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FORMS OF SERVICE: THE POETICS OF COMMUNITY IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

by

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A Dissertation submitted to the

Graduate School-New Brunswick

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program in Literatures in English

Written under the direction of

Ann Baynes Coiro

And approved by

New Brunswick, New Jersey

MAY, 2012

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Forms of Service:

The Poetics of Community in Early Modern England

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This dissertation examines how the concept of service shapes representations of community in texts drawn from four key early modern genres: tragedy, court-masque, travel journal, and epic poem. As a condition of bondage central to early modern social experience, service crucially mediated agency and communal identity in both domestic and cross-cultural contexts. Generically varied as they are, early modern tragedy, masque, travel-journal, and epic all share a profound concern with the founding imperatives of communal life. In the texts I study, this concern manifests itself through an exploration of service as an inherently social, but not necessarily *sociable* concept. Thus, juxtaposing dystopian social critique with utopian idealism, Shakespeare and Middleton's tragedy, *Timon of Athens* (1607), presents the break-down of service-relationships as symptomatic of a general ethical crisis affecting the Athenian civic body. Ben Jonson's royal masque, *Gypsies Metamorphosed* (1621), also mines the discourse of service to explore competing visions of national community. Service mediated the representation of communal identities in cross-cultural contexts too, as I find in my work on Sir Thomas

Roe's journal account of his trading embassy to the Mughal court in India in 1615-19, and in my reading of Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a critique of English imperial ambition. Subscribing to a specifically Anglo-European ideology of service helped expatriate Englishmen like Roe distinguish themselves from the native cultures of service they encountered abroad. Contrarily, Milton's complex treatment of the trope of Oriental despotism in *Paradise Lost* troubled such rigid distinctions between English service and alien slavery, even as it foregrounded godly service in the Edenic "new world" as key to just magisterial labor and Christian community. In tracing connections between various literary genres' treatments of service as a social ethic, I find that these genres do not simply mediate but actively shape the meaning of service, based on their own aesthetic and ideological preoccupations. At once unifying and exclusionary, establishmentarian and utopian, service emerges in my study as a highly contested category, and as such, a perfect vector for diverse constructions of community in the cultural ferment of the early modern era.

Acknowledgments

What drew me to write a dissertation about service in the early modern era was a long-standing desire to find a vocabulary for exploring the ways in which lives intersected with other lives in times and places other than my own, and what such intersections meant. As I complete this dissertation, I am reminded of all the ways in which my own life—and the life of this project—has been shaped by those many others whose paths have crossed mine over the years: for all those joyful, surprising intersections I am—and will always be—grateful.

My curiosity about Renaissance literature and thought was sparked and nourished by the brilliant Renaissance faculty in the English Department at Jadavpur University, including Sukanta Chaudhuri, Swapan Chakraborty, and Paromita Chatterjee. Supriya Chaudhuri and Amlan Dasgupta nurtured my growing intellectual interest in the period as only fine teachers and mentors can. At Rutgers, I owe much to my dissertation advisor, Ann Baynes Coiro, and my readers, Ronald Levao and Emily Bartels, for their guidance and support in shepherding this project to its completion. Many thanks also to my external reader, Jonathan Gil Harris, for his enthusiastic engagement with my project, and for providing valuable feedback on where I can take it next. Over the years, Ann has been a valuable source of sound professional advice and guidance. I have greatly benefited from Emily's astute and engaged comments on my work both in dissertation committee meetings and in a dissertation writing seminar that she offered. Ron's brilliance as a writer and a thinker never fails to amaze and inspire me, and his encouragement at critical moments helped keep me going. I am also grateful to Jacqueline Miller for her advice and

support. I owe many thanks to the Rutgers English Department for its generous academic and financial support, including the award of grants and fellowships to support research travel, conference presentations, and writing. Thanks are due to the South Asia Studies Program at Rutgers for a grant that helped to support a visit to the British Library.

Many thanks to Cheryl Robinson, Eileen Faherty, and now Courtney Borack in the English Department Graduate Office for making life as a graduate student so much easier. I will forever be grateful for their support, their graciousness, and their unfailingly efficient dispatch of all the googlies I've bowled their way over the years.

I learned much about the craft of research and writing from participating in dissertation seminars offered by Myra Jehlen and Meredith McGill, Michael McKeon's Mellon seminar, "Problems in Historical Interpretation," and the Rutgers Medieval and Renaissance Colloquium. I especially want to thank Trinyan Paulson, Paul Benzon, Devin Griffiths, John Rogers, Ameer Sohrawardy, Angela Florscheutz, Susan Nakley, Colleen Rosenfeld, Scott Trudell, and Alison Shonkwiler for their astute feedback on my work, and for sharing their own works-in-progress. Reading these colleagues' works has made me a better writer and thinker.

Many dear friends have helped me weather the vicissitudes of the writing life with their unstinting hospitality, warmth and generosity. For sharing her home with me these many years, for her kindness, and for all those long conversations at the kitchen table about everything under the sun, I want to thank Michele Naples. Dana Chesney and Ana Monica Nunez were as caring and considerate housemates as ever a graduate student could want. Veneeta Dayal supplied an open door, wonderful food, and even more

wonderful company on many occasions. My life would have been considerably poorer if I had not crossed paths with Sonali Barua, Bijita Majumdar, Arpita Chakraborty (who helped me navigate the mysteries of life in a foreign land), Indrani Chatterjee, Sumati Sundaram, Brinda Govindan, Bhaskar Ghosh, and Nikhil Ghosh. For making it easy to pick up where we left off, many thanks to Kajori Aikat, friend across continents.

And finally, there are those whose lives have touched mine in ways beyond words. Anannya Dasgupta has played so many parts in my life: fellow-traveler, co-conspirator, sister of my heart and mind; her friendship has brought joy to work and life alike. Arani Sinha, who joined me midway through my journey, did all that without which this could not have been done. My parents, Dilip and Krishna Maitra, and my brother, Probal Maitra, have been the compass of my nomadic life. This dissertation is for them.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines how the concept of service shaped relations between individuals and the communities they inhabited in texts drawn from four key early modern genres: tragedy, court-masque, travel journal, and epic poem. Varied as they are, all these genres share a concern with the founding imperatives of communal life. My work considers early modern writers' use of service as a conceptual tool for exploring the ethical and political problems and possibilities raised by their era's increasingly diverse modes of communal association. While recent scholarship has done much to theorize and historicize early modern service, literary critics have primarily focused on its relevance to representations of institutional and interpersonal relations in the drama of the time. I argue that the ethic of service, while in many ways rooted in theatrical discourse, was also seminal to representations of the relations between individuals and communities in other genres of writing. Considered together, the texts I examine show how the language of service played a critical role in formulating individuals' responses to civic, political, mercantile, and religious communities in the early modern public sphere. In these arenas, service functioned not only as a unifying social ethic but also as an agent of division and discord. Whether invoked as ideal concept or as lived practice, service fore-grounded the conflicts and discontinuities as well as utopian hopefulness that characterized early modern social imaginings across genres.

In locating service as a key concept shaping early modern representations of the relations between individuals and communities, my project seeks to work across the divide between recent materialist and idealist (or humanist) perspectives on early modern service. Materialist critics have argued that early modern theatrical representations of the

structural and institutional aspects of service testified to the increasing polarization of English society into antagonistic servant- and master-classes. Drawing upon archival records of apprentices' revolts and laws regulating master-servant relations, critics such as Mark Thornton Burnett have forged links between the social history of the institution and theatrical representations of servant resistance as evidence of the attainment of political consciousness by a distinct socio-political and economic underclass.¹ For critics of the materialist position, however, such readings, by privileging moments of resistance, threaten to consign the quite common quiescence of servants (especially in Shakespeare) to the interpretive black hole of ideological mis-recognition or false consciousness. Partly reacting to accounts of early modern master-servant relations influenced by New Historicism and Cultural Materialism, scholars such as Michael Neill, David Evett, and most recently, David Schalkwyk, have sought to foreground the affective and ethical dimensions of service as an experience shared, willingly undertaken, and even idealized by many early modern individuals across divisions of social rank or class.² In a pioneering essay, Michael Neill has argued that acknowledging the pervasiveness of service as a social phenomenon yields a vision of an early modern society "consist[ing] of an unbroken chain of service that stretched from the humblest peasant to the monarch who owed service only to God."³ In another recent work on service in Shakespeare, David Evett has argued that to fully account for the complexity of early modern service, and more specifically, to explain the frequent idealization of the faithful servant in Shakespearean drama, we need to move beyond the "materialist commitment to the primacy of groups over individuals as the subject of analysis" and consider how individuals might have psychologically managed and even triumphed over the constraints

imposed by the material conditions of their existence by willingly embracing service as a source of satisfaction and well-being.⁴

While Evett's project of attending with serious care to idealism as a real force in shaping human agency is immensely helpful in recovering an otherwise much-neglected dimension of service, it nonetheless seems to me that the distinction between the individual, experiential, and ethical aspect of service and its collective, structural, and political aspect which underlies his argument and indeed frames the materialist/idealist debate on service, merits further scrutiny. It seems that in pursuing one aspect of the "world we have lost," i.e., the notion of service as an emotionally and ethically satisfying *individual* or *private* experience, we might be neglecting another aspect of that world, the constant interactions between private and public, ethical and political, the individual and the communal, and the impact of such interactions on the early modern discourse—and experience—of service.⁵ While individuals may well have developed private psychological means for coping with the ethical and emotional claims of service, service itself undoubtedly remained a common, shared phenomenon—a collective experience. While the shared experience of subordination, and the kinds of solidarity it produced, did not necessarily amount to a class-feeling, early modern service has a political significance not only because constituted an ideological mechanism for establishing and maintaining social order but because its ethical substance held out the prospect for imagining an alternative set of social relations. At the same time, the commonality of the experience of service in the early modern world itself produced anxieties in an era of cross-cultural contact. In this dissertation I seek to approach service as both an ethical and political phenomenon, following Richard J. Bernstein's view that politics and ethics

are intimately related, for “we cannot understand ethics without thinking through our political commitments and responsibilities. And there is no understanding of politics that does not lead us back to ethics.”⁶ This interplay between the ethical and political becomes particularly clear when we consider the performative dimension of service, a feature that also explains the prominence of the theme in early modern drama.

Indeed, a survey of the key recent works on service indicates that one noticeable trend in early modern literary scholarship on service is an overwhelming, if not exclusive focus on drama. One reason for this is obvious enough in the rationale that Evett, for instance, offers for concentrating on drama in his study, which is quite simply that “in no other genre are master-servant relationships so fully and variously explored.”⁷ Drama, Evett implies, provided an imaginative venue that was uniquely well-equipped to explore various aspects of the theme of service. But the obverse is also true: the reason why a playwright like Shakespeare turned again and again to service is because it proves to be an infinitely rich and varied source for dramatic material. As Linda Anderson has suggested, service is “a vast and often confusing accumulation of conflicting paradigms—ideal, insult, fact of life, source of conflict, motivation for virtue and villainy.” Its pervasiveness in the cultural idiom and its potential for conflict and complication thus “makes it an extremely useful source of plots and characters”—the dramatist’s most basic tools of trade.⁸

The symbiotic relation between theater and service means that in the process of representing service relationships, the early modern stage also contributed to the contemporary discourse of service in significant ways. Of course, that aspect is something that theatre was itself conscious of, as is captured in a particularly acute

comment by Judith Weil: “service,” she writes, “worked as much as a school for theater as a school for ethics.” This is because “[observing] another’s inclination in oneself, imitating a role and changing people or perceptions through interaction”—all actions performed by servants—“are theatrical as well as social arts.”⁹ While I will have occasion to engage with her comment in more detail in the body of the dissertation, especially in Chapter 2, I want to make a couple of preliminary observations here, especially in relation to David Schalkwyk’s extended exploration of the figure of the “player-servant.” In Schalkwyk’s reading, the player-servant emerges as *the* exemplary figure synthesizing service as a theatrical and a social art: nominally bound to an aristocratic or royal patron as well as to more temporary “masters” in the commercial playhouse, the player servant is a figure who embodies the uncertainties of service not only as an economic but also a psychological condition of being. While Schalkwyk offers Iago as an example of a character who embodies the dualities and tensions of service, Jonson’s Mosca also brilliantly illustrates this point. At one level, Mosca is nothing if not a player-servant who embodies the “eye-service” that characterizes the false or unreliable servant against whom early modern homilists inveighed; at the same time, in his commitment to role-playing, and to making himself the very image of others’ inclinations, Mosca also represents in a deeply ironic fashion the evacuated subjectivity of the ideal servant who is nothing but his “master’s man”—whoever that “master” may be. My point here is that in staging this double-ness at the heart of service, theater does not simply vocalize what is already there—it also actively produces it, by providing not only a vocabulary but also a concrete figuration for this conflict. The figure of the player-servant theatricalizes service by drawing attention to its performative character, and thence to the ambivalences that

such performativity entails for ethical constructions of service. This engagement with the performative dimension of service, which considers service as schooling in the arts of performance as much as anything else, is perhaps the most crucial legacy of early modern theater to ongoing cultural constructions of service, and, as I show in Chapters 2 and 3, it leaves its mark on texts belonging to genres as different as the court masque and the travel journal.

In focusing on the performative aspect of service, we find that while inherently social, service is not necessarily a *sociable* concept. Indeed, in performance, service reveals the fissures and tensions endemic to social existence as much as it points to the potential for positive modes of social association.¹⁰ The texts I consider in this dissertation each use service as a critical tool to examine not only settled notions of community in the early modern period but also the era's new communal formations and the new modes of domestic and cross-cultural interaction these generated. While the ethical discourse of service often functioned as a bridge between the old and the new, between the familiar and the strange, it also powerfully registered the anxieties of such transitions. This becomes particularly clear when we consider how service mediated representations of communal identity in cross-cultural contexts: subscribing to a specifically Anglo-European ideology of service helped Englishmen abroad distinguish themselves as a nation different from and superior to the native cultures of service they encountered, even as such cross-cultural encounters also troubled rigid distinctions between English service and alien servility. The travel journal, as my reading of Thomas Roe's journal suggests, engages the theatricality of service as an ethnographic code-breaker: theatrical analogies make for "easy descriptions" of otherwise-disorienting

rituals of courtly service in Eastern ‘theaters’ of power. It is against this deployment of the discourse of service as a tool of imperial hegemony that Milton articulates his vision of magisterial service in *Paradise Lost*.

Early modern figurations of service not only alert us to the warmth and persuasiveness that Raymond Williams associated with the word “community.”¹¹ They also attest to the unsettling feelings of discord, alienation, and non-belonging produced by a world in which membership in multiple communities and affiliations to multiple masters entailed negotiating between competing, and often contradictory obligations. Furthermore, any consideration of service as a social ethic has to contend with its inherently hierarchical character. Rather than consigning hierarchy to the background, as an inevitable, albeit problematic backdrop to the formulation of servant-subjectivities, this dissertation seeks to bring hierarchy to the foreground. One of my aims here is to show that, rather than treating it as static backdrop, early modern writers framed hierarchical relations of service in different ways—not only to seek ways of rejecting it or working within it, but also to foreground how the idea of hierarchy is not stable but rather contingent and contextual. One prominent way of contextualizing hierarchy that emerges in the chapters of this work is to engage more actively with the concept of the master. While one constant of the idea of service is that it necessarily involves subordination to an other, how that other is construed can have an impact on the scope of the servant’s performative agency as well as the kind of communal association that is achieved through cleaving to an ethic of service. To conceptualize the figure of the master as a concept or an idea—God or the city-state—entails a different set of societal relations amongst the community of servants from conceptualizing the figure of the master as king or lord.

Drawing on recent scholarship tracing the influence of Christianity on early modern representations of service, my first chapter takes as its point of departure *Timon of Athens*' nuanced engagement with the discourse of idolatry. While one critical commonplace locates *Timon*'s tragic crisis in capitalism's disruption of feudal morality, I argue that the play critiques as modes of false, idolatrous service both the feudal cult of lordship and the nascent capitalist cult of gold that has come to define Athenian society. In contrast, *Timon* locates true service and the foundation of authentic community in the ethical agency of its subordinate servant-figures, whose actions keep alive the moral vision of community that their masters doom to destruction. Pitting tragedy's iconoclastic, demystificatory bent against its idealizing and recuperative function in its representation of Timon and his servants, the play explores the place of such idealism in social life, with important implications for the tentative re-assertion of civic order in its closing scene. At once the target of iconoclastic demystification and the subject of tragic faith, the possibility of a community founded on mutual service is in *Timon* a fragile, provisional thing. But that fragility is less a result of the play's pessimism, as is often argued, than of its measured, complex awareness of the limits and possibilities of idealism when it is seen in the light of the material constraints through—rather than against—which it finds expression.

My second chapter turns to Ben Jonson's court-masque, *Gypsies Metamorphosed*, where the notion of a unified national community is challenged by the fissures between England's disorderly borders and its putative center, the royal court. The masque's central characters, the gypsies, occupy a curious middle ground between the exotic

opaqueness of distant cultural others, frequently displayed in court-masques of the time, and the dangerous disorderliness of more familiar local others, including displaced rural laborers, petty criminals, and beggars. Jonson's representation of gypsies as a "tattered," makeshift, yet remarkably resilient "nation" troubles one of the Stuart court-masque's key ideological motivations: the celebration of the magically transformative power of the royal presence, which typically triumphs over the divisive heterogeneities of the realm as embodied in the anti-masque. Framing the gypsy-nation as a ragtag fellowship constituted through shared skills in performance, Jonson's masque presents the gypsies as a voluntary, contingent association of like-minded wayfarers of diverse origins on the kingdom's highways and back-alleys. Thus, against the masque-form's fiction of a national community united in service to a benevolent monarch—a mythology Jonson had himself done much to consolidate in his other contributions to the genre—*Gypsies* uses the anti-masque to set up an alternative vision of national community, one that covertly competes with, even as it overtly compliments, the royal communal imaginary.

While early modern English tragic drama and masque were seminally concerned with the constitution of political communities at home, the proliferation of travel accounts by overseas mercantile agents in this period attests to the emergence of a new form of corporate community that was primarily commercial in character. Yet, as even a brief perusal of the literature reveals, these corporate associations constituted an important imaginative site for defining the English nation. My third chapter considers the travel journal maintained by Sir Thomas Roe, a prominent Jacobean courtier and agent of the English East India Company, during his trading embassy to the court of Jahangir, the Mughal emperor of India in 1615-1619. Examining Roe's account of his conflicted

position in the Mughal court as royal ambassador *and* mercantile agent, I argue that the journal testifies to the anxieties generated by his competing obligations to the English royal body, the mercantile corporation and the Mughal imperial order. Anxious to prove himself a loyal servant of the Company, but equally anxious to distance himself from the corporate body of factors, as well as from the Mughal courtly milieu, Roe's experience of service in the Indies is deeply conflicted and, ultimately, profoundly alienating.

Inhabiting multiple communities at once, he finds himself belonging to none.

Furthermore, Roe's encounter with the Mughal imperial court also ignites one of the key issues concerning the English discourse of service: its fraught relationship with servility and slavery. Throughout the journal, Roe is anxious to distinguish his service from the servile worship directed by the Mughal courtiers at their emperor, but in the process, and not least through his own actions, he reveals such servility to be as intrinsic to the English culture of service as to the Mughal court.

While Roe seeks to distinguish English service from its Eastern, Islamic counterpart by framing the latter as slavery, my fourth chapter assesses the way in which Milton, writing *Paradise Lost* in the late 1650s and into the Restoration, brings the servile idolatry associated with the "Oriental despot" home to the English magisterial classes, which included both the monarchy and the flawed republican leadership of the Interregnum. I argue that Milton's commitment to an ethic of service is a core element of his vision of just magistracy, and that it powerfully shaped his response to the imperial poetics of the post-Virgilian epic form. Resisting both the heroic personae and the ideology of territorial expansion extolled in the imperial epic, *Paradise Lost* marks a sharp departure from the traditions to which it nonetheless lays claim, with profound

implications for the community that the epic form typically seeks to bring into being and to define for posterity. By presenting Satan as a negative exemplar of magisterial service, in terms borrowed from contemporary proto-Orientalist discourse, Milton seeks to re-imagine the ethical contours of the ideal epic community. Insisting on God's unique imperial status, *Paradise Lost* delegitimizes English imperial ambition by linking it to the stereotype of ungodly Eastern despots. In lieu of epic's formulation of a community consisting of imperious heroes and imperial subjects, Milton puts forward in his poem a new vision of epic community comprising individuals with a firm spiritual commitment to an ethic of service rather than dominion. Yet his theological imperialism, combined with his positing of a global Christian community rooted in the Edenic "new world," ultimately rendered his vision vulnerable to appropriation by later apologists for British imperialism, who discovered in *Paradise Lost* moral justification for their unique blend of nationalist aspiration and imperial fervor—the very stances that Milton himself was at pains to reject throughout the epic.

¹ Mark Thornton Burnett, *Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture: Authority and Obedience* (Houndmills, Great Britain; New York, Macmillan, 1997).

² For an excellent overview of recent work on Shakespeare's treatment of service, see David Evett, "The Year's Work in Service Studies: Shakespeare, 2005," in *Modern Philology* 104.3 (2007): 412-29.

³ Michael Neill, "Servant Obedience and Master Sins: Shakespeare and the Bonds of Service," in *Putting History to the Question: Power, Politics, and Society in English Renaissance Drama* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000), 22.

⁴ David Evett, *Discourses of Service in Shakespeare's England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 17-33, esp. 22, 27.

⁵ For a recent, succinct re-appraisal of the relationship between individual and community in the early modern world pertinent to this issue, see Charles H. Parker, "Introduction: Individual and Community in the Early Modern World" in *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity: Individual and Community in the Early Modern World* ed. Charles H. Parker

and Jerry H. Bentley (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007), 1-5.

⁶ Richard Bernstein, *The New Constellation: The Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity/Postmodernity* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), 9.

⁷ Evett, *Discourses of Service*, 30.

⁸ Linda Anderson, *A Place in the Story* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005), 240.

⁹ Weil, *Service and Dependence* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), 147.

¹⁰ For a discussion of “community” as a source of tension as well as positive association, see the editors’ “Introduction” to *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric* edited by Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000), 1-17.

¹¹ Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford UP, 1976), 76.

CHAPTER ONE

**BETWEEN IDEALISM AND IDOLATRY: SERVICE AND THE TRAGIC
COMMUNITY IN *TIMON OF ATHENS***

Recent scholarship on service in Shakespeare and his contemporaries has illuminated the ways in which early modern literary representations of service were influenced by a long pre-history of Christian thought on the subject.¹ This chapter takes as its point of departure *Timon of Athens*' engagement with one relatively less-explored strand (at least in this context) of that religious and cultural legacy, namely, the concept of idolatry. That the play's exploration of service as a social ethic—" 'tis a bond in men" (1.1.148),² Timon hopefully declares early in the play—should allude to the discourse of idolatry is not surprising when we recall idolatry's core-meaning, i.e., service directed at inappropriate objects, a form of servile bondage to false idols, whether mental or material.³ Indeed, by locating Athens' moral and political decay in aristocratic honor-fixation as much as in the pervasive gold-mania of its plutocrats, *Timon* implicitly identifies both as species of idolatry, sapping their votaries' capacity for ethical action and communal solidarity. In contrast, the play locates the possibility of true service and authentic community in the ethical agency exercised by its subordinate, servant-figures, whose actions keep alive the moral vision of community that their masters doom to destruction. While the servants' goodness has not gone unnoticed by critics, its relevance to the play's broader exploration of the ethical foundations of civic community merits further exploration. Minor characters though they are, the servants' tragic experience of fidelity not only calls into question the protagonist's misanthropic nihilism; in the process, they also come to embody a different kind of ethical subjectivity from Timon's, one founded not in the

autonomy from societal bonds that Timon comes to desperately desire, but in an acute awareness of the self's dependence on things (and persons) beyond itself. Pitting tragedy's iconoclastic, demystificatory bent against its idealizing and recuperative function in its representation of Timon and his servants, the play undertakes a particularly nuanced and complex exploration of the place of such idealism in social life, with important implications for the tentative re-assertion of civic order in its closing scene.

Attending to *Timon*'s engagement with iconoclastic discourse allows us to gain a firmer purchase on some of the play's broader social and ethical themes, particularly since, in post-Reformation English culture, the biblical commandment against idolatry came to constitute a powerful and malleable hermeneutic for examining the various ways in which people departed from the service they owed God and their fellow-creatures in their pursuit of material gains and pleasures.⁴ In Judaeo-Christian tradition, idolatry was typically perceived as a form of objectification, whereby the idolatrous subject cedes its ethical agency to false idols, reducing itself to the status of a mere object, while elevating the idolized object to the status of an autonomous subject. As David Hawkes notes, this fallacy represented "a confusion of means with ends," "a transgression against telos" that "exemplified and encouraged a materialist or fleshly approach to the world."⁵ Such transgression threatened the long-standing hierarchical opposition between material means and spiritual ends central not only to Judaeo-Christian thought but to Western classical philosophy as well. Thus, in "Of Benefits," often considered to be one of *Timon*'s source-texts, the Stoic philosopher Seneca sought to distinguish between the "matter" of the benefit and the benefit itself in terms that the iconoclasts would have readily recognized: "...neither Gold, nor Silver, nor any of the thinges wee receive of our

neighbours, is a benefite: but the good will of the giver....[T]he thing that is seene is not a benefite, but the signe and token of a benefite.”⁶ As Katharine Eisaman Maus explains, to confuse the two—by, for example, “overvaluing the gift at the expense of the giver”—is to commit not only the moral error of ingratitude but, as Augustine indicated, an ontological error: “The idolator misconstrues or repudiates the entire system of symbolic meaning according to which the universe is organized.”⁷ Iconoclasts sought to correct this error by forcefully re-asserting the distinctions between matter and spirit, objects and subjects, means and ends. But in doing so, they also reconstituted the relationship between these categories in binarial terms, positing one against the other, and in the process running into the danger of occluding the continuity between them, their *interdependence*.⁸

The tension between matter and spirit characterizing iconoclastic thought also informed early modern discourses on service. Orthodox doctrines of service sought to negotiate between the material constraints of service, the power differential that defined it as an institution, and its spiritually liberating aspect. Early modern servants were frequently enjoined to willing and joyful obedience in their subordinate places because their service pointed to a higher end, the worship of God as imaged in their masters.⁹ Modern scholarship on literary representations of service in the period has responded to this division at the heart of the discourse of service by either foregrounding the material dimension of service as an institutionalized form of domination and subordination, or, conversely, focusing on its affective, individual dimension as a “lived experience” cutting across the boundaries of class, rank and status.¹⁰ What is common to both materialist and humanist (or idealist) approaches to service, however, is a shared concern with

autonomy, a concern that turns on a binarial opposition between subjective agency and objective or material conditions reminiscent of the dualism that informed early modern iconoclastic discourse.

Given the various ways in which service ideologically and institutionally limited the exercise of autonomous agency by subordinates, materialist and politically minded critics have tended to privilege representations of servant resistance when looking for evidence of their agency.¹¹ Working against the materialist rubric, David Evett has sought to recover some measure of autonomy for Shakespeare's many seemingly passive, faithful servant-figures, arguing that if service was an external condition beyond individual control, servants could nonetheless wrest some autonomy out of that necessity by exercising what he calls their "volitional primacy": "by treating constraints and inhibitions as though they were freely chosen, an externally illusory but internally real freedom can be achieved."¹² By exercising this volitional primacy, servants could realize that central Christian dictum, "in service is perfect freedom": consequently, the material conditions to which they were bound could come to paradoxically provide the ground for expressing their personal agency and freedom. But "volitional primacy," by prioritizing the autonomy of the individual will, downplays the degree to which that will is itself shaped by the material conditions through which it finds expression. As Margreta de Grazia et al suggest, albeit in a different context, the relationship between internal agency and external constraint is better seen as a dialectic in which "subjects and objects reciprocally take and make each other over."¹³ The servants' ethical agency in *Timon* is shaped precisely by this sense of a mutually constitutive relationship between subjective will and objective condition.

Rather than projecting a sense of internal autonomy, *Timon*'s representation of servant fidelity, I would argue, foregrounds its essentially heteronomous, dependent character. In service, the self is construed in terms of what Margreta de Grazia et al have described as "a being in need of outside objects and in need of being an outside object to another."¹⁴ Marked by this "double objectivity," servant consciousness in *Timon* approaches the philosopher Simon Critchley's definition of ethical experience: "Ethical experience is heteronomous, my autonomy is called into question by the fact of the other's demand, by the appeal that comes from their face and lays me under an obligation that is not of my choosing."¹⁵ Moreover, this awareness of a heteronomy at the core of the self is also what marks service as a communal experience which, while distinct from the class-based political experience of domination and subordination, is nonetheless not without political implications. For, as Critchley suggests, "an ethical politics flows from our constitutive powerlessness in the face of the other."¹⁶ That powerlessness, the experience of heteronomy, can be the source of a more ethical politics, going beyond autonomous understandings of power and responsibility, is crucial to *Timon*'s tragic exploration of the imperatives underlying the making, and unmaking, of civic life.

Setting its servants' heteronomous ethical experience against the bid for autonomy implicit in Timon's lordly bounty, and in his later turn to misanthropic self-sufficiency, *Timon of Athens* offers a more complex vision of the place of idealism in civic life than is encompassed by its protagonist's misanthropic vision. This complex sensibility owes something to the inherently divided nature of tragic consciousness itself. Terry Eagleton has recently argued that, as a transitional form, tragedy is the product "neither of cosmos nor chaos....neither of faith nor doubt" but of a "skeptical faith," springing from a "clash

between a remembered sense of value and what seems a predatory, degenerate present.”¹⁷ Although *Timon* is not a play Eagleton discusses in detail, his description helps to explain its seemingly disjointed, deeply ambivalent poetics,¹⁸ as does his delineation of tragedy’s dual orientation toward “demystification, denunciation, violent unmasking” *and* toward a “more tortuous...experience of clinging to one’s delusions because in a false situation this is the only way to preserve, in however mystified a guise, a few shriveled seeds of truth.”¹⁹ Timon’s misanthropic truth-telling in the play’s latter half executes a tragedy of violent unmasking, pressing satire into the service of what Eagleton identifies as tragedy’s native iconoclasm. His servants’ fidelity, on the other hand, vectors a tragic experience of the second, “more tortuous” kind. At once target of iconoclastic demystification and subject of tragic faith, the possibility of a community founded on mutual service and fellowship is in *Timon* a fragile, provisional thing. But that fragility is less a result of the play’s cynicism or pessimism as of its measured, complex awareness of the limits and possibilities of idealism when it is seen in the light of the material constraints through—rather than *against*—which it finds expression.

SWEAR AGAINST OBJECTS

Associated from its first occurrence in the play with Timon’s generosity, “bounty” neatly captures the tension between the ideal and material dimensions of his lordly largesse. Derived from the Old French “*bontet*,” signifying virtue as well as high estate, “bounty” in early modern parlance was pre-eminently an attribute of gods, princes, and lords, providing (when applied to secular powers) moral and religious sanction for exceptional privilege of place.²⁰ Christian orthodoxy figured God as master and patron, showering mankind with benefits through the agency of his earthly stewards. But, despite

its putatively divine origin, bounty could also serve as an instrument of secular power, sealing some into places of authority and others into places of dependence, whilst exerting considerable pressure on elite coffers in the process. “For a king not to be bountiful were a fault,” said Robert Cecil in 1610, defending James I’s notorious, treasury-draining generosity as an inevitable, even laudable function of his office.²¹ Implicitly gesturing to this royal parallel, Timon’s generosity too strains against its inscription in the cash-nexus.²² “I could deal kingdoms to my friends,” he cries at one point, reaching deep into his fast-emptying coffers to pull out precious toys for them (1.2. 225). Echoing Seneca’s idealistic interpretation of benefits, he refuses to accept his friend, Ventidius’ offer to return the money he had put up to bail him out of prison: “I gave it freely ever, and there’s none/Can say he gives, if he receives,” he insists. “We are born to do benefits,” he declares at the banquet he hosts for his friends in Act 1, “and what better or properer can we call our own than the fortunes of our friends? O, what precious comfort ’tis to have so many like brothers commanding one another’s fortunes” (1.2. 10-11, 99-103).

While its protagonist channels Seneca to put forth his vision of friendly solidarity as the basis of civic life, *Timon* itself advances a critique of his attempt to separate the ideal and material dimensions of bounty.²³ Thus, even as it acknowledges Timon’s idealistic desire to defy material constraints, the play also emphasizes how the fulfillment of that idealist aspiration remains grounded in the very materiality it seeks to eschew. Too hasty in idealizing the benefits he performs as insignia of his “nobility” and the “love” professed by his friends, Timon, like Lear, does not see that the objects he gives away are crucially linked to his identity—as friend, patron, and host.²⁴ At the same time,

bounty's deleterious moral impact on the community becomes clear in the Poet's opening allegorical figuration of Timon as Fortune's minion. Even as Fortune's favor has transformed Timon into a demi-god, the Poet claims, those who were formerly his equals are likewise translated into "slaves and servants" who abjectly "Follow his strides...Rain sacrificial whisperings in his ear,/Make sacred even his stirrup and through him/Drink the free air" (1.1.72, 82-85). What the Poet—himself one of the false "spirits" conjured by bounty's "magic" (1.1.6-7)—presents as a cynical, thoroughly amoral manipulation of power by self-serving dependents, the play reveals, through the inset dark parody of religious worship, to be the servile idolatry of a community bereft of ethical moorings. The "sacrificial whisperings" that Timon's votaries "rain" into his ear indicate not only the hollowness of the falsely tearful promises offered but their own moral corruption. As the subsequent action makes clear, Timon too is complicit in this deification, which leads him to misrecognize as testimonials to his "nobility" the flattery of the avaricious Athenians he befriends and on whose false expressions of love and loyalty he stakes the fortune of his house. Hubristically emulating the autonomy implicit in divine largesse, he fails to recognize his own dependent, object-status as the conduit for a bounty whose motions and meanings he cannot fully control.

We find this hubris reflected in the play's subplot too, where the Athenian general, Alcibiades' insistence on his martial honor and privilege in his explosive encounter with the Senate leads him to turn against the city he is honor-bound to protect. Alcibiades' reaction to his banishment reinforces the link between the pursuit of honor and god-like autonomy: "'Tis honor with most lands to be at odds;/Soldiers should brook as little wrong as gods" (3.6.115-16). By transplanting the aristocratic ethos from its traditional

discursive sites in court or battlefield to an urban milieu inimical to the values undergirding such behavioral codes, the play only appears to highlight their radical incommensurability. In actuality, juxtaposing urban acquisitiveness with aristocratic expenditure (whether of blood in the battlefield or bounty at the table) serves to underscore their secret affinity. If the play's plutocrats and bounty-hunters are characterized by their abject dependence on the wealth they cannot cease to accumulate and by which alone they measure their worth, Alcibiades and Timon too are equally driven by their enslavement to the 'mental idols' of honor and nobility, an enslavement they misrecognize as agency.

In locating disregard for material means as a primary cause of the tragic crisis in the main plot, *Timon* does not so much re-affirm the hierarchical opposition between matter and spirit central to religious iconoclastic discourse as it stresses the *continuity* between material means and spiritual ends. The play is undoubtedly sympathetic to the iconoclasts' ire against confusing matter and spirit, as evinced in the satire it directs against the bounty-hunters. But in its representation of Timon, the play probes not just the pragmatic but also the ethical implications of ignoring the material altogether in pursuit of spiritual communion.²⁵ Timon's followers' idolatrous attachment to material goods as ends sufficient in themselves transgresses the "natural teleology" of material means leading to ideal ends. But Timon too, in failing to acknowledge the material means whereby the ideal end he seeks may be secured, violates that *telos*, albeit from the other end of the matter-spirit continuum. The play explores this double transgression by ironically invoking the Eucharist in its depiction of the two banquets bookending Timon's career as Athens' foremost philanthrope, calling upon the distant memory of

Christ's exemplary hospitality as a way of critiquing the disorderly relation between matter and spirit in Timon's feasts.

