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**"Loose my speche":
Anne Locke's Sonnets and the Matrilineal Protestant Poetic**

**Thesis presented to the School of Graduate Studies,
University of Ottawa, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, English literature.
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"Loose my speche": Anne Locke and the Matrilineal Protestant Poetic--Abstract

This dissertation seeks to appreciate the English Reformation figure Anne Locke as an important poet, one responsible for producing the first sonnet sequence to be composed in English. Locke's 1560 sequence, *A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner*, consists of five prefatory and six main-body sonnets keyed to the popular 51st Psalm; it is found at the back of a volume of Jean Calvin's sermons translated by Locke. This dissertation discusses Locke's use of the motifs of voice and community in the *Meditation* to trace the Calvinist spiritual journey from sin to grace, and also looks at the manipulation of these ideas by two later Early Modern women poets, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, and Aemilia Lanyer.

Locke's strategy for opening a space for women to speak of faith at a time when the power of voice was traditionally denied to them involves the destruction of the most obvious earthly marker of gender, the body, and emphasises the vital importance to the Christian of voice. Locke reminds readers that it is, ultimately, the (genderless) voice that will cry out to God for mercy, of which all sinners, men and women, are equally in need. It is voice that will trace the journey of the sinner to the community of the godly, those souls, unburdened by the earthly restrictions of gender, to whom God has granted salvation. Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, also worked with the 51st Psalm in her project to finish and expand the work of her brother, Sir Philip Sidney. Pembroke, writing near the end of the 16th century for a private audience of readers, shows a more comfortable, assured sense of the presence of grace in the life of her narrator; community has already been gained, and voice now expresses the soul's challenge to help others to find it. Finally, Aemilia Lanyer, whose *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* appeared in 1610, displays the most overtly "feminist" agenda of the three writers. She appropriates a self-consciously female narrative voice to gather a community of godly women around her--women who also enjoy a large measure of earthly power--in order to re-examine the story of Christ's Passion from a female perspective. Lanyer, perhaps more concerned with addressing earthly inequalities than with gaining the kingdom, is perhaps the least successful of the three women examined here in her project. Together, the three provide a fascinating triptych of Early Modern women's writing.

"Loose my speche": Anne Locke and the Matrilineal Protestant Poetic

Introduction

Elizabeth Harvey has written that "[v]oice is often used as a powerful metaphor for the rebirth of what has been suppressed by patriarchal culture. As women struggle to repossess a power taken from them, as they challenge patriarchal institutions that have deformed them and limited their potential, the synecdochic expression of that liberation is often localized in the voice" (5). This discussion examines selected devotional poetry of three women writing over a period of fifty years in the early modern era with a view to discovering how each writer intersects individual voice with concerns of integration into community. The element of voice is of particular importance to these poets as women writing at a time when their sex was exhorted to silence; the element of community is of importance to them as Reformed Christians living in a highly-structured patriarchal society and hoping to number themselves among God's elect.

Beginning near the start of Elizabeth I's reign, as the redefinition of England's religious character brought with its very uncertainty potential for change in women's role in the witnessing Christian church, I argue that the first writer, Anne Locke, a merchant-class female Renaissance poet to whose life and work the largest part of this discussion is devoted, achieves the highest degree of integration. Locke, whose poetry has only recently begun to attract scholarly attention, foregrounds the significance of voice through a striking process of destroying the physical body to which the voice belongs, and then traces a pattern of the individual sinner's difficult Calvinist spiritual journey toward mercy and salvation in a Christ-centred group. Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, completed her psalmic poems in the early 1590s, as both the century and Elizabeth's tenure were drawing to a close; unlike Locke, Pembroke wrote from the ascendant social position of the nobility, in an England well if temporarily settled into an Established Church, one in which strongly Reformist elements such as those in the countess's family, themselves close to the throne, could agitate for reform with some calmness, if not completely without tension. Pembroke locates her individual narrative voice almost immediately within the community of the godly; rather than having to journey toward the centre, her speaker is able to strike outward

like a missionary to draw others in, and does so with the confidence that God's mercy and grace will remain within reach. Aemilia Lanyer, whose only known work appeared in 1611, attempts to return to something like Locke's model of the Christian community in her long narrative Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum, drawing a group of believing women around herself and acting as the group's self-appointed "voice." Lanyer, however, a self-consciously female poet writing in the middle of the reign of the intensely misogynistic James I, fails to achieve Locke's melding of confident individual voice with integration into the family of the godly, as the intrusion of an earthly "feminist" agenda displaces Christ as the centre of an (ungendered) Christian community and, doomed by the realities of a fallen, misogynist world, Lanyer's vision fragments.

Within the past decade, scholars of English Renaissance literature have focused an increasing amount of attention on the work of the sixteenth-century translator and poet Anne Locke, the woman who wrote what is probably the first sonnet sequence originally composed in the English language. Devotional writing was one of the few types of literary endeavour in which early modern women could participate without fear of censure, and Locke's work stands as a testimony to the possibilities opened to women writers by religious material, particularly in the time of religious flux early in the reign of Elizabeth. In her 1560 sonnet sequence, A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner, Locke carved out a space for herself as a devotional writer who was also a woman by defining voice, supposedly antithetical to the good woman who was encouraged to be silent, as the most essential part of the individual self, and then following a Calvinist pattern of the spiritual life in her sonnet sequence as the narrative self moves toward the community of Christians, its journey recounted by voice. At a time when adherents of Calvinism were enjoying great hope that their faith might flourish in England as it had in places like Geneva, with the English under a new queen whose protestantism was still unshaped, Locke, herself a Genevan exile during the reign of Mary, seized upon the growing popularity of the Psalms as expressions of personal reflection and faith. Through a treatment of Psalm 51, she presented a spiritual and authorial endeavour that illustrated how the Christian was compelled to endorse what the woman was ordered to reject.

The Psalm-based poems of the Countess of Pembroke include her own rendering of the penitential Psalm 51 (*Miserere mei Deus*). Pembroke's verse, based on the Psalms and endeavouring to complete a project begun by her brother, Sir Philip Sidney, remained unpublished during her lifetime, but was circulated and influential among a sizeable group at a time when Elizabethan glory was at its peak and the English Church well-established as an institution much more conservative and "high" than the likes of Locke--and Pembroke herself--wished. Pembroke drew on a vast array of literary examples in her psalmic poetry, including Locke's sonnets, and her own work was known to and praised by such contemporaries as Donne and Samuel Daniel, thus weaving Locke and the countess herself into the continuum of English devotional verse into the seventeenth century. As well, Pembroke, still a woman if a noble one, placed herself firmly under the aegis of her brother's legend, which afforded her authorial protection as she pursued her own interpretation of psalmic scripture. In her rendering of Psalm 51, she, like Locke, focuses on the experience of the individual attempting simultaneously to adhere to the redeemed community and to negotiate the sinful world. For Pembroke, however, this process is less fraught--the dawning of grace in the speaker's life is described with loving wonder, and the compact, rime royal form lends a vitality and optimism to the speaker's desire to be renewed by grace and to use voice to tell others of the truth of God's mercy.

The work of a third early modern woman devotional writer provides a study in contrasts. Aemilia Lanyer makes an interesting partner study to Locke, in particular: recent scholarship indicates that Lanyer may well have been aware of Locke's prose and poetry writings, and may have been influenced by it; like Locke, she asserts a narrative voice through devotional poetry written for publication in an England in which published women authors were still rare; and, again like Locke, she is deeply concerned in her work with the concept and construct of community and the individual self's integration into it. Lanyer, however, seems to be working consciously from a perspective opposite to Locke's: she intends to carve out a position for herself as first and foremost a woman writer, yet one who is also devout - despite what the stigma of writing and publishing suggested for a woman (or, in many cases, a man) of the time. The way in which

gender figures into the equation in Lanyer's case are thus markedly different than in Locke's. By the time of Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, the country was firmly in the grip of James's reign, and a certain nostalgia for the majesty, stability and relative prosperity of the Elizabeth golden age had taken hold; the established church had seen the production of the Authorised Version of the Bible, but was contending with a factionalism that would slide toward war by mid-century.

Susanne Woods, in writing of Lanyer, states that "any just appreciation of what she [Lanyer] accomplished must begin with an appreciation of her context" (Lanyer, Preface viii). In a similar vein, Mary Ellen Lamb asserts that "an understanding of women's writing in the Renaissance depends upon an understanding of their culture, and especially of the gender-specific meanings attached to the acts of reading and writing by that culture" (19). I begin my discussion with the cultural and religious contextualisation of Locke herself, and, to a large extent, that of the later women whose work I examine, paying particular attention to the Calvinism that shaped the Reformation English church so strongly. What did Calvin, and Calvinist theologians like John Knox (a close friend of Locke's), say about women "speaking"? In what position would a woman like Locke, and, later, Lanyer, have found herself upon deciding to write for publication? Was the Countess of Pembroke, who did publish some of her translations but not her and her brother's psalmic poetry, subject to different strictures than Locke and Lanyer because of her class? I attempt to locate my all of subjects of study generally in this first chapter, and also comment on the specifics of Pembroke's and Lanyer's individual situations as appropriate in the chapters devoted to them.

My second chapter first examines Locke's five prefatory sonnets in terms of the way they foreground and define voice as that which is most essential to self, subverting concerns of gender by tracing the simultaneous destruction of the body. I then present a close reading of the main body of the *Meditation* in which the voice that is self journeys from a position of isolation--the self alone--to integration with the community of Christians--the self connected to others; while Locke ascertains that her narrative voice will not be marked by the particularity of gender, she does trace

through this journey a Calvinist pattern resembling the social process of subjugation and reconciliation to authority to which women of the time were subject. Locke thus frees her narrative voice from the restrictions placed on her sex, while allowing that voice to appropriate a socially-conditioned rhetoric suitable to a devotional context.

Chapter three focuses on Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke. Like Locke, Pembroke was both intellectually and spiritually erudite, and turned her hand to translations as well as interpretations involving original composition, into which category her psalmic verse falls. In contrast with Locke, however, Pembroke was solidly located in the highest echelons of Elizabethan society; her uncle was Elizabeth's favourite, the Earl of Leicester, and her husband was a member of the Queen's privy council. This chapter examines the countess's position as a member of the fin-de-siècle English nobility and of a family devoted to the furtherance of ecclesiastical reform, and also as a wealthy and influential chatelaine of Wilton House, the Wiltshire estate at which she developed her skill as a writer under the tutelage of her brother Sir Philip Sidney. I argue that, as a woman, Pembroke still faced certain limitations on her literary endeavours, but her position allowed her to connect with and influence an important circle of English writers, and her guardianship of her brother's literary legend strengthened her own position as a writer. A close reading of the countess's version of Psalm 51 reveals a confident but passionate narrative voice that identifies Christian community as the natural home of the redeemed, one which travels with its members as they work to bring other sinners to God. While Pembroke, like Locke, avoids an overtly gendered voice in her verse, her use of womb imagery and her adoption of a position of filial simplicity introduce both a maternal aspect and the element of feminine subjection to the poem. Her tone, ultimately, is far more comforting than Locke's; while Locke struggles to reach the New Jerusalem or perish, Pembroke gains it joyfully and knows that, once won, it will not forsake those who go on desiring it.

Aemilia Lanyer is the subject of chapter four. In terms of her personal and social circumstances, she is yet another face of Renaissance women's devotional writing, markedly different from both Locke and Pembroke. The daughter of an Italian musician at Elizabeth's

court, possibly born Catholic or Jewish, Lanyer spent her youth on the fringes of the closed world of the English court as the mistress of the queen's cousin and Lord Chamberlain, Lord Hunsdon. Married off to another court musician while expecting Hunsdon's child, Lanyer published Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum several years after the apex of her personal good fortune, at a time when Elizabeth was dead, James I reigned, and Lanyer herself was struggling to regain some semblance of the position she had enjoyed as a young girl. It is this goal that lies at the heart of Salve Deus, and that, I argue, ultimately interferes with Lanyer's attempt to reveal through a re-examination of Scripture and history a long-standing community of godly women gathered around Christ. Lanyer's self-appointment as the voice of this community, a device that invites the powerful Christian women she addresses to identify with her, leads her to place women and not Christ at the centre of the group, and her earthly agenda proves incompatible with her pious intention.

The imperatives of Calvinism afforded English women writers a previously-unknown space for the expression and definition of individual voice through the insistence upon the importance of individual witness to faith experience. This brand of protestantism, which focused on the disintegration of the "old," sinful self, and the reintegration of the "new," repentant and regenerated self into the community of the godly, also presented to believers a pattern resembling the social process of subjugation and reconciliation to authority to which women of the time were subject; women writers could thus draw on their knowledge of this pattern both to define an "I" in their work, and to subvert the very strictures of the process itself. This imperative to explore the individual's relationship with God allowed women like Locke, Pembroke and Lanyer a certain latitude--although by no means free reign--in writing and publishing; the extent to which each woman embraces / stretches or rejects / ignores the degrees of this latitude is the essence of my discussion.

In her feminist work on early modern women, Harvey admits,

I move with a kind of transgressive abandon between the historical context of the early modern period and twentieth-century feminist theoretical writings. If history (and the history that shapes literary criticism) is a

narrative, constructed from the perspective of a present that is itself governed by cultural factors specific to its own historical moments, then what one chooses to focus on in the past, what elements one privileges and the arguments that emerge from the literary and cultural evidence one fashions or discovers, are largely determined by present preoccupations. . . . Historical reconstructions are always a kind of ventriloquization, then, a matter of making the past seem to speak in the voice that the present gives it. (6)

I, too, admit to such "transgressive abandon" in my analysis of the works of the three early modern women poets I address in this discussion, as I believe it affords a rich and relevant lens through which to comprehend the development of a "female" voice in Renaissance writing. Anne Locke's place as perhaps the first English composer of original sonnets, and one of the first English protestant devotional women poets, is obviously of great importance, both in the history of the genres and in the context of woman's poetic voice. As well as tying Locke at least superficially to everyone from Pembroke to Lanyer to Donne and Herbert (as well as Wyatt, if one cares to be broader than post-Reformation), her subject matter illuminates further the role protestantism played, at least initially, in allowing women to explore the parameters of the poetic "I" in a context considered appropriate to their endeavours. The Countess of Pembroke, writing from a much higher social position and far more stratified religious era than those of Locke in 1560, provides a glimpse of the way a woman in her situation--wealthy, well-placed, but still subject to certain strictures of gender--responded to a fairly stable and well-established protestant milieu that may in fact have been less receptive to women's (published) witness than the more fluid era of early Elizabethan times. Lanyer, the most overtly "feminist" of these three writers, attempts to make her voice heard in both a devotional and a worldly context, and does so in a cultural atmosphere that was, however briefly, almost monolithically protestant, and at least as hostile to the prospect of women's public expression as those known to Locke or Pembroke--perhaps more so. Making the boldest bid to enter the arena of social and religious discourse,

Lanyer enjoys the least success--neither winning patronage and praise for herself, nor effecting change in women's earthly status.

This discussion begins with Locke, and it is on her that my overall focus remains. The ways in which a poet like Locke, as well as her successors, not only used but also subverted the opportunities made available to them by the imperatives of reformation theology is, as mentioned, of critical importance to understanding the presence of gendered voices or perspectives in early modern literature; at the same time, the intensely personal and repentant tone of Locke's own work, inspired by Scripture, foreshadowed such seminal work as the devotional poetry of Herbert and Donne with its struggle to define the self and its accompanying tortured introspection. Locke's desire to write and her desire to praise God complemented each other in such a way as to make her poetic work at least marginally acceptable to her age, and although this coincidence was felicitous, she did not pursue this avenue simply because her society did not condemn it; she was determined to express her faith through her considerable skills as a sonneteer. In doing so, she gives ample evidence of an awareness of the importance of voice, for both a Christian and a woman, and assumes a pioneering role in the development of a religious poetic sensibility that flowered several decades after she essentially introduced it into the English tradition. Although the full implications of locating Anne Locke's poetry within the Renaissance canon are obviously beyond the scope of one dissertation to contain, my study aims to help in the process of this location and will, I hope, open up avenues of appreciation for her entire corpus in the context of Renaissance women's writing.

