observation and record, disposition and analysis, understanding, and statement of spiritual intent where the extant introduction forms a statement of intent following the first iteration. Thus, in the second paragraph, quoted above, Delaval summarises her perceived spiritual weaknesses and the cyclicality of her transgressions having read her meditations: 'Sometimes one sometimes another of those unruly rebell's have through the whole course of my life strove to govern me'. In addition to review, Delaval's introduction highlights a habit of making ameliorative 'resolutions' or declarations of her intentions and of later breaking these. Thus, next, Delaval locates much of the cause of her transgressions in a seeming inability to resist temptations; in light of this, Delaval concludes this paragraph with a pertinent extract from James 4:7: 'Resist the Devill'. She makes a declaration of spiritual intent derived from scripture. However, Delaval's reference to scripture is sparse throughout the manuscript and there is no indication that Delaval is meditating upon scripture, systematically or incidentally, as in the example of Austen or Hopton. In addition, that many of Delaval's references to scripture appear as marginal comments suggests these references, and possibly that found in the introduction, were entextualised in a later iteration of the manuscript as a means to provide scriptural authority to her earlier devotions – perhaps suggesting Delaval opened up the manuscript to wider reading later. For instance, appended to the top of Delaval's original poem 'Upon the singing of a lark' (p. 44, see figs. 1 & 2 above) on idleness and devotion, the motto 'Our time is in God's hand' appears to have been added after transcription. In addition, a marginal note added to the eighteenth century manuscript cites Psalm 31:15: 'My times are in thy hand'.[11] Thus Delaval frames her manuscript in recognisably meditative patterns of thought and views it, in

[11] Greene, 'Notes to Text', en. 28 & 29, p. 214.

its 1670 iteration at least, as an opportunity to interpret a spiritual lesson and to set an intention for amelioration. Moreover, this process is underpinned, to a limited extent, with reference to liturgical and scriptural frameworks.

In addition to wholesale reading, reviewing, and transcribing of her meditations, evidence within individual meditations and at key transitions describes Delaval's practice of review on a continuum of formal occasions. Most prominently, a companionate note at the end of the 1670 iteration points to a later reiteration at which time Delaval more ably compared two iterations of her text. Mirroring Delaval's introduction, a large memoir 'Here ends the prayers and meditations writ from my 14th yeare to my 20th' (pp. 165 – 174) signals the end of the 1670 iteration and introduces Ezell's so called 'marriage plots':

> Here ends the prayers and meditations writ from my 14th yeare to my 20th.
>
> Thus far the the thoughts which I had in the springtime of my life are set downe. Now folow's what I writ in the sumer of it, which pass'd away more full of cares, and with less of inocence in it, then the former.
>
> But blesed be God (who never forsakes them that put there trust in him), I was deliver'd by his grace out off those many snares the Devill had cuningly lay'd in my way, to make me fall into such shamefull heanious crimes as wou'd not only have ruined me for ever, but also have disgraced my family and most justly have made me be hated and scorned in this world, as well as eternaly miserable in the next. (p. 165).

As in her introduction to the manuscript, Delaval's note introducing the memoir and later meditations acknowledges her act of collation and review as a means to assess her character and her comparison of two iterations of herself and of her writing as she transition from the Springtime of her youth to the Summertime of her marriage. Delaval reviews both sets of texts in terms of her redemption and God's grace and salvation. Moreover, Delaval's seasonal metaphor for the stages of her life is repeated elsewhere in *Meditations* in light of its spiritual resonances in terms of the progress of her soul, and her preparations for judgment. Thus, Delaval labels her youth as her 'blossom time', her adolescence as 'spring time', her married life as 'Sumer', and her grandmother's

great age as: 'the winter of her life' (pp. 124, 165, 74). At each seasonal transition, Delaval notes her changing attitudes, and her growing concern that she is wasting time set aside for building a spiritual store.

Nevertheless, the habitual frequency with which Delaval meditated on her past, and therefore on iterations of herself as a means to interpret her spiritual progress can also be seen in smaller transitional moments such as the passage of another year, movements between London and the country, and the act of writing her meditations. The beginning of a five part textual meditation headed 'Meditations and prayers writ in my 19th yeare at Nocton' (pp. 131 – 133) signals an opportunity for Delaval to assess her progress up until this biographical and geographical transition from eighteen to nineteen and from London to Nocton – her principal rural residence with her paternal aunt. A secular transition inspires spiritual assessment:

> Tis now about 3 yeares ago since the same kind of thoughts I have now begun to seaze me, but to show how inconstant and gidy our nature is, they have often betwixt that time and this been quite shufled out of my mind by thought's of a difirent nature. (p. 131).

This meditation recorded before and collated into the 1670 iteration of *Meditations* is indicative of Delaval's habit of reviewing her spiritual progress. In this instance, whether Delaval reviews textual meditations or recalls her behaviour is unclear. In the subsequent textual meditations, Delaval describes a pattern of vain thoughts during the intervening years noting: 'outward things have been by me long lok'd upon as the princeple good to be injoy'd here below' (p. 132). Separately she finds a pattern of trifling thoughts which distract her from the import of devotion. Moreover, in the second of these five entries, Delaval reviews her decision to remove herself from the corrupting influences of the court to Nocton and her changing feelings towards this:

> Then I chose a retier'd life out of a beter motive then I feare sway's me now. I cheifly chose it to punnish my selfe for haveing | with to much earnestnesse coveted the glory's of this world (pp. 131 – 132).

Delaval reflects back on a previous moment of transition from London to Nocton and reviews her changing attitudes to retreat from one of escape to one of chastisement. In addition, in the thirteenth of seventeen prayers recorded after the textual meditation 'Upon the nesesary duty of consideration' (pp. 152 – 156) Delaval refers to the material process of collating her (at the time) loose papers comparably to the 1670 reiteration of the manuscript witnessed in her introduction:

> The number of them [sins], now I have gather'd them together and lay'd them before my eyes, is an amaizing fearefull sight […] Those sin's which were scater'd throughout my whole life now seriously consider'd all together makes me cry out with thy servant David,
>
> I am afraid of thy judgements, for with feare and dread thou shakest all my bones. (p. 159).

Delaval underscores the concealing effect of her 'scater'd' papers and the revelatory effect of collation and organisation. There is no evidence that Delaval transcribed her meditations at this juncture as in the example of her introduction. However, this collation aged nineteen may well have inspired the extant collation aged 'four month's past twenty'. Thus in addition to the wholesale reiteration of the manuscript, signalled in the 1670 introduction, these instances signal habitual practices of collation, retrospection, review, and self-assessment as Delaval sought to redeem her past, and the place of the material text as a means to observe, organise, and set spiritual intentions.

Narrative and Biographical Structures of Remediation

Unlike Austen's discontinuous miscellany of forms and topics, Delaval's *Meditations* comprises a recognisable narrative structure which follows Delaval's biographical chronology. This structure has been interpreted by Ezell and Eckerle as lead by secular events and the model of romantic fiction. Nevertheless, competing structures and schema within the manuscript point to meditative underpinnings which unite secular and spiritual matters – such as in the transition of life stages described above. This section describes and examines the structure of *Meditations* in terms of its function as a means to interpret and reiterate Delaval's character. Most overtly, the text is organised according to the year of Delaval's life in which she originated her meditations. Thus, simple

subheadings announce material collected by biographical year signalling the passage of time, and the cycle of the temporal and liturgical calendars: for example, 'Here begins the meditation's writ in my fourteenth yeare' and 'Meditation's writ in my 15th yeare' (pp. 28, 44). Ezell argues the progress of the text through the ages and stages in Delaval's life emphasises a secular narrative given the apparent ego-centrism of this organisational scheme.[12] However, this ego-centerism and emphasis on the origination of her meditations also suggests a stress on Delaval's spiritual progress, measured in the passage of her life and on her dominant devotional forms. In addition, titles within these chapters emphasise the accumulation of individual meditations and the passage of smaller increments of time, such as: 'Meditations writ when I was 18 yeare's old and a halph', in which Delaval records a further period of introspective self-assessment apparently inspired by this biographical milestone: 'These folowing meditations were writ in the later end of my 17th yeare'; and 'Here folows the last meditation writ in my 17th yeare' (pp. 109, 82 – 85, 88 – 91). Whilst suggesting the egocentricity of Delaval's organisation, these titles also stress a concern for accuracy of account and a sense of spiritual progress made between milestones. More locally, beneath these subheadings, Delaval numbers her sequences of meditations and prayers rather than applying individual thematic, contextual, or calendrical titles in the manner of Austen's more dynamic and chaotic *Book M*. In each numbered sequence Delaval orders material by identified form: firstly textual meditations in which she observes and analyses aspects of herself and her environment, 'resolutions' in which she sets objectives for behavioural changes equivalent to Hall's colloquium, and textual prayers which divide the functions of the *colloquium* as first an intention to change her ways and a prayer for God's intervention in the process of change. Thus, though narrative in terms of Delaval's biography, individual events in her life are, with the exception of her memoirs, framed in meditative schema. At its heart, the manuscript is organised according to biographical milestones and the passage of time rather than discrete secular events.

[12] Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine', p. 226.

Moreover, in addition to divisions by biographical year, the subdivisions within these years and the titles Delaval gives to individual meditations indicate her interweaving of devotional praxis and meditation into her biography. This suggests the manner by which Delaval's organisation of the manuscript is, whilst overtly governed by biographical chronology, more accurately governed by the liturgical year. For example Delaval specifies the liturgical season of her subsections including Lent, Advent and Christmas; and in the examples below I draw on the subsections within Delaval's ostensive eighteenth year which forms the largest chapter of the manuscript and which most clearly demonstrates the competing schema governing its structure. Ezell notes the presence of 'formal periods' of meditation in *Meditations* and suggests that these and the manuscript as a whole do not represent a sustained, daily, devotional practice.[13] Nevertheless, Ezell's reading assumes Delaval's practice is as intermittent as the extant text suggests. For instance: 'Severall meditations writ the same yeare [eighteenth] before the beginning of Lent' (pp. 110 – 115)'[14] indicates a deliberate meditative course in preparation for and during Lent. Whilst not indicative of sustained practice, this points to intensive periods of practice dictated by the liturgical year and by significant periods of transition or distress. Moreover, the imprecision of Delaval's nomenclature points to and masks the regularity of Delaval's practice. For instance, it is unclear whether the nine numbered meditations under 'Severall meditations writ the same yeare before the beginning of Lent' were performed at once or over sequential sittings. The difficulty of interpreting the temporality of numbered meditations is also an issue in Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations* and *Select Meditations* and, as in Austen, though practitioners did take care to number and date their meditations, the iterativity and repetitiveness of the form privileges the accumulation of patterns and cycles over temporal accuracy – as a means to evaluate the conscience, the authenticity of the record is more significant than the ability for an external reader to access the text. Nevertheless, the apparent irregularity of Delaval's practice serves to emphasise those periods during which Delaval did meditate with intensity.

[13] Ezell, 'Elizabeth Delaval's Spiritual Heroine', p. 225.
[14] Greene, 'Notes to Text', en 93, p. 216.

Moreover, the inherent selectivity of Delaval's composition, in line with all forms of life-writing, in part masks the frequency of Delaval's devotional practice. Thus 'The 2 Sunday in Lent, upon the difuculty of forsakeing habituall sins' (pp. 122 – 131, henceforth '2 Sunday in Lent'), which occurs in the chapter of Delaval's eighteenth year comprising eleven numbered meditations and nine prayers, attests to the intensity of Delaval's devotion at this time and to the possibility that at some point Delaval distinguished material specific to this second Sunday in Lent and perhaps specific to other Sundays. Likewise, whether Delaval's '2 Sunday in Lent' meditations and prayers were written as a whole or over subsequent days in Lent is unclear. Nevertheless, these meditations describe Delaval's sense of her devotional practice and her conflicting feelings of outwardly appearing pious whilst inwardly doubting her repentance, vanity, envy, and the conviction of her devotion. Her concerns reflect the retrospection and mortification of her introduction also written in Lent. In the first of the eleven meditations found under the title '2 Sunday in Lent' Delaval observes:

> How idly have I concluded my resolutions wise, though form'd only upon one houers meditation; and soon after how miserably have I suffer'd my selfe to be deluded […] When I set my selfe to examine my heart, which from time to time I have allway's done (though, alass, too, too negligently), and found that anger for mere trifling things and rash pationate | words was my most prevaleing sin, I was asham'd of that weakeness, beg'd earnestly God's ayde to asist me, and set my selfe to over come this evill […] but then having gained this victory, I sat downe at ease beleiveing my selfe inocent enough, so that I neglected with care to watch all my way's (pp. 122 – 123).

Delaval confesses the regularity though rushed glibness of her meditative practice and her sense that without conviction and will, her meditations fail, and her sins will be cyclically repeated. In accordance with the *Book of Common* Prayer, Delaval's stress on fortitude and temptation has more in keeping with the lesson for the first Sunday in Lent than that of the second Sunday, and it may be that she meditates on the previous week's lesson in preparation for liturgical worship. Though, like her use of scripture, which is in most part incidental, there is no sense that Delaval is matching her meditation to liturgy. Nevertheless, Delaval's several subsections of Lenten meditations, though far from models of exemplarity, illustrate the influence of the liturgical calendar on Delaval's devotion

both as an opportunity for retrospection and as a means to structure her meditative and textual practice. Thus though most obviously mapped onto Delaval's life, *Meditations* structure embeds multiple complementary organisational schema and iterations in light of Christian eschatology, liturgy, and major life transitions. Delaval's commentary on her practice points to her belief in the spiritual power of meditation as a means to better understand herself, to improve her spirituality with resolutions, and to record periods of spiritual strength and weakness.

Memoir and Correspondence as Meditative Forms

In addition to potential lacunae indicated by the presence of meditations for the second Sunday of Lent, *Meditations* comprises more obvious narrative and biographical lacunae which Delaval fills with memoir. In Ezell's ego-centric biographical reading of the text these point to a secular reader. Nevertheless, meditatively these substitutions suggest three interrelated practices which may occur in any combination and thus illustrates the unfixity of fictional and self-writing forms in the period. Firstly, that Delaval attempts to recover lost meditative material during reiteration of the original loose papers; secondly, that Delaval attempts to create material that never existed; and thirdly, that, Delaval composes new meditations using the memoir form as a vessel. *Meditations* includes three large sections of memoir woven into individual meditations and several smaller sections of commentary. Narratively and meditatively these sections bridge lacunae between documented periods of textual meditation or elaborate on events in retrospective detail, and they afford Delaval opportunities for reflection on the development of her character largely in relation to her social and domestic influences. The first of these immediately follows Delaval's introduction, and it is woven into the first extant meditation 'Here begins the meditation's writ in my forteenth yeare' (pp. 28 - 35). This memoir provides narrative detail on Delaval's life from the age of eight to fourteen (c. 1658 - 1664) a period during which Delaval either did not perform meditations or did not preserve them. Owing to her youth it seems reasonable to suggest any meditations in this period were minimal and that the older Delaval appreciated the opportunity to reflect on patterns of behaviour in her

childhood which influenced her adolescence. That is, therefore, that the memoir serves functions additional to providing biographical detail. Thus, Wiseman has described this memoir as describing the source of Delaval's later vanities and the competing influences of Delaval's corruption by her Presbyterian maid, Carter, and salvation by her Huguenot companion, Corney.[15] Delaval concludes:

> My aunt parted with Mris. Carten not without regret, but I rejoyced at her going; for how cou'd I posibly have seen her daily and not at one time or other have show'd a sharp resentment for haveing been so long deluded by her; and that my new friend Mris. Corny wou'd by no mean's allow me to do. She told me t'was a most imprudent thing ever to quarell with a person that I had once profess'd to love and had liv'd intimately withall; that I must be carefull for the future how I chose my friend's, but if ever I were so unlucky as to chuse amiss agen all that I cou'd do afterward's was to growe coule by degre's, and so gently withdraw my selfe from company where I found my time was flung away.
>
> Thus was I (by the mercy of God) resque'd at eleven year's old from Mris. Carter in my aunt Stanhopes house at Nocton, where I remained (except some part of the yeare that I was at London with my grandmother Gorges) under the care of mris. Corny till I went to live at court. I was not a month past forteen yeare old when my aunt settled upon me an alowance of a hunderd pound a yeare for my close which I had liberty to manage as I pleas'd. My governesse was gone and I had young people to waight upon me such as I chose my selfe, at which time I writ this folowing meditation (p. 35).

In a similar manner to Austen's use of sermons and writing on dreams, Delaval recalls and records a moral lesson on managing her relationships, derived from the greater experience and authority of Corney. Pious women, in the seeming absence of male role models, are particularly prominent as occasions for meditation in *Meditations*, and Delaval frequently compares herself to these women unfavourably. In addition, Delaval's two concluding paragraphs give extensive detail on her relationships and whereabouts and introduce the major characters found in *Meditations*, her paternal aunt and grandmother, Stanhope and Gorges, and the settings, Nocton Hall, Lincolnshire and the Court. More importantly, this memoir describes the relative liberty of Delaval's financial and social arrangements, and in so doing, it establishes the genesis of much of Delaval's later inclination

[15] Wiseman, 'Textual Transmission and Jacobite Context', p. 73.

to vanity, envy, and impulsiveness. From a narrative perspective the memoir is prophetic. From a meditative perspective it describes the foundation of Delaval's proclivities and a spiritual trauma to which she repeatedly returns. Moreover, the memoir establishes an instance of awakening in Delaval's spiritual journey from which to measure her progress. Moreover, Delaval's concluding comment 'at which time I writ this folowing meditation' in reference to 'The second meditation writ in my forteenth yeare' (pp. 35 – 37), which is similarly composed of a meditation and an interwoven memoir, overtly stresses the interaction between textual meditation and narrative augmentation as a means to understanding. That is, Delaval's memoir fills the lacuna yet does not obscure the meditative underpinnings of the text.

With greater complexity Delaval draws on the letter form and the memoir combined as a means to fill meditative lacuna and elucidate character. Delaval's 'sixteenth yeare' chapter describes events in the lead up to the death of Gorges (c. 1665). Of all of Delaval's chapters, this chapter demonstrates the greatest level of curation and selection of a recognisable narrative as a means to frame Gorges as a model of piety. The character of Gorges is a key component in Delaval's understanding of her inheritances of virtue, devotional practice, and financial security. Significantly, Delaval entextualises letters from her grandmother, Jane Gorges, as substitutes for missing textual meditations and as a record of Gorges' piety against which Delaval compares herself noting:

> The meditations' I writ upon the death of my grandmother are ost, and therefore least by any unlucky accident I shou'd also lose her letters that she writ to me, I will here place copy's of them, which hitherto I have carefully preserved' (p. 70).

Delaval's honest admission of her lost meditations and her careful preservation of the letters suggests that elsewhere memoir augments existing meditation in the same manner. Moreover, as in the example of Austen's elegiac poetry, it illustrates competing and concomitant functions of meditative miscellanies as sites of meditation, memorial and self-management. James Daybell describes the precarity of early modern letters written and recorded by women writers, to which

Delaval's admission testifies, and he describes the variety of reasons for which they were preserved: as exemplars of writing, exemplars of character, records of correspondence defining a relationship, and records of official correspondence.[16] Delaval's 'Meditations writ in my 16th yeare' (pp. 65 – 75) consists of a nest of textual forms: firstly a textual meditation under the main title; secondly a textual meditation into which Delaval has woven at least one memoir 'Upon the hearing that my grandmother had some ease of her pain's though no hopes of recovering'; five of Gorges' letters; and a final unrelated occasional meditation 'This following meditation was writ when I was just turned of 16th year's old, upon the eating too much fruit just upon my recovering out of that dangerous fit off sicknesse' (pp. 65 – 66, 66 – 70, 70 – 75, 75 – 76). The first item in the chapter, the textual meditation 'Meditations writ in my 16th yeare' (pp. 65 – 66), blends meditation on scriptural models with meditation on Gorges' impending death and establishes a meditative context into which Delaval locates the later presentation of Gorges character and letters. The meditation was composed aged about sixteen and prior to Gorges death, recording:

> the suden news that is come of my deare grandmother Gorges dangerous illnesse, for her great age makes me almost dispare of her recovery (p. 66).

In response to the event, Delaval's meditation includes a rare recall of scripture as Delaval describes models for her grief. These are the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17), Lazarus's grieving sisters (John 11), and Jairus (Mark 5:42). Delaval's presentation of these examples appears drawn from her memory of Biblical stories rather than as an example of meditation directing her to scriptural study, or Biblical study inspiring meditation, and she includes no direct citation or quotation. That is Delaval meditates upon the typology of these Biblical models and not upon passages of scripture. Delaval compares herself unfavourably to the scriptural models in terms of humility and piety and God's dispensation of mercy:

> Jarrus I also find (upon his humble request to our Saviour) had his daughter raised from the dead. Yet though God has been pleased for the sake of such

[16] James Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 35 – 36.

> holy person's to worke great miracles, alass how can I hope the like shou'd be done for me who have nether the vertu's of those 2 sister's (whose great faith and love can scarce be equall'd), nor the wisdom of Jarrus, nor the piety of the good Shunamite
>
> Yet I know that God is infinitely mercyfull and that he will not despise the prayer's of a broken and contrite heart. I know also that those whose lives are best upon the earth cannot chalenge a a right to the least of his bleseings, for we are all but unprofitable servant's (p. 66).

Poignantly, Delaval considers the likelihood of God's preventing Gorges' death based on Delaval's virtue, and, in comparing herself to scriptural examples of the living whose dead relatives have been miraculously reanimated, she concludes that God will not extend this mercy to her. However, she takes comfort in the knowledge that no Christian can expect such mercies. The reflection suggests a deep knowledge of the spiritual import of the scripture, if not of the specific passages of scripture. After a prayer of thanks for her blessings, Delaval concludes with a final observation which draws a parallel between these models of religiosity and the model of Gorges which follows; this may have been woven in later: 'O my God, supply them all and grant that I may folow the example's of those wise people who have in there generation's served and pleased thee' (p. 66). The none specificity of 'generations' encapsulates Stanhope and Gorges.

The subsequent memoir describes Gorges character and piety and underscores the eschatological objectives of meditation as a means to spiritual growth. This memoir is blended into Delaval's textual meditations under a second subheading 'Upon the hearing that my grandmother had some ease of her pain's though no hopes of recovering'.[17] Greene argues that the retrospectivity of the memoir on Gorges death 'dates the passage after the Delaval marriage' (c. 1670).[18] However, references to the Delaval marriage and to the significance of Delaval's inheritance of a thousand pounds from her grandmother appear in only the final third of the interwoven meditation and memoir beginning: 'Which som of mony severall year's after' (p. 68). It may be, therefore, that

[17] See also Delaval's first memoir which is similarly blended into a pre-existing meditation, pp. 28 – 35.
[18] Greene, 'Notes to Text', en. 53, p. 215 and en. 50, p. 214.

Delaval added this third section during a later reiteration of the manuscript. The interwoven meditation and memoir, therefore, represent at least two iterations of the manuscript and potentially a third as Delaval returned to reflect on the spiritual and temporal significance of her grandmother's death. The initial section, preserved from the original meditation, provides a commentary on Delaval's family unity at the time of Gorges' death, and the memoir takes up the narrative: 'Some few day's after this meditation was writ' (p. 67). In the section of memoir, Delaval slips out of the temporal moment of Gorges' death to reflect more broadly on the relationship between the two and on Gorges' role as a model of textual and devotional practice:

> She was a pious and tender parent. Her life was an example of good work's and constant regular devotion's, and at her death by her last word's tis plane she found it aproaching to her without any terrour, but was meditateing upon our blesed Lord and Saviour's asension in her last moment's.
>
> Her great goodnesse and humility had made her take the pains to teach me her selfe to read, which I did perfectly well before I was 8 yeares old. She also spent much time in giving me daily instructions as I grew up, all that part of the yeare which I was so hapy as to pass with her (p. 68).

In underlining Gorges' efforts to teach literacy, morality, and meditative practice Delaval describes an intergenerational pattern of transmission and the source of her grounding in devotional and textual practices. That Delaval observes Gorges' meditation on Christ at the moment of death, whether dramatised or real, points to the centrality of meditative practice in Gorge's life as a model for Delaval. Thus, in a family of limited moral standing, Delaval defines the one character from whom she can safely claim an inheritance not only in monetary terms but more importantly in religious and educative terms.[19]

[19] For descriptions of Delaval's family see: Greene, 'Introduction', pp. 1 – 2; Margaret JM. Ezell, 'Stuart [née Howard], Ann Hughes, 'Katherine, Lady Aubigny [other married name Katherine Livingston, Viscountess Newburgh] (d. 1650)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2004), available online at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/66716> [accessed 12 August 2022]; John Callow, 'Stuart, Charles, sixth duke of Lennox and third duke of Richmond (1639 – 1672)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2009), available online at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26696> [accessed 12 August 2022]; Rosalind K. Marshall, 'Livingston, James, of Kinnaird, first earl of Newburgh (1621/2 – 1670)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2008), available online at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16807> [accessed 12 August 2022].

In the next section of the memoir Delaval elaborates on her financial inheritance from her grandmother and on the significance of this inheritance in paying off her debts accrued at court. I argue it is this section of the manuscript which most illustrates the conflict between Delaval's secular and devotional concerns and her use of meditative and secular forms to interpret her conscience in light of her social and religious role models. Delaval's seeming conflation of her debt and her inheritance – in the neat total of one thousand pounds – implies her interpretation of this inheritance as a symbol of Gorges' grace and virtue and of Delaval's transgression:

> at her [Gorges] death she gave me all that she had in the world to give, which was a thousand pound, which sum of mony severall year's after when I received it brought more quiet to my mind then any other gift that ever was given me.
>
> For it pay'd off all the debt's that I had contracted at court, before I was mary'd. […]
>
> My father and my aunt Stanhope intended it shou'd have been a part of my portion and did not at all concern themselves with takeing any care about my debt's, which I thought a very great hardshipe towards me, since had they not been pay'd before I was a wife, they must certenly have fallen upon my husband, which I | might very probable have been many times reproach'd withal by his relation's and have lived for that reason (if for no other) unhapily amongst them.
>
> […]
>
> My aunt (who was extreamly good natured), being moved by those word's, shed some tear's and imediately gave order that thousand pounds shou'd be pay'd me.
>
> Thus my grandmother did me good (and in many other instances) as well dead as liveing, since her very name at that time made me prevale (pp. 68 – 69).

In addition to exemplifying Gorges, Delaval prefigures the eventual agreement of Stanhope, who embodies the perpetuation of Gorges' virtue. Delaval's debts were repaid by her inheritance from Gorges which Gorges accumulated through careful moderation of her spending. Symbolically, therefore, Gorges store of piety, in the inheritance she left for Delaval, repaid Delaval's debt of vanity and imprudence as she prepared her conscience for marriage, and the process baptismally reiterates Delaval as a virtuous and unindebted individual.

In the final section of the chapter Delaval preserves and presents a small selection of letters she received from her grandmother in the two years prior to her grandmother's death which exemplify Gorges' character as a paragon of Christian piety and underscore the spiritual significance of this financial inheritance. Moreover, Gorges' letters testify to her virtue and to the continuing instruction she affords Delaval – even after death. Thus, the second letter (c. 1665)[20] Delaval selects demonstrates Gorges' great care for how she is perceived and her oversight of Delaval's devotional practice:

> I desier that you will not measure my respects to you by my letters, for I asure you the lamenesse of my fingers is so great that I cannot hold my pen steady in my hand to write a perfect letter.
>
> […]
>
> I hear you are constant in your devotions. Your serveing God carefully and consionably cannot miss of a bleseing, for God hath promiss'd those that seek him early shall find him. Therefore remember thy creatior in the day's of thy youth, whilest the evill day's comes not nor the year's aproach, wherein thou shall't say, I have no pleasure in them [Ecc. 12:1]; and though it folow's in the same chaptier, rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth [Ecc. 11:9], he says's also remember thy God will bring thee to judgment [Ecc. 12:14].
>
> Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things, and God allmighty blese you with all sprituall bleseings in heavenly thing's in Christ jesus; and make you perfect in all good work's to do his will (p. 71).

Gorges' note on handwriting, which is repeated in the fourth of the letters (p. 73), points to Gorges' consideration of how her virtue is perceived. In light of Delaval's perception of herself as vain and lacking moral integrity and her grandmother's conflation of these two in her consideration of her handwriting, the neatness of *Meditations* might be interpreted as testament to Delaval's character. More importantly, Gorges records her perception of the young Delaval's devotional practice as constant. Gorges' assessment of Delaval's devotional practice is somewhat contradictory to Delaval's perception of herself as negligent, and Ezell's reading of Delaval's devotion as irregularly performed,

[20] This letter was written 'seven month's affter' the first, itself written when Delaval was fourteen, and thus the second letter can be dated to around late 1665.

and Delaval's reality may lie somewhere between these poles. Likewise, Gorges echoes Delaval's frequent concern for spending youthful time in devotion as a means to prepare for old age and Delaval's contrary concern that she has wasted her youth. This too may be less severe than Delaval describes. Most notably, Gorges cites a scriptural underpinning for her assertions in a paraphrase of Ecclesiastes. In so doing Gorges provides a scriptural spur for Delaval's personal devotions, and in this sense Gorges both supervises Delaval's devotion and provides moral and scriptural instruction mediated through correspondence. Thus, Delaval's presentation of the character of Gorges through memoir and letters describes the source and oversight of her moral and textual education and her inheritance of virtue symbolised in the one-thousand-pound inheritance. Moreover, Gorges posthumously acts as a witness of Delaval's character and provides, perhaps, a more authoritative assessment of Delaval's devotional practice as seen through the eyes of a virtuous character. Textually, as in her use of memoir to fill devotional lacunae, Delaval's entextualisation of her grandmother's letters, which she frames with memoir, describes her use of available life-writing forms within a meditative context as a means to establish devotional models and unite her secular financial concerns with her spiritual reiteration.

Poetic Remediation: 'Who ever think's most certenly must Prize'

In keeping with each of the writers chosen for this thesis, Delaval incorporates a small quantity of verse forms into *Meditations*. The nature and location of these poems in the manuscript strongly implies that they were added as part of a later iteration. Their content describes Delaval's interpretation of her textual meditations and the themes which concern her. This strongly implies they were added later as a reflection or summary of the collected textual record of *Meditations*. Thus, Delaval's use of verse, though limited, describes a retrospective attempt to present major spiritual themes evident in her textual meditations and a move toward more creative and literary means of presentation. Delaval's original poem, and the largest in the manuscript, 'Who ever think's most certenly must prize' (pp. 120 – 121, henceforth 'Who ever think's') stands as a centrepiece to

the text at the heart of the large chapter concerning Delaval's eighteenth year. 'Who ever think's' encapsulates many of Delaval's accumulated criticisms of past vanity and envy, her interpretation of the Carolean court as a corrupting and enabling environment, and her views in favour of social retirement – which mirrors Traherne's similar recourse to social retreat in his *Inducements to Retirednes.*[21] The doublemindedness of its themes is reflected in the bipartite structure of 'Who ever think's' which places in opposition retreat and the court, youth and age, folly and vice:

Who ever think's most certenly must prize
A life retier'd, and croud's and noise dispise
With all this gidy world call's blest and great,
Sought for in court's but found in retreat.
At court our maid's place there cheife hapynesse
In new caught lovers, who flatery's express
In look's and word's, nay in there very dress;
For on high day's each youth adorn'd dos wear,
A couler that dos grief or hopes declare,
According as the nymph he most admier's
With scorn, or gentle look's return's his fier's.

This for our youth, now for the graver sort
Who fill great places and rule much at court.
They fix there joy's on high ambition crown'd:
Some tytles wish, some parcells more of ground,
Some heap's of gold wou'd have, and some do boast
There prince's smiles (nere counting what they cost),
Nor that all treasures here will surely rust,
Which ovepriz'd are worse than comon dust;
For that each houer dos planely let us see
With what our ashes once must mingled bee,
But wealth and greatnesse brings a dangerous joy,
Which too much valued, failes not to destroy.

The resolution or advice of the poem is presented before the critique as though Delaval challenges the reader to agree to retreat. The opening quatrain comprises a rhetorical question which flatters the intelligence of the reader. The thinking reader 'most certenly must prize' (ln. 1) 'blest and great' (ln. 3) retirement, and 'retreat' (ln. 4) over the giddy foolishness of the court. Structurally, 'Who ever think's' is composed of two verse paragraphs of eleven and ten lines; the first stanza of 'Upon the

[21] London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS.1360; Thomas Traherne, *Inducements to Retirednes*, in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol I. (Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2005), pp. 3 – 43.

singing of a lark' (p. 44) also has an uneven number of lines and a middle triplet, and this appears to be a quirk of Delaval's poetic style. The first stanza of 'Who ever think's' addresses sexual politics and vanities, whist the second stanza addresses ambition and material wealth in terms of pride, hubris, or vaingloriousness. This separation of causes and effects continues along divisions of age, intelligence, and to some extent gender. Delaval is perhaps inspired by Hall's meditative schema of dividing and contrasting topoi in her assessment of vanities; however, this pattern of meditation does not appear elsewhere in *Meditations*. If Delaval were inspired by this style of meditation, the example of 'Who ever think's' would most likely represent a later innovation of style and form in Delaval's meditative practice and textuality. The concluding quatrain assesses the futility of earthly possessions in terms derived from 'The Order for the Burial of the Dead' in the *Book of Common Prayer*: 'earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust'.[22] That is, in place of scripture, Delaval derives spiritual meaning from the liturgy of the state church to which she aligns herself. This association with the language of the exequy for the dead effects a pun on Delaval's description of the courtiers engaged in these pursuits as the 'graver sort' (ln. 12). Delaval's implication, made overt in the final couplet, is that the pursuits of courtly life are earthy, materialist, and destructive and counter to the blessings and greatness of devotional retreat. Moreover, since the penultimate couplet merges condemnation of courtly corruption with the exequy for the body, it is at least implied that the final couplet concerns the soul, or at the very least social standing. Lastly, Delaval does not distinguish the court she critiques, be it Carolean, Jacobite, or Williamite, and this suggests a hesitancy which implies Wiseman's politically sensitive readership at this stage in composition. Moreover, meditatively, by critiquing courtliness and corruption, as opposed to a given court, Delaval directs her opprobrium at the forms of vanity, flagrancy, and ambition which she perceives as causing her spiritual downfall, and Delaval's offer of retreat speaks to her wider, and ongoing, conflict between secular and spiritual obligations found throughout *Meditations*. Nevertheless, the poem also

[22] The Church of England, 'The Order for The Burial of the Dead', *Book of Common Prayer (1662)*, online edn., <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/book-common-prayer/burial-dead> [accessed 12 August 2022].

functions in the prose in which it appears as a comment on Delaval's life in retreat which somewhat undercuts her critique of courtliness.

Within Delaval's '18th yeare' chapter 'Who ever think's' forms the crux between two similar sequences of meditations, and at this local level the poem draws attention to the comparable yet contrasting topoi in these textual meditations on devotional obligations and on Delaval's continuing transgressions in retreat. Delaval's imposition of the poem at this juncture, therefore, makes a pointed critique of her earlier meditations. These are the sequence of ten textual meditations beginning 'Meditations beginning at Christmasse the same [eighteenth] yeare' (pp. 115 – 120) and 'Meditations writ in Lent in my 18th yeare' comprising fourteen textual meditations and nine accompanying prayers, and 'Meditations writ in Lent in my 18th yeare' (pp. 121 – 131). The liturgical inspiration behind each sequence emphasises the intense retrospection in these sequences. That Delaval numbers 'Who ever think's' within the former sequence as '11' suggests these are a unified set. However, 'Who ever think's' sits awkwardly against the content of 'Meditations begining at Christmasse the same yeare'. The sequence records meditations largely concerned with devotional praxis. For instance Delaval meditates on keeping canonical hours (p. 115), encouraging peers and servants to godliness (p. 115), devotional reading (p. 117), and in reserving as much time as possible to devotion as befits her social status: 'I sin most in so slightly valuing that precious time God in his great mercy alow's me here to worke out my salvation in' (p. 118). Her description of pious behaviour contrasts the loneliness of the court described in 'Who ever think's' and gives a sense of Delaval's 'prized' retreat'. Thus, structurally, 'Who Ever Think's' is imposed on and amplifies its local prose in favour of retreat.

In contrast to 'Meditations begining at Christmasse the same yeare' the textual meditations following 'Who ever think's' offer a frank presentation of Delaval's time in retreat and the insidiousness of her vanities and corruptions. Moreover, Delaval describes her inclination to sin which, though exacerbated by the court and tempered by retreat, is nevertheless independent of her

environment, and this revelation undermines the simple duality of the poem, and its celebration of retirement:

Meditations writ in Lent in my 18th yeare

> There is some one kind of sin or other that most pleases each particular person: the intemperate man is most charm'd with full cup's of rich wines, the unchast heart with waton look's, and my heart (which has more off ambition in it then any other evill) is most of all inclin'd to be delighted with vaine praise. If I cou'd but gaine the generall aplause of the world (which it must cost me many cares and much labour to do), I am apt to thinke I shou'd soon be lifted up to as much greatesse as my heart desiers; and thus vaine glory insinuates it selfe into the most inocent of all my actions (p. 121).

In the first textual meditation following 'Who ever think's' Delaval intimates that the sins of ambition and vanity, described in 'Who ever think's, are found within her character as proclivities which are exacerbated by the temptations of the court. This meditation is reminiscent of Delaval's memoir 'Here begins the meditation's writ in my forteenth yeare' (pp. 28 – 35) which locates the source of Delaval's proclivities in her youth with Mris. Carter, and both point to the cyclicality at which Delaval encountered her selfhood and sought to assuage her proclivities by assigning them to her environment. Moreover, far from being a paradise of piety and withdrawal from sin, Delaval describes her time in retreat as a continuation of the behaviours she developed whilst at court. This is described most pronouncedly in the textual meditations under '2 Sunday in Lent' (pp. 122 – 129). These include substantial biographical details of Delaval's time at court and her sense of its detriment to her spiritual identity. Thus, the second of these meditations begins with a retrospective assessment of Delaval's vanity, prior to her time at court, which echoes the concerns of 'Who ever think's':

> Next to vanity crept ambition into my heart and brought along with it a whole trope of other sin's. I begun to thinke no life was hapy like liveing in a court and pursue'd my designs of living there in splendor with eagernesse' (p. 123).

The third of these meditations concludes Delaval's reflections on her time at court and begins her reflections on its broader impact:

> As to any Spirituall advantage, this young time of my life was quite flung away. But my consience so often chek'd me, and the holy spirit of God did so constantly call upon me to retier home to my aunt agen and consider my way's before I had wander'd to far ever to return, that I cou'd no longer disobey but left those pleasures which had so bewitch'd my soul; yea I left them by my own choyce in the spring time of my life and betoke my selfe once agen to the inocent solitude of a contry life. (p. 124).

This retrospective review by the eighteen-year-old Delaval of her decision aged fourteen to retire to Nocton underscores the opposing attractions of the court and the rural piety of Nocton. Delaval stresses her decision to retire as an act of free will and as a means to redeem her lost time in devotion. Touchingly the fifth of these meditations witnesses changes in Delaval's personality at this time and the consistency and piety of her aunt, Stanhope, as a model of virtue:

> My contry life presently lost all the sweetnesse of inocency and content, by the blakenesse which ingraditude cover'd me withal. I grew stuborn and mutenous in my aunt's family, whose bread I eat and who had allway's treated me as an only child but with this difirence, that there was allway's so much of respect mingled with her love to me that a stranger who had seen us together wou'd have geused I had been some great princes child that she toke care of, rather than the daughter of her brother. (p. 124).