By treating the material dimension of his bounty as a mere "trifle of our love" (1.2. 211), Timon paradoxically enables his guests' gluttony by scattering gifts and food and wine with an indiscriminate generosity which bespeaks a lack of regard not only for his limited means but also for the ideal end to which he aspires. Consequently, in Timon's house, matter does not 'transubstantiate' into spirit, it merely disintegrates into incoherence—into "prodigal bits" of meat and "drunken spilth of wine" (2.2.160, 165). Whereas in the ideal Eucharistic setting, the comestibles carve out a sacred pathway to communion with the divine in the shared space of communal service, signaling a harmonious union of matter and spirit, the scene of Timon's lavish feast in Act 1 enacts a tragic split between the two. That split is aptly captured by the cynic philosopher, Apemantus' framing commentary on the feast:

O you gods, what a number of men eats Timon and he sees 'em not! It grieves me to see so many dip their meat in one man's blood, and all the madness is, he cheers them up too....[T]he fellow that sits next him, now parts bread with him, pledges the breath of him in a divided draft, is the readiest man to kill him—'t has been proved.

(1.2. 39-42, 46-49)

If, as Robert Miola has suggested, the banquet in Act 1 is the imaginative center of *Timon's* Athens, Apemantus' choric monologue is that banquet's imaginative crux.²⁶ Tonally, the governing metaphor of cannibalism, with its Eucharistic undertow, exemplifies the play's manipulation of satiric and tragic cues to register, and hold in tension, quite divergent meanings. Insofar as it is directed at Timon, the metaphor fixes him as an embodiment of the prodigal dupe of Jacobean satiric comedy, seduced to his

destruction by the flattery of those who treat him like the god of the Poet's opening allegory. At the same time, directed at the parasites feeding on Timon's meat, the metaphor draws on the tragic resonance of the Last Supper—"He that dippeth his hand with me in this dish, the same shall betray me" (Matthew 26:23)—to implicitly denounce the impending betrayal of the lord by his followers. But if, like Christ, Timon is an iconic victim of the ills of his society, unlike Christ, who assumes the communal burden of guilt despite his subjective innocence, Timon is complicit, in ways he himself does not fully recognize, in his community's moral failure. Consequently, his "madness" in cheering those who would betray him is not the holy folly of a Christ who, fore-knowing, is nonetheless impelled to forgive, but folly pure and simple.

As recounted in Matthew, Christ's foreknowledge of his betrayal sets the stage for the forgiveness that follows, which takes the form of an irreducibly material act—breaking bread and drinking wine—that is nonetheless inseparable from its spiritual significance:

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

(Matthew 26: 26-29)

It is because the loss of the body, of the material substance of one's being, means something more than a mere "trifle" that Christ's sacrifice and the forgiveness it embodies can execute a radical breach from the old order, wresting a revolutionary meaning out of the same old drama of human frailty and divine vengeance, and boldly cutting across the dualities of base matter and elevated spirit, of thing and deity, means and end. His sacrificial bid seeks to put an end to all sacrifices in the founding gesture of

a new community of grace which links humans and God, and likewise heals the alienation of humans from the world of matter, hallowed anew through the Incarnation. As Regina Schwartz describes it, the Eucharist, at least in its pre-Reformation context, “offered the communicant participation in the sacrifice of Christ, with all its benefits, as surely as God himself entered history and became man in the Incarnation.” Consequently the Eucharistic participant “was no longer an exile from God, for he could enjoy a share of his divinity. He was no longer in exile from the created world, for he was now materially joined to it through the body of God.”²⁷ For Schwartz, the Reformers’ iconoclastic re-workings of the meaning of the sacrament split apart this union between matter and spirit, but its memory haunted much of the poetics of the era. *Timon*’s allusion to the Eucharist to describe the pagan feast draws on popular iconoclastic ire against the ceremonial mass to decry the falsity of Timon’s banquet, but it also registers the loss of visible community—of embodied idealism—that this falsity implies.

Timon’s elaborate first banquet intimates the impending breakdown of Athenian community by ironically recalling the Eucharistic communion it is not. His last supper, which A.D. Nuttall calls his “dyscharist,” explosively announces his misanthropic turn away from the very possibility of communion.²⁸ Like the first banquet, the feast of 3.6 echoes the Last Supper, but this time as savage farce, presided over by an arch-trickster newly committed to hate and universal distrust, who treats his false friends not to a spiritually transformative fare of bread and wine but to “Smoke and lukewarm water” (3.7.88). Radically departing from the Christ-parallel, Timon’s rejection of society at the close of this second banquet—“Burn house! Sink Athens! Henceforth hated be/Of Timon, man and all humanity” (ll. 103-4)—announces his response to the intractability of human

nature, its obdurate resistance to spiritual and ethical transformation. That perception constitutes the aporetic core of his mock-grace, and shapes its cataclysmic concluding wish:

Let no assembly of twenty be without a score of villains. If there sit twelve women at the table, let a dozen of them be as they are. The rest of your foes, O gods—the senators of Athens, together with the common lag of people—what is amiss in them, you gods, make suitable for destruction.

(3.7. 75-81)

These tautologies echo through the succeeding scenes and inform Timon's every act, including his violent response to the gold he discovers in the wilderness. Indeed, almost all of Timon's subsequent acts of re-distributing the gold he finds are driven by his desire to make Athens "suitable for destruction." To this end, he showers gold on Alcibiades and the prostitutes accompanying him, as well as on the bandits who visit him in the wilderness, not to transform them but to ensure that they will continue to be "as they are": "Let not thy sword skip one;" "Be whores still;" "Rob one another—there's more gold" (4.3.110, 139, 440).

Discerning a "religious movement" in Timon's misanthropy, Ken Jackson has argued that Timon's rejection of the obvious use of the gold he has found—to reassume his former place of glory in Athens—suggests that what he has been seeking through his gift-giving is not a sacrifice of covert recompense—Christianity's "secret clause" that, according to Derrida, "seeing in secret, God will pay back infinitely more."²⁹ Rather, Timon seeks an Abrahamic sacrifice, a sacrifice beyond calculation, relinquishing all without hope of reward in a movement toward the "wholly other" of an unknowable God.³⁰ Yet, while Timon does indeed refuse to use his gold to re-enter Athens' vitiated economy, the fact remains that he does not reject it altogether. Instead, he keeps some

“out for earnest” (4.3. 48), to put to use as precisely the god-sent agent of destruction he had sought at the conclusion of his mock grace. Indeed, unable to forgive the unforgivable, and thereby assume, Christ-like, the burden of infinite responsibility for a crime he did not himself commit, Timon’s subsequent career seems committed to exemplifying not so much a biblical as an Aristotelian maxim: “He that cannot abide to live in companie, or through sufficiencie hath need of nothing, is not esteemed a part or member of a Cittie, but is either a beast or a God.”³¹ Turning to the wilderness, Timon seeks at once a god-like self-sufficiency and shares with beasts their aversion to society.

Nonetheless, we may still detect a “religious movement” in Timon’s turn to misanthropy. Only it is not so much an Abrahamic eschewal of worldly exchange in the bid to approach the gods in “fear and trembling.” Rather, Timon’s world-denial takes up the iconoclastic distrust of false idols and extends it to all matter, in an apotheosis of his earlier anti-materialist idealism. Gold appears in Timon’s invectives as the exemplary icon of this universal corruption: it is the archetypal bad servant, a “yellow slave” whose very pliability to the wills of its human masters makes of it a “visible god” that “speak’st with every tongue/ To every purpose” (4.3. 34, 382, 384-85). Gold’s origin in the “damned earth” (4.3.42) is a testimony to the infinite corruptibility of the creaturely world, which originates from the same “Common mother” whose womb “Teems and feeds all” by a “composture stol’n/From general excrement” (4.3. 176-78, 436-37). Seen in this light, not only are human relations and institutions diabolically deceptive but the very cosmic order, traditionally considered to be the ideal pattern for human sociability, is founded on parasitism and mutual thievery, with each element in the chain of being preying on, rather than aiding, its neighbor.

Timon's misanthropic bid for autonomy from this vicious cosmic circuit of "universal thievery" manifests itself in an ascetic denial of the world and all its objects, where "objects" come to designate not only material things but also persons and the affective and ethical stirrings they provoke. "Swear against objects," Timon urges Alcibiades, whilst showering him with gold to expedite the destruction of Athens:

Put armour on thine ears and on thine eyes,
Whose proof nor yells of mothers, maids nor babes,
Nor sight of priests in holy vestments bleeding,
Shall pierce a jot.

(4.3. 122-26)

"Objects" merits scrutiny for the way it departs from our common modern understanding of the term, "a material thing that can be seen and touched," which presupposes a firm distinction, and an implicit power differential, between the subject who sees and touches and the "thing" seen and touched.³² As used here, however, "object" means "some thing or person that presents itself to the eye or the other senses, provoking pity."³³ As such, "objects" render permeable the boundary between perceiving subject and thing perceived: to put armor on one's eyes and ears is, in effect, to stop the gaps whereby the world impinges on, and attaches itself to human consciousness.³⁴ For Timon, the dangerous power of objects (a weeping mother, a crying baby, a bleeding priest) lies in their ability to command attention and affect at a visceral level, at a level beyond moral scrutiny: the woman may be a bawd, the babe a future parricide, the priest a fraud, but their present vulnerability trumps and renders irrelevant their moral frailties. It is this dangerous power that Timon urges Alcibiades to resist, an injunction that the play will invite us to re-assess through its representation of the servants.

Timon's implacable "condition" to Alcibiades enacts Eagleton's "tragedy of demystification, denunciation, violent unmasking," a tragedy that considers the split between the world as it should be and the world as it is to be unbridgeable.³⁵ But the autonomy implicit in such a heroic stance of ethical absolutism carries the seeds of its own undoing, as the play makes clear. Not only does Timon's skepticism—"I must ever doubt, though ne'er so sure" (4.3.502)—rob him of the capacity for positive ethical action, but it fosters a quasi-idolatrous fascination with the very objects of his hatred. The play thus counters its protagonist's nihilism through what might be its most ironic revelation: *this* iconoclast is, after all, an arch-idolator. In this respect, Shakespeare's Timon mirrors Montaigne's elegant summary of the legendary figure: "For looke what a man hateth, the same thing he taketh to hart."³⁶ To hate is to make idols of the things we despise, to cede to the hated object one's capacity for ethical action. Even as Timon's nihilism undoes itself by falling prey to a negative version of the very attachments it decries, the play counters it with the nodal figures of his servants, whose seemingly naïve, even delusional cleaving to their master introduces a new tragic complexity to the play. It is their place in *Timon*'s story that we will now consider.

MERELY LOVE

3 SERVANT

Yet do our hearts wear Timon's livery—
That see I by our faces. We are fellows still,
Serving alike in sorrow; leaked is our bark,
And we poor mates stand on the dying deck
Hearing the surges threat—we must all part
Into this sea of air.

(4.2.17-22)

In Act 4, scene 2, a group of Timon's servants gather outside his house to lament his financial downfall, which has resulted in their own expulsion from service. In this short, yet critical scene, the play turns away from its exposition of the failure of Timon's affect-laden fantasy of Athens as a patrician brotherhood "commanding one another's fortunes" to explore a different kind of fraternity, one brought together at the other end of the social scale by the prospect of utter destitution. In light of *Timon*'s much-noted pessimism, the servants' fidelity seems to convey a sentimental naiveté anomalous to the general tenor of the play—a belated attempt perhaps, on the playwrights' part, to reaffirm from below moral imperatives that have been hollowed out from above. A.D. Nuttall thus describes the servants as "pathologically loyal persons" whose devotion "might have been forgiven had they expressed some resentment."³⁷ More recently, however, David Schalkwyk has argued for a more positive interpretation of the servants' agency, suggesting that they represent "a site of moral rectitude and selfless devotion within a landscape of ruling-class cupidity and hypocrisy."³⁸ This is an important insight, not least because it implies that the servants' singular attachment to their master serves as a more telling indictment of the ways in which he, and the system he stands for, fails them than any degree of explicit resentment on their part could. At the same time, the servants' refusal to engage in the kind of bitter invective which consumes their master in the play's latter half underscores the pathos of his situation better than he himself can. But most importantly for the purpose of this essay, their exemplary selflessness, as showcased in 4.2, partially displaces Timon from the tragic focus to bring into view their own tragic experience.

That experience is rooted first and foremost in the servants' awareness of the material and social costs of their fidelity, an awareness that, I would argue, rescues the scene from

merely being a sentimental valorization of below-stairs virtue. In continuing to profess loyalty to their master, they are fully aware of having contracted from him that dreaded early modern disease of “all-shunned poverty” (4.2.14), which, like the medieval plague, reduced its carriers to a condition of living death, shunned by all for fear of infection.³⁹ The servants’ fidelity thus establishes a dialectic between ideal action and material consequences, tying the tragic romance of uncompromising, high-minded idealism to the much less exalted, yet equally tragic experience of destitution. The Third Servant’s poignant metaphor of shipwreck—likening his fellows to shipmates trapped on the “dying deck” of some “leaked bark”—acknowledges their self-sacrificing loyalty to stress not heroic agency but the ineluctable vulnerability and imminent dissolution of men rendered master-less, houseless, and social outcasts in one fatal blow: “we must all part/Into this sea of air.” This destitution—experienced most acutely as the loss of one’s place in a community—governs the servants’ understanding of their master’s plight as well. Characterizing their master first as a dead companion “thrown into his grave” and instantly forgotten, and then as a “dedicated beggar to the air” who “With his disease of all-shunned poverty,/Walks, like contempt, alone” (4.2.9, 13-15), one servant re-casts Timon’s story not in terms of his heroic singularity but with reference to the quotidian, social roots of tragic experience. This attentiveness to the material dimension of tragedy is crucial to the way the play re-configures idealism through the servants—a reconfiguration that insists on its heteronimity as an alien or foreign presence within the self, as well as its connectedness with the world of objects outside the self.

The governing impression left by *Timon*’s servants is not of a ‘sense of *choice*, and behind choice, of *will*,’ as Evett parses his concept of “volitional primacy.”⁴⁰ The

experience of service—for Timon’s servants at least—seems to be constituted less by an inward psychological freedom pressing through and shaping their response to external conditions than by a sense of attachment that is produced through those conditions and is experientially inseparable from them. In other words, idealism, as embodied in the servants, is an expression not of autonomous but heteronomous subjectivity, forged *within* rather than *against* the world of objects. Indeed, it is through the servants that the play explicates the perils and possibilities of what it means to be an object among objects—“broken implements of a ruined house” (4.2. 16), as Timon’s steward, Flavius, calls them. Flavius’s own characterization of his grief at the depletion of his master’s substance earlier in the play conveys a similar sense of a subjectivity shaped by its continuity with the world of objects: “When our vaults have wept/ With drunken spilt of wine,” he laments, “I have retired me to a wasteful cock/And set mine eyes at flow” (2.2. 159-60, 162-63). Vaults weep into the steward’s flowing eyes such that the division between subject and object is momentarily disrupted in this remarkable image of prosopopoeic sympathy: Flavius does not so much weep *for* as *with* his master’s vaults.⁴¹

Returning in this context to 4.2, the Third Servant’s seemingly straightforward declaration of absolute fidelity—“Yet do our hearts wear Timon’s livery—/That see I by our faces”—also reveals itself as something other than a declaration of autonomous subjectivity. Livery is, after all, not the heart’s attire but the body’s, where it can be cast on or off at will.⁴² Worn on the heart—or rather, *by* the heart—“Timon’s livery” elicits fidelity not as a choice “among competing options” but as an imperative from beyond the domain of personal choice.⁴³ That imperative is doubtless socially conditioned. From a strictly materialist perspective, these are men who have internalized the service ethic such

that they cannot imagine themselves in any other capacity. But, phrased as it is, the play also suggests that the call of ethics—“our hearts wear Timon’s livery”—is located neither solely in the individual will nor only in socially enforced doctrine or ideology but in some liminal zone between will and world, between self and other, between subject and object. As the foreign presence of the other in the self, fidelity emerges at this intersection of utterly heteronomous objects—livery and heart, both subject to and shaped by compulsions from without.

How best to respond to such compulsions? Timon’s story marks out one path, as his injunction to Alcibiades, “Swear against objects,” suggests. Flavius’s story delineates a different, more positive approach to objects, including that most vilified object of all: gold. Indeed, Flavius’ power to *do* (rather than just *be*) good in the latter half of the play emerges directly out of his material means: in 4.2 and later, his carefully husbanded savings enable him to finally exercise the agency that had eluded him earlier in the play, and sets him apart from the other exemplary servants. Flavius’s awareness that his agency is both limited and enabled by his material means also qualifies Timon’s demonization of gold. The uses that Flavius finds for his gold show that the social and moral meanings of money are not quite as predetermined as Timon believes; instead, these meanings emerge out of particular encounters between people, needs, motivations and circumstances.

While his master’s demonization of gold embroils him in a perverse version of the idolatry he so reviles, Flavius’ use of gold marks him as the play’s one true iconoclast. Unlike Timon, Flavius grasps money’s essential neutrality as a material sign whose meaning emerges only in the uses to which it is put. At the same time, unlike the play’s plutocrats and bounty-hunters, Flavius confronts money’s seemingly toxic combination

of neutrality and indispensability as a spur to ethical action rather than as an index of the irrelevance of moral values in *l'age d'or*. We see an exemplary instance of this more complex understanding of money in the central event of 4.2—Flavius' offer to share his savings with his fellow servants in recognition both of their material need and their fellowship:

Good fellows all,
The latest of my wealth I'll share amongst you.
Wherever we shall meet, for Timon's sake
Let's yet be fellows. Let's shake our heads and say,
As 'twere a knell unto our master's fortunes,
'We have seen better days.' Let each take some,
[*offering them money*]
Nay, put out all your hands—not one word more,
Thus part we rich in sorrow, parting poor.
[*They embrace and part several ways.*
(ll. 22-29)

Flavius's gift realizes his master's unfulfilled fantasy of fellowship—of friends “like brothers commanding one another's fortunes”—but it does so only by exceeding the limits of Timon's bounty. For example, in making the gift in the name of an absent third, “our master,” he presents himself as a conduit for rather than source of generosity, and is thereby able to confirm fellowship without re-creating the servile dependency that Timon's bounty fostered. At the same time, his recognition of the servants' dire need does not blind him to his own—he “shares” rather than gives his all, keeping something back to give elsewhere and, presumably, to nourish himself as well. But most importantly, Flavius's gift reconfigures gold, not by avoiding or downplaying its material significance, but by locating that use within a larger, more complex emotional and moral matrix of meaning. It is in this context that we must read Flavius's offer of his “poor wealth” to his master, and his “Care of your food and living” (4.3.483, 510). For Flavius,

such material insignia of service are not mere “trifles” of a love that passes all show, but the very means by which that love expresses itself.

Flavius’s meeting with Timon in the next scene presents a confrontation between an idealism that denies any possibility of its realization in the realm of experience and an embodied idealism that expresses itself in and through that realm of experience, holding on to the belief that it is indeed possible to “show” love, even in the most inhospitable of circumstances. Discussing the poetics of acknowledgment in this scene, Schalkwyk has called attention to Flavius’s hope-filled declaration on seeing his master—“He’s caught me in his eye” (4.3.464)—as the seminal moment of the encounter between master and man: while Flavius “seeks above all...to be “caught in the eye”—to be acknowledged fully in the master’s gaze,” Timon too may be rescued “through the recognition (as both subject and object) of his servant.”⁴⁴ Such recognition would allow Timon to acknowledge not only their shared humanity, as Schalkwyk suggests, but also that this humanity is grounded in their mutual object-status, their common vulnerability. “He’s caught me in his eye” is at once a declaration of vulnerability in the face of the other, as the object of the other’s gaze, *and* an acknowledgment of the (potential) vulnerability of the other to the aspect one presents. What Timon will see, Flavius hopes, is his “honest grief” at the pitiful object before him—“O you gods!/ Is yon despised and ruinous man my lord,/ Full of decay and failing?” (ll. 453-55)—which may allow the all-doubting misanthrope to make *himself* vulnerable enough to “accept” that grief. That, having forsworn “objects,” he might yet prove unequal to their affective power.

Flavius is the play’s way of testing Timon’s conviction that the terrible solitude of all-against-all is the true human condition. In 4.3 we see him alone, unattached, his own

man, and desiring nothing more than to re-attach himself to his master's service—willing, in fact, to stake his all on that improbable venture. When Timon, who must “ever doubt, though ne'er so sure,” wonders aloud if his steward's kindness is merely a “usuring kindness, and as rich men deal gifts,/Expecting in return twenty for one?”(ll. 504-5), Flavius responds:

That which I show, heaven knows, is merely love,
Duty and zeal to your unmatched mind,
Care of your food and living. And believe it,
My most honoured lord,
For any benefit that points to me,
Either in hope or present, I'd exchange
For this one wish: that you had power and wealth
To requite me by making rich yourself.
(ll.510-17)

Ken Jackson has argued that Flavius's “passionate wish” articulates “a pure obligation or ethics towards the other, one not grounded in any economy of exchange,” and as such, represents the moment that Timon's Abrahamic misanthropy has been seeking all along: “The one thing Flavius will exchange is impossible. He cannot exchange his “gift” for wealth for Timon because Timon already has wealth....Timon, who has been seeking the wholly other all along, finds it here in the figure of Flavius's “impossible” gesture.”⁴⁵ But equally, it may be argued that this is the moment that Timon has been *resisting* all along, the moment that jeopardizes the misanthropic project of world-denying, negative idealism. If this exchange recalls Abraham, it is not the Abraham who denies Isaac whilst cleaving absolutely to God, but the more sociable Abraham who intercedes on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah upon learning of God's intention to destroy the cities, securing from God the promise that even if he finds “ten righteous” in the two cities, he will not destroy them for the “ten's sake” (Genesis 18:22-33).

It is a testimony to the power of his desire that Flavius comes as close as he does to breaking his master's resolve, forcing upon him the problem of "one honest man" (4.3.492) that tests the security of his stance of universal hatred in a manner reminiscent of Abraham's challenge to God. Faced with an idealism as implacable, for all its meekness, as his own, Timon cannot but acknowledge its force: "How fain would I have hated all mankind/And thou redeem'st thyself" (4.3.494-95). What Timon cannot, however, bring himself to acknowledge are the broader, social implications of Flavius's "love." Hence his insistence on Flavius's uniqueness as "Thou singly honest man" (4.3.518), as the one exception to the rule of universal villainy—as, in fact, the exception that *proves* that rule. By emphasizing Flavius's uniqueness, Timon can hold on to his belief that the only honest society is one that eschews attachments, an *anti-society* founded on autonomous isolation rather than dependent sociability. "Go, live rich and happy," he tells Flavius, pressing gold on him:

But thus conditioned: thou shalt build from men.
 Hate all, curse all, show charity to none,
 But let the famished flesh slide from the bone
 Ere thou relieve the beggar.
 (4.3. 520-24)

Where wealth for Flavius serves as a means of engaging more fruitfully with the world, for Timon its best use is to secure disengagement from the world and its objects. Thus, "let famished flesh slide from the bone/Ere thou relieve the beggar" re-articulates in the civic context his injunction to Alcibiades to spare none in his war on Athens. What he will not—indeed cannot—do, is what Flavius wants most of all. He cannot acknowledge his own object-status by accepting his dependant's offer of comfort and service, by

becoming, in effect, his dependant's dependant. To do so, as Timon understands well enough, is tantamount to re-entering society.

Yet, even though Flavius fails in this particular attempt to restore the "bond in men", the play subtly affirms the ubiquity of this desire in the unlikeliest of ways, in the unlikeliest of places. Service is the ideal fruition of this desire for social attachment, but even where service fails, and social bonds seem utterly disrupted, they nonetheless continue to exert an inescapable power on *Timon's* characters. Thus, physically splintered and morally incoherent as it is, Athenian society seems incapable of the solitude to which Timon condemns it. For example, almost none of the characters who visit Timon in the play's second half appear alone. The bandits rove in a group; we meet the prostitutes, Timandra and Phrynia, as a pair, accompanying Alcibiades. And even that unholy nexus of false service, the Poet and the Painter, arch-rivals though they are, never appear but in each other's company—as though even the worst of mankind cannot exist by themselves but must seek out like-minded company, however perverse that association may be.

But what do such associations mean for *Timon's* fractured civic community? Enquiring into the founding imperatives of the modern state apparatus, the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas has written:

[It] is very important to know whether the state, society, law and power are required because man is beast to his neighbor (*homo homini lupus*) or because I am responsible for my fellow. It is very important to know whether the political order defines man's responsibility or merely restricts his bestiality.⁴⁶

Levinas' question articulates the dilemma at the heart of *Timon's* meditation on society. The play makes quite clear what Timon's response to Levinas' question would be. For Timon, the bandits, prostitutes, and warmongers who appear before him in the wilderness

emblemize the deceptive, corrupt society that has bred them: plying their trades more honestly than their social betters, they serve merely to demystify the laws and norms holding together the socio-political order as empty fictions masking man's essential bestiality. But it is not at all clear that the play shares this perspective.

In fact, the perverse social groupings in the play's second half, emerging out of the interstices of a society falling apart at its seams, point not only to the fragility of the "bond in men" but also to its powerful hold on even the most self-centered of characters. Admittedly, that hold is not always—perhaps even hardly ever—ethical in any absolute sense. Indeed, even when asserted in ethical terms, such bonds can be merely delusional imaginings, as in Timon's pretty fiction of friends "like brothers commanding one another's fortunes." And conversely, even when bespeaking genuine attachment, such bonds can be all too fragile, like the already-distant memory of "better times" with which Flavius seeks to seal the community of servants at the moment of their dispersal into an uncertain future. Yet, with all these caveats in place, the play also acknowledges that such fragile affirmations of fellowship do have the potential to override the mutual hostility, faithlessness and internecine rivalry that has come to define the Athenian polis. An exemplary instance is offered by the anonymous messenger who brings the Senate word of Alcibiades' alliance with Timon:

I met a courier, one mine ancient friend,
Whom, though in general part we were opposed,
Yet our old love made a particular force
And made us speak like friends.
(5.3. 6-9)

Even as the message he bears augers the chaos of civil war, the means whereby he has obtained it belies the ubiquitous disintegration of social bonds that civil war portends.

Against the autonomous subjectivity of *homo homini lupus*, whose apotheosis is civil war, the play sets the “particular force” of an “old love” in a muted, enigmatic reminder of the “bond in men.”

RICH CONCEITS

Timon’s closing scenes take us to an Athens seemingly chastened by the fury it has unleashed, and which barely averts the further catastrophe of outright civil war through an eleventh-hour reconciliation between the Senate and Alcibiades. While some critics have argued for that reconciliation’s redemptive potential, the dominant critical consensus has been more skeptically inclined, viewing it as gold-soiled compromise between warring elites, whose redemptive elements, if present at all, are severely undercut by the moral ambiguity surrounding the principal actors, Alcibiades and the Athenian Senate.⁴⁷ Indeed, although the play does seek to at least partially rehabilitate the senators of Act 5 through the awkward expedient of killing off their unscrupulous predecessors—these, we are told, along with Timon’s enemies, have died of “shame” (5.5.27-29)—we are never quite certain whether the Senators who have replaced them are indeed a reformed set, nor whether Alcibiades’ capitulation to their plea indicates a recision of his earlier aggressiveness. In view of these and other uncertainties, *Timon*’s concluding scenes powerfully elicit, without clearly answering, Levinas’ question: is the turn to the polis, to the language of law and order and the responsibilities of power an act of fear or of faith? Does Athens, as it is re-imagined in the closing scene, emerge out of a quasi-Hobbesian fear at societal disarray or out of the “particular force” of the loving service and fellowship which motivates the play’s frequently anonymous, subordinate

characters? Do these characters prepare the conditions for the re-establishment of civic order at the play's end or do they haunt its edges in silent rebuke of its hollowness?

Flavius's appearance at the Senators' side in 5.2, where they try (in vain) to persuade Timon to lead them out of their present danger, is telling in this respect. Sometimes read as a sign of betrayal of his master, Flavius's final appearance with the Athenian delegation may also, however, signal a tentative acknowledgment of the possibility of a community more broadly conceived than the atomistic, ephemeral encounters between the good in an otherwise malevolent universe of all-against-all that we have witnessed thus far. Yet, if Flavius bolsters the senate's legitimacy by lending its mission the moral authority of his presence, his presence also complicates our reception of their appeal. The message they carry to Timon is from the grieving Athenian "public body," which, undoubtedly pricked by the looming threat of civil war, has finally acquired "sense withal/Of its own fall...And send forth us to make their sorrowed render" (5.2.32-34). However, Athens' offer to recompense Timon, as presented by the senators, mingles the registers of love and wealth in a highly ambiguous fashion. If Timon accedes to their plea, the senators report, Athens is prepared to shower on him "even such heaps and sums of love and wealth,/As shall to thee blot out what wrongs were theirs,/And write in thee the figures of their love,/Ever to read them thine" (5.2. 37-40). The appeal is at one level commensurate with the sense that we gain from Flavius's gifts in the prior act that the two languages of love and wealth are not necessarily opposed, that material means can, in fact, be steered toward loving ends. But the question remains: which is the means here, and which the end? It is not clear if the Athenians, or the Senators who represent them here, understand the importance of making that distinction, even as Flavius's silent

presence on the edge of the scene reminds us of its salience to any project of reforming the civic body.

Indeed, Flavius' skepticism regarding the Senators' attempt to reclaim Timon to Athens's cause implies a recognition that the polis can never be made magically whole or perfect. No amount of reparation, of attempts to rectify wrongs, can totally heal the spiritual rot at its core. Spurred belatedly to ethical action by the manifestation of this rot, Athens will have to learn to live as best it can with its tragic consequences. This is the basic import of the two central events of the final scene, Alcibiades' rapprochement with the Senate and his closing recitation of Timon's epitaph.

Responding to Alcibiades's initial belligerence—"Sound to this coward and lascivious town/Our terrible approach" (5.5.1-2)—the senators make their case for clemency in terms recalling the Abrahamic challenge that Flavius embodied for Timon:

1 Senator. These walls of ours
Were not erected by their hands from whom
You have received your griefs; nor are they such
That these great towers, trophies, and schools should fall
For private faults in them.

...
2 Senator. ... Then, dear countryman,
Bring in thy ranks but leave without thy rage;
Spare thy Athenian cradle and those kin
Which in the bluster of thy wrath must fall
With those that have offended; like a shepherd
Approach the fold and cull th'infected forth
But kill not all together.

(ll. 22-26, 35-44)

Flawed as the senators may be, the essence of their appeal—that justice cannot be served unless tempered with mercy—rings truer here than in their attempt to bribe Timon into forgiving and forgetting Athens' perfidy. In effect, Alcibiades must choose between the

heroic bid for autonomy implicit in the feudal-aristocratic military ethos—an ethos which had once led him to declare “’Tis honour with most lands to be at odds/Soldiers should brook as little wrong as gods” (3.6.115)—and his responsibility to his “Athenian cradle,” a responsibility that locates him as an one countryman alongside others, a part of the larger community of the *patria*. By appealing to Alcibiades not as a martial hero but as a “countryman,” by in fact hinting that these two identities are at odds with each other, the Senators tentatively re-constitute the native community of the polis, rather than the individual lord or warrior-clan, as *the* ideal object of service. Evoked in the vaguest possible terms, as the repository of distant glory (walls, trophies, towers, schools) and future possibility (“Athenian cradle”), a barely outlined conglomeration of things, people and affects, Athens acquires an iconic aura: its visible markers point beyond themselves to an idea that escapes full embodiment, and is all the more powerful for that reason.

Yet, this implicit iconization of Athens is based on a strategic act of forgetfulness. The senators’ appeal for clemency evades the difficult question of structural reformation: their suggestion that it is “private faults” that need culling, not the “great towers, trophies, and schools” of Athens, troublingly bypasses the culpability of those iconic institutions and monuments under whose powerful shadow such faults find occasion to grow. The city’s walls, trophies and schools may embody the concerted activity of civic building, undertaken by the many for the many, in pursuit of an ideal of community, of the “bond in men.” But, as both Timon and Alcibiades learnt, they can also shelter abuse of power and avoidance of responsibility under the cover of the very “public laws” (5.5.62) to which Alcibiades now cedes control as he capitulates to the senators’ plea. Thus, if the myth-making that the senators engage in here is essential to social cohesion, alerting us to

that “remembered sense of value” without which civic life is impossible, it cannot fully offset the violence at the heart of the civilizing project—a violence which surfaces in their awkwardly pastoral image of Alcibiades as a blood-besmirched shepherd, one who “culls” and “kills” as much as he protects.

Timon’s somber lesson—that icons can all too easily degenerate into idols and idealism into idolatry—reverberates through the closing scene’s depiction of the city fathers’ attempts to patch over the wounds in the civic body. As they, like Flavius before them, find out in their encounter with Timon, certain wounds, “unremoveably/Coupled to nature” (5.2.109-10), cannot be healed. Nor, as it turns out, can they be forgotten. Timon’s implacable rage casts its last, long shadow on the play in the form of his epitaph, dutifully brought to Alcibiades by a conscientious soldier who, ignorant of the script, has impressed it on a tablet of wax: “*Here lie I, Timon, who alive all living men did hate,/Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass and stay not here thy gait*” (5.5.70-71).⁴⁸

Alcibiades’s interpretation of Timon’s epitaph is of a piece with the scene’s overall emphasis on reconciliation and forgiveness, but it cannot—and is likely not intended to—fully offset the acid effect of Timon’s last sour words. Rather, as with the Senators’ re-telling of Athens’ story, Alcibiades’ gloss calls attention to the process whereby such social fictions, the founding myths of civic order, are created:

These well express in thee thy latter spirits.
 Though thou abhorred’st in us our human griefs,
 Scorned’st our brains’ flow and those our droplets which
 From niggard nature fall, yet rich conceit
 Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye
 On thy low grave, on faults forgiven. Dead
 Is noble Timon, of whose memory
 Hereafter more.

(5.5.72-79)

Alcibiades—“aged interpreter though young in days” (5.4.8), as the soldier who brings the epitaph’s wax impression calls him—proves himself worthy of that appellation here, audaciously fashioning out of Timon’s testimonial to enduring hatred an entirely more congenial story of “faults forgiven.” At one level, his re-telling captures the contradiction implicit in the epitaph itself, whose very existence belies Timon’s wish to be free of the “eyes of man” (4.3.51). But at another level, Alcibiades’ notion that Timon’s “rich conceit” taught him “to make vast Neptune weep for aye/ On thy low grave, on faults forgiven” violates the meaning Timon himself earlier provided for his choice of grave in his self-exhortation: “Timon, . . . prepare thy grave:/ Lie where the light foam may beat/ Thy gravestone daily; make thine epitaph, / *That death in me at others’ lives may laugh*” (4.3. 376).

What Timon intends as a mocking laugh directed from the freedom of the grave at the misery of lives lived in a “false world” (4.3.371), Alcibiades reinterprets, in the light perhaps of his own recent softening, as a final admission of grief’s affective pull. For Alcibiades, Timon’s “rich conceit” holds out the possibility that “others’ lives” will invite not only abhorrence of human villainy or scorn at the weak “droplets/ Which from niggard nature fall” but tears of sympathy from which the misanthrope himself will not be excluded. Neptune’s cosmic tears, washing over Timon’s “low grave,” convert it into an enigmatic emblem of “faults forgiven” in which the task of identifying particular agents—whose faults? who forgives?—yields to an assumption both of general culpability and of a general capacity to forgive.

The final words of Alcibiades’ elegy for Timon suggest that this attempt at mythologizing the hero and so weaving him back into the fabric of civic life is a work in

progress rather than a completed action. His “memory” will continue to be rehearsed “hereafter,” presumably in the same fictionalizing vein of unsightly truths burnished by “rich conceit” that characterizes Alcibiades’ brief tribute. But, only imperfectly assimilated through such retrospective acts of commemoration, Timon’s epitaph really belongs to the order of what Eagleton calls the “drag or ballast” of the natural “within the historical.”⁴⁹ It reminds us that the stories we tell about ourselves and our predecessors to mark our difference from the “forest of beasts,” as imaginative counterparts to the “walls” demarcating the boundary between city and wilderness, cannot fully obliterate the savage imperatives that lie dormant at the heart of such civilizing impulses. Inserting the epitaph as a coda to the reconciliation-scene we have just witnessed, the play incorporates Timon’s voice as a reminder, even a warning, of what lies beyond the realm of conciliation.