Chapter 1

Anne Locke, Women and Early Protestant Thought

The Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1475-1640 contains the following entry, number 4450, under the heading for the religious reformer Jean (John) Calvin:

Sermon . . . upon the songe that Ezechias made after he had bene sicke.

Tr. out of Frenche. [By] (A. L[ok?]) 1560. (A meditation vpon the 51.

psalme. [In verse.]) 2 pts. 8^o. *J. Day*, [1560.] Ent. 15 ja. 1560. L.; F.

This entry is for a volume whose ponderous full title is Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made after he had bene sicke, and afflicted by the hand of God, conteyned in the 38. Chapter of Esay. The information provided here indicates that the book is an octavo consisting of two parts--the sermons themselves, translated from French by one A. L., and a verse "meditation" upon the Miserere,¹ the penitential fifty-first Psalm. The book was entered in the Stationers' Register on January 15th, 1560, on behalf of the London printer John Day. Two copies of this edition are currently extant: one is located at the Folger Shakespeare Library, the other at the British Library.²

On the surface, this volume seems unremarkable, just one of the many collections of protestant sermons and religious meditation pieces that proved so popular in England in the second half of the sixteenth century and beyond.³ It is, perhaps, surprising to learn that, until 1999, this book represented the only English translation of these particular Calvin sermons, despite the prominent role played by their author in protestant theology and thought.⁴ Of primary note here, however, are the unattributed verse "meditation" comprising the second part of the book, and representing probably the first sonnet sequence to be composed in English, and also the figure of A. L., the translator of the sermons--and the person who is generally thought to be the author of the sonnets themselves.⁵

"A. L." was a woman; in 1560, she was known as Anne Locke.⁶ Beginning life as Anne Vaughan, she had by the time of her death been, in turn, Anne Locke, Anne Dering, and Anne

Prowse (sometimes Prouze⁷). An examination of her life gives one insight into a breed of woman writer (if one could consider their number great enough to warrant the term "breed") made possible in Renaissance England by a combination of Elizabethan prosperity and the radical change wrought by the Reformation. In Locke, one sees a woman not of the nobility, as were Queen Catherine Parr earlier or the Countess of Pembroke later in the century, but of the increasingly prosperous and mobile merchant class. As well, not only was Locke literate—a rare enough state for any woman at the time—but impressively erudite: she not only knew scripture, but also translated Calvin and, later, Jean Taffin from French; she probably rendered her own translation of the 51st Psalm from Latin for her sonnet glosses; and, as is evident from her epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk, she had a delightful command of rhetoric.⁸ Perhaps most importantly, however, Locke, maturing as the Reformation began to burgeon in England, possessed strong religious convictions informed by a protestant theology that emphasised the need for each Christian to bear personal witness to his or her faith. It was this impetus that allowed Locke some degree of impunity in asserting her voice in expressions of faith in an era when the broader base of English society considered that a good woman was always a silent one.

When one considers Locke's background, her emergence as the woman described above is hardly surprising.⁹ She was born, probably in the early 1530's, to Stephen Vaughan, a London mercer of Welsh descent, and his wife, Margery Guinet or Gwynneth. Vaughan was a mercer who served as president of the English merchants' factory at Antwerp, where he spent a good deal of time, and also as an envoy-at-large for Henry VIII; among the missions upon which he embarked for Henry was a failed attempt to lure the religious reformer William Tyndale back to England under submission to the King (Richardson 26-34).¹⁰ Stephen Vaughan was himself a proto-protestant, "part of that largely unrecorded but highly significant process of conversion which was going forward steadily in the [fifteen-] thirties and forties" (Collinson, "Role" 277). He was called before the bishop of London and Lord Chancellor Sir Thomas More on suspicion of heresy on three occasions in the late 1520's and early 1530's, managing to escape prosecution each time (Richardson 26; DNB 58: 179). Vaughan's second wife, Margery Brinklow, whom he

married roughly eighteen months after the death of Anne Locke's mother in the autumn of 1544, also had ties to the burgeoning reform movement in London: her first husband, the mercer Henry Brinklow, had expressed dissatisfaction with the state of the Church in what Collinson terms "that bitter and excessive diatribe," The Complaynt of Roderyck Mors ("Role" 277). Even the tutor Vaughan engaged for his children, one Mr. Cob, was "under the suspicion of the bishop of London for religious opinion" at one point during his engagement in the Vaughan household (Richardson 20-21, 84-85).¹¹

Stephen Vaughan returned permanently to his family in London in November of 1546, and was elected Member of Parliament for the borough of Lancaster in October 1547. He died in London on Christmas Day, 1549, leaving Anne, her younger sister Jane, and her younger brother, twelve-year-old Stephen, as well as their stepmother. Although the ages of Vaughan's two daughters at the time of their father's death are not known, Collinson describes both as "minors and unmarried," and claims that Anne was the elder ("Role" 276-277).¹²

The relatively abundant knowledge we have of Stephen Vaughan's life is fortunate, as it allows us to form some idea about Anne Locke's early years and the spiritual, intellectual and domestic environment that nurtured her. Her father was a man of proto-protestant views, and her stepmother was also connected to the growing movement for reform within the English church; as well, from the knowledge she may early have gained of Henry Brinklow's publishing foray, Locke would have seen how the printed page can be used to urge change or express discontent. It is clear enough from her own work that Locke received an unusually solid education, and it would appear from what we know of the Vaughan children's tutor that the man responsible for it was also of a reforming turn of mind--at least to a great enough extent to invite trouble for himself. We do not know if Locke was her parents' first-born, but she eventually emerged as the oldest of three children; this may well have been her position at the time of her mother's death, just before Locke entered adolescence. The spirit and strength of character she reveals in her later life make it easy to think of the young Anne, "wanting a mother and lacking the presence of a father" in the wake of her mother's death (qtd. in Richardson 21),¹³ developing a sense of responsibility for her

siblings in the family's uncertain situation before the advent of Margery Brinklow, and becoming a woman of decisive action and convictions. It is also easy to detect in her father's oft-quoted pronouncement on his own religious views the essence of Locke's own overtly protestant beliefs a few decades later. Answering charges of heresy in 1531, Vaughan declared: "[A]s for me, let all men know, whatsoever the world babble of me, that I am neither Lutheran nor yet Tyndalin[.] . . . I have the holy scripture, given to me by Christ's church, and that is a learning sufficient for me, infallible and taught by Christ" (qtd. in Richardson 27).

Within a year or two of her father's death,¹⁴ Anne married Henry Locke, a neighbour of the Vaughans' and himself a mercer;¹⁵ the couple remained in Cheapside, in Stephen Vaughan's parish of St. Mary Bow. Henry and Anne's marriage lasted approximately twenty years--through its share of challenges--and was apparently the only one of Anne's three unions that produced children.¹⁶ In a sad comment on an all-too-common situation of the time, it appears that only two of the Lockes' six children survived to any age--Henry the poet, and the final Anne, who married a Cornish cousin, Robert Moyle (Lupton, History 8:30).¹⁷

Aside from the usual vagaries of fate that affected most families of the time, such as the regular loss of children, the special challenges faced by the Lockes during their marriage came primarily in the form of the reign of Mary Tudor and the consequent presence in their lives of the Scottish religious reformer John Knox. Until recently, Anne Locke was known to history primarily for her close relationship with Knox--and, indeed, their story is memorable, particularly as Knox is popularly thought of as a man not given to friendships with women. The evidence that remains pertaining to Locke, however, casts Knox in a somewhat more sympathetic light as far as his relationships with the opposite sex go--and certainly says something about the strength of Locke's own attachments and beliefs.

Mary Tudor was proclaimed Queen of England on 19 July 1553, after the death of her half-brother Edward VI and Lady Jane Grey's brief interlude on the throne. With Mary came the re-establishment of Catholicism in England, which had moved progressively farther away from the authority of Rome during the short reign of the precocious protestant Edward. John Knox was

among those dissenting religious leaders who realised almost from the moment of Mary's accession that the British Isles would soon be a dangerous place for them, as both England and Scotland were now ruled by Catholic women (Mary of Guise was then Regent of Scotland for her young daughter Mary Stuart). Collinson claims that Knox first met Anne Locke in the winter of 1552-3 ("Role" 279); he certainly did live in London from July to November of 1553, before his departure from England, staying with the Lockes and possibly their neighbours the Hickmans (Spiller, "Locke" ts. 3). Rose Hickman was the half-sister of Henry Locke, and the two families were apparently close in matters of faith. The company of Anne and Rose was evidently a great comfort to Knox at this time, for he later reminisces in a letter to the two women how "your hartis war incensit and kendillit [kindled] with a special care over me, as the mother useth to be over hir naturall chyld" while he was in their care (letter XXIX in Laing 4: 220). After Knox left England for Geneva, it would seem that there was little or no direct communication between him and Mrs. Locke for over two years; in 1556, however, a correspondence began between Knox and his former hostess.¹⁸ This exchange of letters would continue sporadically for six years; although only Knox's side of the correspondence has survived, his letters tell a good deal about the relationship between him and Locke, and clearly indicate that Knox encouraged his friend, however discreetly, to leave the spiritually unhealthy climate of England and join the community of the "godly" in Geneva—even if it meant leaving her husband behind.

Two letters sent by Knox in 1556 respond feelingly to Locke's expression of sorrow at his absence, and express his desire to have her near him. On 19 November he writes:

Ye wryt that your desyre is ernist to sie me. Deir Sister, yf I suld expres the thrist and languore whilk I haif had for your presence, I suld appeir to pass measure. . . . [N]ow yf it sall pleas God that I suld sie yow in theis most dolorous dayis, my comfort suld be dabled, for in prosperitie in the middis of mirth, my hart quaikit for

the sorrowis to cum; and sum tymis I sobbit, feiring what suld becum of yow. (letter XXXII in Laing 4: 238)

On 9 December Knox is even more direct:

Wer it not that partlie ye ar impeidit be impyre of your heid [head, husband], and partlie be so gud occasioun as God hath now offirit yow to remane whair ye ar, in my hart I wald haif wishit, yea and can not cease to wish, that it wold pleas God to gyd and conduct your self to this place[.] (letter XXXIII in Laing 4: 240)

He signs both, "Your Brother[.]" While it is clear from these and other letters that Knox acknowledged his friend to be subject to the will of her "heid," Henry Locke--and one would hardly expect Knox to think otherwise, considering his later published views on women who were not governed by a male "heid"¹⁹--both he and Anne obviously missed one another during the difficult time both were facing as protestants. As Mary's reign continued, these sentiments evidently combined with the genuine danger faced by religious dissenters to the point where Anne Locke did in fact travel to Geneva, without her husband. With her two small children in tow, and accompanied by a maid named Katherine, Locke headed for the continent in the spring of 1557. She arrived at Geneva 8 May, only to suffer immediately the loss of her younger child, Anne, who was buried on May twelfth (Collinson, "Role" 280; Lupton, History 4:12).

As it turned out, Locke and Knox did not enjoy much time together here, either. Knox, destined to lead a harried and unsettled life for some time, tried to return to Scotland in the summer of 1557; although this attempt was not successful, he finally left Geneva for his homeland in January 1559 (Spiller, "Locke" ts. 2). Locke herself remained in Geneva from May 1557 until March 1559, at which time she travelled with her surviving child, little Henry, to meet her husband in Frankfurt and eventually return home to Cheapside in the early summer. The birth of a child, the second baby Anne, in December 1559 would seem to indicate that the Lockes' marriage had held up well enough under the strain of almost two years' separation. Indeed, although

Anne's actions in leaving Henry behind in 1557 could not be considered orthodox for the time regardless of the circumstances, it seems likely that Anne's initiative was eventually supported by her husband as logical in terms of safety: certainly a person of such firm protestant beliefs as Anne, a friend and harbourer of Knox, could not have lived in England with much ease while Mary reigned. Her husband, however, seems to have been what Collinson terms "a somewhat formal Protestant, cast in another mould from that of his wife" ("Role" 278), and was therefore probably able to navigate English religious waters with more facility. As well, it would have been difficult for Henry Locke to abandon his business affairs in England altogether, and as his trade may have taken him to the Continent fairly frequently--witness the experience of his late father-in-law, also a mercer--he must have judged Anne's sojourn in Geneva at least tolerable. While one cannot know just how Henry felt about his wife's attachment to Knox, there has never been any serious suggestion that the relationship between the two went beyond deep friendship and a bond born of shared beliefs and hardships.²⁰ Whatever the details, there seems little question that Anne herself, spurred by Knox's letters, was the one who proposed her decampment to Geneva with her children, and that sooner or later, Henry Locke accepted the situation.²¹

Collinson remarks that "Anne Locke must have been an asset to the congregation of English exiles gathered in Geneva" with her literacy and knowledge of French ("Role" 280). From her time in exile she brought back to the godly in her newly-protestant homeland her translation of John Calvin's four sermons on Hezekiah in Isaiah 38, which she had doubtless heard Calvin deliver in Geneva in 1557.²² This translation, prefaced by Locke's epistle to another Marian exile, the dowager Duchess of Suffolk,²³ and followed by Locke's pioneering sonnet sequence, formed Locke's first published work. The London printer John Day, himself a protestant who had spent time in prison during the reign of Mary Tudor (Oastler 9), owned a shop in Locke's neighbourhood of Cheapside and may have been acquainted with her; he printed the Calvin volume early in 1560 and sold it at his Aldersgate shop.²⁴ The book saw another edition in 1574, but was to be--as far as we know--Locke's only independent publishing venture

for thirty years,²⁵ until the necessity of comforting the faithful in a time of hardship once again compelled her to put her literary abilities to use.

Of course, before continuing with any investigation of Locke's pioneering accomplishment as a poet, it must be acknowledged here there has been some controversy in the past regarding the authorship of A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner.²⁶ This has arisen primarily because of the absence of a signature on the work itself, and, perhaps more importantly, the presence of a note on its title page. The "A. L." that appears at the end of the epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk is in fact the only constitution of an author's--and, in this case, translator's--signature anywhere in the Calvin volume. No one, however, seems seriously to have challenged the claim that Anne Locke was responsible for the composition of the epistle and the translation of the sermons; the practice of identifying oneself as author or translator of a published work solely by one's initials was at all events fairly common at this time, and there is also the fact that the copy now held by the British Library features on its flyleaf a Latin inscription that makes it clear the book belonged to Anne's first husband, Henry Locke.²⁷ The note that prefaces the Meditation itself, however, seems more problematic. It tells the reader that "I have added this meditation folowyng unto the ende of this boke, not as parcell of maister Calvines worke, but for that it well agreeth with the same argument, and was delivered me by my frend with whom I knew I might be so bolde to use & publishe it as pleased me." Those who did bother to pay any attention to this note, and the Meditation, in the past--church historians and Knox biographers, largely--usually assumed that the note was Locke's, and that the "frend" was in fact Knox himself.²⁸

Current literary scholarship, however, has regarded the claim that Knox was the author of the Meditation with skepticism. Such an undertaking would have been positively out of keeping with the reformer's other writings, and with what we know of his nature--most people familiar with Knox's history and temperament would probably find it difficult to imagine him composing sonnets, even devotional ones. Perhaps a more practical argument against Knox's authorship, however, is stated by Michael Spiller: "the implausibility of Knox taking time out in Scotland [if the sequence was composed before his Marian exile] to write twenty-six sonnets in the style of the

Earl of Surrey is too great";²⁹ it seems equally unlikely that Knox would have had the leisure to accomplish this during his unsettled time on the Continent. The theory now accepted as most likely is that Locke wrote the sonnets herself; if she was in fact responsible for the note on the title page of the Meditation--it may perhaps be John Day's³⁰--she may simply have used the subterfuge of the "frend" in order to protect her own authorial identity. Beyond this, in terms of comparing Locke's known work with the Meditation, Hannay points out that "there are verbal echoes of the sonnets in the signed dedication to the Duchess of Suffolk, including the same images of disease, starvation, and horror. Both present God as a physician who brings health."³¹ On the strength of this, and further support she finds in both the Calvin volume and the later volume of Taffin, Hannay proposes that "[u]nless external evidence to the contrary surfaces, we are probably safe in attributing the sonnet sequence to Anne [Locke]."³² Although there may always be room for dissent, there is now little argument among scholars on this point, and all who now write of Locke write of the Meditation as her work.