The eighteen-year-old Delaval recognises her churlishness and sense of entitlement aged fourteen and Stanhope's model of a loving Christian. Moreover, Delaval portrays her behaviour as an insidious continuation of her time at court which 'cover'd me withal'. These reflections on the broader social impact of Delaval's actions continue as she considers her perceived envy (pp. 124 – 125), vanity (p. 125), distractedness, idleness (p. 126), and insolence (pp. 126 – 127). In the eighth textual meditation, Delaval draws parallels between her feelings of sinfulness, and the continuation of her debts accrued at court:

> by one foleish expence or other, have I so order'd it that I have spar'd nothing at the year's end towards the paying of those debts that I contracted at court; whereas if I had managed prudently, by this time I

> might have spar'd neer enough to have pay'd what I ow, and have free'd my selfe from the cruell afliction the thought's of them gives me every day (p. 126).

As in the example of her memoir of her grandmother, Delaval notes her debts as a painful symbol of her former and continuing transgressions and her seeming inability to redeem herself. Delaval's inability to pay her debts by careful moderation, even in retirement, and her eventual recourse to her grandmother's inheritance exemplifies her sense of failure and her perceived natural inclination to sinfulness which extends beyond the corruptions of court. Thus, the textual meditations which follow 'Who ever think's' undercut the simplistic opposition of retreat and court presented in the poem. Though in a broad sense 'Who ever think's' attacks the corruptions of the court in the local sense of Delaval's '18th yeare' the poem registers a source of Delaval's corruption, and points to her failed attempts at self-correction in retreat. Moreover, its likely composition later and entextualisation between meditations composed aged eighteen – though at times retrospectively considering her fourteen-year-old self – describe Delaval's complex interweaving and dramatisation of iterations of herself. Delaval's recourse to meditation in verse describes the function of her manuscript as a locus for intermittent refinement of her understanding of herself against devotional models and her use of a variety of textual forms to perform these functions.

Conclusion

Delaval's *Meditations* embeds a complex character and an equally complex textual process iterated throughout adulthood. Delaval uses a variety of prose and verse forms, meditation, prayer, memoir, letter, verse, marginal commentary, as a means to present, iterate, and interpret her character. Over time she is able to refine her cycles of devotion and transgression and identified the source of her proclivities. Critics have plausibly interpreted this text as remediation of meditative texts into an autobiographical or semi-fictionalised romantic text which describes discrete social, political, and religious contexts and which assumes a readership in Delaval's peers in exile and in England. Nevertheless, concomitant with these readings, these forms, and the meditative forms from which

Delaval first transcribes all function to present a character for assessment against a model. As life-writing forms, in fiction and non-fiction, they represent the fluidity of early modern form and particularly the fluidity with which writers, like Delaval, and Austen blended and combined available forms for a variety of ends including meditation. Moreover, as a means to bridge devotional and secular activity, meditative thought underpins and unites these texts. Meditation provides a framework through which to interpret the manner in which Delaval related morality, devotion, and liturgy, as well as relationships, finances, and her popular reading within her wider world view. At times of great distress, liturgical import, or social and personal transition Delaval reviewed and iterated both her writing, and herself, as a means to prevent the repetition of past indiscretions – often failingly.

This chapter and the previous one explored the nominally private manuscript production of meditative writers as they used their texts as a repository and locus of meditation largely on issues concerning themselves and their close network. Nevertheless, both writers and their texts point to the often porous border between public and private writing in this period; the ambiguity of texts which appear to imply and exclude a readership; and the difficulty of locating and defining this reader where the possessor of the manuscript occupies the roles of writer, curator, editor, and principal reader at different stages of a long period of ownership. In the next three chapters the distinction between writer and reader is more pronounced. The writers address and prepare their texts for distinct readers and readerships; and the writers adopt distinct voices according to the relationship they wish to inculcate between writer, reader, and text.

Chapter Three: Meditation and Rhetoric in John Flavel's *Navigation Spiritualized*

> I request you all, both Masters, common Men, and all others, into whose hands this shall come, that you will lay to heart what you read pray unto him that hath the Key of the House of David, *that openeth, and no man shutteth*; to open your hearts; to give entertainment to these truths. Alas! if you apply it not to your selves, I have labored to no purpose, the Pen of the Scribe is in vain.[1]

During the period of the Cavalier Parliament, John Flavel (Also Flavell, c. 1627 – 1691) was an internally exiled Presbyterian minister of Dartmouth, South Devon. This chapter examines his creation of an imagined community or congregation of readers and his remediation of his ministry in meditative, and devotional rhetorical forms.[2] The chapter centres on *Navigation Spiritualized* (1664) a devotional manual containing thirty-two chapters which each present a moral or spiritual lesson in the rhetorical form of an occasional meditation. *Navigation Spiritualized*, Flavel's first publication, was published in the shadows of the Act of Uniformity (1662) and Conventicle Act (1664) which severely restricted Flavel's ability to minister in person thereby motivating him to mediate his ministry into print. In addition, the chapter explores Flavel's location of his work in literary and devotional traditions including meditation, devotional verse, and the emblem. As a part of this, the chapter describes Flavel's development of the literary model established by *The Christian's Compass or, The Mariners Companion* (1652) by John Durant (c. 1620 - 1689), an independent minister of the Parliamentarian Navy. On this model Flavel innovated his *'New Compass'* (p. x) and he further developed the model in *Husbandry Spiritualized* (1669).[3] *Husbandry Spiritualized* was written

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[1] John Flavel, *A New Compass for Seamen Consisting of XXXII Points of Pleasant Observations, Profitable Applications, and Serious Reflections: All Concluded with Many Spiritual Poems* (London: Richard Tomlins, 1664), p. 203. Later retitled, and more popularly known as, *Navigation Spiritualized* (Henceforth *Navigation Spiritualized*, or *NS* in citation). All references are to this first edition unless stated. Citations are given in parentheses.

[2] James William Kelly, 'Flavell, John (bap. 1630, d. 1691)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2008), available online at < https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9678> [accessed 13 August 2022].

[3] John Durant, *The Christian's Compass or, The Mariners Companion* (London: TL., 1652). William E. Burns, 'Durant [Durance], John (bap. 1620, d. 1689)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2004), available online at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9678> [accessed 13 August 2022].

Husbandry Spiritualized, or The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things, in which Husbandmen are Directed to an Excellent Improvement of their Common Employments. Whereunto are Added, Occasional Meditations upon Birds, Trees, Flowers,

following further restrictions imposed by the Five-Mile Act (1665). With this text Flavel developed his rhetorical style and expanded the scope of his imagined community.

Flavel's work has been subject to minimal critical attention. For the most part this attention has been limited to Flavel's theology in relation to his later texts and to Flavel's biography as a religious character.[4] This chapter, therefore, assesses Flavel's textual practices in light of broader discussions of devotional rhetoric and the religio-political circumstances of Flavel and the maritime communities for which he wrote. Consequently, the chapter offers the first literary assessment of Flavel's verse and prose forms. The opening sections of the chapter examine Flavel's paratextual material including prefatory letters and instructions, poetry, and an index. It assesses how this material constructs and addresses a community of readers and his concept of the rhetorical function of his meditations and verse as means to address these readers. Flavel adopted the rhetorical proforma of meditative writing alongside Ciceronian and devotional rhetoric found in Christian analogy and devotional verse after George Herbert as a means to mediate his ministry into an accessible, versatile, textual format. Flavel's extensive and wide-ranging use of verse forms allows

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&c. (London: Robert Boulter, 1669). All references are to this first edition unless stated. Citations are made in parentheses (Henceforth *Husbandry*, or *HS*). The pagination and chapter numbering of this text are inconsistent up until at least the sixth edition. Pagination is consistent to the 1669 first edition with additional context where necessary.

[4] John Flavel, *None But Jesus* ed. by Nathan T. Parker (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust: 2014) comprises 384 extracts of Flavel's work – though only a handful from the two texts in this thesis, and a short biography. The extracts are published with no textual context or scholarly commentary and are primarily meant for spiritual inspiration. Brian H. Cosby's biography provides an accessible overview of Flavel's religio-political position which relies on generalised readings of early modern Presbyterianism to supplement the limited available material on Flavel. A selection of Cosby's sources, several of which are by Cosby, underscores the narrow scope of criticism on Flavel and the dominance of biographical and more so theological readings of the later texts: Brian H. Cosby, *John Flavel: Puritan Life and Thought* (Lexington Books: Plymouth, UK, 2014), fn. 3, pp. 28 – 29: Kwai Sing Chang, 'John Flavel of Dartmouth, 1630–1691' (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1952); Brian H. Cosby, Suffering and Sovereignty: *John Flavel and the Puritans on Afflictive Providence* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012); Brian H. Cosby, 'The Theology of Suffering and Sovereignty as Seen in the Life and Ministry of John Flavel (c.1630 – 1691)' (Ph.D. diss., Australian College of Theology, 2013); Brian H. Cosby, 'John Flavel: The Lost Puritan', in *Puritan Reformed Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1, (January 2011); Brian H. Cosby, 'The Christology of John Flavel', in *Puritan Reformed Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1, (January 2012); Nathan Parker, 'Proselytisation and Apocalypticism in the British Atlantic World: The Theology of John Flavel' (Ph.D. diss., Durham University, 2012); William R. Edwards, 'John Flavel on the Priority of Union with Christ: Further Historical Perspective on the Structure of Reformed Soteriology', in *Westminster Theological Journal*, Vol. 74, (2012), pp. 33 – 58; Clifford B. Boone, 'Puritan Evangelism: Preaching for Conversion in Late Seventeenth-Century English Puritanism as Seen in the Works of John Flavel' (Ph.D. diss., University of Wales, Lampeter, 2013); Adam Embry*, An Honest and Well Experienced Heart: The Piety of John Flavel (*Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012); Adam Embry, *Keeper of the Great Seal of Heaven: Sealing of the Spirit in the Life and Thought of John Flavel (*Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011); Stephen J. Yuille, *The Inner Sanctum of Puritan Piety: John Flavel's Doctrine of Mystical Union with Christ (*Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2007); Adam Embry, 'John Flavel's Theology of the Holy Spirit', in *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (Winter 2010), 84 – 99.

for critical commentary on the function of these forms as a means to organise the text and address his readers. The second section of the chapter offers a reading of chapter ten of *Navigation Spiritualized* as an exemplar of Flavel's use of the rhetoric of meditation including *compositio loci*, disposition of parts and *considerationes puncta*, and *colloquium*. In addition, I examine Flavel's prominent use of argument stanzas, and summary poems as a means to frame the central arguments of his writing for his readers. The third section of the chapter examines Flavel's literary innovations in *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized*, including his development upon the model established by Durant, and it briefly considers Flavel's adaptation of the emblem tradition as a further means to frame his work.

Flavel's Imagined Communities of Readers

> I have endeavoured to cloath spiritual Matters in your own Dialect and Phrases, that they might be the more intelligible to you; and added some Pious Poems, with which the several Chapters are concluded, trying by all means, to assault your several Affections (*NS*, p. x).

Of the texts in this thesis, Flavel's two published meditative manuals contain the most extensive prefatory and paratextual material. This material describes Flavel's authorial persona, the imagined reading community of the text, and the manner by which the text might be read by individuals. Thus, in the passage above Flavel stresses his use of the language of his readers and verse forms as a means of engaging their will and understanding from a position of affection and authority. In *Navigation Spiritualized* this imagined readership can be identified against the geopolitical backdrop of Flavel's maritime parish in post-Restoration Dartmouth, Devon. The imagined readership of *Husbandry Spiritualized*, with its wider spiritual and literary appeal, is more nebulously abstracted from the agricultural communities of the South Hams, Devon, and from agricultural communities more broadly. For instance, extensive reprints and publication saw *Husbandry Spiritualized* embraced by communities as distant as the Province of Massachusetts Bay by the early Eighteenth

Century.[5] Focussing on prefatory verse and prose, this first part of the chapter examines Flavel's imagined community of maritime readers, then, somewhat asynchronously, assesses more broadly how Flavel presents his text for this community in his selection of analogies, language, sources, and textual forms.

Flavel's imagined community of maritime readers for *Navigation Spiritualized* is inspired by the locale of his parish, and his textual choices reflect seventeenth-century cultural and social concepts of maritime communities as distinct, peninsular and reluctant to engage in prevailing religio-politics. *Navigation Spiritualized* is ostensibly addressed, in 'The Epistle Dedicatory' (pp. iii - xiii), to this community:

> To All Masters, Mariners, and Seamen; Especially such as belong to The Borough of Clifton, Dartmouth and Hardness, in the County of Devon (p. iii).

Significantly Devon was a stronghold of Parliamentarian support, and Presbyterian faith having been Protestantised by Presbyterians of an earlier generation, and, in common with other coastal and urban areas, Flavel's Presbyterian support was particularly strongly felt in Dartmouth.[6] In addition, David Butcher suggests the seafaring life was conducive to non-conformity owing to time away from home and the influence of international exchange.[7] These circumstances imply a community which was both liminal, in relation to centres of power and religion, and central, in relation to networks of community, employment, and trade. That is, the maritime community looked to itself and to the

[5] (Boston, MA: John Allen, 1709); Cosby, *John Flavel: Puritan Life and Thought*, p. 38.
[6] WG. Hoskins, 'The Wealth of Medieval Devon', in *Devonshire Studies*, ed. by WG. Hoskins and HPR. Finberg (London: Jonathan Cape, 1952), pp. 212 – 249 (p. 218); WG. Hoskins, 'The Making of the Agrarian Landscape' in *Devonshire Studies* (1952), pp. 289 – 333 (p. 325 – 326). See sections in: 'Devon' in *The Buildings of England*, ed. by Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner (London: Penguin Books, 1997) pp. 19 – 35, 295 – 324; Ian Gowers, 'The Clergy in Devon 1641 – 1662', in *The New Maritime History of Devon*, ed. by Michael Duffy, Stephen Fisher, Basil Greenhill, David J. Starkey, Joyce Youings, Vol. 1, (Conway Maritime Press: London, 1992) (pp. 200 – 225); Mark Stoyle, *Loyalty and Locality: Popular Allegiance in Devon During the English Civil War* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1994), p. 253 – 254; HPR. Finberg, 'A Chapter of Religious History', in *Devonshire Studies* (1952), pp. 366 – 395 (pp. 366 – 395, 367, 371 – 372); Mark Stoyle, *West Britons: Cornish Identities and the Early Modern British State* (Exeter; University of Exeter press, 2002), p. 2, 86 & 87.
[7] David Butcher, *Lowestoft 1550 – 1750 Development and Change in a Suffolk Town* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 307.

sea, rather than national government or state religion, for its religio-political models.[8] Flavel's imagined community, therefore, conforms to its own standards and values.

Flavel's particular stress on 'Masters, Mariners, and Seamen' situates *Navigation Spiritualized* in a community which crosses social strata and is defined more so in terms of the maritime industry and its locale at sea, or overseas, which brings with it the added complication of lack of ministerial oversight in religious matters and a stress on the individual conscience. Research on conditions at sea during the early modern period is varied in its conclusions, often due to the minimal textual record of individual lives. Nevertheless, ships logs, probate, admiralty records, colonial records, and cultural representations describe the harsh conditions at sea. In an assessment of the English Navy under Cromwell (1648 – 1660), Bernard Capp finds a religious culture largely dependent on the character and confession of the officer class.[9] On the other hand, critics describe sailors as precarious, superstitious, and thanatophobic – though some critics caution against the romanticisation of sailors as bawdy and irreligious. Keith Thomas concludes: 'The dangers of seafaring made sailors notoriously superstitious and generated a large number of ritual precautions designed to secure favourable weather and the safety of the ship'.[10] Philip Pain, a contemporary of Flavel embodies the precarity and danger of seafaring in his life and writing. Pain, a sailor in the North American colonies, wrote a series of meditations on preparations for death which exemplify his fear of impending death.[11] Poignantly his death at sea shortly before publication attests to these fears. In recognition of this morbid precarity, 'The Epistle Dedicatory' Flavel, drawing on Anacharis, acknowledges the nihilism, and religious apathy of the sailor in the face of death and describes sailors as a distinct socio-cultural group:

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[8] See: Vincent Patarino Jr. 'The Religious Shipboard Culture of Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century English Sailors', in *The Social History of English Seamen, 1485 – 1649*, ed. by Cheryl A. Fury (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2012), p.141 – 192 (p. 141); John Horrace Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson: 1963), p. 20.
[9] Bernard Capp, *Cromwell's Navy: The Fleet and the English Revolution 1648 – 1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp 293 – 326.
[10] Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 287; Patarino Jr., pp. 142 – 143.
[11] Philip Pain, *Daily Meditations; or Quotidian Preparations for and Considerations of Death and Eternity Begun July 1666* (Cambridge, MA: SG. and MJ, 1670)

> Seamen are, as it were, a third Sort of Persons, to be numbered neither with the living nor |the dead […] |As for Prayer, it is a rare thing among Seamen, they count that a needless business. They see the Profane and Vile delivered as well as others, and therefore, what profit is there if they | pray unto him? (p. iii - vi).

Flavel is sympathetic to the attitude of sailors given their frequent observation of the totality of loss or survival in shipwrecks and storms. Nevertheless, he questions this assessment of maritime life and suggests that the imminence of death should motivate sailors to care more for their souls. His conflation of the depths of the sea and hell emphasises the proximity of death and judgment to the sailor's lives:

> Sirs! It is a very sad consideration to me, that you who Float upon the great Deeps, in whose Bottom so many thousand poor miserable Creatures lie, whose sins have sunk them down, not onely into the Bottom of the Sea, but of Hell also, wither Divine Vengeance hath pursued them: That you (I say) who daily Float and Hover over them, and have the Roaring Waves and Billows that swallowed them up; gaping for you | as the next prey, should be no more affect with these things. O what a terrible voice doth God utter in the Storms? (pp. vi – vii).

Flavel's repeated and emphatic direct address stresses the intimacy and concern of his authorial voice. Moreover, his rhetorical question invites readers to re-examine their attitude to oceanic storms as a symbol of God's judgment. Flavel's definition of his imagined community of maritime readers is largely in keeping with historical and scholarly interpretations of the precarity of sailing, and the waywardness of sailors, and he positions himself as spiritual leader or evangelist. Indeed, Peter Earle's assessment of sailor's books in probate points to their disparate means of quite literally navigating their world including scientific books, books of lewd rhymes, and, by far the largest numerically, prayer books and Bibles.[12] Flavel's *Navigation Spiritualized*, therefore, had a ready market of sailors and mariners in search of instruction, entertainment, and spiritual or temporal direction

[12] Peter Earle, *Sailors: English Merchant Seamen 1650* – 1775 (London: Methuen, 1998), pp. 94, 103.

As a means to direct and engage his community of sailors, Flavel presents a narrative analogy of a journey at sea which maps onto the journey of the soul from conversion to death, and a variety of repeated rhetorical and structural features designed to aid in accessing and reading the text. In *Navigation Spiritualized*, and likewise in *Husbandry Spiritualized*, each chapter is formed of five rhetorical components. These components combine functions recognisable to the meditative pro-forma of Loyola, Hall, or Baxter simplified and framed in summary verse. Thus, each chapter begins with an argument stanza which briefly introduces the analogy and lesson of the meditation. This is followed by: an 'observation' which describes Flavel's analogy; an 'application' which distributes the analogy into parts, and relates a spiritual lesson - frequently drawing on scripture and religious writing; a 'reflection' which invites readers to assess their conscience, and provides a prayer after the manner of *colloquium* for the reader to rehearse. Finally, a summary poem recapitulates, to varying degrees, aspects of the observation, application, and reflection, and these poems offer alternative, analogical, and aural means of accessing the text. Topically, the thirty-two chapters of *Navigation Spiritualized*, each near identical in structure, length, and tone describe a meditation on preparations for a holy life or, in later chapters, preparations for a holy death. This spiritual journey is described in thirty-two temporal, maritime analogies from victualing a ship to safe haven, and thus intending to spiritualise the regular activities of the reader in the absence of the rhythm of minister lead liturgical worship.[13] Thus chapter one bears the argument stanza 'The Launching of a Ship plainly sets forth / Our double State, by First and Second Birth' (p. 1) which draws an analogy between launching a ship into the 'boisterous Ocean' (p. 1) and the corruptions and salvation of the soul. The final chapter completes the metaphorical journey across the seas to port, and through spiritual learning to heavenly living. In the opening line of its application, Flavel reverses the analogy such that Heaven is figured as a superior harbour:

[13] Robert Boyle describes meditation as a means to 'spiritualize all the Objects and Accidents that occur': Robert Boyle, *Occasional Reflections Upon Several Svblects. Whereto is premis'd A Discourse About such Kinds of Thoughts* (London: Henry Herringham, 1965), p. 80; the pagination of this text is discontinuous, the next page is numbered p. 160; See also: Anselment 'Robert Boyle and the Art of Occasional Meditation', p. 2. McCabe states: '[Hall] refused to allow the secularisation of the universe': McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, p. 168.

> But O what transcendent Joy, yea, ravishing, will over-run the hearts of Saints, when after so many conflicts, temptations, and afflictions, they arrive in glory, and are harboured in Heaven (p. 196).

H*usbandry Spiritualized* also offers an expansion of the scope of the original project of *Navigation Spiritualized* and it includes more detailed and multivocal 'reflections' designed to meet the needs of a broader readership across a spectrum of turpitude, additional paratextual prose and poetry, and an emblem. These project a stronger relationship between writer, text, and reader. It also includes twenty-eight occasional meditations themed after animal husbandry and market gardening – after the manner of Joseph Hall's *Occasionall Meditations* (1630). In their prefatory material, *Navigation Spiritualized*, and *Husbandry Spiritualized*, therefore, represent an extensive, imaginative, and rhetorical project targeted at underrepresented social groups as a means to edification.

Two unusual poems found within *Husbandry Spiritualized* extend the reach of Flavel's prefatory verse and prose as a means to establish the function of the text, and the character of the author, far into the body of the text. 'How is it Reader? have I tired the?' or 'An Introduction to the Second Part of Husbandry' (p. 173, henceforth 'Second') appears ahead of four chapters themed on arboricultural practices. Similarly 'Now from the pleasant Orchard let us walk' or 'An Introduction to the Third Part of Husbandry' (p. 199, henceforth 'Third') appears ahead of the six final chapters themed on animal husbandry. These poems delineate the transition between sections and reassert the guiding role of the authorial persona. These two poems impress a concept of *Husbandry Spiritualized* as a physical and spiritual journey through agricultural spaces. In 'Third' the authorial voice guides the reader into analogies drawn from animal husbandry and reasserts Flavel's overarching project, beginning:

> Now from the pleasant Orchard let us walk
> A turn i'th fields, and there converse and talk
> With Cows and Horses, they can teach us some
> Choice Lessons, though irrational and dumb.
> My Reader's weary, yet I do not fear

> To be forsaken by one Reader here.
> He'l doubtless stay to hear what questions I
> Propound o beasts, and how they make reply.
> The fatted Ox, and pamper'd horse you ride;
> Their careless Master for his care thus chide.

The opening couplet outlines the reader's relationship to the authorial voice as one of two equals in conversation though the dynamic of this relationship is – as elsewhere – one more so of minister to parishioner. Nevertheless, 'Converse' reasserts the dialogic nature of *Husbandry Spiritualized* as a text with which the reader engages or ascribes. The second couplet reasserts the method of the occasional meditation in observing and deriving 'Choice Lessons' (ln. 4) from otherwise speechless, or 'dumb', animals and objects. Both poems query the reader's endurance in recognition of the spiritual labour of the devotional Christian and therefore stress the laboriousness of the task: 'My Reader's weary, (ln. 5). Both poems therefore suggest reassuringly that the pace of reading is governed by the reader and that the content is designed to be a 'pleasant' experience. As extensions of the prefatory texts of *Husbandry Spiritualized*, these two transitional poems reinvigorate the imaginative space of the text, and the relationship between the guiding authorial persona and his weary reader. Moreover, they recapitulate a sense of *Husbandry Spiritualized* as a narrative text read in a linear manner. This concept of the text is counter to the imposition of an index which allows for iterative and discontinuous readings of *Husbandry Spiritualized* and implies the same of *Navigation Spiritualized*.

Flavel's concern for accessibility and didactic function is most pronounced in his imposition of this index in *Husbandry Spiritualized* which implies more dynamic, selective, and iterative reading practices. Structurally *Husbandry Spiritualized* broadly emulates *Navigation Spiritualized* though translates from maritime culture to agricultural activities in an imagined pastoral landscape which greatly expands the appeal and relevance of this text to a wider readership. Moreover, in recognition of non-linear readings of *Husbandry Spiritualized*, Flavel provides an extensive index (pp. 267 – 273) which invites readers to access the text according to either their spiritual need or a

quotidian observation. Items in Flavel's index are listed in two complimentary columns. In the left-hand column material is indexed alphabetically according to its symbol in nature be that 'clouds', 'drought', or 'horses'. Notably many of the items listed here occur within individual chapters but do not form the over-arching analogical topic of these chapters. In the right-hand column material is listed according to the spiritual lesson it provides be that 'Apostates Reflections', 'Ignorance', or 'Ministry'. These too do not refer to specific chapters but rather to the pages on which material can be found. Flavel thereby greatly expands the topical and spiritual scope of *Husbandry Spiritualized* and invites readers to access the text dynamically according to individual inspiration and need with the promise of instruction. Flavel's bipartite index points to reading processes which figure *Husbandry Spiritualized* as a reference text – in addition to its metaphorical journey – whereby readers either recall previously read sections of the text or wish to obtain specific instruction in a lesson or opt to select directly from a directory of lessons. Didactically, the text is designed to be encountered repeatedly by a variety of reading approaches. Flavel therefore prepares his text for the iterative reading habits evident in Austen's *Book M*, and these are also implied in Hopton's *Daily Devotions*. Thus, in addition to imagining a reading community, Flavel composes his texts with this community in mind. His simplified meditations comprised of repeating, small component parts, summary poetry, and assumptions that his readers will iteratively and selectively access the text, imply a reader who benefits from the text's structure, repetitiveness, and easy ability to reference sections and who may find poetry or aural rehearsal more appealing and memorable – as discussed below.

Flavel's Imagined Communities of Practice

Flavel's concepts of meditation as a means to spiritualise the daily lives of his imagined congregation by way of analogy are summed up in the prefatory verse of *Navigation Spiritualized*. Moreover, the prefatory letters in *Navigation Spiralized*, and more thoroughly in *Husbandry Spiritualized*, locate these works at the centre of communities of practice which both aid in the compilation and

consumption of the text as a basis for meditation. 'The Author to the Reader' (p. xiv, henceforth 'Author') appears at the beginning of *Navigation Spiritualized*. This poem employs the metaphor of the Biblical 'Tribe of Zebulun' (Gen. 49:13) to identify Flavel's community of readers: 'Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he *shall be* for an haven of ships':

> When Dewy-Cheek'd *Aurora* doth display
> Her Curtains, to let in the New-born day;
> Her Heavenly Face looks red, as if it were
> Dy'd with a Modest Blush, 'twixt Shame and Fear.
> *Sol* makes her Blush, suspecting that he will
> Scorch some too much, and others leave to chill.
> With such a Blush, my little New-born Book
> Goes out of Hand, suspecting some may look
> Upon it with contempt, while others raise
> So mean a Piece too high, by flattering praise.
> Its Beauty cannot make its Father dote;
> 'Tis a Poor Babe, clad in a Sea-green Coat.
> It's gone from me to young, and now is run
> To Sea, among the Tribe of *Zebulun*.
> Go little Book, thou many Friends wilt finde
> Among that Tribe, who will be very kinde.
> And many of them care of thee will take,
> Both for thine own, and for thy Father's sake.
> Heav'n save it from the dang'rous Storms and Gusts
> That will be rais'd against it by Mens Lusts.
> Guilt makes men angry, Anger is a Storm;
> But Sacred Truth's thy Shelter, fear no harm.
> Or Times, or Persons, no Reflection's found;
> Though with Reflections few Books more abound.
> Go little Book, I have much more to say,
> But Seamen call for thee, thou must away,
> Yet e'r you have it, grant me one request,
> Pray do keep it Prisoner in your Chest. [Flavel's Italics].

Flavel's 'Author' shares functions with Austen's 'Disclaimer' and 'On the Birds' in that these prefatory texts establish the purpose of the document as a whole and define the modesty and sincerity of the authorial persona. In the first half of 'Author', Flavel defines his authorial modesty in the character of the 'New-born Book' (ln. 7) which is sent to press too early as a sign of the apparent urgency of its need. Flavel challenges both contempt of the books and excessive 'flattering Praise' (ln. 10) of so modest a text which is written for functional purpose rather than authorial celebrity. The second half of the poem more seriously defines its content and function. The disclaimer in line

twenty-three of 'Author' distances *Navigation Spiritualized* from the religio-politics of its period by emphasising the absence of politics and doxology in the text or indeed of personal attacks: 'On Times, or Persons, no Reflection's found' (ln. 23). Moreover, the following line 'with Reflections few Books more abound' (ln. 24) describes the contents of the text as a compendium of reflections by both the writer and the writer's sources and puns on Flavel's textual 'reflections'. Flavel's closing pun on the chest as both a sailor's locker and as the locus of the soul – 'Pray do keep it Prisoner in your Chest' (ln. 28) – underscores the meditative function of the text as a means to convey spiritual lessons to the soul.

In addition to imagining the relationship between writer, text, and reader, Flavel's prefatory texts, in particular those in *Husbandry Spiritualized*, more thoroughly describe his concept of meditative analogy as a means to 'cloath' (NS, p. x) his spiritual lessons. In 'The Epistle Dedicatory. To the Worshipful Robert Savery, and William Savery, of Slade, Esquires' (*HS*, pp. iii – xv) Flavel describes his approach to spiritual instruction in terms of the ease of Ciceronian similitudes or to analogy: 'Notions are more easily conveyed to the understanding by being cloathed in some apt similitude, and so represented to the sense' (*HS*, p. v).[14] Likewise, he draws on the scriptural model of parable as a further justification of the use of analogy and to underline its appeal to the memory and imagination:

> Jesus Christ the great Prophet, delighted much in teaching by Parables; and the Prophets were much in this way also, Hos. 12. 10: I have used Similitudes by the Ministry of the Prophets. Those that can retain little of a Sermon, yet ordinarily retain an apt Similitude (ibid).

Flavel recognises those who ordinarily are unmoved by sermons and seeks a means to appeal to this group. Additionally, Flavel derives authority for his farmyard analogies in *Husbandry Spiritualized* from a combination of experiment and external oversight:

[14] I have found no material on Robert and William Savery. Savery appears with some frequency in the Devon archives, and the hamlet of Slade can be found in the parish of Honiton, East Devon. This at least hesitantly suggests that the Savery family were locally significant to Flavel and the Presbyterian cause in Devon.

> I confess I met with some discouragement in my first attempt, from my unacquaintedness with rural affairs; and because I was to travel in a path (to me) untrodden; but having once engaged in it, those discouragements were soon overcome (p. ix).

Flavel describes a compositional process which implies observation, experience, and obtaining feedback on his initial compositions. That is, in addition to a community of readers, Flavel projects a community of practitioners who variously oversee and contribute to the composition of the text. Hopton's preface projects a similar communal process. On the other hand, and more poignantly in his 'Epistle to the Intelligent Countrey Reader' (*HS,* p. xxvii - xxx), Flavel recapitulates his labour as a means to redeem the loneliness and inactivity of spare time in light of the Five Mile Act (1665) which, by the publication of *Husbandry Spiritualized*, had driven Flavel into a semi-itinerant existence:

> Thou hast here the fruit of some of my spare hours, which were thus imployed when by a sad providence I was thrust from the society of many dear friends, into a solitary country dwelling (p. xxvii).

It is a testament of his commitment to his faith and his imagined community of parishioners that Flavel wrote at all. Traherne similarly figures his *Centuries of Meditations* as an edifying gift to his reader. Thus, Flavel employs observation and experience of farming communities as a means to assure the accurate depiction of the lives of his implied readers in his analogies. That is, where Austen and Delaval use observation and meditation to make sense of their respective worlds, Flavel uses the same technique to make sense of his readers' worlds. His resultant meditations reflect the world of the reader as a means to spiritualise and educate.

In addition to the scriptural model of analogy, Flavel derives meditative authority from St. Bernard and Richard Baxter. In so doing, Flavel directs the reader to engage actively with his works as the basis for spiritual enlightenment. Flavel frequently layers historical and contemporary

authorities. Thus he imagines a community of practitioners and theorists which transcends the religio-politics of his immediate time period. In 'The Epistle Dedicatory' (*HS,* pp. iii - xv) Flavel cites:

> Believe me (saith contemplative Bernard) thou shalt find more in the Woods, than in a corner; Stones and Trees will teach thee what thou shalt not hear from learned Doctors. By a skilful and industrious improvement of the creatures (saith Mr. Baxter excellently) we might have a fuller taste of Christ and Heaven in every bit of Bread that we eat, and in every draught of Beer that we drink, than most men have in the use of the Sacrament (p. iv).

According to St. Bernard objects and activities on the farm, or at sea in the example of *Navigation Spiritualized*, offer spiritual lessons. Moreover, Flavel's reading of Baxter implies the Divinity or symbolism of these objects and activities as resonances of God and Heaven after the manner of the sacrament. Though Flavel's citation of Baxter also tresses diligence. That is, Flavel appeals to the spiritualising effect of meditation as a means to imbue the world, and the maritime or agricultural activities of the individual, with symbolic meaning. The metaphorical journey of *Navigation Spiritualized*, therefore, is intended to imbue symbolic resonances to the journeys at sea Flavel's readers undertake. In addition, Flavel develops the analogy between farm labour and the life of a Christian emphasising Baxter's insistence on effort:

> In meditation make the resemblance, and discourse thus within yourselves: This is my Seed-time, Heaven is my Harvest; here I must labour and toyl, and there rest. I see the Husbandman's life is a great toyl; no excellent thing can be obtained without labour, and an obstinate patience. I see the Seed must be hidden in the furrows, rotten and corrupted, | ere it can spring forth with any increase (*Husbandry Spiritualized*, pp. vii – viii).

Flavel's analogy transitions between both the agricultural labour of the principal imagined community of *Husbandry Spiritualized* and the crop cycle as metaphors for spiritual toil and redemption. Like Delaval, he figures meditation and spiritual toil as an earthly preparation for Heaven and uses the metaphor of the seasons to emphasise the passage of time and the inevitability of death and reward. Thus, in addition to outlining his personal labour in compiling his works, Flavel stresses the equivalent labour of his reader.

A further prefatory letter in *Husbandry Spiritualized* provides more detailed instruction in the practice of meditation, and this text, therefore, envisages multiple means of engaging with meditation as a vessel for mediating spiritual lessons – in the several chapters, as exemplary examples of meditation – in the appended occasional meditations, and as a manual of meditation. Moreover, the letter expands *Husbandry Spiritualized* to encompass a wider readership than the farming community imagined by Flavel. 'To the Christian Reader' (*Husbandry Spiritualized*, pp. xvii – xx) was written for Flavel by Joseph Caryl (1602 – 1673), a prominent London Independent minister and a further example of Flavel's' projection of a community of practitioners. This text roughly parallels the first three chapters of Hall's *The Arte of Divine Meditation* (1607). Likewise this text echoes, in heavily condensed form, the first three parts of Baxter's *The Saints Everlasting Rest* (1650) in that it describes the locus of meditation within the exercises of a Godly life, and the benefit of meditation on what Caryl terms the 'lower part of the Works of | God' (pp. xvii – xviii), that is creation. Caryl's epistle points to the broad appeal of *Husbandry Spiritualized* and invites readers outside of the rural landscape:

> This book of Husbandry Spiritualized, is not calculated only for the common Husbandman; persons of any calling or condition, may find the author working out such searching Reflections and strong Convictions, from almost every part, and particularly of the Husbandmans work, as may prove, if faithfully improved, very useful to them; to some for their awakening, to consider the state of their souls, whether in grace, or in nature; to others for their instruction, consolation and encouragement in the wayes of grace, as also for their proficiency and growth in those wayes (p. xx).

Caryl indicates the necessity to follow Flavel's advice both with fidelity and as the basis for personal meditation and locates the text at the centre of a community of meditative practice. Hopton's work similarly has been placed at the centre of a community of practice. Nevertheless, much of Hopton's community is speculated upon by critics whereas Flavel readily draws on a community in his extensive citation and incorporation of prefatory epistles by compatriots. It is, however, as texts which imagine and address communities, in sailors and farm labourers, underrepresented in literary scholarship and the extant record of meditation, that these two texts offer valuable insight and invite

further investigation, for instance, into Flavel's assertion as to the effectiveness of poetry as a didactic tool which I discuss in the next section.

One final assessment of Flavel's sources and authorities, more fully describes the relio-politics of the communities of practice which Flavel imagines, and a comparable function to Austen's memorial function for *Book M* in memorialising and mediating a lost community. Including Hall, Baxter, Herbert, St. Bernard, Caryl – and the Bible – Cosby finds five-hundred and fifty sources across Flavel's works.[15] This number impressively demonstrates the scope of Flavel's reading and the liberality with which he synthesises his reading into his writing for the benefit of his own readers – a process which Hopton and Traherne employ though with a far smaller number of sources. Moreover, whilst Flavel cites an impressive catalogue of sources both *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized* appear dominated by moderate and eirenic non-conformist voices. These voices often belong to the generation just prior to Flavel's own which saw the successes and failures of attempts to unite the divided English churches they include William Gurnall (1616 – 1679), Thomas Gataker (1574 – 1654), and Robert Wild (1615 – 1679). With these figures in mind it is possible to infer Flavel's religio-political allegiances, his desire for compromise, and an undercurrent of lament or memorial in hiss translating of the Presbyterian ministry into print. The note of eirenic lament in Flavel's writing is poignantly illustrated in the final text in *Husbandry Spiritualized*. After the final occasional meditation found in *Husbandry Spiritualized* 'Upon the strange means of preserving the life of Vegetables' (pp. 264 – 266), and serving as somewhat of a concluding epilogue, Flavel appends 'A Pious Epigram of Mr. Gataker' (p. 266) found originally in the funeral sermon *Gray Hayres Crowned with Grace* (1654) of Church of England moderate Thomas Gataker (1574 – 1654).[16] Flavel's cross-confessional emphasis on devotional and textual function is comparable to each of the writers in the thesis. Moreover, these external sources illuminate the delicate balance of the triad of authorial

[15] Cosby, *John Flavel: Puritan Life and Thought*, p. 27.
[16] Simeon Ashe, *Gray Hayres Crowned with Grace* (London: George Sawbridge, 1654), p. 65.

voice, textual authority, and textual function in meditative texts where the reader is imagined. Flavel's heavy reliance on external textual authority allows him to sustain a modest authorial persona within a highly authoritative and reliable text – a technique which is more apparent in Hopton's work.

