



*John  
Milton  
and the  
Cultures  
OF Print*

An Exhibition of  
Books, Manuscripts,  
and Other Artifacts

February 3, 2011 – May 31, 2011

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JOHN MILTON AT THE AGE OF 62,  
IN *THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN* (1670),  
BY THE ENGLISH ENGRAVER WILLIAM FAITHORNE,  
TAKEN FROM LIFE.

COVER ILLUSTRATION: ILLUSTRATION BY WILLIAM BLAKE  
FROM *BLAKE, MILTON A POEM* (1804)

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## Introduction



John Milton was born in 1608 to a century of revolution — in politics, in print media, in science and the arts. By the time he died in 1674, Britain had experienced the governments of three different Stuart monarchs, the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, and a few short-lived experiments in republican government. In the midst of this turbulent period, governmental controls on printing varied considerably, with the most profound release of censorship occurring in 1640–41, at the onset of the English Civil War, a war between Puritans and Anglicans, and between Parliamentarians and Royalists. But control of the press occurred during the wars and the Interregnum, and in part because of these political changes, the written word took an extraordinarily wide variety of forms, from short poems hand-written on a single manuscript leaf to printed treatises, from broadsides and incendiary pamphlets costing a few pennies to massive bound folios.

This exhibition of Milton's writing represents the key moments in his long career in relation to the changing world of print and other forms of written expression. Milton's early poetic career was interrupted in 1640 by civil wars that transformed England's state from a hereditary monarchy into a republican experiment in government. During these turbulent years, Milton largely postponed his poetic aspirations to devote himself to polemical, theological, and historical prose. After the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660, the now blind poet produced his greatest masterpieces, among them the epic *Paradise Lost*. The epic was immediately hailed, in the words of the poet John Dryden, as "one of the most sublime poems this age or nation has produced."

Thanks largely to the work of J. Milton French (or "Milton"), Rutgers Professor from 1940–1960, and to the generosity of donors and alumni, Rutgers owns an exceptionally large collection of Milton's works. It is among the top five collections in American public academic libraries. This exhibition combines the holdings of the Rutgers collection of Milton and his contemporaries with generous loans from the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of Pennsylvania, and with images taken from the Beinecke Library at Yale University, the New York Public Library, and the British Library. Milton's "Digression," a manuscript shown in digital facsimile, is provided by the kind permission of the Houghton Library of Harvard University.

CHAUCER, *THE WORKES OF OUR ANCIENT AND LEARNED ENGLISH POET* (1602).  
MILTON HAD A COPY OF THIS 1602 EDITION OF CHAUCER, THE SECOND  
EDITION OF A COLLECTION FIRST PRODUCED BY THOMAS SPEGHT IN 1598.

# I. Milton's Library

Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life ... as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous Dragons teeth.

Milton, *Areopagitica*

Milton's personal letters show that his access to books came in part from libraries and borrowed books, but also from his own substantial collection, which he had amassed from books acquired at shops in London and Europe. Regrettably, unlike contemporaries whose libraries are still intact or whose collections can be reconstructed with shelf lists or signed books, few of Milton's actual books can be identified with certainty: there are extant only seven books from Milton's own library. This is probably because he stopped signing books quite early in his career. Yet, like many early modern writers and readers, Milton kept a reading notebook or a Commonplace Book, which was a structured repository for reading notes. From this manuscript, in conjunction with references in his written work, we are able to piece together a detailed record of what Milton read and what he took away from his reading. This manuscript is presently housed in the British Library, and a few pages are reproduced for display here.

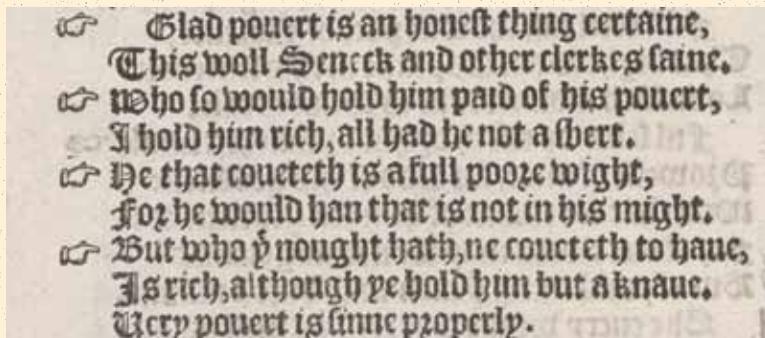
## I. Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Workes of Our Ancient and Learned English Poet* (London: Printed by Adam Islip, 1602)

In the early seventeenth century, publishers commonly marked passages for extraction in the margins, so that readers could record passages of value in their commonplace books. This volume of Chaucer's works presents itself as conveniently noting "Sentences and proverbs." Accordingly, small pointing hands (or "manicules") are littered across the pages that Milton cites in his notebook and in his prose. From the page numbers marked in his Commonplace Book, it is clear that Milton used this edition of Chaucer's works, yet in all of his excerpts from Chaucer, Milton is never tempted to record these marked passages. The Rutgers copy is missing its title page; the photograph is provided by the Beinecke Library at Yale University.



2. “Manicules” in Milton’s Chaucer. *The Workes of Our Ancient and Learned English Poet* (1602), fol. 36v

Manicules or marks indicating extractible sentences (often rhymed couplets) appear throughout the pages that Milton cites in his notebook and in his prose, but Milton never seems tempted to quote the passages marked.



A PAGE FROM MILTON’S CHAUCER, SHOWING A PASSAGE THAT HE CITES IN HIS COMMONPLACE BOOK. THE PRINTED “MANICULES” (OR POINTING HANDS) INDICATE “SENTENCES” TO BE EXTRACTED BY READERS.

3. *The Holy Bible: Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New: newly translated out of the originall tongues* (London: By Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie, anno 1611)

One of the seven extant books from Milton’s library is the King James Bible of 1611, now in the British Library (part of the manuscript collection, MS Additional 32310). This was Milton’s “family Bible,” in which records of family history were recorded in the back. The “authorized” King James Version of the Bible was designed to replace the so-called Geneva Bible, the most popular Bible in England, whose notes nonetheless had a Puritan bias that the King thought “very partiall, untrue, seditious, and savouring too much, of dangerous, and traitorous conceits.” Milton’s copy contains many manuscript annotations and corrections.

4. Sir Thomas Smith, *The Common-wealth of England* (London: Printed by William Stansby for John Smethwicke, 1621)

Thomas Smith (1513–1577) was an Elizabethan political theorist who wrote in strong support of Parliamentary sovereignty. “The most high and absolute power of the Realme of England consisteth in the Parliament,” he wrote. “The Parliament abrogateth old Lawes, maketh new, giveth order for things past, and for things hereafter to be followed, changeth rights and possessions of private men, . . . establisheth formes of Religion, [and] giveth forme of succession to the Crown.” The war between the crown and the parliament revolved largely around questions of parliamentary versus royal sovereignty. Milton refers to this influential book several times in his reading notes and in his printed polemic.

5. Pindar, *Pindari Olympia, Pythia, Nemea, Isthmia* (Saumur, 1620),  
new acquisition

A great deal of Milton's reading was not in English, but in Latin, Greek, Italian, and other languages. Books in languages other than English were printed in London, but many were European imports. The proportion of foreign imprints in Milton's reading notes is 73 percent. Foreign books could be obtained in London bookshops, and Milton also shipped books home from Europe, and had friends send him books from abroad. In comparison with other personal libraries for which we have shelf-lists, the surprisingly low percentage of British imprints in Milton's notes is quite normal, and it may well represent the proportions in Milton's own library. Milton cites Pindar in his writing, probably drawing from this edition. A copy of this same imprint long thought to have been Milton's, with annotations included in the Columbia edition of Milton's works, is housed at Harvard University. Whether the copy now at Harvard actually belonged to Milton is now debated.

6. Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queen; The Shepherds Calendar:  
Together with the Other Works of England's Arch-poët*  
(London: Printed by H.L. for Mathew Lownes, 1617)

In addition to Shakespeare, Milton was profoundly influenced by the English epic poet Edmund Spenser. Frequently cited in Milton's prose, Milton refers to Spenser as "our Poet Spenser" — a figure of unquestionable national importance. Milton had long planned to write a national epic like that of Spenser. As he wrote in 1639 he was "resolved to tell the story of the Trojan ships" that came to the British Isles, a national epic in the Virgilian mode that reaffirmed the foundation myth of a nation. When he finally turned to write *Paradise Lost*, however, the geography was biblical rather than national; and instead of writing about founding a place, he wrote about leaving a place.