The next several years after her return to England were more settled, though hardly inactive, for Locke. As well as the usual demands of domestic life, and the births--and then, sometimes, deaths--of her children, she maintained contact with Knox in Scotland. With the reformer there and Locke in London, Knox frequently asked his friend in his letters to convey news to the former Genevan exiles who were now back in England, and to any who remained on the Continent. Knox also kept Locke informed of his trials in dealing with the Catholic Regent of Scotland and her government, and in enduring the accompanying constant travel, which proceeded as he dealt with his own ill health and advancing age.³³ As well as such matters great and public, however, there are also passages in Knox's letters that make it clear that Locke looked to Knox for comfort and advice in spiritual matters--and Knox, to his credit, responded like a true friend. "Be of comfort, Sister, knowing that yee fight not the battell alone," he assures her the September after her return from exile, when she had written "at midnight" with some doubt or fear relating to her faith (letter XXXIV in Laing 6: 79). Knox also comments on such matters as whether or not Locke should attend church services, which she had apparently asked about from

Frankfurt in anticipation of returning to worship in England: "[W]e ought not to justifie with our presence such a mingle mangle as now is commaunded in your kirks" (letter XXXVII in Laing 6: 83). Intermingled with such assurances and declarations are small things, practical but touching, such as this exhortation from Knox regarding the messenger who brought the reformer's letter to the merchant's wife: "This bearer is a poore man unknowen in the countrie, to whome, I beseeche you, shew reasonable favour and kindnes tuiching his merchandise, and the just selling therof" (letter IV in Laing 6: 21). It is fair to say that these letters necessarily reveal more about Knox himself than about Locke, but an examination of them also illuminates the sort of friendship the two enjoyed.

Locke and Knox probably did not meet again after their time together in Geneva, and their correspondence was thus their only contact. Why the letters stopped suddenly--if indeed they did, and the last letter we have is in fact the last Knox wrote--is unknown. The final letter, written from Edinburgh and dated 6 May 1562, is actually one of the least personal, for it deals entirely with Knox's anxieties over an ongoing feud between the mad Earl of Arran and his sometime-enemy, the Earl of Bothwell (later husband to Mary Queen of Scots) (Fraser, Mary Queen of Scots 210-212). Knox had managed to reconcile the two men briefly, thinking "that by their familiaritie, the kirk of God within this realme sould have received no small benefite." Arran's delusions soon blasted the truce, however, and perhaps the last words Locke ever had directed to her from her "Dear Brother" were weary and despairing: "And heirof springeth our present truble, but greater appearing to follow, for suspicion once kindled, is not easie to be quenched" (letter LXV in Laing 6: 140).

The Lockes' life together in Cheapside continued for almost a decade after the letters from John Knox stopped. In 1571, Henry Locke died, leaving all his worldly goods to his wife.³⁴ Collinson comments that "[a] woman of Anne Locke's qualities and substance was not allowed to remain a widow for long" ("Role" 282), and by 1572 she had indeed remarried. In Locke's choice of a second husband one can see the lasting effects of the friendship with Knox; indeed, Collinson says of this man that he "must have seemed to her to be Knox reborn" (Godly People 317).

Locke, now in mid-life, took as her mate a younger man who was an outspoken and controversial preacher, and to whom female friends often turned for spiritual sustenance. He was Edward Dering, educated at Cambridge and fearless--even reckless--in his preaching. Like Knox, who had guided and been comforted by the likes of Anne Locke and her sister-in-law Rose Hickman, as well as his own mother-in-law Elizabeth Bowes, Dering had female "spiritual patients," women as prominent as Catherine Killigrew; also like Knox, Dering's unbridled tongue got him in trouble with authorities--Elizabethan rather than Marian--who dashed his hopes of preferment, if they did not drive him from the country as Mary's government had Knox (Collinson, Godly People 316).

At the time that Locke threw in her lot with "this Elizabethan Savonarola" in the early 1570's (Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement 135), the English church was determined to crack down on dissenters, and Dering was silenced at Elizabeth's command; in Collinson's words, "[t]he first year of the Derings' married life can have brought them little peace" (Godly People 284). Before remarrying, Locke, now forty or perhaps older, had been a comfortably-off widow who had already done her own share for the good of the godly; it would have been understandable if she had sought a somewhat less-demanding union than that with a man several years younger than she and clearly caught up in the latest wave of religious controversy. Her marriage to Dering is testimony to her unabated fervor for the cause of religion, and to her comfort level with the company of a man of Knoxian spiritual temperament. According to Collinson, Locke even accepted her husband's role as admired advisor to other women, sharing a "sisterly relationship" with them (Godly People 284). Dering, however, was not of Knox's relatively hardy constitution: by mid-1575 he was suffering from terminal consumption, and in June of 1576 Anne Locke lost another husband, only five years after her first experience of widowhood (Collinson, "Role" 285).

There is another gap in our knowledge of Locke's life after the death of Edward Dering, but when she does surface again she appears to have chosen a more secure and quieter existence. Although the year of her third marriage is not known, she had become Mrs. Richard Prowse by 1583; this is revealed by the fact that in that year the English Puritan leader John Field, whom

Collinson refers to as a "restless opportunist" in matters of reformist propaganda, published a work of Knox's that had belonged to Locke ("Role" 284). Locke had evidently not given Field permission to print the piece, and presumably by way of placating her he dedicated the work to "Mrs. Anne Prouze." Locke's response to this impertinence is not recorded, but as Field urged her in the epistle to surrender any other bits of Knoxiana she might have for the good of the faithful, there has been speculation that she did give Field Knox's letters to her, thus setting them on the road to preservation for posterity.

The life led by Mrs. Richard Prowse was doubtless quite different from that of Mrs. Locke or Mrs. Dering. Her third husband, a widower, was a man of substance who took her to live in his native Devon, far from the bustling London in which Locke had grown up and lived for so many years. Richard Prowse is described by Collinson as "an Exeter draper and substantial figure in West Country affairs. . . . [He] was successively bailiff, sheriff, and alderman of Exeter, and mayor three times. He sat in Parliament in 1584 and showed a keen interest in anything which had to do with cloth" ("Role" 285). In current parlance, Locke had "married up," to a pillar of the community in a society comfortably settled into protestantism--at least for the moment. The last one hears of Locke is when the faith which she herself had always tried to support and promote is once again labouring under its efforts to assert itself with a vigour its adherents felt all England should embrace.

The 1590s saw the established Church in England determined to put down non-conforming elements, as it had been in Dering's final years.³⁵ The community was facing a harder time than it had in the 1570s, however: both John Field and the Earl of Leicester, the Queen's good friend and an important ally of the Puritan movement, died in 1588; also in that year began the publication of the scathing Martin Marprelate tracts, which attacked the Anglican bishops and brought down on dissenters the wrath of Elizabeth's Church and government. They were soon quick to break up the gatherings of non-conformist ministers that had begun to meet in various parts of the country. These circumstances apparently convinced Locke, three decades after her first foray into the publishing arena, to use her talents as translator, rhetorician and poet one final

time. In 1590 Locke's translation of Jean Taffin's Of the markes of the children of God, and of their comforts in afflictions was printed in London. This, like the 1560 Calvin work, was prefaced by a dedicatory epistle to a prominent protestant noblewoman--in this case, Anne Dudley, Countess of Warwick. As well, the Taffin text is followed by a poem entitled "The necessitie and benefite of affliction." Meant originally as a consolation for Calvinists living in the Low Countries, the tract probably appealed to Locke because she saw how her English translation could serve to comfort the persecuted godly in this their latest time of trial. Locke's sentiments were evidently shared by her countrymen, then and later, for the Taffin volume went through eight printings between 1590 and 1634 (Beilin, "Current Bibliography" 349).

Although this discussion may not address Locke's Taffin work in any depth, it is worthwhile to consider the circumstances under which Locke produced the volume. In 1590 she was approaching sixty years of age. She had been widowed twice, and her two surviving children were grown. She was now settled, apparently in some degree of comfort, miles away from the centre of conflict in London. Knox was dead, and perhaps the only friend she saw from her Geneva days was Christopher Goodman, who in 1583 came to Exeter to preach in the cathedral there, possibly drawn by Locke's presence in Devon (Collinson, "Role" 285). She could easily have remained in retirement from any public role for the remaining years of her life, but instead chose to use her abilities to do what she could for the cause--in a way, it should be noted, not entirely without risk. While Taffin was not deliberately provocative and inflammatory, as the Marprelate tracts had been, the power of the printed page was considerable as always, and Locke chose to disseminate words of encouragement to a community considered seditious at a time when tensions were high. As with her decision to travel to Geneva and her acceptance of Edward Dering's proposal, she committed herself decisively to a course of action that she felt was right, regardless of whether or not it was easy.

1590 marks the last the world hears of Locke. Richard Prowse was buried in Exeter in December 1608,³⁶ and the fact that there is no mention of Locke in his will, made 20 May 1607, would seem to indicate that she had predeceased him. She may in fact have been dead by 1595;

Charles Huttar notes that her husband took her hapless son Henry to court that year over a debt, and Huttar's quite reasonable inference is that Locke would likely have mediated between the two if she had been living at that time.³⁷ These and other details of the life of Anne Vaughan Locke Dering Prowse may come to light in future; for the moment, scholars are finally concerning themselves with a full critical evaluation of her writing.

It is, of course, misleading to think of the progress of what we might identify as proto-feminism as a steady upward curve from, for instance, the Middle Ages to our own time. English popular impressions of women and their capacities may have been harsher and more misogynistic during the Stuart dynasty of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when public opinion was informed by such models of womanhood as prostitute / royal mistress Nell Gwynn and the ill-educated Queen Anne, than they ever were during the reign of the erudite Elizabeth.³⁸ In the mid-sixteenth century, Anne Locke matured and lived in an England in which much was changing, but much in terms of societal (and legal) postures toward women was staying the same; one can, however, detect a curious tension between long-standing axioms of English (and, largely, European) society regarding women and the emerging sense in the Reformed--specifically for Locke, Calvinist--community that women, notwithstanding their weaknesses, were the spiritual equals of men. Women's lack of status in English law (and, again, throughout much of Europe), a matter remedied but slowly before the twentieth century, is well-known.³⁹ The accepted pattern of a woman's life dictated that she go from the care and authority of her father to those of her husband, with little or nothing in terms of guaranteed financial provision, or physical protection, for herself while she lived under subjection.⁴⁰ In the Reformation period, an Englishwoman who had never been married was, legally speaking, generally assumed to be awaiting marriage, as there was no longer any official recourse to the life of a religious order for single women, and thus every unmarried woman was simply a wife *in potentia*.⁴¹ Virtually the only circumstance under which a woman could hope to control her own life was that of widowhood, and that state was, of course, not without disadvantages, particularly if a woman's husband left an insubstantial estate and many children.⁴² As most widows, however, were made executors or administrators of

whatever estates their husbands did leave, they generally had a great deal more latitude than their single or married counterparts in terms of financial independence and the say they had in the disposal of money and assets pertaining to themselves and their dependent children (contingent, of course, upon the specific terms of a husband's will).⁴³ Women's lack of legal standing doubtless seemed only logical in Locke's time and later, at least to many English men, as women were generally believed to be vain, light-headed, deceitful lovers of gossip who best exhibited modesty by staying quiet and staying home. They were in need of "heads"--male relatives who could keep them on the straight-and-narrow path of obedience and temperance in all things, from which road they were so naturally inclined to stray.⁴⁴

In contrast to this attitude toward women and their capabilities came a strong endorsement of the spiritual worthiness of women and their roles from the theology of reformers like John Calvin.⁴⁵ Calvin says plainly in his commentary on the first epistle of Peter that "the hope of salvation . . . is offered by the Lord to [women] no less than to their husbands" (Commentaries 43: 100). Catholicism had not denied this in the past--Jane Dempsey Douglass points out that the patristic tradition did assert the spiritual equality of the sexes, among other things (79)--but this emphasis on women's access to God's grace and thus to salvation was particularly important because of the way in which early protestantism, as articulated perhaps most clearly in the thought of Calvin, cast the function of the Christian in relation to God. Achsah Guibbory has succinctly assessed the situation:

In some ways, the Protestant Reformation actually deepened the distance between women and the sacred. In getting rid of monastic orders and religious houses, it deprived women of a special form of sacred experience. In rejecting the adoration of the Virgin Mary and the female saints, it eliminated important models as well as objects for women's devotion. Moreover, Protestantism associated the "feminine" with the supposed "carnal idolatry" of Roman Catholicism. But Protestantism also had the potential to give women equal access with men to the sacred. All were "brethren" in God, all people could

know God through reading the Scriptures, and women as well as men could be touched by God's grace. (106)

Like the different, but significant, "female" presence offered to women within the old Roman Catholic structure, this recognition of women's need and right to "equal access with men to the sacred" leads to Lynette McGrath's general observation that "[w]ithin the discourse of Christianity, women have been allowed a limited autonomy to define themselves as subjects of their own experience" (341).

The notion of the "priesthood of all believers," endorsed by Luther and an essential tenet of Reformed theology, dictated that each Christian had a duty to forge and maintain a personal relationship with God, in an attempt to ascertain whether he or she were among the elect, destined to enjoy eternal life.⁴⁶ Although the church as institution was still very much a reality, its ministers charged with the vital duty of spreading God's Word, the church did not position itself as the sole and essential intermediary between the individual and God, the only interpreter of God's will, as the Catholic Church had done; in Douglass' words, "[m]en and women alike experienced a new sense of freedom from control by a clerical hierarchy and a new sense of dignity of the lay person" (84). While one had to accept that salvation could in no way be "earned" through good works, the very fervour of a Christian's desire for certainty about his or her fate was seen as a hopeful sign itself, and as the most natural way of discerning and living God's will; as Benjamin Reist writes, "'[p]iety,' or 'godliness' . . . characterises the life of all who would live in this relationship [with God]" (10). The new "priesthood" meant, among other things, that women in a growing number of Reformed congregations had "new freedom to participate in public worship," particularly in matters such as liturgical singing, an activity traditionally forbidden them in the Roman Catholic church (Douglass 87-88). Furthermore, Calvin's theology promoted the concept that anything and everything that a Christian did was to be done *soli Deo gloria*, to the glory of God alone--regardless of a person's gender or social station, his or her actions were offerings to God, evidence of the individual's desire to enter into and nurture a relationship with the Creator;⁴⁷ women's efforts in this respect were as valid as

men's.⁴⁸ God and the Christian's love for Him, born of the apprehension of the justification of sinners through Christ's sacrifice, were to be the centre of each Christian's life, and any person pursuing this life model could be reasonably sure of doing God's will.

What this represented for women like Anne Locke was an active call to a spirituality that was simultaneously integrated into a community of believers and personalised to an intense degree. It also may be seen to have presented a challenge to women who lived with the reality of a larger society that may have cared little about their status as co-inheritors of the Kingdom. How were the lines drawn for a woman like Locke? It is neither necessary nor desirable to review too many points of Reformed theology here, but a further brief examination of the pertinent areas in the thought of John Calvin, to whose Genevan community Locke belonged for eighteen months, and of the words and actions of John Knox, to whom she was so close, reveals much about the freedoms and restrictions Locke had to negotiate in the new world of early-Reformation England in which she lived--and wrote.⁴⁹

Knox is doubtless better-known (indeed, infamous) for his published views on women than is Calvin, although, as discussed below, many people in Knox's own time and later extrapolated from his writings to his life in a way that simply was not borne out by Knox's actions. Calvin, however, was himself as conservative and traditional as most men of his time when it came to assessment of certain of women's deficiencies, although his recorded comments on the matter are devoid of the vitriol people generally associate with Knox. In his commentary on Paul's first epistle to Timothy, for example, Calvin refers to "a vice to which women are almost always prone. . . . [E]xcessive eagerness and desire to be richly dressed" (Commentaries 41: 65-66); when dealing with the first Epistle of Peter, he continues on this theme, writing that when it comes to adornment, women are "much more curious [elaborate] and ambitious than they ought to be[.]" and warning about "the evil of vanity, to which women are subject" (Commentaries 43: 96). More substantially, Calvin follows Paul, and most of his own contemporaries, in matters of women's subjection to men in marriage: woman, Calvin asserts, was "formed to obey" and, further, "was doomed to servitude before she sinned" (Commentaries 41: 68-69). Elsewhere, he

presumes upon the consensus of his readers with the comment, "we know how outrageous a being is an imperious and a self-willed woman" (Commentaries 43: 97). Taken apart, these comments may seem somewhat at odds with Calvin's assertions that women are the spiritual equals of men—a point on which even St. Paul seems to equivocate at times, and on which Calvin stands even then, explaining away Paul's troublesome statements as best he can.⁵⁰ William Monter describes this theology as offering "an interesting mixture of female subordination and sexual equality" ("Women in Calvinist Geneva" 191). There is, however, no real contradiction evident when one takes into account Calvin's clear distinction between this fallen world and the perfection of the Kingdom, and what he considered necessary for the maintenance of the first and the attainment of the second.