Didactic Poetry

In addition to the meditative analogy, Flavel finds an appealing mechanism for engaging the memory and understanding in his concept of didactic verse derived from classical rhetoric and the devotional model of George Herbert. He uses these models as means to engage the soul and memory of reluctant readers or hearers and displace lewd verses – such as Earle finds in lists of sailors' possessions. In so doing Flavel defines and responds to the needs of his reader in terms of social and educational status. For instance, in 'To the Christian Reader' Caryl notes:

> that the husbandman may be pleased as well as profited, in pursuing the labors of his Author; he hath, with singular aptness, and acuteness, | contrived and contracted the sum and scope of every Chapter into an elegant Distich, or pair of Verses, placed at the head of it, and concluded it with a choice melodious Poem, sutable to, and dilating upon the whole matter of it. These, the Husbandman, who can but read, may quickly learn and sing for his solace, instead of those vain Ballads and corrupting Rimes, which many of that rank are apt to buy (*Husbandry Spiritualized*, p. xix - xx).

In addition to entertainment, Caryl appeals to the aural qualities of poetry as a means of transmission to and lodgement in the memory, like hymns, where reading ability is a barrier to textual consumption. Similarly, in 'The Epistle Dedicatory' (*HS*) Flavel draws on George Herbert's 'Perrihanterium' (ll. 5 – 6) for a means to supplant the sermon with a more memorable and easily understood form of writing:

> I have shut up every Chapter with a Poem, an innocent Bait to catch the Readers Soul. That of Herbert is experimentally true.
>
> A Verse may find him that a Sermon flies.
> And turn delight into a Sacrifice.   (p. xiv).

Flavel's qualification of the function of the poetry in *Husbandry Spiritualized* as 'experimentally true' is strongly indicative of his development of the technique in the earlier *Navigation Spiritualized*, and of its apparent success, and of his conceptualisation of *Husbandry Spiritualized* as an improvement on the former. Thus, Flavel's use of poetry in *Husbandry Spiritualized* derives authority from and exemplifies to the effectiveness of the poetry found in *Navigation Spiritualized*. In turn this didactic technique takes authority from George Herbert's experiments in poetry a generation previously. Thus, Flavel locates his poetry in a rhetorical tradition. Traherne too draws on verse forms for didactic function, and both Flavel and Traherne utilise poetry to provide concrete illustrations of abstract concepts. Nevertheless, Traherne's poetry is less systematic than Flavel's, and Traherne employs the lyric as a means to dramatise aspects of himself as examples of spiritual awakening.

In addition to Herbert's model of poetry as a means to engage the hearer, Flavel continues to qualify his rhetorical use of poetry as a means to 'Bait' the soul and displace the corrupting influences of bawdy poetry, as outlined in Caryl's letter, and with reference to reference to Ovid's *Tristia* in the next section of 'The Epistle Dedicatory' (*HS*):

> I should never have been perswaded (especially in this scribling Age, wherein we may complain with the Poet [Ovid],
>
> Scribimus indocti; docti poemata passim [both the learned and the unlearned write poetry]) To have set my dull Fancy upon the Rack to extort a Poem to entertain my Reader; for I cannot say with Ovid, Sponte sua carmen, &c. [poems came of their own accord: *Tristia*. 4.10: 21–26] but that I have been informed, that many Seamen induced by the pleasure of a Verse, have taken much pains to learn the Poems in their Compass [ie. *Navigation Spiritualized*] by heart; and I hope both the Children at home, and the Servants in the fields, | will learn to exercise themselves this way also. O, how much better will it be so to do, than to stuff their memories with obscene Ballads and filthy Songs, which corrupt their minds, and dispose them to much wickedness, by irritating their natural corruption! (*HS*, p. xiv – xv) [my translation].

Flavel draws a distinction between his own verses, which are entertaining and educative, and popular verses which he describes as 'obscene' and corrupting. He defines his versification as a deliberate process written to a design rather than as a spontaneous outpouring of expression. He

targets the 'Children at home, and the Servants in the fields' as groups particularly vulnerable to corruption and to poorer quality education. Thus, Flavel's poetry is principally a didactic tool designed to appeal to the sensibilities of children and labourers which lodges in the memory and displaces the corrupting influence of secular poetry.

In addition to Flavel's argument stanzas and summary poems, which I address in more detail below, examples of poems found prefatorily to the text stress these functions of poetry as a means to engage or displace thought. Moreover, Flavel's prefatory verse functions as a means to instruct the reader in detailed reading of his verse. Before moving onto these more regularised examples, therefore, one final examination of Flavel's prefatory mesostich – which occurs in some extant editions of *Navigation Spiritualized* illustrates this use of poetry as a means to encourage attentive reading practices. The unique mesostich poem 'What good might Seamen get, if once they were' (see Figure 1.) can be found on the flyleaf of at least the 1698 fourth editions of *Navigation Spiritualized*; and, after Flavel's prefatory poem 'The Author to the Reader' in the 1788 'New Edition' (London: John Binns, 1788) and the 1800 edition held at the British Library and potentially in earlier editions where facsimiles have not reproduced this page or the flyleaf has been lost.[17] Given Flavel's death in 1691, prior to the publication of the oldest available example of this poem, it is not clear whether Flavel composed or authorised the poem. However, its persistence in more recent publications along with the similar mesostich and acrostic poems which are present in all editions of *Navigation Spiritualized*, 'My soul, art thou besieged' (pp. 8 – 9), and *Husbandry Spiritualized*, 'Religion when advanc'd in pow'r' (p. 22), suggest Flavel's hand in composition. 'What good might Seamen get' describes out the value of Christian spirituality to sailors and its overt yet 'hidden'

[17] John Flavel, *Navigation Spiritualized, or, A New Compass for Seamen: Consisting of XXXII Points of Pleasant Observations, Profitable Applications, and Serious Reflections: All Concluded with so many Spiritual Poems*, 4th edn. (London: M Fabian, 1698); John Flavel, *Navigation Spiritualized, or, A New Compass for Seamen: Consisting of XXXII Points of Pleasant Observations, Profitable Applications, and Serious Reflections: All Concluded with so many Spiritual Poems* (Leeds: John Binns, 1788); John Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized; or The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things. and Navigation Spiritualized; or a New Compass for Seamen* (Newcastle: M. Angus and Son, 1800).

message, though little more than a reassertion of the principles of meditation on the created world, exposes the value to be had in closely attending to the text.

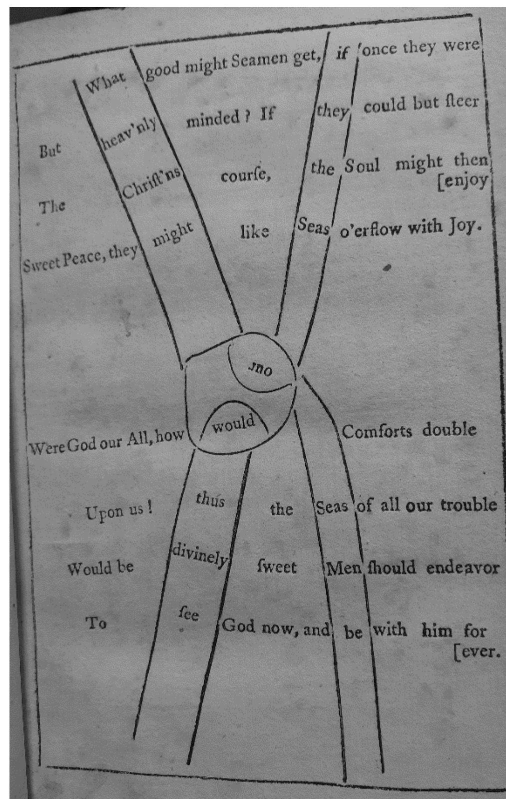

Figure 1. John Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized; or The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things and Navigation Spiritualized; or a New Compass for Seamen* (Newcastle: M. Angus and Son, 1800), p. i. British Library.

> What good might Seamen get, if once they were
> But heav'nly minded? If they could but steer
> The Christ'ns course, the Soul might then enjoy
> Sweet Peace, they might like Seas o'erflow with Joy.
>
> Were God our All, how would our Comforts double
> Upon us! thus the Sea of all our trouble
> Would be divinely sweet, Men should endeavour
> To see God now, and be with him for ever.

Taken line by line the two stanzas of 'What good might Seamen get' offer a simple invitation to follow a Christian path as a means to felicity. The poem is characteristically Flavel's in its mingling of rhetorical questions and imperatives and the liberal use of Heaven or the Divine describing ideals to cajole the reader to a clear ethical conclusion are characteristic – in addition to fluent transitions between literal and figurative uses of imagery relating to sailors and the sea. Thus, the pun (ln. 6) on

the sea as both the physically troublesome environment which sailors inhabit, and figuratively as a sign of the troublesome nature of a Christian life. This suggests Flavel's authorship or a close imitation. It is, however, the unusual internal margins which distinguish this poem, and indicate its mesostich message. This message neatly captures the analogue of the sea as a spiritual guide running throughout the meditations of *Navigation Spiritualized*, and I argue it is intended to encourage readers to pay attention to the text and literally read between the lines – Traherne shows a comparable interest in small fragments of verse as vessels of spiritual knowledge. Thus, I interpret the message as: 'What / heav'nly / Christ'ns / might / our / Seas / Men / be / if / they / the / Seas / would / thus / divinely / see'. Like the poem in its entirety this is a soulful encouragement to seek the divine in the created world of the seas. As a prefatory text, 'What good' shares a similar position to Flavel's 'The Epistle Dedicatory'(*NS*) in that it describes the maritime communities as particularly in need of spiritual guidance and the seas as a ready source of spiritual lessons. However, its overt formal experimentation stresses Flavel's interest in verse forms as a means to appeal to this section of society. The following readings demonstrate Flavel's use of poetry in light of his theories and, more broadly, Flavel's theory and practice of didactic poetry offers new insight into the reception and reinterpretation of Herbert's use of poetry and a contemporary context for the meditative poetry – used in summary and illustration – of Austen, Delaval, and Traherne where Flavel's poetry bridges the simplicity of Austen's poetry, the social critique of Delaval's poetry, and the metaphysical qualities of Traherne's poetry.

The Meditative Model in *Navigation Spiritualized*: 'Chapter 10'

This section offers a reading of the five components of Chapter Ten of *Navigation Spiritualized* (pp. 63 – 69) in light of Flavel's imagined community of maritime readers, his authorial persona and imagined community of practitioners, and his didactic theory, analogy, and poetry. It takes as its starting point the tenth argument stanza and observation as examples of Flavel's use of analogy and external authority:

> By Navigation, one Place stores another,
> And by Communion we must help each other. (ll. 1 – 2, p. 63).

With some few exceptions, the argument stanzas in *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized* follow a simple pattern of first describing the analogue and secondly introducing the spiritual lesson and, therefore, the topic of the chapter. As an introduction these argument stanzas perform similar functions to a prose title. Some later editions of the texts omit them entirely suggesting their superfluity to the text. Nevertheless, in terms of Flavel's Herbertian concept of teaching, the rhyming couplets may offer a memorial effect allowing the reader to recall the analogy and lesson at the moment of activity thus spiritualising life. Thus, in light of its argument stanza, chapter ten of *Navigation Spiritualized*, comprises a meditation on the interpersonal exchange of spiritual wealth within Christian communion defined in the analogue of international maritime trade, and trade more broadly.

Next to the argument stanza, Flavel's observations are typically short prose components of the chapter which expand on the analogue raised in the argument stanza and provide the *composition loci* of the meditation. In keeping with Hall's method, Flavel engages the understanding in the concrete and observable – here the distribution of commodities and their trade – before moving to the abstract and spiritual. In chapter ten, the observation first describes the analogue in terms of God's providence and divine ordination with an opening note of thanksgiving:

> The most Wise God hath so dispensed his bounty to the several Nations of the World, that one standing in need of anothers Commodities, there might be a sociable Commerce and Traffick maintained amongst them all; and all combining in a Common League, may by the help of Navigation, exhibit mutual succors to each other. The Staple Commodities proper to each Country, I finde thus expressed by the Poet. *Bart. Coll.* (p. 63).

Flavel locates 'Navigation' and the maritime community at the heart of this divinely ordained process and he may effect a pun here on the practice of navigation and the title of the text. A second sentence introduces an outside source – in this instance a poem by the Huguenot courtier Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas' (1544 – 1590). 'Bart. Coll' expanded refers to 'La Seconde Semaine' [The Second Week [of the Creation of the World]]' (1584) translated by Josuah Sylvester as *Devine Weekes and Workes* (1605) from the section 'Les Colonies'.[18] Flavel includes a brief extract of this poem which offers a list of commodities and their global sources as an example of nations '[exhibiting] mutual Succours to each other', concluding: 'From England, Wool: All Lands, as God distributes, / To the Worlds Treasure pay their sundry Tributes.' (ll. 1 – 14, pp. 63 – 64). Mirroring the prose of the observation, therefore, Flavel's extract of 'La Seconde Semaine' illustrates a simplified concept of global exchange. More commonly Flavel augments his writing with extracts from prose including liberal use of scripture particularly readings of psalms, proverbs, Genesis – showing God's providences, and the apostles, religious writers, and classical texts particularly Ovid. For instance, the observation of Flavel's second chapter of *Navigation Spiritualized* neatly crosses over between verse, scripture and translations of Ovid:

> The Ocean is of a vast extent, and depth, though supposedly measurable, yet not to be founded by Man. It compasseth about the whole Earth, which, in the account of Geographers, is Twenty-one thousand and six hundred Miles in compass; yet the Ocean environs it on every side, Psal. 104. 25 and Job 11. 9. Suitable to which is that of the Poet. (p. 10).

[18] Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas, *Bartas his Deuine Weekes & Workes Translated & Dedicated to the Kings Most Excellent Maiestie by Iosuah Syluester*, trans. by Joshua Sylvester (London: Humphrey Lownes, 1605).

Below this passage, Flavel adds a footnote of the Latin original of lines thirty-six and thirty-seven of the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and below this he adds a translation in verse:

> *He Spread the Seas, which then he did command*
> *To swell with Winds, and compass round the Land.*

These verses accommodate readers both with and without Latin and demonstrate a function of Flavel's text as an intermediary source text for readers wishing to write their own meditations – Hopton's *Daily Devotions* can be interpreted similarly as a source text for meditation. On the other hand, in the instance of his citation of scripture, Flavel includes only the scriptural citation which implies Flavel's reader should have access to scripture or a ready recall. Nevertheless, that Flavel includes citation, extract, and translations, a common practice throughout *Navigation* Spiritualized and *Husbandry Spiritualized*, positions these texts as a comprehensive resource allowing a reader to access all of Flavel's reading without recourse to additional texts – beyond scripture which is implied – and therefore a consideration made for those with limited access to reading material, such as sailors.

Application

Following the example of chapter ten, the application section of a typical chapter in *Navigation Spiritualized* provides practical spiritual advice grounded in multiple sources and analogical parallels designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of readers and to provide a prescribed spiritual lesson. Unlike Hall who generally offers a tight focus on a single observation in nature, Flavel blends multiple brief metaphors and analogies, and his application enfolds the continued function of the observation in illustrating Flavel's spiritual lessons:

> Thus hath God distributed the more rich and precious Gifts and Graces of his Spirit, among his people. Some excelling in one Grace, some in another; though every Grace in some degree, be in them all; even as in Nature, though there be all the Faculties in all, yet some Faculties are in some more lively then others. Some have a more vigorous eye, others a more ready ear, others a more voluable tongue; so it is in Spiritual. Abraham in Faith, Job in Patience, John in Love. These were |their peculiar Excellencies.
> (p. 64 – 65).

Flavel reiterates his spiritual lesson on sharing virtue and wisdom in the first sentence of the application. Next he compares this distribution of spiritual faculties to the distribution of sensory faculties in people using the distribution of spiritual faculties in a sample drawn from Biblical characters. The models of Abraham, Job, and John form a scriptural analogue which illustrates Flavel's lesson, and lends scriptural authority – as in the example of Flavel's citation of scripture recall of scriptural characters is implied. Within this illustration, Flavel clarifies the 'Gifts and Graces' to which he has previously referred: 'faith', 'patience', and 'love'. In the second paragraph Flavel explains the purpose of the distribution of these 'Gifts and Graces':

> And one Principal Reason of this different Distribution, is to maintain Fellowship amongst them all, 1 Cor. 12. 21. *The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you*. As in a Family, where there is much business to be done, even the little Children bear a part, according to their strength, Jer. 7. 18. *The Children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, the women knead the dough,*. So in the Family of Christ, the weakest Christian is serviceable to the strong. ([Flavel's italics and scriptural citations] p. 65).

In both instances of scriptural quotation, Flavel contracts the original verse whilst retaining its meaning. Thus, in the first instance Flavel paraphrases 1Corinthians 12:21: 'And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you' (KJV). In the second instance Flavel omits the syndetic 'and' from the scripture. In both instances brevity and import over accuracy appear to be Flavel's intention. Moreover, in his final sentence, Flavel includes an interpretation of the scripture in relation to his meditation on the distribution and exchange of spiritual wealth. In so doing, Flavel clarifies his spiritual lesson in light of scripture, and prescribes the interpretation for the reader in his role as minister. Flavel's aim, therefore, is in providing clear, scripturally authoritative, and easily followed spiritual instruction.

Having established terms and comparisons, the next part of the application describes Flavel's practical instruction in the value of religious community and in communion as means to share spiritual faculties. Flavel's use of additional analogies here stresses his didactic style and his emphasis on the accessibility and clarity of the text over the cohesiveness of his metaphorical

conceit. Flavel illustrates his message with the image of the 'vessel' as a ship, an earthen pot, and the human body in which the soul is transported where each of these readings of 'vessel' describes fragility and ephemerality:

> There be precious treasures in these Earthen Vessels, for which we should trade by mutual communion. The preciousness | of the Treasure, should draw out our desires and endeavours after it; and the consideration of the brittleness of those Vessels, in which they are kept, should cause us to be the more expeditious in our trading with them, and make the quicker returns. For when those Vessels (I mean Bodies of Saints) are broken by death, there is no more to be gotten out of them. (pp. 65 – 66).

Flavel's parenthetic clause makes his use of the metaphor of the vessel plain. Moreover, his emphasis on the ephemerality of the body stresses the urgency of learning from the pious in the absence of ministers. Likewise, in this part of the application, Flavel employs collective pronouns as though addressing a congregation; on the other hand, the personal pronoun in the parenthetic clause asserts Flavel's ministerial voice as the speaker of the text motivating the reader. These patterns of address and instruction are present throughout both texts. Furthermore, in the final section of the application Flavel employs imperatives and a more sustained pressure on the importance of time:

> Now therefore it behoves us to be inriching ourselves by Communication of what God hath dropt into us, and the improvement of them, as one well notes. We should do by Saints, as we use to do by some choice Book lent us for a few days; we should fix in our memories, or transcribe all the choice Notions we meet with in it, that they | may be our own when the Book is called for, and we can have it no longer by us. (pp. 66 – 67).

Flavel's final simile points to the combined devotional and textual practices he recommends to his readers. That is, as well as observing the ephemerality of 'Saints', and instructing his readers to learn as much as possible from them, Flavel asserts his readers should learn from all available religious texts – such as his own. Moreover, Flavel emphasises two methods of textual consumption in memorising the text and transcribing or common placing choice phrases. This implies the selective and iterative reading practices assumed in his index appended to *Husbandry Spiritualized* and practices of textual exchange whereby Flavel expects *Navigation Spiritualized* to be passed between

multiple readers. In the example of *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized,* therefore, Flavel stresses the value of these books in their continual and iterative use within a community of practice. Thus, in his applications, Flavel combines additional imagery to that of the observation and presents the bulk of his spiritual instruction. He incorporates the voice of a minister, the collective pronouns of a community of practitioners, and liberal use of scripture, and in this way, he mediates ministry into print.

Reflection

The final section of Chapter 10 prior to the summary poem provides spiritual solace and a notable change in style as Flavel's guiding, direct address gives way to a rehearsal of self-analysis and prayer in the form of interrogatives and comparatives designed to illicit an emotional response in the reader and form the basis for meditation and self-examination. Flavel's extensive expansion and redistribution of his reflections in *Husbandry Spiritualized* implies their edifying function. Thus, in chapter ten of *Navigation Spiritualized* Flavel writes:

> Lord, how short do I come of my duty in communicating to, or receiving good by others! My Soul is either empty and barren, or if there be any Treasure in it, yet it is but as Treasure locked up in some Chest, whose Key is lost, when it should be opened for the use of others. Ah Lord! I have sinned greatly, not only by vain words, but sinful silence. I have been of little use in the World.
> How little also have I gotten by communion with others? Some, it may be, that are of my own size, or judgement; or that I am otherwise obliged to, I can delight to converse with: But O, where is that largeness of heart and general delight I should have to, and in, all thy people? How many of my old dear acquaintance are now in Heaven, whose tongues were as choice Silver, while they were here, Prov*.* 10. 20. (p. 67).

Flavel's first sentence takes the form of an open question which encourages the reader to question the status of the soul in terms of community and communion. Unlike the observation and reflection, the addressee is now God 'Lord', and the reflection takes the form of a prayer for rehearsal by the reader. The second sentence locates the examined soul on axes between empty and full, and open and closed. The axes imply a model Christian who is full and open and a wayward Christian who is

empty and closed. In this way, Flavel's delineation of his readers is not specifically between the sinful and the regenerate 'Saints' but rather a cline between extreme states onto which readers are invited to locate themselves. Similarly, open questions encourage analysis of the extent to which the soul has learnt from others and the extent to which the soul has shared with others: 'where is that Largeness of Heart'. Phrases found in Flavel's reflections including comparatives of quantity 'How little' encourage precise analysis of the soul. Finally, Flavel deploys this type of quantity-based questioning to stress the urgency of his instruction to learn from the spiritual faculties of a community by asking how many pious members of the community are already dead. Intervening sentences, when rehearsed aloud, form the basis of prayers and reflections of penitence and supplication: 'I have been of little Use in the World'. The final section of the reflection offers a colloquium, comparable to Delaval's 'resolutions':

> O let all my Delight in thy Saints, who are the Excellent of the Earth. Let me never go out of their [the Saints] Company, without an heart more warmed, quickened, and enlarged than when I came amongst them. (p. 68).

The opening sentence reaffirms God as the addressee in its simple exhortation 'O'. The final sentence functions both as a prayer of supplication and an implied model of Christian spirituality. In *Husbandry Spiritualized* these reflections are greatly expanded. Flavel separates the reflections into subsections according to the status of the soul. For instance in chapter three (pp. 31 – 36) on the cheerfulness of the Christian in the face of adversity, the reflection, which fills almost half of the space allotted to the chapter (pp. 33 – 35) is presented under three marginal subheadings for instance 'The hypocrite's reflection':

> I cannot say but I have found delight in religious duties, but they have been only such as rather sprang from the ostentation of gifts and applauses of men, than any sweet and real communion I have had with God through them (p. 34).

'The hypocrite's reflection' provides the text for an admission of shame. In contrast, the third subsection, 'The upright heart's reflection' looks to the angelic nature of the pious soul, and to the increase of service to God:

> If there be such an affection as delight in thee, methinks such an object as the blessed face of God in Ordinances should excite it. Ah, how would this ennoble all my services, and make them Angel-like! (p. 34).

Each offers tailored prayers, readings of scripture, and resolutions according to the soul's status. These expanded subsections are practical as the basis or reference for prayer and meditation thus pointing to the increased functionality and accessibility of *Husbandry Spiritualized* over *Navigation Spiritualized* – and to Flavel's continued innovation which I examine next. Thus, in both *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized* the reflection sections comprise interrogatives and imperatives which model the language and ideals of prayer, meditation, and Christian spirituality against which readers can compare themselves.

Summary Poem

Each of the summary poems largely echoes, and indeed follows the structure of, the prose sections of the chapter preceding it, therefore forming a precis of the whole. Thus, the summary poems are inherently meditative in that they follow Flavel's pattern of observation, application, and reflection. As such the summary poems enable a reader to access the entirety of Flavel's teaching in verse form, and according to Flavel's theory of poetry, a reader who is unable or unwilling to endure a sermon, or indeed prose, can access, retain, and recall the message in the rehearsal of Flavel's verses. In chapter ten 'To several Nations God doth so distribute' (pp. 68 – 69) returns to the analogy of global trade as a means to illustrate the benefit of Christian community. Nevertheless, typical of Flavel, he adds further metaphors derived from the transmission of light, and refreshing stale water by extraction:

To several Nations God doth so distribute
His bounty, that each one must pay a tribute
Unto the other. Europe cannot vant [vaunt],
And say, Of Africa I have no want.
America and Asia need not strive,
Which of it self can best subsist and live.
Each Countries want, in something, doth maintain
Commerce betwixt them all; such is the aim,
And end of God, who doth dispense and give
More Grace to some, their Brethren to relieve.
This makes the Sun Ten thousand times more bright,
Because it is diffusive of its light.
Its beams are gilded gloriously, but then,
This properly doth gild them o'er again.
Should Sun, Moon, Stars, impropriate all their light,
What dismal darkness would the World benight?
On this account men hate the Vermin brood,
Because they take in much, but do no good.
What harm, if I at yours my Candle light?
Except thereby I make your Room more bright.
He that, by Pumping, sucks and draws the Spring,
New streams, and sweeter, to the Well doth bring.
Grace is a Treasure in an Earthen Pot,
When Death hath dasht it, no more can be got
Out of that Vessel then; while it is whole,
Get out the Treasure to enrich your Soul.

In 'To several Nations God doth so distribute' Flavel first captures and emphasises the metaphors and topics of international trade and communion described in the foregoing verse and prose of the observation. The opening couplet (ll. 1 – 2) paraphrases the opening sentence of the observation: 'The most wise God hath so dispensed his Bounty to the several Nations of the World' (p. 63). Flavel also paraphrases (ln. 2) from the final line of his extraction of DuBartas' 'Les Colonies': 'pay their sundry Tributes' (ln 14). Moreover, Flavel condenses DuBartas' list of nations and their resources into four continents (ll. 3 – 5). Though the level of paraphrase and adherence to the preceding prose varies in each example of Flavel's summary verse. Next, lines eight to ten reiterate the 'principal Reason' laid out in the second paragraph of the application, that is: [by God's distribution of graces] 'the weakest Christian is serviceable to the strong' (p. 65). However, where one might expect the poem to recapitulate the 'reflection' instead Flavel introduces a second metaphor.

Several of the summary poems in *Navigation Spiritualized* include additional metaphors often weakly related to the unifying analogy of maritime culture, and this potentially opens out the poetry to a wider readership lacking knowledge of maritime culture – though Flavel's intention is unclear. In 'To several Nations God doth so distribute' the second metaphor of 'light' is illustrated in heavenly bodies, and the lighting of candles. Flavel describes the radiation of the heavenly bodies as an example of sharing rather than hoarding light. Flavel's two questions in lines fifteen and sixteen and in line nineteen ask his readers to consider light, and spiritual faculties, in two different ways. Firstly, light is figured as finite and indivisible. The absence of which leads to a world without light, or grace. By this analogy the following statement begrudging grace to those deemed less worthy seems justifiable: 'they take in much, but do no good.' (ln. 18). In the second analogy, however, light is both divisible and multipliable resulting in two flames from one. This lesson is neatly contained within the couplet of lines nineteen and twenty which opens up the possibility that the reader can remember or rehearse this couplet in isolation as one might rehearse a proverb or sententiae. The adoption of the first person in this couplet (ll. 19 – 20) stresses its value in personal rehearsal: 'What harm, if I at yours my Candle light? / Except thereby I make your Room more bright'. In this manner, a large quantity of poems in *Navigation Spiritualized* continue the emphasis on self-examination expressed in the respective reflection through the use of rhetorical questions: 'Judge in thy self (O Christian) is it meet' (pp. 115 – 116), 'There's skill in Fishing that the Devil knows' (pp. 142 – 143), and 'There's many a Soul, eternally undone' (p. 165). Finally, Flavel's standard practice is to conclude his summary poems with an aphoristic instruction which mirrors the colloquium of the reflection. Thus, in 'To several Nations God doth so distribute' the poem concludes with an instruction to extract what can be obtained from the vessels, that is the pious, of a person's' community before these are 'dasht' to death. The metaphor of the vessel recalls the third paragraph of the application. In Flavel's five component meditations, therefore, the reader is provided with extensive and repeating analogies drawn from maritime culture, scripture, and more everyday imagery as a means to describe a spiritual or moral lesson, and too spiritualise daily live. Against this lesson Flavel's

reflection encourage the reader to examine the status of the conscience against implied ideals, and, particularly so in *Husbandry Spiritualized*. These provide the basis of rehearsed prayers and colloquia as a means to resolve the status of the soul. The final summary prayer reiterates the meditation in condensed verse form in accordance with Flavel's concept of verse as a means to reach the unreachable. Where previous studies have tended to view Flavel as a religious figure, these readings offer new interpretations of Flavel's rhetorical, literary, and didactic models as means to instruct and transmit his spiritual knowledge and fervour and provide insight into Flavel's mediation of his ministry during the privations of the Clarendon Code.

Literary Traditions and Innovation in *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized*

The first section of this chapter demonstrated Flavel's adoption and innovation of Hall's rhetorical model and Herbert's concept of verse. The second section of this chapter assessed Flavel's presentation of meditation and verse as means to promulgate spiritual lessons. This section builds on these literary readings by locating Flavel's work in the meditative and emblem traditions. It does so firstly by considering the example of his innovation upon his meditative forebear in the example of John Durant's *Spiritual Sea-Man* and Flavel's positioning of *Navigation Spiritualized* as a supplement and successor to this earlier text. Secondly, by assessing the use of emblem and frontispiece in the work of Flavel, and to a smaller extent, Hopton – as a segue into the next chapter. Like *Navigation Spiritualized* Durant's *Spiritual Sea-Man* is a meditative manual tailored to the maritime community themed around analogies derived from maritime culture, and Flavel is explicit in drawing a connection between these two texts. *Spiritual Sea-Man* is smaller in scope than *Navigation Spiritualized*, founded in less easily imagined analogies, and written entirely in prose. In his epilogue to *Spiritual Sea-Man* Durant writes modestly of his text as a model to be followed:

> These were some occasional Meditations of my own in the yeer, 1642. when I was at sea. And I make them thus publike as a pattern, that all spiritual Saylors (if they have no better) may by this imitate themselves (upon the like occasions) to raise up such Meditations as these are. (p. 91).

Flavel evidently followed Durant's directive to imitate his work. Beginning, at least, with the 1677 edition of *Navigation Spiritualized* 'To all Christians Sailing Heavenward' (pp. xiii – xxix) is entextualised in the paratext of *Navigation Spiritualized*.[19] 'To all Christians' comprises an abridgement of *Spiritual Sea-Man* as the theoretical basis for *Navigation Spiritualized* in comparable manner to 'The Epistle Dedicatory' (pp. iii – xiii) and 'To the Christian Reader' (pp. xv – xviii) found in *Husbandry Spiritualized* – which imply *Husbandry Spiritualized* as something of a sequel to *Navigation Spiritualized*. Thus, Flavel imagines a sequence of texts which each build on the tradition established by Durant. A brief description of *Spiritual Sea-Man* and of the parts Flavel retains in 'To all Christians Sailing Heavenward' will demonstrates Flavel's innovation in light of the readings above.

Spiritual Sea-Man can be divided into two parts which, though shorter, mirror the narrative structure of *The Arte of Divine Meditation* thereby suggesting, at least in this limited scope, its place in a longer rhetorical tradition stretching back to Hall. Thus the initial nine chapters of *Spiritual Sea-Man* enumerate the principles of a spiritual life using mnemonic initialisms derived from each of the thirty-two points of a compass: hence the informal title '*The Seaman's Compass*' given to the work and Flavel's '*New Compass'* of thirty-two chapters which echo Durant's structure.[20] Where Flavel organises the chapters of *Navigation Spiritualized* into a concrete journey at sea, Durant sequences his compass initialisms more abstractly and complexly from North in a clockwise direction emulating the daily journey of the sun from North East to North West, the soul's journey through life, and Christ's journey to Calvary.[21] For example 'N.W & by N.', the thirtieth point working clockwise from North, is intended to be remembered as:

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[19] John Flavel, *Navigation Spiritualized, or, A New Compass for Seamen: Consisting of XXXII Points of Pleasant Observations, Profitable Applications, and Serious Reflections: All Concluded with so many Spiritual Poems. Whereunto is now added 1. A Sober Consideration of the sin of Drunkenesse. 2. The Harlots face in the Scripture Glass. 3. The Art of Preserving the Fruit of the Lips. 4. The Resurrection of buried mercies and Promises. 5. The Sea-mans Catechism* (London: Thomas Fabian, 1677).
[20] Durant, Compass, pp. 1 – 55.
[21] Ibid, p. 18 – 19.

> Now work wisely ere Night come, while you have the light and life, walk in it, before the night comes when none can work, Joh.12.35,36. Defer not, nor put off the great things of eternal life, unto the uncertain time of thy natural death. How many are gone down to the place of the second death, by putting off repentance and faith, &c. till their death came, when they had not space nor grace to do either, and so perished for ever for the defect of that which they defer. Remember therefore the wise counsel of Solomon: |Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it (defer not, stay not, but) do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest, Eccl. 9.10. The soul who puts off his great work till the last, may dye ere he hath begun to do that which he can never sufficiently do, should he work all his dayes. Take the present time for every work which God by his word, Spirit, Providence, or any other way doth call thee unto.[22]

How well Durant's readers memorised his initialisms is debateable. The style is brief, dogmatic, and heavily scriptural where Flavel favours practical solutions to spiritual predicaments. Though both writers make liberal use of scriptural paraphrase. Flavel's 'To all Christians Sailing Heavenward' (*NS*, 1677) for the most part condenses the thirty-two compass points of Durant's *Spiritual Sea-Man* as the theoretical underpinning to *Navigation Spiritualized*. Thus, the corresponding initialism for 'N.W & by N.' in 'Heavenward' is abridged and adapted as follows: '(30.): N. W. and by N. Now Work Nimbly ere Night Come, *Job* xii. 35, 36. *Eccles*. ix. 10.'[23] As in examples elsewhere, Flavel's presentation of scripture implies access to the Bible. In this manner, 'Heavenward' provides the minimum of information in order to acknowledge the lessons of Durant's *Spiritual Sea-Man*, and a separate reading of Durant's original is implied. Thus, *Navigation Spiritualized* is positioned as a practical supplement rather than a substitution of the earlier work.

The second part of *Spiritual Sea-Man* contain instructions in the practice of meditation, and a large number of short exemplar occasional meditations, after the manner of Hall, themed on maritime culture. Flavel inherits a thematic and spiritualising pro-forma whereby Durant uses the rhetoric of meditation and an interrogative and imperative style of address to disseminate spiritual

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[22] Ibid, pp. 47 – 48.
[23] *NS* (1677), p. xiv.

lessons. Durant's sixth meditation of chapter ten, a comparatively large and lucid example, compares sailors in a storm and the Biblical tale of Jonah sleeping in the hold:

> What labour and paines doe all take in a storme? How do these tend the sails and those the pump? How do these stand by this, and the others by the other rope? And how do all secretly [at least] cry out, and say, Lord save us, that we perish not! Why then doest thou (O my soule) Jonah-like lye and sleep securely, in many a tempest which doth befall thee? Is the sinking of thy soul less then the perishing of a ship? or art resolved desperately to go a-drift, to see if God | will save thee at a venture? O take heed of this, Awake, and call upon thy God; up and take hold of the means. Set every faculty awork: This is the hour and power of darkness, as Christ said, [truly we may speak it of our present times.] (Durant's brackets).[24]

Durant's first four questions function after the manner of a *compositio loci*. The questions encourage the reader to imagine the event of a storm and to consider the role of each mariner. The following three questions first ask the reader to analyse this image in a spiritual context by translating this temporary labour, in a storm at sea, to spiritual labour, in a storm of the soul. The final two questions starkly demonstrate the consequences of abstention from spiritual duties through the use of comparison: 'Is the sinking of thy soul less then the perishing of a ship?'. The concluding lines, in the form of imperatives, prescribe prayer and spiritual labour though Durant does not provide a *colloquium* or rehearsal of prayer as in Flavel's model. In Durant's *Spiritual Sea-Man*, therefore, Flavel finds the theoretical, didactic, thematic basis for *Navigation Spiritualized*, which he subsequently refines in *Husbandry Spiritualized*, and a ready tradition into which he locates his own work.

'Emblem' and Frontispiece in *Husbandry Spiritualized*

In addition to placing himself in a meditative tradition after Durant and in a rhetorical tradition of poetry after Herbert Flavel also aligns *Husbandry Spiritualized* with the tradition of emblem writing made popular in seventeenth century England by Francis Quarles' *Emblemes* (1635) and

[24] Durant, *Compass*, pp. 68 – 69.

Hieroglyphikes of the Life of Man (1638).[25] In so doing Flavel draws attention to the relatedness of the emblem and meditation as reflective forms based in visual and textual cultures. Alastair Fowler suggests the emblem is a loosely defined tradition, whereby each emblem opens a discussion as to its conformity to type.[26] In its most common guise the emblem comprises an image or *pictura*, a motto or *inscriptio*, and a verse or *subscriptio* – most commonly in Latin. Rosalie Colie describes the interpretation of these parts as a semiotic process or 'diaeresis' whereby image and text resonant together across space.[27] Though critics have pointed to variations comprising fewer or additional components and have compared the emblem to heraldry and frontispieces – where the diaresis of parts functions across more disparate parts.[28] Moreover, the emblem comprises many similar features and functions to that of meditation. Thus, both are nominally means to interpret and express spiritual understanding, though both have been used more broadly, and both incorporate imagery or *compositio loci*, discursive analysis, and, often, scripture.[29]

Flavel's self-titled emblem, which occurs in the first edition of *Husbandry Spiritualized* (p. xxxiv – xxxv), diverges significantly from more prescriptive definitions of the form and aligns more fully with examples of emblem as frontispieces in that it performs functions in exposition and in establishing a mindset for the reader as seen in frontispieces. Flavel's emblem appears at the front of *Husbandry Spiritualized* often on a large fold out page. It comprises a large image containing a variety of agricultural animals, objects, and activities; a large pair of wings held down by chains, stones, and a symbolic 'carnall' heart; and a poem presented in three parts across the wings (see

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[25] Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: George Miller, 1635); Francis Quarles, *Hieroglyphikes of the Life of Man* (London: M Flesher, 1638).
[26] Alastair Fowler, 'The Emblem as a Literary Genre', in *Deviceful Settings: The English Renaissance Emblem and its Contexts*, ed. by Michael Bath and Daniel Russel (New York: AMS Press, 1999), pp. 1 – 31 (p. 6).
[27] Rosalie Colie, The Resources of Kind: Genre-Theory in the Renaissance, ed. by Barbara Keifer Lewalski (London; University of California Press, 1973), p. 37; Fowler 'The Emblem as a Literary Genre', p. 8.
[28] Fowler, 'The Emblem as a Literary Genre', p. 18; Peter M. Daly, *The Emblem in Early Modern Europe: Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), p. 18. On the interchangeability of images and compositio loci, see: Karl Josef Höltgen, 'Emblem and Meditation: Some English Emblem Books and Their Jesuit Models', in *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, Vol. 18 (1992), pp. 55 – 92 (p. 62 & p. 80); Colie, *The Resources of Kind*, p. 36. Colie argues the image was added later to assist interpretation.
[29] Daly, *Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem*, p. 14; Barbara Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 179.