7. The Index of Milton's Commonplace Book, British Library  
MS Additional 36354, p. 251

Milton's reading notes were organized under topics in three categories: Ethics, Economics (or Domestic topics), and Politics. Each listed topic appeared at the top of a page, and notes were then systematically recorded on that page until a new page with that topic was needed. The topic "Rex" or "King" needed a few pages. From Milton's handwriting, it is clear that the first two topics in the Political Index were Republica and Rex, and then the other topics were filled in during the ten or fifteen year period that the notebook was used. The Index has several topics added that are not in Milton's hand, such as those from pp. 197 to 205, which are in the hand of a posthumous owner. "Varius Reipub. Status," or "Various Forms of Government," is in the recognizable hand of one of Milton's scribes, perhaps acting as a research assistant.

8. The first page of the Political Index of Milton's Commonplace Book,  
British Library MS Additional 36354, p. 177

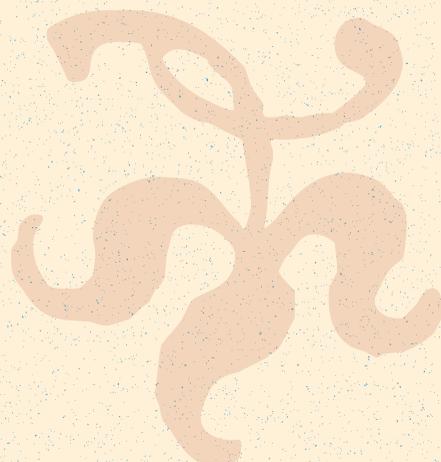
Almost all of the entries in Milton's notes have a clearly cited source, but the second entry here is an unusually long reflection that does not seem to derive directly from reading material. The first topic in this Index is *Respublica*, or "Republic." The page illustrates the differences in handwriting, from what appears to be one of Milton's earliest entries, from Eusebius, in a small neat hand, to Lord Preston's entry at the bottom, drawn from a book of Machiavelli's, "printed at London, 1675" — the year after Milton died.

9. "Laws" from Milton's Commonplace Book;  
British Library MS Additional 36354, p. 179

The page on "Laws" from Milton's Commonplace Book shows one of many clustered entries to Holinshed's *Chronicles*, in which Milton seeks to cite multiple instances in which English kings are sworn to the laws at their coronation. The page contains a few cross references, "vide Subditus" and "see Rex," allowing the reader to access other passages related to the topic. The citation format used in the Holinshed entries changes significantly, showing that Milton made entries on this page at different times. Holinshed is the most frequently cited work in his reading notes.

10. "Rex" or "Monarchy," a topic in Milton's Commonplace Book,  
British Library MS Additional 36354, p. 195

Milton's reading notebook has many entries that are not in his hand, and here all of the entries, except for the first entry and the topic "Rex" are in hands other than Milton's. The second entry in the elegant hand is by Jeremy Picard, a scribe that worked with Milton in the late 1650s, who wrote entries in his Family King James Bible, recording the death of his wife, and who worked on the manuscript of *De Doctrina Christiana*, shown in X. There are also entries from Machiavelli's *Discorsi* by a scribe who worked with Milton, possibly his nephew John Phillips. Lord Preston's posthumous entries — "What Calvin says" — are particularly revealing for what they suggest about the omissions in Milton's recorded reading, for Milton surprisingly never recorded Calvin's political views here.



## II. Milton's Early Poetry

Then to the well-trod stage anon,  
If Jonson's learned sock be on,  
Or sweetest Shakespeare fancy's child  
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

Milton, "L'Allegro," lines 131-34.

Like most early modern poets, Milton circulated his poems in manuscript and eventually collected them — or, at least, those fit to print — into a printed volume. Many poets, such as John Donne, never lived to see the majority of their poems in print, in part because manuscript circulation still provided an extremely effective form of publication. More comfortable with the print marketplace than some contemporaries, Milton put out two volumes of poetry during his lifetime: the first, printed at the age of thirty-seven during the civil wars in 1645, and the second in 1673, the year before he died. A few of his short poems also appeared in print separately, such as the poem to Shakespeare, the first of his poems to appear in print in 1632. Some of his poetry, such as the sonnets to Fairfax and Cromwell, were not fit to print in his lifetime.

### An Epitaph on the admirable Dramaticke Poet, VV. SHAKESPEARE.

hat neede my Shakespeare for his honour'd bones,  
The labour of an Age, in piled stones  
Or that his hallow'd Reliques should be hid  
Vnder a starre-ypointing Pyramid?  
Deare Sonne of Memory, great Heire of Fame,  
What needst thou such dull witnesse of thy Name?  
Thou in our wonder and astonishment  
Hast built thy selfe a lasting Monument:  
For whilst to th'shame of slow-endavouring Art  
Thy easie numbers flow, and that each part,  
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued Booke,  
Those Delphicke Lines with deepe Impression tooke  
Then thou our fancy of her selfe bereaving,  
Dost make us Marble with too much conceiving,  
And so Sepulcher'd in such pompe dost lie  
That Kings for such a Tombe would wish to die.

"AN EPITAPH ON THE ADMIRABLE DRAMATIC POET, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE,"  
MILTON'S FIRST PUBLISHED POEM, WRITTEN IN HIS EARLY TWENTIES, AS IT APPEARS  
IN THE SECOND EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE'S COLLECTED PLAYS (1632).

11. [Milton,] “An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet, William Shakespeare” in *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies* (1632)

Milton’s first published poem is this anonymous “epitaph” placed prominently in the second edition of Shakespeare’s collected plays. No one knows how John Milton, a then unknown poet in his early 20s, was selected to contribute to this majestic Folio printing of England’s great dramatist, though it has recently become clear that Milton’s family had connections to the King’s Men, Shakespeare’s troupe of players.

12. [Milton,] “An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet, William Shakespeare,” in *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies* (1664)

“Epitaph” literally means “written over the tomb.” The concept is explored by the poem itself, but also by the way it is printed, with “EPITAPH,” and “WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE” produced in lapidary letters suggestive of a tomb.

13. J.M., “To the Memorie of M. W. Shakespeare,” in Shakespeare’s First and Second Folio; shown here from the 1664 Folio

This poem, by a “J.M.,” appeared in the first Folio of Shakespeare’s works in 1623, and it is thought by some to have been by Milton’s father, John Milton Senior, who was a trustee of Blackfriars Theatre, which was used by Shakespeare’s company.



14. Milton, *Poems of Mr. John Milton, Both English and Latin* (Humphrey Moseley, 1645) title page facsimile courtesy of the Beinecke Library, Yale University

Milton produced the first printed collection of his poetry in an elegant volume that seems almost at odds with his pamphleteering work at the time. It was printed very early in 1646, in the midst of the civil wars, after Milton had published eleven prose pamphlets. His publisher protested in his preface to Milton's volume that "the slightest Pamphlet is now adays more vendible then the Works of learnedest men." In wartime England, he had been "diligent to collect, and set forth such Peeces," out of "the love I have to our own Language." Moseley published mostly drama and Royalist poetry, making him a curious choice for Milton. William Marshall's rough portrait of Milton features an idyllic background quite at odds with England's polemical, as well as actual, battlefields. The Greek inscription adds some comedy to the pastoral, for Milton had the unwitting engraver write "That an unskillful hand had carved this print / You'd say at once, seeing the living face; / But finding here no jot of me, my friends, / Laugh at the botching artist's mis-attempt."

15. John Suckling, *Fragmenta Aevrea. A Collection of all The Incomparable Peeces* (Humphrey Moseley, 1646)

Another poet that Moseley put into print at the same time as Milton was the Cavalier poet and playwright Sir John Suckling, a Royalist close to the court of Charles I. His portrait is also by Marshall.

16. Milton, Sonnet "How Soon hath Time" in manuscript draft. Facsimile of the Trinity College Manuscript at Cambridge (MS R.3.4)

This sonnet, later numbered "Sonnet 7," was sent in a letter to a friend that exists in draft in the Trinity Manuscript. It is, as Milton writes, in a "Petrarchian Stanza" (or a Petrarchan form, after the great Italian poet Petrarch), rather than the Shakespearean sonnet form more commonly practiced by English sonneteers. As was the case here, many of Milton's poems would have circulated in manuscript.

MILTON AT TWENTY-ONE, BY WILLIAM MARSHALL, A PROLIFIC ENGRAVER, FRONTISPIECE TO *THE POEMS OF MR. JOHN MILTON* (1645). MILTON CARED LITTLE FOR THE PORTRAIT, AND LATER SAID THAT THE ENGRAVER WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT COULD BE FOUND IN WAR-TORN LONDON. MARSHALL IS THE SAME ARTIST WHO PRODUCED THE IMAGE OF THE KING IN *EIKON BASILIKE* (1648), BELOW.

### III. *The Scribal Publication of Verse*

What Printing-presses yield we think good store,  
But what is writ by hand we reverence more.

John Donne, “De Libro cum Mutuaretur Impresso”

Donne’s famous aphorism suggests a reality supported by his practice, in which all but three of his poems circulated only in manuscript while he lived. The scribal “publication” of these poems was probably as effective as print, since even now over 4,000 extant manuscript texts attest to an extraordinary rate of production. Survival rates vary in puzzling ways: in spite of the value they must have had even then, the survival rate of poems in Donne’s own hand is extraordinarily low: only one survives, and it was discovered in 1970. Scribal circulation was the central mode of publication for poets like Donne, Thomas Traherne, Andrew Marvell, or Katherine Phillips, most of whose poetry was not printed until after their deaths.