The prevailing sense of incompleteness, of something left over at the play’s end calls to mind Adrian Poole’s observation about the conclusion of Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*—that, once “the crisis of understanding or ‘recognition’ is past,” the “business of living with the new burden of understanding” is already underway.⁵⁰ We sense something of the same effect in *Timon*’s last scene, which takes us to the middle of an ongoing negotiation with the “new burden” of tragic understanding. Alcibiades’ fictive re-telling of Timon’s last words, and the Senators’ evocation of Athens’ iconic greatness, present one way of dealing with this burden. Alcibiades’ own last words, appended to his tribute to Timon and functioning as an epilogue to the play, suggest another, more somber approach:

Bring me into your city,
And I will use the olive with my sword,
Make war breed peace, make peace stint war, make each

Prescribe to other, as the other's leech.
(5.5.80-82)

Having momentarily laid to rest Timon's unruly "memory," Alcibiades' closing vision revivifies it in this admission that violence and disintegration are as endemic to society as the desire for peace and fellowship, thereby positing the two, contrary impulses as integral to a fuller understanding of civic life, its limits and possibilities. The play's final lines do not unequivocally answer Levinas' question, suggesting rather that this question cannot be answered once and for all—that the founding imperatives of civic life are a matter of ongoing ethical struggle between the contending possibilities of peace and war, between the contrary pulls of self-interest and responsibility for "my fellow." The play also leaves unclear what Alcibiades' role will be in managing this societal flux. He certainly does not eschew the use of his sword, however tempered by "the olive," and his concluding desire to "make war breed peace" sounds too close for comfort to justifications of war in our own—and other—times. Yet, if the "I," presented as the governing subject of the last sentence in the above quotation, projects the autonomy of a demagogue-in-the-making, the penultimate line, with its awkward, repeated stress on "make" suggests the struggle with historical and material conditions which limit that autonomy, even as they define the scope of the responsibility that Alcibiades is now about to assume as his city's physic.

Ultimately, in *Timon*, the place of service and fellowship in society is perhaps best seen as the subject of what Eagleton calls tragedy's "skeptical faith." Seen in this light, the seeming attenuation of civic idealism in the closing scene may well stem from the play's awareness of its fragility rather than constituting a testimony to its hollowness.

Indeed, the negotiations of meaning arising from the burden of tragic understanding that the scene features suggests that, as a particular orientation towards the world, idealism cannot really be seen as adherence to some immutable, ahistorical “truth.” Rather, it is itself caught up in the flux of societal change, when neither past nor future can be seen as sanctuaries of comfortable certainties or enduring values. Indeed, by laying bare the process whereby such sanctuaries are created, the play attests at once to their centrality to the project of civic re-building and to the myriad aporia that such activities generate. Yet, while Timon would see that project as irredeemably vitiated by its inherent frailties, the play, I think, suggests a more nuanced approach, one alert to these systemic frailties but also to the value, even the *necessity*, of such a project.

¹ See especially David Evett, “Luther, Cranmer, Service and Shakespeare” in *Centered on the Word: Literature, Scripture, and the Tudor-Stuart Middle Way*, ed. Daniel W. Doerksen and Christopher Hodgkins (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2004), 87-109; and Michael Neill, “‘Servile Ministers’: *Othello*, *King Lear*, and the Sacralization of Service” in *Words that Count: Essays on Early Modern Authorship in Honor of MacDonald P. Jackson*, ed. Brian Boyd (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2004), 163-65.

² All citations from *Timon of Athens* follow the edition prepared for *The Arden Shakespeare: Third Series* by Anthony B. Dawson and Gretchen E. Minton (London: Arden Shakespeare, Cengage Learning, 2008).

³ As a mental habit signaling the human propensity to cede power and ethical agency to fictive constructions, the scope of idolatry extends beyond the deification of tangible entities to the intangible realm of concepts and cultural ideals. The perils of mental idolatry were a commonplace in religious discourse from Paul, through Tertullian, Augustine, Aquinas and Calvin, as Katherine Eisaman Maus shows in “Idol and Gift in *Volpone*” in *English Literary Renaissance* 35 (September 2005): 432-34.

⁴ David Hawkes discusses the broad application of idolatry in early modern English culture in *Idols of the Marketplace: Idolatry and Commodity Fetishism in English Literature 1580-1680*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

⁵ See Hawkes, 6.

⁶ Seneca, *The woorke of the excellent philosopher Lucius Annaeus Seneca concerning benefyting : that is too say the dooing, receyuing, and requyting of good turns*, trans. Arthur Golding (London, 1578), 5-6.

⁷ See Maus, 440.

⁸ Such a dualistic view, Regina Schwartz has persuasively argued, lay behind Protestant reformers' zealous attacks on transubstantiation—on the spiritually transformative potential of the sacramental wafer and wine—even as Protestant poetics itself sought to articulate a more complex relationship between the two poles of matter and spirit. See Regina Schwartz, *Sacramental Poetics at the Dawn of Secularism: When God Left the World* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2008), 3-17.

⁹ According to the Puritan minister, William Gouge, "because Masters by virtue of their office and place bear Christs image, and stand in his stead...it followeth that servants in performing duty to their master performe duty to Christ." See his *Of Domesticall Duties Eight Treatises* (London, 1622).

¹⁰ See Michael Neill's nuanced discussion of these different dimensions of the ideology of service in "Servant Obedience and Master Sins: Shakespeare and the Bonds of Service" in his *Putting History to the Question: Power, Politics, and Society in English Renaissance Drama* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000), 13-48.

¹¹ See, for example, Mark Thornton Burnett, *Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture: Authority and Obedience* (London, New York: Macmillan, 1997); see also Richard Strier, "Faithful Servants: Shakespeare's Praise of Disobedience" in *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture* ed. Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 1988), 104-33. Directly relevant to *Timon* is Maurice Hunt's critique, drawing on Strier, of Timon's steward, Flavius's timorousness in "Qualifying the Good Steward of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*," *English Studies* 6 (2001): 507-20, esp. 513.

¹² Evett, "Luther, Cranmer, Service and Shakespeare," 101.

¹³ See "Introduction" in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* ed. Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, Peter Stallybrass (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 8.

¹⁴ Margreta de Grazia et al, "Introduction," 4.

¹⁵ Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance* (London, New York: Verso, 2007), 56.

¹⁶ Critchley, 120.

¹⁷ Terry Eagleton, *Sweet Violence: The Idea of the Tragic* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2003), 145.

¹⁸ Recent accounts of a likely collaboration between Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton, whom Dawson and Minton identify as "Shakespeare's junior partner in...[the] enterprise" ("Introduction," *Timon of Athens*, 17-18) also helps explain some of the play's inconsistencies, including its sometimes choppy interlacing of satire and tragedy. Brian Vickers discusses the collaboration in "Timon of Athens with Thomas Middleton," in *Shakespeare, Co-Author, A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2002), 244-290. John Jowett describes Middleton as the play's "leading poet of debt" and consequently its "more realistic poet," but also, given Middleton's hand in composing some of the episodes involving the steward,

Flavius, suggests that the play “reflects less familiar dimensions of his writing.” See John Jowett, “Middleton and Debt in *Timon of Athens*,” in *Money and the Age of Shakespeare: Essays in Economic Criticism*, ed. Linda Woodbridge (New York; Houndmills, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 222, 220. Although space does not permit me to pursue the issue in detail here, Middleton’s experimentation with a characteristically Shakespearean theme (faithful service) in conjunction with Shakespeare’s experimentation with satire in *Timon*’s misanthropic diatribes draws attention to the inter-subjective nature of the collaborative process—an aspect of the play’s composition that chimes with its thematic exploration of societal interdependence.

¹⁹ Eagleton, 99-100.

²⁰ See *OED*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989), s.v. “bounty, n.” 4a.

²¹ Cited from Linda Levy Peck, “‘For a King Not to be Bountiful Were a Fault’: Perspectives on Court Patronage in Early Stuart England,” *The Journal of British Studies* 25 (January 1986): 36.

²² For the relation of *Timon*’s bounty to James I’s, see Coppelia Kahn, “‘Magic of Bounty’: *Timon of Athens*, Jacobean Patronage, and Maternal Power,” in *Shakespeare Quarterly* 38 (Spring 1987): 34-57, and David Bevington and David Smith, “James I and *Timon of Athens*,” in *Comparative Drama* 33 (Spring 1999): 56-87.

²³ For a nuanced discussion of these Senecan echoes, see John Wallace, “*Timon of Athens* and the Three Graces: Shakespeare’s Senecan Study,” *Modern Philology*, 83, no. 4 (1986), 349-63.

²⁴ Margreta de Grazia discusses this issue in relation to *King Lear*: see “The Ideology of Superfluous Things: *King Lear* as Period Piece,” in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, 17-43, esp. 24-26.

²⁵ Sharon O’Dair examines *Timon*’s anti-materialist stance from a pragmatic standpoint in *Class, Critics and Shakespeare: Bottom Lines on the Culture Wars* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2000), 43-66.

²⁶ Robert Miola, “*Timon* in Shakespeare’s Athens,” in *Shakespeare Quarterly* 31 (Spring 1980): 23.

²⁷ Schwartz, 9.

²⁸ A.D. Nuttall, *Timon of Athens* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), 141.

²⁹ Quoted in Ken Jackson, “‘One Wish’ or the Possibility of the Impossible: Derrida, the Gift, and God in *Timon of Athens*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 52 (Spring, 2001):42.

³⁰ Jackson, 34-66, esp. 59.

³¹ Aristotle, *Aristotles Politiques, Or Discourses of Government*, trans. John Dee (London, 1598), 15.

³² *OED*, s.v. “object, n.,” 1a.

³³ I am drawing on *OED*, “object, n.” 4.

³⁴ See Margreta de Grazia et al’s compelling discussion of the etymological permeability of “objects” and “subjects”: “The very ambiguity of the word “ob-ject,” that which is thrown before, suggests a more dynamic status for the object. Reading “ob” as “before” allows us to assign the object a prior status, suggesting its temporal, spatial, and even causal *coming before*. The word could thus be made to designate the potential priority of the object. So defined, the term renders more apparent the way material

things—land, clothes, tools—might constitute subjects who in turn own, use, and transform them. The form/matter relation of Aristotelian metaphysics is provisionally reversed: it is the material object that impresses its texture and contour upon the noumenal subject. And this reversal is curiously upheld by the ambiguity of the word “sub-ject,” that which is thrown under, in this case—in order to receive an imprint.” See Di Grazia et al, “Introduction,” 5.

³⁵ See Eagleton, n. 13 above.

³⁶ See Michel E. Montaigne, “Of Democritus and Heraclitus,” in *Montaigne’s Essays*, trans. John Florio, intro. L.C. Harmer, 3 vols. (London: Dent, 1965), 1: 344.

³⁷ Nuttall, 88.

³⁸ David Schalkwyk, “‘More than a steward’: The Sonnets, *Twelfth Night*, and *Timon of Athens*,” in his *Shakespeare, Love and Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), 144. Schalkwyk’s account provides a useful corrective to a critical tradition which highlights the servants’ impotence, as exemplified in Ralph Berry, *Shakespeare and Social Class* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1988), 163; Rolf Soellner, *Timon of Athens: Shakespeare’s Pessimistic Tragedy*, 120; John Bayley, *Shakespeare and Tragedy* (London: Routledge, 1981), 83-84.

³⁹ According to William C. Carroll, poverty was thought to breed infection in multiple senses: biologically, by spreading diseases like the plague; socially, since vagrants and rogues were considered to be corrupting influences on young apprentices and the working poor; and politically, as a breeding ground for sedition. See *Fat King, Lean Beggar: Representations of Poverty in the Age of Shakespeare* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996), 127-28. Also pertinent is Craig Muldrew’s account of the poor’s loss of credibility (in the double sense of financial credit-worthiness and social reputation) in a period marked by increasing anxiety about debt. See *The Economy of Obligation: the Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 303-12.

⁴⁰ Evett, 28 (italics in the original).

⁴¹ While he puts it to a different use, Maurice Hunt’s application of the Virgilian dictum—*lacrimae rerum*—to Flavius’ tears aptly captures the point I am making here, for the phrase, literally translated as “tears of things” or “tears in things,” indicates precisely the mutual imbrication of subject and object central to Flavius’ experience of service. See Hunt, 511.

⁴² Legally servants were free to leave their masters’ service, although material constraints doubtless qualified this freedom.

⁴³ Evett, 28.

⁴⁴ Schalkwyk, 158.

⁴⁵ Jackson, 64-65.

⁴⁶ Emmanuel Lévinas, *The Lévinas Reader*, ed. Sean Hand (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 247-48.

⁴⁷ See, for example, Gail Kern Paster, *The Idea of the City in the Age of Shakespeare* (Athens, GA: Georgia UP, 1985), 107-08 and Rolf Soellner, *Timon of Athens: Shakespeare’s Pessimistic Tragedy* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1979), 50-63. Richard Fly offers a more positive reading of the conclusion in *Shakespeare’s Mediated World* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1976), 141-142.

⁴⁸ In the Folio version, these lines are preceded by another, contradictory epitaph, which the editors of the Arden edition argue persuasively against including in their version of the text. See Dawson and Minton, 338-9 n.

⁴⁹ Eagleton, 287.

⁵⁰ Adrian Poole, *Tragedy: Shakespeare and the Greek Example* (Oxford, New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 106.

CHAPTER TWO

**PLAYER-SERVANTS AND THE ROYAL NATIONAL IMAGINARY IN
JONSON'S *THE GYPSIES METAMORPHOSED***

Unlike tragedy, court masque, as a genre, makes a concerted effort to control and erase skepticism altogether in favor of affirming an unconditional faith in the monarchical regime. Indeed, part of our modern fascination with the genre lies in tracing how the erasure of skepticism happens (or fails to happen) in formal terms and what the object of erasure is, in terms of the masque's political agenda. Crucial to that agenda was the enactment of the fiction of a nation unified and rendered homogeneous through service to the monarch, figured as all-powerful and all-bountiful. The English state attempted to realize the idea, much cherished by James I, of a unified British "empire," by pursuing a policy of internal colonialism directed at the peripheral regions of the polity along with a slew of aggressive legislative attempts to curb disorderliness amongst the socio-economically marginalized sections of the domestic populace.¹ The state-sponsored drive toward cultural homogenization and social order paradoxically spawned new awareness of heterogeneous, dissident communities at home, a consciousness of cultural and social difference that was further reinforced by England's increasing participation in global trading networks. In this scenario, the court masque became, on occasion, a potent venue for exploring the relation of the monarchical nation and its governing ideology of loyal service to the king not only to exotic others in distant locations (Ethiops, Indians, and so on) but also to those others who populated the margins of the English polity itself (the culturally distinct "Celtic fringe" as well as vagabonds, itinerant traders and artisans, and the unemployed or underemployed poor).²

Thus, in 1621, when Ben Jonson, the Jacobean court's pre-eminent composer of masque scripts, penned his latest offering in the genre, he chose for his principal characters a group of people who had the dubious distinction of having been, for over a century, one of England's most marginalized, and ill-defined cultural categories. The entertainment, *The Masque of the Gypsies Metamorphosed*, featured hired professional players alongside prominent courtiers who take on the roles of tawny, smooth-talking nomadic gypsies of dubious occupation, ethnicity and legal status. Commissioned by James' favorite, George Villiers, the Marquis of Buckingham, the masque was a great hit at court, and was the only one of Jonson's masques to have been performed thrice: it was first staged on August 3, 1621 on the occasion of the king's visit to Buckingham's newly acquired estate at Burley-on-the-Hill, and then again, two days later, at the neighboring estate of Buckingham's father-in-law, the Earl of Rutland; a final, amplified version of the masque was presented at Windsor sometime in September 1621.

The central fiction of the masque involves the appearance at court of a band of gypsies who take turns to tell the fortunes of key members of the audience; a further diversion follows, in the form of the gypsies' encounter with an assortment of country 'clowns' and their 'sluts.' On the pretext of reading the fortunes of the clowns, the gypsies steal their goods but then, with an equally skillful display of "legerdemain," return the stolen objects to the clowns. The gypsies so impress the country clowns with their performance that the latter decide, en masse, to join their "company"; the anarchic resonance of the rustics' desire is apparently tempered by the masque's beguilingly conventional conclusion, with the disguised courtiers reassuming their gentlemanly shapes, while the

principal hired actors continue in role to direct the closing songs addressed to the king in what is ultimately a profoundly ambivalent gesture of assimilation.

Much of the critical debate about *Gypsies* has centered on whether the masque presents a latently subversive or ultimately complimentary portrayal of Buckingham, who played the symbolically important—and morally ambivalent—role of the Captain of the gypsies. Dale Randall argues that the masque's genre-bending features—the extended antimasque and the absence of a fully developed main masque, the assignation of speaking parts to the aristocratic performers, the ambiguities surrounding the courtiers' transformation, and the generally risqué nature of the gypsies' activities—function at least partly as a Jacobean mirror for magistrates, implicitly warning James about his favorite's profiteering activities, while also slyly critiquing the monarch's own laxities.³ Contrarily, Martin Butler has argued that Jonson's masque raises the specter of Buckingham's corruption only to triumphantly dispel it before the king.⁴ Both Randall and Butler advance a court-centered reading of the gypsy-fiction as a vehicle for the critique or vindication of the royal favorite. But as more recent studies have demonstrated, the scope of Jonson's gypsy fiction extends beyond the domain of immediate court politics to reflect on issues as varied as early modern colonialist discourse, the failure of James' Anglo-Scottish Union project, and the performative dimension of early modern criminality.⁵ While these later accounts foreground Jonson's treatment of gypsies' cultural difference and its relation to performance, the connection between the gypsies' cultural liminality and the court masque's specific ideological commitment to a ritualized enactment of loyal service to the monarchical regime has not been fully explored.

In this chapter, I argue that Jonson's gypsies' performance of cultural difference constitutes a vehicle for exploring the tensions between the performative and ethical dimensions of service embodied in the masque form, thereby drawing attention to the limits of royal control over the discourse of service as an ideological tool promoting cultural homogeneity. Indeed, *Gypsies*' insistence on the performative, histrionic dimension of service foregrounds the difficulty of ascertaining the ethical probity of declarations of service, especially when such declarations are made by already-suspect members of the nation's marginal groups. At one level, *Gypsies* solves that problem by revealing that these gypsies were English gentlemen all along, a strategy already tried and tested in the *Irish Masque*.⁶ This similarity has led Netzloff to argue that *Gypsies*, like the *Irish Masque*, "dodges the issue of cultural difference" by identifying the gypsies' performative culture as fundamentally inauthentic and ephemeral, "nothing more than a role that can be assumed or abandoned."⁷ But Jonson's treatment of the Irish and the gypsies is markedly different in that the former is more clearly the object of ridicule, burlesque parody, and unambiguous colonialist assimilation than the latter.

While the masque is certainly insistent on the performative dimension of cultural identity, as Netzloff argues, it seems also to leave room for the possibility that rather than simply effecting the total erasure of cultural difference, performance can also help make that difference insistently, even transgressively legible. Here the masque's division of gypsy parts between hired actors and courtiers is particularly important because the actor, a liminal figure, embodies not only the transience of performative identity but also its resilience. That is to say, the actor's lability and ability to adapt to various roles models a strategic response to the manifold risks of adhering to an identity or way of life that is

outside the norm. It is important, in this respect, that the unidentified actors playing the roles of Patrico and Jackman remain in character throughout the masque, and even as they join in the songs praising the king, they do not fully capitulate to the royal terms of service.⁸ In the masque, the histrionic dimension of service provides scope for enacting liberty in the guise of sanctioned play, opening up an alternative model for communal affiliation than that advanced by the masque's royalist politics and that, as Reynolds has suggested, cuts a transversal path across that ideology. Indeed, the masque's closure is shot through with ambiguity: even as it undertakes a ritual affirmation of royal power, its attention to the royal body suggests not its transformative potential but its need for protection from the chaotic heterogeneity of the nation's margins. The playful, demotic tenor of this masque, with its broad scatological humor, sexual innuendoes, and showcasing of performative sleights contributes to the dramatization of the masque form that positions it ambivalently between festive theatre and ritual panegyric, rendering its ideological affirmation of service open to theatrical scrutiny.⁹

GYPSIES, PLAYERS AND THE HISTRIONICS OF SERVICE

The stage direction denoting the entrance of the gypsies in Jonson's masque draws heavily on stereotypical representations of gypsies in early modern culture. It reads as follows: "Enter a Gypsy, leading a horse laden with five little children, bound in a trace of scarfs upon him: a second leading another horse, laden with stolen poultry, etc."¹⁰ The first leading gypsy, the Jackman, calls attention to the principal point of contention over the gypsies' identity in his opening speech, when he introduces the little children in his charge as "the five princes of Egypt" and enjoins the audience to "gaze upon them, as on

the off-spring of Ptolomy, begotten upon several Cleopatras in their several counties.” At once exotic and domestic, a royal nation in exile and a local band of nomads, Jonson’s gypsies occupy a curious middle ground between the exotic opaqueness of distant cultural others and the dangerous disorderliness of more familiar local others, including displaced rural laborers, petty criminals, beggars, and itinerant peddlers and entertainers.

The gypsies’ cultural liminality is further registered in the rustics’ initial confusion regarding their identity. Upon seeing them, the clown Cockerel describes them excitedly as “the finest olive-coloured spirits: they had so danced and gingled here, as if they had beene a set of over-growne fayeries.”¹¹ (W 536-38) Cockerel’s description emphasizes the gypsies’ quasi-mythical status in early modern folklore by aligning them with mysterious fairies who had enjoyed something of a revival in early modern times. As Carolyn Williams notes, the enduring cultural image of the fairy from pre-modern times to the nineteenth century has been that of a figure from the borders, an internal outsider, who bears the memory of the folk, the rural, the regional, and whose cultural difference, “made visible through their appearance and behavior,” is a “signal of the fissures within the notion of a Greater Britain that is more than the sum of its parts.”¹² Indeed, just as the disappearance of fairies is intrinsic to their cultural construction from medieval literature onwards,¹³ the elusiveness of the gypsies’ origin and occupation is part of their cultural construction from the early modern period onward.¹⁴ The elusiveness attributed to gypsy identity by the state and in popular culture paved the way for their eventual association with theatricality, and the consequent designation of gypsies as an inherently “performative social category.”¹⁵

As a category of identity, “gypsy” was labile from the outset, variously identified with “outlandyshe people calling themselves Egyptians,” and domestic vagrants who initially sought protection from the law by identifying themselves as Egyptians, members of a distinct ‘nation’ with its own laws, and therefore immune from prosecution by Anglo-Scottish authorities.¹⁶ While the earliest English acts concerning Egyptians were directed specifically at foreign immigrants who identified themselves as such, by 1562 they expanded to include “counterfeit Egyptians,” and “all persons found disguised in the company of vagabond Egyptians.”

The all-encompassing category of “counterfeit Egyptian” recurs in Elizabeth’s 1597/8 Act “for the Punyshment of Rogues, Vagabondes and Sturdy Beggars” which stipulates against “all such persons not being Fellons wandering and pretending themselves to be Egipcyans, or wandering in the Habbite Forme or Attire of counterfayte Egipcians.” These legal pronouncements eschew any attempt to distinguish between “true” or “counterfeit” in favor of the more expedient policy of identifying all gypsies as potentially “counterfeit” and vagabonds. Such a conflation of domestic wanderers with nomads of foreign origin alerts us to the intermixing of the gypsies with the local populations, an intermixing that David Mayall suggests may have taken the form of a mutual acculturation, whereby both the foreign nomads and the domestic travelers adopted and incorporated one another’s ways and practices: “This would allow for the entry of a group of foreign ‘Egyptians’ in the sixteenth century, but instead of this group maintaining their own separate identity, it permits greater fluidity between the original immigrants, their offspring and an indigenous nomadic population with whom they shared much in common.”¹⁷ This left open the possibility, Bryan Reynolds speculates, for

“white-skinned rogues and vagabonds to blacken their faces, practice fortune-telling, and label themselves Egyptians...not to mock gypsies,” as in the blackface minstrel shows of the 19th and 20th centuries but “to pass as or become gypsies.”¹⁸

The official emphasis on the gypsies’ counterfeit status was reiterated in the popular pamphlet-literature detailing the exploits of England’s criminal underground, and which reflected what was widely perceived to be the performative, elaborately crafted nature of the gypsy-identity. The rogue-pamphleteers thus played an important role in theatricalizing the figure of the gypsy.¹⁹ This theatricalization was linked to the gypsies’ nomadic way of life and their reputation as entertainers specializing in song, dance, legerdemain and fortune-telling, and is similar in many ways to the general tendency toward theatricalization of rogues and vagabonds in general, as noted by Paola Pugliatti.²⁰ For example, Dekker, describing the gypsies’ “filthy complexion,” opines that they are “not born so, neither has the Sunne burnt them so, but they are painted so.” Everything from gypsies’ skin-color and what they wore to what they did for a living were susceptible to performative explanation, and allied in that sense to the theater.²¹ By designating as vagrants not only “counterfeit Egyptians” but also those actors who did not enjoy the protection of a “Baron of the Realm, or any other honorable personage of greater degree,” the Acts passed in 1572 and 1597 provided official sanction for the imaginative link between players and gypsies that animates Dekker’s account.²² In Jonson’s masque, the rustics partly attribute the gypsies’ defiance of the law to their reputation of being, like “bearwards and other minstrels,” entertainers associated with the court. But their frank admiration for the gypsies’ performative skills also suggests that the

gypsies' sense of liberty derives from the nature of their occupation, the production of mirth through histrionic self-displacement.

Noting Jonson's preference for the "humorous and satirical" rather than the "barbaric and culturally exotic" in his later anti-masques, Hugh Craig suggests that this preference stems from a lack of sympathy for the "anthropological other" or the opportunity offered by such a figure for "exploring alternative possibilities in human psychology and social organization." When Jonson turns to the "seditious, violent and pseudo-human grotesque," he finds in it the image of his own society, a distorted but still familiar lens.²³ Craig's point holds true for the comical Welsh and Irish figures who people the anti-masques of *For the Honor of Wales* and the *Irish Masque at Court*: the naïvete of the former defuses the charge of the specter of sedition that their explicit talk of loyalty raises; in the latter, the threat of Irish "difference," visibly encoded in the mantle which the masquers dressed as Irish lords initially wear and then let fall, is practically nullified through their avowal of loyal devotion to the king.

In *Gypsies*, however, cultural difference carries a different valence, in part owing to the more diffuse nature of gypsy-identity. Here, the gypsies' cultural difference is less an object to be absorbed into the rhetoric of service to the monarch than the vehicle of the masque's exploration of the divided nature of service which, as Judith Weil observes, functioned as a "school of theatre as much as of ethics."²⁴ In David Schalkwyk's view, this performative dimension of service raises the specter of the unreliable servant as a player embodying either "the eye service that threatens master-servant relations at their core or its repressing corollary, the person reduced to mere performance, robbed of any independent subjectivity."²⁵ In Jonson's masque, the gypsies' cultural difference,

embodied by a socially mixed group of players, becomes an exotic screen onto which he can project the ambiguities and tensions surrounding the performance of service which not only preoccupies him in his dramatic works but also informs the masque as a genre. Indeed, in a masque lacking other scenic spectacles or elaborate machinery to provoke wonder, the gypsies' bodies, their gestures, movements, and their speech become the center of the action, drawing attention to their ambivalent performance of cultural liminality, and hence to the histrionic dimension of service that it mediates. The gypsy-fiction at the heart of the masque opens up a gap between the masque's carnivalesque and panegyric orientations that the courtiers' scaled-down transformation at the end cannot fully bridge.

SERVICE IN THE FUTURE PERFECT

The composite text of *Gypsies Metamorphosed* offers two markedly different inductions to the masque, the first delivered at Burley on the day of James' arrival at the estate, several days before the masque's first-ever performance; the second at Windsor directly before the masque's third and final performance. Considered together, the inductions act as competing thresholds announcing the key tension that informs the masque—that between the histrionic and ethical dimensions of service, which is heightened by the masque's dual orientation toward carnivalesque theatre and courtly ritual. The immediate purpose of the inductions is to set the stage for Buckingham's strategic manipulation of the gypsy-role to compliment and entertain the monarch and his fellow-courtiers. But since Jonson scripts Buckingham's part so as to discreetly distance him from the more negative associations of the role he is to play, this differentiation between courtier and gypsy allows the masque to explore the broader political and social

implications of the gypsy-fiction and the device of fortune-telling at its heart along a less court-bound trajectory as well.

In keeping with its temporal distance from the masque proper, the Burley induction is ostensibly extra-dramatic, framing the masque to come as part of an extended ceremonial display of hospitality organized for the king by a grateful Buckingham.²⁶ The induction is spoken by a porter, possibly played by a servant of Buckingham's household, who, as his master stands silently at his side, invites James to enter—

The house your bounty'hath built, and still doth reare,
With those high favours, and those heap't increases,
Which shews a hand not griev'd, but when it ceases.
The Master is your creature; as the place;
And eve'ry good about him is your grace;
Whom, though he stand by silent, think not rude,
But as a man turn'd all to gratitude
For what he neve'r can hope how to restore,
Since while he meditates one, you poure on more.

(B 13-21)

Unlike *Macbeth's* drunken Porter, who famously exceeds the bounds of his prescribed role to stage a “hilarious show of im-pertinence” at the “frontiers of representation,”²⁷ Jonson's admirably sober Porter vanishes completely into his appointed role, displaying a total commitment to the business of representing—and interpreting—his master's tongue-tied devotion. “The Master is your creature; as the place,” the Porter assures James, “And eve'ry good about him is your grace.” His depiction of his master's instrumentality recalls David Schalkwyk's description of the early modern servant “as the furthest reaches of ideology would have him: . . . the inward man reduced to nothing by being in every sense his master's man.”²⁸ Of course, Schalkwyk's description of the self-effacing servant applies quite as much to the Porter as to his master. And conversely, if the

Porter's self-effacing re-presentation attests to the sincerity of Buckingham's devotion to the king, it also subtly marks that silence—a dumb-show of gratitude—as a performance in its own right. Buckingham's studied silence speaks volumes through his servant-turned-player. The Burley induction thus glances discreetly, through the veil of panegyric, to the performative dynamics underpinning demonstrations of courtly service that will be elaborated, and complicated, through the masque's explicitly theatrical gypsy-fiction.

The entire performative force of the Burley prologue is geared toward minimizing the impression of the theatricality of service. But the prologue at Windsor, likely spoken by an actor in the role of a gypsy, places the performative dimension of service in a much more overtly theatrical context. Here, for example, royal favor appears not in the form of unlimited bounty but as the source of the gypsies' license to entertain:

I onelie beseech
 You take in good grace
 Our following the Court,
 Since tis for your sport,
 To have you still merry
 And not to make you wery.
 Wee may strive to please
 So lounge, some will say, till we growe a disease:
 But you Sir, that twice
 Have grac'd us already, incourage to thrice;
 Wherein if our bouldnes your patience invade,
 Forgive us the fault that your favour hath made.
 (W 9-20)

The Windsor induction recalls the theatrical prologues and epilogues of the time, which provided player-servants with a liminal performative space from which to acknowledge their dependence on the paying audience, their temporary masters, while at the same time winking insouciantly at the audience's complicity and delight in the bravura

performance.²⁹ The prologue also presents the relation between gypsy-entertainer and king in much less affective terms than at Burley: the gypsies' purpose of playing is not to reaffirm gratitude or evince support for royal policy but "for your sport/To have you merry." And if in "striv[ing] to please," the gypsies "growe a disease," as many critics of Jacobean courtly excess alleged, that is "a fault" the king's "favour hath made." As played at Windsor, then, the masque acknowledges in its very inception the ambivalence of its gypsy fiction, the possibility that the topsy-turvy, carnivalesque antimasque might take over, appropriate, and irreversibly theatricalize the masque's performative space, turning solemn ritual into raucous travesty and the loyal devotion of the courtly servant into histrionic play.³⁰ When considered together, *Gypsies*' two prologues draw attention to the masque's dual impulse toward panegyric ritual and festive theater, and thence to its self-conscious awareness that the festive topsy-turvydom of the gypsy fiction might undermine rather than enhance or "set off" the authority of the royal praise embedded within that fiction—and that, as a consequence, ephemeral fiction might erode the stability of timeless ritual.

According to Tom Bishop, the "secret anxiety" of the masque is that, rather than successfully embodying the future, "its magical gestures will turn out in reality to be every bit as ephemeral as the endings of many masques admit they themselves are."³¹ It is this aura of ephemerality overhanging the masque's aspiration toward permanence that Jonson sought to dismiss in the preface to his edition of *Hymenaei* (1606), by distinguishing—and prioritizing—the "removed mysteries" of masques over and against their "present occasions." (15-17)³² Jonson's preface mounted a Neo-Platonic challenge to Inigo Jones' spectacular innovations, claiming that the poetic "soul" of the masque

is—or should be—more “impressing and lasting” than its spectacular “body,” whose sensory delights are “but momentary and merely taking.” (1-6)³³ Jonson’s metaphysical distinction also speaks to Bishop’s larger point about the masque-form’s attempt to tether ephemeral novelty, the sensory paraphernalia of the “present occasion,” to a ritualistic annunciation of a “more removed” mystery, such that the masque’s “fullest political meaning” is achieved in the “future perfect—‘it will have been,’ the sign announcing the glory to come.”³⁴

In *Gypsies*, Jonson, by now a more seasoned judge of courtly taste, subjects his earlier high claims for the masque to an amused scrutiny that at times verges on self-parody and at other times ironically targets masque audiences’ alleged aversion for the genre’s abstruse allusions.³⁵ *Hymenaei*’s “removed mysteries” find parodic expression in the gypsies’ use of cant, a language whose obscurity the Jackman admits but insouciantly refuses to parse for his courtly audience:

If here we be a little obscure, it is our pleasure, for rather then we will offer to be our owne interpreters, we are resolv’d not to bee understood: yet if any man doubt of the significancy of the language, wee referre him to the third volume of reports, set forth by the learned in the lawes of canting, and published in the Gypsie tongue.”

(B & W 84-86)

If Jonson is here parodying his own predilection for imbuing the masque with “high and hearty inventions...grounded upon antiquity and solid learnings,” he also takes aim at his audiences’ seeming preference for “metheglin” over “nectar.”³⁶ No doubt *Gypsies*’ courtly audiences were meant to be amused by the Jackman’s raffish insistence on the “significancy” of his language. And the mingling of homely idiom with specifically cant terminology that marks the gypsies’ tongue throughout the masque could well be

intended to sate the court's curiosity about cant as "an influential popular fetish," as Bryan Reynolds has suggested.³⁷ But the gypsies' refusal to be "our owne interpreters" also points to an underlying vernacular intransigence which toys with the limits of royally-licensed mirth, and which makes linguistic self-assertion, as well as a keen instinct for preserving the secret "laws" of their craft, key elements of their self-image.³⁸

In Jonson's masque, cant operates as a kind of linguistic metonym for the performative character of a whole spectrum of obscure and exotic gypsy cultural practices. Most saliently, the gypsies' use of cant is paralleled by their palm-reading skills, which in one critic's view functions as a "second kind of secret language" to which they are privy.³⁹ If canting represents Jonson's self-consciously burlesque deflation of the masque's association with high culture, the central device of fortune-telling ironically literalizes the Jonsonian masque's preoccupation with embodying the future-in-the-present. Fortune is not only the masque's "metaphoric hinge," connecting the two main actions the gypsies perform on the stage: fortune-telling and fortune-stealing.⁴⁰ It is also the masque's performative hinge, refracting a generic preoccupation with futurity through the gypsies' linguistic and bodily skills. P.A. Skantze calls attention to the suspense that the performance of fortune-telling would have generated, bringing together the "audience, the characters they watch, and the actors who inhabit them":

We all lean metaphorically and literally forward to 'see' what the fortune teller will see....The methods of theatrical play are sharpened: *what will be said*, a question for any theatrical performance, heightens into a prophecy....Fortune-telling hints at the alchemical in the masque form: though potentially dismissable as a showy sleight of hand, once heard the predictions become embedded in the memory; should the prophecy prove 'true,' the predictions appear in retrospect portentous and revelatory.⁴¹

While Skantze is inclined to emphasize the more elevated, “alchemical” aspect of suspense generated by the fortune-telling device, part of the frisson of the performance would surely have hinged on how far the gypsies would push the envelope in the direction of sexual or political innuendo without violating the decorum of the occasion.