Figure 2.). In this manner, Flavel's emblem lacks a unified image and a Latin or scriptural motto – though the wings, string and stone, and carnal heart could be considered a *pictura* distinct from the images beneath. Moreover, the cacophony of visual elements in Flavel's emblem makes diaresis difficult. On the other hand, the M. Angus combined edition of *Husbandry Spiritualized* and *Navigation Spiritualized* (1800), held at the British Library, contains a more cohesive, though no less abundant, image wherein the individual animals, labourers, and crops are combined into a single farmyard scene with a symbolic cross and dove over the farmhouse door (see Figure 3.).[30] This image more fully describes Flavel's process of spiritualisation of the occupations and spaces of agricultural life. Visually, therefore, Flavel's emblem is difficult, nevertheless, Flavel's three verses more adequately locate *Husbandry Spiritualized* in terms of emblem, meditation, and frontispiece.

[30] John Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized;' or The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things. and Navigation Spiritualized; or a New Compass for Seamen* (Newcastle: M. Angus and Son, 1800), p. i.

Figure 2. John Flavel *Husbandry Spiritualized* (London: Robert Boulter, 1669), p. xxxiv – xxxv, *Early English Books Online* [Reproduction of original in Cambridge University Library], available at <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2240854009/citation/4A008D5BD06F4938PQ/1?accountid=8630> accessed [22/09/2022].

Figure 3. John Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized; or The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things and Navigation Spiritualized; or a New Compass for Seamen* (Newcastle: M. Angus and Son, 1800), p.i. British Library.

Flavel predominantly adopts rhetorical features of the emblem as a means to frame *Husbandry Spiritualized* and locate it in the devotional lives of his readers; and Flavel's use of the term 'emblem' to describe his emblem is best seen is this rhetorical light. Moreover, like much of the prefatory prose and verse in both *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized*, the three

verses and the images found in the emblem are emphatic of Flavel's method of teaching by analogy drawn from objects and activities associated with agriculture rather than a single abstract concept or truth found in emblem. In both versions of the fold out, the central verse and the two verses written into the dove's wings are retained at the top of the page. These three verses describe the content and the meaning of the *pictura*. In providing these descriptions Flavel accommodates the cryptic and interpretative nature of his images. Karl Josef Höltgen describes Quarles' *subscriptio* as frequently deictic and notes that, whether or not the *pictura* is omitted, the verbal components of the emblem are highly descriptive; similarly Fowler points to the use of additional '*explicatio*' in some examples of emblem.[31] However Flavel's verse does more than merely clarify the image in its blazon and explication of parts. Instead, these verses describe the devotional function of the images as inspiration for meditation and the meditative and didactic functions of *Husbandry Spiritualized* as a means to grace more broadly:

> Reader this Emblem, darkly represents
> The Books chief scope, and principall contents,
> Yet since these Birds, Beasts, Heart, Stone, String, and Tree
> Doe more imply than at first glance you see,
> Our courteous Muse which cannot be unkinde,
> Intends more plainly to divulge her minde.
> You see the Shadows would you see the Things
> She couches under them then view her Wings (ll. 1 – 8).

'Reader this Emblem' describes the piece as an 'Emblem' (ln. 1) both emphatically in the use of terms, and descriptively in the suggestion of the cryptic qualities of emblem: 'darkly represents'. Moreover, the verse asserts Flavel's intention to teach by similitude, as he does in his 'The Epistle Dedicatory' (*HS*, p. v). Thus in 'Reader this Emblem' a distinction is drawn between the physical object which casts visible 'shadows' (ln. 7) and the spiritual lessons 'She couches under them' (ln. 8). Moreover, this final line directs the reader to the two contrasting parts found in the 'wings' (ln. 8). Thus, the *subscriptio* guides the reader in the process of diaeresis in a similar manner to the margins

[31] Höltgen, 'Emblem and Meditation', p. 80.

in Flavel's prefatory variant mesostich poem 'What good might Seamen get, if once they were' in *Navigation Spiritualized* which guide the reader in the skill of extracting meaning from verse. Therefore, Flavel's emblem functions more fully as a further demonstration of his analogical process of instruction and his verses directs the reader around its component parts.

The two verses of the *subscriptio* found on the wings explicate the meaning of the string and stone symbolism found in the emblem and more fully introduce the devotional functions of *Husbandry Spiritualized* as a locus for meditation and edification. The left wing contains the verses 'A gracious heart' (p. xxxiv – xxxv). These verses promote spiritual learning, by way of *Husbandry Spiritualized*, as a means to a devotional life. The right wing contains the counterpart verses 'The string and stone' (ibid) which war against sinfulness and 'carnall sence' (ln. 6) which 'pinion' (ln. 4) the ascendent soul. The two verses therefore contrast the heavenly and earthly desires of the soul and begin a broad pattern of separation between the 'gracious' and the 'carnall' which Flavel draws upon in the 'Reflection' sections of *Husbandry Spiritualized* thereby introducing the volume's rhetorical shape. Colie argues that the *pictora* was added to the emblem, the root motto and epigram, as a means to assist readers with limited Latin or Greek.[32] With this in mind, Flavel's removal of the Latin and Greek entirely and his explication of the meaning of the string and stone advances this assistive function further, and ensures clarity of meaning for his readers. That is, Flavel retains the spirit of Colie's definition of the emblem as a combination of verses and images, if not its semiotic formalities. In line with his innovations elsewhere, Flavel adapts the rhetorical elements of the form to his didactic programme and his specific imagined readership.

Fowler has observed that emblems and frontispieces of volumes often have comparable functions and he offers a means to interpret both Flavel's emblem and Hopton's frontispiece.[33] In Fowler's conception of the emblem as frontispiece, the title, motto, and any other text functions as the *explicatio*, and the images establish a mindset for reading and set out the contents of the text in

[32] Colie, *The Resources of Kind*, p. 36.
[33] Fowler, 'The Emblem' (1999), p. 18.

visual form. By this model, the components of Flavel's emblem appear are in part reversed. Thus, the verses establish a mindset for reading and interpreting grace and carnality and the images set out the contents of the text. Hopton's frontispiece to Hopton's *Daily Devotions* more accurately describes Fowler's model. Her *pictura* features a closeted penitent, surrounded by books, receiving Divine wisdom (see Figure 3.). This describes a mindset of prayer and textual or scriptural consumption. So too the subtitle on the subsequent page 'For the Benefit of the more Devout, and the assistance of weaker Christians' and the anonymised authorial persona 'By an Humble Penitent' stress a concept of *Daily Devotions* as a distillation and presentation of textual sources and meditative thought by the closeted penitent, for Christian readers.[34] As a frontispiece, therefore, Flavel's emblem combines the visuo-spatial spirit of the emblem and the practicality and consideration of the writer-reader relationship of prefatory texts, and it demonstrates Flavel's engagement with wider devotional and rhetorical forms as a means to instruct his readers.

[34] Susanna Hopton, *Daily Devotions: Consisting of Thanksgiving, Confessions, and Prayers*. (London: Jonathan Edwin, 1673), in *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1 (of 2) (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. i – 164 (pp. i – ii).

Figure 4. Susanna Hopton, *Daily Devotions,* in *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1 (of 2) (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. i – 164 (p. i).

Conclusion

Persecuted under the Clarendon Code, Flavel identified underrepresented and precarious communities requiring spiritual assistance. He found a flexible, accessible rhetorical form in meditation – following a model established by Durant – and blended this with related and relatable literary and devotional traditions in didactic and summary verse, Christian analogy, and emblem. Not

content with following these traditions, Flavel adapted and continually developed these forms according to the needs of his readers – including literacy ability. He accommodates different reading abilities, iterative reading practices, and communal practices of textual exchange in his plain, repetitive, style; summary verse as a replacement for reading and remembering prose; extensive entextualisation of sources (with the notable exception of the Bible); a dynamic index; and unusual 'transition' poems. After the manner of Herbert, keen to dislodge 'lewd rhymes' from the minds of his readers, Flavel provides summary poems which can be sung in the rigging or the fields. Flavel's verse forms show a distinct literary achievement and a sustained project focused on the accessibility, portability, and understanding of the text within the hearts and minds of its readers and hearers. His innovation draws distinctly on the rhetorical structures of his prose and verse forms and on their visual, auditory, and mnemonic features as a means to transmit spiritual lessons. Flavel's use of a textual form is, primarily, as a vessel for learning over adherence to its formal features. Nevertheless, his greatest achievement is his unique 'reflections' which enable the reader to participate in meditation, devotion, and prayer according to the individual status of the soul.

Chapter Four: Adaptation, Authorial Effacement, and Devotional Function in Susanna Hopton's *Daily Devotions*

This chapter pays attention to Susanna Hopton's *Daily Devotions Consisting of Thanksgivings, Confessions, and Prayers* (Henceforth *Daily Devotions*, 1673).[1] Hopton (nee Harvey, 1627 – 1709) was a High Church, later non-juring, member of the gentry and professional class. *Daily Devotions* is her earliest published text and her most devotionally practical text. This chapter will attend to it in the religio-political context of the late-seventeenth century period in which it was first composed and published where previous studies have tended to view Hopton's work in light of her membership of the non-juring community. The chapter analyses Hopton's presentation of textual prayers and meditations, Psalm paraphrases, interrogatives, and instructions as a supplement to both private devotion and liturgical worship in which she anticipates praxis. It demonstrates Hopton's skill in adapting material across confessional boundaries and her justification of nominally Roman Catholic sources as universal or Primitive Church practices which she reclaims for the reformed, established Church of England. In so doing, the chapter argues Hopton's habits of authorial effacement, elision, adaptation, and depersonalisation are authorial strategies intended to accentuate the devotional function of the text.

The authorship of Hopton's works has at times variously been claimed by her contemporaries including George Hickes and, more recently, scholars of Thomas Traherne. These claims are owing to the relatively weak presence of Hopton's authorial voice in her texts. This chapter seeks to rehabilitate Hopton's identity as a textual agent in her own right. Hopton does not include examples of personalised meditations in the manner of Austen and Delaval. Instead, Hopton provides the scriptural and imaginative basis for meditation and devotion on the part of the reader.

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[1] Susanna Hopton, *Daily Devotions: Consisting of Thanksgiving, Confessions, and Prayers* (London: Jonathan Edwin, 1673). Throughout this chapter, references are made to the first edition of *Daily Devotions* held at the Cranston Library, Reigate, as available in Julia J. Smith's facsimile edition: *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1 (of 2)(Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. i – 164. Citations to this edition are given in parentheses. *Daily Devotions* is also found in: Susanna Hopton (attrib), *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions, In Three Parts* (Nathanial Spinckes: London, 1717) as Part Two. These pages are not reproduced in Smith's facsimile of *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions, In Three Parts*.

In her introduction to her facsimile edition of Hopton's works, Julia J. Smith notes the absence from the volume of any biographical material: 'She did not write her own prefaces nor directly address the reader, and her view of herself as an author can be deduced only from the works themselves'.[2] I begin with a reassessment of the critical material which has led to misallocation of Hopton as an eighteenth century non-juring writer and of her works as being heavily influenced by Thomas Traherne. This will establish the place of adaptation as a skill deployed across Hopton's corpus and Hopton's intellectualism as she processed and analysed religious texts. A reading of *Daily Devotions* then describes the meditative practices Hopton deploys and her abnegation of authorial personality in favour of textual and scriptural authority. A final reading briefly considering Hopton's and Traherne's responses to an Augustinian source demonstrates the distinct authorial intentions of these writers and provides a useful segue into the complexities of Traherne's meditative textual practices which are the subject of the next and final chapter.

Texts and Contexts

Three publications have been fully or in part attributed to Hopton. Each of these texts illustrates Hopton's authorial precarity. These are *A Letter written by a Gentlewoman of Quality to a Romish Priest upon her Return from the Church of Rome to the Church of England* (1710, henceforth *A Letter*) a work originally written c. 1661 to Jesuit Henry Tuberville (c. 1607 – 1678) and published after Hopton's death by non-juring bishop George Hickes (1642 – 1715); *Daily Devotions* (1673) a popular collation of prayers, meditations, devotions, and a hymn complied and adapted from multiple sources, and published anonymously under the pseudonym 'An Humble Penitent' which reached a fifth edition by 1703; and *Devotions in the ancient Way of Offices with Psalms, Hymns, and Prayers for Every Day of the Week, and Every Holiday in the Year: Reformed by a Person of Quality* (London: George Hickes, 1700) a comprehensive supplement to church liturgy including scriptural readings,

[2] Julia J. Smith, 'Introductory Note', in *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1 (of 2) (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. ix – xxiii (p. x).

canonical and church festival prayers, hymns, and devotions or 'psalms' adapted into a Church of England context from John Austin's *First Part In the Antient Way of Offices* (1668) itself derived from the Roman Catholic *Primer*, or, *Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.[3] This final work is similarly anonymous and popular as a standard component of the collections distributed by the Trustees for Erecting Parochial Libraries.[4] In addition, Hopton's authorship is claimed in part for *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions, In Three Parts* (Nathanial Spinckes: London, 1717) which comprises a reissue of *Daily Devotions* along with *Meditations on the Six Days of Creation* (1717, also known as and henceforth *Hexameron*), *Meditations and Devotions Upon the life of Christ* and *The Sacrifice of a Devout Christian*. This was purportedly improvised from several manuscripts found in Hopton's possession by Spinckes.[5] The complex provenance, post-humous publication, and poorly defined authorial identities of *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions, In Three Parts* and of its component parts have shed significant doubt on the authorial provenance of all of Hopton's texts and on Hopton's abilities as a writer. Moreover, where critics have attributed authorship to her, they have tended to dismiss her work as derivative and collaborative.

As a consequence of her evasive authorship, plain style, and her association with prominent non-juring clerics Hopton has largely been studied as an historical and religious figure and limited attention has been given to her literary style or textual processes despite the size and contemporary popularity of her body of works. For instance, when considered against Austen's *Book M* and Delaval's *Meditations*, Hopton's work represents a markedly liturgical and scriptural approach to meditation and her writing accommodates a broader and less closely connected readership to whom

[3] Susanna Hopton, *A Letter written by a Gentlewoman of Quality to a Romish Priest upon her Return from the Church of Rome to the Church of England*, in George Hickes, *A Second Collection of Controversial Letters Relating to the Church of England and the Church of Rome, As they passed between an Honourable Lady, and Dr. George Hickes. To which is added, A Letter by a Gentlewoman of Quality to a Romish Priest upon her Return to the Church of Rome to the Church of England* (London: Richard Sare, 1710), cited in *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1. (of 2)(Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 118 – 152.
[4] Smith, 'Introduction', p. xiv; *Susanna Hopton*; Austin, John: *Devotions in the Antient Ways of Offices* (Paris, 1668).
[5] Smith, 'Introduction', p. xviii – xx. *Meditations and Devotions Upon the life of Christ,* and *The Sacrifice of a Devout Christian* can be found alongside a reissue of *Daily Devotions* in Susanna Hopton, *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions, In Three Parts* (Nathanial Spinckes: London, 1717), in *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1 (of 2)(Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp.1 – 91 & 92 – 320.

Hopton's depersonalised style, arguably, appeals on a practical level in comparison to the emotionally charged biographical and social touches of Austen and Delaval. Nevertheless, recent scholarship on Hopton concerns her role as a lay writer in the non-juring schism following the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy Act (1688), and her relationships with male authors and publishers which undermine her agency as a writer.[6] This discussion has overwhelming centred on Hopton's *Devotions in the ancient Way of Offices*, *A Letter*, and *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions*. The last two were published or by George Hickes, the leading non-juring bishop during the early eighteenth century. Hickes' influence on Hopton's text has been long-lived. Susan Staves locates this clerical practice of publishing material by lay women: 'clergy of all denominations took pleasure in being able to offer accounts of intelligent women who had abandoned other denominations for the superior truth of their own'.[7] Hopton's conversion story was co-opted by Hickes as a means to encourage conversion and opposition to Roman Catholic freedoms. No extant manuscripts are attributed to Hopton. Her printed texts and her annotated copy of her source for *Devotions in the ancient Way of Offices*, John Austin's *First Part In the Antient Way of Offices* (1668), give the only insight into her textual practice.[8] Thus, Hickes the publisher of Hopton's textual legacy, and Nathaniel Spinkces, the publisher of her sole autobiographical text, *A Letter*, set the narrative for Hopton's authorial afterlife. Moreover, mid-twentieth century Traherne scholars, beginning with Gladys I Wade, who sought to expand Traherne's oeuvre speculated on the relationship between the two writers, the potential transmission of manuscripts between them – before and after Traherne's

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[6] John William Klein, 'Susanna Hopton and Mary Astell: Two Women Spiritual Writers Among the English Nonjurors', in *Anglican and Episcopal History*, Vol. 88, No. 2, (June 2019), pp. 156 – 175; Robert M. Andrews, 'Women of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century High Church Tradition: A Biographical and Historiographical Exploration of a Forgotten Phenomenon in Anglican History', in *Anglican and Episcopal History*, Vol. 84, No. 1 (March 2015), pp. 49 – 64; Jantina Ellens, '*Devotions in the Ancient Way of Offices*: Medieval Domestic Devotion in the Seventeenth Century', in *Religions*, Vol. 10 (2019), pp. 1 – 13; Andrew Braddock, 'Domestic Devotion and the Georgian Church', in *Journal of Anglican Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (June 2018), pp. 188 – 206; Susannah Brietz Monta, 'John Austin's Devotions: Voicing Lyric, Voicing Prayer', in *Early Modern English Catholicism: Identity, Memory and Counter Reformation*, ed. by James E. Kelly and Susan Royal (Leiden: Brill, 2016); Charles Wallace Jr., 'The Prayer Closet as a "Room of One's Own": Two Anglican Women Devotional Writers at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer, 1997), pp. 108 – 120.

[7] Susan Staves, 'Church of England Clergy and Women Writers' in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (2002), 'Reconsidering the Bluestockings' (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 2002), pp. 81 – 103 (pp. 90 – 91).

[8] Smith, p. x.

death (1674) – and the likelihood that Traherne originated or heavily influenced Hopton's work.[9] The combination of Hopton's evasive authorial style and the domination of her legacy by scholarship on Hickes and Traherne has shifted focus away from Hopton's textual agency in the late Seventeenth Century period of her composition to the appropriation of her texts by the non-juring church in the Eighteenth Century and to the at times compelling coincidences in her relationship with Traherne. This leads Julia J. Smith to argue 'most twentieth-century discussion of [*Hexameron*], apart from the analysis of sources, is now of limited value'.[10] However, skewed by comparison with Traherne as it is, this critical material provides often the only textual and devotional assessment from which to evaluate Hopton's texts and there is, therefore, considerable room for enquiry into Hopton's textual and literary ability.

Hopton's sensitive adaptation of *Devotions In the ancient Way Offices* from John Austin's Roman Catholic original *First Part In the Antient Way of Offices* (1668) is the principal example of her textual skill as an adaptor, and of her effacement of confessionally controversial language whilst reclaiming the spiritual essence of the source.[11] Her sensitivity to the original is apparent in light of Theophilus Dorrington's (1654–1715) *Reform'd Devotions, in Meditations, Hymns, and Petitions* (1687). In Dorrington's own words, his adaptation is an extensive purge and reformation of Austin's Catholic original; the resultant text is dramatically different to the original in language, style, and format where Hopton's treatment preserves the intricacies of Austin's voice. Moreover, Hopton's skill extends to her knowledge of and commitment to her faith. Hopton's unique confessional biography, recorded in *A Letter*, privileged her with insight into the similarities between the Church

[9] Gladys I. Wade, *Thomas Traherne* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946) particularly chapter VIII 'Susanna Hopton', pp. 79 – 88; for a more evidence based biography of Hopton see, Julia J. Smith, 'Susanna Hopton: A Biographical Account', in *Notes and Queries* (June, 1991), pp. 165 – 172; Richard Douglas Jordan, 'Thomas Traherne and the Authorship of 'Daily Devotions'', in *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 12, (1982), pp. 218 – 225. Barbara Keifer Lewalski does not directly engage in this debate. However, she implies Traherne's authorship of *Hexameron* in her inclusion of this text in her chapter eleven 'Thomas Traherne: Naked Truth, Transparent Words, and the Renunciation of Metaphor' in Barbara Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 352 – 387.
[10] Julia J Smith, 'Introductory Note', in Susanna Hopton (Ashgate: Farnham, 2010), pp. ix – xxiii (p. xix).
[11] Theophilus Dorrington, *Reform'd Devotions, in Meditations, Hymns, and Petitions, for Every Day in the Week, and Every Holiday in the Year* (London, Joseph Watts, 1687), p. xiii; John Austin, Devotions in the Ancient Ways of Offices (Paris, 1668).

of England and Roman Catholic faiths. During the Interregnum, Hopton converted to Catholicism returning, after the Restoration, to The Church of England. Several critics have offered interpretations of this personal interregnum for its impact on her spiritual development. Most compellingly, critics have read this as an indication of Hopton's preference for the ecclesiastic and apostolic essence of the Church of England and of Catholicism.[12] Hopton, therefore, laid loyal claims to her High Church principles, which she traced to Primitive roots, over and above the religio-politics of her day. Boyd M. Berry describes Hopton's interest in the boundaries and similarities between the Church of England and the Catholic Church and, in concluding, he emphasises Hopton's textual skills in reclaiming Catholic devotional practices: 'Hopton's efforts to meditate between Roman practices of worship and her reformed church marks her as among those few, even today, who can contemplate rapprochement between the English and Roman Churches'.[13] In addition to textual skill, Hopton's *A Letter* describes her study and her engagement with theologians across the confessional divide. This expertise put her in a privileged position as a reader, writer, and adapter of devotional texts:

> my husband bid me set whatever I thought amiss in the Church of *England*, against the Faults I began to discern in your Church, and then to judge impartially, which I thought had the fewest and least. He also put into my Hands the controversial Books of the ablest and clearest *English* Writers, in Defence of the Church of *England* against her Adversaries of your Church: And as I took time to try and examine all things, so I make no doubt but I have chosen the best. He also brought me acquainted with the Divines of the Church of *England*, which our Parts afford, by whom I profited very much (*A Letter*, p. 149).

Her cross-confessional knowledge and sensitivity gave her a distinct ability to reclaim devotional practices which is reproduced in her textual legacy.

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[12] Smith, 'Introduction', p. x; Denise Inge, 'On Becoming Anglican: Emerging Anglican Thought in the Works of Thomas Traherne', in *Journal of Anglican Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, (January 2015), pp. 8 – 28. (p. 11); Boyd M. Berry, 'Two Restoration Responses to the Roman Church', in *Ben Jonson Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (2000), pp. 225 – 246 (p. 231). See also: Julia J. Smith, 'Hopton [née Harvey], Susanna (1627–1709)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2004), available online at < https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/13773> [accessed 29 August 2020]; Wade, *Thomas Traherne*, p. 80.
[13] Berry, 'Two Restoration Responses to the Roman Church', pp. 226, 243; see also, p. 231.

Hopton's personal devotional practice is difficult to confirm as it is based in anecdote and speculation on her texts and prefaces – which are not her own. Nevertheless, the nature of her texts, and the manner in which she and her publishers present them suggests that she derived her meditations and devotions from a combination of practice and study – enabled by her conversion. If this is so, then it indicates Hopton's engagement with the meditative habit of passing on successful meditative practice to a wider readership. Several critics have pressed claims for Hopton's devotional practices largely based in speculation on her texts.[14] Furthermore critics have proposed Hopton's devotional practices were communal. These more promising proposals acknowledge the practicalities of Hopton's texts, their applicability across solitary, or group reading contexts, and their positioning as supplements or perhaps substitutes to church worship in like manner to Flavel's *Navigation Spiritualized*.[15] Wade, somewhat fancifully, compares Hopton's home at Kington, Herefordshire, to the religious community at Little Gidding, and proposes shared devotional and textual practices after the manner of medieval monastic communities.[16] Textually, Berry, finds motifs of 'community' and 'homely detail' in *Daily Devotions.*[17] These readings of devotional rigour and community in Hopton's texts belong to the religio-political context of the incredibly small number of non-juring clergy which isolated rural laity in particular. In the absence of concrete evidence of Hopton's devotional and meditative practice, the following readings of *Daily Devotions* assess Hopton's carefully effaced presentation of texts as supplements to church worship, meditation, and devotion. I begin, cautiously owing to its authorship, with the preface and prefatory material – though I draw on the preface throughout as a useful means to structure my reading. As an example of the reception of *Daily Devotions*, the preface is useful as an interpretation of the structure and function of the text, and it provides framing for an implied reader. I continue in a

[14] Robert M. Andrews, *Lay Activism and the High Church Movement of the Late Eighteenth Century: The Life and Thought of William Stevens, 1732-1807* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2015), p. 58; Smith, 'Introduction', p. x; George Ballard, *Memoirs of British ladies, who have been celebrated for their writings or skill in the learned languages, arts and sciences.* (London: T. Evans, 1775), p. 169.
[15] Smith, Introduction', p. xii. Brietz Monta, 'John Austin's Devotions', p. 234. See also: Klein, 'Susanna Hopton and Mary Astell', pp. 160 – 166; Wade, *Thomas Traherne*, p. 82.
[16] Wade, *Thomas Traherne*, p. 82, 133.
[17] Berry, 'Two Restoration Responses to the Roman Church', p. 236, 239.

roughly linear manner through significant instances in the three subsections of the text namely the 'Meditations', 'Prayers' for canonical hours, and the 'Residue' of meditations and prayers concerning sleep and death, with the exception of 'Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward' (pp. 138 – 143) which I read out of sequence so as to separate readings of Hopton's presentation of meditation from a second set of readings centred more so on her adaptation and effacement of sources.

Structure and Authority in 'The Preface to the Reader'

Daily Devotions includes prefatory texts which frame the triad of writer, reader, and text: an emblem, a title page, preface, and contents list (pp. i – xii). Firstly, in conjunction with her emblem, Hopton's title page underlines the submissiveness and piety of the authorial persona as 'Humble Penitent' (p. ii). This stress on the self-effacing character of the author is more pronounced than modesty. Where Austen – in her disclaimer – and Delaval – in her introduction – invite a reader to assess authorial character, Hopton's authorial persona retreats from character analysis. The effacement of the author is also apparent in the preface (pp. v – xi) in which the passive manner by which the text is presented stresses the devotional function of its content and the ultimate authority of God and the reader in judging the effectiveness of the writing. Thus, the opening lines underscore the literary forms contained in *Daily Devotions*:

> The following Meditations, Praises, Prayers, and Confessions, were the Devotions of a learned and pious Christian, humbly offered up, in due order, to the Divine Majesty, as their nature, and the time to which they were fitted, required. being very Rational, Comprehensive and Emphatical, are offered now to the most | sacred Consideration and practice of all those holy Votaries that may in any sort be assisted. (pp. v – vi).

According to the preface, the devotions are the product of Hopton's worship and of her organisational design. The preface offers the material in *Daily Devotions* to readers for 'Consideration' and assistance. That is, *Daily Devotions* is positioned as both a product of Hopton's devotion and as the inspiration for or supplement to meditation and devotion by and for the edification of the reader. The authority, and meditative value of *Daily Devotions* manifests itself in its

use first by the authorial persona, and secondly by its readers. This concept of passing on a tradition of meditative writing can also be seen in Hall and Flavel's exemplars, and Rich and Boyle's compositions for close friends and family. Additional authority is derived from the text's association with an imagined community of reviewers much like Flavel's use of prefatory letters and poetry in *Navigation Spiritualized*, and *Husbandry Spiritualized*:

> I shall not speak more in praise of the Devotions, (which several learned and holy men have seen, and approved) but leave them to the experience of all the intelligent and pious that shall use them, praying for a Blessing upon their Exercises in the same. (p. x).

The community of clerical overseers attests to the authority of the text. The preface presents a concept of a collaborative or negotiated approach to textual production in which the text is developed in correspondence with Hopton as its central compiler and editor. Critics have looked to this statement in arguing that Traherne was one of Hopton's 'holy men'; however, the evidence is inconclusive.[18] Wade notes both *Daily Devotions* and *Roman Forgeries* were entered into the Stationers' Register on September 25, 1673 by the publisher Jonathan Edwin and that Edwin had a pattern of publishing only a small number of texts often one in a year. As a consequence, Wade argues Edwin's agreement to publish both *Daily Devotions* and *Roman Forgeries* signals a combined project of Traherne's masterminding. However, it is difficult to establish a textual relationship between *Roman Forgeries* and *Daily Devotions* in the context of 1673 given that the former highlights Roman Catholic hypocrisies and the latter is written in a spirit of reproachment and devotional rigour. Nevertheless, these critical perspectives illustrate the complex mediation of Hopton's writing through male publishers and the displacement of much of the authority of the text onto imagined communities of readers and reviewers.

[18] Berry, 'Two Restoration Responses to the Roman Church', p. 225; Smith, 'Introductory Note', pp. x, xii; Wade, *Thomas Traherne*, pp. 132 – 133.

As well as effacing the author in favour of the authority of the text, the preface and contents list describe the textuality and functionality of the work in their distribution of its forms, functions, and devotional contexts. The preface distributes the contents into three broad sections which describe increasingly specialised devotional functions: ‘Meditations’, ‘Prayers’, and the ‘residue’ of devotions (pp. vi, vii, ix). The labels describe an initial group of prose meditations, devotions, and prayers beginning ‘Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church’ (pp. 1 – 42). These are designed as a general supplement to liturgy including material preparative to church worship, and for post worship devotions ‘After Church’ (p. 12). The second section composes a more specialised series of prayers (pp. 43 – 114) for the canonical hours, and major Christian festivals including Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas. The final series of prayers is mostly concerned with sleep, preparation for death, and sin (pp. 115 – 164). Each section is occasioned by frequent events in the life of a pious Christian and located on a continuum between church and domestic settings. Thus, the boundary between public and private worship in *Daily Devotions* is collapsed, and the text is structured around broad functional categories of prayer and meditation supplementary to liturgical and domestic patterns of devotion. This functional and devotional primacy is carried through to the contents list. Items are listed first by devotional form, and secondly by mode: ‘1. A brief Soliloquy by way of Admonition. / 2. Submission to the sentence of death. / 3. Thanksgiving for all benefits of your life past’ (pp. xi – xii). In combination this privileging of the discrete form and function of the text gestures toward the underlying structure of *Daily Devotions* as composed of discrete texts to be used for specific devotional contexts and not as a sequence to be followed in full – though the title ‘Daily Devotions’ stresses the affordances of a text which is frequently to hand. This dynamic manner of use was also described in the paratexts and distribution of Austen and Flavel’s texts but not Delaval’s linear narrative. These broad approaches to reading describe the implied manner by which imagined readers will approach meditative texts.

Psalms, Prayers, Meditations, and Voice

The material located in the first section of *Daily Devotions* is the most recognisably meditative of all the material found in the text. Its presence at the opening of the text establishes the mode of *Daily Devotions* as meditative and its function as a supplement to liturgical worship. The first item after the prefatory texts in *Daily Devotions*, 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church' (pp. 1 – 16) contains material defined by the preface as 'Meditations' in combination with prayers, extracts from the Psalms, and devotions. It serves as a typical example of the first part of the volume. The meditations in 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church', and throughout much of Hopton's writing, are scriptural and largely derived from the meditative model of the Psalms. That is, Hopton's literary style effaces or blends her voice in favour of the scriptural authority of David and the Biblical authors. Thus, in the preface, this section of meditations is described as a suggested source of reflections for the reader to peruse:

> In the Meditations, suggested to the Readers use, as he is going to Church sitting there, and coming thence, the best and most opposite [apposite] Reflections and Resentments of holy David, that Royal Pattern which God himself hath | set before our Eyes, are so collected and digested, that they may easily pass into the apprehensions and after affections of the Peruser. The Praises contain the great and manifold effects of Gods goodness, the Demonstrations of his Love, the causes of our Joy, and the Incentives that feed and enflame our Love and Gratitude (pp. vi – vii).

The preface defines the authorial process by which the psalms have been 'digested' or synthesised and presented for use by the reader in a manner which will allow them to pass into the memory, will, and understanding of the reader. Moreover, in the absence of other available devotional material, *Daily Devotions* provides a ready substitute for the *Book of Common Prayer*. This synthesised nature of the readings in *Daily Devotions* may have contributed to the appeal of the text to the embattled non-juring congregations later in the Seventeenth Century. The section is further divided between 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church', 'Devotions in the Church', and, with elision, 'After Church' (pp. 1 – 9, 10 – 12, 12 – 16) which imply a progression and

stress the augmentation of liturgical worship with preparative and summative devotion. I focus this reading on the first subdivision which demonstrates Hopton's careful selection of extracts from the Psalms in praise of the church as both a physical space, and an embodiment of Christian communion. These extracts and illustrate Hopton's integration of original material designed to inspire prayer, and meditation upon these extracts.

Hopton's authorial intervention is in the selection and ordering of meditative material into an accessible form for the reader with a particular emphasis on brevity. The first item in Hopton's 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church' is a near verbatim transcription of Psalm 122 and a brief note indicating prayer:

> I was glad when they said unto me, let us go to the House of the Lord.
> Our feet stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.
> Jerusalem is built as a City that is compact together.
> Wither the Tribes go up, the Tribes of the Lord unto the Testimony of Isreal, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.
> For there are set Thrones of Judgement, the Thrones of the House of David.
> O pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.
> Peace be within thy walks, and prosperity within thy Palaces. |
> For my Brethren and Companions sake, I will now say peace be within thee.
> Because of the House of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.
> *Glory be to the Father, &c*. (Hopton's italics, pp. 1 – 2).

Hopton is notably faithful to the *King James Version*, and occasionally the *Book of Common Prayer* where these differ, throughout her works. Hopton's' adherence to scripture strongly implies her studiousness in transcription, and her wish for her work to be read within a Church of England context using its authorised text. Hopton follows these Psalms with further examples: 65, 27, 42, 62, 63, and 95 (pp. 3 – 7). Hopton has chosen this sequence of Psalms firstly in praise of the metaphysical concept of the church, as Jerusalem or tabernacle, and secondly in meditation on God's comforts: 'In God is my Salvation and my Glory, the Rock of my strength and my refuge is in God' (Psalm 62: 7, p. 5). Hopton's prescriptive approach to scriptural meditation puts the pared down, and reordered, voice of King David at the centre of the meditation for the reader to reconstruct. Hopton's process of meditation upon the Psalms is distinct from that of Austen's

combination of her own voice with David's as a means to interpret and analyse her readings and personal reflections. Hopton's selection, effacement, and brevity extends to her presentation of instructions for the reader, and this stylistic trait extends across several of Hopton's texts. Thus, Hopton's instruction '*Glory be to the Father, &c*.' is abbreviated; Hopton replicates this instruction once more after the second psalm transcription (pp. 2 – 3) leaving the reader to infer its presence at moments of cadence within the text. Hopton's tendency to abbreviate can also be seen in the titles of these three subdivisions where the third bears the simplified title 'After Church' and in the opening exhortation, which Hopton derives from Psalm 19:14, found at the opening of the discrete chapters in *Hexameron*: 'Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditations of my Heart, be always acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer'.[19] David's supplication for the affectivity of meditation is abbreviated in subsequent chapters to 'Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditations, &c'. This pattern of abbreviation and curtailment is sufficient across *Daily Devotions* and other work attributed to Hopton to suggest that brevity and effacement are her textual practice.

Nevertheless, Hopton's voice is more overtly present later in 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church' as she blends a prayer into the meditative voice of the Psalmist, and Hopton's rhetorical structure mirrors Hall's disposition of parts and Flavel's presentation of multiple spiritual transgressions against which his readers can evaluate their conscience:

> O worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness, O come let us fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
> In thy fear do I worship thee in [this] thy holy Temple: desiring to praise thee in the great Congregation, before much people.
> Here, O Lord, in the beauty of Holiness I approach, to worship thee among thy Saints in the great Assembly. (Hopton's brackets, p. 7).

The first sentence paraphrases, more forcefully, psalm 95:6: 'O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker'. Hopton's foregrounding of the imperatives translates David's invitation to communal worship and supplication into a more plaintive instruction to worship

[19] Susanna Hopton, 'Meditations on the Six Days of the Creation', in *A Collection of Meditations and Devotions in Three parts*, Part 1 (London: Nathanial Spinckes, 1717), cited in, Susanna Hopton, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp.1 – 91 (pp. 1, 26, 39, 56, 65).

and 'fall down' or prostrate before God. Hopton transitions from augmenting David's voice to her own voice entirely in the following lines:

> I adore thine infinite Bounty, that notwithstanding all my sins, thou permittest me to tread thy Court, to attend thy Majesty in thy holy Temple.
> For I have profaned thy Sabbaths.
> Defiled thy Sanctuary.
> Polluted thine holy Ordinances.
> Dishonoured my Profession.
> Been cold in my Prayers.
> Dull in my Praises.
> Careless and censorious in my Hearing.
> Extreamly negligent in my Meditation.|
> Miserably distracted in all.
> So that I have deserved a curse rather than a blessing from thee.
> But O merciful Father.
> Tender and compassionate Lord.
> Jesus my Saviour.
> Most blessed and holy Spirit.
> By thy Grace I return unto my heart, and with all my heart I return unto thee. (pp. 7 – 8).

Hopton's penitential prayer is in keeping with her extractions from the Psalms on the metaphysical church, which she renders as 'Temple', 'Court', and 'Sanctuary', and on the comforts of God. In like manner to her abbreviation of '*Glory be to the Father, &c*.', Hopton's phrasing falls into elision as she lists improper acts of devotion. Hopton lists these items in a progression from the church 'thy Sanctuary' through secular and public activities to domestic and private activities ending in the most private and introspective 'Meditation'. In presenting items in a list, Hopton's format encourages the reader to pause and reflect on individual transgressions in devotional practice, or, as in the example of Flavel's 'reflections', to select the transgressions most appropriate to individual circumstances. Likewise, the subsequent lines calling on God are divided between the parts of the Trinity. Additionally, like Flavel, Hopton appends appropriate, adaptable penitent responses to her meditations though in her own style she favours brevity over Flavel's prescriptiveness: 'By thy Grace I return unto my heart, and with all my heart I return unto thee'. Thus in 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church' Hopton defers to scriptural authority, though she blends this with her abbreviated voice, as a means to inspire meditation and prayer on the nature and occasion of the

church. Hopton composes much of *Daily Devotions* in this selective, terse style, and the formulaic repetitiveness of her style, which can also be seen in *Hexameron* and *Meditations and Devotions Upon the Life of Christ*, mirrors the accessibility and practicality of Flavel's writing as a means to supplement meditation, prayer, and liturgy. However, Hopton composes the final sections of *Daily Devotions* in a markedly different style.

The final section of *Daily Devotions* includes an extensive series of interrogatives which encourage meditation in a catechistic style. Hopton's meditative voice is recovered in her prefiguration of rhetoric and her representation of an implied ideal Christian against which practitioners compare themselves. In the preface, this final 'residue' is framed in terms of its function according to spiritual need:

> The residue are Devotions adapted, some to the use of Sinners, for the bewailing of their sins at all times; others for the use of Christians in our most eminent Fasts and Festivals; and some by way of Preparation for Death; that meditating upon it, & wisely fitting our selves for it here, it may be a blessed change unto us, and bring us to the life of Eternal Glory (p. ix).