Unlike Knox, Calvin was no revolutionary, willing to upset the current state of things at any cost in order to advance the triumph of the True Church on Earth; Douglass states plainly that Calvin "regarded social upheaval as a great danger to civilisation" (63),⁵¹ and thus he embraced what was generally seen as the "common" structure of human relations most conducive to harmony, such as the subjection of women to men, as a necessary evil in a post-lapsarian world.⁵² Humans require order, predictability, limits; God does not.⁵³ In distinguishing between the world of man and the world of God, Calvin was also careful to emphasise the difference between that which was necessary to salvation—things to which all Christians, male and female, needed to pay attention—and *adiaphora*, or indifferent things, matters which Calvin recognised as culturally determined and integral to good order in society, but not to the attainment of eternal life.⁵⁴ In fact, when one takes this into account, some of Calvin's unflattering observations on women seem diminished, for in this latter category he placed such things as the matter of dress for which he took women to task in his biblical commentaries—he ultimately asserted that "dress is an indifferent matter, (as all outward matters are,)" (Commentaries 41: 66)—and the related matter of women keeping their heads covered in public (Institutes 4.10.31). Interestingly, Calvin also categorised the matter of women's silence in church in this way, assured that St. Paul, in forbidding women to speak in church, "has merely in view what is becoming in a duly regulated

assembly" (Commentaries 37: 468); Calvin also says of woman that "there is a place where it is no less proper for her to speak than elsewhere to remain silent (Institutes 4.10.31). Above all, he was concerned with the maintenance of "decorum" in these matters (Commentaries 37: 355)--so as the sight of a bare-headed, preaching woman would scandalise the community, women should refrain from assuming such a stance in public.⁵⁵ Calvin did, however, seem willing to envision women speaking to small groups in private homes, making the assumption that Paul himself meant his instructions to imply this (Commentaries 37: 356). The prohibition on female preaching, for Calvin, has apparently little to do with the corrupting influence of a speaking woman, or the equating of a talkative woman with promiscuity,⁵⁶ or the placing of her own salvation in jeopardy, or the representation of some immediate and terrible threat to man's authority⁵⁷--the spectacle is simply inappropriate and potentially disruptive, and so should be avoided.

Even when speaking of women's subjection in marriage, Calvin is clear about the proper role to be played by men, who have been given the role of "head" in relation to their wives not so that they might use and abuse it for their own ends, but so that God's plan for the interdependence of the sexes may unfold as it should through the mutual love and respect of married people. The matter of mutuality runs vitally throughout Calvin's theology: as Reist says, "[i]t is not too much to say that for Calvin the only possible understanding of God and humanity is a *relational* one" (10, emphasis Reist's); and, just as one cannot conceive of humanity without God, so one cannot conceive of man without woman. When writing on this in relation to marriage, Calvin may startle some modern readers with his eloquent and enlightened defense of the married state as a locus for the support and preservation of human happiness--men's *and* women's--in a harsh world. In his commentary on the first epistle to the Corinthians, Calvin states that married couples "ought to be connected together by mutual benevolence, for the one cannot do without the other." He goes on to affirm women's inherent value as persons, and the incompleteness of one sex without the other: "The pious . . . acknowledge that the male sex is but half of the human race. . . . Thus the man has no standing without the woman, for that would be the head severed from the body; nor has the woman without the man, for that were a body without a head" (Commentaries 37: 359-360). In

his commentary on the first epistle of Peter, Calvin is even more specific about the foundation on which marriage should be built: Peter, he says, requires "that the husbands honour their wives. For nothing destroys the friendship of life more than contempt; nor can we really love any but those whom we esteem; for love must be connected with respect" (Commentaries 43: 99). Clearly, this is not a notion of marriage based solely on procreative necessity, or even solely on the perpetuation of social order; for Calvin, in theory at least, marriage should be a union of two people with regard for each other's integrity and dignity as human beings.⁵⁸ In this model, women are indeed subject to their husbands, but that is not to be seen as an invitation to men to abuse their power; for "dominion over their wives is not given them, except on this condition, that they exercise authority prudently" (Commentaries 43: 99). Indeed, Calvin even writes sympathetically about another of women's perceived defects, timidity, in the context of their genuine vulnerability in the married state: women "fear lest by their subjection [to their husbands], they should be more reproachfully treated" (Commentaries 43: 98); he then assures them that Peter encourages them not to fear this fate, as obedience will always be most pleasing to God and the surest way to their own security.⁵⁹ Calvin also sees Paul in 1 Corinthians as advocating an absolute equality between the sexes when it comes to the preservation of marital fidelity: "In other things . . . husband and wife differ, both as to duty and as to authority; in this respect the condition of both is alike--as to the maintaining of conjugal fidelity" (Commentaries 37: 226). Critic Gary Waller can thus state that "[t]he Puritan emphasis on the woman as the helpmeet in marriage and the insistence on domesticity as a proper, semiautonomous, realm of activity . . . [make it] arguable that such developments marked, despite their intentions perhaps, a real breakthrough" in the perception of women's worth (251).

In affirming women's spiritual equality with men and their active role in the preservation of conjugal harmony, Calvin is not showing himself a complete radical; patristic tradition, as mentioned, had at least affirmed these things in theory (Douglass 73-79). It is Calvin's insistence on these matters in his writings, combined with his overall emphasis on women's inherent dignity as human beings, worthy of participating in the sacraments and tending to their own spiritual well-

being, that represent a fresh angle that must have appealed to women like Locke, who could see here an indication of a well-defined place carved out for them as valued members of the Calvinist community. Recalling the point that every person had the potential to offer something as evidence of the glory of the Creator, Douglass points out that "[t]he doctrine of Christian vocation elevated the religious status of the housewife as well as the cobbler" (84),⁶⁰ and thus women were able to see their own role and duties as not only pleasing to God, but of equal value with those of others, including men. Women were to have their due as wives and Christians.

Unfortunately, the gap between theology and practice, both in Geneva and England, was wide when it came to actual change in women's lot. Although the Consistory, established in the 1540's by Calvin as "the means by which Reformed morality and discipline were imposed on the rank and file in Geneva" (Watt 429), did reflect Calvin's pronouncements on women's due in marriage by introducing the possibility of divorce in cases of adultery or desertion, very few divorces were in fact granted in Geneva in Calvin's time. In other areas, Monter finds that the community did poorly in Locke's time when it came to improving educational opportunities for girls, but he writes with approval of Geneva's long-standing even-handedness in dealing with "matrimonial business" (secret engagements, children who married against their parents' will) and with adults guilty of sexual offences such as adultery: "The important feature is that the Consistory tried to enforce its legislation fairly and thus gave as much trouble to men as to women, despite its patriarchal composition. . . . At no time did this Calvinist patriarchy regulate female sexuality much more severely than male sexuality" ("Women in Calvinist Geneva" 199). Sadly, this fairness did not always extend to affording women much protection against abusive spouses: Jeffrey Watt points out that "Calvin and other reformers were concerned that men not use *excessive* violence toward their wives—a degree of force was tolerated both by magistrates and by popular opinion" (436, emphasis Watt's); Watt then goes on to cite the instance of a lumberjack who, in 1542, "beat his wife so severely that he put out one of her eyes," yet went away with only a lecture from the Consistory and from the Petit Conseil, Geneva's city council and tribunal.⁶¹ This was the state of things in Geneva, presumably the model for the ultimate

Christian community. In England, as discussed above, the status quo held when it came to women: they might be the equals of men before God, but not before the law. Thus Locke's faith presented the necessity for men to treat women with respect (at least in theory), and for women to participate in worship and bear witness to their faith, at the same time as the force of social tradition, reflected in law and influencing even Calvin himself, dictated that women should not expect their social roles to be re-defined or their burdens lightened.

We have seen evidence of the personal bond that existed between Locke and another influential reformer, John Knox. Theologically speaking, Knox was certainly a passionate Calvinist himself—he had of course fled to the haven of Geneva during the Marian years, living and working in what he estimated to be "the maist perfyte schoole of Chryst that ever was in the erth since the dayis of the Apostillis" (letter XXXIII in Laing 4: 240). Knox, however, was of a markedly different temperament than Calvin in both his writings and his personality.⁶² Knox biographer and historian Richard Greaves assesses him charitably as simply "an emotional man" (Greaves 161)—a characterisation borne out positively in the letters to Locke. Others, however, might be inclined to describe Knox as a hothead—this is the man who reduced Mary Queen of Scots to tears with his harangues on more than one occasion (although it later suited him to take as his second wife Mary's seventeen-year-old cousin, Margaret Stuart, when Knox himself was fifty).⁶³ Combined with this bent was Knox's strong identification of religion with what we would now call nationalism, and out of this combination came his most public, and certainly most contentious, opinions on women.

The first version of the Scottish kirk's Confession of Faith was completed by Knox in 1560. In the section of the Confession dealing with "the Creatioun of Man," it is stated that "We confesse and acknowledge this oure God to haif creatit Man, (to witt, our fyrst father Adam) of quhom also God formit the Woman to his awin image and similitude" (Laing 2: 97). When this document was printed in 1561, the clause referring to the creation of woman in God's image was omitted. As we have seen, this was a point on which Calvin himself came down on the side of women, doubtless considering it *sine qua non* for any claims they might have to spiritual equality

with men. This small but disturbing omission seems to underline a fundamental difference between the theological approaches of Knox and Calvin to women's place in the Divine scheme, but it has always been overshadowed by Knox's far more notorious composition, The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women, published two years before the initial completion of the Confession.

Susan Felch has commented that "The First Blast has attracted few defenders since it was published" ("Rhetoric" 805 n. 1), and certainly Knox himself suffered from the fallout provoked by his diatribe for many years after its publication. Greaves reports that in 1568, ten years after the treatise's initial appearance, Knox complained to a friend that "men 'yitt storme' against The First Blast" (167); it elicited a number of published rebuttals from people of varying political and religious stripes, including one written by Richard Bertie, second husband to the dowager Duchess of Suffolk, to whom Locke dedicated the epistle that prefaces her Calvin translation (Greaves 254 n. 30). There is neither space nor reason here to re-argue the entire matter of the tract, and there is certainly no intention of "defending" it; however, in view of Knox's closeness to (and doubtless influence on) Locke, and his own importance to the development of Reformation thought in Locke's environment, it is necessary to discuss the essentials of the matter in order to determine whether or not Knox would have presented to Locke a more confused or restricted role for herself in her faith than that defined by Calvin.

There is evidence of genuine affection and regard for Anne Locke in Knox's letters to her, and the fact is that Knox looked to various women for support throughout much of his life. He enjoyed a particular friendship with Elizabeth Bowes, a daughter of Sir Roger Aske who had married into a powerful northern family and eventually alienated her husband and neighbours by becoming a fervent protestant in a part of England that was only cosmetically so. The relationship between Mrs. Bowes and Knox was so devoted that it inspired unkind gossip on the part of Knox's Catholic detractors even after Knox married her daughter Marjory.⁶⁴ This marriage, which produced two sons, was by all accounts happy enough. After Marjory's death in 1560, Knox, as mentioned above, married the youthful Margaret Stuart in 1564, and the marriage

produced three daughters (Ridley 383-384, 432, 518). While still a bachelor, he had established his friendship with both Locke and her sister-in-law Rose Hickman, whose tender care of Knox while they harboured him in the early 1550's is testified to in his letters. It is also clear from the letters that Knox saw Locke as a friend whose spiritual journey was as significant as his own--to wit, the advice he offers her in response to her questions and crises. In Felch's words, "[f]or Knox, the Christian soul, engaged in its battle against the devil and surrounded by constant temptations to idolatry, is an essentially sexless being" ("Rhetoric" 807-808). In spiritual matters, Knox showed a consistent willingness to accept women and their efforts as legitimate and worthy.

It cannot be denied, however, that in The First Blast--which was published anonymously but was rapidly identified as Knox's work--women are generally characterised in the most negative terms tradition had to offer, and certainly in a more derogatory tone than one finds in Calvin. As Knox's concern is ostensibly the problem of women rulers, he initially describes women as "blind[,] "weak, . . . sick and impotent[,] "foolish, mad, and frenetic" specifically when "compared unto man in bearing of authority" (Knox 37-80). Later, however, he speaks unqualifiedly of "the foolish fondness and cowardice of women[,] and the "vanity[,] ambition[,] "pride" and "avarice" that must obtain in any woman's kingdom, for "[t]he law doth . . . pronounce womankind to be most avaricious" (44). Knox mines classical and patristic writers--the "law" makers--by way of proving the legitimacy of his assertions about women, and he seems to find more than sufficient support for his opinions everywhere he turns. He sees no reason to disagree with ancient precedents, even to the point of confirming that a mother cannot properly claim to have power over her own sons (presumably even if they are small children) (44). Knox claims that history bears ample witness to "the imperfections of women," "their natural weakness and inordinate appetites" (45), which afflictions, apparently, affect women generally, not just those who presume to rule. Among his copious quotations from the ancients is Tertullian's unvarnished declaration to women: "Thou art the port and gate of the devil" (49). There is in The First Blast little against which to balance such vituperation, save a statement like "I except such as God, by singular privilege and for certain causes known only to himself, hath exempted

from the common rank of women" (43). Unfortunately, within the text Knox does not really seem to accept the possibility of such exceptions in his own time.

The presence of this sort of rhetoric throughout The First Blast makes it difficult to accept the argument sometimes offered in Knox's (qualified) defence that his anger was directed solely against women rulers, whose usurpation of male authority in the very act of ruling was generally accepted to have been prohibited by scripture.⁶⁵ Indeed, female rule was considered both anomalous and ominous to most at the time, including Calvin, who wrote in his commentary on 1 Corinthians that "[i]t is the dictate of common sense, that female government is improper and unseemly" (Commentaries 37: 468). There is no question that this is indeed the main thrust of the text--Knox consistently returns to the notion that a woman with ruling authority is "more than a monster in nature" throughout The First Blast. The character portrait drawn here of womankind in general, however, makes it hard to ignore the charge that there is a much wider-ranging misogyny at work in this tract, largely untempered by any idea of woman's temporal value or spiritual worthiness. Knox does affirm the right of women to possess any inheritance left to them lawfully by their fathers, but insists that they may not succeed to any office (70); he also acknowledges the Biblical example of Deborah, she who "judged Israel," but explains away any notion of her authority over men by noting that she claimed no sovereignty herself, but acted purely as God's agent⁶⁶--and even so, God elevated her solely "to confound and ashame all men of that age, because they had for the most part declined from his true obedience" (67). When taken on its own, there is little in the hectoring tone of The First Blast to soften the image of Knox as one who had little true regard for women.