On the whole, the performative dynamic of the fortune-telling device holds in the tension the masque’s generic orientation toward a prophetic “future perfect” and *this particular* masque’s demystifying hint that it’s all a joke, a “deceptio visus/Done gratia risus,” as the Patrico will later say. (W 781-82) The gypsies’ joco-serious approach to their self-appointed task is most clearly evident in the telling of the ladies’ fortunes at Burley and Belvoir. Buckingham’s controversy-provoking mother, for example, is announced to be “greatest felon in the land”—but only, it turns out, because she has “stol’n so many hearts.”⁴² (B 423, 426) But even in these more intimate venues, the sly jokiness of the fortune-telling device is harnessed to panegyric predictions focused, among other things, on the establishment or perpetuation of aristocratic dynastic lines through matrimonial alliances and propagation. The sequence of fortunes at Windsor likewise mixes serious political ritual with deflating irony, especially when some of the court functionaries are lauded for offices they have not yet performed, in an ironic literalization of the masque’s “future perfect” orientation.⁴³ Shades of the masque’s future perfect modality also mark Buckingham’s effusive praise for James’ pacifist foreign policy, which was in fact subject to great contention at the time but which he describes as virtually a *fait accompli*, earning for James the style, “James the Just.”

At Windsor, emphasizing royal agency in the fortune-telling sequence also serves to forge crucial political bridges between Buckingham and his fellow- courtiers. As Butler

has argued, Jonson artfully situates Buckingham in the position of a “servant of the king complimenting his fellow-servants on the diligence of their labors,” such that the “possibility of horizontal competition” between the favorite and his rivals at court “is rewritten in terms of the vertical relationship of service to the same royal master.”⁴⁴ Thus, toward the end of his panegyric over the king’s hand, Buckingham declares James “the maker here of all” since “none doe stand or sitt in veiwe/But owe theire fortunes unto you.” Attributing the fortunes of all the assembled company to James, Buckingham pointedly emphasizes James’ total control over the distribution of favors at court, while extricating himself from the taint of active favor-seeking.

Jonson crafts Buckingham’s role as the gypsies’ Captain not only to reaffirm his—and his associates—dependence on the king but also to provide an outlet for displaying his skills as a charismatic courtly entertainer. As critics have noted, the gypsy disguise afforded Buckingham ample opportunity for demonstrating his legendary talent as a dancer and accomplished masque, while showcasing his erotic appeal.⁴⁵ The flexibility of the gypsy role allowed Buckingham to publicly address James with the merry familiarity of an intimate (“With you, lucky bird, I begin”) before executing a carefully-crafted double-take: “But stay! In your Jupiter’s mount what’s here/ A king? A Monarch? What wonders appear!” Presumably unable to contain his excitement, he breaks off into a dance, and returns in full-blown panegyric mode, channeling the gypsies’ legendary fortune-telling skills to reiterate James’ unique status not only as Fortune’s favored “lucky bird,” but as a maker of his own—and others’ fortunes.

The version of this speech given at Windsor tellingly culminates with Buckingham letting slip his gypsy-mask to acknowledge himself as his master's creature in terms that echo the Porter's induction at Burley:

My selfe a Gypsye here doe shine,
 Yet are you maker, Sir, of mine:
 O, that confession would content
 So highe a bountie, that doth knowe
 No part of motion but to flowe,
 And givinge, never to repent!
 (W 307-12)

Buckingham here acknowledges a role well-played with an actor's bravura self-expressiveness, while at the same time discreetly distancing himself from what is—after all—just a role. That is, Buckingham shines in the exotic role of gypsy captain, but he also shines through it to pay tribute to his master's power: either way, his royal vindication is achieved through a consummate performance of service that seeks to affirm ethical probity by showcasing histrionic skill.

As Butler has argued, the gypsy disguise provides a means to playfully “question Buckingham's motives in order that they may be royally vindicated.”⁴⁶ This vindication is, however, achieved not by staging a collapse of the figures of courtier and gypsy, as Butler's thesis implies, but by carefully manipulating the parallels and distinctions between them. By partially distancing the courtiers from the parts they play, the masque extracts Buckingham and his associates from the more negative valences of gypsy-identity. However, it also opens up a space for exploring the gypsy fiction not simply as a faux-antimasque populated with aristocrats gone slumming but also as a real antimasque, linked to the demos that was traditionally excluded from the masque site, but circled its edges as a token reminder of “the ruled who make rule active and subjects who make

sovereignty transitive.”⁴⁷ *Gypsies* reminds us that the masquing stage provided an arena not only for social and political negotiations amongst a courtly elite and their king, but that the fictions of the masque also reflect on negotiations between the court-centered royal national imaginary and its at-times demonized, at times parodic other.

ARTS OF LEGERDEMAIN

Unlike the first part of the masque, where the gypsies mingle freely with the courtly aristocracy as they tell the fortunes of prominent members of the audience, and where the time and place of the ‘action’ is quite emphatically the ‘here and now,’ the episode with the rustics is presented in a more illusionistic fashion, unfolding as a play-within-the-play sealed off from the main action. The rustics, when they appear, show no awareness of the courtly audience who are likewise no longer participants in the entertainment but spectators on its margins.⁴⁸ Notably, Buckingham has no lines or indeed any part to play in the gulling of the rustics, which suggests that Jonson is seeking to shelter the favorite from the unseemly aspersions conveyed by the action while also finding a way to explore the gypsy metaphor and its relation to the themes of the masque more independently. This part of the masque is in fact marked by the increasing prominence of the Patrico and Jackman, played by professional actors, whose status as semi-independent player-servants, nominally bound to the king but also potentially masterless, neatly dovetails into the liminal situation of the gypsies, a “group at the center of both exceptional care and persecution” in this period.⁴⁹ These gypsies’ lengthy comic interaction with the rustics in this second half of the masque takes a playfully ironic look at the dynamics of royal bounty and servant gratitude eulogized in the masque’s first half. In the process, the gypsies also come to embody an alternative community, based on artifice and

performance that contests the homogeneity of the royal national imaginary and tacitly competes with it for the rustics' allegiance.

Jonson juxtaposes the suave gypsy with the naïve country clown to explore dichotomous representations of the antimasque other in terms that recall the juxtaposition of gulls and knaves in his comedies. The transgressive allure of the gypsies is expressed through a self-conscious, sophisticated histrionics that makes amorality palatable, in much the same way as the knaves in *The Alchemist* and other city comedies are licensed to play because the "gulls" take on the ethical and social opprobrium associated with such transgressive behavior. Thus empowered, the gypsies exceed the function of the burlesque antimasquer as the comic object of ridicule such that here, the tawny-fronted gypsy disguise resists being seen as a straightforward parody lampooning the cultural and political outsider. This function is offloaded (albeit not without ambiguity) onto the second, inset antimasque of the country clowns.

Jonson's insertion of the comic interlude with the rustics into his masque speaks to the growing popularity of such comic devices lampooning the nation's marginal social groups in the court masque. Mediating between court and country, Jonson's gypsies maintain an ambivalent relation to both venues and its populace while throwing into relief the clowns' otherness. The rustics in this masque do not only present—at least initially—an antimasque opposition to the more liminally-situated gypsies; they are also clearly opposed to the court, constructed as its antithesis and its distorted mirror. A comparison of the fortunes read for the courtly women and the clowns' "sluts" makes the point clear. The ladies' fortunes in the Burley and Belvoir episodes had focused on the crucial role of matrimonial alliances and fertility in ensuring the continuity of

genealogical lines of descent, thereby tacitly investing some of the more arriviste members of the audience with longstanding aristocratic credentials that they did not strictly possess.⁵⁰ By contrast, the fortunes of Long Meg, Prudence, and Christian focus explicitly on illicit sexual alliances and improper mingling, thereby ostensibly characterizing them as the court's antithesis, while also tacitly deflecting onto them—and the rustics more generally—some of the charges of sexual license associated with the Jacobean court. At the same time, the rustics' group is also presented as much more openly fractious than the seemingly tightly-knit, harmonious courtly circle, and as such presents a different, more divisive model of communal life than that vectored by the court groups we have encountered so far. Here, too, we might discern beneath the studied contrast between courtier and clown a strategic displacement of courtly intrigue, infighting and factionalism onto the demos.

It is apposite that in a masque so heavily focused on the performative, the exigencies of performance should create the occasion for the masque's most theatrical—and in many critics' eyes, most controversial—event. In order to give the courtiers time to reappear “as new men,” washed clean of the paint that had enabled their role-playing, Jonson invents a further diversion, wherein the courtier-gypsies pretend to filch the rustics' knickknacks before taking flight, thereby further literalizing—and materializing—the masque's central metaphor of “fortune.” Left alone on stage, the professional player performing the role of the Patrico now takes center stage, stepping into the comic confusion that ensues as the rustics discover their loss and proceed to bemoan their much-loved trinkets while raining barbed comments on one another for being so gullible. “What was here done,” the Patrico assures the rustics, will soon prove to be a “Deceptio

visus,/Done gratia risus.” He then engineers the return of their goods via a series of quasi-magical conjurations and tricks, such that the rustics re-discover their possessions on their neighbors—rather than their own—persons. The Patrico concludes his feat of legerdemain with a triumphant declaration of festive generosity:

All's to be found
If you looke your selves round:
We scorn to take from yee,
We'had rather spend on yee:
If any man wrong yee,
The thief's among yee.
(B 768-773)

While most critics concur in reading this restoration as the masque's attempt to exonerate Buckingham and his clan from charges of rapacity, they differ on how successful it is as a ploy. Reading the rustics as naïve enables Butler and Knowles to claim that the gypsies are successfully exonerated. Attributing more self-awareness and critical acumen to the rustics, Goldberg claims that the rustics see through the gypsies' performative legerdemain to the ideological message behind it.⁵¹

In revisiting the generosity topos articulated earlier in relation to James' open-handedness, the Patrico reiterates its thematic significance for the masque, but he also gives it an ironic edge. For, after all, as Goldberg points out, what the gypsies “spend” on the rustics is nothing more than what they had already taken from them by stealth. Part of the point of the gypsies' transparently fake generosity is to highlight the contrast with royal bounty. Nonetheless, in displacing the moral discourse of royal favor with a discourse of playful trickery, the Patrico also hints that lordly generosity might involve a similar mystification, an ideological legerdemain of sorts that conceals inequity under the cover of festive bounty. Jonson is here revisiting in theatrical register a terrain that he had

explored in “To Penshurst,” but in *Gypsies*, the license of “mirth” comes close to revealing what love’s dissembling force conceals in “Penshurst”—the gypsies’ insouciant disregard for property as well as for the ideological gravitas of royal bounty is tolerated because it is undertaken in mirth, as part of their entertainment.

The rustics’ desire to join the gypsies’ company even after their exposure to the gypsies’ mischievous arts has elicited markedly different responses from critics. In Martin Butler’s Buckingham-centered reading, the rustics’ naïve pleasure in the gypsies’ act and their willingness to join their order serves to buttress Buckingham’s image: “in delighting both king and clown, Buckingham is made to look like a figure whose charisma cements the solidarity of society at large.”⁵² Likewise, for James Knowles, it reiterates their gullibility, so that the gypsies’ “potential lawlessness” becomes a “product of the stupidity exhibited by the clowns.”⁵³ By contrast, Mark Netzloff suggests that the rustics’ attraction to gypsy-society is in line with popular cultural uses of the gypsy figure to “represent an idealistic escape from social realities, an alternative space in which economic deprivation could be reinscribed as a release from social constraints.”⁵⁴ Bryan Reynolds describes this “alternative space” as dangerously “transversal,” because it requires “deterritorialization from official territory rather the accepted socio-economic position into which the rustics were born.” It would, he remarks, “have been significantly less threatening to official culture and state power for a rustic to pursue a career as an artisan, a merchant, or a clergyman than to become a gypsy.”⁵⁵

Reynolds’ comment rightly draws attention to the potential dissonance between the rustics’ desire and “official culture or state power.” But attending more closely to the terms in which the rustics seek entrance into the gypsies’ company presents a somewhat

more complicated picture of how they view that company, and what they hope to get from joining it, than the out-and-out transversality that Reynolds attributes to it.

Puppy. Sir, you are a prelate of the order, I understand, and I have a terrible grudging now upon me to be one of your company: will your captain take a prentice, sir? I would bind myself to him, body and soul, either for one and twenty years, or as many lives as he would.

Clod. Aye, and put in my life for one, for I am come about too....if I had known you would have picked my pocket so like a gentleman, I would have been better provided. I shall be glad to venture a purse with your worship at any time you'll appoint, so you would prefer me to your captain. I'll put in security for my truth and serve out my time, though I die tomorrow.

Cockerel. Aye, and upon those terms, sir, and in hope your captain keeps better cheer than he made the devil...we'll all be his followers. I'll go home and fetch a little money, sir, all I have, and you shall pick my pocket to my face, and I'll avouch it, a man would not desire to have his pocket picked in better company.

Puppy. Tut, they have other manners of gifts than picking of pockets or telling fortunes, if they would but please to show 'em, or thought us poor country mortals worthy of them. What might a man do to be a gentleman of your company, sir?

(W 954-982)

The rustics' comic confusion about the structure and organization of the gypsies'

"company" and how they might gain entry ironically confirms the Jackman's allusion to the gypsies' "tattered," makeshift "nation." The rustics' diverse descriptors underline the fantastic, "what-you-will" quality of gypsy society. And like all such topsy-turvy social imaginings, this one too constitutes a vehicle for commentary on prevalent paradigms of communal association. Thus, Clod's appeal to be "preferred" to the Captain's service points to the much-abused (and vilified) system of brokerage whereby aspirants vied for privileges at court and glances at Buckingham's enormous power as a conduit of favor.⁵⁶

And Puppy's desire to be "prenticed" to the Captain of the gypsies, body and soul, for as long as it will take, satirizes the apprenticeship regulations in the Statute of Artificers, which played an important role in determining master-servant relations in this period.⁵⁷

Indeed, just as the rustic interlude materializes the masque's key metaphor of fortune, thereby imbuing the immaterial world of the masque with the intense physicality of the antimasque, so also rustics' evocation of courtly and commercial channels of social mobility lays bare the economic and material conditions of service-seeking in early modern society, thereby demystifying the rhetoric of generosity and devotion which fuels the main masque. The focus on the material dimension of service also opens up the distinction between service as an unchangeable ethical and political pre-condition of social existence and service as a contractual rather than existential bondage—a distinction that brings us back to the figure of the player-servant, ambivalently situated between these two worlds of service. Doubtless, Puppy's half-ironic awareness of the potentially devilish nature of the pact he is so keen to make—"I would bind myself to him, body and soul, either for one and twenty years, or as many lives as he would"—glances, whether he knows it or not, at the coercions underlying the supposed "freedom" of service in a commercial context. But Puppy's language also characterizes the gypsies' "company" as a guild-like organization, which opens up the possibility of a different, more fraternal way of thinking about nationhood that cuts against the official ideology of the nation offered in the masque, centered on subordinate service to the monarch.⁵⁸ Indeed, as a "tattered" and scattered nation, the gypsies defy the normative association of nationhood with a sedentary mode of existence circumscribed by fixed boundaries and settled allegiances.

In one sense, the rustics' repeated references to the gypsies as a "company" captures the derivative, yet elusive character of their fictive society. The term, as applied to the gypsies, is a loaded one, likening them simultaneously to various models of fraternity that

the gypsies seem loosely to inhabit to: incorporated guilds, to informal associations formed as a result of travelling companionship, and (most significantly for the purpose of this argument) to theatrical corps.⁵⁹ The gypsies' association with vagrants and strolling players enables the masque to map their elusiveness as cultural others onto the elusiveness of the player-servants' "real" loyalties which lie concealed beneath their histrionic show. Thus, the Jackman's response to the rustics' plea for admittance highlights the cultivation of performance tricks and the arts of self-concealment alongside stealing and a firm commitment to idleness as part of the repertoire of skills that the rustics must acquire to enter the gypsies' "mystery," to master the secrets of their calling.

Some critics take the Patrico's initial response to the rustics' desire to join their company—

Freindes not to refell ye/
Or any way quell ye...
I onelie must tell ye
Yee aim at a misterie
Worthy a historie.
(W 985-90)

—to be an outright rejection, exposing the bigotry that underlies even a supposedly more inclusive communal arrangement as the gypsies seem to offer. Yet, the Patrico's response can also be seen as an attempt to whet their appetite for the gypsy life than to squelch it, and his long and intricate explanation of the "misterie" of his company and what the rustics must do to belong to it, while delightfully topsy-turvy, hardly seems a fob-off. Indeed, his explanation of how they might mimic one key element of the gypsies' cultural difference, the most intransigent element, supposedly—color— with a "noble confection/

Of walnuts and hog's grease," emphasizes, as Andrea Stevens has suggested, that the identity is "readily available; this 'Ptolemy's knot' is not too difficult to unravel."⁶⁰

Deliberately nonsensical as his list of the 'skills' that make up gypsies' mystery is, it highlights the tension between the two modes of service that the masque investigates, between service as a school of ethics and as a school of theatre, of impersonation, disguise and histrionic performance. And if, as we have seen, the court itself is not untouched by such a tension between an ethics of gratitude and courtly playing, the essence of the gypsies' craft lies exactly in this hinterland: what they promise the rustics is schooling in service as theater, and it is perhaps the surreptitious liberty that such a vision of service encodes that attracts the rustics. Nonetheless, having delicately raised the problematic spectre of the rustics' defection to the gypsies' company, the masque maintains a discreet silence on the ultimate outcome of their plea, choosing instead to turn its focus back on the court.

RECONFIGURING ROYAL AUTONOMY

For I can (and I will)
 Give you all your fill,
 Eache Jack with his Gill,
 And shewe ye the King,
 The Prince too, and bring
 The Gipsies were here
 Like Lordes to appeare,
 As you thought offenders,
 Who nowe become newe men,
 You'll know 'hem for true men.
 (W 1075-1085)

With these words, the Patrico announces the masque's final, climactic device—a device meant to bring the focus of attention back on the court, with the king and his heir

at its center, and thereby effectively install ritual panegyric in the place of festive license. Yet, as it turns out, the enactment of the transformation that will make the “Gypsies were here/Like Lords to appear” reiterates rather than eschews the ambivalence of the masque’s double gesture toward festive theatre and ritual panegyric. Unlike some other masques in the Jonsonian canon, where the royal presence enables the transformation of festive or demonic chaos into ritual order by either dispelling or co-opting the antimasquers into the world of the masque, *Gypsies* allocates that transformative agency to a player-servant, and thereby foregrounds the theatrical instability rather than the moral symbolism of the device. Moreover, rather than representing the transformation of the gypsies into courtiers as testifying to the efficacious “wonder” of the royal presence, the Patrico presents the appearance of the king and his court as another, final trick of perspective performed for the entertainment of the rustics. The joke is partly on the rustics, who, like the antimasquers in *The Irish Masque* are presumably too dim to spot the court, which was present all along, just as they evince a somewhat clownish confusion about who the gypsies are earlier on.⁶¹ But even so, the Patrico’s rationale for the transformation, “For I can (and I will)” sets the licentious energy of playful trickery over the magical impulse of ritual transformation as the masque’s governing drive. If the rustics had been initially brought on to satisfy the court’s appetite for low comic hi jinks, the tables are tilted here, if not completely turned, as the court itself is made to appear, as if by command, for the viewing pleasure of the demos. *Gypsies* in this regard reverses the traditional sequence of an opening antimasque leading into the masque proper; instead, it compresses iterations of the ‘elevated’ masque into bookends for the main action, which comprises a prolonged antimasque.

The mechanics of the transformation, then, highlights the royal presence partly in order to absorb it into the ongoing comic spectacle. As a consequence, rather than representing the king as the active, transformative agent formally eulogized in the closing panegyrics the masque's closing device renders him doubly passive, not only because he has no role in the transformation *per se*, but also because the transformation explicitly makes him the subject of enquiring eyes, thereby deflecting the half-voyeuristic, half-lugubrious attention invited by the gypsies onto the royal body itself. The gypsies invite attention by dint of their power to entertain—spiked in part by the erotic pull of their exotic appearance.⁶² The King, however, becomes the focus of attention as the object of representation rather than representing agent,⁶³ most notably when he is seen as comically vulnerable to a host of trivial nuisances from whose noxious influence his five senses need blessing. This is the “burden” of the comic song which the Patrico induces his adoring chorus of clowns to sing at Windsor, where the inventory of nuisances to the king's five senses starts off with the sight of “a Gypsie in the morninge.” (W 1129) The Patrico's self-deprecatory inclusion of his own kind in the list is undoubtedly meant to be comically disarming, reducing the political and social danger of gypsies prone to wander into places where they are not wanted (such as royal courts) to one of a sequence of nominal sense-related annoyances listed in the succeeding stanzas: a “squint eye turning,” the stink of tobacco or fish, the taste of ‘bad venison,’ or the ache of gout. (W 1130, 1159, 1162, 1167, 1180) The minor nature of the song's inventory of offences from which the king needs protection has led Andrew McRae to suggest that the Patrico's verses—unlike the more serious libelous poem they inspired—function as a “lightly comic assertion of political order” because they imply that the only threats to James' royal

authority are “trivial assaults” on his “refined sensibility.”⁶⁴ Nonetheless, it is in the explosion of objects inventoried in the blessing that the masque’s counter-generic impulse toward materialization reaches something of a climax. If this end-point signals the triviality of the political danger of the demos by decomposing it into a heterogeneous medley of sense-offending objects, such a vision of the demotic also risks a breakdown of the royal national imaginary as James’ putative ‘empire’ dissolves into a swirl of noxious sensory offenses. (W 1242) At one level such decomposition suggests the incoherence of alternatives to the royal body politic; but it also mirrors the rag-tag heterogeneity of the gypsies’ makeshift fellowship, a heterogeneity that cannot be assimilated nor eradicated, only banished from the king’s person.

In drawing attention to the materiality of the king’s body, the masque also continues to invert the body-spirit hierarchy traditionally central to the genre, thereby undercutting the heavily allegorical interpretation of the royal presence that the masque’s final panegyric verses foreground.⁶⁵ The personal tenor of Jonson’s poem, which “throws into sharp relief the king’s physical needs and desires” also gestures toward the tension between the king’s corporeality and his heroic, even “sacred” invulnerability.⁶⁶ In the context of this implicit, ongoing acknowledgment of royal frailty in the “Blessing,” the Patrico’s closing reference to the king’s mortality take on a special significance:

Bless him, O blesse him heave’n, and lend him long
 To be the sacred burthen of all song,
 The actes and yeares of all our Kings t’outgoe,
 And while hee’s mortal, wee not thinck him so.
(W 1186-89)

At one level, the Patrico’s final verse configures James in elevated terms which anticipate the panegyric verses that Buckingham and his “new men” will soon sing. The Patrico

identifies him as ‘sacred,’ and prays for him “The actes and yeares of all our Kings t’outgoe/*And while hee’s mortal, wee thinck him not so.*” Patricia Crouch has argued that the masque as a genre is devoted to working out the relation between kingship as subject of encomiastic allegory and kingship as material, bodily presence—an endeavor she links to the political concept of the king’s two bodies, which are at once distinct and conjoined.⁶⁷ The Patrico’s reference to the doctrine of the king’s two bodies, considered in the context of the deflation of the royal body in the preceding verses of his song, presents faith in the king’s heroic invincibility as a necessary fiction essential for the social cohesion of the court-society, akin to the mythography surrounding the bounteous royal hand earlier in the masque. At this point in the masque, the earlier focus on the quasi-divine efficacy of the bounteous royal hand has been displaced by the leakiness of the king’s royal body, and the masque’s subsequent attempts to recapture the more hagiographic tone of the Burley induction seems somewhat stiffly formulaic in comparison with the more free-flowing comic verses.

The blessing, first devised for the prolonged Windsor entertainment, frames with awkward jollity the more conventionally panegyric verses sung at the closing of all the masque’s three versions, which are keen to apply the resources of praise poetry to “embody the future in the present” more unreservedly. These verses are sung by the newly transformed courtiers, with Buckingham leading; they are directed by the Jackman to “speak a hymn/To him,/Where all your duties do of right belong.” The verses envision a courtly community seamlessly united under the wise leadership of James, with the promise of Charles’ regency to maintain dynastic stability, and conclude that in a nation

“where the prince for goodnes is renownd,/The subject with felicitie is crownd.” (W 1267-68)

This is the note on which the Burley and Belvoir masques conclude, bringing the focus of the masque belatedly back to the affirmation of the ethical dimension of the masque’s focus on service as the enactment of loyal devotion of subjects to their royal master. But the theatrical destabilization of the ritual closure, already implicit in the first two performances, is explicitly invoked in the more dramatically complex and experimental Windsor version which reintroduces the thematic of disguise and performance in one last theatrical turn, this time in “The Epilogue” that Buckingham speaks in order to explain more fully the change he and his fellow-courtiers have just undergone—“It being a thing not touchd at by our poet” (W 1275):

But least it prove like wonder to the sight
To see a Gipsie, as an Æthiop, white,
Knowe that what dide our faces was an ointment
Made and laid on by Master Woolfs appointment,
The Courtes Lycanthropos, yet without spellles,
By a mere barbor, and no magicke ells:
It was fetcht off with water and a ball;
And to our transformation this was all
For to a Gipsies metamorphosis
(Who doth disguise his habit and his face,
And takes on a false person by his place)
The power of poesie can never faile her
Assisted by a barbor and a taylor.
(W 1277-90)

At a practical level, the closing speech was possibly necessitated by the more public venue of the masque’s final performance, with its heterogeneous audience, not all of whom were likely to be as kindly disposed to Villiers &co. as the more familial and intimate audiences of the earlier performances. Consequently, Buckingham needed to

more firmly distance himself at Windsor from any lingering negative associations brought on by his assumption of the role of a gypsy captain. The epilogue does not assign any transformative agency to the king which would hardly be politic given Buckingham's controversial position at court, but the Patrico's ambivalent explanation that the transformation is yet another instance of "deceptio visus" is not allowed to stand without qualification, either. Buckingham painstakingly explains the quotidian nature of the courtiers' whitewashing. What "dyed our faces," he explains, "was an ointment/Made and laid on by Master Wolf," the king's apothecary, and it has been removed by the simple expedient of "water and a ball" of soap. "And to our transformation this is all," he proclaims. Buckingham's explanation undercuts the gypsies' theatrical magic by foregrounding the material devices (ointment washed off with water and ball, and new clothes furnished by a tailor) that go into the making of that magic.

Buckingham's explanation calls away attention from the gypsies' counterfeiting and metamorphosing powers, de-centering them so as to bring into view another set of collaborators in the theatrical production, all of whom are much more closely—and unambiguously—affiliated with the court: the official apothecary, the master tailor, and so on. As Andrea Stevens suggests, this "dismantling of one layer of illusion is used to sustain the masque's more important fiction, these gypsies are really gentlemen, and have been so all the while."⁶⁸ Yet, as Netzloff has argued, the "metamorphosis" continues to be troubled by the performative quality of gypsy identity: "Distinctions are blurred between Buckingham's counterfeiting of gypsy identity and the performativity of that identity itself: each is, in this sense, a 'false person.'"⁶⁹ The deliberately demystificatory element of Buckingham's explanation of the magic of the transformation cuts two ways:

it displaces the locus of deception from the histrionic body of the courtier playing the role of a gypsy to an external, (re)movable apparatus: stage paint which can be as easily “fetched off” as it is “laid on.” As a result it makes a clean cut between courtier and role even as it disallows the agency of the other, non-courtly actors who presumably have a different relation to their craft than he does. Moreover, it implies a clear contrast between the courtiers on the masquing stage who had merely personated gypsies and the ‘real’ thing elsewhere.

Just as the wonder evoked by the ‘gentlemanly’ nature of the gypsies had tacitly implied a contrast between the courtly gypsies and their baser, real-life counterparts, so too does Buckingham’s demystification of his gypsy-guise as a bit of stage trickery which reveals that he and his crew were “gentlemen all along.” If they had not been so, it would have been an unbelievable “wonder,” to “see a gypsy, as an Ethiop, white.” This is a pointed allusion to Jonson’s controversial masque for Queen Anne and her ladies, *The Masque of Blackness*, where the women played African nymphs who want to become white and who travel to the court of England’s Sun-King to effect their “change.” If that earlier masque had implied that James’ imperial power, his civilizing influence, could achieve the putatively impossible task of washing an Ethiop white, re-activating that image of racial transformation again in this late masque, Jonson/Buckingham does not make any such grand claims for James. Indeed, rather than reducing the gypsies’ cultural difference to an empty performative gesture and so dodging its salience to the masque’s representation of the polity, as Netzloff has argued it does, Buckingham’s careful distancing of himself from the role he has just played points in fact to the intransigence of cultural identity—to the very real existence of gypsies elsewhere. Buckingham’s

narrative of exoneration depends on the recalcitrant Æthiop -gypsy who is akin to what Srinivas Aravamudan calls the “tropological blackamoor” who operates as a “sign of failed whitening or unachievable whiteness,” and by a process of “associative reduction, . . . relapses into the stereotype of unchangeable uselessness.”⁷⁰ In *Gypsies* this stereotype of blackness is of course far from useless—it not only functions as a vehicle for the masque’s exploration of the divisions between festive theater and panegyric ritual, and between the histrionic and ethical ends of service; it also reveals the limits of royal autonomy whilst showcasing the histrionic agency of the player-servant. Indeed, the lability of the gypsy-sign signals inassimilability as much as it indicates adaptability to the governing fictions of the monarchically-centered court and nation.

After the transformed courtiers dance, the Patrico seeks to allay his prior suggestion that this is just another playful counterfeit, saying: “Why now ye behold/’Twas truth that I told,/And no device;/They’re changed in a trice,/And so will I/Be myself by and by.” But if Buckingham’s transformation is “incomplete” because it retains a residue of the performativity with which the gypsy is associated, the Patrico’s transformation too is deferred to a future that is—ultimately—outside the reach of the masque’s assimilationist energy. On-stage, the Patrico and Jackman continue to embody through their histrionic impersonation that intransigence of the cultural other against which the court can only shut its doors. This intransigence is shot through with the ambivalence of the players’ dual role as servants of the king and as (potentially) masterless men. And while they are incorporated into the masque’s concluding moments, leading both the blessing for the king’s senses and the final panegyric verses, their inclusion into the courtly service-

community is limited, for they make no show of giving up their nomadic way of life or indeed their performative practices.

In the gypsies' persistent nomadism and histrionicity, we find a reflection not only of the Jacobean court's own peripatetic and performative nature, but a parallel with another set of nomadic wanderers: England's merchants who were at this time eagerly seeking entry into the lucrative business of global merchandizing. In fact, the masque glances obliquely at this association between the nomadic gypsies—peddlers of petty trinkets and performers par excellence—with the merchant voyagers associated with the lucrative East India trade, when the 3rd Gypsy identifies the hedges from which the gypsy-crew steal linen as their "Trades-Increase." (W 218) The optimistically-named (but ill-fated) 'Trades Increase' was one of the largest ships owned by the East India Company, manufactured by the Company at its shipyard in Deptford (located right next to the royal naval dockyard), and christened by James on December 30, 1609, in the presence of his queen and son, Henry.⁷¹ Indeed, while James displayed profound ambivalence throughout his career with regard to the presence of gypsies in his realms, he showed much less uncertainty in blessing the project of another group of nomadic profiteers, who incidentally relied on some of the same mechanics of histrionic performance to assert their authority abroad as Jonson's gypsies do. Like the players and gypsies in the masque, these mercantile agents too sought to protect and aggrandize their status in foreign courts and ports by identifying themselves as James' servants, an identification which served not only as a marker of loyal devotion but of royally sanctioned license.

¹ Michael Hechter defines internal colonialism as “the political incorporation of culturally distinct groups by the core” in his *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 32.

² In a letter to John Chamberlain dated 15 January, 1604, Dudley Carleton described a “maske brought in by a magician of China” who “sayde he had brought in cloudes certain Indian and China knights to see the magnificency of this court.” Quoted in E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 3:279-80. The text of this masque has not survived. As is well-known, Jonson’s very first court masque, *The Masque of Blackness* (1605), featured Queen Anne and her ladies, at her request, as “Blackamoors.” Jonsonian court masques featuring England’s “internal outsiders” include *The Irish Masque at Court* (1613) and *For the Honor of Wales* (1618).

³ Dale B.J. Randall, *Jonson’s Gypsies Unmasked: Background and Theme of The Gypsies Metamorphosed* (Durham, N.C.: Duke UP, 1975).

⁴ Martin Butler, “‘We are one Mans all’: Jonson’s *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*” in *The Yearbook of English Studies* 21 (1991): 253-273.

⁵ See Mark Netzloff, “‘Counterfeit Egyptians’ and Imagined Borders: Jonson’s *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*,” in *ELH* 68.4 (2001): 763-793; Bryan Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal: Transversal Performance and Cultural Dissidence in Early Modern England* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 2002), 23-63.

⁶ For a discussion of this strategy and its impact on the politics of the masque, see David Lindley, “Embarrassing Ben: The Masques for Frances Howard” in *English Literary Renaissance* 16.2 (1986): 343-59, esp. 350-59; see also James M. Smith, “Effaced History: Facing the Colonial Contexts of Ben Jonson’s *Irish Masque at Court*” in *ELH* 65.2 (1998): 297-321.

⁷ Netzloff, “Counterfeit Egyptians,” 784.

⁸ The anonymity of these hired actors places them outside what Heather Anne Hirschfeld calls the masque’s “culture of privileged identification, a culture that recognized distinct contributors among its range of designers.” See her *Joint Enterprises: Collaborative Drama and the Institutionalization of the English Renaissance Theater* (Amherst and Boston: U of Massachusetts P, 2004), 67.

⁹ Kevin Curran traces the burgeoning comedic element in Jonson’s Stuart court masques (specifically his “uproarious Cupids”) to the “influence of the burlesque in French ballet de cour.” See Kevin Curran, *Marriage, Performance and Politics at the Jacobean Court*, (Farnham, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 147. (Barbara Ravelhofer tracks the influence of burlesque French ballet in the dances designed for *Gypsies Metamorphosed* in “Burlesque Ballet, a Ballad, and a Banquet in Ben Jonson’s *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*” in *Dance Research* 25.2 [2007]: 144-55).

¹⁰ Thomas Dekker, in “Villainies Discovered by Lanthorne and Candlelight,” describes their mode of travel in terms strikingly similar to Jonson’s stage direction: “If they [the children] can straddle once, then as well she-roges as the he-roges are horst, seven or eight upon one jade, strongly pinioned, and strangely tied together.” See A.V. Judges, *The Elizabethan Underworld: A Collection of Tudor and early Stuart Tracts and Ballads*

(London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1930), 345. See also John. H. Astington's discussion of a series of four prints by the seventeenth-century French artist, Jacques Callot, entitled *Les Bohémiens*, which Jonson's description of the gypsies resembles so strongly so that Astington proposes that Jonson may have seen these prints by Callot at the time of the masque's composition. John H. Astington, "Buckingham's Patronage and the Gypsies Metamorphosed" in *Theatre Survey* 43.2 (2002), 133-48.

¹¹ All quotations are from the edition prepared by W.W. Greg, *Jonson's Masque of Gypsies In the Burley, Belvoir, and Windsor Versions* (London: Oxford UP, 1952).

¹² Carolyn Williams, *Gilbert and Sullivan: Gender, Genre, and Parody* (New York: Columbia UP, 2011), 190. Whilst discussing the nineteenth century fairy extravaganza, Williams attests to the persistence of the pre-/early-modern perception of fairies all the way through to the Victorian era. For connections between Renaissance fairy-lore and a "growing national consciousness," see Wendy Wall, *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 100-02. Matthew Woodcock discusses the political uses of fairy lore in the early modern period (especially under the Tudors) to both celebrate sovereignty and offer idealized versions of it. See his *Fairy in The Fairie Queene: Renaissance Elf-fashioning and Elizabethan Myth-Making* (Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), esp. 38-39.