Whilst not comprehensive, therefore, *Daily Devotions* nevertheless represents a wide-ranging acknowledgement of the concerns of the laity for whom Hopton writes, in similar manner to Flavel's stress on readiness for sudden death, avoidance of sin, and, in his later writing management of grief such as *A Token for Mourners* (1674).[20] Hopton's 'Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward' (pp. 138 – 143) comprises a sustained list of questions and prompts with which the reader can meditate upon and examine the status of the soul including the ethics of the conscience. The plurality of 'thoughts' and 'exercises' stresses the rigour and psychology of the text and echo Baxter's concerns for commitment and transformation; indeed a question at the end of the second section of 'Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward' asks readers to consider their dedication: 'Our business was it begun with that purity of intention, carried on with that diligence and industry, and with that

[20] John Flavel, *A Token for Mourners , or, The advice of Christ to a Distressed Mother Bewailing the Death of her Dear and only Son wherein the Boundaries of Sorrow are Duly Fixed, Excesses Restrained, the Common Pleas Answered, and Divers Rules for the Support of Gods Afflicted Ones Prescribed* (London: Robert Boulter, 1674).

constancy and unweariedness that was fitting, till brought to an end?' (p. 141). It is necessary to quote a substantial portion of 'Evening Thoughts' in order to demonstrate the range of material, the intensity of its presentation, and the gradual transition from questions of behaviour to more penetrative questions of conscience:

> The ADVICE.
>
> Do not dare to go to Bed in such a state, with such a conscience, in which you do not dare to die. For who can tell whether this night your Soul may not be required of you. Having retired therefore, and set God before you, and your self before God, stir up your self to an act of self-examinations thus, or to this purpose.
>
> The MEDITATION
>
> See O my Soul, the day is past, the time of working is over, night is come and invites us to rest, our life is one day shorter than it was in the Morning, and what if it be our last?
>
> Our gracious Lord has given us this | day to serve him, and what service have we done him, to work out our Salvation in, and what have we done towards it? How have we spent this day, how was it past, from our down-lying, to our uprising, to the first hour, the third, the sixth, the ninth, to the Evening, to this hour, where was each hour spent, and with whom, and in what employment?
>
> 2. What were the considerable passages of each hour, what was done by us, what devotions, businesses, recreations?
>
> Have we ordered our Conversations aright to Godward in the exercises of Religion, Prayer, spiritual reading of this Book, or other good Books of Devotion, looking up to his hand in all things that befell us, both the good and the evil; directing all our doings to his Glory?
>
> To our selves in the exercises of prudence, ordering all our affairs wisely; of Temperance, moderating our | selves, Actions, Appetites, Affections; of Courage, both doing the good we had the power and opportunity to do, notwithstanding the difficulty or danger; and suffering the evil that befell us, bearing afflictions, pains, losses, injuries with patience, and (as much as may be) with cheerfulness. (pp. 138 – 140).

'Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward' presents the rhetorical basis of a deliberate meditation governed by the disposition of Hopton's series of questions. The reader is asked to parcel the passage of the day into ever smaller units for analysis. The opening 'See O my Soul, the day is past'

implies introspection, and this is emphasised in Hopton's question which stresses the uncertainties of death and the status of the soul: 'and what if it be our last?'. Next, echoing Hall's distribution of parts though without his categories, Hopton divides the day into the canonical third, sixth, and ninth hours and she further divides this time into individual hours: 'where was each hour spent'. The following sequence of questions, marked by the number '2', then further distributes the processes performed within each hour from activity, through thought and intentions in terms of persons, activities, and devotion. Thus, the reader is first asked to assess behaviour and, in the final quoted paragraph, asked to consider 'Appetites', 'Affections', attitude 'cheerfulness', and whether they acted upon opportunities to do good. That is, the motivations and ethics underpinning their behaviour. The extent to which the reader is able to answer these questions positively indicates the distance between the reader and the implied ideal 'Christian reader' present in the text. That is, like Flavel's 'Reflections' which prescribe two, or three, broad states of the soul, Hopton's questions prescribe an ideal reader who is able to give a sustained positive response to her questions on conduct, conscience, and ethics.

Reclaiming and Reframing Primitive Church Sources

Between 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church' (pp. 1 – 42) and 'Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward' (pp. 138 – 143) the section of prayers for canonical hours and festivals which sits at the centre of *Daily Devotions* demonstrates Hopton's reclamation of Roman Catholic and Primitive Church practices, her presentation of this material in a meditative framework, and her possible ability in Latin translation. Most significant to the thesis, this is the only verse form which Hopton includes in *Daily Devotions* – though Hopton does adapt and compose hymns and verse forms in *Devotions in the ancient Ways of Offices* and *Hexameron*. Her choice of a nominally Roman Catholic poem of medieval origin, in *Daily Devotions*, demonstrates her reclamation of historical church practices. After the initial group of prose meditations, devotions, and prayers including 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church' (pp. 1 – 42) Hopton inserts a

poem, taken from the Roman Catholic Breviary and originally composed by St Bernard of Clairvaux 1090 –1153, ‘An Hymn to Jesus, wherein the the [sic] Soul may expatiate it self with delight in Him’ (henceforth ‘An Hymn’, pp. 43 – 44). ‘An Hymn’ is a translation of Clairvaux’s medieval Latin hymn ‘Iesu Dulcis Memoria’. Wade suggests that ‘An Hymn’ must be Thomas Traherne’s adding the poem is of poor quality, and this error in recognising Hopton’s source casts considerable doubt on Wade’s assertion of Traherne’s role in *Daily Devotions*.[21] ‘An Hymn’ separates the former sequence of general supplements to liturgical worship, from the more specialist prayers and meditations for the canonical hours and major Christian festivals including Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas (pp. 43 – 114). This use of verse as a means to demarcate transition is not explicit or as rigidly rhetorical as in Flavel’s argument stanzas. Nevertheless, as a canonical prayer for Vespers and Lauds in itself and a meditative poem on Christ’s suffering, ‘An Hymn’s’ invocation to the reader to meditate upon Christ’s suffering reemphasises the meditative and Christological thrust of the central section of *Daily Devotions*:

Jesus, the only thought of thee
Fills with delight my memory.
But when thou dost thy presence shew,
Heaven into my brest doth flow!
No Theme for voice so sweet can be,
Nor to the ear such Melody:
No Heart can Thought so charming frame,
As Jesus his most precious Name.
Our hope when we for sins do grieve,
Thy mercies all our wants relieve,
If good to those that seek thy Grace,
What art thou when they see thy face?
Jesus! in whom we comfort find,
Life of our Souls, light of our Mind,
Thou dost our Hearts with true joys feed,
Thy gifts our utmost wish exceed.
No eloquence of tongue can teach,
Nor art of Pen this Secret reach:
Only the experienced Soul doth prove,
What sweets they taste, who Jesus love,
Him then I’le seek retired apart,

[21] Wade *Thomas Traherne*, pp. 133, 134, 136, 153, 157.

Shutting the world out of my heart;
Amidst my business him I'le strive
With fresh pursuits still to retrive.
Early with Magdalen I'le come,
A Pilgrim to my Saviours Tomb,
Wailing my sins with mournful cries,
I'le seek him with my Mind, not Eyes.
My Tears shall on his Grave distill,
My faithful Sighs the Garden fill,
Prostrate before him on my face,
His sacred feet, I'le fast embrace;
Striving to follow where they lead,
Jesus, in thy blest steps I'le tread.
Nor shall my Soul give o're to mourn,
Till to thy favour it return. (ll. 1 – 36).

At a literal level, 'An Hymn' is a meditative poem on Christ which can be read as an instruction in the function, loci, and practice of meditation. The title invites the reader or hearer to 'expatiate' with Christ; that is, the speaker imaginatively follows Christ to the Sepulchre. OED defines 'expatiate': To walk about at large, to roam without restraint' and, limited to seventeenth century examples', more figuratively as '*transitive*. To enlarge, extend, expand (territory, etc.); to spread abroad (glory, shame); to exalt, magnify; to spread wide (the arms)'.[22] Thus the speaker describes cognitively the 'thought of thee' (ln. 1) and imaginatively or by *compositio loci* [in] 'my memory' (ln. 2) engaging with Christ. The speaker then takes this understanding from the mind to the heart: 'when thou dost thy presence shew, / Heaven into my brest doth flow!' (ll. 3 – 4). 'An Hymn' stresses an experiential from of meditation upon the presence of Christ. Thus, the speaker eschews the written and spoken word (ll. 17 – 18) in favour of the sensual experience of devotion akin to the Loyolan meditation: 'Only the experienced Soul doth prove, / What sweets they taste, who Jesus love (ll. 19 – 20). Locationally, lines twenty-one to twenty-four stress both private contemplation 'retired apart' (ln. 21) and meditation as a means to imbue secular life with spirituality: 'Amidst my business him I'le strive / With fresh pursuits still to retrive' (ll. 20 – 21). Meditation is thus figured as a means to

[22] 'expatiate, v.' *Oxford English Dictionary*, online edn., < https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/66440?rskey=3VJdDK> [accessed 17th August 2022].

follow, or literally to walk with Christ through life, and in keeping with Hopton's presentation of *Daily Devotions*, meditation is located in all aspects of life.

Textually, however, Hopton locates 'An Hymn' alongside prayers for the canonical hours, and, taken together, 'An Hymn' and these prayers demonstrate her reclamation of Primitive Church practices in a meditative context. Robert Cornwall identifies a trend of reclaiming lost practices in high church practitioners following the Restoration as a means to redefine the continuity of the church whilst avoiding religio-political controversy.[23] Canonically, 'Iesu Dulcis Memoria' appears in the Roman Catholic Breviary, in Latin, in three parts assigned to canonical hours. The first assigned to Vespers bears the umbrella title 'Iesu Dulcis Memoria', the second part is assigned to Matins as 'Iesu Rex Admirabilis', and the third is assigned to Lauds as 'Iesu Deus Angelicum'. Nevertheless, given the Roman Catholic context of the Breviary the correspondence to canonical prayers may not have been clear to Hopton's readers and her title stresses the form and function of the hymn as a meditation on Christ primarily. Thus, Hopton's 'An Hymn' retains the first two parts, of Clairvaux's original, on the memory or emotional experience of Jesus (ll. 1 – 34) and on the admiration of Jesus (ll. 37 – 52) which most directly correspond to the meditative mode of *Daily Devotions* in terms of the memory and understanding of Christ. Moreover, Hopton's entextualisation of 'An Hymn' frames her canonical prayers, which include detailed descriptions of Christ's sufferings, as befits canonical prayer, in terms of their meditative function in light of Christ's suffering. Thus, though Hopton recovers Roman Catholic practices, she frames them through the lens of meditation.

In the preface the sequence of prayers found after 'An Hymn' *Daily Devotions* is framed as an inspiration to the memory and understanding, and underscored by the Primitive heritage of canonical hours:

> The Prayers for the third, sixt, and ninth hour, | are every day to be used, in memory of our Saviours Passion, for the more effectual application of the merits of his bitter Death, & the more lively exercise of our daily Communion with him, in the sight and sense of all his love & sufferings on

[23] Robert D. Cornwall, 'The Search for the Primitive Church: The Use of Early Church Fathers in the High Church Anglican Tradition, 1680-1745', in *Anglican and Episcopal History*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (September 1990), pp. 303 – 329.

> the Cross for us, after the manner of the ancient Christians, in the best, most pure, Primitive Times. (pp. vii – viii).

The prescriptiveness in the instruction ‘every day to be used, in memory’ figures these prayers as a supplement to liturgical worship and an inspiration to meditation. Andrew Braddock cites ‘Roman Catholic manuals’ as a source for Hopton’s prayers; Braddock also suggests a prayer he calls ‘Prayer at Night for a Family’ draws on the *Book of Common Prayer* and mirrors the Litany of the Church of England.[24] However, Braddock does not specify which Roman Catholic manuals, and what he called ‘Prayer at Night for a Family’ may well be Hopton’s ‘Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward’. Nevertheless, Braddock’s scholarship points to the ease with which Hopton blends sources across confessional boundaries, and he notes this is in keeping with Hopton’s use of practices from the Primitive Church which Hopton does not consider exclusively Roman Catholic. Hopton’s sequence of canonical prayers precedes through the third (pp. 45 – 54), sixth (pp. 59 – 72), and ninth hours (pp. 73 – 76) – that is the diurnal or minor canonical hours – and ‘Additional Devotions for the Evening’ (pp. 78 – 81) and ‘Compline’ (pp. 82 – 84). In complement to ‘An Hymn’ which transcribes aspects of Vespers and Lauds, these prayers complete the cycle of hours. The variation in Hopton’s titles, like her elision elsewhere, suggests an emphasis on the spiritual function and accessibility of her prayers rather than their specific placement in a litany. Moreover, Hopton’s avoidance here, with the exception of ‘Compline’ of Latinate terms points to an Anglicisation of offices deemed to be the practice of Roman Catholicism and to Hopton’s project to make devotional practices derived from the Primitive Church palatable to a Church of England context. In addition, the sequence is interrupted by ‘A Prayer to the Holy Ghost, out of St. Augustine’ (henceforth: ‘A Prayer to the Holy Ghost’, pp. 55 – 59) which, though not canonical, is thematically complementary to the canonical prayers in their shared presentation of aspects of Christ’s Passion, and this further emphasises the

[24] Andrew Braddock, ‘Domestic Devotion and the Georgian Church’, in *Journal of Anglican Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (June, 2018), pp. 188 – 206 (p. 195). I have not identified ‘Prayer at Night for a Family, though Braddock may refer to ‘Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward’, or to one of the prayers which follow this: ‘A Prayer against Afflictions’, ‘A Brief Soliloquy by way of Admonition’, pp. 144 – 145.

meditative function of the texts in this section of *Daily Devotions*. Moreover, the sequence is rounded off with prayers for 'Lent', less specifically 'Thanksgiving', 'Christmas Day', 'Easter-Day', and 'the Day of Pentecost' (pp. 84 – 90, 90 – 106, 107 – 109, 109 – 112, 113 – 114). Together these prayers underscore Hopton's collation of prayers according to their meditative function and spiritual value over their source or confessional implication.

Hopton's 'Prayers for the Ninth Hour' (pp. 73 – 77) offers a typical example of the meditative and spiritual thrust of Hopton's canonical prayers over their confessional and ritual source. It includes the addition of a notable series of interrogatives which, as in the example of 'Evening thoughts and Exercises to Bedward', guide the reader to a prescribed introspection. The prayer focuses on the subject of Christ's death – which happened at the ninth hour – and on typologies of salvation in the body and blood of Christ as represented in the Eucharist:

> O Blessed Jesus, I come now to commemorate thy holy Death, which after all thy pains, hanging so tedious a time on the Cross, thou didst suffer at the ninth Hour, in full satisfaction for all our sins [...] At the Ninth Hour was thy Heart pierced with a Spear; O transfix my heart unto thee. (p. 73).

The opening lines vividly illustrate Christ's suffering and draw analogies between this and the suffering of the Christian soul. In addition, the prayer points to moments of self-reflection on Christ's suffering:

> O blessed Jesus, what a bill of payment| hast thou here discharged? what an acquittance hast thou made for me?
>
> The Rocks did rent, the Graves open, the Heavens mourn, the Earth did shake at thy Passion; and shall I evermore make leight of any transgression more?
>
> O strike the Rock of my hard Heart, that it may kindly flow forth in tears for thee, as thou didst overflow in tears of blood to ransome me (pp. 75 – 76).

Hopton's third interrogative here mimics her 'Evening Thoughts to Bedward'. Thus, again Hopton presents a series of questions against which to assess the status of the conscience and provides the foundations of a prayer of penitence. In so doing Hopton demonstrates the flexibility and parity of

meditational and prayer forms when incorporated in a meditative miscellany particularly in light of the meditative thrust of ‘An Hymn’.

Adapting Lancelot Andrewes and St. Augustine Sources in Hopton and Traherne

In addition to ‘Iesu Dulcis Memoria’ and the Psalms, Hopton adapts and entextualises Augustinian prayers into *Daily Devotions* and critics have found further influences in her wider corpus which locate Hopton’s textual practice in a culture, or perhaps a community, of adaptation and appropriation. Braddock and Lynn Sauls observe a source shared by Hopton in *Hexameron* and *Meditations on the Life of Christ* and Traherne in *Centuries of Meditations* in the Jesuit Luis de la Puente’s *Meditations Upon the Mysteries of our Holie Faith.*[25] However, these arguments as to the shared sources and shared textual production overlook the popularity of sources such as Augustine and Andrewes and Hopton’s habit for adaptation for an imagined readership. Building on earlier research, Peter Auger describes Hopton’s verbatim transcription of verses found in Guillaume DuBartas’ *La Semaine ou creation du Monde* [*The Week, or creation of the World*] (also known as *La Premiere Sepmaine* [*The First Week*], 1578) in the poems which conclude the chapters of *Hexameron* and locates this in a wider culture of appropriation from DuBartas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Hopton’s sources in Puente and DuBartas demonstrate her engagement with a wider culture of adaptation and appropriation. Hopton, like Flavel and Traherne, uses further Augustinian sources in her ‘A Prayer to the Holy Ghost , out of St. Augustine’ (pp. 55 – 59) which is derived from ‘Of the Invocation of the Holy Ghost’. Hopton’s use of Latin, medieval meditative sources points to three textual practices: firstly, to Hopton’s appeal to Primitive sources devoid of the religio-political controversies of her own period, secondly, to her reclamation and adaptation of these sources for a late seventeenth century readership, thirdly, to the possibility that Hopton had some training in Latin or that her study of religious writing during her period of conversion brought her into contact with a number of texts which were unavailable to the likes of Austen and Delaval. For instance, Hopton concludes *Daily Devotions* with a Latin prayer: ‘Deus vitae mea quam vane consumpta sunt

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[25] Braddock, ‘Domestic Devotion and the Georgian Church’, p. 195; Lynn Sauls, ‘Traherne's debt to Puente's 'Meditations”, in *Philological Quarterly*, Vol.50, No. 2 (1971), pp. 161 – 174; Peter Auger, *Du Bartas' Legacy in England and Scotland* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 217 – 219; Hopton, *Hexameron* (1717), pp. 15 – 16, 25 – 26, 39 – 39, 54 – 55, 64, 89 – 91.

[O God, my life has been spent in vain]' (pp. 163 – 164). This prayer comprises an almost verbatim transcription of the tenth meditation found in Eckbert of Schönau's (d. 1184) Pseudo-Augustinian *Soliloquium seu Meditationes.*[26] Whether Hopton was aware of this provenance is indeterminate though its aptness to *Daily Devotions* suggests at least an understanding of its import and Hopton's wide reading and study.

More overtly, Hopton points to her source in Lancelot Andrewes' (1555 – 1626) 'Confession of Sin, out of Bishop Andrews' and 'Deprecations out of Bishop Andrewes', and her appropriation of Andrewes' more fully describes her selectivity and presentation of devotional texts in the context of *Daily Devotions* (pp. 115 – 123, 124 – 127). Carol L. Marks Sichernan notes that Hopton transcribes and adapts material found in 'Intercessions' and 'Deprecations' in Lancelot Andrew's *Institutiones piæ* (1630).[27] In my assessment, Hopton has not utilised Andrewes' subsequent entry 'In Affliction' to inform her brief 'A Prayer against Affliction' neither does she appear to have drawn on Andrewes to inform her prayers before and after church, nor 'Evening Thoughts and Exercises to Bedward' – each of which has a parallel entry in Andrew's work. Thus counter to Wade's assertions that Hopton's work is largely derivative, it is evident that Hopton was selective in her adaptation of material.[28] Boyd M. Berry has pointed to Hopton's adaptation of this material as his example of Hopton's interest in communal worship and to its contrast with Andrewes' original which concerns personal sin. Whether Hopton herself engaged in the communal practice Berry envisages is inconclusive. Indeed, Berry's reading leans on Hopton's status as a non-juror in the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Centuries, and it must be noted that Berry's reading of Hopton's 'community' is in light of Wade's unsubstantiated conception of Hopton's home at Kington as like that at Little Gidding.[29] Nevertheless, as a presentational theme, Berry's readings locate *Daily Devotions* in a

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[26] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bod.MS. Laud Misc. 212 2., fols. 50rb – 54vb.
[27] Carol L. Marks Sichernan, 'Traherne's Church's Year-Book', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 1966, Vol. 60, p.31 – 72 (p. 44); Lancelot Andrewes, *Institutiones piæ or directions to pray also a short exposition of the Lords Prayer the Creed the 10 Comandements Seauen Penitentiall Psalmes and Seauen Psalmes of thanksgiuing* (London: Henry Seile, 1630), 128 – 130, 140 – 144.
[28] See: Wade, *Thomas Traherne*, p. 133.
[29] Berry, 'Two Restoration Responses to the Roman Church', p. 239; Wade, *Thomas Traherne*, p. 82.

comparable devotional space to Flavel's *Navigation Spiritualized* and *Husbandry Spiritualized* in which the text forms the nexus around which an imagined community of readers and worshippers is formed. More pertinently this broader appeal to community translates Andrewes' esoteric and intellectual text published largely as a means to his own edification into a text more suited to the general public. I borrow from Berry's reading as it usefully establishes much of the groundwork for my subsequent readings of Hopton's adaptation of Augustine in light of Traherne's comparable adaptations. Berry begins by comparing Hopton's conformity to Andrewes in the opening sections of her adaptation of 'Confession of Sin out of Bishop Andrewes' – from which he quotes: '[Hopton] followed Andrewes in this typical passage from the "Confession of Sin" closely. However, he observes 'she departed completely from Andrewes' conclusion'.[30] More tellingly, Berry compares Andrewes' violent and emotional petitions to be free of evil and Hopton's no less painful though more concrete petitions to be free of pain. These Berry describes as 'homely detail'. Berry continues with reference to Hopton's conclusion to her 'Deprecations out of Bishop Andrewes' (p. 127):

> [Hopton] completely omitted [Andrewes'] lengthy petitions to be free from "All evil and mischief, ... from all ... Scandal, ... Grief, ... and ... Infamy" and from "All Enemies," as well as from "Sudden" or "Violent" death, since she was not a publicly visible bishop who might be attacked. Where he had asked,
>
> > In all my Prayers and petitions.
> > Distresses, and angers,
> > Infirmities, and need,
> > Tentations, and tribulations, |
> > Good Lord deliver me,
> > and help me
> > (Andrewes, sig. G5r-v)
>
> she prayed, much more concretely and socially,
>
> > In all my prayers hear me,
> > In all my thinkings, speaking, and writings,
> > Inspire, instruct, and direct me,
> > In all my infirmities, pity and help me,
> > Out of all temptations deliver me.
> > From all falls, fractures of bones,
> > Dislocations, poison and grievous diseases,
> > Good Lord deliver me".

[30] Berry, 'Two Restoration Responses to the Roman Church', p. 233 – 234.

(sig. [M4]r)

> That is, where he says "my Prayers and Petitions," she adds "my thinkings, speaking, and writing"—more concrete activities which by definition involve others; where he talks of "infirmities," she follows him, but where Andrewes talks of his "Tentations, and tribulations" she expands with homely, concrete detail, adding "falls, fractures of bones,/Dislocations, poison and grievous diseases." (Berry's pagination, see, p. 127).[31]

Whilst Hopton's 'speaking, and writings' (*Daily Devotions*, p. 127) inherently involves others, her stress on 'thinkings' points more to these activities in terms of the individual conscience and to Hopton's concern for the internalised morality. Similarly, Berry's interpretation of physical injuries as 'homely details' can equally be interpreted as a means to remove ornament and clarify Andrewes' language for a less academically literate readership. This is in keeping with Hopton's efforts to prioritise accessibility. Thus in full, Hopton translates Andrewes' 'Tentations and tribulations' by standardising the spelling of 'temptations', effacing 'tribulations', and, as Berry states, replacing this abstract term with concrete examples: 'In all my infirmities, pity and help me, Out of all temptations deliver me, From all falls, fractures of bones, [etc.]' (p. 127). Berry perceives the pinnacle of Hopton's motif of community in 'A Prayer for Lent' (pp. 84 – 90).[32] However, the communal activities described here more adequately describe the Christian values of care for the sick, compassion, and humility, and Hopton lists devotional practices across social and private spheres including 'Retirement' and 'profitable Meditation' (p. 87) concluding 'Let my private devotions so fit and prepare me for thy publick Worship' (p. 89). It is more compelling, therefore, to suggest that Hopton integrates public and private forms of devotion into a continuum of interrelated practices. Nevertheless, Berry's reading is useful in that it describes Hopton's habitual style of adaptation, and highlights her concerns for the functionality of the text in terms of addressing the understanding as a preliminary means to edification of the soul. I build on this argument more thoroughly in my final reading of 'A Prayer to the Holy Ghost, out of St. Augustine'.

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[31] Berry, 'Two Restoration Responses to the Roman Church', pp. 234 – 235.

[32] Ibid, p. 236 – 237.

Ongoing debates, including Ross' publication of Hopton's Hexameron alongside Traherne's texts, have variously argued for Traherne's wholesale or collaborative authorship of Hopton's texts and for Hopton's assumption of Traherne's manuscripts after Traherne's death. These arguments frequently touch upon Hopton's and Traherne's incorporation and adaptation of Augustinian sources in their manuscripts. Nevertheless, given the importance of Augustine in Christian thought common recourse to Augustine is understandable.[33] However, this debate invites comparison between Hopton and Traherne's textual habits and into the distinct manner in which the two writers respond to the source material according to the publication and function of their texts. I argue, where Hopton depersonalises and simplifies material for the meditative, and devotional benefit of her reader, Traherne's manuscript is looser and esoteric, and its relationship with a reader beyond himself or his immediate circle is less certain. Traherne's *The Church's Year-Book* (c. 1670 – 1674?) is an autograph manuscript containing prayers, readings, meditations, and poems which I assess as having a similar role to a notebook or commonplace book as a means to prepare texts for sermons and liturgical service. I begin with a reading of Hopton in light of her Augustinian originals and compare Traherne's response subsequently.

'A Prayer to the Holy Ghost, out of St. Augustine' (henceforth 'Holy Ghost') appears between A Prayer upon the third Hour' and 'A Prayer for the Sixth Hour' in the second section of *Daily* Devotions (pp. 55 – 59, 45 – 54, 59 – 72). Hopton's interruption of her canonical sequence of prayers is explained by the association of the Holy Ghost to the third hour, and the hour at which the Holy

[33] Stanley Stewart, 'Thomas Traherne' in *Seventeenth Century British Nondramatic Writers,* Third Series, ed. by. M Thomas Hester, Dictionary of Literary Biography*,* No. 131, (Detroit: Gale, 1993), pp. 272 – 290 (p. 276 – 277); Wade, *Thomas* Traherne, pp. 129 – 168; Jan Ross, 'Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. IV (of 8)(DS. Brewer: Cambridge, 2009), pp. xi – liv (pp. l – lii); Jan Ross, 'Textual Emendations and Notes', in Thomas Traherne, *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. IV (of 8)(DS. Brewer: Cambridge, 2009), pp. 262 – 311 (p. 265). Jan Ross finds a further Augustinian source in *The Meditations, Soliloquia, and Manuall of the Glorious Doctour S. Augustine*, Trans. by Anon. (Paris: Nicolas de la Coste, 1631). Louis L. Martz argues Traherne 'displays a pervasive Augustinian affinity in the form and literary method of the *Centuries of Meditations*: Louis L. Martz, *The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964), pp. 43; Barbara Keifer Lewalski stresses Traherne's Neoplatonic spirituality, though not explicitly listing Augustine as a source: Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics* pp. 173, 352, 354, 382. For a list of Traherne's sources see: Denise Inge, 'Introduction' in, Thomas Traherne, *Happiness and Holiness: Thomas Traherne and His Writings*, ed. by Denise Inge (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2008), pp. 1 – 64 (p. 46).

Ghost descended on Pentecost. Wade observes Hopton derives the first part of 'Holy Ghost' from chapter nine 'Of the Invocation of the Holy Ghost' of Saint Augustine's Meditations found in an anonymous early seventeenth century translation: *The Meditations, Soliloquia, and Manuall of the Glorious Doctour S. Augustine* (1631).[34] The original opens in a long, sensuous sequence of mixed metaphors which form a supplication to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Hopton's version, which I quote second, is abbreviated and reformatted into a more direct, less abstract supplication for the same. That is, Hopton effaces much of the ornamentation of the original:

> O Love of that diuine power; the Holy communication of the Omnipotent *Father*, and of the most blessed *Sonne*, O thou Omnipotent *Holy Ghost*, the most sweete comforter of the afflicted; slip thou downe euen very now, by thy puissant virtue, into the most seerers [serious] corners of my hart, and by the splendor of thy cleere light, illuminate, (o thou deere dweller in our sowles) these darke retreyts of our neglected habitations; and by thy visitation, and by the abundance of thy dewe from heaven, make my sowle growe fruitful, which by reason of so lóge [low] a drought, is all deformed and | decayed. Wound thou the most retyred parts of this inward man, with the darts of thy loue; and inflame, and pearce the very marrow of my dull hart, with those heathfull fires of thine. And by the flame of thy holy feruour, illuminate thou and feed the very interior, both of my whole body and minde.
>
> Giue me once *to drinke of the torrent of thy delights*: that now I may noe more haue a minde, so much as once to taste, of the pestiferous sweetnesse of worldly things.[35]

Hopton's adaptation of the Augustinian source intensifies the visceral, devotional power of the text. Hopton's version is notably shorter, and in addition to updating the presentation of spelling, punctuation, and paragraphs, Hopton removes much of the excess vocabulary as a means to accentuate the devotional meanings of the text:

> O Love of the Divine Power, the holy Communication of the Omnipotent Lord and Father, and of the most blessed Son, come down even now I beseech thee by thy powerful Virtue into my Soul, and get into all the corners of my heart, and by they splendor clearly illuminate all the darkness thereof.

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[34] St. Augustine, *The Meditations, Soliloquia, and Manuall of the Glorious Doctour S. Augustine* (Trans.), pp. 36 – 38; Wade, *Thomas* Traherne, p. 133 ; Wade further suggests Hopton derives 'Thanksgivings for all Persons and Times' (pp. 33 – 42) found in the first section of Daily Devotions from Augustine, p. 133.

[35] St. Augustine, *The Meditations, Soliloquia, and Manuall of the Glorious Doctour S. Augustine* (Trans.), p. 36 – 37.

> Let thy gracious Visitation and abundant dew make my Soul fruitful in all good works, pierce the most retired parts of mine inward man, with the keen piercing darts of thy love, enflame me with the holy fires, feed me with delicious Viands, replenish me with thy Coelestial Graces. Give me so to drink of the torrents of thy delights, that I may have no taste of vain or sinful pleasures. (p. 55).

As in the pattern of 'Confession of Sin, out of Bishop Andrewes' Hopton removes the elaborate vocabulary in favour of literal and accessible description. Thus 'puissant virtue' and 'neglected habitations' become 'powerful Virtue' and 'darkness thereof'. Likewise, Hopton effaces the metaphorical synonyms for the Holy Ghost's presence: 'sweete comforter' and 'deere dweller'. Similarly, 'the pestiferous sweetnesse of worldly things', a metaphor for earthly vanities, is simplified, and clarified to 'vain or sinful pleasures', and it is apparent Hopton presents material devoid of ornamentation such that it can be readily digested. Hopton's reader can readily apply a personal vanity or sin to her text. Nevertheless, sympathetic to the authority and structure of the original, Hopton retains the opening address 'O Love of the Divine Power'. As a consequence of her adaptations, Hopton's rendition places greater stress on direct and concrete invocations addressed to God, and the desire to be filled by the Holy Ghost. Thus, the original rather cumbersome invocation to be filled by the Holy Spirit 'by the flame of thy holy feruour, illuminate thou and feed the very interior, both of my whole body and minde' is rendered more directly by Hopton in the form of an imperative: 'get into all the corners of my heart, and by thy splendor clearly illuminate all the darkness therefof'. Hopton nevertheless retains the note of praise to God in 'thy splendor'. The description of the scope of the speaker's body and mind is elided in favour of the Divine action of the Holy Ghost upon the speaker. Likewise, Hopton removes much of the description of the speaker's soul '[which] is all deformed'. In so doing, she ensures that the remaining text has stronger emphasis on the Divine acts of grace demonstrated in a further imperative: 'pierce the most retired parts of mine inward man, with the keen piercing darts of thy love'. Hopton's repetition of 'pierce', also a feature of 'Prayers for the Ninth Hour', above, underscores the visceral nature of the Divine

act upon the body of the Christian and her stress on the devotional force of the text over the personality of the author as expressed in the Augustinian metaphors.

Nevertheless, Hopton diverges from Augustine, and, in like manner to the previous examples above, Hopton appends her own voice to Augustine's prayer in the form of a list after the manner of that found in her 'Devotions and Meditations to be used as we go to Church'. Hopton's list illustrates her integration of meditative practices into wider devotional practices. The large number of personal pronouns found in this prayer suggest its rehearsal by the reader as a means to take to heart its message of fear, love, and devotion:

> And that thou mayst abide with me, I do again beg of thee, the fear of the Lord; because this fear is,
> Beautified by Wisdom,
> Informed by Understanding,
> Directed by Counsel,
> Strengthened by courage,
> And crowned with Piety |
> As this fear advanceth our knowledg, so our knowledg brings us to this fear.
> Therefore O thou only spirit of Wisdom, give me this knowledg, that I may always have this fear.
> Such a fear as may make me wise unto Salvation.
> Give me wisdom to understand thy Word.
> Open mine eyes to see the wondrous things of thy Law.
> Enlighten my Understanding, to find out the hidden and glorious treasures thereof.
> Fill me with the love of it,
> With all delight in it,
> Inspire me to meditate humbly of it.
> Make me in every reading or hearing of it, to profit by it; and in all things to be obedient to it. *Amen* (pp. 56 – 57).

Hopton's supplication 'abide in me for ever' unites her voice with the supplication of Augustine's prayer to be inhabited by the Holy Ghost which precedes it. Hopton's list describes the faculties acted upon in fear and devotion in ascending order from 'Wisdom' to 'crowned with Piety'. Next, Hopton expands on her list of faculties. Scripture ('thy Word') and meditation ('Inspire me to meditate') are described as integral practices in the attainment of 'knowledge' of God's 'Salvation'. This emphasis on scripture and salvation are distinctly Protestant. In the final line I quote Hopton's

supplication for obedience and profit in 'reading and hearing' unites scriptural and textual forms of devotion with liturgical worship. Thus, similarly to the examples above, Hopton adapts 'Holy Ghost' in support of meditation and wider devotional practices and locates this as a supplement to liturgical worship. In a final prayer under 'Holy Ghost' Hopton supplicates for knowledge and re-emphasises parallels between meditation and wider devotional practice including the imitation of Christ (pp. 57 – 59). This prayer stresses the significance of Christ's Passion as an inspiration for meditation, as in the example of 'An Hymn':

> Dearest Lord and most blessed Saviour, give me I beseech thee such grace in meditating, such divine light | in understanding thy sacred sufferings in thy passion for me' (pp. 57 – 58).

Hopton concludes this prayer with a list of Christian virtues and graces, which I quote here for comparison in the following reading of Traherne's prayer:

> Give me, O Lord, I beseech thee, thy Obedience, thy Humility, thy Meekness, thy Purity, thy Wisdom, thy Silence, | thy Contentedness, thy Sweetness, thy Mildness, thy Mercy, thy Pity, thy Fortitude and Courage, thy Constancy and Perseverance, thy Righteousness to cover me, and all thy Merits to save me. (pp. 58 – 59).

Hopton's list is notable for its asyndeton and for the repetition of the possessive pronoun 'thy' which stress her supplication and submission before God. Thus, in her adaptation of the Augustinian source Hopton abbreviates and removes ornamentation from her source material, opens out the text to a wider, more general readership, and appends her own notably Protestant voice and an impetus to meditate.

As an introduction to Traherne's more loquacious and digressive voice, his version of Augustine, when read as a foil to Hopton's, further exemplifies her brevity and illustrates the distinction between their literary styles. I argue against Wade and other critics that this distinction is sufficient to ascribe Hopton's independence from Traherne, and I question the extent or existence of their perceived collaboration. Traherne's prayer is longer than Augustine or Hopton's and it largely

comprises extensive praise of the mercies of the Holy Ghost: 'When we rebelled Thou O H Spirit, didst Descend to Create Grace in our Hearts, and Thou bringest us freely into the Kingdom of Glory'[36]. Whereas, as demonstrated above, the Augustinian original and Hopton's prayers are supplicatory. Nevertheless, the closing section of Traherne's prayer bears some likeness to Hopton's second, original, prayer 'Dearest Lord and most blessed Saviour' appended to the end of her adaptation of Augustine (pp. 57 – 59). Traherne supplicates a list of graces and his final paragraph echoes the Augustinian supplication to be inhabited by the flames of the Holy Ghost:

> O H. Spirit, who didst this Day Descend in the Shape of a Dov, Giv me the Properties of a Dov : Mildness, Meekness, Innocence, Purity, Chastity, Constancy, yea Diligence and Swiftness; that laying aside all |Bitterness; I may receiv the Engrafted Word with Meeknes, which is able to save our Souls.
>
> […]
>
> O Divine fire burn Continualy in the Hearts of the faithfull: Consecrat all our Spiritual Sacrifices: be a fire in my Heart and Tongue, that I may be fervent in Meditations, and Zealous in thy Truth. Purge out the Dross of my Corruptions, Direct me in all the Affairs of this Life, Strengthen me in all Assaults, Deliver me from all Sins, Seal all thy Promises to me, This Day by thy Grace, and by the H. Sacrament. O thou that bearest the Privy Seal of God, make me Partaker of all thy Joys in Eternal Glory. Amen.[37]

Traherne describes the Holy Ghost using the metaphor of the Lord Privy Seal, that is, Traherne's employer Orlando Bridgeman (1606 – 1674), and this context suggests composition late in Traherne's life, in Teddington, West London, where Traherne was employed as chaplain to the Bridgeman family in London, far from Hopton in Herefordshire.[38] In the final paragraph, Traherne's prayer includes supplications for the gifts of the Holy Ghost. However, Traherne does not share the visceral wounding metaphors of Augustine and Hopton. In their place, Traherne's verbs ask the Holy Ghost to purge, direct, strengthen and deliver. Wade finds compelling parallels between two

[36] Traherne, 'The Church's Year-Book', in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. IV (of 8)(Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2009), pp. 1 – 311 (p. 148).
[37] Ibid, pp. 148 – 149.
[38] Julia J. Smith, 'Traherne, Thomas (c.1637 – 1674)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2010), available online at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/38074> [accessed 18 August 2022].

paragraphs found across Traherne's pages twenty-five and twenty six and finds parallels between Hopton's 'A Paraphrase Upon the Objective Hymn of Praise' (pp. 24 – 32) and Traherne's 'a Thanksgiving for the Glory of God's Work'.[39] However, the direction of influence is inconclusive, and it may be, as in the example of Augustine, that the two writers shared a source independently of each other. Moreover, Hopton's adaptation of her sources demonstrates intentions independent from those of Traherne, and her engagement with a wide variety of devotional sources across the confessional divide at times coincides with Traherne, and at times do not. Thus, whilst it is possible that Hopton and Traherne collaborated by some means it is evident that Hopton adapted and presented work independently of Traherne.