#### 17. Donne, Elegy 18: “Love’s Progress,” and 6-line epigram

Like many of the 4000 plus poems that have survived by Donne, this copy shows no indication of authorship. One of the dangers of scribal publication, of course, is that attributions can easily shift or disappear, though — as is clear in the many anonymous print publications in this exhibit — possessive authorship was still a developing concept.

#### 18. “Oceana et Britannia,” probably written in 1681.

The manuscript copy in an unknown hand of a poem  
incorrectly ascribed to Andrew Marvell; 12 pp

Another anonymous poem, long thought to be Marvell’s. Because the writings of many poets were not collected until after their deaths, attribution of early modern poetry is still a source of dispute.

#### 19. “Cromwell’s Ghost” [sonnet]

(“Rouze upp my Sons: redeeme your lost Renown.”)

A radical republican sonnet, perhaps written in 1659 or 1660, which bids readers to remember 1641 — probably as the restoration of the monarch was nearly at hand. Scribal publication was a major vehicle for subversive views, since there were no authorities to license publication, and the source of publication is virtually untraceable. Milton’s own political sonnets to Cromwell and Fairfax (among others) remained in manuscript until after his death.

20. Milton, “On Time,” in manuscript draft. Facsimile of the Trinity College Manuscript at Cambridge (MS R.3.4)

This poem was first circulated with the instructions “Upon a Clocke Case, or Dyall” as it appears in a manuscript now housed in the Bodleian Library, with similar instructions later crossed out in the Trinity MS.

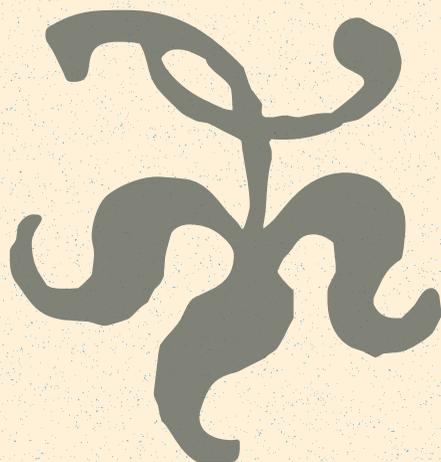
21. Milton, “At a Solemn Music,” in manuscript draft. Facsimile of the Trinity College Manuscript at Cambridge (MS R.3.4)

Ben Jonson once said that Shakespeare “never blotted out a line,” meaning that he never needed to correct a line of verse. Jonson was probably myth-making, but there is unfortunately almost no evidence to corroborate or challenge his claim. Drafts of poems from the early modern period are rare, though in Milton’s case there is extant a quite large collection of his poems in manuscript, some in very rough versions, and some in a fair copy by a scribe, such as what might have been circulated in manuscript form. The last line of this early poem, “At a Solemn Music,” shows considerable rethinking over the question of how one lives and sings with God:

To live and sing with him ~~in ever-endless light.~~  
~~in ever-glorious light~~  
where day dwells without night  
~~in endless morne of light~~  
~~in cloudlesse birth of light~~  
[~~cloudlesse morne of light~~  
~~endlesse birth of light~~]  
~~in never parting light~~  
in endles morne of light.

In print, the first phrase is also modified:

“To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light.”



## IV. Pamphlet Wars

The slightest Pamphlet is nowadays more vendible  
then the Works of learnedest men.

Humfrey Moseley, in the Preface to Milton's *Poems* (1645)

Short, cheap, vernacular, and costing no more than a few pennies, the printed pamphlet often proved the most effective form for quick interventions in controversy. With the breakdown of censorship, the production of books and especially pamphlets exploded. The number of titles printed in England in 1641 was 2042, more than three times the number produced in 1639. More books and pamphlets were printed in 1642, during the English Civil War, than in the five-year period prior to 1639.

In 1640–1, a bookseller and friend of Milton's named George Thomason began collecting books to document history, and for two decades he amassed 22,000 pamphlets, books, broadsides, and books of poetry. He dated each title with the day of its appearance, providing an invaluable (though not always precise) record of the day-to-day history of print; the entire collection now rests in the British Library, and is accessible online. Some of the titles preserved by Thomason exist in no other collection — all other records of their existence have been lost.

Pamphlets were the dominant mode of publication in the mid-seventeenth century, and most of Milton's own publications are pamphlets. Even though Milton published many pamphlets, and referred to many pamphlets in his printed work, he almost never refers to contemporary pamphlets in his *Commonplace Book*. Pamphlets have not always been valued; the Oxford librarian Thomas Bodley spoke famously against preserving pamphlets in libraries and university collections such as his own, opining that they were “not worth the custody in such a Library.” They were short — sometimes very short — quarto books, which meant that the large sheet that was printed was folded twice (to make four parts) — a Folio, such as Shakespeare's Folio featured here, would be folded just once.

### 22. Joseph Hall, *An Humble Remonstrance to the High Court of Parliament, By a Dutifull Sonne of the Church* (London, 1641)

The pamphlets represented in this section of the exhibit represent a small slice of a larger debate that helped precipitate the English Civil War. Here Bishop Joseph Hall writes a remonstrance to Parliament on behalf of the English Church. He is then attacked in print by a group of puritans; he then defends himself, is attacked again, defends himself, and Milton finally enters the fray in 1642 with his last pamphlet on the Church.

### 23. Smectymnuus, *An Answer to a Book Entituled An Humble Remonstrance* (London, 1641)

“Smectymnuus” is an acronym created from the initials of five writers (who thus somewhat preserved their anonymity): Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow. Thomas Young had been a tutor of Milton in his youth. This is their first pamphlet, appearing in March, 1641, in response to Hall's *Humble Remonstrance*, above. It is thought that Milton wrote “The Postscript” to the volume.

24. [Joseph Hall,] *A Short Answer to the Tedious Vindication of Smectymnuus* (London, 1641)
25. [Joseph Hall,] *A Defense of the Humble Remonstrance against the Frivolous and False Exceptions of Smectymnuus* (London, 1641)
26. [Joseph Hall,] *A Letter Sent to an Honourable Gentleman*

This anonymous pamphlet or “letter” is only four pages long, which means it was constructed with just one printed sheet. It gives no indication of author or printer.

27. [John Milton,] *An Apology against a Pamphlet call'd A Modest Confutation of the Animadversions upon a Remonstrant against Smectymnuus* (London, Printed by E.G. for John Rothwell, 1642)

Milton’s apology (or “defense”), also called *An Apology for a Pamphlet*, was the last of his anti-prelatical tracts criticizing the structure of the established Church of England. It is currently valued for the rather lengthy and revealing defense of himself that occurs in the tract, in which Milton speaks of himself as a poet.

28. Sonnet, “On his dore when ye Citty expected an assault,” written in 1642, from the Trinity MS (facsimile)

The sonnet titled “On his dore when ye Citty expected an assault,” written in a scribal hand in the Trinity Manuscript, with the title then changed in Milton’s hand, was possibly reproduced by the same scribe. It appears to be a finished copy rather than one created from dictation, and possibly created in the process of additional scribal copying. Like the poem “On Time,” it is a poem first designed to be affixed to a place. In 1642 the Royalist army had terrific success against the parliamentarians, centered in London.

29. Sonnet, “On ye religious memorie of Mrs Catharine Thomason my christian freind deceas’d 16 Decem. 1646,” from the Trinity MS (facsimile)

A sonnet written about the wife of George Thomason. Milton’s friendship with the Thomasons is also attested in the number of copies of Milton’s work that Milton provided for Thomason’s collection, signed by Milton. By the date provided on another copy donated to an unknown person — November 23 written in a copy of *Areopagitica* now at the Beinecke library — it seems that Milton (or the recipient) also took an interest in documenting the relationship between literature and history.

## V. *The Divorce Tracts*

### “Licentious, new, and dangerous”

During the civil war period Milton wrote over twenty pamphlets in defense of “three varieties of liberty,” as he put it in 1654: “ecclesiastical liberty, domestic or personal liberty, and civil liberty.” The five pamphlets on “domestic liberty” — his so-called divorce tracts — boldly argued for the liberty to choose a spouse and to choose again if that choice proved in error. His views were called “licentious, new and dangerous,” and he was the subject of a Parliamentary inquiry. Contemporaries wanted the books suppressed, which may have contributed to his commitment to the freedom of the press.

#### 30. Milton, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643)

It is often thought that difficulties in his first marriage to Mary Powell precipitated his writings on divorce, and biography may have played a role. But it is clear by his notes in the Commonplace Book that he was interested in the rules around marriage and divorce much earlier. Recent research has also shown that Milton’s several divorce tracts are also in dialogue with current debates, and particularly the Westminster Assembly’s efforts to reform the institution of marriage. These reveal Milton to be contributing to a national discussion much more than has been previously understood.