It is true that Knox was far from alone in his age in expressing negative opinions about gynecocracy. Greaves cites the works of men like Juan Luis Vives, Sir David Lyndsay, George Buchanan and Montaigne, all of whom lined up with Calvin's own opinion on the subject of "female government" (157-158). It is also true that Knox was plagued by "mischievous Maries" before and after the publication of The First Blast (Greaves 66): Mary Tudor's reign in England had forced him to leave behind that country and such friends as Anne Locke, while Mary of Guise

before her had necessitated Knox's exile from his Scottish homeland during her regency for yet another Mary, her daughter Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots.⁶⁷ It is perhaps understandable that the presence of these women, all of whom were Catholic and all of whom meant trouble for Knox, gave the reformer what Greaves terms "an anti-Marian fixation" (160). It is not difficult to believe that Knox saw in this unusual preponderance of women rulers, all of them Papists (Maries aside, there were also examples like that of the influential Catherine de Medici, dowager queen of France), a dark future for Europe. However, while his outburst against gynecocracy and the attendant broader misogyny of The First Blast may not have been unusual, Knox's perceived advocacy of rebellion against these monarchs made many around him genuinely uncomfortable. Although Knox had consulted Calvin himself, among others, on the problem of female rule, there was clearly a chasm between Knox and his fellow reformers when it came to the issue of how subjects should respond to the matter. Calvin agreed that the "improper and unseemly" nature of gynecocracy marked the phenomenon as a sign of God's displeasure: if the Almighty wished to punish a people, he set a woman over them. Regardless of whether a queen were a Jezebel or a rare Deborah, however, Calvin would not hear arguments in favour of rebellion. Given Calvin's abiding belief in earthly order, and in the chaos that it kept at bay, he could hardly be expected to endorse Knox's declarations that the nobility in any kingdom ruled by a woman "ought without delay to remove from authority all such persons as by usurpation, violence or tyranny [i.e. any ruling woman] do possess the same[.]" or that the people "ought to remove from honor and authority that monster against nature (so call I a woman . . . against nature reigning above man)" (First Blast 75). In citing approvingly the deposition and murder of Athaliah in the same passage, Knox moves even farther away from the position of Calvin and many others, such as Heinrich Bullinger, who saw in such extremism only danger and disaster (Greaves 158).

So far apart were Calvin and Knox on this matter that, together with his fellow reformer Theodore Beza, Calvin banned the sale of The First Blast in Geneva, along with that of Christopher Goodman's How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyd (Greaves 166). As is well-known, Knox's unfortunate timing with The First Blast meant that the protestant Elizabeth was on

the throne of England by the time the offensive tract was published; Calvin, eager to cultivate friendly ties with an England that was once again well-disposed to the Reformed cause, found it necessary to distance himself from Knox's work.⁶⁸ After Calvin dedicated his commentaries on Isaiah to Elizabeth and found them greeted by the queen with little enthusiasm, Calvin wrote Sir William Cecil, the queen's secretary, to make it clear that Knox's stand on gynecocracy was not to be made synonymous with Geneva's. While female government was unusual and generally undesirable, Calvin asserted, there were exceptions to the rule; and at all events, "it would not be lawful to unsettle the governments which are ordained by the peculiar providence of God" (qtd. in Greaves 159). Greaves quotes Calvin as referring to Knox's "thoughtless arrogance" in writing The First Blast (160). It was an arrogance Knox would stand by all his life; unlike Goodman, who eventually recanted, Knox never officially tempered the vehemence of his position on female rule (Greaves 167).

The differences between Knox and his contemporaries when it came to the issue of women and power were mostly matters of degree: few saw gynecocracy as normal or good, but Knox's hot rhetoric and his truly alarming endorsement of rebellion, combined with an irritating reiteration of much of the anti-feminist polemic inherited by his age, served to brand him as a misogynistic breed apart for his generation and ever after. As well, when it comes to a comparison of the attitudes of Knox and Calvin toward women wielding virtually any kind of authority, Greaves points out that "Calvin himself clearly recognised that Knox's doctrine of authority was more rigid than his own" (16). Where Calvin saw *adiaphora*, or showed a willingness to recognise certain matters of gender and authority as culturally determined, Knox usually saw unchangeable Divine law, ordained for eternity. This necessarily makes him appear uncompromising in his writings, even when the opinions of the men around him, Calvin included, do not differ greatly from Knox's in the essentials. Despite all of this, however, it is clear that much in Knox's life, aside from his writings, reveals his long-standing attachment to and regard for women--women who were not, of course, either queens or papists, but who were presumably vulnerable to the myriad defects of the sex as outlined by Knox himself in The First Blast. Once

again, contradiction, to one degree or another, seemed the byword for the age when it came to the issue of women and their worth.

It is not known whether Anne Locke read The First Blast. She was living in Geneva at the time of its publication, and so presumably had no access there to the banned text, or to that of Goodman (whose presumed friendship with Locke may have brought him to the West Country to preach many years after the Marian exile, according to Collinson). Locke must have been aware of the argument of The First Blast, however, and known that the work that was drawing so much opprobrium upon its author had been written by her good friend. It is quite likely that Locke would even have agreed with Knox on the matter of gynecocracy, at least when it came to the woman who was Knox's primary target in The First Blast, Mary Tudor. Aside from the general assumption of the age that female rule was unnatural--and there is no reason to think that this assumption was not shared by a good number of women--there was the fact that Mary Tudor had been the general cause of upheaval and exile for the majority of English in Geneva; as well, as Locke makes clear in her epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk (herself a Marian exile in Lithuania) that appears in the Calvin volume, "Popery" in any form was to be regarded as the greatest of evils by all true Christians; thus the Catholic Queen Mary was rendered as odious to Locke and others of her sect as to Knox. Whether Locke would have espoused the notion of just rebellion against such a monarch, or assented to the more general characterisations of womankind contained in The First Blast, is another matter. The fact that she and Knox continued their correspondence for several years after the publication of the tract would seem to indicate that it did not disrupt their friendship.

What is certain is that protestant communities on the Continent had, since the early days of the Reformation, seen examples of women assuming roles and speaking out in ways that might not have met with Knox's unqualified approbation. During the 1520's, one Katherine Zell, "wife of the first Reformed minister to marry in Strasbourg" (Douglass 85; DeBoer 237-238), was publishing a defense of married clergy, advising Strasbourg officials on ways to improve conditions in the city's hospital, and, shortly before her own death, conducting "an unauthorised

funeral service for a dead Schwenckfeldian woman whose husband was not willing to let the pastor announce her apostasy from the true faith" (Douglass 87). Later, in the 1530's in Geneva, Marie Dentière, a former abbess and probably the wife of the pastor Anthoine Fromment, published "the first history of the Genevan Reformation" and may have preached to local nuns in an attempt to convert them (Douglass 22, 100). A contemporary of Dentière's, Claudine Levet, also seems to have preached publicly, to an appreciative audience of both women and men (Douglass 102). These and other accounts of women's participation in (and, in some instances, resistance to [Douglass 99-101; Watt 432-435]) the Reformation in Geneva and elsewhere indicate that by the time Locke arrived in Geneva in the late 1550's, there was a well-established trend of women taking active roles in the spiritual life of their communities, sometimes in ways that pushed the boundaries of the conventional considerably--witness the funeral conducted by Zell. Of course, certain phenomena experienced in the early stages of any process of great change sometimes prove the exception rather than the rule as time goes on and patterns settle, and the Geneva that Locke knew was not home to ordained women preachers or female city administrators; as discussed, the social status quo was generally maintained there, as it had been for generations throughout Europe. Change had come, however, and Locke participated in the process in a way earlier embraced by Zell and Dentière--by publishing. Douglass's assessment of Dentière's attitude toward her writing, as revealed in a small volume of religious and proto-feminist pieces dedicated to Marguerite of Navarre, could easily apply as well to Locke and her works, both poetry and translation: "It seems that she [Dentière] has so internalised the Reformed teaching of the freedom of the Christian . . . that she feels called to write and speak, knowing full well that these roles are neither ecclesiastically nor culturally approved for women" (103). Like Locke, Dentière had been careful about author identification: Douglass notes that both Dentière's book on the Reformation, The War and Deliverance of the City of Geneva (1536), and her work addressed to Marguerite (1539), "were published anonymously, though the second states that she is a woman" (Douglass 103). Like Dentière, Locke, as we shall see, would learn to balance her desire to speak out on matters that touched her faith with the need to wrap her public voice in a

protective veil. She learned to negotiate the space between the rapidly changing world of the private Christian, who must testify to God's operation in her life at all times and always work to the utmost of her capacity to advance His kingdom on earth, and the larger world of the public voice, the published work--a world that gave no clear sanction to women to operate within it.⁶⁹

If Reformed theology decreed that women were the spiritual equals of men, but subordinate to them according to the imperfect order of a fallen world, then how were ordinary women--those without the particular outspokenness of a Katherine Zell, for instance--expected to express their beliefs both appropriately and fully? Calvin encouraged women to embrace their subordinate earthly roles without fear--indeed, with dignity--confident in the knowledge that their everyday activities and service to their families, if rendered in the true spirit of love, were evidence of God's grace in their lives as surely as anything done by any man. But for all protestants, early Reformed Christianity was above all about the Word--hearing, reading and reflecting on Scripture were seen to be vitally important to salvation.⁷⁰ As William Perkins would write during Locke's lifetime, "[t]he onelie ordinarie meanes to attaine faith by, is the word preached: which must bee heard, remembered, practised, and continuallie hid in the heart" (D1). Attending service, having access to the Bible and reading it, and engaging in "spiritual exercises" such as private meditation were all ways of nurturing one's relationship with God and thus discerning one's place among the Elect, destined for eternal life; indeed, the very desire to engage in these activities and secure this knowledge (to the extent that that was possible) was seen as a hopeful sign of one's election.⁷¹ Each Christian had an active role to play in his or her spiritual life, a belief which stood in opposition to what Reformers saw as the passive role played by adherents of the Roman faith, who were supposedly able to discharge their spiritual obligations through the repeated observation of rituals,⁷² and who had their relationships with the Creator mediated by the clergy in all matters. Reformed Christians believed that, while nothing anyone could do could prove a person worthy of God's mercy, everything one did represented a response to that mercy, a personal witness to one's awareness of it. The importance of this personal witness was, for early protestants, summarised in the words of Paul, here taken from the Geneva text of 1560: "For if

thou shalt *confesse with thy mouth* the Lord Jesus, and shalt beleve in thine heart, that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man beleveth unto righteousness, and *with the mouth* man confesseth to salvation" (Romans 10: 9-10, emphasis added). The marginal gloss to verse 10 in the 1560 Geneva reinforces the necessity of bearing witness through one's speech: "That is, the way to be saved is to beleve with the heart that we are saved onely by Christ, and to confesse the same before the worlde."

The need to bear witness to the action of God's grace expressed itself not only through the conduct and worship of believers, but also through other endeavours, particularly those designed to spread God's Word and make it as much a part of the popular idiom as possible. Sermons, meditations on sin or on God's mercy, Scripture-based devotional poetry, Psalm paraphrase--various of these exercises took on new potential for a greater number of people as the new religion took root. Part of this impulse was intended generally to counter what was regarded by some as the corrupting influence of popular secular songs. Miles Coverdale's 1539 volume Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes drawn out of the Holy Scripture featured "metrical selections from scriptures--both close paraphrases and free elaborations--offering these as a substitute for licentious popular ballads and secular songs and sonnets" (Lewalski, Protestant Poetics 33).⁷³ Lewalski also states that the title page of the ubiquitous Sternhold-Hopkins' psalter, which first appeared in 1562 and remained for years the standard versified songbook of the English church, "presents the Psalms as a wholesome substitute for licentious secular lyrics" (Protestant Poetics 40). The English must have taken to heart the wishes of Coverdale and his ilk, for Hannay notes that by 1580, "Anthony Gilby [translator of Beza's Psalms] was quite concerned that psalms were being sung more 'for fashion sake, then for good deuotion and with vnderstanding'" ("House-confined maids" 45), and Anne Lake Prescott also speaks of differences developing by the early seventeenth century "between those who wanted to infuse secular life with the sacred . . . and those who wanted to protect the holy, to keep some places and times free from daily sweat and smudge" (199).

Regardless of any eventual backlash or misdirection, however, the desire to do something as general as offer ordinary people wholesome alternatives to their usual folk-song fare meshed well with the protestant imperative to bear constant witness to the truth of the Kingdom. As well, although throughout the Renaissance and later it remained common for written works, devotional and otherwise, to be circulated in manuscript form among small numbers of people, the proliferation of the printing press in the sixteenth century meant increased potential for dissemination of printed works of all sorts, including those of a religious nature, and thus provided greater scope for the various sorts of testimony given by the "godly." As Lewalski describes it, there was now an "important new factor introduced by the Reformation --an overwhelming emphasis on the written word as the embodiment of divine truth" (Protestant Poetics 6); and just as the written word of the Bible revealed divine truth to Christians, so too, in England, was the written word of Christians used to spread the news of that truth to others.⁷⁴

It should be noted that, while it is virtually impossible to determine English literacy levels for the sixteenth century with any accuracy, there is no doubt that the majority of women were illiterate--although as Diane Willen points out, many gentle- and noblewomen may have been able to read but not write (145-146).⁷⁵ A woman like Locke, who could clearly read and write in at least three languages (English, French and Latin), would certainly have been rare, especially among the merchant class. Calvinist doctrine insisted that "those who are saved have an obligation to lead others to God" and thus both spoken and written faith testimony "becomes not a privilege but an obligation" (Hannay, "House-confined maids" 50); Locke's work may have been motivated by a sense that the onus on her, as an erudite supporter of the new faith, to do what she could to spread the Word was even more pronounced than it would have been for a zealous woman who was able only to memorise what others read or preached to her. Fully-literate protestants were needed to disseminate printed material to others of the godly who could read; those people in turn were needed to help educate the illiterate. As Locke herself wrote late in her life in her epistle to the Countess of Warwick, in a now frequently-quoted passage that reveals her awareness of the restrictions placed on her as a woman: "because great things by

reason of my sex I may not doo . . . that which I may, I ought to doo" (A4). True conviction dictated that, even within the circumscribed world of Christian women, there was work to be done.

This aspect of the "new" faith--the need for ordinary people to have access to Scripture and various published reflections on it⁷⁶--was never unproblematic in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England, as suppression of dissenters, and, later, war, indicate. Even well before the Reformation, in the wake of John Wyclif's translation of the Bible into English, scripture in the vernacular had stirred controversy in England; Hannay, Kinnamon and Brennan note that

[s]ome Psalms in English had circulated in manuscript Books of Hours during the second half of the fourteenth century, demonstrating the influence of the Wyclif translation, but the "Constitution of Clarendon" (1408) ordered that "no one shall in the future translate on his own authority any text of the holy scripture into the English tongue." The injunction was effectively enforced until Tyndale's publication of the New Testament in English on the Continent, begun at Cologne in 1525 and completed at Worms in 1526. (3)

In the early years of the Reformation in England such translation was immediately contentious. Henry VIII, for all his repudiation of Rome and its authority, was no radical when it came to theology, and his naturally conservative stance was strengthened in the wake of the discussion and disagreement among the laity provoked by the exposition of the Great Bible, which the King had ordered placed in English churches for all to read when it first appeared in 1539 (Willen 144). Antonia Fraser, writing of the reforming zeal of Henry's last queen, Catherine Parr, notes the reactionary bent of Henrician legislation passed in reaction to the Great Bible experiment: in 1543, "[t]he Act for the Advancement of the True Religion stated that 'no women nor artificers, journeymen, serving men of the degree of yeoman or under husbandmen nor labourers' could in future read the Bible 'privately or openly'" (Wives 380). Although a clause in the Act did allow aristocratic and noblewomen to read Scripture, provided they did so privately (Fraser, Wives 380;

Willen 144), a woman of Anne Locke's merchant station would presumably have been forbidden her Bible;⁷⁷ according to Willen, however, the English government "could not . . . effectively enforce this legislative prohibition" (144).

Much changed during the reign of the young Edward VI, but the powerful potential of accessible Scripture, available in the vernacular to anyone who could read--or, in the case of the many illiterate English, anyone who could listen to another read--was always recognised,⁷⁸ as was the potential influence on ordinary believers of the various devotional texts written by other believers; what was also recognised was the fact that this power and influence might not always operate to the advantage of the crown and the order it wished to preserve.⁷⁹ As Hannay puts it, "[t]ranslation of sermons and commentaries was seen as an act of devotion, but could also be a political activity. Paradoxically, translation was subversive, since it undercut the authority of the established church by enabling even the lower classes to interpret scripture, but it was also a form of control, since the commentaries gave the correct Protestant interpretation" ("Unlock" 25). Thus the imperative for reformed Christians to bear witness to their faith immediately thrust matters of religion more firmly than ever into the arena of the political the moment people were encouraged to read the Bible on their own, or listen to others read from it. Queen Catherine herself nearly brought about her own demise partly through her book The Lamentation of a Sinner. Fraser writes that the book "does have a distinct doctrinal slant" and that its "strongest message . . . is the crucial need for the laity to benefit from personal study of the Bible" (Wives 380);⁸⁰ when the religious conservatives on Henry VIII's fractious council later attempted to bring about the downfall of their more reform-minded colleagues (Catherine's brother William Parr among them), the Queen and her book were swept up in the struggle. She saved herself by, in fact, declining to debate religion with Henry, stating that women should learn from their husbands, and flattering the King's much-vaunted theological expertise (Fraser, Wives 388-389).