Conclusion

Successive readings of Susanna Hopton, beginning with George Hickes' publication, have misappropriated her textual style of effacement as a means to co-opt contemporary, louder, male voices. In part, this chapter is indebted to these readings of Hopton's collation, adaptation, borrowing, and possible collusion or collaboration, and it is difficult to move away from these debates without first acknowledging their contribution to our understanding of Hopton. Nevertheless, by rehabilitating effacement and adaptation as style choices integral to meditative writing, where the author presents the text for the reader's use and assessment, and recedes in favour of the text's functionality, this chapter has shown Hopton's great skill, selectivity, and sensitivity as a writer. In her *Daily Devotions* Hopton provides ready rhetorical, scriptural, and liturgical frameworks for meditation. Her authorial voice is notably characterless. Textual authority is derived in part from the textual sources, most prominently scripture, and in part from the imagined community of readers and overseers who adopt the text. Moreover, Hopton is exceptionally faithful and sensitive to the authority of her sources, though not always explicit, and to the authority of the

[39] Thomas *Traherne, A Serious and Pathetical Contemplation of the Mercies of* God, in Thomas Traherne, *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. IV (of 8)(Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2009), pp. 349 – 360; Wade, *Thomas* Traherne, pp. 134 – 135.

authorised scripture of her chosen Church of England where much of her writing is adapted from the King James Version of the Psalms. These habits of depersonalisation and adherence to authority are exemplified in her later *Devotions in the ancient Way of Offices* (1701) which she transcribed from a Roman Catholic source, and, I suggest, in her *Hexameron* (1717) and *Meditations and Devotions Upon the Life of Christ* (1717) which exemplify a deep understanding of the scriptural sources and great humility and modesty as a textual agent. The scope of this thesis prohibits further exploration of these texts. Critics have proposed Thomas Traherne as Hopton's co-writer or as the identity behind Hopton's authorial persona. Throughout this chapter, Traherne has served not as a replacement for Hopton but as a ready comparison to illustrate the distinctiveness of two writers who wrote for very different contexts – and only potentially for each other. Studied in light of Hopton's life as a highly devout Christian writing for similarly devout readers seeking a closer relationship between church and home, and a reclamation of lost, Primitive piety, *Daily Devotions* underscores habits of piety, effacement, and rigour, and the pre-eminence of scriptural and Divine authority. Moreover, meditation, prayer, devotion, and scriptural reading are integrated activities which are inspired directly from the textual source.

Chapter Five: Recontextualisation in Thomas Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations* and his Works

This chapter examines the meditative writing of Thomas Traherne (c. 1643 – 1674), a conforming cleric and later chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Lord Privy Seal (c. 1669 – 1672).[1] Traherne's larger body of writing across manuscript and print affords opportunities to examine the relationships between his works and the manner in which Traherne composed, refined, and adapted meditative writing between texts. The chapter argues that meditation underpinned much of Traherne's devotional and secular works – for himself and for distinct readerships – and that Traherne adapted and iterated meditation in a variety of verse and prose forms for these readerships. It asserts that meditation was a pervasive system of thought rather than a ritualised form of devotional exercise. In particular, Traherne's habit of reproducing poems in full or in part in two or more documents invites investigation into how and why he recontextualised these verses and investigation into the rhetorical value added to the text by recontextualisation. Therefore, in light of the affordances of Traherne's multiple texts and distinct textual habits, the chapter addresses two questions which have been explored throughout the thesis. Firstly, the chapter examines Traherne's meditative model and argues that he revisits, blends, and reframes existing material across multiple texts. Secondly, the chapter examines Traherne's fragmentation and recontextualisation of poems and evaluates the values and functions Traherne, and Traherne scholars, have attributed to meditative verse according to its context.

The chapter focusses on four texts which have previously been studied as a meditative context for each other in only a cursory manner. These are: Traherne's collection of original poems and commonplace book containing extracts from a variety of authors, Bodleian MS. Eng. poet. c. 42,

[1] Julia J. Smith, 'Traherne, Thomas (c.1637–1674)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (2010), available online at <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/38074> [accessed 18 August 2022]. David Reid suggests Traherne is a Vicar of Bray given the ease with which Traherne conformed to the 1662 Act of Conformity: David Reid, *The Metaphysical Poets* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 234; Dodd chooses 'Anglican Divine': Elizabeth Dodd, *Boundless Innocence in Thomas Traherne's Poetic Theology* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), p. 1.

The Poems of Thomas Traherne (also known as *Ledbury* Manuscript, *Dobell Manuscript*, or, more recently *Commonplace Book,* where verse and prose are discussed together: henceforth *Commonplace*); his series of over four hundred meditations and devotions in verse and prose, Bodleian MS. Eng. th. e. 50 *Centuries of Meditations* (c. 1660 – 1674, henceforth *Centuries*); the similar, more recently discovered, and nominally private, Osborn MS b. 308 *Select Meditations* (c. 1658 – 1665); and *Christian Ethicks* (1675) an extensive thesis on Christian virtue entered in the Stationer's Register in the months before Traherne's death.[2] Evidence within these texts suggests Traherne worked across several manuscripts at once and that this multi-text process took place in an intense four-year period at the end of his life.

At the centre of the four texts selected, the chapter assesses Traherne's meditative model in *Centuries* and examines the iteration of meditative material in to this text from *Select* Meditations, and out of *Centuris* to *Commonplace, Poems of Felicity*, and *Christian Ethicks*.[3] *Centuries* is a large text subdivided into four centuries of one hundred meditations with some residue. The main thrust of the chapter is carried through sections which focus on individual centuries. In keeping with the previous chapters, the first half of the chapter examines Traherne's meditative model. Thus, the chapter begins by defining the roles and relationships of the authorial personae and implied reader with particular emphasis on the first and fourth centuries in which Traherne uses pronouns

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[2] Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS.Eng.poet.c.42 and MS.Eng.th.e.50; New Haven, Beinecke Library, Osborn MS b. 308; Thomas Traherne, *Christian Ethicks, or, Divine Morality Opening the Way to Blessedness* (London: Jonathan Edwin, 1675). Unless otherwise stated this chapter refers to the following editions: Thomas Traherne, 'Poems from the Dobell Folio', in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol VI. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2014), pp. 1 – 77; Thomas Traherne, *Centuries of Meditations,* in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol V. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2013), pp. 1 – 249; Thomas Traherne, *Select Meditations*, in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol V. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2013), pp. 251 – 467; Thomas Traherne, *The Church's Year-Book*, in The Works of Thomas Traherne Works, Vol. IV. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2009), pp. 1 – 311. Thomas Traherne, *Christian Ethicks*, ed. by Carol L. Marks Sichernan and George Robert Guffey (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968). Citations are given in parentheses except where this would cause confusion. I use Ross' method of referencing individual meditations in *Centuries* and *Select* (eg: CM I. 1 or SM I.1) which is now recognisable in Traherne studies. The prose section of Bodleian MS.Eng.poet.c.42 also known as 'Traherne's Commonplace Book' is expected to be published in the eighth volume in Ross' DS. Brewer series and is otherwise unavailable in print. *Christian Ethicks* was entered into the Stationer's Register by Thomas Traherne just prior to his death in 1674 making it, with *The Roman Forgeries* (London: Jonathan Edwin, 1673), one of only two texts to reach publication during Traherne's lifetime.

[3] London: British Library, BL, MS. Burney 392 *Poems of Felicity, Containing Divine Reflections on the Native Objects of an Infant-Ey*. Unless otherwise stated this chapter refers to the following edition: Thomas Traherne, *Poems of Felicity*, in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol VI. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2014), pp. 79 – 194.

irregularly. Next the chapter examines the structure of *Centuries* and, building on earlier studies, argues that Traherne likely meditated during intense extended periods and that this is reflected in the digressive and repetitive substructure of *Centuries*. The second half of the chapter locates *Centuries* and its precursor, *Select Meditations*, more broadly in Traherne's works. Focusing on the third century of *Centuries*, and expanding on extensive critical attention on this century, the final sections form case studies of two poems which occur in full or in part in *Centuries* and one or more of Traherne's texts.

Texts and Contexts

The chapter unites readings of Traherne as both a devotional writer and a wide-ranging intellectual by locating meditation as the impetus and sustenance of his later work. Since the discovery and publication of Traherne's poems which appear in his *Commonplace* and the simultaneous discovery and publication of *Centuries*, poetry, meditation, and spirituality have been central themes in the categorisation and interpretation of Traherne's works. Nevertheless, scholarship on these texts has tended to be piecemeal and it has at times viewed Traherne anachronistically. In her *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry for Thomas Traherne (c.1636 – 1674), Julia J. Smith points to the considerable weight of scholarly work on Traherne which has viewed his work as either eccentric, metaphysical, or intellectually and thematically compartmentalised, in part owing to the intermittence by which Traherne's corpus has been discovered and attributed up to as recently as 1997[4]:

[4] Washington DC, Folger MS. Va.70 'The Ceremonial Law', discovered 1997, see: Julia J. Smith, 'The Ceremonial Law: A New Work', *PN Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2, (1998), p. 22.
Metaphysical studies: David Reid, *The Metaphysical Poets*; AL. Clements, *The Mystical Poetry of Thomas Traherne* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); David Scott, *Sacred Tongues: The Golden Age of Spiritual Writing* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2001) *John Donne and the Metaphysical Poets*, ed. by Harold Bloom (New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2008); *Metaphysical Poetry*, ed. by Collin Burrows (London: Penguin Books, 2006); Robert Ellrodt, *Seven Metaphysical Poets: A Structural Study of the Unchanging Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Frances Austin, *The Language of the Metaphysical Poets* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992); Donald Mackenzie, *The Metaphysical Poets* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1990); *The Metaphysical Poets: A Casebook*, ed. by Gerald Hammond (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1974); *The Metaphysical Poets*, ed. by Margaret Willy (London: Edward Arnold, 1971); *The Metaphysical Poets: Key Essays on Metaphysical Poetry and the Major Metaphysical Poets*, ed. by Frank Kermode (New York: Fawcett World Library, 1969); The *Metaphysical Poets*, ed. by Helen Gardner (London: Oxford University Press, 1961);

> Traherne was seen for much of the twentieth century primarily as a poet, rather than as a prose writer, and as a radiant and sometimes facile mystic who 'was unaffected by the domination of either king or protector' [Q, Iredale, *Thomas Traherne*, (1935), p. 2]. A tendency to associate his work with that of the earlier metaphysical poets seemed further to distance it from the concerns of the Restoration period in which he actually wrote.[5]

Dodd and Gormon's collection *Thomas Traherne and Seventeenth Century Thought* (2017) discusses selections from his work in light of seventeenth century science, philosophy, and religio-politics.[6] This work builds on earlier criticism particularly by Louis L. Martz in *The Poetry of Meditation* (1954), and Barbara Keifer Lewalski in *Protestant Poetics and The Seventeenth-Century English Lyric* (1979), which provides readings of the rhetoric of meditation in Traherne's poetry found in *Commonplace* and *Poems of Felicity* and which interpret these poems as literary products.[7] But there is still considerable work to be done connecting intellectual, literary, and meditative readings of Traherne's corpus through the lens of textuality.

Traherne's corpus has resisted accurate dating due to its largely manuscript status, Traherne's habit of omitting accurate dates, and sparse references to topical events in his writing. Nevertheless, there is now a sizeable quantity of scholarship which argues that much of Traherne's

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Helen C. White, *The Metaphysical Poets: A Study In Religious Experience* (New York: Macmillan, 1936); James Blair Leishman, *The Metaphysical Poets: Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, Traherne* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934).
Religio-Political studies: Boyd M. Berry, 'Two Restoration Responses to the Roman Church', in *Ben Jonson Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (2000), pp. 225 – 246; Julia J. Smith, *Attitudes Towards Conformity and Non Conformity in Thomas Traherne* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Denise Inge, 'On Becoming Anglican: Emerging Anglican Thought in the Works of Thomas Traherne', in *Journal of Anglican Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, (2015), pp. 8 – 28; William Wilt, 'Creation and Cross in the Anglican Spirituality of Thomas Traherne', in *Pro Ecclesia*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (2016), pp. 413 – 438; RV. Young, *Doctrine and Devotion in Seventeenth Century Poetry* (Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2000).
Philosophical studies: Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London: Macmillan, 1914); Paul Cefalu, 'Thomistic Metaphysics and Ethics in the Poetry and Prose of Thomas Traherne', in *Literature and* Theology, Vol. 16, No. 3 (September, 2002), pp. 248 – 269; Malcolm M. Day, 'Traherne and the Doctrine of Pre-existence', in *Philology*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (January, 1968), pp. 81 – 97; Rosalie L. Colie, 'Thomas Traherne and the Infinite: The Ethical Compromise', in *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No.1 (1957), p.69 – 82.

[5] Julia J. Smith, 'Traherne, Thomas (c.1637-1674)'.

[6] *Thomas Traherne and Seventeenth-Century Thought*, ed. by Elizabeth S. Dodd and Cassandra Gormon (Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2016). One of the first studies to move away from Traherne's poetry to his intellectual sphere can be found in the 'General Introduction' to Traherne, *Christian Ethicks*, ed. Carol L. Marks Schiernan and George Robert Guffey (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968) pp. xi – l. This examines Traherne's philosophical background and his reliance on an Aristotelian framework to describe Neo-Platonic thought concluding that, at least in *Christian Ethicks*, Traherne's thought is more prosaic than it might at first appear.

[7] Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, revised edn. (London: Yale University Press, 1962; Louis L. Martz, *The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton* (London: Yale University Press, 1964); Barbara Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979). See also: AL Clements, *The Mystical Poetry of Thomas Traherne*, p 17; HM. Margoliuth, 'Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *Centuries, Poems, and Thanksgivings*, ed. by HM Margoliuth, Vol. I (of 2)(Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. ix – xli (p. xiii).

works including *Centuries, The Roman Forgeries* (1672), *Christian Ethicks* (1675), *Commonplace*, *Commentaries of Heaven,* and *The Kingdom of God* were written later in Traherne's life than was previously assumed.[8] Traherne's later period c. 1669 – 1674 encompasses his role as private chaplain to Orlando Bridgeman (1606 –1674), Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal (1667 – 1672), and Traherne's association with Bridgeman's Neo-Platonist associates at Teddington. This locates the composition of Traherne's major work in a fertile community of thinkers and suggests an intensity of writing across several texts at once and the likelihood that Traherne adapted his writing across differing contexts – as demonstrated in the recontextualisation of verse fragments across his corpus.[9]

The Implied Reader and the Authorial Persona of *Centuries*

In his *Inducements to Retirednes*, as described in my introduction chapter, Traherne defines meditation as an intensive learning process conducted over a long period of time and as a skill carried throughout life much like professional skills.[10] Traherne kept a number of manuscripts during his time at university, *Early Notebook* and *Ficino Notebook*, and alongside his professional career as a cleric, *Select Meditations*, *Centuries* and *The Church's Year-Book*, in which he variously composed meditations, devotions and readings drawn from his philosophical studies, clerical practice, and observations. The largest and most well-known of these, *Centuries*, offers insight into Traherne's meditative practice. Here, as he does in *Inducements to Retirednes*, Traherne outlines meditation as a learning process conducted over a long period of time. Throughout *Centuries* Traherne notes the biographical distance between an initial moment of observation or confusion and later recollection and meditation and the maturation of a process of coming to understanding – such as the childhood recollections he lists in the third century (CM III. 1 – 16, pp. 93 – 107). For instance, following a series

[8] NI. Matar, 'The Political Views of Thomas Traherne', in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 57, No. 3, (Summer 1994), pp. 241 – 245 (p. 253).
[9] Elizabeth S. Dodd, *Boundless Innocence in Thomas Traherne's Poetic Theology* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), p. 5.
[10] London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS.1360. Unless otherwise stated this chapter refers to the following edition: Thomas Traherne, *Inducements to Retirednes*, in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol I. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2005), pp. 3 – 43 (p. 12).

of meditations on infinity and moderation – Traherne frequently meditates on abstract concepts – Traherne describes the intermittence of his meditative inspiration:

> These Liquid Clear Satisfactions, were the Emanations of the Highest Reason, but not atchieved till a long time afterwards. In the mean time I was som times tho seldom visited and inspired with New and more vigorous Desires after that Bliss which Nature Whispered and Suggested to me. (CM III. 22, p. 103).

Traherne models meditation as habitual, enduring, and iterative, and the inspiration for meditation as sporadic and fleeting. In this model, frequent meditation trains the mind to be open to inspiration. Like Austen and Delaval, Traherne frequently revisits and augments earlier meditations; however, Traherne's *Centuries* were apparently composed for a nominated reader. Though seemingly inspired or 'Whispered' by creation, therefore, Traherne composes his meditations for more than his own consumption, and the nature of the extant text has more in common with Flavel's didactic *Navigation Spiritualized* – although the authorial persona of *Centuries* is more candid and intimate and the writing is derived from personal experience. The following section examines Traherne's model of meditation and the intimate triad of writer, reader, and text in *Centuries* beginning here with a brief explanation of the composition of this text.

Centuries is an autograph manuscript with extensive emendations, deletions, and occasional excisions which suggest it is a text in process.[11] This process is both exposed and concealed by the structure of the text in favour of presenting a coherent product for the reader at the expense of the writer's editorial labour. The text is composed of four-hundred and ten meditations, prayers, poems, verse fragments, psalm paraphrases, and devotions.[12] As its title implies, *Centuries* is organised into centuries of one-hundred items.[13] As an organising principle the century is nominally composed of hundreds. Variations in number are not of themselves indicative of the completion or incompletion

[11] Ross, 'Introduction' (2009), p. xxi.
[12] Margoliuth notes that whilst many of the entries can be considered meditations many cannot: Margoliuth, 'Introduction', p. x.
[13] On Dobell's origination of the title *Centuries of Meditations*, see: Margoliuth, 'Introduction', pp. x – xi.

of the text rather the numerical accumulation of separate parts is incidental or writers select numerically significant quantities.[14] The formality of the century implies its cohesion as a serial scheme. Nevertheless, its rigidity makes it difficult for Traherne to return later to make emendations, as in the manner of Austen, and this is apparent in the repetitiveness and digression of Traherne's style as he vacillates between topics. KW. Salter observes: '[Traherne] gives no dates nor does he write in any consistently chronological order of experience'.[15] That is, Traherne records his meditations consecutively as they occur or reoccur or as they fit into a didactic narrative on his subject of recovered innocence. Thus, whilst overtly indicating the lengthiness of his meditative process – as in the quotation above – Traherne simultaneously conceals the chronology of his meditative practice. The effect is a stress on the textual and epistemological product of Traherne's meditation for a reader where Austen and Delaval's texts allow the writer variously to recollect, augment, or assess the iterations of their texts. This seeming cohesiveness of *Centuries* has been further enhanced by multiple publications of the text which efface its messiness as evidence of a textual process.

In the absence of extensive prefatory texts, Traherne frames the reader and functions of *Centuries* in the initial textual meditations. The ambiguous manner in which Traherne's reader is defined has resulted in several propositions as to her identity. Real or imagined, Traherne's implied reader is strongly, if intermittently, accommodated in the text. In the opening meditations and a

[14] Irénée Hausherr SJ., 'Centuries', in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, ed. by Marcel Viller et al, Vol. 2 (of 2)(Paris: Beauchesne, 1953), pp. 416 – 418; John Eudes Bamberger "Introduction" in Evagrius Ponticus, *The Praktikos & Chapters on Prayer*, trans. by John Eudes Bamberger (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1981), pp. xix – lxx (p. lxix); Ross 'Introduction' (2003), p. xiii. Tanya Zhelezcheva argues that all of Traherne's works including *Centuries* and *Select Meditations* are unfinished in what she describes as the renaissance aesthetic of the 'non-finito' reflecting the imperfection of humanity. Nevertheless her readings of *Centuries* and *Select Meditations* do not account for the missing first section of *Select Meditations*, which is lost rather than absent by design, or the numerous emendations in both texts which point to their editorial status and Traherne's continued use of his manuscripts long after the initial period of composition, see: Tanya Zhelezcheva, 'The Genre of the Non-Finito: Thomas Traherne's Way of Centrifugal Writing', in *Literature and Theology*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (September, 2016), pp. 309 – 329 (p. 310). Francis Quarles, *Enchiridion: Containing Institutions Divine, Contemplative, Practical, Ethical: Moral, Oeconomical, Political* (London : A. Mosely, 1640) contains four-hundred aphorisms. The relationship between centuries as a form and centuries as a quantity of one hundred is not strict. Some examples do not fall into neat units of a hundred. *De Oratione Caputula* or *Chapters on Prayer*, Evagrius Ponticus 'The Solitary' (345 – 399), is composed of one-hundred and fifty-three numbered sentences symbolising the miraculous catch of the apostles (John 21:11).
[15] KW. Salter, *Thomas Traherne: Mystic and Poet* (London: Edward Arnold, 1964), p. 42.

single prefatory poem 'Presentation Quatrain' Traherne frames *Centuries* as a guide to a Divine life derived from meditation. The 'Presentation Quatrain', the first item of text in the manuscript, which occurs on 2^r, and the initial seven prose entries, which begin on 5^r, go some way to defining the relationships and functions in the triad of writer, reader, and text of *Centuries* (p. 6)[16]:

> This book unto the friend of my best friend
> As of the Wisest Love a Mark I send
> That she may write my Makers prais therin
> And make her self therby a Cherubin (ll. 1 – 4).

The 'Presentation Quatrain' nominates an implied, specific, though ambiguously anonymous female reader. Several critics have speculated that the reader is Susanna Hopton; however, there is no conclusive evidence for this and other recipients have been proposed.[17] Moreover, the reader is only gendered in the instance of the 'Presentation Quatrain' being addressed 'you' and 'we' intermittently and intimately throughout: 'Hath not His Blood united you and me, Cannot we see and Lov and Enjoy each other at 100 miles Distance?' (CM I. 80, p. 39).[18] Critics have used the metaphor of '100 miles' here to suggest Traherne addresses Hopton in Hereford from London; nevertheless, the metaphor is illustrative of Christ's communion suffusing the world.[19] Moreover, in the manuscript CM I. 80 has been entirely crossed through suggesting deletion and the irrelevance

[16] Margoliuth gives the quatrain its accepted name: Margoliuth, 'Notes on the Centuries', in Thomas Traherne, *Centuries, Poems and Thanksgivings*, ed. by HM. Margoliuth, Vol. 1 (of 2)(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 233 – 297 (p. 234).
[17] Edmund J Newey, 'God Made man Greater When He Made Him Less: Traherne's Iconic Child', in Literature and Theology, Vol. 24, No. 3 (2010), pp. 227 – 241 (p. 230); Raymond-Jean Frontain, 'Turning the World: Traherne, Psalms, and Praise', in *Re-Reading Thomas Traherne: A Collection of New Critical Essays*, ed. by Jacob Blevins (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2007), pp. 93 – 113 (p. 107); KW. Salter, *Thomas Traherne: Mystic and Poet*, p. 22; Margoliuth, 'Introduction', p. x; Arthur F. Marotti, Manuscript, Print, and the Social History of the Lyric', in *The Cambridge Companion to English Poetry: Donne To Marvell*, ed. by Thomas N. Corns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 52 – 79 (p. 56); Anne Ridler suggests Hopton or someone in Traherne's circle: Anne Ridler, 'Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *Poems, Centuries and Three Thanksgivings,* ed. by Anne Ridler (London: Oxford University Press, 1966) pp. xi – xviii (p. xii); Harold Love points to Sir Orlando Bridgeman as the patron of Traherne' writing more broadly: Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 60.
[18] The forty-one instances of female possessive pronouns and nineteen instances of female second person pronouns I find in the body of *Centuries* (excluding 'Presentation Quatrain') each refer to women in Biblical or figurative senses. Joan Webber has examined Traherne's use of pronouns and capitalisation of pronouns in *Centuries* as a means for Traherne to craft distinct personae of himself. Though, by her own admission, she points to the often arbitrary distinction between upper and lower case letters in Traherne's hand: Joan Webber, '"I and Thou" in the Prose of Thomas Traherne', in *Papers on Language and Literature*, Vol. 2, No. 3, (Summer, 1966), pp. 258 – 264 (pp. 259 – 260).
[19] Ridler, 'Introduction', p. xvi.

of its content. In addition, the reader is addressed as 'My Excellent friend' as in 'Presentation Quatrain' where 'the friend of my best friend' (ln. 1) most likely refers to God as the interconnecting 'best friend' though some critics have read this more ambiguously. Elsewhere in the manuscript there is a suggestion of a personal relationship between writer and implied reader though this is an exception: 'those fashions and Tinsild vanities, which you and I despised ere while' (CM. III. 31, p. 109).[20] The identity of the implied reader is unclear and may have shifted over time. Nevertheless, the stylistic effect of the authorial intimacy suggests a relationship with the ambiguous elect reader distinct from the corrupt.

In light of its ambiguity, Ross suggests that the quatrain may have been added later, and 'perfunctorily' during preparation for publication.[21] However, a closer inspection of the poem implies a more intimate and reciprocal relationship with the reader than print publication allows. Ross's suggestion applies as easily to manuscript transmission or gifting which Margoliuth suggests is implied in the 'Presentation Quatrain'. Moreover, in examination of the manuscript, 'Mark', which implies gifting, is substituted for the earlier 'As of the <true Token>' which reflects the haste in which the poem was written.[22] Stanley Stewart suggests the 'Presentation Quatrain' and the blank pages at the end of the manuscript are the: 'defining act of the speaker's character. In creating his "word" he creates the opening for "her" response ("I send / That she may write"). His love for the friend emerges as thematic and structural evidence of a will to accept – as his – her freedom to create *Him* anew, and by this act, to create herself'.[23] There is, however, no evidence that this collaborative recreation occurred, and Ross finds only Traherne's hand throughout *Centuries.*[24] Neither is there evidence that the text was read by anyone other than Traherne during his lifetime, and the provenance of the text is largely uncertain. Nevertheless, Stewart's reading points to the gendering,

[20] Raymond-Jean Frontain, 'Traherne, Psalms, and Praise', p. 106; Ridler, 'Introduction', p. xvi.
[21] Ross, 'Introduction' (2013), p. xxv.
[22] Jan Ross, 'Textual Emendations and Notes', in *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol V. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2013), pp. 192 – 249 and 390 – 431 (p. 192).
[23] Stanley Stewart, 'Thomas Traherne' in *Seventeenth Century British Nondramatic Writers,* Third Series, ed. by. M Thomas Hester, Dictionary of Literary Biography*,* No. 131, (Detroit: Gale, 1993), pp. 272 – 290 (p. 278).
[24] Ross, 'Introduction (2013), p. xxv.

intimacy, ambiguity, and perfunctoriness of the relationship between author and reader in *Centuries* and the 'Presentation Quatrain' which hang on the poetic licence with which write, friend, and mark are interpreted. Moreover, the characterisation of this relationship is subtly though significantly different in the prose which follows the poem, and it seems probable that Traherne's concept of his implied reader was inconsistent and tied in with some form of scribal transmission or exchange.

A corresponding note in CM I. 1, which likely predates 'Presentation Quatrain', further characterizes the notion of exchange and collaboration in 'Presentation Quatrain'. The note draws attention to the closeness of the relationship between author and implied reader and the imputed significance of the text:

> An Empty Book is like an Infants Soul, in which any Thing may be Written. It is Capable of all Things, but containeth Nothing. I hav a Mind to fill this with Profitable Wonders. And since Love made you put it into my Hands, I will fill it with those Truths you Love, without knowing them: and with those Things which if it be Possible, shall shew my Lov; To you, in Communicating most Enriching Truths; to Truth, in Exalting Her Beauties in such a Soul. (p. 7).

Traherne describes the empty book using the metaphor of the tabula rasa such that the manuscript symbolises the reader's soul onto which he writes. It is an intimate relationship which is emphasised by the reciprocation of first and second person pronouns which define the guiding author and the compliant reader. Significantly this meditation implies that the manuscript was first gifted to Traherne by a commissioning friend, and later returned or intended for return to the original gift giver. Like Stewart, Joan Webber points to the empty pages at the back of the manuscript and suggests that the recipient of the text was instructed to continue to 'write' (ln. 3) after the final tenth meditation of the fifth century.[25] There is, therefore, in *Centuries*, an imagined though undefined reader with whom the authorial persona identifies, and for whom the authorial

[25] Webber, 'the Prose of Thomas Traherne', p. 259.

persona provides guidance in the form of *Centuries* be it by scribal publication, print, or manuscript transmission. Though Traherne may not always have had a single person in mind, his untimely death may have hastened or altered his plans. In addition to outlining the relationship between author and reader the opening meditations describe the function of the text for the reader and, owing to the intimacy of the relationship with the reader, the function of the text for the writer.

> True Lov, as it intendeth the Greatest Gifts, intendeth also the Greatest Benefits. It contenteth not it self in Shewing Great Things unless it can make them Greatly Usefull. For Lov greatly Delighteth in seeing its object continualy seated in the Highest Happiness. Unless therfore I could advance you Higher by the uses of what I give, my Lov could not be satisfied, in Giving you the Whole World. But becaus when you Enjoy it, you are Advanced to the Throne of God, and may see his Lov; I rest well pleased in Bestowing it. It will make you to see your own Greatness, the Truth of the Scriptures, the Amiableness of Virtu, and the Beauty of Religion. It will enable you also, to contemn the World, and to over flow with Praises. (CM I. 6, p. 8).

As a means to edification, Traherne's meditations both edify himself and his reader. Like Flavel's authorial persona, Traherne's authorial persona gifts the fruit of meditative labour to the reader, and the reciprocal devotion of the reader edifies both; and like Hopton's *Daily Devotions*, Traherne's text is completed only in its perusal and acceptance by the reader. Moreover, the text is figured both as a means to compose and present meditation and as an artefact of the relationship between the writer and the reader.

In addition to a somewhat unstable imagined reader Traherne's characterisation of the authorial voice of *Centuries* also fluctuates. The instability of the authorial persona illustrates the intermittence at which Traherne wrote, his changing concept of the text, and the manner by which he collapsed his reading and sources into the authorial persona. Such irregularity is particularly apparent in the third and fourth centuries (pp. 93 – 140, 141 – 186). Critics have frequently interpreted the meditations and poems which occur in the third century, and which serve as the principal context for the two poems in these case studies, as a biographical account of Traherne's

childhood.[26] Though a number of critics have warned against reading any material in *Centuries* as biographical. Moreover, the nature of Traherne's childhood 'memories' implies a fictionalised account for rhetorical purposes.[27] Where some critics have found biographical and domestic details of Traherne's childhood in Hereford in the third century I interpret Traherne's descriptions of childhood as ambiguous and lacking personal detail. For instance, in CM III. 23. Traherne's stress is on the emotional import of the event over the specifications of location and time: 'Another time, in a Lowering and sad Evening, being alone in the field, when all things were dead and quiet, a certain Want and Horror fell upon me, beyond imagination' (p. 104). Traherne either strips out any personal detail, in like manner to Hopton, or fabricates the account for didactic purposes, in like manner to Flavel, or some combination of both these approaches. Thus, Salter observes of the biographical entries in the third century including 'The Approach': [Traherne] is including his subsequent experience in what he says; it is essentially a reflective statement. It has, that is, a reference to the time when he wrote it as well as to the events about which it was written. It is not a re-creation of an experience so much as a comment upon that experience and an interpretation of it'.[28] In the third century, therefore, Traherne's authorial persona is on the one hand candid, retrospective, and indicative of a meditative process which iterates and recovers childhood events in like manner to Delaval and on the other hand concerned with the emotional and spiritual import of the meditation over and above its personal specifics, in like manner to Flavel and Hopton.

Traherne's at times contradictory use of pronouns in the fourth century presents multiple iterations of the authorial voice and relationship with the reader. These iterations suggest the intermittence of Traherne's composition and his attempts to collapse multiple authorial voices into a smaller number of characters. Traherne's authorial persona begins the fourth century with a peculiar

[26] Raymond-Jean Frontain, 'Traherne, Psalms, and Praise', pp. 93 – 95; Warren Chernaik, 'Crossing the Red Sea: *The Ceremonial Law,* Typology, and the Imagination', *Thomas Traherne and Seventeenth Century Thought*, ed. by Elizabeth S. Dodd and Cassandra Gormon (Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2017), pp. 107 – 129.
[27] Edmund J Newey, 'Traherne's Iconic Child', pp. 227 – 241; Carol Ann Johnston, 'Heavenly Perspectives, Mirrors of Eternity: Thomas Traherne's Yearning Subject', in *Criticism*, Vol. 43. No. 4 (Fall, 2001), pp. 377 – 405 (p. 378).
[28] KW. Salter, *Thomas Traherne: Mystic and Poet*, p. 24.

reference to himself 'your friend' in the third person. As in the example of the prefatory meditations in the first century, Traherne's presentation here underscores the relationship between the writer, reader, and text:

> Having spoken so much concerning his Enterance and Progress in Felicity, I will in this Centurie speak of the Principles with which your friend Endued Himself to enjoy it! (CM IV. 1, p. 141).

The imposition of a new topic marks a rare coincidence of a structural and topical transition and describes Traherne' occasional imposition of structural authority onto the text. Ross observes emendations in this introduction in which the author is reframed as a third person character which suggests Traherne later edited the text for a more seamless presentation and this implies a return to a more intimate relationship with the implied reader. Ross' rendering of the unamended CM IV. 1 is as follows:

> Since the Author in the last centurie hath spoken so much concerning his Enterance and Progress into the Study of Felicity, and all He hath there said pertaineth only to the Contemplativ part of it I will in this Centurie supply his place and speak of the Principles with which he Endued Himself to enjoy it in the practical![29]

The transition from 'Author' to 'friend' underscores the familiarity of the relationship between the reader and the author. Moreover, the elision of practical and cognitive terms in the extant rendition, such as 'Progress', 'Contemplativ', and 'practical' refocuses the role of the reader from one of devotional labour to devotional joy, and it reemphasises the authorial stress on love and guidance described in the opening meditations of *Centuries* (CM I. 1 – 7, pp. 7 – 9). Thus, the text is reframed as the product of Traherne's meditative labour for the reader to follow. At this juncture, therefore, the authorial presence is figured as a close friend of the reader.

[29] Ross, 'Textual Emendations' (2014), p. 235.

Nevertheless, throughout the subsequent entries the third person pronoun 'he' at times refers to Traherne in the third person, as in the above reference to 'the Author', and at times refers to Traherne's imputed source where Traherne frequently elides citation or to a proverbial everyman (CM IV. 2 – 3, 10, 14 – 15, pp. 141, 145, 147 – 148). The inconsistency in Traherne's use of pronouns collapses the identity of Traherne's sources and, as in the example of Austen, stresses the authority of the text over the authority of the authors. This engenders a concept of the text as communally composed and consumed – though through the personhood of Traherne's reading. Thus, in CM IV. 20. Traherne introduces several maxims or principles using the character of an anonymous external source: 'He from whom I received these things' (p. 149). This vacillation between an external character and a third person authorial identity both draws attention to and conceals Traherne's source within his own voice. Margoliuth suggests 'the Author' and 'your friend' are a 'transparent fiction' and both refer to Traherne.[30] Ross suggests Traherne is quoting a mutual friend from whom he derives his principles of felicity. However, this person could also be a text or the model of Christ. Regardless, Traherne collapses authorial authority into textual authority as a product of meditative thought upon the Divine. Nevertheless, intentionally or not, through the third person friend Traherne inculcates a close community of meditative practitioners, real or imagined, surrounding the text in like manner to the 'several learned and holy men' who, according to the preface, oversee Hopton's *Daily Devotions*.[31]

In an intervening meditation (CM IV. 10, p. 145) the authorial voice and the fictional friend recede and their replacement with declaratives, and impersonal 'he' pronouns describe both Traherne's quotation from a source and his paraphrase of his own commentary and a quotation. These examples point to Traherne's prioritisation of textual authority over authorial authority as in the example of Austen's *Book M*:

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[30] Margoliuth, 'Notes on the Centuries', p. 284; Ross, 'Textual Emendations' (2014), p. 236.
[31] Susanna Hopton, *Daily Devotions: Consisting of Thanksgiving, Confessions, and Prayers* (London: Jonathan Edwin, 1673), in *Susanna Hopton*, ed. by Julia J. Smith, Vol. 1 (of 2)(Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. i – 164 (p. x).

> He that will not Exchange his Riches now, will not forsake them herafter. He must, but will hardly be persuaded to do it willingly. He will leav them, but not forsake them. for which caus two Dishonors cleav unto him, and if at Death, eternaly. first, he coms of the Stage unwillingly, which is very unhandsom: and secondly He prefers his Riches abov his Happiness. Riches are but Servants to Happiness, when they are Impediments they ceas to be Riches. As long as they are Conduciv to Felicity they are desirable; but when they are incompitable are Abominable. for what [end] are Riches endeavored? Why do we [desire them] but that we may be more Happy. When we see the Persuit [of riches] destructiv to Felcity, to desire them is of all things in [Nature] the most absurd and the most foolish. I ever thought that Nothing was desirable for it self but Happiness, and that whatever [els] we desire, it is of valu only in relation, and Order to it. (CM IV. 10, p. 145).

The male pronouns in the first half of the meditation refer to a neutral everyman reader. In addition, the plural address to 'we', whilst inviting a reader, figures this reader as a part of a wider community of practitioners, and this at least suggests that Traherne paraphrases these sections from a source. Nevertheless, the rhetorical questions at the midpoint and the seemingly biographical 'I' that appears in the final sentence suggest a return to the intimate author-reader address of 'Presentation Quatrain' and the opening meditations. In this meditation, Traherne seemingly blends his sources and their authorial personae. Martz, describes Traherne's similarly silent paraphrasing of Psalms taken from KJV and the *Book of Common Prayer*, in the final section of the third century beginning with the poem 'In Salem dwelt a Glorious King' and Traherne's blending of his own commentary into these paraphrases (C III. 69 – C III. 100, pp. 126 – 140).[32] In addition Denise Inge has commented on Traherne's habit of collapsing his sources into his own voice: 'Traherne had the habit of quoting freely from what he had been reading, often without citing his sources. Whole passages are lifted; sometimes altered, sometimes simply planted in the middle of his work and woven in alongside other texts and ideas. Often, in this way, his primary sources go unidentified and whole phrases that are not his own are attributed to him'.[33] Inge's reading of Traherne's use of sources suggests that,

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[32] Martz, *Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton*, pp. 95 – 96. See also: Webber, 'The Prose of Thomas Traherne', p. 261.
[33] Denise Inge, *Wanting Like a God: Desire and Freedom in Thomas Traherne* (London: SCM Press, 2009), p. 19. Inge lists Traherne's philosophical and theological sources, pp. 19 – 22.

like Austen, Traherne prioritises the spiritual import of the text over its authority, and indeed over its seamlessness in *Centuries*. Moreover, unlike Flavel, whose extensive citation directs the reader beyond his texts to a wider intertextual discourse, Traherne synthesises or, to use Edmund Calamy's metaphor, digests his sources for his reader.[34] These examples combined point to a habit of composition which is inspired both internally, by the previous meditation, and externally, by Traherne's reading and by a didactic urge to instruct. Moreover, the authorial voice is at once affectionate, guiding, disembodied, and at times silently, or near silently, channels external sources including scripture.