¹³ "The fairies have been leaving England since the fourteenth century—at least according to Chaucer's Wife of Bath," writes Carole G. Silver in her *Strange and Secret Peoples: Fairies and Victorian Consciousness* (New York, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), 185; see also Wendy Wall, *Staging Domesticity*, 96, for fairy lore as a "'recently' fading" belief system.

¹⁴ In a chapter aptly titled "The different faces of the Gypsy," David Mayall surveys the ambiguities and contradictions surrounding constructions of Gypsy identity: see Mayall, *Gypsies Identities 1500-2000: From Egipcians and Moon-men to the Ethnic Romany* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 1-18.

¹⁵ Netzloff, "Counterfeit Egyptians," 778.

¹⁶ For a summary of key legislation concerning Gypsies, vagrants, rogues and vagabonds in England and Wales, see David Mayall, *English Gypsies and State Policies* (Hertfordshire: U of Hertfordshire P, 1995), 23-26.

¹⁷ Mayall, *Gypsy Identities*, 75.

¹⁸ Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal*, 38.

¹⁹ Indeed, rogue pamphlets and state legislation mutually reinforced one another as is amply demonstrated by Samuel Rid's channeling of the language of legislation against gypsies in his pamphlet, *The Art of Juggling*, in Arthur F. Kinney ed. *Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars: A New Gallery of Tudor and Early Stuart Rogue Literature* (Barre, Mass.: Imprint Society, 1973), 266.

²⁰ See Paola Pugliatti, *Beggary and Theatre in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 157.

²¹ Dekker, *Lantern and Candlelight*, in Judges ed. *Elizabethan Underworld*, 344.

²² Pugliatti suggests that the major novelty of the 1572 act is that it finally brought together, under the category of 'vagrant' "the bits and pieces of the many disorderly 'mimetic' or otherwise 'performing' activities that for centuries had been variously and

sparsely prosecuted under different headings.” It’s also worth noting that James in 1604 issued a statute which withdraws the privilege to license theater companies from “any Baron of this realme,” thereby asserting royal monopoly over theatrical representation. (*Beggary and Theatre*, 49-50)

²³ Hugh Craig, “Jonson, the antimasque and the ‘rules of flattery,” in Bevington and Holbrook ed. *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 176-93, esp. 185-86.

²⁴ Judith Weil, *Service and Dependency in Shakespeare’s Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), 147.

²⁵ David Schalkwyk, *Shakespeare, Love and Service*, 14.

²⁶ Buckingham undoubtedly had much to be grateful for, as Randall points out, since James had helped him to pay for Burley. See Randall, 72-3.

²⁷ Robert Weimann, *Author’s Pen, Actor’s Voice: Playing and Writing in Shakespeare’s Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 204. Judith Weil describes Macbeth’s drunken Porter as recreating “a particularly demanding occupation as sheer play” in *Service and Dependency*, 148.

²⁸ David Schalkwyk, *Shakespeare, Love and Service*, 14.

²⁹ Weimann and Bruster conduct a sustained discussion of the liminality of prologues in their *Prologues to Shakespeare’s Theatre* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2004); see also Weimann’s discussion of the liminality of epilogues in his *Author’s Pen, Actor’s Voice: Playing and Writing in Shakespeare’s Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 216-250.

³⁰ As Michael Bristol observes, the actor aroused anxiety amongst antitheatrical ideologues not simply because his “speech is ‘dissembling’: the deeper problem is that he is most valued for his ability to dissemble convincingly.” See his *Carnival and Theater: Plebian Culture and the Structure of Authority in Renaissance England* (New York: Methuen, 1985), 113. This capacity for mimicry is also what makes the player a paradigm for the unreliable servant.

³¹ Tom Bishop, “The Gingerbread Host: Tradition and Novelty in the Jacobean Masque,” in David Bevington and Peter Holbrook ed. *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 88-120, esp. 95. The poet Samuel Daniel acknowledged this ephemerality as characteristic of the form, saying that masque-makers like himself were “poor Ingeniers for shadowes...[who] frame onley images of no result.” See John Pitcher, ““In those figures which they seeme’: Samuel Daniel’s Tethys’ Festival,” in Lindley ed. *The Court Masque*, 34-46, esp. 44.

³² Ben Jonson, *Hymenaei, or the Solemnities of a Masque and Barriers at a Marriage*, in Stephen Orgel ed. *Ben Jonson: The Complete Masques* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1969).

³³ For a concise discussion of Jonson’s metaphysics, see James Loxley, *The Complete Critical Guide to Ben Jonson* (London: Routledge, 2002), 116-118.

³⁴ Bishop, 95.

³⁵ As David Lindley points out, Jonson’s complaints about the incomprehension of court audiences were echoed by other masque writers of the time. See David Lindley,

“Introduction,” in Lindley ed., *The Court Masque* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984), 6. According to Orazio Busino, chaplain to the Venetian embassy, James interrupted the performance of *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* (1618) by impatiently crying out: “Why don’t they dance? What did they bring me here for? Devil take you all, dance!”

Buckingham famously saved the day by “cutting a score of lofty and very minute capers with so much grace and agility that he not only appeased the ire of his angry lord but rendered himself the admiration and delight of everybody.” See Allen B. Hinds ed.

“Venice: January 1618, 21-31,” *Calendar of State papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice*, Vol. 15 (1615-19), British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=88670>.

³⁶ “It is not my fault,” Jonson had complained at the end of his preface to *Hymenaei*, “if I fill them out with Nectar, and they runne to Metheglin.” (26-27) See Orgel ed., *Complete Masques*, 76.

³⁷ Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal*, 94.

³⁸ For cant’s relation to ordinary English, a relation often construed as “disorderly,” see Paula Blank, *Broken English: Dialects and the Politics of Language in Renaissance Writings* (London: Routledge, 1996), 33-68, and William West, “How to Talk the Talk, or, The Work of Cant on the Jacobean Stage” in *English Literary Renaissance* 33 (2003), 228-51.

³⁹ Paula Blank, *Broken English*, 64.

⁴⁰ Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and their Contemporaries* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1983), 129.

⁴¹ P.A. Skantze, *Stillness in Motion in the Seventeenth-Century Theatre* (London: Routledge, 2003), 50.

⁴² Simon D’Ewes, in a diary entry of January 1623, alludes to a libelous book “sett forth called ‘The Chaste Matron,’ in which was discovered all the villanies, witchcrafts and lasciviousness of the old Countesse, the Marquesses mother.” (Cited in Knowles, ‘Songs of Baser Alloy’). For a somewhat choleric account of the Countess’ activities to secure her family’s advancement, see Randall, 105-08. Randall also mentions rumors of improprieties surrounding Buckingham’s marriage to Katherine Manners, which shed ironic light on the fortune read for her (see Randall 106).

⁴³ See Butler, “One Mans All,” 266-67.

⁴⁴ Martin Butler, “One Mans all,” 266.

⁴⁵ It is a critical commonplace that Buckingham used his performative skills to literally dance his way into royal favor. Orazio Busino’s eyewitness account of Buckingham’s intervention during the performance of *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* provides some corroboration of this view. Busino notes that after the masque was over, James “honoured the Marquis with extraordinary signs of affection, touching his face.” (See my n.37 above for source). For Buckingham’s skill as a masque and dancer, see Jean Macintyre, “Buckingham the Masquer,” in *Renaissance and Reformation* XXII 3 (1998), 59-81; Barbara Ravelhofer contends that the masque featured an innovative dance-choreography modeled on French ballet in “Burlesque Ballet, a Ballad and a Banquet,” 144-55. James Knowles discusses the erotic appeal of the gypsy disguise in “Songs of Baser Alloy,” 166ff.

⁴⁶ Butler, "One Mans All," 258.

⁴⁷ Hugh Craig, "Jonson, the antimasque and the 'rules of flattery,'" in Bevington and Holbrook ed. *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 190.

⁴⁸ Their lack of awareness of their surroundings is sometimes taken to be a testimony to their gullibility and their ignorance, but it also serves the practical function of dissociating them, and the gypsies' fortune-stealing, from the court setting.

⁴⁹ Netzloff, 777.

⁵⁰ Randall, 23-28.

⁵¹ Goldberg, 129.

⁵² Butler, 266.

⁵³ Knowles, 159.

⁵⁴ Mark Netzloff, *England's Internal Colonies: Class, Capital, and the Literature of Early Modern English Colonialism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 158.

⁵⁵ Reynolds, 46-47. Elsewhere in *Becoming Criminal*, Reynolds identifies transversality as a deviation from "the hierarchizing assemblages—whether vertical or horizontal—of any organizational social structure." (19)

⁵⁶ On Buckingham's role in the sale of titles, see Alan G.R. Smith, *Emergence of a Nation State: The Commonwealth of England 1529-1660* (London and New York: Longman, 1984), 274.

⁵⁷ Netzloff, *Internal Colonies*, 156.

⁵⁸ Gypsies frequently depicted themselves as a nation with their own monarchs, but how much actual power such monarchs wielded over their subjects is debatable. On this issue, see Valentina Glajar and Domnica Radulescu, "Gypsies" in *European Literature and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 4-5.

⁵⁹ See Heather Ann Hirschfeld (*Joint Enterprises*, 12), for a discussion of theatrical companies' organization in relation to commercial guilds.

⁶⁰ Andrea Stevens, "Mastering Masques of Blackness: Jonson's *Masque of Blackness*, the Windsor Text of Jonson's *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* and Brome's *An English Moor*." *English Literary Renaissance* 39.2 (2009): 396-426, esp. 417.

⁶¹ On the multiple valences of this comic situation in the *Irish Masque*, see Curran, 149. Additionally, to see the rustics as simply comic butts, as Knowles and Butler do, is to disallow the possibility of a complicity that may have developed at the level of the performance between the rustics and the two gypsies who remain on stage after the courtiers have fled the scene—not least since they were all likely to be hired actors.

⁶² For the erotic appeal of the gypsies' bodies, see Knowles, 167, and the sexualization of the "gypsy-sign," see Reynolds, 55-63.

⁶³ On this point, see Russell West, "Perplexive Perspectives: The Court and Contestation in the Jacobean Masque." *The Seventeenth Century* 18 (2003): 25-43, esp. 37.

⁶⁴ McRae contrasts Jonson's relatively harmless and decidedly comic song to the "far more troubling vision of corporeal frailty" in the libelous poem, *The King's Five Senses* which was circulated in the manuscript form in the 1620s. This latter poem, a coded invective against Buckingham, was also presented as a prayer for the king's welfare, enumerated each of the king's five senses as a site of potential pollution that threatened

not only the royal body but the entire royal body politic. See McRae, *Literature, Satire, and the Early Stuart State* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 76-77.

⁶⁵ On the matter-spirit hierarchy in the masque as a genre, see Gail Kern Paster, *The Idea of the City in the Age of Shakespeare* (Athens: U of Georgia P, 1985), esp. 136.

⁶⁶ Quoted from James Knowles, "Songs of Baser Alloy," 167. For the tension between the heroic symbolism and the corporeality in the masque form, see Patricia Crouch, "Dissecting the Royal Subject: The King's Two Bodies and the Jacobean Court Masque," in *ATENE* 22 (2002), 17-30, esp. 24ff.

⁶⁷ Crouch, 24-5.

⁶⁸ Stevens, *Mastering Masques*, 419. For a discussion of make-up in the masque, see Andrea Stevens, "'Assisted by a Barber': The Court Apothecary, Special Effects, and Gypsies Metamorphosed," in *Theatre Notebook* 61:1 (2007): 2-11.

⁶⁹ Netzloff, "Counterfeit Egyptians," 784.

⁷⁰ Srinivas Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency 1688-1804* (Durham, N.C.; London: Duke UP, 1999), 4.

⁷¹ For an account of the "Trade's Increase," see Jean Sutton, *Lords of the Sea: East India Company and Its Ships* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1981), 40. The ship, too massive to maintain and highly inefficient in design, eventually ran aground at Bantam. On its all-too-brief career in the service of the East India Company, see Richmond Barbour, "A Multinational Corporation: Foreign Labor in the London East India Company," in *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion*, ed. Jyotsna Singh (West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2009), 143-44.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DISCONTENTS OF SERVICE IN SIR THOMAS ROE'S *EMBASSY*

In 1615, at the request of the English East India Company, Sir Thomas Roe, impoverished scion of a prominent London mercantile family, knighted under James I, and on familiar terms with some key members of the Stuart Court, was appointed as James' official ambassador to the court of the Mughal emperor of India, Jahangir.¹ Before Roe, several Company servants had presented themselves at the Mughal court, posing as royal ambassadors in order to negotiate privileges on behalf of the East India Company's trading interests in the region. However, these men were soon discovered to be imposters and their petitions were either ignored or scorned by a court that refused to deal with mere merchants. One of the prominent features of Roe's embassy was to bolster the Company's attempt to negotiate a comprehensive bilateral commercial treaty with the Mughal authorities by stamping the activities of the Company's agents in India with the prestigious seal of royal sponsorship.² In the journal and correspondence that he maintained during the four years of his embassy, Roe testifies to the anxieties (and embarrassments) produced by his position in the Mughal court as royal ambassador and mercantile agent.³ Anxious to prove himself a loyal servant of the Company, while also anxious to distance (and distinguish) himself from the corporate body of factors and from the Mughal courtly milieu in his capacity as James' ambassador, Roe's experience of service in the Indies is deeply conflicted, embarrassing, and, ultimately, profoundly alienating. Periodically embarrassed (in every sense of the term) by his situation in the Mughal court, Roe marshaled theatrical and religious tropes to manage that embarrassment and in the process produced a discourse of service that combined a

carefully cultivated attitude of distanced ethnographic scrutiny with anxious self-justification. This discourse, and the light it sheds on the complexities of service in an ideologically fraught cross-cultural context, will be the subject of the present chapter.

In light of Roe's experiences on the ground, it is ironic that it was precisely the need to avoid embarrassment at the Mughals' refusal to deal with mere merchants that motivated the Company's directors to petition James to nominate Roe as his official ambassador to the Indies. But James' intervention in Roe's career at the Mughal court was limited to providing him with a letter attesting to his appointment; the charge of his office and of the presents he carried in the name of his king was borne solely by the Company. In the event, the Company's budget for its ambassador proved to be too sparse for Roe to engage in the kind of spectacular display of wealth and expenditure, specifically in the form of lavish presents, which would allow him to cut a fine figure at the Mughal court, where gifts provided material testimony of the donor's honor and status and had a significant bearing on the degree of prestige he commanded.

As a royal servant in an alien court, Roe was acutely aware of his role as status-symbol, and was bedeviled in his attempt to represent his master's power and majesty in the opulent Mughal court by charges of imposture, on the one hand, and his meager stock of presents, on the other. As a paid agent—but not regular employee—of the company, he found his powers heavily circumscribed and was moreover committed to an ethic of frugality that was at odds with his status as royal representative. In addition, his dual employment also rendered his position in the company hierarchy unclear, generating conflicts with the factors in India, who resented his attempts to assert his authority but also expected him to intervene on their behalf at the Mughal court to resolve disputes

with local traders and court functionaries. His constant intervention on behalf of merchants' petty troubles made him a suspect figure diplomatically at the Mughal court, and hampered, in his own view, his ability to sway the minds of the key players at the court with regard to his larger mission. Called upon to serve in capacities at once highly symbolic and intensely pragmatic, Roe found himself hard-pressed to exercise agency in any one—an incapacity to which his journal and letters from India might be regarded as a concerted response.

Roe's embassy writings have in recent times attracted the attention of literary scholars and historians interested in interpreting early modern encounters between England and India. While Roe's journal and correspondence have always had a prominent place in historiographies of the East India Company and the Mughal court, in recent decades scholars have focused attention on either assessing the embassy with the future history of Anglo-Indian relations in mind or considering it in more synchronic terms. From the former perspective, Roe's account intimates emergent colonial and imperial attitudes although the "dream of imperial power [was] yet to take shape";⁴ seen from the latter point of view, the account testifies to how "utterly incidental" the English were to the Mughal polity at the time, and to how the journal and letters "grant Roe rhetorical space to...exercise the dignity and influence denied him elsewhere."⁵

One common question spanning both these (and other) perspectives on Roe's documents is that of cultural 'translation,' on which hinges his reliability as a witness and interpreter of Mughal courtly proceedings. For Bernard Cohn, "Roe read the political world in which he found himself in terms of his own system of meanings," and betrayed a fundamental ignorance of the "cultural premises" of the Indian polity, most notably the

practices of obeisance and gift-giving. This incomprehensibility Cohn traces to the idea that “Europeans of the seventeenth century lived in a world of signs and correspondences, while Indians lived in a world of substances”; consequently, Roe saw Mughal court rituals as a “sign of debasement rather than an act of incorporation in a substantive fashion.”⁶ Critiquing Cohn’s perspective, William Pinch has argued that it was precisely because Roe was cognizant of the symbolic valence of the rituals and gifts from his experiences in the Jacobean court-system, that he resisted participating in Mughal rituals: his loyalties lay in his prior investment in the “ritual-political world...[of] the English court and its European connections.” Pinch goes on to conclude that while the Mughal *darbar* and the Elizabethan-Jacobean courts were “differently conceived in many obvious and subtle ways...these differences were primarily differences of detail, not of substance.”⁷ Adjudicating between these contrary perspectives, both of which he sees as insufficiently historical, Sanjay Subrahmanyam claims that while the conceptual differences between the two court-societies were indeed “notionally...translatable,” Roe’s inherent prejudices against the Mughal political system, accompanied by his lack of cultural and linguistic knowledge and his need to “justify” the limited success of his mission did in fact seriously hamper his ability to effectively “translate” Mughal court culture.⁸

As my review of some of the key scholarly studies on Roe suggests, Roe’s journal has attracted attention from scholars across disciplines, but as the historian Colin Paul Mitchell’s analysis shows, Roe’s self-conscious use of literary strategies and tropes in his embassy writings makes them particularly amenable to literary study.⁹ And while historians have sometimes tended to be wary of potentially a-historical, literary

approaches to archival documents, it is noteworthy that the literary critic Richmond Barbour reaches much (though not all) the same conclusions that the historian, Sanjay Subrahmanyam arrives at about how Roe's personal imperatives shaped his perspective of the Mughal India.¹⁰ Indeed, Barbour's nuanced and thoughtful study of Roe's complex self-positioning provides valuable insight into the psychology of belatedness and personal insecurities that go into the making of Roe's account. In the process, Barbour reveals how English experiences of Eastern courtly milieus on the ground could markedly differ from the proto-Orientalist projections on the London stage, and one of his conclusions is that the implicitly teleological perspectives driving imperialist and postcolonial "reconstructions" of Roe's work do not adequately attend to its uncertainties and anxieties. While Barbour rightly points out the limitations of a teleological approach, it is also true, however, that attending to the historical dynamic in which individual voices and experiences (such as Roe's) are embedded can reveal how on occasion "imperial ideologies appear to precede rather than derive from 'actual' imperial power."¹¹

This chapter considers the discourse of service that Roe produces, and suggests that the language of theater contributes in a significant way to Roe's attempt to combine a rhetoric of self-justification with ethnographic scrutiny. Alongside theater, Roe's discursive framework also draws on Anglo-European courtly traditions and on religion to assess and compare the culture of service he encounters in the Mughal court with his own. This framework produces an optic on the Mughal culture of service that is not simply idiosyncratic or revelatory of personal inadequacies but also contributes to the construction of the organizing "topos of Oriental Despotism" that Subrahmanyam discerns as the structuring principle of Roe's *Embassy*.¹²

SERVING A MULTITUDE

“It is my misery that I am to answer a multitude.”

—Thomas Roe¹³

That symbolism took precedence over pragmatic consideration in the choice made by the Company’s directors is hinted at in the merchants’ assessment of the qualities that fitted Roe for the assignment: from the court minutes for the discussions preceding his nomination, it appears that he was regarded as a man of “pregnant understanding, well spoken, learned, industrious, and of a comelie personage”; the court minutes for the day the company finalized their choice reiterate his gentlemanly status and his “good breeding” alongside his “good understanding.”¹⁴ The fact that Roe’s “comely personage” and command of the arts of speech was taken into account in considering his fitness for the service denotes the symbolic element in Roe’s assignment: being “comely”, quick-witted and a skilled orator would equip Roe to “breed regard” for the English nation for “they here look much after great men,” as Thomas Aldworth, one of the Company’s factors wrote when urging the directors to send a “sufficient man” to intercede with the Mughal administration on the Company’s behalf.¹⁵ That he had no knowledge of the languages that were spoken at the Mughal court nor any prior exposure to a cultural milieu akin to that of the court seems not to have been an object of consideration, perhaps because his appointment was made as much with an eye to securing royal approval and investors’ confidence as with his effectiveness on the ground.

James’ “Instruccions” for Roe, signed at Whitehall on Dec 29, 1614, reiterate his symbolic function as royal representative, exhorting him to be “careful of the preservation of our honour and dignity” in “your Carriage,” “speeches and presentation

of our letters as in all other circumstances.” He then urges Roe to deploy his skills to impress upon the Mughal emperor the “greatness” of the English monarch by describing “the accesse of our power and strength at sea, which giveth us not only reputation and authority amongst the greatest princes of Christendome, but maketh us even a terror to all other nations; Concluding all with this happiness, that Wee be not onelie absolutelie obeyed but universally beloved and admired of all our People.”¹⁶ James’ instructions operate as a template for Roe’s verbal representation of English power in the Mughal court through his “speeches”, “presentations” and “discourse”. James’ instructions, urging a highly rhetorical presentation of the self through both verbal discourse and bodily “Carriage,” runs counter to the plain discourse that the Company’s directives repeatedly insist on;¹⁷ Roe negotiates the tension between these two modes of discursive self-presentation by resorting to a kind of verbal theatricality in his journal that matches his histrionic performance in the Mughal court.

From the insistence on performative skills (with an eye to their symbolic function) in the documents detailing Roe’s assignment, it seems clear that in this particular appointment, the public function of the ambassador coincides to a great extent with that of the orator.¹⁸ As Barbour suggests, calling ambassadors “orators” meant casting them “as likely embodiments of a widely inculcated Ciceronian ideal supposedly capable of fostering public morality” and civility.¹⁹ Interestingly for Roe’s case, Roman orators were often closely linked to actors in some aspects of their craft, most notably in their use of body language.²⁰ But while Cicero and other classical rhetoricians admitted the usefulness of orators’ studying the performative techniques of actors, they also warned the aspiring orator against the dangers of collapsing the distinction between the two, for

example, by “provoking laughter in a manner which recalls mime actors too closely.”²¹ Indeed, more than one Renaissance commentator noted the theatricality of the ambassador’s diplomatic persona: “An ambassador resembles in some respect a comedian, exposed upon the theater to the eyes of the world, to act there the parts of great personages,” wrote the seasoned French diplomat, François de Callières.²² Roe might have, in one of his more self-aware moments, appreciated the irony. The potential for embarrassing the “dignity of rank” that Callières proposes goes with the position of envoy was aggravated in Roe’s case by his lack of knowledge of either Turkish or Persian, the languages in most common use at the Mughal court, and he consequently had to rely on a series of translators, often partisan and sometimes hostile, to convey his words to the Mughals.²³ Given this inability to display his verbal eloquence, the emphasis on the body’s ability to communicate status and mood was doubled—hence Roe’s perennial concern, anxiously (and somewhat risibly) echoing James, with his “carriage.” Appointed as an orator, Roe finds himself restricted—or demoted—to an actor, having to mime a role that would convey through his bodily gestures a dignity for which he had neither linguistic nor material back-up.

Part of Roe’s problem stemmed from the fact that, although officially a royal appointee, he would be working for the East India Company and was on the Company’s payroll. In effect, James would do nothing for his ambassador to India beyond furnishing him with a letter verifying his credentials. James’ “Instruccions” stresses this: for, even as he enjoins Roe to transmit his “honor and dignity” to the Mughal emperor, he also strictly delineated Roe’s “main scope of employment,” which is to advance the English Company’s trade in Mughal territory. In writing on behalf of Company interests and in

limiting the authority of the man who was to represent him to their “direccions and prescripcions,” from which he was in “noe wise to digresse, as you will answeare the Contrarie at your peril,” James was restricting the scope of Roe’s agency, but in the same breath enjoining Roe to enact a fictional role of dignity and importance, a role that he scripts for him.²⁴ In their own agreement with him, the Company imposed on Roe not only the restriction of non-interference in the management of merchandize (strictly the province of the factors) but also reminds him of the burden of “frugality, wherein he promiseth his uttermost endeavours.”²⁵

James’ insistence on the subordination of his ambassador to the Company, and the Company’s restrictions on his authority vis-à-vis the merchant community in India presented Roe with a seemingly insoluble problem as far as his self-representation at the foreign court went. He recognized that while the token appointment by James enabled his relationship with the Mughals, his real master in the day-to-day conduct of business was the Company. At the Mughal court and in his dealings with the Mughal officials, Roe played the English ambassador to the hilt, insisting on his prerogatives, despite lacking the material resources that would give heft to such claims to pre-eminence. While his honour as a company employee depends on absolute fidelity and obedience to the letter of the Company’s directions, his honour as the English ambassador to the Mughal court is based on calculated acts of disobedience (as when he refuses to perform the *taslim* or *sijdah*, which the English commonly referred to as “ground courtesies”) that serve to display his independence, his political freedom.²⁶ In the capacity of Company employee, Roe’s honour depends on his frugality, his very lack of personal riches must testify to his honesty, and therefore his honour. However when this frugality is carried over into the

Mughal court, as when he finds himself ill-equipped with presents and/or personal provisions, it is interpreted as a sign of lack of honour.

In 1616, Ben Jonson, who was well-acquainted with the Roe family, and knew Thomas Roe personally, published an epigram, addressed to Roe, as part of the folio volume of his collected works in which he lauded Roe in the following terms: “He that is round within himself, and straight,/Need seek no other strength, no other height.”²⁷ The epigram seeks to locate in Roe’s straightness and “gathered self” the fundamental characteristics of the Jonsonian ideal man, and is, in its context, one version of a conventional enough compliment that Jonson extended to people he approved of. But, perhaps unwittingly, it strikes an uncanny note of correspondence with Roe’s own preferred mode of public self-presentation in the Mughal courtly and commercial circles, as well as in his dealings with the English factors of the E.I.C. Not only that, it also recalls the terms of James I’s instructions to Roe to “be careful,” in his “Carriadge,” of the preservation of our honour and dignity,” and Roe’s subsequent decision “to repayre a ruined house and to make streight that which was crooked.”

Caught between the poles of honouring his commitment to mercantile thrift and maintaining, in his “Carriadge,” the honour of James’ royal person, and driven in both cases by a paradoxical sense of privilege and inadequacy, Roe evinces, in his journal and letters, an obsession with honour in his presentation of himself in action upon the Mughal “stage.” Concurrent with this, and resulting from it, is his awareness of playing a role that would establish his “presence” in symbolic terms from the moment he sets foot on Mughal soil. The necessity of doing so with the uttermost seriousness was all the more present to him when he was told that the news of the arrival of an English ambassador

was greeted by the locals at Swally and Surat with contemptuous and disbelieving laughter, “it being become ridiculous, so many having assumed that title, and not performed the offices.” Justifying his subsequent course of action in reaction to such reports, he writes to the Company, in biblically-charged idiom, that “if it seeme to any that shall heare of my first carriadge that I was eyther too stiff, to Punctuall, too high, or to Prodigall, lett them Consider I was to repayre a ruined house and to make streight that which was crooked.”

Roe goes on to write, in the same entry, that he would have “done noe lesse” even if “I had beene the first that ever landed under that title...the Kings Honor (being) engaged more deeply than I did expect.” As emissary of the King, his acknowledged master, Roe determines to approach ambassadorial duty in a markedly different way from that of the imposters who had preceded him. In Roe’s view, while these men had merely assumed the title or the name, and had flooded the Mughal emperor and his officers with presents in an attempt to “bribe” their way into favour, he would insist on the substance, all that “ambassador” meant, in international diplomatic circuits. The phrase “to make straight that which was crooked” aptly expresses Roe’s plan for reviving the dignity of his office: by means of his upright “carriadge” Roe will straighten the “crooked,” as if bowing, line of the pseudo-ambassadorial back even as he will straighten the “crooked,” that is, perverted or out-of-order relations between the English and the Mughals. Thus at his first meeting with the Governor of Surat, intent on honoring the “place and qualetye I now held,” he produces James’ letter to Jahangir with a suitable flourish – “having caused yt to be delivered with great reverence, I rose and kissed yt and showed yt.” (*Embassy*, 60) Later, at his audiences with Jahangir and his sons, wedded to his erect stance as sign of

his determination not to compromise his honour, he insists on saluting them in a European fashion, refusing to perform the ceremonial gestures of prostration in use at the Mughal royal court.

Colin Paul Mitchell, in examining Roe's account of Mughal courtly practices, suggests that Roe was driven in this regard by his European assumptions, particularly in the context of his exposure to Jacobean court corruption and patronage politics as well as his knowledge of European diplomatic protocols gleaned from his experience as part of the Nottingham ambassadorial mission to the Spanish royal court. These experiences led Roe to significantly misunderstand both Mughal courtly service rituals and diplomatic codes.²⁸ For example, while Roe quickly grasped the importance of gift-giving as part of standard courtly procedure, he persisted in seeing such gifts in Jacobean terms as "bribes" with which to win favors. In a letter to Lord Carew, he notes that the great men about Jahangir are not "borne noble, but favourites raised" who "all rise by presenting him, which they strive to do both richly and rarely, some giving a hundred thousand pounds in jewels at a time." (*Embassy* 110-111) If the parallels with Jacobean court patronage seem obvious here, it is partly the effect of Roe's language, which applies the discourse of patronage to describe Mughal court practices in a characteristic move of familiarization.

The peril in all this, of course, was loss of nuance: for example, Roe never quite figured out the function of the "daily bribes" that he found so irksome but without which the king would not entertain any request. But while he took away from this practice the message that "often giving of trifles is the way of preferment," it misses the symbolic element of such routine tokens. (*Embassy*, 346) That Roe never uses the term "nazr" to describe these gifts but directly translates them as "bribes" or "trifles" or even the more

neutral “presents” suggests his distance from the phenomenon. As Mitchell has shown, the term *nazr* has pre-Islamic roots, and originally meant a promise or vow made after sacrificing to a god. In the Mughal context, “the act of presenting a large gift was metaphoric of the donor acknowledging the king as the source of all his wealth and being.” It was in this regard a crucial element in maintaining the ties between the emperor and his nobles, since it constituted an “expression of loyalty through the giving of a material vow, or *nazr*.” In fact, the participation of visiting ambassadors in the giving of *nazr* meant that they were inculcated into the Mughal court hierarchy and were in effect expected to serve both their own master and the Mughal emperor during the duration of their stay.²⁹ Roe’s preferred term, “bribe” demystifies “*nazr*,” which undoubtedly functioned as a tool of advancement, but at the expense of gaining purchase on the imperial ideology of power that underpinned its symbolic function—a purchase that might lead to a more holistic assessment of the structure of power and thence to engage with it more successfully.

Roe’s insistence on his privileges as an ambassador from a foreign court is acknowledged by Jahangir, but this acceptance comes at a certain price. While Roe is allowed to maintain his “upright carriage”, he is relegated by this insistence to the margins of royal bounty. That is to say, he is not a beneficiary of the sort of largesse that his fake predecessors had enjoyed and that was awarded to the Persian ambassador, who visited Jahangir with much fanfare during Roe’s stay in India. He frequently complains about this in the journal and in his letters, noting in one letter to Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton, that ‘though the king hath often sent to me, yet this bounty is only expressed in whyld hogges.’ (Embassy 135) However, Jahangir had on at least one

occasion told Roe that “whatsoever I had a minde too, hee would give me.”(*Embassy*, 211) But Roe’s understanding of his mission is such that he feels that it is impossible to ask and at the same time retain his singular status. He records his response: “I made a reverence and answered that I humbly thanked his Majestie...neither was it the Custome of my Nation, especially of my place, to ask anything: if his Majestie gave me but the worth of a rupy, I would receive it and esteeme it as a marke of his favour.”³⁰ Clearly Roe felt that his independence both as an ambassador and Company employee would be compromised if he accepted Jahangir’s offer to name a gift. His reply is characteristic in its refusal to evince his desire: Jahangir’s offer opens up a perfect opportunity for Roe to ask for a monetary allowance befitting his position, an allowance he urgently needed, given the paltry sum awarded him by the Company for his expenses. One suspects that the Company would not seriously object to this request since one of the terms of their agreement with Roe was that he would cease to receive a salary from the Company if he were to be awarded an allowance from the Mughal imperial coffers. Roe’s response, while technically appropriate, seems, however, to suggest a hidden complexity. Jahangir’s offer is a deliberate expression of royal munificence (“*whatsoever I had a minde too*”) that is intended to create and satisfy desire, and that is lodged in his power to do so. Roe’s reply reverses the logic of the largesse, by creating a counter-rhetoric that treats any gift, however small or large, as equally a sign of the king’s favor. By responding in this manner, Roe reduces the power implicit in the king’s gesture by treating the gift as simply a token of favor – Jahangir’s gifts would be valued only because it came from him; it would not, for Roe, satisfy any specific want or desire.

Pretending in his interactions with Jahangir and his court to a puissance that he did not feel, Roe turns the pages of his journal into a virtual theater where he acts out the role of a servant beleaguered by contradictory imperatives, and constrained to “answer a multitude.” Writing to James, he notes, “I have sought to meyntayne upright your Majesties greatenes and dignitie, and withal to effect the ends of the Merchant; but these two sometimes cross one another.” (*Embassy*, 497-8) Constrained in public to strike a heroic pose, to grandly refuse gifts and favors, he evinces in his own actions a deeply theatrical sense of self that is complicated by an equally deep undercurrent of anti-theatrical prejudice that he brings to bear upon his observations of the Mughal court-scene. Not surprisingly, it is in his accounts of the rituals of service and incorporation, accompanied by lavish presents, at the Mughal court that he deploys the resources of theatre to decry the slavish customs of the Oriental court.

ORIENTALIZING SERVICE

Roe projects his discomfiture with the theatrical undercurrents of his service to king and company onto the Mughal court-scene itself. Theatricalizing the court-setting and its associated rituals becomes a way for him to register moral disapproval of the slavishly subservient—yet also substantively empty—nature of the affirmation of bonds of service between monarch and court. At the same time, theatre provides Roe with a descriptive toolkit with which to generate for his English masters “easy” descriptions of a world of service that was both disturbingly familiar and disorientingly strange. Indeed, interpreting the court scene in theatrical terms enables Roe to produce a discourse of service that adds to what Sanjay Subrahmanyam calls the “accumulating dossier on Oriental despotism in the seventeenth century.”³¹

Roe's deployment of theatre to orientalize rituals of contact, service and incorporation at the Mughal court—that is, to produce a discourse of service commensurate with his representation of the Mughal regime as an exemplar of what would come to be termed oriental despotism—was in significant ways anticipated by English theatrical tradition. Early modern theatre furnished would-be travelers with a repertoire of interpretative strategies which shaped *what* such travelers saw and *how* they saw when they found themselves in zones of inter-cultural contact. In particular, early modern stagings of East-West encounters did not only re-enact or respond to accounts of inter-cultural contact. Such stagings also actively produced strategies of ethnographic cognition. They inculcated habits of seeing, interpreting and communicating that were steeped in the culture of the stage and in the culture of spectatorship that it fostered. The stage thus equipped play-goers with performative and interpretative tools that influenced how many English travelers responded to their experiences in contact zones.³²

Of particular relevance to Roe's theatrical tropology is the long-standing tradition of representing Oriental despots on the English stage, which extends all the way from the immensely popular depictions of Herod as the very type of oriental tyranny in medieval mystery plays to Marlowe's swashbuckling semi-mythical empire-monger, Tamburlaine, to whose historical counterpart, the central Asian ruler Timur, the Mughals linked their dynasty.³³ English stage depictions of imperial authority were not restricted to distant locales or antique models, however. With the *Henriad*, a play-cycle that, according to some critics, may well be dubbed *Tamburlaine Upstag'd*, Shakespeare struck closer home. Recently, Jonathan Gil Harris has argued that Harry's "strategic deployment of the histrionic style" of the Oriental stage tyrant "seals his success not only on stage but also

within the *Henriad*'s narration of England's privileged place in history."³⁴ Whether by displacing domestic anxieties about monarchical power onto a foreign setting, or by folding the bombast of oriental tyranny into a more sophisticated histrionic style of national self-representation, early modern theatrical representations of political power foregrounded, however ambivalently, the intimacy between kingly players and player kings.