Catherine Parr's run-in with her husband and conservative religious forces in England in the mid-1540's highlights a problem faced by zealous Englishwomen of reforming tendencies throughout much of the sixteenth century. While anyone speaking or writing on religious issues

at the time risked censure for meddling with affairs deemed at least partly political, women faced added strictures of a largely social and cultural nature: that is, they were expected to keep quiet. The first edition of Thomas Becon's The book of matrimony, published in 1564, expressed an opinion on women and silence that was both popular and enduring:

" . . . there is nothing that so garnisheth a woman as silence. Few words in a woman is ever most commendable: even as nothing doth more discommend a woman then [sic] the multitude of words, according to the common proverb: a woman should be seen and not heard. It is good for every honest woman to remember this saying of our saviour Christ, *that at the day of judgement we shall render an accompt of every idle word that we have spoken*" [Matt. 12].

(qtd. in Aughterson 112, emphasis in text)

As well, Guibbory writes that "the 'Homilie of the state of Matrimonie', read regularly in every church during Elizabeth's and James's reigns, encouraged the silence of women, not only in the church but even within the home" (108).⁸¹ As with so many other issues touching public perception of the feminine at this time, the matter of women's speaking / silence was sexualised; Elizabeth Harvey remarks that, "[e]xamined within the cultural discourses of the [early modern] period, woman's voice or tongue is seen to be imbricated with female sexuality, just as silence is 'bound up' with sexual continence" (4).⁸² Mary Ellen Lamb also notes this, and believes that "[p]erhaps the most debilitating limitations placed upon potential women authors of the Renaissance proceeded from the sexualization of women's speech, even more than of their written word. . . . Women's speech, like Eve's, was pervaded by a dangerous sexuality requiring strict containment to prevent moral damage" (4-5). Regardless of a woman's religious persuasion, then, the general expectation was that she would remain the most private of persons. Her authority, such as it was, was to be confined to the domestic sphere, the ordering of her household and the tending of her children, with private and personal devotions integrated into her day, if possible (Crawford 78-79), and of course regular attendance at church.⁸³ As Lamb puts it, "women were,

in theory, to be enclosed within their houses, with their doors, their mouths, and their bodies closed off to all but their proper owners" (6).

Earlier in this discussion, examination of Calvin and the Pauline texts to which he (and others) so often turned showed how thoroughly orthodox the exhortation of women to silence was, although Calvin did believe in the worthiness of women's humble efforts within accepted boundaries. Even Catherine Parr herself, writing of "the so-called 'Children of Light', those who were 'so pure and holy' that they could simply read the scriptures without need for further instruction[.]" alluded to Paul's directions in 1 Corinthians 35 in Lamentation of a Sinner: "such holy people, if they were 'women married', should learn from St. Paul 'to be obedient to their husbands, and to keep silence in the congregation, and to learn of their husbands at home'" (Fraser, Wives 381).⁸⁴ Especially in an age before England had experienced the imperious glory of Elizabeth I and her reign,⁸⁵ there was little notion of a "public" woman, or, more accurately, a woman with a public persona, unless the public signified the notorious; the exception would of course be queens consort, but here again their characterisations tended toward either the domestic ideal (Catherine of Aragon, renowned for piety, suffering, and sewing Henry VIII's shirts) or the misogynist nightmare (Elizabeth I's mother Anne Boleyn, supposed adulteress and witch). Indeed, Queen Catherine Parr found herself in trouble essentially because she, however tentatively, ventured into the public sphere by writing and publishing a book, and so did not heed her own advice simply to "keep silence" and "learn of her husband." Good women were, by definition, private--withdrawn from the world outside the home, and ideally silent, invisible. As Willen discusses, the influence of women on religious matters within the home may indeed have increased--in some cases, considerably--as the Reformation removed the parish priest and the emphasis shifted to family worship, within which structure wives and mothers could presumably make their opinions known, albeit within a solidly patriarchal framework;⁸⁶ Lynette McGrath has also asserted that "in the Protestant sects of the Renaissance . . . [women] were often assigned primary responsibility for the spiritual welfare of their families, with recurrent comments throughout the latter part of the Renaissance by male as well as female writers acknowledging

that women equal men as spiritually enlightened and developed beings" (341). Outside the domestic sphere, however, there was no normalised space for them in religious debate.

For Englishwomen to attempt to participate in public religious discourse through publication thus carried a two-fold risk: religious works could wander into dangerously controversial political territory, regardless of who wrote them, as Catherine Parr discovered; and women's very presence as authors could be seen to contravene conventions of modesty, which necessarily demanded that women have no public voice. Adding force to this latter point was the English ambivalence in Locke's time and later about the propriety of authorship in general. Although the ability to compose poetry, for example, had long been considered desirable in a courtier, this talent was to be integrated as just one aspect of the courtly persona; it was not to be considered a profession, and few would have cared to be identified primarily and publicly as "poets," even a good deal later than 1560, when Locke's sonnet sequence appeared.⁸⁷ Discussing the perceived impropriety of publishing one's writing, Wendy Wall points to the way in which matters of authorship and gender were, in fact, automatically tangled together in the rhetoric of the modesty topos so popular with writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In mocking Thomas Dekker's statement that he had no wish to be identified as "a Man in Print," Anthony Scoloker, in 1604, refers to Dekker as having "under-gone a Pressing"--that is, having had his works published--and then "protesting for this poore Infant of his Brayne, as it was the price of his Virginitee borne into the world in tears" (qtd. in Wall 1). Wall notes that "in Elizabethan slang, to 'undergo a pressing' is to act the lady's part and be pressed by a man, an act associated here with the loss of authorial virginity. Publishing is widely represented, Scoloker claims, as if it were a bastardized birthing, a scandalous breach denoting forced entry into the public sphere" (1-2). Ann Baynes Coiro also picks up the thread twining together publication and gender in her comment that "John Milton's late and agonised decision to begin to print his writing . . . is also [to Milton] a decision to become somehow a *man* at last" (359, emphasis Coiro's). Coiro also observes more generally that "writers like Philip Sidney or John Donne were extremely leery of appearing in print for fear of seeming common and . . . carelessly clever" (358). As this was,

then, an activity in which men sometimes hesitated to take part for fear of being identified as authors and thus becoming a sort of vulgar public property, it is hardly surprising that women were not encouraged to "undergo a pressing" of this sort themselves, whether in Dekker and Milton's times or in Locke's own. Lamb summarises the situation by saying that "[w]hile men struggled with choosing or adapting a voice from a range of often conflicting authorial models, cultural prohibitions purporting to contain women's sexuality threatened, in theory, to render the term *woman author* an oxymoron" (4). Indeed, Warnicke states that between 1486 and 1548, only eight Englishwomen, including Parr, appeared in print (95); even with only a small segment of the female English population fully literate at this time, this number is miniscule.

As the sixteenth century wore on, women determined for whatever reason to enter the publishing fray generally found that, to the extent that any sort of material at all was thought acceptable for them to produce, translations of religious or moral works were most likely to gain them praise, or at least tolerance, rather than opprobrium.⁸⁸ Translation, particularly of pious works, was at least considered a more acceptable form of literary endeavour for women than original composition, as translating involved the "simple" transmission of the words and thoughts of others--usually men--from language to language in such a way that the direct agency of the translator was thought to be minimal. Precisely because this concept of translation as a "neutral," non-creative activity has died hard, much modern scholarship on the English Renaissance has tended to devalue women's translating activities, despite the fact that, as Micheline White points out, "translators played an important role in England's cultural development, and religious translators exerted considerable agency in importing works either for non-partisan consumption or as tools in domestic religious controversies" (ts. 2). As a result of this devaluation, White says, "we know relatively little about the part that Englishwomen played in the history of textual importing" (ts. 10). In the past few decades, the work of various theorists has led us to understand that, because of the inherent nature of language, even the most unembellished translation is always more than a simple rendering of text from one language into another; the potential creativity and complexity of so-called "free translations" is, naturally, even more

pronounced. That this is true of women's translation work in Renaissance England is evidenced by, for instance, Margaret Hannay's examinations of the Psalm translations of Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, which show the extent to which Pembroke expands upon Scripture to suit her own desired emphases.⁸⁹ The activity of translation, in the words of Kathleen M. Swaim, thus had the potential to draw out "a culturally silenced woman's skill at seeking out subversive expressional means" (255),⁹⁰ and so, as the Reformation proceeded in England, "religious translation provided one of the primary opportunities for a woman to enter public discourse" (Hannay, "House-confined maids" 47). The potential importance of women's translation work is thus twofold: as White argues, it had an inherent value in the cultural and religio-political contexts of Renaissance England; as well, what women chose to translate, what they were allowed to translate, and the extent to which they did or did not take liberties with language and meaning in their translations are all matters that mark the activity of translation by women as one aspect of "women's writing" in the Renaissance.⁹¹

The increased private and public participation in the spiritual life to which Reformed theology invited women gave them the potential for some kind of a voice--a meditative voice in their own homes, but also, at times, a public voice in their communities through participation in worship, the publication of moral or devotional works, or the voicing of opinions on religious or, occasionally, civic matters. This potential was not unproblematic, as we have seen, but it was there. As Charmarie Jenkins Blaisdell summarises it, the reforms of early protestant theologians "did not bring about any major changes in attitudes towards women or the roles permitted them in the early modern period. Women, however, contributed outside the structure of the Reformed Church in spite of traditional male instructions for passive, submissive behavior" (35). A space, however small, opened up for women with the change brought about by reform, and women like Anne Locke filled that space with voices strengthened by a religious conviction that they felt compelled them to do their public part for their faith.

Chapter 1 Notes

¹ Although it is, of course, a Latin word, I present "Miserere" without italics throughout this discussion, as it is a term commonly used in English to refer to the 51st Psalm.

² A copy of a later edition of this work, printed in 1574, was formerly held by the British Library along with the original 1560 copy; Richard Goulden of the British Library confirms that the 1574 volume was destroyed during the Blitz in World War II. Susan Felch writes that the book was also reprinted in 1569, making for three known editions of this work (The Collected Works of Anne Vaughan Locke, Introduction xxxi).

³ I use the word "protestant," uncapitalised, to designate generally non-Catholic English Christians and their churches in this Reformation period, as distinctions such as "Puritan" are rather hazy until later in the century. In this I follow the examples of such scholars as Sinfield and, occasionally, Collinson.

⁴ Susan Felch's recent volume of the collected works of Locke contains the only modern rendering of these translated Calvin sermons.

⁵ Parts of this dissertation have previously appeared in my edition of Locke's sonnets and in *Other Voices, Other Views*.

⁶ The name is variously spelled Lock, Lok, and Locke. A Latin inscription found on the flyleaf of the British Library's Calvin edition and apparently written by Anne's husband Henry (or by Anne herself) has the name as "Lock"; David Laing's transcriptions of a copied text of Knox's letters to Locke have Knox writing to "Mrs. Locke" and, mostly, "Mrs. Lock"; Anne's son, the minor poet Henry, apparently spelled his name "Lok." Lewis Lupton, in his *History of the Geneva Bible*, claims that "Locke" was Anne's own spelling of her name (8: 12), and Patrick Collinson generally uses this variant as well. I follow Lupton and Collinson in employing this version. To spare confusion, I also spell the name of Anne's first husband "Locke." I must note here that I refer to Lupton's work advisedly throughout this book, as one must be cautious with his colourful but sometimes inaccurate pronouncements on Locke and those around her. In

volume 8 of his History, for example, Lupton refers to the Meditation and its preface (which he believes were written by John Knox) as consisting of twenty-five sonnets, "one for each of the nineteen verses of the psalm and six others for a [preface]" (13); there are, in fact, five prefatory sonnets and twenty-one main-sequence sonnets, for a total of twenty-six. In reporting facts established by others, however, Lupton is generally reliable.

⁷ John Field employed this spelling in a dedicatory epistle to Anne in 1583, at which time she was on her third marriage; Collinson follows Field's spelling occasionally in *Godly People*, although he mistakenly refers to Anne's husband as William Prouze at least once (203). Later in the book, Collinson correctly names Anne's third husband as Richard Prowse, changing the spelling of the family name ("Role" 273-288).

⁸ See Felch, "Curing the Soul," for a discussion of Locke's skill as a rhetorician.

⁹ This brief biographical sketch of Locke and her family draws primarily from the work of Collinson and from W.C. Richardson's book on Locke's father, Stephen Vaughan, Financial Agent of Henry VIII. Other information can be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter referred to in my text as DNB).

¹⁰ Vaughan not only failed to bring Tyndale home, but also managed to annoy Henry with his apparent sympathy for the reformer; the King felt that Vaughan "bore too much affection towards Tyndale" (qtd. in DNB 58: 179). Thomas Cromwell's patronage of Vaughan, before the former fell from Henry VIII's favour, was the main reason Vaughan received his diplomatic commissions, and it also played a part in protecting Vaughan from the charges of heresy that More seemed so determined to pursue (see below).

¹¹ See also Felch, *Collected Works*, Introduction.

¹² On the strength of these and other facts, I have judged the range of probable years for Locke's birth to be 1533-34. It should be noted that the definition of "minor" in this context seems somewhat vexed--the age of consent for marriage was (officially, at least) twelve for girls, and, apparently, Anne was older than this; conversely, if she were in the (unusual) position of

inheriting property, the age of twenty-one may have been the limit of minority (as was the case for her brother, who inherited most of his father's estate), or perhaps fourteen if she were in the wardship of a male relative. Antonia Fraser, in the first part of her book *The Weaker Vessel*, points out that women, unless widowed, were not independent persons before the law--their rights and property were generally subsumed by those of their nearest male relative (see discussion of this matter below). The situation during Anne Locke's childhood would not have been different. The term "minor" in the context of anything but consent to marriage is thus rather unhelpful when speaking of a young girl in the sixteenth century, as she would never, in a sense, reach a true "age of majority" in the eyes of the law until she found herself a widow.

¹³ Stephen Vaughan endured a number of domestic hardships after the death of his first wife, difficulties exacerbated by his own enforced absence in Antwerp at the King's command; his motivation to remarry quickly lay largely in his desire to re-establish order in his London household.

¹⁴ Collinson says Anne married "[s]ome time in the next six years" after Stephen Vaughan's death ("Role" 277), but this window of time is clearly too wide.

¹⁵ One has the sense of how self-contained the trade and guild communities were in London at the time; they seem as closely and carefully interconnected as the nobility were.

¹⁶ Ascertaining the number of children who were born to the Lockes can be difficult; although one son, Henry (Lok), certainly lived long enough to gain a reputation as rather a poor poet, the fate of his siblings is hazier. Confusion is compounded by the common practice at this time of high infant mortality of giving the name of a deceased child to the next of that sex to be born--one may end up with three Johns or Marys in the birth or baptismal records of a single family. In the present case, there is a further complication still. The London baptism in February 1561 of a child supposedly belonging to Anne and Henry Locke is sometimes cited as evidence of John Knox's influence on Anne, as the child had neither godfather nor godmother--the role of whom Knox considered suspect. Lupton, however, points out that Anne had given birth to a

child just three months before this "sponsorless" child was baptised, and it is thus unlikely that both children were hers. Lupton claims that the child baptised in February 1561 was in fact born to Henry Locke's brother Michael Lock. An entire volume (8) of the History of the Geneva Bible is devoted to Henry Lok the poet, and it is there that Lupton attempts to straighten out the matter of Anne's progeny, with the following results: apparently the Lockes' first born was a son, named Henry for his father, baptised 6 September 1553; there follows a daughter, Anne, whose birth is unrecorded but whose death is documented (see below); there is then another Anne, baptised 21 December 1559; another Henry, baptised 8 November 1560 (just a few months before his cousin, Michael Lock's child); a third Anne, who seems to have lived to adulthood, baptised 23 October 1561; and, finally, a son named Michael, baptised 11 October 1562.