#### 31. Milton, *The Doctrine & Discipline of Divorce; Restor’d to the Good of Both Sexes... To the Parliament of England, with the Assembly. The author J. M.* (1644)

The popular, though scandalous first edition of Milton’s first divorce tract justified a significantly expanded second edition.

#### 32. Milton, *The Judgement of Martin Bucer, Concerning Divorce... To the Parliament of England... Publisht by Authoritie* (Printed by Matthew Simmons, 1644)

In his effort to present divorce as a legitimate concern (and not the view of a heretic), Milton translated part of Martin Bucer’s *De Regno Christi — On the Kingdom of Christ* — a work of theocratic politics that Bucer had written in England during the reign of Edward VI. Bucer was a major Reformation figure, imported to England in the early establishment of English Protestantism. Unlike other Miltonic tracts of the period, which were not licensed for publication, Milton could publish this tract “by Authority” — no one would bar him from publishing a translation of a venerated figure. In this tract, Milton addresses the Parliament, as usual, but he gives up on the Presbyterian Westminster Assembly.

33. *Colasterion: A Reply to a Nameles Answer against The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (London, Printed in the year, 1645)

In August 1644, Stationers (the publishing guild) asked parliament to enforce laws against unlicensed pamphlets, and demanded that the Committee on Printing hunt down “the Authors, Printers, and Publishers” of such pamphlets as those “Concerning Divorce.” In November 1644, an anonymous (or “nameless”) “Answer” to Milton’s first divorce tract appeared. This response (“Colasterion” means “punishment”) is a sharp rebuke.

34. *Tetrachordon: Expositions upon the Foure Chief Places in Scripture, which Treat of Mariage, or Nullities in Mariage. By the former author J.M. (1645)*

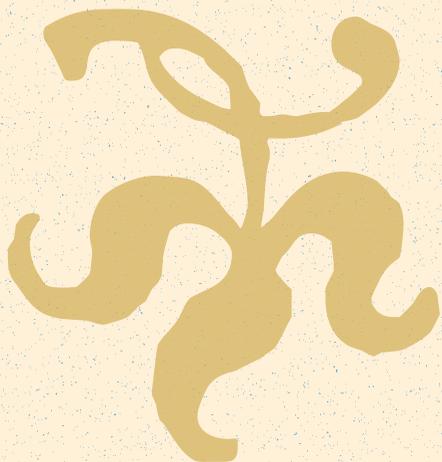
*Tetrachordon*, named after a four-stringed Greek lyre, is a study of the four scriptural passages pertaining to marriage and divorce. It appeared at about the same time as *Colasterion*, and it is quite large by pamphleteering standards: some 110 quarto pages. A work of biblical exegesis, it attempts to harmonize (like the strings of the lyre) four seemingly dissonant scriptural passages.

35. “On the Detraction Which Followed Upon My Writing Certain Treatises” from the Trinity MS (facsimile)

“I writt a book” was changed in the manuscript to “A booke was writ of late call’d Tetrachordon,” perhaps to make the texts safer to print in the Restoration. Milton was deeply frustrated with the response to his divorce tracts, which may in part have contributed to the hiatus in his printed work from 1645-1649.

36. “On the Same,” now Sonnet XII, from the Trinity MS (facsimile)

“I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs / By known rules of ancient liberty,” this sonnet begins. But now England seems only to “bawl for freedom” in “a senseless mood.” Milton became extremely disillusioned with England’s ongoing civil wars, which no longer seemed revolutionary, but senseless and even potentially ruinous.



## VI. Revolution and the Freedom of the Press

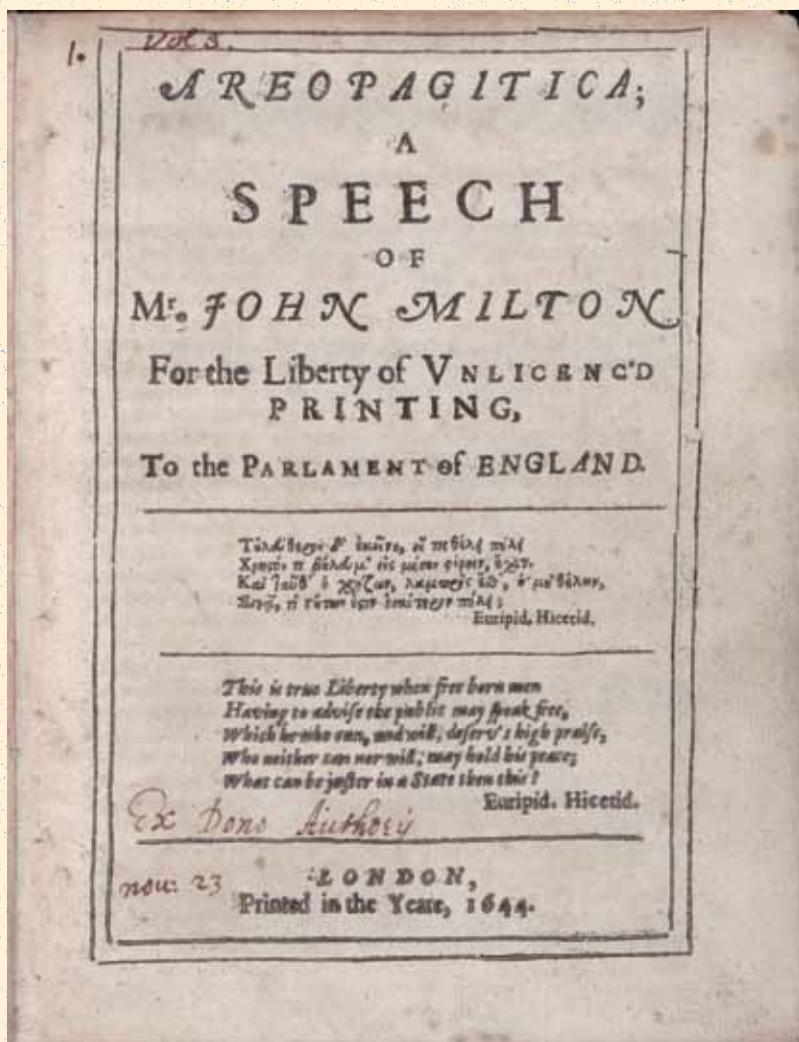
What Magistrate may not be misinformed,  
and much the sooner, if liberty of Printing  
be reduc'd into the power of a few?

Milton, *Areopagitica*

Early in the parliamentary wars against King Charles I, major factions began to emerge among members of the opposition. Parliament was increasingly dominated by extremists who advocated intolerance — sometimes even extreme intolerance — against dissenting opinions and religious beliefs. These strict Presbyterian puritans opposed many of the positions that Milton either held already or would come to hold in the course of the 1640s — among these the freedom to divorce, theological free will, and anti-trinitarianism. In 1643, Parliament passed an “Ordinance for the Regulating of Printing,” which Milton interpreted in *Areopagitica* as designed to suppress belief. In 1648 the extremism had taken an even more severe form, when Parliament passed an “Ordinance for the Punishing of Blasphemies and Heresies,” and it became illegal to print certain “heresies” — such as those that Milton upheld.

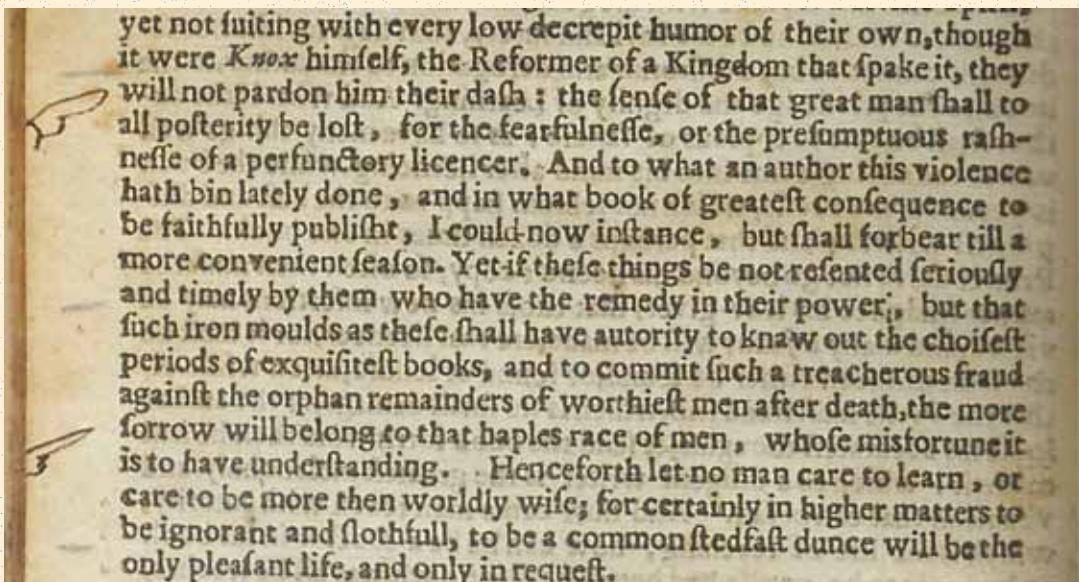
Milton felt increasingly that the revolution had not gone far enough, and the struggle was mired in a stalemate that might be ruinous to the country. He wrote *Areopagitica* in the midst of writing the divorce tracts, and soon thereafter — after, in fact, he published the 1645 poems featured in the central case — he stopped participating in the print marketplace for four years.