As is well-known, both Elizabeth and James attested to the currency of the stage-state analogy by referring to themselves as actors on a stage. "We Princes," said Elizabeth to a parliamentary delegation, "are set on stages, in the sight and view of all the world duly observed. The eyes of many behold our actions; a spot is soon spied in our garments, a blemish quickly noted in our doings."³⁵ James would later echo his predecessor, saying that "a King is as one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazinglie doe behold."³⁶ The monarchs' self-conscious theatricalization of their public, political personae may well have fed into the cognitive value that their subjects attached to the theatrical scenes they witnessed, even as habits of theatrical spectatorship gave such audiences leave to not only behold, but also, as Elizabeth put it, to "spy spots in our garments" and "note blemishes in our doings." Where the Puritan critic, Philip Stubbes, imagined the theatre as a school where playgoers learn to "murther, slay, kill, picke, steale, rob, and rove" through emulation of the actors onstage, Elizabeth sees theatrical spectatorship as doing exactly the opposite.³⁷ Theatre breeds not emulation through a psychic identification between spectator and player, but the habit of criticism, which presupposes distancing, and lights the way to a potential disenchantment of the mystique of monarchical authority.

The theatrical habit of critical observation that Elizabeth and James noted in their subjects manifests itself in Thomas Roe's conflation of stage craft and state craft in his description of the Mughal court. In journal entry dated January 9, 1616, Roe recounts his first audience with Jahangir in the "Durbar, . . . wher the Mogull sitts out daylie, to entertayne strangers, to receive petitions and presents, to give Commandes, to see, and to bee seene." "To see, and to bee seene," that characteristic Jacobean formula for the spectacle of power and public self-presentation, sets the stage—as it were—for Roe's ensuing description of the Mughal emperor's daily doings, and eventually of the court setting itself. He begins by noting that Jahangir "comes every Morning to a window called the Jarruco looking into a playne before his gate, and showes himself to the Common People." This course, he continues, is unchangeable, "except sicknes or drincke prevent yt; which must yet be known, for as all his Subjects are slaves, so is he in a kynd of reciprocall bondage, for he is tyed to observe these howres and Customes so precisely that" if he were to fail to appear one day without sufficient reason, "the people would mutinie." Roe's description of *jharokha-darshan*, the king's ceremonial appearance in person before his people (a practice instituted by Jahangir's father, Akbar) converts the Mughal theatre of power into a site of mutual enslavement, where the king is bound "in a kynd of reciprocall bondage" to his "slaves." Roe's language of slavery renders passive—and oddly enough, equalizes—seer and seen, subject and emperor, even as it misses the sacred, interactive resonance of the ceremony and its place in the Mughal ideology of the accessibility of the monarch.³⁸

Roe, himself the subject of a king notoriously averse to making public appearances, registers bemusement at the emphasis on contact between ruler and subject as well as at

the “publique” nature of imperial governance obtaining in the Mughal court. In the same entry, he observes that “no business is done with [Jahangir] concerning the state, government, disposition of war or peace, but...wher it is publicly propounded, and resolved, and soe registerd” such that the “common basse people knew as much as the Councell, and the Newes every day is the kings new resolutions tossed and censured by every rascall.” In a tone oddly reminiscent of Stuart royal proclamations against “inordinate libertie of unreverent speech,” Roe sees the public nature of Mughal imperial decision-making as cheapening the *arcana imperii* such that it can be “tossed and censured by every rascall.”³⁹ The notion of a court where access is seemingly unrestricted leads directly into a parallel with the theater:

The Place is a great Court, whither resort all sorts of people. The king sitts in a little Gallery over head; Ambassadors, the great men and strangers of quality within the inmost rayle under him, rayed from the ground, Covered with Canopies of velvet and silke, under foote layd with good Carpetts; the Meaner men representing gentry within the first rayle, the people without in a base Court, but soe that all may see the king. This sitting out hath much affinity with a Theatre – the manner of the King in his gallery; the great men lifted on a stage as actors; the vulgar below gazing on – that an easy description will informe of the place and fashion.

(*Embassy*, 108-09)

Evoking the theatre as an “easy” spatial simile for the court, Roe’s account soon takes on a moral character, encapsulated in the closing reference to the “vulgar below gazing on.” What Roe’s theatrical analogy points up, in fact, is the reflexivity of his ethnographic gambit: estranged from the scene before him by the twin barriers of language and custom, his hunt for an “easy description” leads him right back to the London stage. The Mughal court becomes easy to describe once the theatrical analogy is summoned, so that the make-believe trappings of the English stage when *Tamburlaine* was playing no longer

appear as fictive conjurations but as realistic portrayals of an Eastern court. In this instance, then, the strategic cultivation of spectatorial distance in the eastern theatre rides on the back of the collapse of such distance with respect to the fictions produced on the stage at home.

If he maintains a strictly spectatorial distance from the rituals of courtly service, (and his later emphasis on “observing” the Persian ambassador highlights that stance of spectatorial distance), Roe also finds himself on occasion drawn into the world of Mughal ritual, as for example when he was unwittingly inducted into imperial service by Jahangir. Roe tellingly leans on theatre to de-code—and defuse—Mughal courtly culture on another occasion, this time when he is called upon to actually participate in a court ceremony. On November 9, 1616 Khurram, Jahangir’s favourite son, sent for Roe on the eve of his departure to a military campaign in the south of India. Roe is told, first by the Prince’s messenger, a soldier, and then by a “Dutchman his jeweler” that he can expect an “extraordinary favour” from the Prince. He is also informed by the Prince’s “Captaines” that the “Prince would give me a great Present, and if I feared to ryde late, I should have ten horse to guard mee, and made such a business as if I should have received his best Chayne of Pearle.” Roe’s gives the following account of the gift that he receives from Prince Khurram:

By and by came out a Cloth of gould Cloake of his owne, once or twice worne, which he Caused to be putt on my back, and I made a reverence very unwillingly. When his Ancestor Tamerlane was represented at the Theatre the Garment would well have become the Actor; but it is here reputed the highest of favour to give a garment warne by the Prince, or,being New, once layd on his shoulder.

(Embassy, 334)

What Roe had just undergone was a version of the ceremony of *khil'at*, a ritualized gift of clothing practiced widely in the Islamic world and even beyond it. The public presentation of the “Cloth of gould Cloake of the prince’s owne” was in the same order as the numerous presents of turban, vest and girdle that Jahangir and his son made to favoured nobles and visitors as part of the ceremony of investiture. Such gifts of clothing were symbolically charged on multiple levels: in the Mughal imperial culture, they marked political bonding on a personal level, serving as tokens of imperial favor and evincing reciprocal declarations of loyalty from the imperial servant. Scholars interested in producing a more nuanced theory of Mughal kingship than that of oriental despotism have argued that the centrality of the *khil'at* ceremony to Mughal political ritual signified a fissiparous, contingent model of kingship that depended on such ceremonies of solidarity and fealty to secure authority.⁴⁰ Stewart Gordon has suggested that honorific ceremonies such as the *khil'at* were essential for “cobbling together a culture of governance in polities throughout the Asian robing world, divided as they were along “several fault lines: family, faction, religion, region, and so on.”⁴¹ Indeed, if robing ceremonies had an auto-ethnographic dimension, if they functioned as a symbolic means of securing legitimacy, recognition or fealty for a particular ruler or dynasty, the cultural signature they bore paradoxically depended for its efficacy on being legible, *translatable*, across cultural fault-lines.

In his own account of the ceremony, Roe takes pains to denote the importance of the ceremony in local culture – “it is here reputed the highest of favour to give a garment warne by the Prince” but arguably misses the broader significance of the ritual. He interprets it as an act of auto-ethnographic performance on Khurram’s part that is tied to a

bid for legitimacy—hence the coded reference to “his ancestor Tamerlane.” Faced with what he takes to be a moment of narcissistic reflexivity, Roe’s own gaze turns inwards: “When his Ancestor Tamerlane was represented at the Theatre the Garment would well have become the Actor.” The theatrical setting that immediately suggests itself to Roe’s imagination upon receipt of this honour best expresses one of the cardinal significances, for him, of the cloak and by extension, of the whole ceremony. Following upon the deprivation of agency implicit in the actual moment of investiture (“By and by came out a Cloth of gould Cloake of his owne... which he Caused to be putt on my back, and I made a reverence very unwillingly”) the theatrical allusion might well appear to be an attempt, on Roe’s part, to regain agency for himself by depriving Khurram of his. In so far as the English ambassador, newly endowed with a cloak of honour, might appear to be like Edward Alleyn representing Tamburlaine, so may Khurram, the former owner of the cloak, appear to be little more than an actor playing the role of his famous ancestor.

Roe’s description of *jharokha-darshan* presented the relationship between Jahangir and his subjects as a mutual abjection, grounded in an evacuation of agency so extreme that subject and king are tied together in a bond of slavish subjection. His theatrical descriptors of the court reinforce the impression of pervasive servility. This point comes across with vivid clarity in his account of the Persian ambassador, Muhammad Riza Beg’s behavior in the Mughal court:

Hee appeared rather a Jester or a Juggler then a Person of any gravety, running up and downe, and acting all his words like a mimick Player. Now indeed the *Atashkannoe* was become a right stage....His toong was a great advantage to deliver his owne busines, which hee did with so much flattery and obsequiousness that it Pleased as much as his guift: ever calling his Majestie King and Commander of the world, forgetting his owne Master had a share in yt; and on every little occasion of good acceptance hee made his tesselimis.

(*Embassy*, 300)

Roe notes in an earlier entry that the Persian ambassador had arrived, with “order from the Sophy to give content” to Jahangir so as to secure “some ayde in mony against the Turke,” a mission in which he “often finds liberal succor.” (*Embassy*, 303) Finding himself thoroughly upstaged by his Persian counterpart’s superior resources in “toong” and “guift” alike, Roe notches up small face-saving triumphs for the benefit of his masters in England—to his mind, neither the Persian nor his master’s letter are as well-entertained by Jahangir as he and his master’s letter had been, the Persian is assigned a place “far inferior to that allowed mee,” and some of the gifts the Persian bears are “unfit for to be sent or taken by Princes.” (*Embassy*, 301) Yet he also, at around this time, writes to the Company to tell them to send no more in the king’s name.

Mustering scornful distaste for his rival ambassador, whose prestational display he could scarcely hope to match, Roe’s characterizes Muhammad Riza Beg as a “Jester or a Juggler,” a “mimick player,” and his protracted presentation of gifts as a “play” that “will not bee finished in ten dayes.” (*Embassy* 301) Observing his rival the juggler, Roe’s histrionic assessment of his performance dovetails self-abnegating servility into the self-expressive physical energy of the English stage comic or street entertainer. In a letter to the Company in November 1616, written about a month after the arrival of the Persian ambassador, he remarks that “I could sooner dye than be subject to the slaverye the Persian is content with,” but also advises against diplomatic blunders in the matter of gifts, for “it was censured to name Presentes in a Kinges lettre to bee sent by a Principall man his Ambassador and such poore ones delivered...that if they had not beene named as from a Monarch it had beene less despiceable.” (*Embassy* 350-1, 347)

For all Roe's amused contempt at Muhammad Riza Beg's self-presentation, he keenly follows the latter's reception at court, making a special trip to the Durbar one evening to "observe" him, where he is gratified to find the ambassador "standing in his ranncke and often removed and sett lower as great men came in." (*Embassy*, 302) Even so, Jahangir commands his nobles to feast the ambassador, and grants the Persian 20,000 rupees to cover his expenses for which "hee made innumerable Teselims and Sizedas," which Roe characterizes as "base but profitable Idolatrye." (*Embassy* 303) At once an object of envy and ridicule, the Persian ambassador is a paradox for Roe, exemplifying the combination of the ridiculous and the idolatrous with which he associates opulent rituals of service in the Mughal court. The language of idolatry—signalling servility, misdirected worship, and overvaluation of the material—is thus mapped onto Roe's deployment of theatre as a descriptive tool in a manner strikingly reminiscent of antitheatrical Puritan ideologues like Stubbes.

SERVING IN A WILDERNESS

Theater provided Roe with one kind of apparatus for decoding the rituals of service he witnessed in the Mughal court, with an eye to offsetting his genuine amazement at their opulence by underscoring their combination of servility and emptiness. His comment about the Persian ambassador's "base but profitable idolatry" underscores for the Company's eyes his own frugal self-restraint and upright carriage; it also links his anti-theatrical assessment of Mughal court-society to the culturally salient issue of religious difference. Religion, in fact, provides Roe with another, even more morally-charged apparatus for representing the distinctions between English and Mughal practices, especially when it came to the practice of slavery. Yet, even on the question of slavery

Roe, while proudly conscious that “in England we had no slaves,” found himself embroiled in a quagmire, having to negotiate between his religious conviction and what he perceived as a test of his ambassadorial honor. Nonetheless, religion provided Roe with a vocabulary for articulating his own trials and tribulations as a servant exiled in an alien land even as it supplied him with a ready rhetorical—and dramatic—framework for asserting his selfless devotion to king and company. Religion thus functions in ways similar to theater in Roe’s account, allowing him to produce a discourse of service that combines ethnographic scrutiny with self-justification.

In view of Roe’s strong investment in his religious identity, it is not surprising that one of the clearer threads of continuity in his embassy writings is provided by his reiterated sense of being in a state of exile—a sense for which the Bible and the traditions of his faith provide ample idiomatic support. Characterizing his time in India as a “pilgrimage” on one occasion, and on another declaring that God “hath met with me in the wilderness,” he presents himself from early on as a righteous, much-tested biblical servant-hero, a role strikingly combining dramatic effect and religious affect. (*Embassy* 122,

³¹⁹⁾ This is already evident in his early assessment of his task in India, where he casts himself as simultaneously emulating two biblical models from Luke as he sets out to “repayre a broken house and make straight that which was crooked.”⁴² Nor was his sense of weariness and of being an embattled servant of the Lord in a “faithless and barbarous place” confined to his interlocutions with the Mughals; he characterizes himself in relation to the English factors as well in terms of another long-suffering biblical servant: “however your factors love to runne without mee,” he writes to the Company, “I will looke out to mend their faults and, like patient Job, pray and sacrifice for them, as he did

for his sonnes whiles they banquetted.”⁴³ Tellingly, Roe’s biblical analogy highlights not the cohesion of the mercantile community through bonds of religious and corporate affiliation but a sense of alienation, fissure and societal disarray. Indeed, the biblical scaffolding of his writings not only lends rhetorical force to his sometimes pathetic pleas to be called home; it also bolsters his claims to be the Company’s one true servant in the Indies. In missives to the Company he repeatedly makes his singular poverty the proof of his faithful service, and so seeks to distinguish himself from the venality displayed by the Company’s servants as well as court functionaries: whereas “ther is no man but will ayme at his owne profit,” he himself “shall not return richer by 500l. for my stay, but in my honest deseart to you; which I bring under good Certificatt and trust to you for recompence.” (487)

If religion serves as a means of self-justification, it also functions in Roe’s account as an ethnographic tool for differentiating Mughal practices of slavery from Christian “charetye.” Religion thus provides support for his assessment of Mughal service rituals and practices as instances of slavery. Before turning to this aspect of his use of religion, however, a few details about the Mughals’ somewhat ambiguous attitude toward the actual institution of slavery might help to provide some contextual clarification. Unlike their predecessors, the Delhi Sultans (or their Mediterranean rivals, the Ottomans), the Mughals did not rely on an elite corpus of slaves for administrative or military purposes. Jahangir’s father, Akbar, prohibited the enslavement of the families of war-captives, although this prohibition did not extend to the captives themselves; he also banned the sale of slaves in public markets in his dominion, and in 1582, he freed war-captives attached to his own household. Jahangir continued many of Akbar’s policies, and in

1608, prohibited the ancient practice of substituting slave-eunuchs for cash revenue. Even so, the Mughals continued to have significant institutional investment in slavery: not only did domestic slavery flourish in elite Mughal households, but rebels and those who had defaulted on revenue payments were routinely enslaved and deported to Central Asian markets where they were traded for horses to augment the imperial army.⁴⁴ The idiom of corporate military slavery to the imperial master was also crucial to the discourse of political fealty in this period. Imperial officers were described—and described themselves—as “slaves” to the imperial household.⁴⁵ It is possible that *ghulami* or *bandagi*, the condition of bondage or servitude, was in a way as flexible and capacious a term in the Mughal context as “service” was in early modern England, describing as it did relations ranging from the real violence of total domestic and political enslavement to the spiritual violence of the Sufi mystics’ ecstatic quest for God, to which the metaphor of slavery was central.⁴⁶

While Roe reserves his greatest moral indignation for what he sees as the slavish practice of escheat, when called upon to engage with actual Mughal practices of enslavement, he evinces an intriguing—and complex—conjunction of pragmatic calculation, piety, and cultural self-definition. On one occasion, Jahangir, “being loth to execute” a Mughal suspected of felony, sends him to Roe “for a slave, or to dispose of him at my pleasure.” Noting for his employers’ benefit that this “was esteemed a high favour,” Roe records his response in terms which explicitly pits the bondage of English service with its promise of eventual “libertye” against the bestial condition of slavery: “I returnd thancks: that in England we had no slaves, neyther was it lawfull to make the Image of God fellow to a Beast: but that I would use him as a servant, and if his good

behavior merited yt, would give him libertye. This his Majestie tooke in very good part.” (*Embassy*, 150) Roe represents himself here as having pulled off a minor moral coup with diplomatic finesse, although he would later write more bitterly to the factors at Surat that he had experienced Jahangir’s liberality only in the form of “hogges flesh, deare, a thief and a whore.” (*Embassy* 176, n.1)⁴⁷

Several months later, a similar incident occurred when Roe was given the opportunity to purchase—and so save the lives of—two boys who were among “divers theeves” facing execution by imperial command. (*Embassy*, 305) On this occasion, Roe finds himself initially unable to interpret whether the gesture is a sign of “wonderful baseness in this great Monarch or a triall of mee.” (304-5) The chance to demonstrate Christian mercy and display his “liberallitye” vies with pecuniary consideration and fear of being “cosened”: while he is aware that the chance to save the life of a prisoner was one of the “Mogols signal favours: to Choose out such great men as hee will give occasion to doe good and honorable woorkes,” he can’t at the same time help but complain that “I fynd no honor in a Prince to impose it on a stranger to whom he give neyther maintenance nor liberallitye.” But he decides, after some demurrall, to reply that “if there were any mony to be Payd to save the life of twoo Children to those whom they had robbd, or to redeem them from the law, both for respect to the kings Command and for Charetye, I was ready to give it; but I would not buy them as slaves.” Asaph Khan, the minister who had approached Roe with the offer, accepted the money for redeeming the boys’ lives, but to Roe’s dismay, without “once offering to enforme the king, which was one end of my liberallitye.” (*Embassy*, 305) He then proceeds to go to some lengths to make sure that Jahangir is informed of his offer to redeem the prisoners “for Charytyes sake,” so that he

“should not be ignorant I had more mercy then he, and that a Christian esteemed the life of a Moore above mony.” (*Embassy*, 306) Set against the backdrop of a Mughal theater of cruelty, Christian charity becomes the vehicle for a display of cultural and moral superiority.

Yet, as critics have noted, Roe’s account also registers moments when this assumption of superiority in the matter of displaying “Charytye” is unmoored, as when he reports Jahangir’s reception of a “professed Poore holy” man:

This miserable wretch, clothd in raggs, crownd with feathers, covered with ashes, his Majestie talked with about an hower, with such familiarity and show of kindnes that it must needes argue an humilitey not found easely among kinges. The begger....gave the king a Present, a Cake, ashed, burnt on the Coales, made by himselfe of Course grayne, which the king accepted most willingly, and brake one bitt and eate yt, which a daynty mouth could scarce have done. After hee tooke the Cloute and wrapte it up and putt in the poore mans bosome and sent for 100 rupees, and with his owne hands powered them into the poore mans lap, and what fell besides gathered up for him. When his Collation of banqueting and drinck came, whatsoever hee tooke to eate, hee brake and gave the begger halfe; and after many strange humiliations and Charetyes rising, the ould wretch not beeing Nimble, hee tooke him up in his armes, which noe Cleanly bodye durst have touchd, embracing him; and 3 tymes laying his hand on his hart, calling him father, hee left him, and all us, and me in admiration of such a virtue in a heathen Prince. Which I mention with envye and sorrow, that wee having the true vyne should bring forth Crabbes, and a bastard stock grapes: that either our Christian Princes had this devotion or that this Zeale were guided by a true light of the Gospell.

(*Embassy*, 366-67)

This extraordinarily detailed account of princely charity has generated contradictory critical responses. Kate Teltscher notes that Roe’s description “with its endlessly extended syntax, piling one precise observation upon another, reflects a mounting incredulity at Jahangir’s ‘many strange humiliations and charities,’” whose cumulative effect is to “unsettle Christian certainties: if a heathen can realize biblical truths, then Christendom’s most basic premises of superiority are thrown into question.”⁴⁸ Taking

issue with Teltscher's position, Paul Stevens sees in the passage "an explicit and angry denunciation of Christian failure," a denunciation which opens a "radically disturbing fissure" that Roe's first editor, Samuel Purchas, strove to contain by excising the last angry sentence, and supplying a marginal gloss in its stead: "Humilitie and Charity superstitious, and therefore blind." (4:386)⁴⁹ For Stevens, the description of the incident makes Roe seem "unmoored, unable to make up [his mind]," rather than being caught in a "closed system."⁵⁰ But, as Teltscher implies, the unsettling effect that the incident has on Roe's "Christian certainties" is still bound up in a decidedly Christian framework, and is in a sense a product, however disturbed, of that governing paradigm. As with his theatrical analogies, so with his religious frame, Roe works his way through an experience of the unfamiliar by applying a mechanism of "compare and contrast," and so seeks to fold the strangeness back into a familiar discursive framework. But while theater provides a paradigm that can reduce and deflate the unfamiliar rituals of Mughal court etiquette, turning high ceremony into burlesque, religion in this instance provides a compass of a different, more disturbing sort, one that produces a critical distancing not with respect to the barbaric other, but with respect to one's own society and culture. Yet, such distancing can only go so far. Committed to the "true light of the Gospell," Roe simply cannot admit the possibility of another faith producing a charity that he associates with his one true religion; he converts his admiration into "envye and sorrow" that Christian princes lack the "devotion" and the "virtue of a heathen Prince." (That he was at this moment writing an entry in a journal meant for the eyes of the Company rather than his king no doubt encouraged frankness on this point.) Roe's curious coupling of "envye and sorrow" is in a sense a remarkably complex iteration of what Gerald

MacLean has diagnosed as “imperial envy.”⁵¹ Instead of manifesting the “contradictory structure characteristic of envy—that recognition of excellence in another tends to breed malicious dislike,” that we are frequently treated to elsewhere in his writings, Roe’s conjugation, “envye and sorrow,” points to a sense of rift between experience and prejudice that is ultimately managed by turning his face homeward, albeit in anger and sorrow.⁵²

Genuinely moved as he is by Jahangir’s humility, and for all the emotional intensity of his prose, this episode (like certain others where he evinces an equally genuine wonderment at Mughal courtly splendor) does not appear to register either a turning-point or a deepening in Roe’s understanding of the Mughal culture or its emperor.⁵³ At one level, the episodic nature of the journal itself disallows such narrative development or complexity, constituted as it is of “broken and undependant Pieces and fragments.”⁵⁴ The very fragmentary nature of his correspondence allows Roe to express momentary flashes of sympathy, admiration and insight without having to alter or re-assess the basic premises of his representation of a dysfunctional Mughal court beset with intrigue and corruption, a benignly despotic emperor too easily swayed by powerful factional interests and the love of his favorite wife, and a regime of service that is both servile to the point of self-annihilation and nothing but empty, self-seeking histrionics. These premises, according to Subrahmanyam, are held in place by a political ethnography that is fundamentally geared toward “comparing and ranking” political systems.

That Roe’s application of a Jacobean framework of understanding to describe Mughal court practices remains on the whole a tacit orientation, rather than explicitly acknowledged purchase on the alien setting is telling. At one level, it suggests that,

immersed in the language of Jacobean court culture, he does not really view the rituals in the Mughal court in indigenous terms; but the tacit nature of the comparison also enables him to interpret the discontents of service as embedded not in the institution itself but in cultural difference. Ultimately, Roe's journal resists being read as an implied critique of Jacobean and Mughal codes of hierarchical service; instead, court service and its iniquities, instead of being a function of hierarchical, highly stratified societies, becomes an essential and unique attribute of the Mughal—and by extension—the despotic Oriental court.

¹ Standard biographies include Michael Brown, *Itinerant Ambassador: The Life of Sir Thomas Roe* (Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1970) and Michael Strachan, *Sir Thomas Roe, 1581-1644: A Life* (Salisbury, Wiltshire: M. Russell, 1989).

² While Roe did not completely fail in his mission to secure trading rights for the English, by the time he returned to England his experiences in India had caused him to seriously diminish his expectations regarding the outcome of his mission. Instead of the comprehensive bilateral trading agreement the Company wanted him to get for them, he returned having won for his countrymen a general firman from the Mughal emperor assuring James that the English factors would be treated well and granting them permission to maintain their base in Surat.

³ Excerpts from Roe's journal were first published by Samuel Purchas in *Hakluytus Posthumus: or Purchas his Pilgrims* in 1625; William Foster compiled a more comprehensive edition of his embassy writings in *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 1615-1619* 2 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1899). Unless otherwise stated, all references in this chapter to Roe's Journal conform to this edition, and will be referred to in the body of the text with the appropriate page number(s).

⁴ Jyotsna G. Singh, *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues: "Discoveries" of India in the Language of Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1996), 40.

⁵ Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576-1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), 146-47.

⁶ Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996), 18.

⁷ William Pinch, "Same Difference in India and Europe," in *History and Theory* 38 (October 1999): 389-407, esp. 401 and 404. Ania Loomba concurs in the main with Pinch's assessment of Cohn's thesis, pointing out that Cohn's distinction between a

European world of “signs and correspondences” and an Indian world of “substances” is incompatible with his argument that the English saw “only the literal and not the symbolic value of the goods being exchanged.” In Loomba’s view, “cultural differences between the Mughals and the English were often a matter of different interests rather than incompatible cultural views.” See Ania Loomba, “Of Gifts, Ambassadors, and Copy-Cats: Diplomacy, Exchange, and Difference in Early Modern India,” in Brinda Charry and Gitanjali Shahani ed. *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Mediation, Transmission, Traffic, 1550-1700* (Surrey, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 41-76, esp. 49 and 50 n.19.

⁸ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: Mughals and Franks* (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2005), 152-53.

⁹ Colin Paul Mitchell, *Sir Thomas Roe and the Mughal Empire* (Karachi: The Area Study Centre for Europe, 2000), throughout but see esp. 48-89 for a reading of Roe as “litterateur.”

¹⁰ Both Barbour and Subrahmanyam argue, in different ways, that Roe’s self-positioning and his survey of Mughal power is intimately tied to his desire to prevent his mission from being perceived as a failure.

¹¹ Ania Loomba, Review of *Before Orientalism*, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 5.3. (2004).

¹² Subrahmanyam, *Explorations*, 152.

¹³ Letter to merchants at Surat, 19th June, 1616, in *Addl. Ms. 6115*, folio 104 (India Office Archives, British Library, London).

¹⁴ E.I.C. Court Minutes, September 7, 1614; East India Company Court minutes, 4th October, 1614 in William Foster, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-19* Revised ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1921), xviii-xix.

¹⁵ William Foster ed. *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East 1612-1617*, 6 vols. (London: Sampson Low, 1896-1902), 1:307.

¹⁶ Foster, *Embassy*, Appendix B, 552-53. A full abstract of these instructions is to be found among the Carte Mss. (no. 103, f. 282), in the Bodleian Library. This document, entitled “Instruccions for Sir Thomas Rowe, knight, autorised by us under our Great Seale of England to repaire as our Ambassadour to the Great Magaor” needs to be distinguished from the Royal Commission to Roe impressively titled in Latin “De Tractando cum Monarcha Indiarum Orientalium super Amicitia et Commercio” in one important respect: while the commission was meant to be produced at the Mughal court as evidence of Roe’s authenticity, the Instructions, although also official, were meant for his use and depart remarkably from the tone of the Commission—in its insistence, for example, that Roe follow the Company’s directions to the letter.

¹⁷ See, for example, the *Laws and Standing Orders of the East India Company* (London, 1621), which codified norms of discourse that were already in circulation in commissions and directives issued to individual voyages.

¹⁸ The use of orator in the sense of “person sent to speak or plead for another” and synonymous with “ambassador” or “envoy” was current in Roe’s day (O.E.D “orator, n.” 4). For the close connection between the orator and the ambassador in medieval and Renaissance discourses of diplomacy see Donald E. Queller, *The Office of Ambassador in*

the Middle Ages, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1967) and Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971).

¹⁹ Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, 151.

²⁰ Glenys Davis, "Togate Statues and Petrified Orators," in D.H. Berry and Andrew Erskine ed., *Form and Function in Roman Oratory* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010), 52. Davis lists several passages in Cicero's *De Oratore* and Quintilian's *Institutes* which address various aspects of the relation between actors and orators. See also Neil Rhodes' discussion in his *The Power of Eloquence and English Renaissance Literature* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 12-19.

²¹ C.E.W. Steel, *Roman Oratory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), 55.

²² François de Callières, *The Art of Diplomacy*, ed. H.M.A. Keens-Soper and Karl W. Schweizer (London: Leicester UP, 1983), 76-77. The editors note Callières' borrowal of the analogy from the Dutch diplomat, Abraham De Wiquefort's claim that the ambassador "ought to have a tincture of the comedian...perhaps in the whole commerce of the world, there is not a more comical personage than the ambassador. There is not a more illustrious theater than a court; neither is there any comedy where the actors seem less what they are in effect than ambassadors do in their negotiations..." (see 76-77, n.2)

²³ Callières, 77.

²⁴ "Instruccions," in *Embassy*, Appendix B, 552.

²⁵ *Embassy*, Appendix B, 547.

²⁶ For a discussion of various forms of rituals of obeisance in use at the Mughal court, see Mukhia, 89-92.

²⁷ Ben Jonson, "Epigram XCVIII" in George Parfitt ed. *Ben Jonson: The Complete Poems*, (New Haven: Yale UP, 1982), 69.

²⁸ Mitchell, *Sir Thomas Roe*, 90-172.

²⁹ Mitchell, 165.

³⁰ It is interesting to compare Roe's response with that of Mutribi Samarqandi, a Central Asian poet and scholar who visited Jahangir's court some years later and not only names the gifts he desires from the emperor but also haggles about them without any apparent loss of self-esteem. See Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations*, 154-58.

³¹ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Beyond Incommensurability: Understanding Inter-Imperial Dynamics in the Early Modern World," 13, posted at the e-scholarship Repository, University of California. <http://repositories.cdlib.org/uclasoc/trcsa/32>

³² Mary Louise Pratt coins the term "contact zone" to describe the "space of imperial encounters, the space in which people geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other, and establish ongoing relation, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict." The question raised by the combative terms of her description—why not dub such zones "conflict zones" rather than contact zones—is partially addressed a little later in the same passage, when she explains that a "contact perspective" treats such cultural encounters "not in terms of separateness, but in terms of co-presence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices," albeit often in situations of "radically asymmetrical relations of power." Pratt's primary object of study is the Americas, which presented a different alignment of power relations from that which obtained in European encounters with Eastern empires. See Mary Louise Pratt,

Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation, 2nd edition (New York: Routledge, 2008), 8.

³³ In fact, the Mughals claimed descent from both Chingiz Khan and Timur, as Harbans Mukhia points out. For an interesting account of their early antipathy to the term “Mughal” to describe their dynasty, see Harbans Mukhia, *The Mughals of India* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 2-3.

³⁴ Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 83.

³⁵ Quoted from J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584-1601* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1958), 119.

³⁶ James I, *Basilikon Doron or, King James's Instructions to His Dearest Sonne, Henry the Prince* (London, 1682), 77. James makes this claim in the second paragraph of his prefatory epistle to readers as well, stating: “For Kings being publike persons, by reason of their office and authoritie, are as it were set (as it was sayd of old) upon a publique stage, in the sight of all the people; where all the beholders eyes are attentively bent, to looke and pry in the least circumstance of their secretest driftes.”

³⁷ Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* ed. Margaret Jane Kidnie (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and Renaissance English Text Society, 2002), 204.

³⁸ Natasha Eaton highlights the central role of *darshan* (viewing) in the “Indian scopic regime,” suggesting that in *darshan* “seeing is conceived as an outward reaching process, as extrusive, a medium through which the seer and the seen come into contact.” See “Between Mimesis and Alterity: Art, Gift, and Diplomacy in Colonial India, 1770-1800,” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46 (2004), 837. For the divine resonance of *darshan*, a Hindu act of worship which became crucial to the Mughals' sacralization of kingship, see Diana Eck, *Darshan: Seeing the Divine Image in India* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996). For the place of *jharokha-darshan* in Mughal imperial practice, see Catherine B. Asher, “A Ray from the Sun: Mughal Ideology and the Visual Construction of the Divine” in *The Presence of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2004), 161-194, esp. 177-78. Such practices, which emphasized contact between ruler and subject, were part of the Mughal patrimonial mode of governance, which entailed “obedience to a person, not an office,” according to Stephen Blake, “The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals,” in *Journal of Asian Studies* 39, no.1 (1979), 79.

³⁹ J.F. Larkin and P.L. Hughes, *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973-83), 1:520.

⁴⁰ Stewart Gordon, “Introduction: Ibn Battuta and a Region of Robing” in *Robes of Honor: Khil'at in Pre-Colonial and Colonial India* ed. Stewart Gordon (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2003), 1-30.

⁴¹ Gordon, 22-23.

⁴² As Barbour points out, Roe is referring to two moments in the Gospel of Luke: the parable in Luke 6.48-9 contrasting the man who build his house “upon a rock” with the “man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth...and the ruin of that house was great,” an allusion that “casts Roe as the belated builder of Christ's firm foundation”;

and an earlier chapter in Luke 3.4-6 referring to a prophetic “voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain...brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight.” See Barbour, 163-64.

⁴³ “Letter to Sir Thomas Smythe,” dated November 27, 1616, in *Embassy*, 354.

⁴⁴ These details are drawn from Indrani Chatterjee and Richard M. Eaton, *Slavery and South Asian History*, (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2006), esp. 11-12, and W.G. Clarence-Smith, *Islam and the Abolition of Slavery*, (New York: Oxford UP, 2006), 90-91; for distinctions between slavery in the Indian Ocean World and plantation slavery in the Atlantic, see Gwyn Campbell, “Introduction,” in Gwyn Campbell ed. *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia*, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), viiiff.

⁴⁵ John F. Richards, “The Formulation of Imperial Authority under Akbar and Jahangir,” in J.F. Richards ed. *Kingship and Authority in South Asia*, (Delhi: Oxford UP, 1998), 311-12.

⁴⁶ For a nuanced exploration of the multifaceted nature of slavery, reconstructed from a Persian narrative by an ex-slave, see Indrani Chatterjee, “A Slave’s Quest for Selfhood,” in *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 37 (2000): 53-86. In *In An Antique Land*, Amitabh Ghosh describes slavery in the Indian Ocean world in the medieval period in terms strikingly similar to the discourse of service in the early modern period, particularly with respect to the capaciousness of the institution as it accommodated “a very flexible set of hierarchies.” While Ghosh’s account tends toward a nostalgic (or utopian) idealization of the master-slave relation in ways that don’t address the social realities of the institution of slavery, it is nonetheless, I think, plausible to claim that slavery in the medieval (and early modern) Indian Ocean world had a broader range of applications (like service in early modern Europe) and as an institution may well have taken “many forms,” with varying degrees of exploitation, affective investment, and violence. That said, I am chary of Ghosh’s (undeveloped) claim that *all* these forms “differed from ‘slavery’ as it came to be practiced after the European colonial expansion.” See Amitabh Ghosh, *In An Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler’s Tale*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 259-63.