¹⁷ In the same volume, Lupton writes that Henry Lok, the poet, married Moyle's sister. Charles Huttar also writes that "[t]he first of [Anne's] six children (two of whom lived to adulthood) was born in 1553" (404). See also the introduction to Susan Felch's Locke volume for mention of Micheline White's apparent discovery that Michael Locke, too, survived to adulthood (xxix n. 55).

¹⁸ It is possible that the two were writing earlier, but as Locke obviously made an effort to save Knox's letters to her, it seems likely that 1556 does mark the beginning of the correspondence. There is, of course, always the possibility that the series of letters did not long survive intact after it left Locke's possession; however, considering the busy life led by Knox on the Continent and Locke's domestic responsibilities and growing family, it is entirely possible that it was 1556 before either had any time to begin and maintain a regular exchange of letters.

¹⁹ One thinks, of course, of the notorious *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, published in 1558 and dealt with later in this chapter.

²⁰ In a letter written to Anne after they had each left Geneva and were on their way to their respective homes, Knox states primly that "I have yow in such memorie, as becometh the faithfull to have of the faithfull" (letter I in Laing 6: 11).

²¹ Collinson says that "Mrs. Locke's desertion of her husband for the cause of religion was not without parallel" among European wives, and refers to Romier for examples of fervent women whose actions clearly caused consternation to their "heids" ("Role" 280). Jasper Ridley, in his biography of Knox, notes that, when it came to women's subjection to their husbands, "religion was the only issue on which an independent-minded woman could justifiably resist the tyrant of the family, conscious that if God was to be obeyed rather than man, He was to be obeyed rather than her husband" (132).

²² The sermons were preached between August and December 1557, and Spiller believes Anne would have taken the complete French text from the "six-volume stenographic collection [of Calvin] being made in Geneva while she was there" ("Locke" ts. 3).

²³ In her earlier Locke scholarship, Hannay claims that the duchess herself dwelt in Geneva with her family before moving on to Lithuania (then part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) to pass the rest of Mary Tudor's reign ("Unlock" 21, n.7). Lupton, however, following Foxe, traces the duchess's movements from London to Wesel (in Cleves), then to Weinheim (near Heidelberg), and finally on to Lithuania, without a sojourn in Geneva (History 9: 104-122). In March of 1998, Hannay informed me that, upon re-examination of her sources, she could in fact find no evidence that the duchess had lived in Geneva (e-mail correspondence).

²⁴ Confusion about dating materials produced early in a calendar year may arise when one considers that Europe was still using the Julian calendar at this time, and that the English considered the new year to begin on 25 March. The aforementioned Latin inscription (for detail, see n. 26) found in the British Library's Calvin volume bears the date 1559; according to the Stationers' Register, Day registered the book in January 1560 (registration did not always predate printing); and Locke refers to "this newe yeare" in her epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk.

²⁵ In the early 1570's, Locke, writing under the name Anna Dering, also contributed a four-line Latin poem to a manuscript volume entitled *Giardino cosmografico coltivato*, by a Dr. Bartholo Sylva of Turin. Its purpose was to try to regain Queen Elizabeth's favour for Locke's

then-husband Edward Dering, who had lost his preaching license after offending Elizabeth with a particularly inflammatory sermon, preached in her presence, in 1570. The volume was dedicated to the Queen's favourite, the reform-minded Earl of Leicester (Schleiner 39-40; Felch, *Collected Works*, Introduction xxxiii).

²⁶ References throughout this text to the poems of the *Meditation* are to my edition of the sonnets unless otherwise indicated; I thus refer to *A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner, or the Meditation* (the title's accepted short form), underlined, to indicate its publication as a separate text from the Calvin volume. See page 207 of this thesis for the complete text of the *Meditation*.

²⁷ The inscription reads "Liber Henrici Lock ex dono Annae uxoris suae. 1559."

²⁸ Lupton, for instance, writing in the early 1970's, blithely asserts in his marginalia in *Mrs. Locke's Little Book* that "the 'frend' referred to was John Knox, without a doubt." Lupton gives no reason for this opinion, although in his *History of the Geneva Bible* he claims that the "underlying doctrine" of the sonnet sequence "is so fiercely masculine that it must be by Knox" (8: 9). This bizarre assertion was evidently sufficient to settle the question of authorial identity in Lupton's eyes.

²⁹ Spiller, "Locke" ts. 4.

³⁰ While Day does not seem to have had a particular propensity for such headnotes, Susan Felch does note that "Day uses the same term [as in the headnote], 'publish,' elsewhere; for instance, in *The treasure of euonymus* (1559), he promises that if this book is well received, he will also 'publishe' the work of other continental medical writers (+2^v)" (Introduction liv).

³¹ Hannay, "'Unlock'" 21.

³² Hannay, "'Unlock'" 21-22.

³³ Knox writes in September 1559, "'I have beene in continuall travell since the day of appointment, and notwithstanding the fevers have vexed me the space of a moneth, yitt have I travelled through the most part of this realme" (letter XXXIV, Laing 6: 78). Earlier in the year, however, he had asserted that he had no desire to change his difficult place under a Catholic

monarch for life under the protestant Elizabeth, for her government's reforms were inadequate for him: "If your Reformatioun be no better nor your Acts expresse, I repent not of my absence from England" (letter VI, Laing 6: 30).

³⁴ Henry made out his will early in the year, when he was ill; it was proved (probated) 31 October (Collinson, "Role" 282).

³⁵ My source for details here is Somerset 491-497.

³⁶ This information was given to me by Micheline White, who discovered it in the records of the Vistations of the County of Devon.

³⁷ This speculation appears in an early draft of an entry published in the revised and expanded edition of *An Encyclopedia of British Women Writers*. Huttar has also communicated his speculation on the possible year of Locke's death to Micheline White and to me.

³⁸ Even during Elizabeth's time, in 1595, a debate arose in Germany between Valens Acidalius and Simon Gediccus over whether or not women were human. Although Acidalius' *Disputatio nova contra mulieres, qua probatur eas homines non esse* "professed to be a satirical mimicry of the Anabaptists', i.e., the Socinians' alleged practice of Biblical exegesis[.]" it proved so popular and controversial that it was reprinted, both in Latin and in French translation, numerous times for nearly two centuries after its initial appearance. It seems, on the whole, to have been taken a great deal more seriously than was Agrippa of Nettesheim's hyperbolic defense of women's excellence, *Oratio de nobilitate et praecellentia foeminei sexus*, written early in the sixteenth century and published at Cologne in 1532. See Fleischer, "Are Women Human?" These and other works formed part of the *querelle des femmes* that the Renaissance inherited from medieval tradition. Pamela Joseph Benson lists six different English-authored texts appearing between 1542 and 1597 that purport to defend and praise women's worthiness, although Benson herself contends that they are in fact "conservative works, and they reinforce traditional stereotypes of ideal conduct and roles for each sex by means of antimasculine satire and sentimental portraits of women" (205 n. 3) (see also Douglass 68-73, and Woodbridge).

³⁹ In writing of the particular situation of divorced women in Renaissance England, Retha Warnicke does remark that, in law, "discrimination against [divorced] women was greater in England than in any other Protestant country" (85).

⁴⁰ See n. 11. The jointure, a married woman's guarantee of financial security, would only come to her if she were widowed; for a discussion of how the jointure and its alternatives worked, see Harris 608-610.

⁴¹ In *The Weaker Vessel*, Fraser relates the story of Sister Dorothea, an English nun of the famous Mary Ward's band of sisters, who was arrested for her Catholicism in 1622 and appeared before a magistrate in Suffolk. When the magistrate asked her "Are you a maid, or widow, or a wife?"--the only three recognised categories for women--Dorothea replied that she was a maid. "So much the better," said the magistrate, "for then I hope a good husband will persuade you to change your religion" (165). This was, of course, after Anne Locke's time, but the situation for English women would not have been substantially different in the sixteenth century after the break with Rome; it still would have been the case that, as Fraser says of seventeenth-century England, "neither legally nor psychologically was there a proper place for the unmarried female . . . except on her way to marriage" (163).

⁴² Christopher Marsh, in his article entitled "'Departing Well and Christianly': Will-Making and Popular Religion in Early Modern England," relates an incident in 1593 in which one John Pottes of Cambridge refused to visit his ailing friend, Thomas Willowes, because he had learned that Willowes intended to leave all but "twenty nobles and the lease of the painters house" from his estate to a cousin, rather than to Willowes' wife. When Willowes later recovered, Pottes informed him that, if the former indeed intended to do this, "you will goe to the divell for . . . if she had ben yor servant as she is yor wyffe she had ben worthye of xx shillings a yeare and she hathe ben yor wiffe these xx yeares" (qtd. in Marsh 222). While thus still susceptible to poor treatment in a husband's will, a widow, Barbara J. Todd points out, "[e]ven if she was [sic] poor . . . was her own woman and could run her life as she saw fit" (55).

⁴³ Fraser, writing of the demise of Catherine of Aragon around the time of Locke's own birth, notes that the disposal of estates and effects in Renaissance England worked differently for women than for men: "under English law . . . [a married woman] could not make a will, but she was allowed to leave a list of 'supplications' for her husband" (Wives 228). A woman's husband was under no legal obligation to adhere to the requests on this list. The situation would have been necessarily different for widows (see Marsh).

⁴⁴ This outlook reflected the often-echoed Pauline rhetoric that "identifies the husband with Christ and the head, the wife with the Church and the body, defining a mutual dependence and 'love' based on woman's 'subjection' and 'submission', which is seen as necessary for a well-ordered society" (Guibbory 120).

⁴⁵ In fact, far from concentrating on anti-feminist polemic, Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion says relatively little on the matter of women throughout its four books, from the work's first Latin edition (1536) to its fifth and final form (1559). Douglass points out that Calvin meant the Institutes to act "as the systematic context within which to read [his] commentaries" on scripture, most of which he had published by the time of the final edition of the Institutes (45, 50), and a number of which address women and their behaviour at some length. Douglass also argues that by 1559, "Calvin's selection [in the Institutes] of what is important to grasp theologically . . . still virtually excludes positive teaching of the subordination of women" (50-51).

⁴⁶ In Bard Thompson's words, the Lutheran notion of the priesthood of all believers means "that every Christian, being connected to Christ by faith, shares the priesthood of Christ" (393). Thompson goes on to say that Luther

purloined the word "vocation" [from the monastic tradition], declaring that every Christian had a vocation, not certainly in monastic seclusion, but in the real world, where love was meant to be shared. The shoemaker, for example, should think of his trade as a vocation; by making good shoes at a fair price, he

has the possibility of expressing his love for his neighbor. The same could be said for a mother of five children[.] (393)

⁴⁷ While Christians were still encouraged to work for the good of others, the desire to do so was, according to Luther, the free and impulsive by-product of faith, emanating from the *quellende Liebe*, the overflowing love, and the sense of freedom, that fill Christians sensible of their justification by faith--that is, their faith in the forgiveness of their sins through Christ's sacrifice on the cross. In the Lutheran scheme of things, "Christians are under no *constraint* to help their neighbor. Nor are they performing works of merit or attempting to earn righteousness" (Thompson 393, emphasis added). It is important to note that, while Calvinism endorsed the latter sentiment, acts of goodness were not seen as spontaneous results of God's love; rather, justification by faith "leads not to freedom but to an intense, heroic life of fulfilling the will of God as stated in his law. The *rigor* of the law . . . may have been discharged by Christ, but the *claim* of the law survives. . . . For Calvin . . . grace brings demand--the obligation to live in great holiness of life according to the law of God" (Thompson 485, emphasis Thompson's).

⁴⁸ It is important to note that intention and volition are always involved here, even when it comes to women's traditional "offering" of child-bearing: "Even 'child-bearing' is obedience acceptable to God, only so far as it proceeds from *faith and love*" (Commentaries 41: 72, emphasis in trans.).

⁴⁹ Of course, Geneva is not in England, and Calvin was not English; however, while E. William Monter points out that during the Marian exile the English still were not as numerous in Geneva as French-speaking or Italian religious refugees (Calvin's Geneva 172), the community in which Locke participated during the 1550's was nonetheless comprised of many English men and women--Lupton actually claims that, together with other European protestant refugees, they managed at one point actually to outnumber the native Swiss in Geneva (4: 9). More importantly, it was a distinctly Calvinistic brand of protestantism that Locke and other English expatriates eventually brought back with them to their native country, and that Reformers like Knox

embraced, with modifications, to suit their own concepts of the True Church. As Sinfield has pointed out, "The Elizabethan Church, doctrinally, was broadly Calvinist[.]" and had "little in common with modern Anglicanism" (foreword vii; 1). H. R. McAdoo also says that "[t]he disagreement between Anglican and Puritan [originally] began with questions of church order and not of teaching, and it has been said that there was hardly one of the Elizabethan bishops who was not a Calvinist" (5). Michael Keefer puts it perhaps most succinctly when he says that "Calvin's God . . . was for most purposes also the God of the Elizabethan Anglican Church" (147).

⁵⁰ "But the statement in which man alone is called by Paul 'the image and glory of God' and woman excluded from this place of honor is clearly to be restricted, as the context shows, to the political order" (Institutes 1.15.4). Presumably, if women had not been made in God's image, their status as the spiritual equals of men would be difficult to argue. See below for Calvin's differentiation between the "political order" and that of the Divine, and also for John Knox's apparent reaction to Paul's statement as reflected in the Scottish kirk's Confession.

⁵¹ For Luther, too, "revolution against duly constituted authority was simply and utterly inadmissible[.]" as "even a tyrant might be an instrument of God's providence, an expression of God's wrath over human wrongdoing" (Thompson 407); sharing this view, Calvin was thus willing to tolerate the "unnatural" rule of a woman.

⁵² Calvin does state that women's subjection was determined even before the Fall, but claims that the service rendered in Paradise was born of a natural desire in the woman, while sin brought with it a sort of enslavement to the state of service, "so that the subjection was now less voluntary and agreeable than it had formerly been" (Commentaries 41: 69). The "common order" is that which "God as a rule wishes to be observed" (in such matters as the subjection of women, for instance), although it in no way prevents Him from contravening that order when He sees fit (Douglass 55). See Douglass on Calvin's discomfort with Paul's arguments that the subordination of women is "natural," that is, ordained by God for all eternity (64).

⁵³ Here again, Calvin is following Luther, who distinguished between the "*weltliches Regiment* (the kingdom of the world) and *geistliches Regiment* (the kingdom of God). The former was the state; the latter, the church" (Thompson 406).

⁵⁴ Calvin's opinion here seems to have been ignored by later English protestants but echoed by their queen, Elizabeth I, in the 1570's, when she was experiencing trouble with dissenters who insisted that the vestments prescribed for clergy in the settlement of 1559 were "popish" and should be abolished: Elizabeth "could argue that since rites and ceremonial had no bearing on individual salvation, they were a thing 'indifferent' and she was entitled to regulate such matters as she thought best" (Somerset 296).

⁵⁵ Again, Calvin urges the necessity of order in "indifferent things" generally: "For confusion in such details would become the seed of great contentions if every man were allowed, as he pleased, to change matters affecting public order!" (Institutes 4.10.31).

⁵⁶ The matter of women's silence and chastity is discussed briefly later in this chapter.

⁵⁷ See Knox on what a reigning woman represented to man's authority.

⁵⁸ Douglass comments on the endurance of this characterisation of marriage in the Reformed churches:

The Second Helvetic Confession of 1566 in the section on marriage makes no mention of procreation as the purpose of marriage and mentions the remedy of incontinence only parenthetically. God wishes man and woman to cleave inseparably to each other and to live in one highest love and concord. The Westminster Confession in the following century would also list the mutual help of husband and wife as the first purpose of marriage. (86)

⁵⁹ This was, of course, not always the case in practice, as the appalling matter of the Genevan lumberjack and his wife, cited below, illustrates.

⁶⁰ See n. 45.

⁶¹ In fact, the lumberjack did not even show up to hear himself admonished by the Petit Conseil; instead, his ravaged wife appeared in his place.