The Structure of *Centuries*

The author-reader relationship defined in the prefatory textual meditations of *Centuries* implies a compositional model of the text whereby *Centuries* describes a structured curriculum of Traherne's meditation, not unlike Flavel's *Navigation Spiritualized* nor unlike Loyola's prescribed topics of meditation. Nevertheless, this structure implies Traherne undertook intense periods of meditation over several sittings, similar to Delaval's meditation undertaken during Lent, and that during these periods of meditation he explored one topic until he reached a conclusion or digression or exhausted his process. Several critics have suggested Traherne followed a prescribed series of topics and Traherne's recommendation in *Inducements to Retiredness*, after the manner of Hall, suggests this curriculum would progress from Divine to earthly matters.[35] This model would imply a plan from the outset. Nevertheless, in the initial meditations, Traherne refrains from setting out a curriculum or scheme. In its place, as in the example of CM I. 1, Traherne sets out abstractly and paradoxically to describe: 'Things Strange, yet common; Incredible, yet Known: Most High, yet plain; infinitely Profitable, but not Esteemed' (CM I.3, p. 7). Moreover, Traherne refrains from chapter headings in contrast to elsewhere, such as in *Inducements to Retirednes*, *Christian Ethicks* and *Commentaries of*

[34] Edmund Calamy, *The art of divine meditation, or, A discourse of the nature, necessity, and excellency thereof with motives to, and rules for the better performance of that most important Christian duty: in several sermons on Gen. 24:63* (London: Thomas Parkhurst and J Collier, 1680), p. 31. See my Introduction, p. 36:

[35] Traherne, *Inducements to Retirednes*, p.7 – 8.

Heaven, and his numerical system of organising meditations by number within discrete centuries describes only the most basic of organisational methods. These critical interpretations of the structure of *Centuries* have tended to conceptualise the text in its entirety as a single continuous explication of a meditative thought process, though there is no consensus as to the nature of this structure and this absence of a consensus suggests the structure may not be as deliberate as earlier critics have proposed.[36] Attempts by Martz and Benjamin Barber to compare the structure to Traherne's possible models or to recover a structure from the text have resulted in a variety of proposals. Each of these accommodates Traherne's digressive style with interpretations of error, or adaptation.[37] These readings of *Centuries* rely on the fixity of a text which is riven with emendations. In contrast, the texts previously studied in this thesis are demonstrably serial, discontinuous, or iterative and, even in the metaphorical journey which unites the thirty-two chapters of *Navigation Spiritualized*, are written and read as discrete though interrelated parts.

Other critics have proposed looser structures derived from closer readings of the text. However these too have met difficulties in attempting to marry Traherne's habit of digression with the topics and themes they uncover.[38] Gerald Cox proposes recovering the structure from the extant text rather than imposing a structure derived from possible sources.[39] Cox observes a preponderance of meditation on God in the first century, the world in the second century, and humanity in the third century. However, like Martz, Cox reductively labels themes which can be found across the entirety of *Centuries* and meditative writing more broadly. Similarly, Justin Miller, KW. Salter, and James Balakier observe looser, incomplete, and competing structures though they continue to label themes in discrete centuries using differing terms; these differing terms

[36] Margoliuth, 'Introduction', p. xi.
[37] Martz, *Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton*, pp. 44, 57; Benjamin J Barber, 'Syncretism and Idiosyncrasy: The Notion of Act in Thomas Traherne's Contemplative Practice', in *Literature and Theology*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, March 2014), pp. 16 – 28 (p. 16).
[38] Gerald H. Cox III, 'Traherne's "Centuries": A Platonic Devotion of "Devine Philosophy"', in *Modern Philology*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (August, 1971), pp. 10 – 24 (pp. 11, 23).
[39] Ibid, p. 10, 15 – 16.

underscore the uncertainty of the structure of *Centuries.*[40] Thus, though several critics have determined structures and schema in *Centuries* the precise nature of its scheme is debateable, and at no point does Traherne set out a scheme of his own.

The topics of *Centuries* develop organically in a manner of single, discrete though related meditations or sequences of meditations from three to approximately thirty in which Traherne elucidates his thoughts upon a longer topic. For instance, Cox finds a distinct series of entries at the close of the first century (CM I. 78 – 100 pp. 38 – 49) which he observes as following an adaptation of the method of Hall through, in Cox's terms, confession, petition, longing, crucifixion, and thanksgiving.[41] This attention to a smaller unit of the text underscores the local structural pattern in *Centuries* and points to a possible meditative and rhetorical influence on Traherne. Similar smaller groups of meditations can be found throughout *Centuries* such as CM III. 1 – 26 (pp. 93 – 107) in which Traherne draws on an assumed biography of his childhood to describe corruption and the recovery of innocence and CM III. 27 – 46 (pp. 107 – 115) in which Traherne reflects on the Bible and education including a closing sequence on the disciplines he sees worthy of university study (CM III. 41 – 46, pp. 112 – 115): professions, philosophy, theology, 'Natural Philosophy', 'Ethicks', and felicity. Martz gives extensive readings of similarly local structures within and across discrete centuries which runs somewhat counter to his and other critics assertion of the integrity of the five centuries and points to more promising readings of *Centuries* as organised more locally and thematically similarly to the manner of Austen's *Book M.*[42] Several examples of these local patterns of composition unfold as digressions which point to an extempore character to Traherne's writing. For instance, between CM VI. 4 to CM VI. 9 Traherne digresses to describe the meaning of his terms 'Philosopher' and 'Christian' (pp. 141 – 145). The digression is overt and indicated throughout. Thus,

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[40] Justin Miller, 'Thomas Traherne: Love and Pain in the Poet of Felicity', in *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (September, 1980), pp. 209 – 220 (pp. 210, 214 – 215); Salter, *Thomas Traherne: Mystic and Poet*, p. 22, James J. Balakier, 'Felicitous Perception as the "Organizing Form" in Thomas Traherne's Dobell Poems and *Centuries*', in *Bulletin de la Société d'études Anglo-Americaines*, No. 26 (1988), pp. 53 – 68 (pp. 58 – 65).

[41] Gerald H. Cox III, 'Traherne's "Centuries", pp. 15 – 16.

[42] Martz, *Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton*, pp. 59 – 102.

Traherne begins: 'This last Principle needs a little Explication' adding 'This Digression steals me a little further' and concluding 'Once more we will distinguish of Christians' (pp. 141, 143, 144). Critics' inability to agree on the organisation of the meditations, the preponderance of digressions and more locally described structures, and Traherne's subsequent editorial interventions points to a scheme or schema which was developed in the process of writing.

In addition to structural and topical patterns which suggest Traherne meditated on loose topics over intense periods frequent changes in Traherne's hand and ink strongly imply an intermittent process of writing, comparable to Austen's, though over a narrower period of composition than Austen's eighteen years; and this materiality supports a concept of the intermittence of Traherne meditative composition. To this end, Allan Gilbert observes a structure comprised of loose groups of entries marked by abrupt changes in topic and tone noting:

> The effect is as though each one of the groups of kindred Meditations was written independently and the groups were then combined with little thought of their relation to each other […] Such arrangement lessons the possibility of inferring when individual meditations or groups of them were written. Unless the author counted carefully as he wrote he must have had the problem of combining groups that in total ran over the number possible for a Century. Is this the reason why the late sections of the Fourth Century are in the tone of the first half of the First?[43]

Gilbert figures *Centuries* as discontinuous, incidental, and iterative in that he implies Traherne returned to earlier ideas later in composition. Sharon Seelig observes similar patterns of discontinuity in *Select Meditations* and is particularly observant of the cyclicality and repetitiveness of the text noting the imposition of Traherne's inspiration onto the extant text: 'We see in [*Select Meditations*] the structure of Traherne's ideas as he thinks through theological points'.[44] Thus, both

[43] Allan H. Gilbert , 'Thomas Traherne as Artist', *Modern Language* Quarterly Vol. 8, No. 3 (Seattle) pp. 319 – 341 (pp. 323 – 326).
[44] Sharon C Seelig, 'The Origin of Ecstasy: Traherne's "Select Meditations"', in *English Literary Renaissance*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Autumn, 1979), pp. 419 – 431 (p. 421).

Centuries, and its precursor, *Select Meditations*, exhibit Traherne's habits of digression and intermittence and the organic development of the structure of the text according to inspiration.

The Centrality of *Select Meditations* and *Centuries* in Traherne's Wider Corpus, and his Recontextualisation of Meditation

Several critics have noted thematic and topical connections across texts in Traherne's corpus which go beyond cursory or historically contingent comparisons and imply that, like Austen and Delaval, Traherne frequently returned to and iterated earlier meditative work for new functions and readers. This section of the chapter examines the iteration of meditation across Traherne's texts and forms and the likelihood that meditation underpinned much of his textual production. For instance, Marks Sichernan finds links between Traherne's early, philosophical *Ficino Notebook*, *Centuries*, and *Christian Ethicks*. She suggests *Ficino Notebook* was in use late in Traherne's life as a source for these texts.[45] Similarly Inge finds elements of the Physico-Theology found in *The Kingdom of God* in both *Centuries* and *Select Meditations* and a large number of critics have found comparisons between *Centuries* and *Select Meditations* where *Select Meditations* is figured as a precursor.[46] Moreover, Traherne's corpus includes several instances of recontextualised or reused verses in meditative and non-meditative texts which point to a practice of borrowing and a habit of refining thought across more than one textual site. This section of the chapter first briefly describes the critical groundwork which establishes the recontextualisation of meditation across Traherne's corpus in manuscript and print, and chiefly focusses on two case studies, of Traherne's poems, 'The Approach' and 'Poem Upon Moderation', as examples of these processes.

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[45] London, British Library, MS. Burney 126. Carol Marks Sichernan, 'Traherne's Ficino Notebook', in *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of* America, 2nd Quarter, Vol. 63 (1969), pp. 73 – 81 (pp. 74 – 78).

[46] Inge, *Desire and Freedom in Thomas* Traherne, p. 288; Ross asserts *Select Meditations* anticipates *Centuries* and *Christian Ethicks*: Ross, 'Introduction' (2014), p. xvii. Seelig proposes *Select Meditations* anticipates *Centuries*: Seelig, 'Traherne's "Select meditations"', p. 420. Martz describes *Select Meditations* as 'like a version of several well-known passages in the *Centuries*': Louis L. Martz, 'Preface', in Thomas Traherne, *Select Meditations*, ed. by Julia J. Smith (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1997), pp. vii – viii (p. vii). See also Martz's 'Appendix' on the discovery of *Select Meditations*, in *Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton*, pp. 207 – 211.

The discovery of *Select Meditations* in 1964 shed new light on Traherne's meditative and textual practices in *Centuries*. Moreover, the relationship between these two texts, and between these two texts and Traherne's wider corpus, points to a conception of the two as central to Traherne's writing practice. *Select Meditations* is a damaged amanuensis copy with Traherne's annotations, of a lost original. The original was likely composed during the early 1660s.[47] I argue the amanuensis copy may have been produced as a complement to Traherne's late period of textual composition; like Delaval's transcriptions of her manuscript, the amanuensis copy of *Select Meditations* iterates the original *Select Meditations* for a new function in supplying material for Traherne's later writing. NI. Matar has described *Select Meditations* as 'early and emotional' and as a private text in which Traherne reflected on his professional development in the manner of meditation he later described in *Inducements to Retirednes.*[48] For instance, in SM.II.100, Traherne expresses his dismay at the apparent corruption of his congregation. These frustrated sentiments were likely kept private:

> These Thinges the Glory of thy kingdom they cannot understand. There is a Great Gulph set between us, if they will not Come to me, O let not me goe back againe to them. but weep in my secret Places; and Pray for them. O my God make me faithfull, lively, Constant (SM II. 100, p. 296).

Several other critics have observed anticipatory, formal, or preparative relationships between these texts. Nevertheless, Smith stresses that there are no replications of meditations between the two texts.[49] Smith notes that *Select Meditations* is not didactic like *Centuries* and is instead introspective. Even so, the manufacture of the extant amanuensis copy of *Select Meditations* points to Traherne's likely reappropriation of the older 1660s original into the compositional context of the 1670s. Thus,

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[47] Julia J. Smith dates the origination of *Select Meditations* to the immediate post-Restoration period c. 1660: Julia J. Smith, 'Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *Select Meditations*, ed. by Julia J. Smith (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1997), pp. x – xxvi (pp. xv, xix). See also: Ross, 'Introduction' (2014), p. xviii; Martz, *Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton*, p. 209; Seelig, 'Traherne's "Select Meditations"', p. 419; NI. Matar, 'Prophetic Traherne: "A Thanksgiving for the Nation"', in *The Journal of English and Germanic* Philology, Vol. 81, No. 1 (1982), pp. 16 – 29 (p. 16); Inge, Desire and Freedom in Thomas Traherne, pp. 14 – 15.

[48] Matar, 'Prophetic Traherne', p. 17. See also Seelig, 'Traherne's "Select Meditations"', p. 420.

[49] Smith, 'Introduction' (1997), pp. xxii – xiii.

whilst not a direct inspiration for any of the texts in Traherne's corpus, the amanuensis copy of *Select Meditations* represents an intellectual and textual precedent made available at the time of composition of *Centuries* and Traherne's wider corpus.

Several critics have pointed to thematic relationships between *Select Meditations, Centuries*, and Traherne's wider corpus. These conceptions gesture toward both meditative texts as central to Traherne's works, and to the latter as a continuation, iteration, or refinement of the former – at least to some extent. Marks Sichernan and Guffey point to *Select Meditations* and *Centuries* as early studies in felicity and ethics noting a 'putative embryo' of *Christian Ethicks* in a list of twelve meditations found between SM III. 31 and SM III. 32 headed: 'Instructions Teaching us how to Liv the Life of Happieness' (pp. 315 – 317).[50] Ross cautions against this reading, however, noting that 'although parts of [Traherne's] treatment of virtue correspond to *Christian Ethicks*, it also differs markedly from it.[51] Traherne significantly refined his embryo, therefore. In addition, the text of SM IV. 53 – 68 (pp. 379 – 388) is, though smaller in scope, comparable in topoi and style to *Christian Ethicks*. These meditations share Traherne's recurrent concern for societal corruption in *Select Meditations* and *Centuries*:

> It is no Small matter to Dwell in Community or in a Congregation, and to Convers there without complaint, and to Persevere Faithfully in it untill Death. Blessed is He that hath there Lived well, And Ended Happily' (SM IV. 52, p. 378)

Having established this spiritual conundrum, the subsequent meditations form a manifesto of imperatives labelled 'Towards thy neighbour thou must behave' which describes how to live in a corrupt society (SM IV. 53, p. 379). The final meditations, SM IV. 56 – 66, describe virtues much like the chapter structure of *Christian Ethicks*. Thus, in the absence of chapter headings, the final meditations begin with the name of the discrete virtue signalling the topic: 'Begin with wisdom.

[50] Marks Sichernan and Guffey, 'General Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *Christian Ethicks* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1968), pp. xi – l (pp. xxxii – xxxiii). See also: Smith, 'Introduction' (1997), p. xiii.
[51] Ross, 'Textual Emendations and Notes' (2014), p. 428.

wisdom is the Light in which Happiness is Enjoyed', 'Prudence', 'Courage', continuing to 'Humility', the largest of these meditations (SM IV. 56 – 58, 66, pp. 380 – 383, 386 – 387). This list is greatly expanded in *Christian Ethicks*. Though somewhat different in terms of structure and scope to *Christian Ethicks*, in these meditations Traherne exhibits a budding desire to define and classify Christian morality, after the manner of Hall's rhetorical process, and to reach conclusions on the applicability and value of each classified moral. In addition, Traherne's habit of comparing, ranking, and relating virtues throughout *Christian Ethicks* is putatively described in these meditations:

> when we have Courage to beleive and wisdom to perceiv, we hav Great need of Temperance and Power to Govern our Selves. of Prudence to Direct and Justice to Regard the Grandure others that are as Great as we (SM IV. 63, p. 385).

For instance, chapter twenty-two 'Of Temperance in Matters of Art, as Musick, Dancing, Painting, Cookery, Physick, &c.' begins with a typically similar opening paragraph which locates Temperance in Traherne's conception:

> Prudence giveth Counsel what Measure and Proportion ought to be held in our Actions, Fortitude inspires Boldnes and Strength to undertake, and set upon the Work; but it is Temperance doth execute what both of them design (p. 170).

Thus, the final meditations found in *Select Meditations*, which are notably different to the bulk of the text, bear a resemblance of topic, style, and tone to *Christian Ethicks* and suggest that Traherne sought to elaborate on the meditations first iterated in *Select Meditations* at a later date, and for a different readership.

The Contextualisation and Meditative Value of 'The Approach'

In addition to thematic and stylistic transmission, a small quantity of poems appear across more than one textual context in Traherne's works. This practice of recontextualising whole poems and couplets or fragments of poems across texts, points to a textual practice which saw Traherne compose new

texts from existing texts or compose several texts at once with different readers and functions in mind or a combination of these practices. The poem ‘The Approach’ appears in each of *Commonplace*, *Felicity*, and *Centuries.*[52] The poem ‘For man to Act as if his Soul did see’ appears in both *Christian Ethicks* chapter twenty-one, ‘Of Courage’, and chapter forty-two of *The Kingdom of God* (c. 1670).[53] The verse fragment or quatrain ‘All Musick, Sawces, Feasts, Delights, and Pleasures’ appears in both *Christian Ethicks* chapter twenty-two ‘Of Temperance in Matters of Art’, and as the coda to the prose of SM IV. 60.[54] Finally, verses from ‘Poem upon Moderation’ which appears in two parts in *Centuries* as CM III. 19 and CM III. 21 and the couplet ‘Even as the Sea within a finit Shore / Is far the Better ’caus it is no more.’ which appears within the prose of CM 2. 11 also occur in ‘As in a Clock’ in chapter twenty-three ‘Of Temperance in God’ in *Christian Ethicks* alongside verses which do not occur elsewhere in Traherne’s extant works.[55] The final two sections of the chapter form case studies on two poems which Traherne iterated across more than one text as examples of Traherne’s habit of contextualising and recontextualising verse forms across texts. In addition, these studies further exemplify the unevenness and iterativity of Traherne’s authorial voice and meditative process in *Centuries*. The first of these examples, ‘The Approach’, demonstrates Traherne’s pattern of incorporating meditative verse into prose, the likely later recontextualisation of some of this poetry into *Commonplace* and *Poems of Felicity* with new publication and meditative contexts in mind, and an enduring stress on the value of poetry as a standalone meditative form in Traherne’s work.

1

That Childish Thoughts such Joys Inspire,
Doth make my Wonder, and his Glory higher;
His Bounty, and my Wealth more Great:
It shews his kingdom, and his Work Compleat.
In which there is not any Thing,
Not meet to be the Joy of cherubim.

2

[52] *Commonplace*, pp. 20 – 21; ‘Poems of Felicity’, pp. 143 – 144; *Centuries*, pp. 94 – 95.
[53] *Christian Ethicks*, p. 165 – 166; London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS1360 ‘The Kingdom of God’, see: Thomas Traherne, *The Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. I (of 8)(Cambridge: DS. Brewer, 2005), pp. 255 – 503 (pp. 501 – 502) all references are to this edition.
[54] *Christian Ethicks,* p. 171; *Select Meditations*, p. 383.
[55] *Centuries*, pp. 53, 102 – 103; *Christian Ethicks*, p. 181.

He in our childhood with us walks,
And with our Thoughts Mysteriously He talks;
He often visiteth our Minds,
But cold Acceptance in us ever finds.
We send Him often grievd away,
Who els whould shew us all His Kingdoms Joy.

3

O Lord I wonder at thy Lov,
Which did my Infancy so early mov:
But more at that which did forbear
And mov so long, tho sleighted many a yeer:
But most of all, at last that Thou
Thy self shoudst me convert, I scarce know how.

4

Thy Gracious motions oft in vain
Assaulted me: My heart did hard remain
Long time! I sent my God away
Grievd much, that he could not giv me His Joy.
I careless was, nor did regard
The end for which He all those Thoughts prepard.

5

But now, with New and Open Eys,
I see beneath, as if I were abov the Skies:
And as I backward look again
See all His Thoughts and mine most Clear and plain.
He did approach, He me did Woe.
I Wonder that my GOD this thing would doe.

6

From nothing taken first I was;
What Wondrous things his Glory brought to pass!
Now in the World I him behold,
And me, Inveloped in precious Gold;
In deep Abysses of Delights,
In present hidden Glorious Benefits.

7

Those Thoughts his Goodness long before
Prepard as precious and Celestial store:
With Curious Art in me inlaid,
That Childhood might it self alone be said
My Tutor Teacher Guid to be,
Instructed then even by the Dietie.[56]

[56] As found in *Centuries*, see: pp. 94 – 95.

'The Approach' is a meditative poem on the rediscovery of God's image within the human soul. Keifer Lewalski briefly compares 'The Approach' to 'Infant-Ey' found in *Poems of Felicity* stating both share the voice of a mature speaker who has 'undergone a classic conversion experience and knows himself to be regenerate, transformed by grace'.[57] Moreover, the seven stanzas locate the speaker in the experiential moments of the conversion from the initial easy relationship with God of the innocent child through loss, grief, penitence, and eventual recovery in the final three stanzas: 'But now, with New and Open Eys, / I see beneath, as if I were abov the Skies' (ll. 25 – 26). The recovered perspective allows the speaker to see the world with a God-like appreciation and to reflect on the spiritual lesson of conversion as a journey of rediscovery. As he does throughout, *Centuries*, Traherne constructs an authorial persona which embodies iterations of a lengthy period of meditation beginning in initial confusion, and inspiration and ending with a guiding account of his understanding presented for an intimate reader.

As well as thematic and authorial similarities to *Centuries*, Traherne contextualises 'The Approach' in its immediate surroundings in *Centuries* and this context further exemplifies Traherne's meditative process iterated across several closely related textual mediations. The four entries which Traherne arranges surround 'The Approach' share the poem's subject of the loss and recovery of child-like innocence and provide commentary upon this from a mature perspective. Taken together these five meditations in prose and verse trace a meditative process of Traherne's own which demonstrates the compartmentalisation, and interaction of parts in *Centuries*. Similarly, to Flavel's five-part pattern, this sequence includes instructive, descriptive, analytical, and exegetical parts composed with didactic intention in mind; however, the distinction is less clear and overt than Flavel's, and Traherne's poem is not summative as in Flavel's pattern but rather adds an illustrative dimension. Within the five-part sequence 'The Approach' is framed as an integral part under a subheading: 'Upon Those Pure and virgin Apprehensions I had in my Infancy, I made this poem'

[57] Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, p. 369. See also: Clements, *The Mystical Poetry of Thomas Traherne*, pp. 104 – 105.

which describes both its form, and its unity within the five part sequence of prose and verse where 'those Pure and Virgin Apprehensions' and the opening reference 'That Childish Thoughts such Joys Inspire' (ln. 1) refers to the childlike thoughts described in CM III. 3 (p. 94). For instance, in the final lines on the child's inability to conceptualise property Traherne describes the apparent paradox of both knowing no legal or material possessions and spiritually possessing all things as objects of creation:

> I knew no churlish Proprieties, nor Bounds nor Divisions: but all Proprieties and Divisions were mine: all Treasures and the Possessors of them So that with much adoe I was corrupted; and made to learn the Dirty Devices of this World. Which now I unlearn, and becom as it were a little Child again, that I may enter the Kingdom of GOD (ibid).

This contrast between earthly, human corruption by socialisation and Traherne's ignorance or innocence of these matters recurs throughout *Centuries.*[58] These instances of distaste for corruption echo Traherne's distaste for his congregation in *Select Meditations* (SM II. 100, p. 296); Traherne's sense of the corrupting influence of society may have developed at the time he wrote *Select Meditations*, and later found their way, with greater refinement and clarity into *Centuries*. The final lines of CM III. 3 incorporate a spiritual commentary on Traherne's endeavour to unlearn his adult corruptions and, as he does in the final stanza of 'The Approach', Traherne concludes each of the five meditations with a lesson derived from the content. In this manner each of the five meditations functions both as a self-contained meditation and as a component within the larger five-part sequence. The composition of these five parts, therefore, indicates the likelihood that the five were composed or collated as a set.

Broadly conceived, CM III. 1-5, including 'The Approach' at CM III. 4, each treat the subject of lost and recovered child-like innocence in a logical progression. This progression encompasses an introduction to the subject with an appeal to the reader to make her own meditation (CM III. 1), three examples from personal experience including the example of 'The Approach', and an

[58] For instance, in CM III. 9 Traherne describes his initial confusion at being taught materialist values: 'It was a Difficult matter to persuade me that the Tinsild Ware upon a Hobby hors was a fine thing': Traherne, *Centuries*, p. 97.

application to scripture (CM III. 5). Characteristically, owing to the personal, didactic relationship between author and the implied reader in *Centuries*, the first entry makes an emotional appeal to the reader unseen in Flavel's plain and direct addresses to his readers or Hopton's depersonalised presentations for her readers:

> Will you see the Infancy of this Sublime and Celestial Greatness? Those Pure and Virgin Apprehensions I had from the Womb, and that Divine Light wherwith I was born, are the Best unto this Day, wherin I can see the Universe. By the Gift of GOD they attended me into the World, and by his Special favor I remember them till now. Verily they seem the Greatest Gifts His Wisdom could bestow. for without them all other Gifts had been Dead and Vain. They are unattainable by Books, and therfore I will teach them by Experience. Pray for them earnestly: for they will make you Angelical, and wholy Celestial. Certainly Adam in Paradice had not more sweet and Curious Apprehensions of the World, then I when I was a child. (CM III. 1, p. 93).

The speaker twice implores the reader to 'see', and 'pray' for like thought; and he stresses the necessity of learning by example and that the reader should be attentive to the subsequent selection of illustrations in terms of its lesson or its meditative occasion rather than as autobiographical expression. Likewise, Traherne compares his childhood self, as a character, to that of the Biblical Adam who is representative of lost innocence.

In the subsequent two prose entries (CM III. 2-3) Traherne describes the experiences of the character of his childhood self. In addition, there is some stylistic evidence to suggest that Traherne iterated this meditation from an earlier meditation, also in prose, which appears in *Select Meditations* and, therefore, that the set of five meditations in discussion are themselves iterated, in full or in part, from earlier meditations. The adult Traherne writes onto the character a definition of child-like innocence as feelings of wonder, intuition, and an inability to recognise human values, possessiveness, or corruption. For instance, CM III. 3, lists people and objects with the exuberant joy of Traherne's childhood character:

> The Citie seemed to stand in Eden, or to be Built in Heaven. The streets were mine, the Temple was mine, the People were mine, their Clothes and

> Gold and Silver was mine, as much as their Sparkling Eys fair Skins and ruddy faces (p. 94).

In comparable function, though without the formality of structure, therefore, to Flavel's exemplary meditations on maritime and agricultural labour, these three meditations describe an imagined or fictionalised, observation for the purposes of spiritual instruction. Ellrodt finds a parallel between the retrospective description of CM III. 3 and those found in SM III. 29 – 30, and CM III. 36 – 37 (pp. 313 – 314, 111)[59]:

> I Look upon them in the Light of the Citty wherein I lived. I remember the time when its Gates were Amiable, its streets Beautifull, its Inhabitants immortall, its Temple Glorious, its Inward Roomes and chambers Innocent and all Misterious, Soe they appears to the little Stranger, when I first came into the world […] And they were all mine, Temple Streets skies House Gates and people. I had not learned to appropriat any thing other way. The people wer my Living joys and moeveing Jewells, sweet Amazments, walking Miracles (SM III. 29, p. 313).

Whilst not verbatim, this meditation closely echoes the objects and import of CM III. 3 and it strongly suggests an example of Traherne's iteration of earlier meditation. Arguably the stylistic asyndeton breaking into syndeton of the iteration which appears in *Centuries* demonstrates Traherne's refinement, contraction, and dramatisation of the earlier iteration which appears in *Select Meditations*.

Where CM III. 1 comprised an introduction and an encouragement to the reader to meditate, CM III. 2 and 3 provide material for meditation and 'The Approach', within this sequence, models a meditation upon conversion, the fifth entry in this set provides an appropriate scriptural perspective on the subject of child-like innocence. It begins with paraphrases of John 3:3-6 and Mark 10:15 – 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God' – followed by an exegesis of its meaning. In contrast to Flavel's appeal to authority and scriptural sources and Hopton's effacement of her voice in the presence of scripture, Traherne's silent paraphrase of scripture is

[59] Traherne, *Select Meditations*, pp. 313 – 314; Traherne, *Centuries*, p. 111; Ellrodt, *Seven Metaphysical Poets*, p. 92.

more in keeping with Austen's recall of scripture, and it suggests that, like Austen, with the exception of his Psalm paraphrases, Traherne recalled scripture rather than meditated upon scripture:

> Our Saviors Meaning, when he said, He must be Born again and becom a little Child that will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: is Deeper far then is generaly believed. It is not only in a Careless Reliance upon Divine Providence, that we are to becom Little Children, or in the feebleness and Shortness of our Anger and Simplicity of our Passions: but in the Peace and Purity of all our Soul. which Purity also is a Deeper Thing then is commonly apprehended. for we must disrobe our selvs of all fals Colors, and unclothe our Souls of evil Habits; all our Thoughts must be Infant-like and Clear (pp. 95 – 96).

Traherne stresses the distinction between childishness, which implies 'feebleness', 'Careless reliance', and 'simplicity' and the child-like innocence of one who rejects 'habits', 'customs and conceits' and sees the world as God intended. He sketches a reversal of the corruption described in CM III. 2 – 3 through a process of rediscovery as described in 'The Approach'. In this context of four prose meditations, 'The Approach' forms an integral part of a short series which demonstrate to the reader Traherne's recovery of child-like thought. Whether 'The Approach' was originally written for this context or iterated into it alongside parts of the prose is an additional question to its function as a dramatisation of conversion as a component of a broader five-part meditative sequence in verse and prose.

'The Approach' in its Additional Contexts

In addition to its context in *Centuries*, 'The Approach' also appears in Traherne's *Commonplace* and *Poems of Felicity*. It is the only poem to appear in all three volumes, and several critics have debated which of these iterations is the earliest. The version found in *Poems of Felicity*, can be discounted as the earliest version. Nevertheless, its presentation points to the adaptability, reception, and value placed upon Traherne's poetry in his lifetime and in the present. *Poems of Felicity* is a post-humous collation of Traherne's poems found across *Commonplace*, *Centuries,* and unidentified sources in Traherne's corpus compiled by Traherne's brother Philip. The manuscript includes a title page and

prefatory poetry including a dedication by 'Philip Traheron' which suggests the manuscript was prepared for some form of print or scribal publication (pp. 83 – 84). The version of 'The Approach' which appears in this context is heavily edited when compared with the *Centuries* and *Commonplace* version. Cedric Brown and Tomohiko Koshi have commented on the removal of contentious language and imagery from the poems in *Poems of Felicity* and have stressed the authorial and compositional intervention of Philip Traherne.[60] Their argument as to the removal of contentious language further implies that Philip Traherne intended a wider readership for *Poems of Felicity*. Moreover, Philip Traherne's intervention encompasses a further iteration of the poem and the other poems in *Poems of Felicity* whereby Philip Traherne values and retains the verse form of the meditation whilst refining its language and message with a readership in mind – Hopton's adaptation of John Austin's verse, which the thesis does not discuss, is a further example of this careful adaptation of verse. The most significant editorial change in the *Poems of Felicity* iteration is the substitution of lines thirty-one and thirty-two for: 'Now in this World I Him discern, / And what His Dealings with me meant I learn' (ll. 31 – 32, p. 144). Philip has softened the potentially mystical 'behold' in the *Centuries* iteration to a more observant and cognitive 'discern' though the likelihood of contention is slight, and several of Philip's editorial interventions appear as much stylistic as political as an iteration and recontextualisation of Traherne's poetry, *Poems of Felicity* represents an attempt to present Traherne's poetry perhaps for a commercial market and a value placed on meditative verse which sees it stand independently of the iterativity and cyclicality of its origin in Traherne's *Centuries*.

Poems of Felicity is the first in a line of collations of Traherne's poetry which have divorced it from its prose context. Moreover, these practices have influenced interpretations of the texts in the thesis.[61] The resultant texts frequently frame Traherne as a metaphysical poet after the more robust

[60] Cedric C. Brown and Tomohiko Koshi, 'Editing the Remains of Thomas Traherne', in *The Review of English Studies* (New Series), Vol. 57, No. 232 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, November, 2006), pp. 766 – 782 (p. 773).

[61] Bertram Dobell, 'Introduction', in Thomas Traherne, *The Poetical Works of Thomas* Traherne, ed. by Bertram Dobell (London: Bertram Dobell, 1906), pp. xiii – xcvi (p. xcv); Ridler 'Introduction', pp. xiii – xv. Burrow (ed.) *Metaphysical* Poetry; Gardner (ed.), *The Metaphysical Poets*; Ridler (ed.), *Poems, Centuries and Three Thanksgivings*. The ongoing DS Brewer

model of Donne. Thus, the publication contexts of these poems tend to perpetuate a somewhat skewed or artificial perception of Traherne as a poet and provide a value placed on meditative poetry as a literary product which disregards the meditative and textual processes of which it forms an integral part. This perception is further exemplified by critical interpretations of *Commonplace* and *Poems of Felicity* and of the likely chronology of composition between *Commonplace* and *Centuries*.

Like *Poems of* Felicity, the series of poems found in *Commonplace* has been interpreted as an integrated sequence of meditative poems. For instance, Keifer Lewlaski compares both sequences to the works of George Herbert and John Donne.[62] Her study overlooks the prose context of both *Commonplace* and *Centuries* and interprets the 'The Approach' as an integral component of the sequence of poems in *Commonplace*. That is, as demonstrated in relation to *Centuries*, Keifer Lewalski see the poem as composed for its context in *Commonplace* and she perceives *Commonplace* as a published or publishable sequence of poems. Like Austen's social poetry and letters therefore, 'The Approach' has potentially co-existing contexts both within and without *Centuries* and it challenges the fixity or perceived boundary between private and public meditative texts. The poetry in *Commonplace* appears on the opening pages (2^r – 16^r) in neat double columns which whilst presentable do not suggest publication in scribal form but rather imply a system of storage with the possible intention of extracting poetry from this location at a later date.[63] Ross suggests the text of *Commonplace* was written before being bound into the extant manuscript, and she points to several excisions including a large part of the poem 'The Estate' which describe the manuscript as a text in process.[64] I argue the miscellaneousness and irregularity of the manuscript

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edition edited by Ross reserves the prose of *Commonplace* for the eighth volume. Margoliuth's edition of 1958 extracts poetry from the prose publications and manuscripts available at the time and includes an extensive contents list which makes plain the value placed on Traherne's poetry divorced from the prose, see: HM. Margoliuth, 'Contents', in Thomas Traherne, *Centuries, Poems and Thanksgivings*, ed. by HM. Margoliuth, Vol. I (of 2)(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. v – x.

[62] Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, pp. 354 – 382.

[63] Ross, 'Introduction', in *The Works of Thomas* Traherne, ed. by Jan Ross, Vol. VI. (of 8)(Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2014), pp. xv – xxxvii (p. xxii).

[64] Ibid, p. xxiii.

supports a reading of the text as a practical and personal resource. The series of poems in *Commonplace* is, nevertheless, selective, possibly implying an intention to publish in a subsequent document, and it does not represent all of the poetry in Traherne's oeuvre – 'The Approach' for instance is the only example taken from the fourteen verse forms found in *Centuries*. The prose commonplace which is found after the poetry and which fills the largest part of the manuscript is similarly arranged into neat columns under headings and written in the hand of an amanuensis with Traherne's notes (16^{v} – 96^{r}). That is, both poetry and prose are a textual resource or depository, and whilst publication or preparation for publication is not unreasonable, in their extant state, these poems are housed alongside a commonplace text which suggests their intermediacy as textual forms selected for later reference.

Nevertheless, keen to stress the integrity and selectivity of the sequence of poems found in *Commonplace,* Clements and Keifer Lewalski have defined thematic and meditative arcs in the sequence of prose which describe a further meditative context for 'The Approach' and infer that Traherne contextualised 'The Approach' alongside 'The Improvement' after which it occurs in the sequence. Clements conceives the series of poems in *Commonplace* as a sequence progressing through creation, fall, and redemption. Keifer Lewalski less specifically describes the sequence as a 'deliberate' meditation on felicity.[65] Within this perceived sequence in *Commonplace*, Clements locates 'The Approach' in 'the fall' group between 'The Instruction' and 'Speed' (pp. 13 – 36).[66] Clements argues for the unity of this group by suggesting the anaphoric reference in the opening line of 'The Approach', 'That Childish Thoughts such Joys Inspire' (ln. 1), refers to the preceding poem 'The Improvement' (pp. 17 – 20) – where this line referred to the apparent observation of Traherne's child-self in CM III. 3 in its context in *Centuries*. Nevertheless in 'The Improvement' a mature voice reflects on the act of God's 'Wisdom, Goodness, Power' (ln. 25) and the possession of these acts within the soul 'by their Efficacy, all mine own' (ln. 84) which contradicts Clements' claim to childish

[65] Clements, *The Mystical Poetry of Thomas Traherne*, p. 105; Keifer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, pp. 369 – 382; Balakier, 'the "Organizing Form" in Thomas Traherne's Dobell Poems and *Centuries*', p. 57.
[66] Clements, *The Mystical Poetry of Thomas Traherne*, p. 97.

thoughts expressed in 'The Improvement'. However, the mature voice of 'The Improvement' briefly reflects on its childish sensibilities in the twelfth of the fourteen stanzas though not on specific thoughts or incidents. This tangentially supports Clements' interpretation:

> But Oh! the vigour of mine Infant Sense
> Drives me too far: I had not yet the Eye,
> The Apprehension, or Intelligence
> Of Things so very Great, Divine, and High
> But all things were eternal unto me,
> And mine, and Pleasing, which mine Ey did see. (ll. 67 – 72).

The uneven tenses in this stanza first present the infant sense as an underdeveloped faculty of the mature voice 'Drives me too far' and secondly, in the past perfect, as reflections on a former self which possessed undeveloped faculties 'I had not yet the Eye' (ln. 68). Thus, the connection between these two poems appears stretched though not impossible. In addition Clements proposes that the sixth stanza of 'The Approach' echoes 'The Salutation', the first poem found in the *Commonplace* series – that is, part of his 'creation' set – and the final lines look forward to the later poems in *Commonplace*.[67] Though less compelling, these thematic and structural links, the apparent selectivity with which Traherne composed *Commonplace*, and *Commonplace's* status as a repository point to Traherne's collation and organisation of meditative poetry found across multiple sources into *Commonplace*. Whether or not Traherne intended to publish or further refine these poems, this entextualisation of 'The Approach' underscores Traherne's own stress on the value of poetry as an interpretative form distinct from prose contexts. Thus, in *Centuries* and *Commonplace* 'The Approach' demonstrates conceivable contextualisation by Traherne in meditative prose and meditative verse. Moreover, in its contexts in *Commonplace* and *Poems of Felicity*, 'The Approach' points to an authorial and critical value placed on meditative verse which sees it independent of its prose contexts and iterations. This value conceives poetry as a finalised product of meditation and imputes a concept of poetry as a vessel of spiritual truths.

[67] Ibid, pp. 104 – 107.