⁴⁷ Roe’s bachelor household was thrown into some confusion when Jahangir sent him “a woeman slave, servant to Normall[Nur Mahal],” Jahangir’s queen, who had been “putt away in Cholar.” (*Embassy*, 174-176)

⁴⁸ Kate Teltscher, *India Inscribed: European and British Writing on India 1600-1800* (Oxford: Oxford UP), 25.

⁴⁹ Paul Stevens, “England in Moghul India,” in Balachandra Rajan and Elizabeth Sauer ed. *Imperialisms: Historical and Literary Investigations, 1500-1900* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 104-05. For Purchas’ editorial intervention, see Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Postumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 20 vols. (Glasgow, 1905-7), 4:386. While Roe’s 19th century editor, William Foster, leaves his account intact, he also glosses the episode in terms not entirely unlike Purchas’, noting Jahangir’s “superstitious respect for devotees.” (*Embassy*, 367 n.1)

⁵⁰ Stevens, 106.

⁵¹ Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire Before 1800* (Basingstoke, UK; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 20-23.

⁵² MacLean, 61.

⁵³ See Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, 188-89, for an evocative reading of another such moment of wonder, aroused by the sight of the intricately designed “lescar” or royal camp which, however enlarging at the time, only reinforces, in Barbour’s view, Roe’s sense of alienation and hardens him in his insularity.

⁵⁴ Roe refers to his epistolary communications in this fashion in a letter to George Abbott, the Archbishop of Canterbury, October 30, 1616 in *Embassy*, 305.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDOING EMPIRE: MAGISTRACY, WORK AND SERVICE IN *PARADISE*

LOST

Having resisted Satan's call to rebellion in Book 5, the angel Abdiel returns in Book 6 of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* to repudiate his erstwhile leader's insinuation that he, Abdiel, belongs to that group of angels who prefer the slothful comfort of a servile existence to hard liberty. "This is servitude," Abdiel retorts:

To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebelled
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled.
(6. 178-81)¹

Implicit in Abdiel's denunciation of Satan's logic of rebellion is a distinction between servitude and service, a distinction that posits these close etymological cousins as irreconcilable opposites.² To serve the unwise, or the unwisely rebellious, is to be trapped in a condition of servitude, Abdiel argues, but the target of his denunciation is less Satan's misguided angelic followers than their bad master, the great "archangel" himself: "Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled." For Abdiel, as for Milton, however much Satan might seek to dress his bid for power in high-republican idiom, his rebellion connotes neither love of liberty nor strenuous opposition to tyranny but the servile idolatry of excessive self-regard.³ Abdiel's rejection of Satan's attempt to legitimize his nascent imperialism is founded on one of Milton's central concerns in *Paradise Lost* and a cornerstone of his republican ideology: the duty of masters to *serve*—rather than *rule*—those over whom they have been placed in positions of authority. It is only by demonstrating this willingness to serve that masters testify, as the Son does in *Paradise*

Lost, to the internal, spiritual freedom which is the true source of their authority. This chapter explores how this vision of magisterial office as preeminently a site of service comes into productive tension with the representation of authority in *Paradise Lost* even as it highlights the importance of collaborative or “joint” labor to the formation of Milton’s ideal epic community.

The responsibilities inherent in magisterial office is an issue that surfaced repeatedly in Milton’s political writings of the 1640s and 1650s as it later does, in resonantly ethical and theological terms, in *Paradise Lost*. In *A Defence of the People of England* Milton had argued that kings and magistrates were authorized to serve the people, not rule over them, a point on which he claimed “our Saviour’s” backing: “Christian princes are no other than the people’s servants; it is very certain that all good magistrates are so. Insomuch that either Christians must have no king at all, or if they have, that king must be the people’s servant. Absolute lordship and Christianity are inconsistent.”⁴ In *Paradise Lost*, he explicitly praised (through that anti-monarchical spokesperson, Michael) fraternal rule over the monarchical excesses of Nimrod; and in *Paradise Regained*, he has Jesus reject kingship itself as a satanic temptation. Arguably, for Milton, the temptation to rule rather than to serve—to insist on the service of others rather than placing oneself at the service of others—is built into the institution of earthly monarchy, whatever the motives of individual monarchs, so much so that it may well have prompted his turn to republicanism as a surer path to realizing, as far as was possible, the ideal Christian commonwealth on earth.⁵ In *A Ready and Easy Way*, composed on the eve of the Restoration, he contrasts monarchical excess and incompetence with magisterial labor in a free commonwealth, asking scathingly: “...what madness is it, for them who might

manage nobly their own affairs themselves,” relying on “none but God and our own counsels,” to “sluggishly and weakly devolve all on a single person...who neither can perform what he undertakes, and yet for undertaking it, though royally paid, will not be their servant, but their lord?”⁶ Against such “civil idolatry,” he posits his vision of magistracy in a free commonwealth, “wherein they who are greatest, are perpetual servants and drudges to the public at their own cost..., neglect their own affairs, and yet are not elevated above their brethren, ...walk the streets as other men, may be spoken to freely, familiarly, friendly, without adoration.”⁷ Milton here re-interprets magistracy as disinterested service, as labor undertaken for another, and at considerable cost to one’s own affairs, in a concerted attempt to ethicize the position while also effectively confining it to a select virtuous elite.⁸

In the last decade and half, scholars have come to regard the relationship between Milton’s republican politics and his radical Protestantism as a mutually constitutive one: in a recent work, Walter Lim develops the term “biblical republicanism” to describe this coalescence of classical republican political thought with biblical prophecy which defines Milton’s political ideology.⁹ At a political level, this marriage of biblical ethics with republican political theory is reflected in Milton’s nationalism, defined as it was by an awareness of the exceptional status and responsibility of the English protestant public as God’s chosen people and of the English nation as the new Israel. Yet, Milton’s biblical republicanism is not only about realizing an ideal national imaginary, although that is certainly one of its fundamental components. Alongside this explicitly political dimension, Milton’s biblical republicanism also has a complementary ethical dimension which expresses itself forcefully in his incessant probing of magisterial responsibility, of

the duties inherent in the magisterial calling. Milton's turn to spiritual concerns in *Paradise Lost*, exemplified in his choice of biblical matter as the subject of his epic, is neither simply a sign of his "withdrawal from politics into faith"¹⁰ in the aftermath of the failed republican experiment nor merely sublime code for an unrepentant political iconoclasm. Rather, his focus on spiritual development signals an acutely-felt need for moral education, of that laborious process of inward spiritual fortification without which—as the outcome of the English republican experiment showed—outward reforms prove impossible to sustain. Spiritualization of labor, however, does not for Milton mean a separation of secular and religious labors but the infusion of one's daily activities, whether intellectual, affective, or manual, with spiritual meaning.

By identifying work with service, and thereby stressing the ethico-spiritual orientation of labor as much as its material performance, Milton, like many of his contemporaries, posits a spiritual parity between all kinds of work insofar as they constitute diverse ways of serving God.¹¹ Where the medieval tripartite social model explicitly restricted the category of worker or *laboratore* for only the meanest sort who worked with their hands, by the seventeenth century the definition of work had expanded to include "divers sorts of labours, some of the minde, and some of the body," as Thomas Adams put it.¹² Furthermore, even as it revises and develops prior configurations of work, Milton's spiritualization of work also invites a perhaps more surprising connection with the postmodern category of immaterial labor. As explicated by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, immaterial labor designates the various kinds of affective and intellectual work that have come to dominate the post-industrial global capitalist labor-market.¹³ Even as it echoes both contemporary Puritan and later postmodern accounts of work, however,

Milton's characterization of labor also departs strikingly from these earlier and later theories. Most notably, *Paradise Lost* blurs the line between material and immaterial labor by presenting both as species of the affective and spiritual work of service. Reconfiguring work as a form of service also allows Milton to cast both manual and intellectual labor as a means to spiritual labor.

Milton's commitment to an ethic of service as a core element of his vision of magisterial work also shaped his response to the imperial poetics associated with the epic form. In literary historical terms, this was an association sealed by Virgil's epic paean to Augustus Caesar in the *Aeneid*. As David Quint has argued in his seminal study, the *Aeneid* had "decisively transformed epic for posterity into both a genre that was committed to imitating and attempting to "overgo" its earlier versions and a genre that was overtly political." For Quint, Milton's signal achievement in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* was to break this epic continuity by "[opposing] both of the aspects of empire linked and celebrated by Virgilian epic, the kingship of an Augustus-like emperor and the expansionist territorial state."¹⁴ Milton's biblical republicanism shapes not only his resistance to civil idolatry in *Paradise Lost* but also to what David Armitage calls the "fatal temptations of empire," i.e., the urge to territorial expansion and colonization which had led to the decline of the Roman republic.¹⁵ Quint suggests that the ensuing problem, which Milton never quite resolves, is that the individual dissenter or hero is left in isolation, unanchored to community, since in the imperial epic tradition, community is always generated in relation to empire, either as locus of empire-formation or as locus of empire-resistance.

But I would argue that what Milton is doing, in fact, is trying to find a way of representing epic community without resorting to the paradigms offered by imperialism. In *Paradise Lost*, he achieves this by developing the thematic of true heroism as the magisterial work of service against the classical model of heroic conquest as a cornerstone of epic community. As Maureen Quilligan has suggested, Milton's poem turns the classical conquering hero into a villain, while celebrating true heroism elsewhere, "in a complexly 'heroised' labour, differentiated from manual work but which still relies upon its productive powers." In so doing, Quilligan argues, *Paradise Lost* joins other Renaissance epics in "answering the great need felt across western Europe for some cultural instrument by which each nation could make sense of [a] vast shared and competitive imperialist project" spanning three continents, Africa, and North and South America.¹⁶

While my argument shares Quilligan's perspective that *Paradise Lost* reinterprets epic heroism in terms of "labor" rather than martial prowess, it seeks to examine more closely the distinction Milton's epic makes between the work of service and the work of slavery. While Quilligan suggests that, by instituting a hierarchical distinction between manual and intellectual labor, *Paradise Lost* paves the way for the emergence of a global order of imperial authority and colonized/enslaved subordination, I argue that Milton actually eschews any hierarchical distinction between manual and intellectual labor. Instead, he subordinates both to the spiritual work of service to God, which constitutes the true end of human (and angelic) labor and lays the groundwork for a different kind of communal imaginary than that embodied in the epic tradition to which the poem is responding.

Resisting both the heroic personae and the ideology of territorial expansion extolled in the imperial epic, *Paradise Lost* marks a sharp departure from the traditions to which it nonetheless lays claim, with profound implications for the community that the epic form typically seeks to bring into being and to define for posterity.¹⁷ By epic community, I mean both the “fit audience...though few” which Milton designates as his ideal readership and the more motley community –or rather, *communities* –represented within the epic. These latter communities include the one Satan founds in Hell as the base for his aggressive imperial agenda; the heavenly community of saints, figured as angelic servants, centered on God and the Son; and finally, the Edenic community which is preeminently the locus of ethical experiment, discovery and innovation. In *Paradise Lost*, the boundary between the communities of epic audience and epic actors is a permeable one: the communities represented within the epic also serve as object-lessons for the community outside the fiction. That is to say, Milton’s fit audience is expected to learn from—and with—his epic characters. Furthermore, Milton’s epic community is marked by a simultaneous expansion and contraction: the strict ethical limitation of quality imposed by “fit...though few” is attended by a concurrent extension of the potential epic audience to include a global and trans-historical Christian community, even as the epic fiction itself encompasses the genesis and history of the human race itself.

Presenting Satan as negative exemplar of magisterial service who combines the martial vigor of the traditional epic hero with an intense commitment to the Protestant work-ethic, and the Son as positive exemplar, in the shape of the master as servant committed to an ethic of work as a form of service, Milton seeks to re-imagine the ethical contours of epic community. The re-configuration of the figure of the hero, the master-

figure who dominates the epic landscape, as a laborer in the service of God is linked to the larger design of defining the epic community in terms other than imperial. Milton ultimately eschews the traditional Western epic formulation of a community of imperial subjects, whether willing or resistant, and constructs a new vision of epic community as comprising laboring individuals with a firm spiritual commitment to an ethic of service rather than dominion. This ethic of service is of course first and foremost directed at God but it has important consequences for how humans relate to each other and to the community they inhabit.

In the argument below, I first examine Milton's rejection of the heroism associated with the imperial epic tradition. I then follow through the implications of this rejection for the "paradise within" that Milton designates as the true locus of Christian community at the end of the poem. In so doing, I will initially attend to the imperial discourse that the epic activates in relation to Satan and then consider how the description of God's monarchical rule both undercuts Satan's imperial agenda and is itself qualified by the constitution of the Son as servant of God and man. In the third and final section of my argument, I will trace the implications of this re-definition of magisterial labor for the Edenic community. Between the polarities of the negative exemplar of service, Satan, and its positive exemplar, the Son, Milton's epic posits Adam and Eve as all-too-fallible servant-workers in the art of community-building, riven by the tensions between hierarchy and mutuality that inform the epic's vision of magisterial service in Eden. But while Adam and Eve fail to maintain their fragile commonwealth, their failure, and their response to it, does not only testify to the limits and contradictions implicit in Milton's anti-imperial model of magisterial service; alongside the strains of service, the poem's

depiction of Eden also offers a more hopeful vision, albeit only partly realized, of magisterial work as a form of loving collaboration.

Satanic Labor

While *Paradise Lost* does not altogether eschew the concept of a Christian *imperium*, it departs markedly from Milton's stance in his prose writings in the 1640s and 50s, where Christian imperialism was strikingly conjoined with a prophetic sense of England's manifest destiny as God's chosen nation who, having struck down tyranny at home, were elected to serve as a beacon of light to Europe and the rest of the world. That earlier sense of England's assured role in the realization of Christian *imperium* is missing from *Paradise Lost*—and not just because Milton writes from the knowledge that England has lost its divinely sanctioned imperial mandate on account of the failings of the English people and their leaders.¹⁸ *Paradise Lost* suggests not so much an imperial mandate *lost* as that such a mandate was never to be had by any people—not the chosen seed of Israel, nor the English, nor even the prelapsarian first couple. The “right” of “Dominion absolute” over “beast, fish and fowl” granted to Adam and Eve does not extend, as Adam recognizes, to the lordship of “man over men,” and is, in any case, framed as a divine gift, a donation. (12.68-70)¹⁹ Indeed, at the surface level of the epic narrative, *Paradise Lost* does not even address the English question; the English nation is never explicitly named as the nation whose future, and whose very identity has seemed, for many readers, to simmer beneath the archetypal biblical material. The nascent English republic's bitter experience of political defeat is evoked only indirectly, and this indirectness serves both to signal England's displacement from its earlier pre-eminent status among the nations in Milton's religious and political thought and to broaden the

range of his poem's exposition of the failures of magistracy through the figure of Satan. Much as in *A Ready and Easy Way* Milton may have blamed a base and idolatrous populace eager to welcome their tyrants, in *Paradise Lost* the failure of the republican experiment prompts a probing critique of failed leadership and an exploration of its causes and tragic consequences. The baffling, even vertiginous figuration of Satan in *Paradise Lost* is Milton's way of conducting this critique, consisting of an elaborate dismantling of traditional epic heroism which is linked to an emergent colonial and mercantile enterprise fueled by an identifiably Protestant ethic of work.

Paradise Lost's portrayal of Satan advances a critique of the partisan and combative nature of Western epic heroism, a feature which was readily absorbed into the genre's post-Virgilian armature. Milton's epic explicates Satan's primal antagonism in terms of classical epic tradition: Satan is the diabolic master of the underworld whose constant labor "out of good still to find means of evil" is sutured to the classical warrior-hero's desire to establish his imperial power over (and against) others through his military prowess.²⁰ In developing the connection between the epic hero's generic combativeness and his will to power, Milton further embellishes Satan with images and tropes drawn from diverse, often mutually conflicting forms of magisterial authority known to the seventeenth century. Perhaps the most striking coalescence of such oppositions in the figuration of Satan is that he is made to represent both the protagonist and the antagonist of European epic. He is at once the archetype of the heroic voyagers of Western epic (from Homer's Ulysses to Camoes' Vasco da Gama) and the Oriental "soldan," the metonymic stand-in for the barbaric (and imperial) East, against whom they set sail, whether literally or figuratively. Moreover, *Paradise Lost* portrays Satanic imperialism in

terms borrowed explicitly from the language both of early modern Euro-colonialism's critics and its apologists. Satan is thus made to inhabit roles from both sides of the colonial divide. He is simultaneously the marauding *conquistador*, the merchant-adventurer, and the hireling priest who helped to "justify" such imperial and mercantile ventures. He is also the oriental despot, given over to luxury and autocratic rule, and, in his serpent guise, the treacherous native informant whose moral depravity encodes his enthralled status. Working across the colonial divide, *Paradise Lost* repeatedly marshals evidence of imperialism's fatal flaws by compiling in the figure of Satan a slew of character-types drawn from East and West who together drive home the point that the vices of empire can only be exacerbated by a state-sponsored Anglo-European proto-imperialist enterprise animated by an "excessive love of Gain and Traffick."²¹ Thus, even as Satan's nature is elucidated through distant or foreign tropes of magistracy, he is also simultaneously conceived as a thoroughly home-grown product, combining features of absolute monarch, feudal lord, and republican leader, all figures recognizable from England's domestic political history.

At one level, the syncretic, trans-cultural characterization of Satan in *Paradise Lost* emphasizes what Barbara Lewalski has described as Milton's "central political insight, that inner slavery to passions and vices leads to political subjection by tyrannous lords," an insight that "he applies quite generally, to English, Irish, Israelites, Asians, and any other it may describe." But, as Lewalski notes, this insight also "holds worrisome potential for imperialists to make selective application, arguing that subject peoples for their barbarism or vices deserve their enslavement."²² This ambiguity in Milton's anti-imperial stance is heightened by his own "selective" procedure, as evinced, for instance,

in his designation of the Orient as a paradigmatic site of enslavement, despotic rule and luxury.²³ But, while Milton reinforces one cultural stereotype in taking recourse to Orientalist discourse for some of his touchstone tropes of tyranny and servility, through Satan he also conducts a nuanced and sustained critique of another set of ideological pre-suppositions that, in the seventeenth century, frequently underpinned that stereotype. For Satan in *Paradise Lost* is a representative not only of tyranny everywhere but also of the Protestant work-ethic in one of its most capital- and empire-friendly mutations. Insofar as Satan represents the failure of magistracy as a site of service, his failure is directly linked to the application of the Protestant ethic of work to an imperial capitalist project of acquisition, improvement, and dominion. As Anthony Low points out, Milton's Satan "is a laborer as well as a warrior, who understands full well that an empire cannot be built without sweat and toil."²⁴ Tellingly, Satan articulates his core philosophy of ceaseless opposition to divine will in terms that parodically echo the Protestant work ethic's emphasis on incessant labor: "If then his Providence/Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,/Our labour must be to pervert that end,/And out of good still to find means of evil." (1.162-65) While proponents of the work-ethic designated hard-working Christians as "God's laborers," Satan's ethic of work is stridently oppositional: his "labor" is undertaken not in the service of God but against him.²⁵ But Satan's inversion of the work-ethic does not simply mark his own depravity; it also reveals the inherent vulnerability of that ethic to precisely such selective and distorting interpretations.²⁶ The explicitly imperial-capitalist thrust of his labors is particularly significant in this context because their satanic association marks such endeavors as deeply problematic.

The debate scene in Book 2 articulates what Keith Staveland has called the “expansive inner logic of capitalism,” laying bare the ideological process whereby an ethos of capitalist acquisitiveness and enterprise extends inexorably into imperial conquest and colonization.²⁷ This development is most clearly evident in the speeches of Mammon and Beelzebub, whereby an emergent imperial-capitalist discourse is shown to supersede a war- and court-centered feudal ethos, articulated respectively by the battle-hungry Moloch, desperate for revenge, and Belial, whose courtly eloquence masks “ignoble ease and peaceful sloth.” (227) Mammon, speaking immediately after Belial, also argues against “open war or covert guile” (41), but proposes a course of action that severs him from the feudal aristocratic culture of leisure interspersed with bursts of brutal warfare that Belial and Moloch together represent. Rather, Mammon espouses an ethos of self-reliant, unremitting and materially productive labor that aligns him with proponents of industrious commercial enterprise in seventeenth-century England. Rejecting as “servile” and “wearisome” the possibility of returning to a state of “splendid vassalage” in Heaven, Mammon suggests that the devils “rather seek/ Our own good from ourselves, and from our own/Live to ourselves...to none accountable, preferring/Hard Liberty before the easy yoke/Of servile pomp.” (252-57) They might thereby “work ease out of pain/ Through labour and endurance,” turning their “skill and art” to the project of raising “Magnificence” from “this desert soil” and so found, as the narrator comments, a “nether empire...In emulation opposite to Heav’n.” (261-273, 296-980) It is left to Satan’s deputy, Beelzebub, to announce the extension of this project of improvement at home outwards, into a more aggressive, and explicitly imperial agenda of conquest and colonization of the new world to “waste [God’s] whole Creation, or possess/ All as our

own.” (365-66) Beelzebub does not so much oppose Mammon’s more circumscribed project of improvement at home through incessant and vigorous labor as channel the inevitable spill-over of that productive energy into his—and Satan’s—agenda of imperial conquest. In other words, as Staveland suggests, the devils’ debate highlights the way in which the productive energies released by the Protestant ethic pave the way for the “emergence of modern imperialism.”²⁸

In an era when economic productivity and its corollary, profit, were steadily gaining ascendancy as secular measures for assessing the value of work, as Joyce Appleby has argued, Milton’s epic advances what seems to be a markedly anti-economic view of work.²⁹ In *Paradise Lost*, the productive dimension of angelic (and human) labor inheres not in the work accomplished but in the *relation* that the work, and the worker, bears to God. Labor is thus presented not as an end in itself but as a means; its validation comes from the degree to which it is geared toward serving God. In striking contrast with the productive efficiency of the fallen angels, the angels appointed by God to prevent the entry of Satan into Paradise and to warn Adam and Eve of the dangers facing them fail repeatedly—and explicitly—at their tasks without being rebuked for it. What is more, rather than glossing over the uselessness of the labor of the guardian angels set to guard Eden, Milton highlights it, devoting the beginning of Book 10 to describing their hurried progress as they “toward the throne supreme/Accountable made haste to make appear/With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance.” (28-30) Unsuccessful though their charge has proved to be, their vigilance is “easily approved” by God who reminds them consolingly that they had known all along that their “sincerest care could not prevent” the fall. (31, 37-41) The narrative implies that the angels are approved not because they have

been successful at their task but because they have performed it well, with the “sincerest care,” *even as they knew* that their sincerest care could not alter the outcome. The immediate—and material—object of their labor may have been the protection of the garden and its inhabitants, but their ultimate object was obedient service to God, as manifested in the sincere care they brought to their work even under the most adverse of conditions.

Read in the light of the poem’s representation of work as service to God, its depiction of Satanic labor unfolds as an admonitory critique of the secularization of the Protestant work-ethic, in part because the evacuation of its theological charge implies a denuding of its ethical content in favor of a stringently economic calculus. The ingenious productivity of the fallen angels as they build their infernal metropolis, Pandemonium, is tellingly evoked in language that links it directly to the logic of improvement and efficiency underlying much mercantilist writing of the era. Under Mammon’s guidance, his “industrious crew” take but an hour to dig out “ribs of gold,” treat the ore, and erect “the fabric huge” of what will become Satan’s imperial seat. Instead of lauding them for their industry, however, the Miltonic narrator holds up these “Spirits reprobate” as an object lesson for humans who are tempted to admire such great works of material production. (688ff.)

Severed from the service of God, Satanic labor assumes an adversarial character that is in keeping with Satan’s understanding of his relation with God as a perpetual battle between contestants who are at once opposites and mirror-images of each other, and who are consequently locked in mortal combat precisely because in order to establish his identity, each one has to annihilate the other. Satan’s imperial envy thus manifests itself

in a mimetic rivalry that seeks to match and undo divine creativity, work for work, act by act. We see an exemplary instance of this in Book 6, when, in response to Nisroch's call for a "more forcible" invention to aid the rebel angels in their "too unequal work...Against unequal arms," Satan announces his greatest discovery yet: gunpowder. (465, 453-54) The speech in which he alerts his army to the potential of the "spirituous and fiery spume" underlying celestial soil ironically juxtaposes divine creativity with "infernal" invention:

Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious Heav'n, adorned
With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems and gold,
Whose eye so superficially surveys
These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spiritous and fiery spume, till touched
With Heav'n's ray, and tempered they shoot forth
So beauteous, op'ning to the ambient light.
These in their dark nativity the deep
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame.
(II.472-83)

Satan's derivative genius is nothing if not economical: from the very inception of his adversarial enterprise, he seeks to use God's tools against him, drawing an "infernal flame" to match God's "dreaded bolt" from the same "spiritous and fiery spume" that "touched/With Heav'n's ray, tempered...shoot forth/So beauteous" in the "plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems and gold" that adorn the "ethereous mould." The epic narrative leaves no doubt about the destructive potential of this Satanic invention, nor of the labor it embodies, which is sharply contrasted with the Son's, when returns to Heaven at the end of Book 7, having brought forth a new world, to be acknowledged "greater now in

thy return/Than from the Giant angels; thee that day/Thy thunders magnified; but to create/ Is greater that created to destroy.” (604-07)

The adversarial logic that drives Satanic labor means that for him work is both a curse and the only means he has of avoiding dwelling on his accursed condition. One of *Paradise Lost*'s most inventive and hard-working characters, Satan is committed to an never-ending struggle for supremacy from which there is no rest—and as the poem progresses we sense more and more that he might actually want it that way. For Satan, resting from toil means recognizing, as he does in Book 4, that for all his industrious mobility he is forever trapped in the same place, the same posture: “Which way shall I fly/Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?/ Which way I fly is Hell; myself am hell.” (73-75) The story of Satan, as it unfolds in *Paradise Lost*, is ultimately one of a circuit of subjection and bondage—the subjection that he seeks to inflict on others repeatedly reverts back to that most intimate level of subjection to which Abdiel alerts us and which encapsulates Satan's entire history, his thralldom to himself, to his own “unconquerable will.” (1.106) Lacking the willing obedience to God's will that characterizes good labor in the poem, Satan views his subjection as subjugation and in turn seeks to extend that subjugation, under the ruse of a struggle for liberty, to others around him. By the same token, he also paves the way for a different understanding of the work of leadership as residing not in a potentially self-enthraling exercise and extension of magisterial authority, but in an ethos of service for which the Son provides an exemplary model.

Empire, Power, and Love

Paradise Lost enacts the ultimate *translatio imperii*, the translation of universal power and authority to God from whom it was derived in the first place—which thereby, in

Milton's view, negates the absolutist pretensions of all earthly empires. Milton justifies this back translation of imperial power by insisting first on God's unique authority as creator and second, on his authorship of free will. The divine donation of free will to angels and humans is central to *Paradise Lost*'s theodicy, shoring up Milton's justification of God's unique *imperium*, which turns on the basic (and paradoxical) point, iterated throughout the epic, that humans and angels owe service to God precisely because it is not framed as an injunction or a coercion, but as a choice. The emphasis on free will thus serves as a way of establishing the ethical probity of divine fatherhood. *Paradise Lost* revisits Milton's vehement argument in the first *Defensio* against the validity of the patriarchal model of kingship whereby royalists such as his contemporary, Sir Robert Filmer, sought to naturalize absolutist monarchy.³⁰ Insisting that "Nature has given fathers to us all, but we ourselves appointed our own king," Milton in the *First Defence* goes on to acknowledge that even the natural basis of fatherhood does not exclude its abuse, or indeed resistance on the part of those so abused: "'We bear with a father though he be harsh and severe;' and so we do with a king. But we do not bear with a father if he be a tyrant...and why should not a king be subject to the same law?"³¹ In *Paradise Lost*, the justification of divine *imperium* is based not only on God's authorship of creation, but *contra* Satan, on the donation of free will as proof of the non-tyrannical nature of divine fatherhood. If, at one level, free will is a gift, a divine donation rather than a right, it is not thereby an arbitrary gesture of imperial favor to "courtly" favorites. Rather, it is an organic response to the particular complexities of angelic and human being which serves as a way of making ethical sense of them; thus, angels and humans

alike experience free will as an essential tool of their ethical and political choices and actions.

Free will marks the distinction between service to God and the compulsory subordination denoted by “servitude,” a condition akin to slavery in the poem’s terminology and almost invariably associated with Satanic manipulation. In the eyes of Milton’s God, only free will can constitute sufficient proof of the authenticity of angelic (or human) service because:

Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love?
Where only what they needs must do, appeared,
Not what they would, what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason ...
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me.

(3. 103-11)

The ability to choose to serve or not is what distinguishes subjects of Milton’s godly *imperium* from those of earthly or Satanic versions of empire. Under the pressure of this emphasis on freely willed service, the fatalism of imperial epic tradition gives way to individual ethical responsibility. Milton’s epic subject is an entity constituted not by the fatality of war, conquest, or elite political domination but by this sense of freely chosen responsibility. The connection between freedom and service is not, of course, a Miltonic invention; as David Evett has shown, the paradox, “in service is perfect freedom,” had long been part of orthodox Christian religious discourse, occupying pride of place in the morning collect in Cranmer’s Book of Common Prayer, and regularly reinforced by seventeenth-century household manuals and sermons.³² While the paradox of freedom in service was frequently used by Milton’s contemporaries to shore up the traditional social

order by enjoining servants and subordinates to quietly accept their lot, Milton himself puts it to somewhat more radical use. Just as, by making empire God's sole province, Milton tacitly delegitimizes human appropriations of imperial insignia as idolatrous and sham, so also his reference to the freedom-in-service trope turns that trope, with all its orthodox political uses, on its head. Returning the trope to God's mouth, he thereby pins it to its original context and function, one that will brook no earthly substitution.

Free will is thus invoked in *Paradise Lost* to establish the non-tyrannical nature of divinely ordained hierarchy, and to render the relationship between creator and creature more reciprocal: "Where only what they needs must do appeared/ Not what they would, what praise could they receive?/What pleasure I, from such obedience paid," God asks. Endowed with free will, the higher forms of being are not only invited—rather than forced—to respond to the divine call, but themselves elicit divine responses of "praise" and "pleasure." Furthermore, the ethical responsiveness implicit in freely chosen service constitutes the basis of the ongoing communication between maker and creature that, in line with the poem's frequent confluences of word and act, marks divine creative labor as well. In Raphael's re-telling, Creation is structured by a pattern of call and obedient response as the Son, "th' omnific Word," rides out into Chaos to "diffuse/His good to worlds and ages infinite" through a series of spoken imperatives: "Silence, ye troubled waves," "Let there be light," "Be fruitful and multiply," and so on (7. 216, 190-91, 216, 243, 396). When God says, "Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind," the earth "obeyed, and straight/Op'ning her fertile womb teemed at a birth/Innumerable living creatures" (7.451, 453-55). Alongside this spontaneous responsiveness of matter to the voice of God, the poem sets the equally immediate and constant responsiveness of the

heavenly choirs which greet each new act of imbuing matter with spirit with “joy and shout” and “hymning prais[e]/God and his works” (7. 256, 257-58).

Insofar as, for Milton and for many of his contemporaries, the object of true labor is service to another, this “another” in *Paradise Lost* is God himself, the “great Work-master,” who routinely bends his eye earthwards, “His own works and their works at once to view.” (3.696, 58-9) This figuration of God as surveyor may well invite us to associate divine omniscience with the panoptic, masterly surveillance of worker-behavior that characterized early modern domestic, commercial and penal work-sites, as Laura Knoppers has argued.³³ But, considered in its context, the appellation, “Work-Master,” appears actually to emphasize God’s status as the first—and best—worker.³⁴ This is how Uriel uses the term in his response to Satan who, in the likeness of a “stripling Cherub,” enquires about where he might find Man, the better to praise “the Universal Maker” whose most “wondrous” work he is. (3.676, 663) Taken in by Satan’s hypocrisy, the otherwise sharp-sighted Uriel enthusiastically commends the Cherub’s enterprise in seeking to “witness with thine eyes what some perhaps/Contented with report hear only in Heav’n.” (700-01) For Uriel, the Cherub’s desire to know “the works of God, thereby to glorify/The great Work-Master” leads “to no excess/That reaches blame, but rather merits praise/The more it seems excess.” (694-98) Uriel’s words remind us that inspection of “works” is not restricted to God alone, but is the prerogative of his creatures as well—through his “works,” God is as much an object of others’ gazes as they, through their works, are of his. Of course, there is a power-differential between the divine gaze and its creaturely counterpart, and there is no denying the disciplinary element in the former. But there is also an undeniably reciprocal quality, a mutuality, about the

circulation of praise and commendation that this exchange of gazes, mediated through the works of Creator and creature alike, enables. Identified not simply as an overseer or surveyor of others' works but himself a master-worker, God's vigilance over "his own works and their works" bespeaks a vision of work that is collaborative and corporate.

Yet, such collaboration between creature and Creator is by nature shot through with inequality and hierarchy. As David Norbrook has argued, while communication is central both to Milton's God and to the Son whose role is "to create, to extend and communicate the divine substance....[this] is a very special form of communication in which there can be no equality, in which all speech-acts are ultimately echoes of the divine speech act."³⁵ Unfallen communication with the divine excludes the possibility of debate or dissent—the cut-and-thrust of a conversation among equals—since praise and obedience seem to be the only two appropriate responses to the Word of God. Irrespective of level of being, all creation is in this sense servant to God, tied to their maker in a relationship of inequality, however tempered with reciprocity and the kind of collaborative energy that marks the work of Creation. It follows then that theologically necessary as this inequality may be, at the level of the epic narrative God's empyrean rule cannot escape troubling comparison with earthly—or indeed Satanic—forms of empire, dogged as it seems to be by an all-too worldly imperial logic of restricted participation and territorial aggrandizement. It is at this juncture that the introduction and dramatic elaboration of the figure of the Son becomes necessary, for the Son proves integral to the ongoing process whereby the contradictions and conflicts of divine imperium are both explicated and negotiated in the epic.

In *Paradise Lost*, the Son's agency is crucial not only to the eventual dismantling of divine empire but to the more immediate need to differentiate divine and Satanic versions of empire: while Satan means his heroic "enterprise" of conquest and colonization of the newly created world to secure and augment his "imperial sov'reignty" in Pandemonium, the Son sets out to "diffuse" divine goodness to "worlds and ages infinite." The Son's elevation itself is also a reduction because it entails a commingling of divine essence with subordinate forms of being which, in the words of Abdiel, are thereby "more illustrious made, since he the head/One of our number thus reduced becomes."³⁶ (5.842-43) Indeed, the Son's mediation ensures that, rather than locking creation into static forms of being, Miltonic hierarchy appears subject to change and even to dissolution. Regina Schwartz argues that the process of "all turning into God is the very order of the universe" in the prelapsarian garden, as is attested by Raphael's eager partaking and "transubstantiation" of the meal that Adam and Eve serve him.³⁷ Raphael's advice to Adam is telling in this context: if he and Eve are found obedient and "retain/Unalterably firm his love entire/Whose progeny you are," their bodies too "may at last turn all to Spirit...and winged ascend/Ethereal, as we." (5. 501-03, 497-99) After the fall, the incremental, processual changes in hierarchical status outlined by Raphael give way to a more apocalyptic model. In Book 6, the Son looks forward to the eventual dismantling of hierarchy, and his own resignation of power at the end of time—and history:

Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume,
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
 Thou shalt be All in All, and I in thee
 For ever, and in me all whom thou lov'st.
 (ll. 730-34)

Milton follows Christian theological tradition in according divine love especial prominence in his representation of redemption, as exemplified in the Son's incarnation and in his eventual relinquishing of power when, as God puts it in Book 3, "thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by," and "God shall be All in All." (3.339, 341) Framed as an act of boundless love, the final redemption, like creation, diffuses divine energy, cutting across orders of being to generate the condition of "all in all."