*AREOPAGITICA, A SPEECH*  
*OF MR. JOHN MILTON,*  
TITLE PAGE OF THE COPY AT  
THE BEINECKE LIBRARY,  
DONATED BY MILTON.  
EITHER MILTON OR THE  
RECIPIENT HAS DATED THE  
PAMPHLET, PROVIDING THE  
SAME DATE OF PUBLICATION  
AS GEORGE THOMASON.  
NOTE THAT THERE IS NO  
INDICATION OF PUBLISHER  
OR OF LICENSE TO PRINT.



37. Milton, *Areopagitica; a Speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicens'd Printing, to the Parliament of England* (1644)

*Areopagitica*, the most famous of Milton's prose works, is one of the earliest defenses of the freedom to print, as it is also one of the most important defenses of the freedom of religion. The title page calls it "A SPEECH OF Mr. JOHN MILTON For the Liberty of UNLICENC'D PRINTING, To the PARLAMENT of ENGLAND," lending the incorrect impression that the tract is an actual speech delivered in parliament. This rare Rutgers edition is heavily marked by a seventeenth-century reader.



MANUSCRIPT MANICULES (POINTING HANDS) IN *AREOPAGITICA*.  
THE PRINTED MANICULES IN MILTON'S CHAUCER MIMICKED WHAT READERS DID IN  
THE MARGINS OF BOOKS TO CALL ATTENTION TO IMPORTANT PASSAGES.

38. Manicules in the Rutgers copy of *Areopagitica*

Readers' marks frequently provide a revealing glimpse of the way that early modern readers approached texts.

leapt forth into the World. And perhaps this is that doom which  
*Adam* fell into of knowing good and evill, that is to say of knowing  
 good by evill. As therefore the state of man now is; what wisdom  
 can there be to choose, what continence to forbear without the  
 knowledge of evill? He that can apprehend and consider vice with  
 all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish,  
 and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true wayfaring  
 Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloister'd vertue, unexercis'd &  
 unbreath'd, that never siliies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out  
 of the race, where that immortall garland is to be run for, not with-  
 out dult and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world,  
 we bring impurity much rather: that which purifies us is triall, and  
 triall is by what is contrary. That vertue therefore which is but a  
 youngling in the contemplation of evill, and knows not the utmost

“WAYFARING CHRISTIAN” CHANGED BY HAND TO “WARFARING CHRISTIAN”  
 IN *AREOPAGITICA* (1644), p. 12.

39. “Wayfaring Christian,” or “warfaring Christian”?  
 A Textual Crux in *Areopagitica*, p. 12

Many copies of *Areopagitica*, such as the Rutgers copy, and the copy exhibited here that was donated by Milton to an unknown recipient, have a manuscript correction to the printed word “wayfaring,” changing it to “warfaring,” and vastly changing the meaning. “Warfaring Christian” is, of course, a provocative, perhaps problematic, contradiction in terms. What kind of emendation is this? Is it a printer’s mistake, emended by supervision of the author, or a revision to the original wording?

40. Milton, *Areopagitica; a Speech of Mr. John Milton for the  
 Liberty of Unlicens’d Printing, to the Parliament of England* (1644),  
 facsimile courtesy of the Beinecke Library, Yale University

This copy of *Areopagitica* now at the Beinecke was given by Milton to an unknown recipient (along with the copy of *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, shown in the next case). It contains the correction shown above.

41. “Prohibition of books not the wisest course,” an entry  
 in the Milton’s Commonplace Book, British Library MS  
 Additional 36354, p. 195 (detail)

Milton’s notes indicate that he was thinking about the prohibition of books before writing *Areopagitica* in 1644.

42. “On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament,”  
 from the Trinity MS (facsimile) 1646?

On the same themes as *Areopagitica*, this poem regrets that the program of toleration urged in that tract has not been followed, and instead free “Consciences” are set under “the Civil Sword,” and good people are “nam’d and printed Heretics.”

43. “On the Lord General Fairfax at the Siege of Colchester,”  
 from the Trinity MS (facsimile), August, 1648

This sonnet, presumably sent to Fairfax on the battlefield, urges Fairfax that “a nobler task awaits thy hand.” This suggests that Milton hopes that Fairfax will not only end the war, but also participate in a republican overthrow of the English monarchy.

## VII. *The Execution of Charles I*

No man who knows ought, can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were born free, being the image and resemblance of God himself, and were, by privilege above all the creatures, born to command and not to obey.

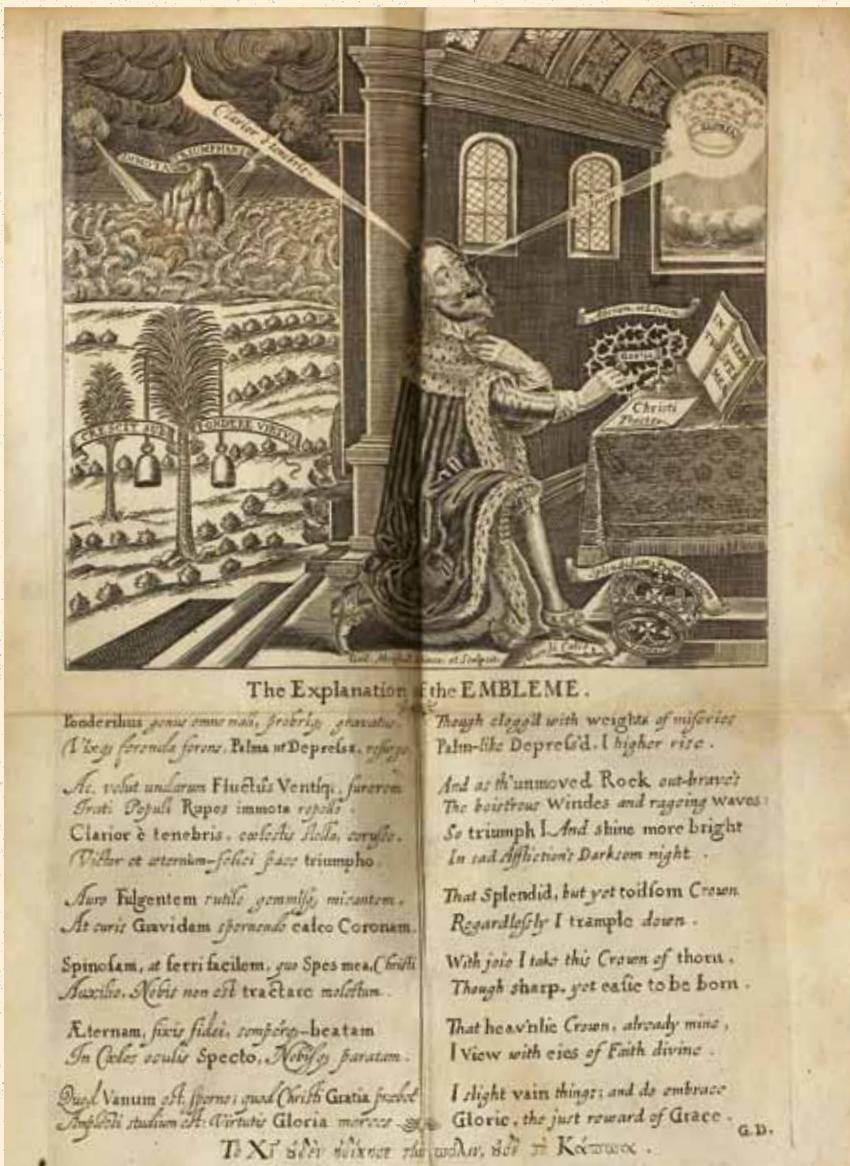
So states Milton in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, in words that sound almost Jeffersonian: “all men naturally were born free,” “born to command and not to obey.” These are part of a strenuous and profound defense of popular sovereignty, the right of a private person to overthrow both parliament (or magistrate) and king. After a protracted stalemate, English political history experienced a sudden succession of upheavals: the forceful exclusion by the army of the majority of Parliament, called “Pride’s Purge” of Parliament in December 6, 1648, the decision by the new “Rump” Parliament to put the king on trial on January 6, and the trial and execution of King Charles I on January 30, 1649. During the trial, January 26–30, Milton began an extraordinary defense of the overthrow of both parliament and king, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, a work published shortly after the king’s death. Milton was then hired by the new government to be their spokesperson and counter-propagandist, and also to be a secretary of foreign languages, which meant communicating in Latin and in other languages to foreign diplomats and politicians.