The Fragmentation and Reconfiguring of 'Poem upon Moderation'

The second case study of the chapter, 'Poem upon Moderation' illustrates Traherne's habit of recontextualising and reconfiguring verse fragments across prose contexts, and the consequent recontextualisation of meditation between texts – in this example between *Centuries* and *Christian Ethicks*. 'Poem upon Moderation' can be found in two near equal parts in *Centuries* as CM III. 19 and 21 (pp. 102 – 103). The commentary which Traherne includes alongside the two parts of the poem in *Centuries*, which is the basis for the bulk of my discussion below, suggests he considered the parts to make a single poem at least in the context of *Centuries.*[68] Each part separately examines the necessity of moderation and the infinity of God. The first (ll. 1 – 26), rendered here, explores moderation of the human body and the absurdity of an infinite body using earth bound montane metaphors. The second, slightly smaller part (ll. 26 – 48) considers the consequences of moderation and infinity using cosmological imagery: the 'Endless Sea' (ln. 30), 'the Sun [not] bounded in its Sphere' (ln. 37), a star, and the earth (ll. 43 – 44):

19

In Making Bodies Lov could not Express
It self, or Art; unless it made them less.
O what a Monster had in Man been seen,
Had evry Thumb or Toe a Mountain been!
What Worlds must He devour when he did eat?
What Oceans Drink! yet could not all His Meat,
Or Stature, make Him like an Angel Shine;
Or make His Soul in Glory more Divine.
A Soul it is that makes us truly Great,
Whose little Bodies make us more Compleat.
An Understanding that is Infinit,
An Endles Wide and Everlasting Sight,
That can Enjoy all Things and nought exclude,
Is the most Sacred Greatnes may be viewd.
Twas inconvenient that His Bulk should be
An Endless Hill; He nothing then could see:
No figure hav, no Motion, Beauty, Place,
No Color, feature, Member, Light, or Grace.

[68] Ross' endnote '21. 1' implies she considers the poem as two discrete poems and only the second part as a variation of 'As in a Clock', see: Ross, 'Textual Emendations and Notes' (2014), pp. 227 – 228. Alan Bradford mitigates the ambiguity of the two parts by indexing the poem under its two respective first lines, see: Thomas Traherne, *Selected Poems and Prose*, ed. by Alan Bradford (London: Penguin Books, 1991), pp. 379 – 380.

A Body like a Mountain is but Cumber.
An Endless Body is but idle Lumber.
It Spoils convers, and Time it self devours,
While Meat in vain, in feeding idle Powers.
Excessiv Bulk being most injurious found,
To those Conveniences which Men hav Crownd.
His Wisdom did His Power here repress,
GOD made Man Greater while He made Him less.

Most germane to my argument as to the integrity of 'Poem upon Moderation' in its context in *Centuries* are the matched pairs of couplets which begin and end each of the two parts. The first couplet of the first part (ll. 1 – 2) shares a rhyme with that of its final couplet (ll. 27 – 28): 'Express'/['unless'] 'less' (ll. 1 – 2) and 'repress'/'less' (ll. 27 – 28). The repeated rhyme effectively encloses the body of this part of the poem and encapsulates this part as a unit of verse. Likewise, the second part is enclosed in similar paired couplets: 'Might'/'infinit', and 'Delight'/'infinit' (ll. 29-30 & 47 – 48). The perfect rhyme here underscores two interpretations of infinity in this part of the poem. In the first instance infinity is destructive given the impossibility of two infinite entities occupying the same space. In the second instance infinity unites all things in God. The first couplet of this second part 'His Power Bounded, Greater is in Might, / Then if let loos, twere wholy infinit' (ll. 29 – 30) syntactically and rhetorically mirrors the last couplet of the first part (ll. 27 – 28). Syntactically the opening pronouns 'His Wisdom' (ln. 27) are echoed 'His Power' (ln. 29) and in both couplets wisdom is expressed as moderation. This mirroring and the pattern of enclosing rhymes which bookend the two parts of the poem strongly indicate the structural integrity of the two parts as one whole in the context of *Centuries*. While these observations do not exclude the possibility of further lines existing elsewhere or the possibility that Traherne contrived the enclosing couplets as a means of beginning and ending the extant 'Poem upon Moderation' as it is found in *Centuries* they do imply the interrelatedness of the two parts in *Centuries*. This integrity of poetic form is further underscored in the manner by which Traherne frames the poem in the surrounding prose.

In its context in *Centuries*, 'Poem upon Moderation' can be found enclosed within three prose entries (CM III. 18, 20, and 22) and, as in the example of 'The Approach', Traherne

contextualises and entextualises these parts (pp. 101 – 104). These three entries and the poem form a digression from a wider discussion of innocence and childhood recollections found in the first third of the third century, as in the example of CM IV. 4 – 9 above. Like 'The Approach' therefore, Traherne embeds verses in their prose surroundings. The three meditations in which 'Poem upon Moderation' is nestled explore the finitude of creation in like manner to 'Poem upon Moderation'. Firstly CM III. 18 is a dramatised recollection of Traherne's youthful curiosity which raises the topic of the cosmos and its boundaries. The opening lines describe imaginative exploration of the universe and they suggest Traherne draws on rigorous, deliberate meditative methods as a means to conceptualise the cosmos:

> Som times I should Soar abov the Stars and Enquire how the Heavens Ended, and what was beyond them? concerning which by no means could receiv satisfaction. som times my Thoughts would carry me to the Creation, for I had heard now, that the World which at first I thought was Eternal, had a Beginning: how therefore that Beginning was, and Why it was; Why it was no sooner, and what was before; I mightly desired to Know. By all which I easily perceiv that my Soul was made to live in Communion with God, in all Places of his Dominion, and to be Satisfied with the Highest Reason in all Things. After which it so Eagerly aspired, that I thought all the Gold and Silver in the World but Dirt, in comparison of Satisfaction in any of these. Som times I Wonderd Why Men were made no Bigger? I would have had a man as Big as a Giant, a Giant as big as a Castle, and a Castle as big as the Heavens. Which yet would not serv: for there was infinit Space beyond the Heavens, and all was Defectiv and but little in Comparison: And for him to be made infinit, I thought it would be to no purpose, and it would be inconvenient. Why also there was not a Better Sun, and better Stars, a Better Sea and Better Creatures I much admired. Which Thoughts produced that Poem upon Moderation, which afterwards was written. Som part of the verses are these (pp. 101 – 102).

In addition to dramatising the curiosity of Traherne's child character, the opening series of interrogatives echo the rhetorical pattern of *compositio loci* and *considerationes puncta* and mirror Traherne's habit of digression as each image and analysis opens up new lines of meditative enquiry. The relatedness of the prose and 'Poem upon Moderation' can be seen in the shared subject matter of the finitude and smallness of the human body in comparison to the expanse of the sun, sea, and stars, and the shared conundrum of fitting infinite objects into finite space illustrated in the

metaphor of man as a giant. In his final lines, Traherne describes these recalled questions as the inspiration for 'Poem upon Moderation'. The determiners 'that Poem' and 'Som part' make it unclear whether Traherne refers to the extant poem as it appears in two parts in *Centuries* or to a larger poem which encompasses these two parts and more parts besides – such as those found in 'As in a Clock' in *Christian Ethicks* (p. 181) which I discuss below. Moreover, the preposition 'afterwards' points to the temporality and iterativity of Traherne's meditative practice whereby meditation, the composition of 'Poem upon Moderation', and further meditation precede the extant poem in *Centuries.* Like Austen and Hopton, Traherne's practice is iterative, occurs over an extended period of time, and is mediated and recontextualised across verse and prose texts. Based on these precedents it is possible that the poems stored in *Commonplace* were retained for iterative purposes. The poems in *Commonplace*, and the prose, may predate *Centuries* and, therefore, form an earlier iteration of meditation which Traherne later developed into *Centuries*. That is to say the direction of iteration may as easily be from prose to verse as from verse to prose and, quite possibly, like Austen, Traherne worked across both verse and prose, *Centuries*, and *Commonplace* simultaneously.

Nevertheless, in its context in *Centuries*, Traherne's imposition of a synopsis of 'Poem upon Moderation' in CM III. 20 demonstrates his concern that his reader should understand this poem in spiritual and philosophical terms. CM III. 20 is a synopsis of the first part of 'Poem upon Moderation' and a rare example of literary criticism found in meditative writing in this thesis, comparable to Austen's reading of an extract of Henry King's 'The Legacy' in her *Book M* (p. 120, 71[v]). Traherne stresses this point through the use of rhetorical questions after a brief paraphrase of the verse:

> The Excellencies of the Sun I found to be of another kind then that Splendor after which I sought, even in unknown and invisible services; And that GOD by Moderation Wisely Bounding His Almighty power, had to my Eternal Amazement and Wonder, made all Bodies far Greater then if they were infinit: there not being a Sand nor Mote in the Air that is not more Excellent then if it were infinit. How Rich and Admirable then is the Kingdom of GOD; where the Smallest is Greater then an infinit Treasure! Is not this Incredible? Certainly to the Placits and Doctrines of the Scholes: Till we all Consider, That infinit Worth

> shut up in the Limits of a Material Being, is the only way to a Real Infinity. GOD made Nothing infinit in Bulk, but evry thing there where it ought to be. Which, becaus Moderation is a vertu observing the Golden Mean, in som other parts of the former Poem, is thus Expressed. (CM III. 20 p. 103).

A comparable framing sentence to that found in CM III. 18 concludes CM III. 20 and introduces the second part of the extant 'Poem upon Moderation'. As in the former example the determiners make it unclear whether 'Poem upon Moderation' is included in full or in part. Moreover, Traherne introduces the philosophical topic of this part of the poem 'the Golden Mean'. Though the second part does not directly explicate the golden mean but rather describes its meaning and theological implication through the use of metaphor. That is, combined prose and poem describe the concept of the Golden Mean in metaphorical terms, and this use of poetry to clarify meaning is more reciprocal – as also in the example of 'The Approach' – where meaning is expressed across poetry and prose than Flavel's use of summary poetry. A similar explication of the poetry in the prose of *Centuries* can be found in CM III. 48 which follows 'A Life of Sabbaths here beneath' (CM III. 47, pp. 116 – 117). In *Centuries*, therefore, the entextualisation of 'Poem upon Moderation' augments the meditative imagery found in the adjacent prose and exemplifies the rhetorical point on the Golden Mean raised in the prose. Nevertheless, lines from 'Poem upon Moderation' are also found in 'As in a Clock' in *Christian Ethicks* and these lines enhance the prose in this context.

Like 'The Approach' the presence of lines which occur in both 'Poem upon Moderation' and 'As in a Clock' in two prose contexts points to Traherne's extensive recontextualisation of verses and a meditative value placed on verse and perhaps prose. Unlike 'The Approach', however, Traherne's more extensive fragmentation and recontextualisation of lines which occur in each poem stresses a value placed on individual verses akin to that placed on scripture and a meditative process which saw Traherne dismantle and reconfigure texts. Margoliuth implies 'Poem upon Moderation' and 'As in a Clock' are versions of each other with that found in *Centuries* earlier than that found in *Christian Ethicks* owing to the finality and publication of *Christian Ethicks* late in Traherne's life; Ross broadly

concurs owing to the editorial state of 'Poem upon Moderation' as it is found in *Centuries* which Ross finds suggests Traherne worked on the poem in *Centuries* in the first instance.[69] Nevertheless, it is not impossible that Traherne worked across both texts at the same time or that, like Durant, Traherne held off publication of *Christian Ethicks* for some time. The relationship between the two poems and the two texts is complicated further by the presence of a couplet 'Even as the Sea within a finit Shore / Is far the Better 'caus it is no more' which appears in both 'As in a Clock' and in the prose of CM 2. 11 (p. 53). Nevertheless neither 'Poem upon Moderation' nor 'As in a Clock' contains all of the couplets found across the two poems and Traherne, therefore, adapted both for their respective contexts and for the rhetorical meaning he wished to express in these contexts. The final six lines of 'As in a Clock', which continue after the incorporated final six lines of 'Poem upon Moderation', represent a divergence from the shared theme of moderation of God's power toward an exposition of the proportionality of all things in an ordered universe: 'In all Things, all Things service do to all: / And thus a Sand is Endless, though most small' (ll. 29 – 30). Proportionality is also described in the metaphor of the ordered motion of the clock which is unique to the opening of 'As in a Clock': 'Which order'd motion guides a steddy Hand' (ln. 3). Likewise, the first of the two parts of 'Poem upon Moderation' are unique to *Centuries* both in terms of its couplets, and its theme of moderation of the human body. It seems reasonable, therefore, to suggest that Traherne composed framing couplets for the contexts of these verses in both 'Poem upon Moderation' and 'As in a Clock' and that Traherne reformed and reframed lines from one of the two poems, whilst working between the two texts, with the intention of reusing existing verses for two distinct though related meditative processes.

[69] Margoliuth, 'Notes on the Centuries', in Thomas Traherne, *Centuries, Poems and* Thanksgivings, Vol. I (of 2)(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 234 – 297 (p. 274); Ross, 'Textual Emendations and Notes' (2014), pp. 227 – 228.

‘Poem upon Moderation’, ‘As in a Clock’, and *Christian Ethicks*

Taken together, *Centuries* and *Christian Ethicks* represent two attempts to describe a means of living in a corrupt world for distinct readerships and represent Traherne’s matching of form and reader as vehicles for meditation. C*hristian Ethicks* is a manual of practical Christian virtue primarily aimed at the educated layperson[70]:

> The design of this Treatise is, not to stroak and tickle the Fancy, but to elevate the Soul, and refine its Apprehensions, to inform the Judgement, and polish it for Conversation, to purifie and enflame the Heart, to enrich the Mind, and guide Men (that stand in need of help) in the way of Vertue (p. 1).

Though Traherne’ intention in enriching the soul is similar to that set out in the opening meditations of *Centuries*, the personal, affectionate, and guiding tone whereby Traherne leads his reader to think like him is replaced with pragmatic instruction, and an impersonal relationship with a reader in need of improvement. None of the poetry found in *Commonplace* also appears in *Christian Ethicks*; however, its influence on *Christian Ethicks* adds to supposition that Traherne worked across several texts at once. ‘As in a Clock’ is a thirty-two-line poem on the moderation of power appearing in chapter twenty-three, ‘Of Temperance in God’. The title of the chapter alone implies a theme of moderation for the prose context of this poem. Chapter twenty-three describes the moderation of God’s power in a similar manner to the second part of ‘Poem upon Moderation’ found in *Centuries*:

[70] Marks Sichernan and Guffey, ‘General Introduction’, pp. xxxvi – xlvii.

As in a Clock, ‘tis hinder’-Force doth bring
The Wheels to order’d Motion, by a Spring;
Which order’d Motion guides a steddy Hand
In useful sort at Figures just to stand;
Which, were it not by Counter-ballance staid,
The Fabrick quickly would aside be laid
As wholly useless: So a Might too Great,
But well proportion’d, makes the World compleat.
Power well-bounded is more Great in Might,
Than if let loose ‘twere wholly Infinite.
He could have made an endless Sea by this,
But then it had not been a Sea of Bliss;
A Sea that’s bounded in a finite shore,
Is better far because it is no more.
Should Waters endlessly exceed the Skies,
They’d drown the World, and all whate’re we prize.
Had the bright Sun been Infinite, its Flame
Had burnt the World, and quite consum’d the same.
That Flame would yield no splendor to the Sight,
‘Twould be but Darkness though ‘twere Infinite.
One Star made infinite would all exclude,
An Earth made Infinite could ne’re be view’d.
But all being bounded for each others sake,
He bounding all did all most useful make.
And which is best, in Profit and Delight,
Though not in Bulk, he made all Infinite.
He in his Wisdom did their use extend,
By all, to all the World from End to End.
In all Things, all Things service do to all:
And thus a Sand is Endless, though most small.
And every Thing is truly Infinite,
In its Relation deep and exquisite.

I have underlined ll. 9-12 which are analogous to ll. 27-30 of ‘Poem upon Moderation’. Likewise, ll. 15-16 of ‘As in a Clock’ are analogous to ll. 31-32 of ‘Poem upon Moderation’ and ll. 21-26 are analogous to ll. 43-48. These twelve lines retain their meter and rhyme scheme across both poems. Furthermore lines 17 – 20 share the essence of lines 39 – 40 of ‘Poem upon Moderation’: ‘And were that flame a real Infinit / Twould yeeld no Profit Splendor nor Delight’ though the lines in ‘As in a Clock’ expand on the image of the sun’s flames. Similarly, a mild adaptation of the couplet ‘Even as the Sea within a finite Shore / Is far the Better ‘caus it is no more’ appears in ll. 13 – 14 of ‘As in a

Clock'.[71] The product of this process, in 'As in a Clock', represents an endeavour considerably more involved than recalling a few lines or reusing a favoured phrase. Moreover, the minimal though noticeable reordering of lines, particularly of 'Even as the Sea within a finite Shore/Is far the Better 'caus it is no more', suggests Traherne edited, adapted, or improved verses as he moved them between contexts; though the direction of this improvement is largely a question of stylistic preference. Thus the verse found both in *Centuries* and *Christian Ethicks* strongly imply Traherne either worked across both texts at the same time or that one text was used as a source text for the other and in this manner, Traherne's meditative poems and their prose contexts are not fixed but rather grow into new texts according as a vehicle to the reader for transmitting thought.

Moreover, Traherne's framing of verse in *Christian Ethicks* suggests a more distant and refined understanding of verse as a vessel of knowledge and the careful presentation of this thought for distinct readers – in comparison to the intimate presentation of 'som parts' of 'Poem upon Moderation'. In *Christian Ethicks*, Traherne introduces 'As in a Clock' anonymously:

> IF you say it would be Beneficial to GOD, or to that Spectator, or that Intelligible Power, that Spirit for whom it was made: It is apparent that no Corporeal Being can be serviceable to a Spirit, but only by the Beauty of those Services it performeth to other Corporeals, | that are capable of receiving them: and that therefore all Corporeals must be limited and bounded for each others sake. And for this Cause it is, that a Philosophical Poet said (pp. 180 – 181).

Traherne's language in *Christian Ethicks* is notably more abstract and less intimate than that in *Centuries,* and he frames the poem in a limited way as a means to further his rhetorical point. He does not explicate the poem as he does in *Centuries*. As well as suggesting modesty, Traherne's anonymous framing of the poem suggests a focus on the philosophical import of the poem over its meditative origins and his authorship. Only one further poem, of the eight, found in *Christian Ethicks* is framed so overtly. This second poem 'For Man to Act as if his Soul did see' occurs across two of

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[71] 'Even as the Sea within a finite Shore / Is far the Better 'caus it is no more': Traherne, Centuries, CM II. 11, p. 53.

Traherne's texts in print and manuscript: *Christian Ethicks* and *The Kingdom of God.*[72] In *Christian Ethicks* 'For Man to Act as if his Soul did see' is framed as temporally distant from the composition of the prose and lacking any sense of Traherne's authorship: 'Take it in Verse made long ago upon this occasion' (p. 165). That 'For Man to Act as if his Soul did see' does not appear elsewhere in the period strongly points to Traherne's composition of this poem.[73] In both examples, Traherne's distancing implies a stress on the refinement and perfection of the verses as vessels of truth. On a continuum where poems found in *Select Meditations* and *Centuries* are iterating or developmental, and intimately related to the prose; and poems found in *Commonplace* and *Poems of Felicity* are seen to stand alone these two poems found in *Christian Ethicks* are framed as final, published, and authorised by the passage of time as a means to refine thought and expression. Likewise, the meaning and refinement accumulated by these forms reflects the recontextualisation, refinement, and reframing of thought for distinct readers beginning in *Select Meditations* and arguably ending in *Christian Ethicks*. More tellingly, the framing of this material points to a value system which saw Traherne sometimes intimately sharing meditative poetry with a reader, sometimes storing or sequencing poetry as a standalone resource, perhaps with publication in mind, and sometimes presenting poetry more distantly as a refined philosophical truth.

Conclusion

In recent years, scholarship has embraced Traherne's greatly expanded body of works for its variety of forms and for its engagement with the intellectual trends of his time. These readings have moved away from older interpretations of the poetry and of *Centuries* as mystical or meditative works. Nevertheless, in returning to *Centuries* and in bringing together existing readings of *Christian Ethicks* and *Poems of Felicity* alongside new readings of *Select Meditations* this chapter has argued for the centrality of meditation and meditative texts to Traherne's textual production. The chapter argues,

[72] Traherne, *Christian Ethicks*, pp. 165 – 166; Traherne, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 501 – 502.
[73] No record for this poem appears in Washington DC., Folger Shakespeare Library, Union First Line Index of English Verse, online edn. <https://firstlines.folger.edu> [accessed 31st August 2022].

meditative writing was a habit of thought which Traherne carried across texts and that in iteratively rewriting, reframing, and at times reconstructing meditative prose and verse Traherne continually refined meditative thought throughout his life – later presenting these thoughts for distinct readerships. In composing texts, recomposing fragments, and blending sources Traherne shows a concern for the form, function, and authorial personae of his writing and above all he stresses the spiritual message of his writing. The examples in this chapter adumbrate an image of a writer working across several manuscripts in search of means to express, often extemporarily, experimentally, or digressively his concepts of felicity, virtue, and community in a corrupt world. At the heart of this process, Traherne experimented with verse and he, his brother, and many of his critics have seen this poetry as a standalone vessel of spiritual truths derived in meditation. This has, at times, uncoupled Traherne's poetry from its originating meditative prose context and lead to interpretations of Traherne as primarily a poet and of his meditative prose as somewhat ambiguous, incomplete, and developmental. Nevertheless, to see Traherne's texts individually and separately whether complete or incomplete, verse or prose is to miss their collective value. Traherne's body of writing is better understood as a connected series of artefacts in a meditative, devotional, intellectual, literary, textual process which began in *Select Meditations*, *Ficino Notebook*, and Traherne's earlier texts and progressed through *Inducements to Retirednes*, *Centuries*, *Commonplace, Christian Ethicks*, and on, posthumously, to *Poems of Felicity*. The beauty of Traherne's corpus is not in its diversity but in its unity, which is underpinned by meditative thought.

Conclusion: Forms of Textual Mediation in English Meditative Practices, 1661 – 1678

This thesis has argued that early modern meditation was a textual practice, that this textual practice was essentially and multiply iterative, and that it took place across, or interacted, with a diversity of devotional and secular forms and genres in verse and prose. Writers composed, collated, amended, and contextualised a wealth of texts intermittently and often throughout their lives. They did so as means to make sense of their world and of their place within it ostensibly through the lens of Christian spirituality. Likewise, these texts were read iteratively, repeatedly, and discontinuously by their authors and by selective or implied readerships, In each instance illuminates a complex triad of writer, reader, and text which was contingent on competing concerns for privacy, transmission, modesty, authority, identity, and, overriding these, spiritual function; these texts where inherently iterative, discontinuous, and non-linear, and they elude categorical binaries. As an iterative practice, meditation enabled and at times obligated practitioners to confront their conscience; the repetitiveness of this process revealed spiritual and psychological truths which could be uncomfortable, joyful, or edifying. Moreover, this practice was not an isolated and ritualised form of devotion but a pervasive system of thought which practitioners co-opted into adjacent concerns such as liturgy, construction of personal, familial, and communal identity, moral instruction, and biography. The thesis examined compositions by five practitioners across social strata during the religio-politically oppressive period of the Cavalier Parliament. The period saw the last great flowering of meditation in response to these inequities. The diversity of these texts is, in part, influenced by the variety of theological standpoints the writers took, the communities of practice into which they projected themselves and their texts, and the space they found for individual interpretations of doctrine, scripture, faith and ethics. Austen weighs her material and spiritual worth; justifies her social, familial, and legal decisions as an oppressed widow; and finds solace in the Psalms. Delaval justifies her loyalty and faith in the harsh socio-political environment of the

Carolean and Jacobite courts. Flavel charts a journey from reprobation to election and he uses meditation to mediate his Presbyterian ministry into print with underrepresented communities in mind. Hopton abnegates herself in favour of the Divine, reappropriates cross-confessional and Primitive practices, and is later co-opted by the marginalised non-juring community. Traherne retreats into the intellectual freedoms of scholarship and embraces the Divine presence in the here and now. The texts describe conflicts between social, professional, and religious conscience and a marked turn to interiority and communities of practice. The intensity with which practitioners turned to meditation often during traumatic, transitional, or productive periods of their lives' stresses into therapeutic and empirical appeal as a means to resolve moral predicaments. Studying these texts in their mediative framework highlights the enduring frailties of the human condition. Moreover, the surviving texts give valuable insight into the emotional experiences of early modern people and the often creative ways in which they approached the hazards of life.

The thesis has centred on five English Protestant practitioners who composed meditations during the late Seventeenth Century. However, there is considerable scope to extend the project in terms of time period across a date range approaching two hundred years, confession by considering Roman Catholic practitioners and other non-conformist confessions, geography by considering exiled English faith communities across Europe and maritime and colonial communities particularly in the Atlantic North-West, and by embracing writers who adopt a narrower though no less diverse or significant range of textual forms. Notable exceptions from this thesis which would nevertheless add valuable insight to a modest expansion of the criteria for study include the following. Firstly, the aristocratic Anglo-Irish siblings Robert Boyle and Mary Rich. Their prose occasional meditations written around the time of the Cavalier Parliament and Boyle's large body of scientific works invite questions as to the locus of meditation in their political and intellectual lives. Secondly, Edward Taylor, the colonial American Congregationalist, beginning just after the Cavalier Parliament period wrote copious verse meditations and prose sermons which invite questions as to the transmission of spiritual knowledge between these two textual practices. Thirdly, the colonial American Presbyterian

Anne Bradstreet is most well known for her poetry, and, like Hopton, for the complicated co-option of her publishing by men. However, Bradstreet also wrote a small quantity of prose and taken together her poetry and prose meditations give insight into the loss, longing, and grief of colonial womanhood.[1] Lastly Presbyterian apothecary Julia Palmer's life and writing are difficult to date. Nevertheless, her impressive *The Centuries of Julia Palmer* composed during the early 1670s spans two-hundred scriptural meditations in verse; the scope and variety of these verses invites comparison with Bradstreet, Traherne, and Halkett in terms of style, form, and devotional fervour.[2] This concluding chapter considers the value of studying the forms and functions of meditative writing in its material and epistemological contexts and it gestures toward opportunities to expand this line of enquiry by considering writers across the Early Modern period.

Taking an historico-formalist approach, the thesis has evaluated different genres and forms in verse and prose found in meditative miscellanies, and their functions in light of the biographical, political, social, religious, and geographical contexts of the writer. It has defined and assessed the often-shifting triad of writer, reader, and text as a means to interpret the functions of meditative texts, the question of for whom they functioned, and therefore how and why the forms in these meditative miscellanies were employed. In doing so it has shed light on meditation and meditative miscellanies as processes rather than literary products, and collapsed binaries of completion, literariness, and publication where meditation was, at times, iterated back and forth across these boundaries – such as in the example of Traherne's concomitant writing of several texts at once. Readings of Traherne's *The Church's Year-Book*, Edward Taylor's poetry, and the metaphysical poets in light of their extant sermons and religious writing could find fruitful interactions between meditation and liturgical practice. By locating function at the heart of the readings, the thesis has revealed the at times surprising uses practitioners found for their writing within a meditative context

[1] Cambridge, MA, Harvard Library, MS 1007.1 'The Andover Manuscripts'; Anne Bradstreet, *The Works of Anne Bradstreet*, ed. by Jeannine Hensley (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967).

[2] Los Angeles, CA, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, MS P1745 M1 P744 1671-3 Bound; Julia Palmer, *The 'Centuries' of Julia Palmer*, ed. by Victoria Burke and Elizabeth Clarke (Trent Editions: Nottingham, 2001).

and their great skill in adapting, contextualising, and iterating disparate forms into their meditative miscellanies often over long and dynamic periods of composition as the text grew to reflect changing values and needs. The thesis has argued for a model of meditation which opposes modelling.

The diversity and plurality of these meditative miscellanies which combine devotional and secular forms suggests that there is a wealth of meditative material that has been classified and studied according to competing definitions of form which overlook the pervasiveness of meditative writing. As a habit of thought aimed at personal and cosmological understanding, meditation likely underpinned a wide variety of early modern thinking, and this thesis has argued against interpretations of meditation of meditative texts as formulaic products of this thought. Particularly in light of Delaval's remediation of her meditative texts into a semi-fictional autobiographical text, these texts co-exist with other self-writing forms and, in contrast to rigid interpretations of from, function, and reader, these texts can have multiple overlapping functions. For instance, Austen's letters imply readers outside of the meditative context and her child loss poems whilst implying a reader in their form are questionable in their ego-centric content. There is, therefore, a need to reassess early modern forms in terms of their functions and contexts, particularly where writers compose both meditative and non-meditative texts, such as Robert Boyle, Mary Rich, Anne Halkett, and Thomas Traherne. There are opportunities to open up texts by these writers as in dialogue with each other within a meditative framework or as iterations of a root sequence of thoughts.

As a multi-author study, the thesis has examined writers across confessional, social, and gender boundaries and brought together a canonical author, in the example of Traherne, with writers who have received limited critical attention. The thesis intentionally segregated these writers so as to shine equal critical light on each of them. The intention from the outset has been to demonstrate the influences and textual choices that arise from the unique contexts of the writer and their text. Each text and textual form is a consequence of multiple contextual factors. In turn, the evolving form shapes the context in which it is found. For instance, Delaval's growing understanding

of her proclivities to vanity affect her behaviour and her later decisions to remediate her mediations as a biographical text. Similarly, Traherne's *Select Meditations* later influenced the form of *Centuries of Meditations* and the content of *Christian Ethicks*. This textual shaping sometimes occurs intergenerationally as in the example of Delaval who receives instruction from her aunt and grandmother. The thesis also demonstrates the variety of forms afforded to individual writers and their ingenuity in adapting available forms to suit their needs. Whilst the women in particular show great variety in their forms, it is their textual skill which has been most undervalued. Hopton selects, curates, adapts, depersonalises, quite possibly translates, and assesses the functionality of her sources. Hopton's authorial skill is shown in her careful recontextualisation of texts for the purposes of meditation. The women writers in particular have been maligned by publication and scholarly practices, often after death, by which their agency and skill have been diminished in favour of male ideals of piety, form, and literariness. Women frequently turned to discontinuous forms and, as a discontinuous form itself, meditation, particularly in prose, has been overlooked by scholars preferring polished and rhetorically accomplished texts. Women's meditative writing is often expensive and hard to come by. Digitisation projects such as the Perdita Project have opened up these archives to wider scholarship; however, there is still work to be done: Hopton's work is published only in facsimile form, Delaval and Flavel's works are long out of print, and Halkett's work is yet to be published in full owing to its substantial size. By attending to discontinuous forms such as receipt books, mother's advice, and commonplaces it may be possible to recover further instances of meditative writing and complex textual epistemologies. Similarly, Traherne's century form is notably rigid and unwieldy, and his large body of unfinished texts describe a writer searching for an ideal form. Nevertheless, by attending to textual function this thesis has argued that despite appearances Traherne's two century texts are not incomplete rather they fulfilled their function. By focusing on function and reception the at times discontinuous and messy textuality and materiality of manuscript texts is described as a consequence of the writer's intentions as to the function and readership of the text and not a simple binary of literary or presentational and functional or private.

Since its inception this thesis has been interested in the roles, contextualisation, and values placed on verse forms found in prose in the meditative texts studied. Starting from a question as to the value added by the introduction of verse forms into meditative texts, the thesis has demonstrated that writers chose verse forms for a wide variety of reasons. Thus, verse is chosen for coincidence and convenience as the original source, often being carefully contextualised, and in some cases translated, such as in the examples of Hopton's 'Hymn' and Traherne's 'The Approach'. Further investigation into Hopton's effacement of controversial language in John Austin's poetry in her adaptation, *Devotions in the ancient Way of Offices*, would shed light on her skill in editing poetry which can also be seen in Philip Traherne's appropriation of Thomas Traherne's poetry. Writers use verse to dramatise and summarise thought already found in prose, as in Austen's 'Of Supportation' and Delaval's 'Who ever think's', often with only themselves as the reader. Flavel uses verse extensively with the literacy and memory of his readers in mind; the thesis has introduced the great wealth of Flavel's poetic output and his debt to George Herbert both of which invite further investigation. It has considered Flavel's use of verse as a didactic, moral tool and his perception of a fine line between moral poetry and immoral songs. The thesis has also examined a habit of entextualising or recontextualising small fragments of verse. Austen and Delaval both entextualise fragments of other writers' poems as a means to emphasise or justify a moral position. Traherne most notably recontextualises fragments of his own verses into entirely new texts and contexts with remarkable skill in contextualisation. Moreover Austen, Flavel, and Traherne use verse to frame the author, reader, and text though each of these, particularly Austen and Traherne, appears to do so out of an accepted model of paratextual presentation rather than ingenuity or literary flair. In the examples of Austen, Delaval and Traherne there is some evidence to suggest a trajectory from prose composition to verse composition, and a standalone value placed on meditative verse as embodying spiritual truths which has lead writers, publishers, and scholars to view collections of meditative poetry as retelling meditative arcs. Nevertheless, the intention to publish verse is not universal and writers do at times revert to prose. Moreover, it could be argued that these writers elected to

publish their verse or prepared verse for publication as a means to protect the privacy and candour of their prose where the lyrical voice is more universally acceptable as a conduit of truth. Neither Traherne nor Austen seems to have intended to publish their verse in its entirety, and this selectiveness in reiteration and recontextualisation of verse and prose is a common feature across meditative writing. Moreover, the thesis has demonstrated the value of studying verse in its prose context, and the complex iterativity of meditation across forms.

More personally and poignantly, the texts studied and meditative texts more broadly give insight into the lives of early modern writers, and the ability to recover the voice, experience, and ameliorative processes of historical character is particularly compelling as a means to find social value in humanities research. Each of the five writers was tremendously productive and seemingly always employed often in competing roles including ministry, motherhood, studentship, courtship, legal trials, and lengthy travel between disparate places of work and habitation. Austen's *Book M* charts her not always straightforward engagement with family, legal professionals, politics, neighbours, property, romantic relationships, and staff, and shows that, far from displaying meek piety, women engaged with a wealth of activities, individuals, and institutions, and textual and verbal skills were crucial to their success. Flavel's writing records the activities and concerns of mariners and farm labourers, if not always accurately, and the fears, hopes, and labour of these communities resonate across time. More viscerally Flavel writes of drunkenness, lechery, profanity and hypocrisy, and it is evident that the perceived vices of our own time were just as concerning for social moralisers in the past as they are today. Moreover, these occupations and activities were performed against a backdrop of precarity, itinerancy, and disease. Both Delaval and Flavel are subject to persecution and exile, and Austen's writing is suffused with accounts of death. Marriage, in the three women studied, could bring opportunities to access financial and intellectual support, as in the example of Hopton, yet frequently brought with it emotional turmoil, financial peril, and loss; Delaval's meditations composed in marriage stress a particularly lonely and disorienting period of her life which meditation appears to have helped her to resolve. These experiences not only

resonate with ongoing issues of female inequality today, but gesture toward investigation into the usefulness of the iterativity of meditation and journaling in modern therapeutic settings. Spirituality can be thought of as a second occupation. Devotion, meditation, and scripture occupied spare hours, and often dominated even trivial activities and choices. Each of the writers displays extensive and often assumed knowledge of scripture and devotional practice. Their frequent use of scriptural paraphrase and abridgement suggests Biblical knowledge is sufficient such that it seems casual; however, the relative sparsity of Biblical references demonstrates these writers' frequent deviation from the theoretical intention of meditation as a means to take scripture to heart. Nevertheless the manner in which they continued to compose meditations and to improve upon their writing attests to the effectiveness of meditation as a habit of learning, the mental exertion it doubtlessly demanded, and the apparent conviction and sincerity with which practitioners repeatedly returned to meditation to resolve personal, professional, and spiritual dilemmas. Meditation offers practitioners a means to step outside of themselves and their material concerns to larger questions of faith, ethics, cosmology, and identity. Nevertheless, writers, such as Austen, took the opportunity to consider family and legacy and an undercurrent of legacy and lament governs Flavel's frequent citation of moderate and eirenic clergy. Each of these texts charts the conflicts of conscience early modern Christians faced in balancing the ideals of their faith or family with the realities of a corrupting and frenetic world. Austen, Delaval, and Traherne's manuscripts reveal a world fraught with suspicion, intrigue, and hypocrisy in which individuals faced difficult social negotiations or, given the privilege, retreated into physical or emotional retirement.

Most compellingly, the texts give insight into the emotional experiences of the writers, and the research contributes to growing interest in the history of emotions. Delaval expresses anger, anguish, regret, hope, and ultimately despair at her position in life as a consequence of her, and her family members', choices; in a modern medical context we might describe her condition as suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as she attempts to recover her identity. Flavel shows great affection for his readers, admiration for his clerical forebears, and occasional notes of sadness and

loss, and his 'little book' is testament to his endeavour in recovering a community of the faithful. Austen experiences melancholy, loneliness, joy, and moments of pride and satisfaction each of which she questions with the anxiety of what today might be termed 'survivor guilt'. In addition, her text is riven with her fear of death and sickness. Traherne, experiences perhaps the greatest extremes of emotion. In *Centuries* he expresses his overwhelming and infectious joy and wonder is interspersed with deep sadness and recollections of intense isolation and loneliness. In *Select Meditations* he candidly describes feelings of alienation and frustration at meeting his congregation and he complains to God about the hardships of his profession. Meditative writing provides an excellent means to understand the experience and expression of a wide variety of emotions in this growing field of study.[3] Moreover, meditation gives insight into how Early Modern textual practices aided in the management of emotions: Austen and Delaval seem particularly drawn to meditation as a means of emotional solace. Their work shows how meditative writing aids in the expansion of emotional vocabulary, and the repetitiveness and iterativity of meditation aids in the precise delineation, prioritisation, and assessment of strengths and weaknesses, or, in Austen's framework, triumphs and afflictions. Thus, as an insight into the history of emotions the study of the forms and functions of meditation affords opportunities to ask how historical practice might apply to modern day therapeutic settings.

In her assessments of Austen and Delaval, Ezell positions their texts as a locus of expression of identity. Whilst acknowledging Ezell's assessment, this thesis has shown a concomitant process of encountering selfhood and identity, often repeatedly, and often distressingly. Austen encounters multiple layers of selfhood and negotiates these identities according to need; Delaval encounters the

[3] See: *The Renaissance of Emotion: Understanding Affect in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*, ed. by Richard Meek and Erin Sullivan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015); Erin Sullivan, *Beyond Melancholy: Sadness and Selfhood in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Bradley J. Irish, *Emotion in the Tudor Court: Literature, History, and Early Modern Feeling* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018); Cora Fox, Bradley J. Irish and Cassie M. Miura, eds., *Positive Emotions in Early Modern Literature and Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021); Fay Bound Alberti, *A Biography of Loneliness: The History of an Emotion* (Oxford University Press, 2019); *Spaces, Places, and Times of Solitude in Late Medieval and Early Modern Cultures*, ed. by Karl A. E. Enenkel and Christine Göttler (Leiden: Brill, 2018); Andrew Mattison, *Solitude and Speechlessness: Renaissance Writing and Reading in Isolation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019).

dissonance of her religious ideal and her flagrant reality and she struggles to reconcile these two. Hopton abnegates her selfhood in favour of the devotional fervour she encounters in her sources; however, her two conversions imply the difficult religio-political decisions she undertook in order to protect her sense of herself as a member of an apostolic church. Traherne and Flavel encounter professional identities in contrast to their personal selfhood and their writing asks their readers to consider the same issues of identity in a conflicted world. As an expression of identity, therefore, these meditative texts are more than a presentation for a reader, and the writing is not solely for transaction or publication. Writing, in the instance of meditation, is an encounter with the conscience.

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