The Second Coming is significant for *Paradise Lost*'s theodicy because it serves to distinguish divine empire from earthly empires: God's empire is not founded on the assumption of an immutable hierarchy but is rather construed as a flexible and changeable system. But, overall, the primary emphasis of the epic falls not on the end of history but on its origin. Consequently, it is the Son's incarnation that receives detailed attention in Milton's epic account of the genesis of Christian community as a community shaped by the principle of service, a principle that applies as much to masters as to servants, to the rulers as to the ruled. The incarnation also emphasizes the Son's mediatory role between God and humankind, and so reiterates the Son's characterization as a figure intimately linked to yet also distinct from God. The figuration of the Son elaborates on Milton's theological distinction between God and Son in *De Doctrina Christiana*: while God made the Son "out of his own substance" (unlike Adam whom he *created* out of dust), this does not imply that "the Son is of the same essence as the Father. Indeed, if he were, it would be quite incorrect to call him Son. For a real Son is not of the same age as his father, still less of the same numerical essence: otherwise father and son would be one person."³⁸

The difference between Son and God emerges most clearly in Book III, where, according to one critic, the Son “challenges” God’s dispensation because it is focused on a strictly retributive revenge and so is uncomfortably akin to Satan’s *modus operandi*.³⁹ Rather than an outright challenge or even a warning,⁴⁰ however, the Son’s responses to God’s paradoxical (and curiously passive) desire for “mercy and justice both” is marked by his sense of the complexity of his role as mediator, owing a double allegiance of service to God, his father, and to humanity, object of his custodial care. Seizing on God’s closing declaration, “But mercy first and last shall brightest shine,” the Son tactfully applauds God’s “sovrn sentence” as one “For which both heav’n and earth shall high extol/Thy praises,” and then, with the inexorable gentleness of a seasoned advocate, launches into a series of rhetorical questions that disclose the injustice at the heart of the demand for pure justice:

For should man finally be lost, should man
 Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joined
 With his own folly? That be from thee far,
 That be far from thee, Father, who art judge
 Of all things made, and judgest only right.
 Or shall the Adversary thus obtain
 His end, and frustrate thine, shall he fulfill
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught...
 ...Or wilt thou thyself
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake,
 For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
 Be questioned and blasphemed without defense.
(3.150-66)

The Son’s careful yet passionate delineation of the larger consequences of God’s desire for justice exposes that desire as wholly inadequate to the “goodness and greatness” of the deity, whether construed in terms of his affective attachment to “Thy creature late so

loved, thy youngest son,” or his insistence on the absolute difference between himself and his “Adversary,” or finally, the “glory” he has acquired through his last—and best—creation. It is worth recalling that God has just characterized the execution of justice against fallen man as his “glory”—here the Son turns his own word against him, arguing that justice will not enhance but diminish that glory.

Most significantly, the Son’s intervention prompts God to pose the question that will, in turn, elicit the former’s passionate intercession on behalf of the humans. Having acclaimed—and appropriated—the Son’s commentary as his own word (a trick he repeats with Adam), he then says:

Say heav’nly Powers, where shall we find such love,
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Man’s mortal crime, and just th’unjust to save,
Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?
(3.213-16)

The deafening silence that follows God’s query exactly matches, as so much else in this scene, the debate in Hell when Beelzebub poses the question that is designed to seal Satan’s infernal hegemony: “whom shall we send/In search of this new world, whom shall we find/Sufficient?” (2.402-04)

Milton suggests that it is as a good son and ardent servant, rather than as adversary, that Christ is able to discern and resolve the conflict of the Godhead through a single action of self-sacrifice: by taking upon himself the shape and form of man, he both anchors God’s wrath and releases the fount of his mercy. And this decision proves momentous, because it is in the wake of this intercession that he is declared, for the first time in the epic, God’s co-regent (3.313-320). His extreme self-humbling is the condition for his elevation because he proves himself by “merit” more than “birthright” the Son of

God, a merit that proceeds from love, for “in thee/ Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,” as God says (3.311-12). In his account of the Christian discourse of love, Irving Singer describes the sacrificial descent of Christ as an example of divine *agape*, “God suffusing all things with spontaneous, unbounded love,” a love that is “fortuitous and unmerited.” Singer sees this divine bestowal of love as the reverse of *nomos*, the obedient and whole-hearted commitment of the self to God: if *agape* is “God giving himself...in acts of love,” *nomos* is man reciprocating that love by freely renouncing the will. Raphael in *Paradise Lost* emphatically marks obedient and willing service as the fruit of freely-given love when he tells Adam: “Freely we serve,/Because we freely love, as in our will/To love or not” (5. 538-40)

If divine *agape* and angelic (and human) *nomos* are at times polarized in *Paradise Lost*’s discourse of loving service, Milton’s representation of the figure of the Son seems meant to stitch them together again. For, the Son’s embodiment of the spontaneous and infinite nature of divine love (*agape*) cannot be seen separately from his equally boundless commitment to God’s will (*nomos*).⁴¹ *Agape* and *nomos* together structure the judgment scene in Book 10, where the Son, responding to God’s will, appears before the humans as their “mild Judge and intercessor both.” The Son here functions both as divine agent, insuperably distant from the human subjects of the poem, and as an exemplar meditating between the human and the divine, modeling divine magistracy for human emulation through an act of loving intimacy. As judge of human disobedience, he formally pronounces irksome labor as punishment for their transgression; as intercessor, he is moved to clothe the distraught couple:

...then pitying how they stood

Before him naked to the air, that now
 Must suffer change, disdained not to begin
 Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
 As when he washed his servants' feet, so now
 As father of his family he clad
 Their nakedness.

(10. 211-17)

What is interesting in this passage is the conflation of the different roles of “servant” and “father”—Christ exemplifies just magistracy because he is able to resolve the contradiction between all-giving, all-powerful father, and all-obeying servant, between the poles of divine bestowal, *agape*, and human obedience, *nomos*. Christ’s magistracy, his claim to authority and rule, is legitimized by his readiness to assume the “form of servant.” It also serves to distinguish him from Satan who will return to Hell in this very same book of the epic ready to claim his status as “Emperor” on the strength of his new conquest. Against the adversarial model of magisterial labor that Satan comes to model, Milton emphasizes the Son’s self-sacrificing decision to proffer a more collaborative vision of magistracy, one founded on reconfiguring the magistrate as a servant rather than a master.

In Godly Service Bound: Labor and Magistracy in Eden

The tension between the adversarial and collaborative figurations of magisterial labor in the epic comes to a head in its depiction of Adam and Eve’s relationship to each other and to the garden. Eden is, in this sense, the site where the collaboration between the exercise of power and the ethic of service, exemplified in the relation between God and the Son, confronts the adversarial model of magisterial agency that Satan represents. Consequently, Eden emerges as the ultimate testing-ground for the epic’s stance against empire, a stance announced with great force and certainty in relation to Satan but whose

messier details are much more tentatively approached in the tortuously consensual hierarchy of heavenly polity. While the Son plays a key role in God's negotiation of the charge of tyranny, as we have seen, the figure of the Son is itself not without contradiction: as a character, he embodies the very oppositions between justice and mercy, between hierarchy and mutuality that he magically resolves in his capacity as a sacred icon, the Word made flesh. No such resolution seems possible in Eden where the drama of that conflict must be played out in intensely human terms. Yet the process (and outcome) of the struggle is as critical in Eden as it is in heaven, for on it hinges not only how the first humans will relate to one another, but also how they relate to the garden that is, simultaneously, their "dominion absolute" and the object of their magisterial labor.

Shot through at critical points in the narrative with adversarial energy, at other times animated by collaborative mutuality, Adam and Eve's relationship to each other tracks a complex pathway between the Son and Satan's respective relations to God, and hence, to imperial dominion. At one level, the epic invites us to seek patterns of similarity between Son and Eve: Eve's derivation from Adam's side—"Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, my self/Before me"—glances at the Son's consubstantiality with God even as the epic's frequent conflation of Son and God parallels the repeated conflation of Adam and Eve under the masculine singular. Like the Son, Eve is created to share with Adam the rule of Eden as his "Sole partner and sole part of all these joys"; she is his chief delight, "Dearer...than all," as the Son is God's "sole complacence." (4. 411, 412; 3.276) Such parallels might suggest, as Diane McColley has argued, that Eve's relation to Adam can, like the Son's to God, be informed by a kind of "subordination [that] is not demeaning, but is a means of promotion by unpredestined merit."⁴² But as James Grantham Turner

notes, Adam's petition for a mate emphasizes his perception of a fundamental dissimilarity between God's self-sufficiency and his own "single imperfection": perfect in himself, God is "Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not/Social communication."⁴³ (8. 423, 428-29) While the Son is conceived as an instrument of divine communication, serving his Father as an extension of his will, Adam's language points to a different desire: he imagines Eve not in instrumental terms, but as the source of a "fellowship...fit to participate/All rational delight," a being whose "Collateral love, and dearest amity" can repair his deficiency.

Adam's desire opens up the possibility of pushing the poem's vertical orientation of loving service onto a horizontal plane, for "Among unequals what society/Can sort, what harmony or true delight?" God's response to his plea hints at the complications that will ensue: "What next I bring shall please thee, be assured/Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self." Eve's subjectivity is from the start conceived in relational terms (as, incidentally, is the Son's). Whether as Adam's "likeness" or as his "other self," she is framed as a response to his "wish, exactly to [his] heart's desire," and is structurally both subordinated and reciprocal to Adam, an ambiguity captured in "fit help," a phrase which casts her both as Adam's aid and his servant. Eve's first experience of her otherness, however, is framed not in terms of an intuition of hierarchy (as is the case with Adam whose intrinsic ability to name and sort Edenic creatures signals his superior status and makes him uncomfortably aware of his solitude) but in terms of the intrinsically relational character of subjectivity; her encounter with the figure in the pool prioritizes "sympathy and love" over inequality as the ground of otherness, but she then discovers—

like Adam—that otherness, in the material world, is charged with hierarchical implications.

Both Eve and Adam, in their different ways, begin by looking for some kind of symmetrical partnership, whether in the form of a misguided quest for “answering looks/ of sympathy and love” or in the form of an equally misguided desire for likeness. Yet from the very beginning they must contend with a relationship whose “language of mutuality is vulnerable to a grammar of inequality,” as Ronald Levao puts it.⁴⁴ In Eve’s case, this paradox implies a subordinate subjectivity that has shades of both the Son’s submissive collaboration and Satan’s adversarial opposition. In her remarkable autobiographical speech in Book 4, she echoes the Son’s filial obedience in addressing Adam as “my guide/And head” without whom she is “to no end,” but then points to the troubling implication of her subordination for Adam’s original desire for a consort proportionate to him: she enjoys him “Preeminent by so much odds, while thou/Like consort to thyself canst nowhere find.” Her subsequent narrative of her first day’s experiences evinces a similarly complex experience of subjection: her ambiguous tale of self-discovery eventually wheels around to a closing reiteration of her willing subjection to Adam’s superior “manly grace/And wisdom, which alone is truly fair,” but not before she has also explicitly recalled that primal act of violence with which Adam laid claim to her: “with that thy gentle hand/Seized mine, I yielded.” Eve’s prelapsarian experience intuits a danger that the postlapsarian Satan precipitates with brute force: the logic of wifely subordination must be upheld, in the final instance, with a violence that cuts against the grain of a mutual loving service. Adam, for his part, finds himself in a state of “Commotion strange” in his response to Eve, a response divided between his intellectual

understanding of her inferiority to him and his emotional response to her “loveliness,” which makes her “absolute.../And in herself complete” but also her capacity for loving communication through “Those thousand decencies that daily flow/From all her words and actions, mixed with love/And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned/Union of mind, or in us both one soul.” In either case, a sense of idolatrous fascination commingled with a sense of her inferiority: having desired an equal mate, he can now imagine her only in hierarchical terms even though it is threaded through with an intuition of mutuality.

In view of Adam and Eve’s pervasive experience of inter-subjectivity as a form of “social communication” that must contend with the conflicting demands of loving fellowship and hierarchy, it is no wonder that a similar tension informs their working relation to the garden. Not surprisingly, this tension is least evident when the task at hand is the praise of God, a form of communal labor particularly valorized in *Paradise Lost*. Thus, in Book 5, Adam and Eve bid all creation to join them in their morning orison (154-208), and later, in Book 9, right before their fatal falling-out, they are figured as “join[ing] their vocal worship to the choir/Of creatures wanting voice.” (198-99) At moments such as these, the work of praise, which comes spontaneously to all created things, instills a sense of congregational communion across levels of being, dissolving distinctions and leveling hierarchies, focusing all attention on the worship of the divine. All other hierarchical arrangements recede in the face of these ritual acknowledgements of absolute distinction between creator and creation. Parsing their “dominion giv’n” in the mood of praise, Adam in Book 4 discerns in Eden not simply “signs of power and rule” but also a place where the humans have been appointed to serve God and their

fellow-creatures in a collective endeavor of praise and glorification: “to ever praise him, and extol/His bounty, following our delightful task/To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers.” (4.430, 429, 436-38)

More usually, however, Eden and its creatures finds Adam much less sanguine about what it means to fulfill the responsibilities of his position as “master work” who “upright with front serene” is to “Govern the rest, self-knowing.” (7.509-10) Worry lines threaten Adam’s front serene in Book 4, when at day’s end he contemplates the Edenic hierarchy over which he presides in a tone that mingles a sense of gratified superiority with stirrings of anxiety: while “other creatures all day long/Rove idle unemployed.../Man hath his daily work of body or mind/ Appointed, which declares his dignity,/And the regard of Heav’n on all his ways.” Other creatures, he half-regretfully notes, are free to range “unactive,” for “of their doings God takes no account.” Viewed from a hierarchical perspective, the call to labor, then, is a privilege—and a burden—unique to Man, reinforcing his sense of being a creature both superior and subordinate, who must not only “govern” those below but also “account” for his ways to those above.⁴⁵ (As we have seen, this double orientation along the vertical axis informs Adam’s view of relation with Eve as well, whom he sees both as his superior and his ‘inferior’). And as if to make his work more difficult, the apparent inactivity of Eden’s fauna is more than made up by the “wanton growth” of its flora, characterized by “branches overgrown/ That mock our scant manuring,” and “dropping gums/That lie bestrewn unsightly and unsmooth.” (4.627ff) Hierarchy not only produces a sense of distinction charged with moral feeling, but such distinction-making seems but one step away from a more benign version of the adversarial labor that characterizes Satan’s mission of imperial aggrandizement. Less

than two hundred lines after his first speech to Eve, gardening is less easily linked to praise of divine bounty, or describable as a “delightful task.”

One striking element about the great debate scene in Book 9 is that Eve, who (as we shall see) has a very different and much less tortured approach to work from Adam’s, not least because of her different relation to Edenic society, seems to adopt his stance in Book 4 with a vehemence and a completeness that is initially puzzling. Observing that the “work under our labor grows/Luxurious by restraint,” Eve goes on to suggest to Adam that they work separately so as to avoid the seemingly distracting exchange of “looks,” “smiles,” and “Casual discourse” prompted by the sight of “object new” that routinely punctuate their labor. (208-09, 222-23) Only by relinquishing the affective and intellectual delays brought on by their proximity can they hope to cope with the garden’s intransigent growth. In other words, Eve implies that their gardening labor can only be fruitful if manual work is more strictly separated from intellectual and affective labor, which she excludes from the category of labor altogether and re-designates as mere playful dalliance—even a kind of idleness which results in “Our day’s work brought to little/...and th’ hour of supper [come] unearned.” (9.224-25) In thus segregating manual and intellectual or affective labors, Eve thus appears to call for a more efficient division of labor symptomatic of a proto-bourgeois or early capitalist conception of work, even as she seemingly identifies herself and Adam as early medieval *laboratores*—those constrained by their status to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow.

Adam responds by first praising Eve’s thoughtful “study of household good,” and then countering her anxiety about not doing enough to earn their “hour of supper” by

presenting a different understanding of labor altogether, one grounded in “love” as the proper end of human life:

Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
 Labor, as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute denied, and are of love the food,
 Love not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight
 He made us, and delight to reason joined.
 These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
 As we need walk.

(9.233, 235-46)

Although Eve is, at one level, simply echoing concerns he himself has voiced earlier in Book 4, Adam, faced with the prospect of even a temporary separation from his beloved companion, here glosses over the extent of their work-load. Taming what he had earlier characterized as the garden’s “wanton growth”—exemplified in its “branches overgrown” and its “dropping gums/That lie bestrewn unsightly and unsmooth”—now constitutes a task their “joint hands” can perform with “ease.” (4.627ff, 9.245) The bitter-sweet comedy of his lover’s alarm at losing Eve’s company aside, Adam’s view of labor merits scrutiny for the emphasis it places on the affective and intellectual “refreshment” provided by their “sweet intercourse” as a necessary counterpart to manual labor. While Adam seems initially to join Eve in regarding such loving interludes as something other than labor, as the speech progresses love itself becomes the goal of their day-labor, figured as “not the lowest end of human life.” In other words, their “day’s work” does not only entail pruning and tending to the garden. Laboring together will also reinforce their own conjugal love, which will then render Satan “Hopeless to circumvent us joined,

where each/To other speedy aid might lend at need.” (250-60) It is the cultivation of this mutual aid—imagined as a reciprocal, loving service that each will perform for the other—that is at the heart of Adam’s view of labor rather than the cultivation of the garden alone.

In re-orienting the focus of their labor, Adam is not, however, denying the importance of manual labor. Rather, he suggests that the shared, material labor of gardening is a means of strengthening their affective and intellectual enjoyment of each other’s company (and of the garden itself), and so fulfilling their divinely-appointed *raison d’être*: “For not to irksome toil, but to delight/He made us, and delight to reason joined.” This multi-dimensional perspective of labor seems a far cry from Eve’s more constrained “proto-capitalist model of wage-labor,” as Maureen Quilligan has described it.⁴⁶ Admittedly, Adam’s own understanding of labor does not exclude hierarchy: it emerges most clearly in his delineation of Eve’s womanly duty to “study household good,/And good works in her husband to promote.” Quilligan has argued that in “reserving for himself a theologically resonant ‘Good Works’, Milton has Adam...relegate to the woman the privacy of a derogated economics, ‘household good’ being, simply, a translation of the Greek term.”⁴⁷ Consequently, in Quilligan’s reading of this speech, Adam gestures toward the installation of a hierarchical differentiation between a private, domestic, (and ultimately) manual labor performed by women (or slaves, colonized subjects and other subordinate groups) and the public, intellectual labor of a dominant, imperial male elite. Considered from this perspective, Eden becomes the original site of differentiation and hierarchy, not least in relation to the division and demarcation of labor—whether according to gender, the relative value of manual and intellectual labor,

or the relation between a dominant class of capitalist entrepreneurs or “planters” and a subordinate class of workers. Yet, even in his designation of Eve’s womanly (and subordinate) labor, Adam does not unequivocally close the door on her agency: nothing in the speech itself suggests that Eve is restricted only to promoting “good works” in her husband and barred from performing any herself. Furthermore, as we have seen, Adam’s subsequent speeches in this episode elucidate an attitude to labor that seems markedly at variance with a hierarchized and differentiated world of work because it envisions human labor as incorporating many different kinds of activity—mental, emotional, and physical. If anything, the primary distinction Adam draws is between individual labor and corporate (“joint” or “mutual”) labor. Indeed, as Joanna Picciotto has argued, Eve’s fallacy is that she assumes that the task of facing Satan is one that she can undertake alone, without any external aid.⁴⁸

Nonetheless, Adam’s vision of loving aid, because of its reliance on the language of hierarchy and subordination, puts too great a strain on the delicate balance between mutual fellowship and vertical service that constitutes their relationship. While Quilligan suggests that the differentiation of labor leads to the birth of hierarchy, it is also possible that it is actually hierarchy that necessitates the (initially physical) segregation of labor that leads into the momentous differentiation between the different labors assigned to man and woman after the fall. It is Eve’s sense of subordination that prompts her anxieties about “th’ hour of supper [come] unearned.” And her response to this anxiety, generated by the peculiar conditions of her service, is to challenge the more constricting duty of obeying Adam by embracing the more liberating task of tending to her appointed task.

Indeed, for all the anxiety about work that she evinces in the debate with Adam, when left to her own resources Eve manifests a much closer and tension-free relationship with the garden than Adam does. Eve's approach to her work suggests that Milton's configuration of human dominion over Eden as stewardship, as a care undertaken on behalf of another, does not entail an alienated labor on their part, as some critics have suggested.⁴⁹ Rather, its model is the Son's assumption of custodial care of Creation, a position that he will relinquish at the end of the time, when God shall be "all in all." And in Eve, it bespeaks not alienation but a powerful sense of belonging to the world around them. This profound affective attachment to the objects of her labor resonates through Eve's reaction to the prospect of leaving Eden:

Must I leave thee paradise? thus leave
 Thee native soil, these happy walks and shades,
 Fit haunt of gods? where I had hope to spend,
 Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
 That must be mortal to us both. O flow'rs,
 That never will in other climate grow,
 My early visitation, and my last
 At ev'n, which I bred up with tender hand
 From the first op'ning bud, and gave ye names,
 Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
 Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount?
(11. 269-79)

Eve's devotion to Eden as her home and work-place here comes across as something other than an espousal of the quasi-capitalist productive efficiency she had seemed to embody in her earlier speech to Adam. Nor does it seem that her "distress" is caused by her loss of proprietorship of Eden, as the angel, Michael seems to suggest when he warns her against setting her "heart/Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine."⁵⁰ If Eve is fetishizing her work-site, Eden, as unique and irreplaceable, it is less in the sense of

claiming ownership of it as her property than as an essential component of her being. In other words, Eve finds herself possessed by—rather than possessing—Eden, and thereby implicitly placing its pleasures over her husband’s company: “Thy going is not lonely,” Michael reminds her, “with thee goes/Thy husband, him to follow thou art bound;/Where he abides, think there thy native soil.” Yet, if Eve’s attachment to Eden comes dangerously close to an idolatry of place, her concern with nurture echoes Christ’s own nurturing ministration of the fallen humans when he assumes the “form of servant” and as the “father of his family” clothes “their nakedness.”

Just as Christ’s assumption of the “form of servant” to minister to the fallen humans destabilizes the hierarchical difference between master or “father” and servant, in keeping with Milton’s own emphasis on the duty of masters to serve rather than “dominate,” Eve’s work in the garden on the eve of her fall is also presented as service rather than dominion. The overall effect of this representation of prelapsarian labor is to transform the binary relation between active, working, dominant subject and passive, worked-on, subordinate object into something more fluid. Satan, surprising Eve at work alone among the flowers in Book 9, finds her so enmeshed with the objects of her labor that it becomes difficult to tell her apart from them, “Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,/Half spied, so thick the roses bushing round/About her glowed.” (425-27) Satan’s own movements in the garden, “then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,” mimic Eve’s disappearance into her work but to strikingly different effect. (9. 436) Eve disappears because she is possessed by her work, and cannot be told apart from it. Her hand *becomes* the “thick arborets and flow’rs/Embordered on each bank” she has been working on. (9.437-38) Satan’s vanishing act is an act of possession: he “possesses” the body of

the serpent just as he seeks to possess Eve, and through her, the race of humans. He seeks to dominate by inducing servility through the promise of godlike dominion, attained magically, without labor, through an act of rash, un-regarding consumption. Eve's prelapsarian nurturance, by contrast, is intended to render her charges less vulnerable, as she "stoop[s] to support/Each flow'r of slender stalk" which otherwise "Hung drooping unsustained."

Satan's insinuation of himself into the work of creation only subverts and destroys without holding out the possibility of any kind of positive, mutual transformation, either for himself or for his material. By juxtaposing the prelapsarian Eve's labor with that of the fallen archangel at this critical juncture in the epic narrative, *Paradise Lost* reiterates the distinction between dominion and service, and the labors appropriate to each, in the starkest possible way. Eve's garden-labor offers a vision of work that is not defined by possessiveness—by the desire to gain or assert sole proprietorship—but by a collaborative, and processual enterprise in which the hierarchical distinction between the subjects and objects of labor are, if not fully erased, rendered more reciprocal and inter-dynamic.

That tensions nonetheless persist—and do so fatally—is a testimony to the limits of Milton's attempt to construct a community of servant-magistrates that seeks to conjoin an ethic of interdependence and mutuality to a hierarchical society whose imperial resonances ultimately reverberate not only in hell but in Eden. When Eve falls, it is not simply because she fails to recognize in her charges her own likeness—that she is herself the "fairest unsupported flow'r." It is also, and perhaps more crucially, because the temptation of attaining godhead seems to offer a way out of the adversarial pressures of

hierarchy—and accompanying anxieties about self-effacement—that cut across the collaborative subordination ideally informing her relation with Adam. And the fall itself is accompanied by an explicit institution of gender hierarchy, whereby woman will “serve” man in the narrowest, and most power-laden sense of the term: “to thy husband’s will/Thine shall submit, he over thee shall rule.” (10.195-96) To be sure, Adam is also condemned to see his worst fear come true: labor in the post-lapsarian world that he now inhabits will indeed become a curse: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” That this is also the moment when the Son begins “the form of servant to assume” suggests emblematically the path that the humans will have to take to repair their relations with each other and with the world around them.

Standing at the cusp of modernity, Milton in *Paradise Lost* puts forth a vision of work that is distinctly utopian in its articulation of an alternative to the individual entrepreneurial and accumulative zeal that he doubtless saw bristling about him in the new impetus to work for individual gain that inspired many a seventeenth-century Englishman (and insofar as opportunity allowed, -woman) on the make. The utopian strain in *Paradise Lost*’s vision of work as service is nonetheless qualified by the theological roots of Milton’s vision of the working community. His assertion that man was not made to rule over other men is articulated in the context of a theological imperialism which posits the Christian god as the one true god and which, by the eighteenth century was already paving the way for an entirely different interpretative manipulation of the epic and its representation of the Protestant ethic of work— not least by a pro-imperialist readership which sought, and found, in *Paradise Lost* powerful

justification for aggression, expropriation, and even enslavement.⁵¹ Yet, despite such appropriations, which it does not entirely discourage, what makes *Paradise Lost* such a key text in the literary representations of work in the early modern era is that still allows for an alternative vision of magisterial work as collaborative, mutually-beneficial service, as nothing less than an act of loving fellowship, signaled perhaps most powerfully in the poem's closing vision of the fallen humans departing Eden "hand in hand with wand'ring steps and slow" into an uncertain future, to seek out a place of work and rest, another Eden. For all the tensions and ambiguities that mark the epic's end and indeed its afterlife, the closing image holds out the promise that the Edenic experiment has just begun anew.

¹ All citations from *Paradise Lost* follow the edition prepared by Alastair Fowler for the *Longman Annotated English Poets* series (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, 1998).

² In making this contrast, Milton's Abdiel is following tradition: as a perusal of the OED entries for "service" and "servitude" shows, while both terms are adaptations of *servitium* (from *servus*, slave), servitude is usually associated with burdensome bondage and almost always carries a negative charge while service has more complex and multi-valent moral connotations. Our contemporary usage of the terms continues to reflect this distinction.

³ David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 433-95, esp. 478.

⁴ Milton, *A Defence of the People of England* (1651) in *The Prose Works of John Milton* (London: Westley and Davis, 1838), 360.

⁵ Milton's praise for Queen Christina has sometimes been interpreted as a sign that his anti-monarchism wasn't really that firm. But see Norbrook's nuanced reading of this issue in *Writing the English Republic*, 333-35. On this subject, see also Joad Raymond, "The King is a Thing" in Graham Parry and Joad Raymond ed. *Milton and the Terms of Liberty* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2002), 69-94.

⁶ "A Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth" in Merritt Y. Hughes ed., *John Milton: Prose Selections* (New York: Odyssey Press, 1947), 368-9.

⁷ "Ready and Easy Way," 366-7.

⁸ Perez Zagorin describes Milton's republicanism as founded in an aristocracy of the virtuous few; see *Milton, Aristocrat and Rebel: The Poet and his Politics* (New York: D.S. Brewer, 1992), 154.

⁹ Walter Lim, *John Milton, Radical Politics and Biblical Republicanism* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2006). For the prophetic tenor of Milton's political rhetoric—a feature that also marked the writings of radical Protestant leaders, see Elizabeth Tuttle, "Biblical reference in the political pamphlets," in David Armitage, Armand Himy and Quentin Skinner eds., *Milton and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 63-81.

¹⁰ Blair Worden is among those who make this claim in "Milton's Republicanism and the Tyranny of Heaven," in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge UP, 1990), 244.

¹¹ This positive re-evaluation of work as not a curse but the divinely-appointed means of exercising human agency on earth was already evident in the later medieval period, and arguably paved the way for seventeenth-century Protestant interpretations of work as a vocation or calling from which none were exempt, although distinctions between classes could still be preserved in the *kind* of labor individuals were called upon to perform. See Kellie Robertson, *The laborer's two bodies: literary and legal productions in Britain, 1350-1500* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). On the issue of "Work and Vocation" in the early modern period, see Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfillment in Early Modern England* (Oxford; New York: Oxford UP, 2009), 78-109.

¹² Thomas Adams, *Certain Sermons or Homilies in Works* (London: Thomas Harper, 1629), 250.

¹³ See Michael Hardt, "Affective Labor," *Boundary 2* 26.2 (1999): 89-100; see also Hardt and Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard UP, 2000), 289-94.

¹⁴ David Quint, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1993), 8, 340.

¹⁵ David Armitage, "John Milton: Poet against Empire," in *Milton and Republicanism*, 206-26, esp. 215.

¹⁶ Quilligan, "Freedom, Service, and the Trade in Slaves: The Problem of Labor in *Paradise Lost*," in *Paradise Lost: John Milton* ed. William Zunder (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 170-194, esp. 177, 190.

¹⁷ For epic as a genre defined by a poetics of community, see Margaret Beissinger, Jane Tylus, and Susanne Wofford ed. *Epic Traditions and the Contemporary World: The Poetics of Community* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1999), esp. 5-6.

¹⁸ Walter Lim, *The Arts of Empire: The Poetics of Colonialism from Raleigh to Milton* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1998), 196.

¹⁹ See Balachandra Rajan and Elizabeth Sauer, "Introduction," in *Milton and the Imperial Vision* ed. Rajan and Sauer (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1999), 19-21.

²⁰ For Satan as the classical *imperator*, see Janel Mueller, "Dominion as Domesticity: Milton's Imperial God and the Experience of History" in *Milton and the Imperial Vision*, ed. Rajan and Sauer, 25-47, esp. 26-29.

²¹ *A Brief History of Muscovia* in *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 8 vols. Ed. Don M. Wolfe et al (New Haven: Yale UP, 1953-82), 8:524.

²² Barbara Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 472.

²³ On Orientalism in *Paradise Lost*, with an especial focus on the Indies, see Balachandra Rajan, *Under Western Eyes: India from Milton to Macaulay* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 1999), 50-66, and Pompa Banerjee, "Milton's India and *Paradise Lost*," *Milton Studies* 37 (1999), 142-65.

²⁴ Anthony Low, *The Georgic Revolution in Seventeenth-Century English Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1985), 314-16.

²⁵ Keith Thomas, *Ends of Life*, 91-92.

²⁶ For an exploration of such selective applications of the Protestant work-ethic, see Christopher Hill, "Protestantism and the Rise of Capitalism," in his *Change and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1975), 81-102.

²⁷ Keith Staveland, *Puritan Legacies: Paradise Lost and the New England Tradition 1630-1890* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1987), 84.

²⁸ Staveland, 86.

²⁹ Joyce Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1978).

³⁰ See Richard Hardin, *Civil Idolatry: Desacralizing and Monarchy in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton* (Newark, Del: U of Delaware P, 1992), 180ff, for a discussion of Milton's relation to Filmer's patriarchalism.

³¹ *First Defence*, already cited., 344.

³² David Evett, *Discourses of Service*, 1-16.

³³ Laura Lunger Knoppers, "Rewriting the Protestant Ethic: Discipline and Love in *Paradise Lost*," *ELH* 58.3 (1991), 545-59.

³⁴ For this double sense of work-master as master-workman and overseer, see O.E.D., "work-master," n. esp. sense a.

³⁵ Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 479.

³⁶ Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, 476.

³⁷ Regina Schwartz, *Sacramental Poetics*, 68.

³⁸ *Of Christian Doctrine* in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (Yale edition) 6:209.

³⁹ Michael Bryson, *The Tyranny of Heaven: Milton's Rejection of God as King* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2004), 75.

⁴⁰ Michael Lieb, "Milton's 'Dramatic Constitution': The Celestial Dialogue in *Paradise Lost* Book III," *Milton Studies* 23 (1987): 215-40, esp. 229.

⁴¹ See Irving Singer, *The Nature of Love: Plato to Luther* (New York: Random House, 1966), 276-77.

⁴² Diane McColley, *Milton's Eve* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1983), 56. She goes on to suggest that the idea that service "means loss of power, freedom, dignity, and opportunity" is a Satanic "distortion," but while I do agree that service in *Paradise Lost* means much more, it is also the locus of a great deal of the poem's political and ethical tension.

⁴³ James Grantham Turner, *One Flesh: Paradisal Marriage and Sexual Relations in the Age of Milton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 276-77 n.56.

⁴⁴ Ronald Levao, "Among Unequals What Society": *Paradise Lost* and the Forms of Intimacy," *Modern Language Quarterly* 61.1 (2000): 79-107, esp.88.

⁴⁵ Laura Lunger Knoppers, "Rewriting the Protestant Ethic," 545-59.

⁴⁶ Maureen Quilligan, "Problem of Labor in *Paradise Lost*," 184; Quilligan presents Adam's speech as proposing a model of work "organized by a beneficent Lord in terms of a feudal arrangement of service"; for Adam's connection with a Renaissance aristocratic culture devoted to the pursuit of pleasure and display, see Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U California P, 1992), 107-08; J. Martin Evans describes Adam and Eve as indentured servants on a quasi-colonial plantation in the New World, placed there by a "Sovran Planter." See his *Milton's Imperial Epic: Discourse of Colonialism in Paradise Lost*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1996), 78-81, esp. 80.

⁴⁷ Quilligan, 183.

⁴⁸ Joanna Picciotto, "The Experimentalist Eden and *Paradise Lost*," *ELH* 72.1 (2005): 23-78, esp.56. See also her *Labors of Innocence In Early Modern England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2010), 400-507 for a more extended discussion of the first humans' "exercise of curiosity, investing custodial and investigative care in creation," with Eden as their experimental laboratory, their intellectual *and* material work-site. (*Labors of Innocence*, 470)

⁴⁹ See for example, J. Martin Evan's discussion of "indentured labor," already cited.

⁵⁰ See Mary Fenton, "Hope, Land Ownership and Milton's 'Paradise Within,'" (*SEL* 43.1 [2003]:151-80, esp. 169) for a reading of Eve's "distress" as proprietary.

⁵¹ For an in-depth examination of the imperial afterlife of Milton's poem, see Anne-Julia Zweirlein, *Majestick Milton: British Imperial Expansions and Transformations of Paradise Lost, 1667-1837* (Munster: Lit,2001). See also Nicholas von Maltzahn, "Acts of Kind Service: Milton and the Patriot Literature of Empire," in Rajan and Sauer ed. *Milton and the Imperial Vision*, 233-254.

CONCLUSION

Today, when our globalized working world is undergoing its own seismic shifts, subject to constant and frequently exilic movements of new classes of postmodern servant-labor,¹ *Paradise Lost*'s exploration of the relation between work and service, and its concomitant vision of labor as an activity grounded in a matrix of relationships, in common or shared rather than alienated experience, proves uncannily relevant to our own postmodern predicament. At the same time, the shaping influence of service across the religious, political, and economic upheavals of the seventeenth century that this dissertation has attempted to trace suggests that, while early modern service may in certain crucial senses be a part of the "world we have lost," contemporary writers did not necessarily think of service as part of the world *they* had lost. Indeed, my research suggests that service, hoary concept as it may be, was also at the heart of new ways of imagining and evaluating community in the early modern period. As a concept itself undergoing profound change, from signaling feudal bondage and servitude to denoting wage-labor in the early modern market-place, the vocabulary of service equipped early modern writers with a particularly flexible analytic apparatus for engaging with the ethical complexities of their changing world. And in their often ideologically-fraught struggles over the meaning and experience of service, these early modern writers bear witness to our own ongoing struggle with socio-ethical concepts that are at once the fabric of our social being and the site of incessant debate and redefinition: the term 'democracy,' albeit in so many ways the very antithesis of 'service,' comes to mind.

¹ See for example Arlie Russell Hochschild and Barbara Ehrenreich, ed. *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003).

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