44. William Prynne, *A Breife Memento to the Present Unparliamentary Junto Touching their Present Intentions and Proceedings to Depose and Execute, Charles Steward, their Lawfull King* (London, 1648 [January 4, 1649])

William Prynne was one of the members of Parliament who was excluded by Pride’s Purge. In spite of many years of fighting on Parliament’s side against the king, he and other members of Parliament were unable to consider deposing Charles, which was the cause of the stalemate. These copies of William Prynne’s protest against what he calls an “unparliamentary junto” are remarkably preserved in their original form. Pamphlets were stab-stitched along the side (as shown here), and rarely survive the ravages of time unless they were rebound.

45. Milton, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649), title page facsimile courtesy of the Beinecke Library, Yale University

If they were not anonymous, pamphlets usually bore the author’s initials, or (less often) a full name. After *Areopagitica*, most of Milton’s pamphlets usually had his initials or his name. This copy of *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* possibly has Milton’s name provided by Milton himself, as it seems to come from a group of pamphlets given by the author. As Milton states on the title page, this pamphlet proves “it is Lawfull for any, who have the Power, to call to account a Tyrant, or wicked KING...if the ordinary MAGISTRATE have neglected, or deny’d to doe it.” Milton is justifying both the purge of Parliament and the deposition of Charles.



WILLIAM MARSHALL'S EMBLEMATIC IMAGE OF CHARLES PRAYING IN *EIKON BASILIKE* (1649), OR "THE KING'S IMAGE." THE EMBLEM SHOWS CHARLES PUTTING DOWN THE "VAIN" WORLDLY CROWN, TO TAKE UP A CROWN OF THORNS. MILTON WROTE THAT THE BOOK'S "QUAINT EMBLEMS AND DEVICES... WILL DOE BUT ILL TO MAKE A SAINT OR MARTYR."

#### 46. Charles I, *Eikon Basilike* (London, 1648)

*Eikon Basilike* ("The King's Image") was a brilliantly effective piece of posthumous royal propaganda. Supposedly written by the king (though actually by a ghost writer), the book appeared within days of the execution. In spite of many efforts to suppress it and other anti-regicide works, the book went through over thirty editions in its first year alone — the largest single printing effort England had ever seen. Looking back over a decade later, the ghostwriter of *Eikon Basilike* John Gauden remarked that when the book "came out, just upon the King's death, good God! What shame, rage, and despite filled his murderers! What comfort his friends! How many enemies did it convert! How many hearts did it mollify and melt!... In a word, it was an army and did vanquish more than any sword could!" The Rutgers copy contains a popular foldout picture of the king in prayer.

47. Milton, *Eikonoklastes*  
(London, 1649)

Milton's iconoclastic book *Eikonoklastes* ("Image Smasher") was commissioned by the new English republican government to respond to *Eikon Basilike*, and it appeared within months of the king's book. When the monarchy was restored in 1660, Milton was arrested and two of his books, *Eikonoklastes* and *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio*, were recalled, banned, and publicly burned.

48. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan or The Matter, Forme and Power of a Common Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil* (London: Andrew Crooke, 1651)

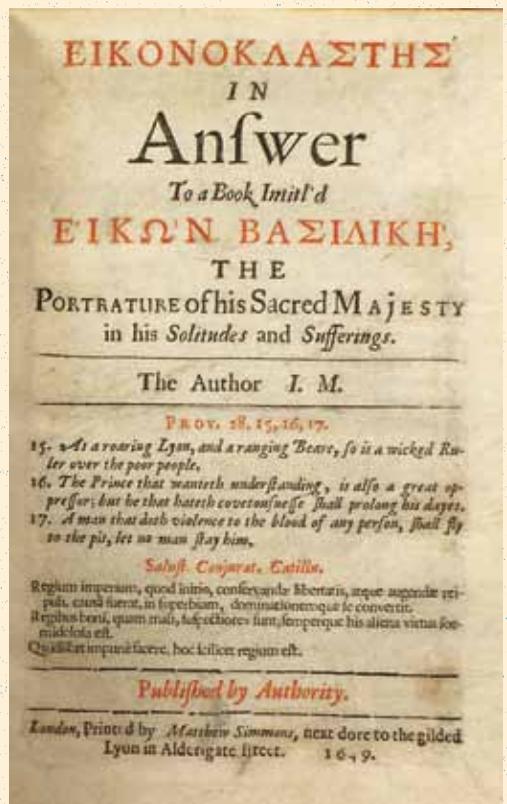
With extensive input from Hobbes, the Parisian engraver Abraham Bosse created the iconic image of civil power in the frontispiece of the *Leviathan*. Reflecting Hobbes' authoritarian view of sovereignty, it features a crowned giant, made up of people, with a sword and a crosier. The caption above is from the Book of Job, "*Non est potestas Super Terram quae Comparetur ei*" (*There is no power on earth compared to him*). Hobbes' massive work was written while he was in exile in Paris, though he returned to England after the execution of Charles I. It is often considered the most important work of political philosophy ever written.

49. *Eikon ACLASTOS: The Image Unbroken* (London, 1651),  
title page facsimile courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania  
Rare Book and Manuscript Library

This book is another piece in the pamphlet war over the execution of Charles. The anonymous author attacks Milton for his "Impudence, Falsehood, Vanitie, and Profannes [Profanities]."

50. Milton, *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio* (1652)

Milton's Latin defense of the regicide and the new English government, satirically titled the *Defense of the People of England, against Claude the Anonymous, otherwise known as Salmasius*, is a commissioned response to a famous French classicist who championed the monarchy. Within about a year of its publication in February 1651, it was published in thirteen editions and a couple reissues in London, Amsterdam, Utrecht, and Gouda, translated into Dutch, and rumored to have been translated into French. This copy bears a manuscript note at the end of the book indicating that Milton had been released from prison.



MILTON'S *EIKONOKLASTES* WAS BY POLEMICAL STANDARDS A BIG BOOK, AND MORE A BOOK THAN A PAMPHLET. AT WELL OVER 200 PAGES IN THE SECOND EDITION, THIS WAS MILTON'S LARGEST PUBLISHED PRODUCTION THUS FAR.

### 51. Milton, *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio* (1651)

Another copy. The frontispiece bears the arms of the newly created British Commonwealth, which united England, Scotland, and Wales without a monarch. This was a major work of Latin — now the largest printed book produced by Milton, and by far the most extensively produced — ranged from 104–389 pages in its various editions. In London, it was printed officially by William Dugard, who was thrown in jail for “printing several scandalous books against the Commonwealth,” including *Eikon Basilike* and Salmasius’s *Defensio Regina*, which he was apparently trying to print when, as the description in the Record Office reads, “he was cast into Newgate...and had been tried for his life by an High Court of Injustice, had not Sir James Harrington saved him from that danger, and procured his release.” Shortly thereafter, Dugard managed somehow to find his way into the position of “Printer to his Hignes the Lord Protector” — that is, Oliver Cromwell.

## VIII. Milton and Sons: *A Family Business*

In 1652, after a couple of years of waning eyesight, Milton went completely blind. From about 1650 onward, Milton began to rely extensively on a team of researchers, scribes, and amanuenses. Rutgers English Professor Ann Baynes Coiro has used the term “Milton and sons” to describe Milton’s close relationship with two of these young men, Edward and John Phillips, nephews of Milton who attended Milton’s small academy in the early 1640s, and who were adopted into Milton’s household. These young men went on to have publishing careers of their own, but it still remains unclear how much they helped Milton in researching and even co-writing some of the work of the period, particularly Milton’s second Latin defense of the English people, shown here, and a defense of himself.

### 52. *Joannis Miltoni Defensio Secunda Pro populo Anglicano* (London, 1654)

Milton, now completely blind, wrote a second Latin defense of the English people against an anonymous opponent, which he mistook to be Alexander More. This defense is often cited for its valuable, if sometimes inaccurate, autobiographical account.

### 53. Edward Phillips, *Letters of State, written by Mr. John Milton, to Most of the Sovereign Princes and Republicks of Europe. From the year 1649. Till the year 1659* (London, 1694)

Long after Milton’s death, Milton’s nephew assembled the letters of state that Milton had worked on during his service as secretary of foreign tongues under the commonwealth government. Phillips added an account of Milton’s life, one of the early biographies of Milton, and four poems that had not previously been printed with Milton’s name (three that had never been printed before at all): the sonnets to Vane (which appeared anonymously), to Fairfax, to Cromwell, and to Skinner.

54. John Phillips, *A Satyr against Hypocrites* (1655)

This book was written by Milton's nephew and student, who helped him as a researcher and an amanuensis after his blindness.

55. Edward Phillips, *Theatrum Poetarum, or A Compleat Collection of the Poets* (Printed for Charles Smith, at the Angel near the Inner Temple-Gate in Fleet-street, 1675)

In the year after Milton's death, Phillips collected an anthology of poets and provided some "observations and reflections upon many of them, particularly those of our own nation."

56. Edward Phillips, *The New World of English Words, or, A General Dictionary* (1663)

Phillips is perhaps most well known for his Dictionary, the first folio English Dictionary.

## IX. *The Restoration:* *Censorship and Paradise Lost*

*Paradise Lost* (1667) was Milton's first venture into print after the Royal Proclamation, his arrest, and the public burning of his works in 1660. In order to reenter the public world of print, Milton returned to a family business that had published several political tracts — including *Eikonoklastes*, one of the banned books. Still, as one early biographer relates, censorship threatened to suppress publication: "we had like to be eternally depriv'd of this Treasure by the Ignorance or Malace of the Licenser; who, among other frivolous Exceptions, would needs suppress the whole Poem for imaginary Treason in the following lines":

As when the Sun new ris'n  
Looks through the Horizontal misty Air  
Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon  
In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the Nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes Monarchs.

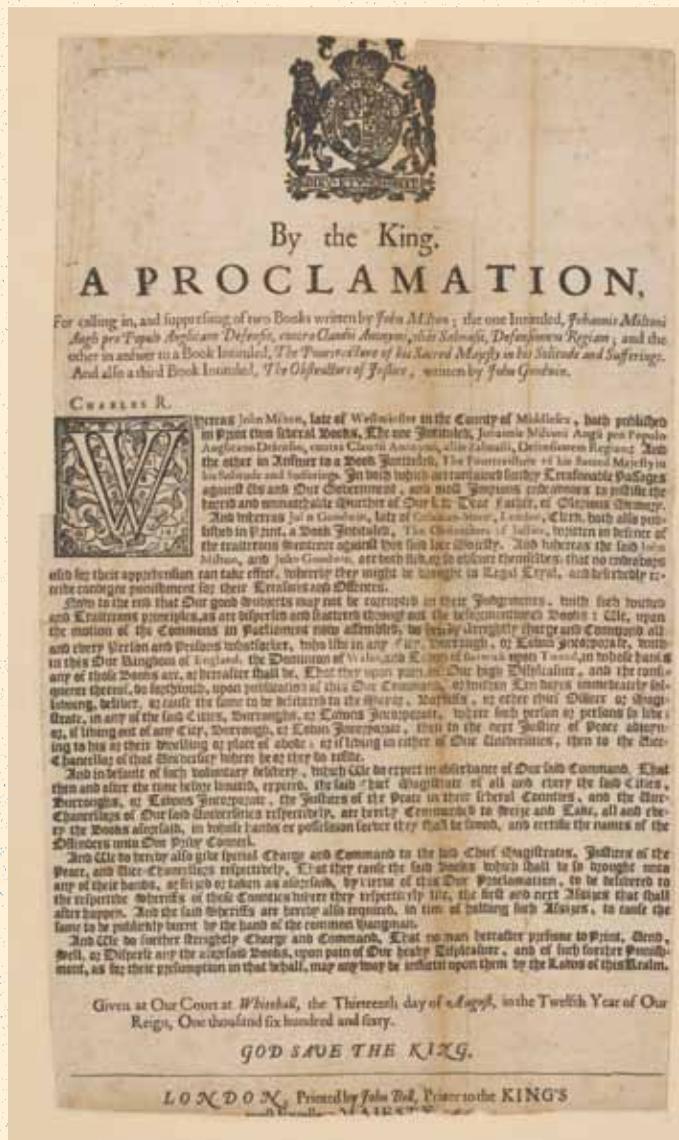
(*Paradise Lost*, I, 594-9)

We do not know what other "Exceptions" were taken or allowed, but Milton's manuscripts continued to be challenged by licenser.

PROCLAMATION RECALLING MILTON'S BOOKS. PRINTING PRESSES WERE USED FOR MUCH MORE THAN BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS. A BROADSIDE PROCLAMATION LIKE THIS COULD BE POSTED THROUGHOUT THE STREETS OF LONDON.

57. *By the King. A Proclamation for Calling in, and Suppressing of Two Books By John Milton* (13 August 1660), single sheet. Facsimile of the New York Public Library Copy

Milton was, in a very real sense, proclaimed by law, and his *Eikonoklastes* and *Defensio Pro Populo Anglicano* were singled out to be recalled and burned. The proclamation states that the books “contained sundry Treasonable Passages against Us and Our Government.” According to the Proclamation, “the said *John Milton*, and *John Goodwin*, are both fled, or so obscure themselves, that no endeavors used for their apprehension can take effect, whereby they might be brought to Legal Tryal, and deservedly receive condigne punishment for their Treasons and Offences.” Milton endured a short stay in prison, but Goodwin suffered far worse: he went into hiding and died in 1665.



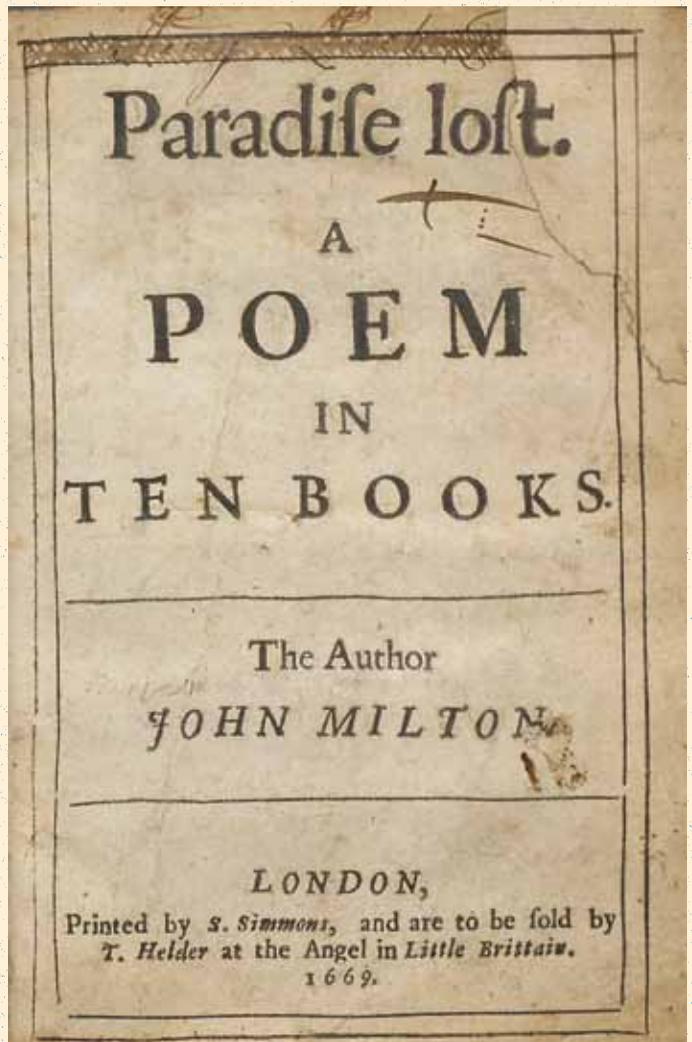
58. Milton, *The Manuscript of Paradise Lost, Book One*. Edited by Helen Darbishire (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931)

Milton sold the manuscript of *Paradise Lost*, probably this very fair copy now at the Morgan Library in New York, for £5 to Samuel Simmons. He was promised another £5 if the first edition of 1300 to 1500 copies sold out. The printer probably preserved the first book to prove to any inquiring authorities that it had an imprimatur. It is the only surviving manuscript of *Paradise Lost*, and it is not the manuscript that was produced by dictation. A great deal of care obviously went into producing this copy for the printer, as five recognizably different hands made small corrections. Even so, the 798 lines of manuscript differ from the printed text in over a thousand places, suggesting that the printer may have made further changes, or that Milton and his team of assistants intervened at the printing stage as well.

MILTON'S *PARADISE LOST*:  
*A POEM IN TEN BOOKS* (1669)

59. Milton, *Paradise Lost*:  
*A Poem in Ten Books*  
(Printed by S.  
Simmons, and are  
to be sold by T. Helder  
at the Angel in Little  
Brittain, 1669)

Milton's *Paradise Lost* appeared first in 1667, and it was reissued in the following year with a polemical "Note on the Verse," which was written in response to readers who demanded to know why the epic was written in blank verse (unrhymed iambic pentameter). The printer, Samuel Simmons, son of the printer who had printed his radical polemical tracts, was unable to sell all the copies of the original print run, so he repackaged the epic with an explanatory note.



INSCRIPTION TO  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, WHO  
WAS GIVEN IT AS A GIFT.

60. Inscription to  
William Wordsworth,  
*Paradise Lost* (1669)

This edition of *Paradise Lost* seems to have been owned by the great Romantic poet William Wordsworth. Like many Romantics, Wordsworth was profoundly influenced by Milton. He began his epic experiment *The Prelude* (final version, 1850) using the words at the end of *Paradise Lost*.



61. Milton, *Paradise Lost: A Poem in Twelve Books, revised and augmented by the same author* (Printed by S. Simmons next door to the Golden Lion in Aldersgate-street, 1674)

For the second edition of *Paradise Lost* Milton divided the ten books to make twelve, in part to mirror the structure of Virgil's *Aeneid*. The octavo version appeared in July 1674, and Milton died in November.

62. Milton, *Paradise Lost: A Poem in Twelve Books* (1678)

63. Dryden, John, *The State of Innocence, and Fall of Man: an Opera, Written in Heroique Verse, and dedicated to her Royal Highness, the Dutchess* (1677)

This is a re-write of *Paradise Lost*, for which Dryden had to obtain permission from Milton. Marvell's poem, which is first attached to one of the later editions of *Paradise Lost*, alludes deridingly to Dryden's dramatic presentation.

## X. *The Christian Doctrine*

“My Best and Richest Possession”

64. Joannis Miltoni Angli, *De Doctrina Christiana libri duo posthumi: quos ex schedis manuscriptis deprompsit, et typis mandari primus curavit* (London, 1825)

The manuscript of Milton's longest surviving work, *De Doctrina Christiana* (London, National Archives, SP 9/61), was discovered in 1823. It was, Milton wrote in the introduction, his “best and richest possession.” Yet it languished for over a century in a state of near oblivion. Milton probably hoped that it would be possible to publish the treatise, but the views in it were considered heretical by his contemporaries, and when the Restoration of the monarchy occurred in 1660, Milton and his views fell under a shadow of scrutiny. He probably sought to hide the manuscript at the Restoration. If the manuscript of *De Doctrina Christiana* had not been discovered, our understanding of Milton's theological beliefs would stand on far more speculative grounds, and in many cases take an entirely different form. This is the first printed edition of Milton's work.

## XI. Censorship and Milton's Late Work

After the appearance of *Paradise Lost* in 1667, a frenzy of publication ensued until Milton's death in 1674. Among the many works Milton published are: *The History of Britain*, which was started in the late 1640s; a sequel to *Paradise Lost* (*Paradise Regained*); to which was bound a biblical drama, *Samson Agonistes*; his collected poems, and several other pamphlets and books. His published work continued to attract the eye of the censor.

### 65. Milton, *History of Britain, that part especially now call'd England* (London, 1670)

This was Milton's longest published work of prose, and a major (if now neglected) undertaking. He had meant to write a history of England all the way to the present, but could not finish it. Edward Phillips records in his biography that in 1670 Milton "finisht and publisht his History of our Nation till the Conquest, all compleat so far as he went, some Passages only excepted, which, being thought too sharp against the Clergy, could not pass the Hand of the Licencer, were in the Hands of the late Earl of Anglesey while he liv'd; where at present is uncertain." Whether the manuscript of "The Digression," a section cut from the *History*, was part of those censored passages remains uncertain; it was almost certainly censored (or self-censored) for its content.

### 66. "The Digression" to the *History of Britain*, Harvard MS Eng 901 (Lobby XI.2.69)

The third book of the *History* opens with the hope that "by comparing seriously" Britain's early post-Roman state in 440 CE to the present state of England, these "two

such remarkable turns of State" will "raise a knowledge of ourselves great and weighty." This weighty meditation was to be the "Digression," but it did not appear in Milton's book. Instead, it exists in a manuscript designed to be inserted into a section of the third book of Milton's *History*. Many questions remain about this manuscript: was it one of many, a censored section that was produced by a scribe, to be inserted into the printed book? Did Milton oversee its production, or was this done after his death?



MILTON'S "DIGRESSION" IN *THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN*, FIRST PAGE. BY PERMISSION OF THE HOUGHTON LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

67. *Mr John Milton's Character of the Long Parliament* (London, 1681),  
Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania

In addition to being openly republican, the “Digression” was so critical of the corrupt Parliament that had fought against the king that it was used as Tory propaganda. By the 1680s, Milton’s criticism of his fellow parliamentarians — even for not being republican enough — became valuable to his enemies. This “pirated” printing of Milton’s “Digression” omits the first two pages of the manuscript. It is also based on a different version of the manuscript, further suggesting that there was a plurality of manuscripts in circulation.

68. Milton, *Paradise Regain'd: a Poem in IV Books; to which is added Samson Agonistes* (London, 1671), Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania

A Quaker friend and amanuensis of Milton’s named Thomas Ellwood was given the manuscript of *Paradise Lost* to read (it must have been an extra manuscript), and Ellwood reportedly returned and said “Thou has said much here about *Paradise Lost*, but what hast thou to say of Paradise found?” According to Ellwood, Milton returned sometime later with *Paradise Regain'd*, and said “This is owing to you, for you put it into my head by the question you put to me at Chalfont, which before I had not thought of.”

69. “The Omissa,” in *Paradise Regain'd: a Poem in IV Books; to which is added Samson Agonistes* (London, 1671)

Some ten lines in the unusual form of an “Omissa” (an omitted passage) were inserted late in the printing process of *Samson Agonistes* (1671). As one scholar, Stephen Dobranski, suggests, two basic hypotheses may be drawn from the evidence of the “Omissa”: either that “Milton slipped in these ten lines after having the book licensed on 2 July 1670 in an attempt to avoid the licenser’s censure and emphasize the poem as a political allegory,” or that “a licenser initially suppressed this and/or other passages” and thus “Milton may have been using the Omissa to defy the government’s stricture.”

70. Milton, *Poems, &c. upon several occasions...with a small tractate of education to Mr. Hartlib* (London, 1673)

Milton’s final collection of his poetry, missing only four political sonnets.

71. Joannis Miltoni Angli, *Artis Logicæ Plenior Instituto: ad Petri Rami Methodum Concinnata* (London, Spenser Hickman, 1672)

A textbook on logic that Milton had written in the 1640s, when he had run a small academy. The frontispiece engraving of Milton is by William Dolle.

72. Joannis Miltonii Angli, *Epistolarum familiarum liber unus: quibus accesserunt, ejusdem, jam olim in collegio adolescentis, prolusiones quedam oratoricæ* (London, 1674)

Milton’s collected letters.

## XII. *J. Milton French, A Tribute*



### J. Milton French

Rutgers University Libraries' Milton collection originated in the foresight of Joseph Milton French (1895-1962), internationally acclaimed Milton scholar and professor of English at Rutgers from 1940 to 1960. Soon after his arrival at Rutgers, French advised university librarian George A. Osborn in the acquisition of the 1649 *Eikonoklastes*, the divorce tracts, and several other works on display in this exhibition. J. Milton French's five-volume *The Life Records of John Milton* was published by the Rutgers University Press between 1949 and 1958. He served on the editorial board of Yale University Press' *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton* and was named Honored Scholar of the Year by the Milton Society of America in 1956.

J. MILTON FRENCH, PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH AT RUTGERS, 1940-60, frontispiece, *Essays in Literary History*, photo by David P. French

73. Joseph Milton French, ed. *The Life Records of John Milton*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1949-58)
74. *Essays in Literary History, Presented to J. Milton French*. ed. by Rudolf Kirk and C. F. Main. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1960)

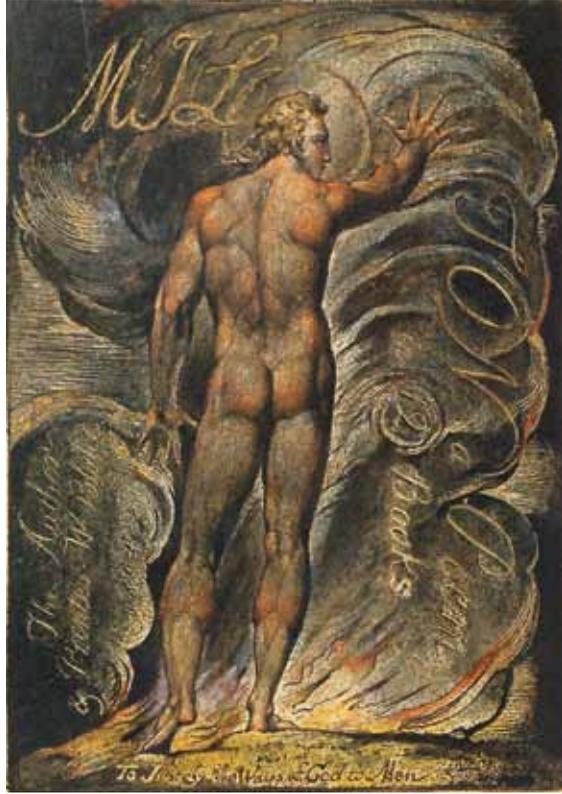




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