⁶² Christopher Morris records the reaction of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, to Knox during the reign of Edward VI: "Knox, who was sounded for a bishopric, was found to have too much of a mind of his own and to be 'neither grateful nor pleasurable'" (111-112).

⁶³ Even stranger, perhaps, is the fact that Queen Mary asked Knox to mediate the marital strife between her half-sister, Jean Stewart, and Jean's husband, the Earl of Argyll; Knox responded by writing a letter of rebuke to Argyll himself, in which he said that, notwithstanding the countess's own questionable behaviour, the earl owed her her marital due: "Your behaviour toward your wyff is verrey offensive unto many godlie. Hir complant is grevouse, that ye altogetther withdraw the use of your body from hir" (Laing 2: 377). The marriage later failed (Fraser, *Mary, Queen of Scots* 192, 261-263).

⁶⁴ The fact that Elizabeth left her husband and family at the age of 50, fled to Geneva to live with Knox and Marjory during Mary Tudor's reign, and lived in Knox's household in Scotland after her daughter's death fuelled the rumours. Mrs. Bowes doubtless stayed with Knox after Marjory's death to help him care for his two young sons; upon Knox's remarriage, she returned to England (Ridley 130-131, 384).

⁶⁵ See I Corinthians 14: 34; Genesis 2: 18-25, 3: 13-16.

⁶⁶ As Knox's era considered this to be the role played by all monarchs, regardless of the extent to which a ruler acknowledged it, it is unclear how Deborah was different from any king.

⁶⁷ Mary of Hungary, Regent of the Netherlands and sister of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, did not have as direct an effect on Knox's life, but her very existence was still evidence of the "monstrous regiment" in Knox's terms; later, when Philip II became King of Spain in his father Charles V's stead, yet another woman ruled the Low Countries--Margaret of Parma, King Philip's half sister, was named regent in 1559 (Somerset 215).

⁶⁸ Elizabeth "utterly abhorred" Knox, to the point where her secretary, William Cecil, "warned a colleague, 'Of all others, Knox's name . . . is most odious here; and therefore I wish no mention of him hither" (Somerset 121-122).

⁶⁹ Writing of the works of Lady Eleanor Davies Douglas, produced almost a century after Locke's sonnets, Mary Ellen Lamb remarks that

Davies may have . . . experienced the liberating effects of the time, for hers is one of several women's voices within the religious writings of the topsy-turvy mid-century. The increase in writings by women during this period suggests a temporary loosening of strictures as a result of the problematizing of hierarchies, including sexual ones, that occurred with the deposition of King Charles. (14)

I would suggest that the political and religious uncertainty experienced by England in the mid-sixteenth century benefited Anne Locke as a writer in a similar way.

⁷⁰ See Book I of the Institutes, chapters VI and VII, for Calvin's views on this matter.

⁷¹ Sinfield writes that "William Tyndale in *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon* (1527) invites the faithful to seize upon the slightest good impulse [toward God] as evidence of election. . . . Disappointment at one's failure [to live perfectly] is a cheerful sign, only minimal virtue is expected" (14-15).

⁷² Reformers saw the worst supposed consequence of this in such practices as the selling of indulgences, which was (and still is) popularly interpreted as a way in which Roman Catholics essentially "purchased" forgiveness for their sins and bought their way into heaven; this was, in fact, never the way indulgences were intended to function, but corruption within the Church made the selling of them a money-making venture for many of its officers, and so indulgences became representative of all that was wrong with the Roman faith. Luther objected to indulgences not so much on the grounds of corruption, but rather because they were "good works, denying two fundamental theological issues: the absolute gratuity of God's grace and the full efficacy of Jesus'

redemptive act" (Osborne, "Indulgences" 663). The denial that good works of any sort could aid a Christian in gaining eternal life was, of course, fundamental to Reformed theology.

⁷³ Lewalski goes on to comment of Coverdale's project that "[h]e obviously hopes to stimulate original composition in the biblical mode" (33), a wish fulfilled by such works as Locke's sonnets.

⁷⁴ "Challenging [English Jesuit Robert] Parsons' assertion that Protestants had produced no materials for the daily direction of the Christian life, [Richard] Rogers [an early seventeenth-century English devotional writer] pointed to many Protestant 'catechismes, sermons, and other treatises . . . which may clearly direct Christians, and stir up godly devotion in them'" (Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics* 149).

⁷⁵ Willen expresses the general view of historians that "[w]omen did not participate in full literacy or in the so-called educational revolution of the Elizabethan and Jacobean period," but does maintain that "Protestantism and reading undoubtedly reinforced one another" (145), an almost indisputable assertion considering the primacy placed by many protestant sects upon the need for Christians to know the Word.

⁷⁶ Reformers themselves were also aware of the potential for misinterpretation of the Word by certain people; as Warnicke notes, protestants "believed that the 'unlearned and the laity' should not be given the scriptures without official interpretations to guide them" (81). This does not, however, diminish the importance the reformers placed on making scripture available to all believers, even those who required aid in understanding it.

⁷⁷ "[M]ales who were merchants might read [the Bible] in private, a privilege which was denied their wives and daughters" (Willen 144).

⁷⁸ Morris writes of the English Bible, the first versions of which appeared during Henry VIII's reign, that "[w]ithin a generation Bible-reading, though it had not made a Protestant majority, had made far more Protestants than any government could possibly have rooted out" (90).

⁷⁹ According to Fraser, "[i]n a sermon in the City of London the next year [after passage of the 1543 Act], it was suggested that the study of the scriptures was making the apprentices unruly" (Wives 380).

⁸⁰ Retha Warnicke, in her book *Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation*, insists that Parr's book "cannot be described as a Protestant treatise. . . . [it] has statements that are entirely compatible with the beliefs expressed in the fifteenth-century tract, *De Imitatio Christi*, a work celebrating the tenets of the Dutch mysticism that had such a profound effect upon the thought of Erasmus" (93). *De Imitatio Christi* itself was probably written by Geert Groote, a Catholic whose desire to reinvest the lives of ordinary Christians living in the world with a sense of monastic virtue marked him as a reformer, if a conservative one; out of his "Devotio moderna" movement was born the Brethren of the Common Life, who believed, among other things, that study of the Bible was of paramount importance for ordinary Christians. It was in the Deventer school of these proto-reformers that Erasmus received his first education (Thompson 334-335). Queen Catherine's agreement with the spirit of Groote's work is thus not incompatible with her reforming tendencies. In fact, a good deal of Reformed theology and belief was indeed compatible with the tone and content of patristic writings, medieval mysticism, and even some contemporary Roman Catholic teachings; this did not change the fact that early protestantism was incompatible with, and often overtly hostile to, a number of key tenets of Catholicism, primary among them the matter of the efficacy of works. As well, not all Catholic teachings carried equal weight, and the difference between theory and practice within the Church was often marked, influenced by such things as prevailing cultural forces and the desire to protect the authority of the ruling class in any given region; thus, finding similarities between some aspects of Reformed theology and some of Catholic theology does not make the two compatible. Catherine Parr's views did indeed prove radical enough to arouse the suspicion of her husband, and the matter of the accessibility of the Bible to ordinary people was both a contentious one for her to address, as Fraser mentions, and a fundamental one for protestantism. See Sinfield 8.

81 According to Lamb, the "passage from Saint Paul (1. Cor. 14: 34-35) prohibiting women from speaking in church and advising them to ask their questions of their husbands at home was generalized to prohibit women's speech in any public place" (5).

82 Juan Luis Vives also equates silence with chastity, and, apparently, prolixity with its opposite: ". . . it is not unbecoming for a woman to be silent; what is foul and abominable is to be wayward and behave badly. . . . [women should read] those excellent sayings and monitions of the Holy Fathers about chastity, about obedience, about silence, women's adornments and treasures." (qtd. in Margaret King 165-166). Margaret King notes that "[t]he education Vives prescribed for the young woman of the Renaissance was not one that would cultivate her mind, but one that would encourage her obedience to familiar duties and virtues" (165)

83 Watt notes that in Geneva during Calvin's time, women who were convoked for failure to attend church—and women tended to be "less regular than men in their church attendance"—often "complained that they could not go . . . very often because they were burdened with small children at home" or had to "tend their husbands' shops or stores in their absence. Members of the Consistory, however, did not consider these responsibilities valid excuses for missing church" (432).

84 This would seem not to conform to Calvin's opinion, ventured without provision for gender, that "[p]erhaps the duty of those who have received from God fuller light than others is to help simple folk [to understand scripture] . . . and as it were to lend them a hand, in order to guide them and help them to find the sum of what God meant to teach us in his Word" (Institutes, "Subject Matter of the Present Work" 1: 6).

85 The interlude of the unfortunate Mary Tudor did little in the eyes of many to dispel notions of women's shortcomings, despite the queen's personal integrity and intelligence, which have historically been overshadowed by her often poor judgment and sheer bad luck. In Morris's opinion, "[s]he was the only adult Tudor who was upright, the only adult Tudor with a genuine

conscience. It is her tragedy and it is an irony of history that she was the only Tudor who failed and the only Tudor who did her country indisputable harm" (117).

⁸⁶ See Willen's article for discussion of this matter. Lamb reminds us that, in religious matters as in other things, "[t]he Renaissance discourse of gender difference expressed a patriarchal ideal, a fervent wish sometimes existing in direct opposition to lived experience. Increasing infringements of gender rules may themselves have elicited the reassertions of the supposed bases of those rules in Scripture and natural order" (4).

⁸⁷ One thinks of the ambivalence of Sir Philip Sidney toward the composition and role of poetry and fiction in his own time.

⁸⁸ Commenting on the acceptability of translation as a literary activity for women, Lamb provides a useful encapsulation of the situation of any given woman writer of the period covered in this discussion:

Within any culture, the availability of specific discourses and the unavailability of others place restraints upon the kind of subject that can be constructed. . . . Choices always exist, but choices are always limited. Thus, the Renaissance gender ideology did not succeed in preventing all Renaissance women from writing; but it exerted formative pressure upon what they wrote, how they wrote, and the ways their writings were received. . . . by defining writing as a highly gendered act, it confronted women writers with different and more complicated tasks than those facing men writers. (Lamb 4, 10)

⁸⁹ See Hannay's "Unlock my lipps" and her "Wisdom the wordes."

⁹⁰ "Where learning and leisure allowed, even women of the time were encouraged to practice translation, a 'silent art' that masked their own efforts behind male 'authority' Translation for women was a personal activity, and preferably also a pious one" (Swaim 257).

⁹¹ It is important to note that Locke's reputation as a noteworthy literary figure would deserve to stand even if her entire corpus consisted only of her translations of Calvin and Taffin.

It is also interesting that, in the case of her Calvin volume, Locke emphasises in her epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk that "I have rendred it [Calvin's text] so nere as I possibly might, to the very wordes of his text, and that in so plaine Englishe as I could expresse" (A8). This claim of neutrality aside, however, Locke did see to it that the English public, still defining its protestant religious identity under the young Elizabeth in 1560, had access to Calvin's sermons on Hezekiah a full two years before they were available in the original French (Spiller, "Locke" ts. 3). The outright trouble that she may have risked with her translation of Taffin thirty years later has been discussed. Locke's role as a disseminator of protestant religious texts is not to be dismissed in either historical or literary terms--and its significance and impact cannot be fully evaluated in a few paragraphs. It is important, however, to keep Locke's contribution in the area of translation in mind along with her major effort in the field of sonnet-writing, upon which this discussion is focused.

Chapter 2

Locke's Verse and Community

Among the few materials to which Englishwomen of the sixteenth century could devote literary attention with some impunity were the Psalms of the Old Testament. As protestantism increasingly encouraged people to become acquainted with scripture, the Psalms attracted considerable attention, for they appealed to male and female believers on both literary and personal levels: they were simultaneously lyric poem and poignant address, the voice of any and every Christian speaking in praise, lamentation or fear to the Creator within the structure of a song. Here was the Bible's poetry, and the godly's heartening reminder that King David, the supposed author of the Psalms, had sinned and suffered as acutely as they did. To Reformed England, Lewalski writes, "[t]he book [of Psalms] was described as the epitome of the entire scripture, the compendium of all theological, doctrinal, and moral knowledge in lyric form" (Protestant Poetics 41). The Psalms also lent themselves to congregational use: at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the Marian exiles brought back with them to England the practice of singing versified renderings of the Psalms during church services, and "[o]n 21 September 1559 the first known singing of metrical Psalms 'after Geneva fashion' took place at the 5 a. m. prayer service at St. Antholin's Church in London" (Hannay et al. 5). This practice caught on quickly and rapidly became "an integral part" of the Elizabethan service (Rathmell xii). The importance of this Old Testament material to the protestant communities of Europe was thus tremendous; Margaret Hannay comments that the Psalms were "so significant in the Reformation that they can be studied as popular culture, as political statement, and as literary genre" ("House-confined maids" 45). This significance is reflected in the sheer proliferation of psalters: according to Rivkah Zim, after George Joye published the first complete edition of Psalms in English in 1530,¹ "[m]ore than seventy different, new versions in English were printed . . . [between 1530 and] the end of the century" (2), and Lewalski states that "[b]y 1640 there were well over three hundred editions (in several versions) of the complete psalter in English verse" (Protestant Poetics 39).² This part of

scripture was to become "the most often translated, heavily annotated, and widely imitated of all the biblical books" (Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics* 39).

Of particular interest to many protestants were the so-called Penitential Psalms, numbers 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143.³ These works focus on such themes as the speaker's awareness of and regret for the stain of sin, and his desire to cry out to God for aid and forgiveness. The Psalms generally, and the Penitential Psalms in particular, invited believers to engage with lyric Biblical text in a highly-personalised way, presenting them with the example of David's poems as a model for their own expressions of desire for mercy and redemption. Throughout the Psalms one might see an individual speaker defining for himself his relationship with the Almighty in all its aspects--fearful, bitter, plaintive, joyful--and these characteristics, together with their tone of introspective soul-searching, marked the Penitential Psalms as especially well-suited to individual exercises of meditation and reflection⁴--and to poetic endeavours. As Lewalski writes:

[t]he prefaces to . . . [the many] metrical versions, together with countless commentaries and sermons upon the Psalms, developed several grounds for considering them to be superlative religious lyrics in themselves and particularly suitable models for Christian poets. . . . [Of] importance in intimating the significance of the Psalms as lyric models was the idea that they present an epitome of human emotions, a searching analysis or anatomy of the soul of each and every Christian. (*Protestant Poetics* 40, 42)

As Psalm-based poetry involved both devotional material and, to at least some extent, the activity of translation, the Psalms were also "one of the few genres open to female as well as male voices in sixteenth-century England" (Hannay, "House-confined maids" 44). Any Christian Englishwoman who wished to write poetry would thus have found in the Psalms, particularly the Penitential Psalms, both occasion and social acceptability.

It was a commonplace in Locke's time that women and men stood in roughly the same relationship to each other, respectively, as did men and God: God was the head of man, man was the head of woman, and woman had to learn to accept and deal with the reality of her submission

on earth. While women were to keep this fact in mind in their relationships with the Creator, to whom they were always to acknowledge themselves to be both far inferior and undeserving of his tremendous love and mercy, all Christians were faced with this truth about themselves, regardless of gender. Renaissance Englishwomen, however, like most European women of the time, were trained from their childhoods to know the language and posture of submission. This was not meant to be the case with men.⁵ Writing of education and class structure during the Renaissance, Margaret King notes:

Poor women, like poor men, received no formal education whatsoever, although many men and some women were trained in certain crafts. Middle- and upper-class women were initiated in a particular female culture, however, in which they were taught to perform household functions and pursued a regimen stressing needlework and spinning, silence and obedience. (164)

The rhetoric of women's physical weakness was also familiar to the Renaissance--Shakespeare's Kate, a reformed shrew, speaks of women's bodies as "soft and weak and smooth / Unapt to toil and trouble in the world" (*Shrew* V.ii.170-171), while Queen Elizabeth, in her famous Armada speech, asserted that she had "the body but of a weak and feeble woman" but "the heart and stomach of a king" (qtd. in Somerset 60).⁶ In her five prefatory sonnets, Locke uses the language and imagery of subjection and abasement--a feminine code--to illustrate the necessity for complete submission to God on the part of any Christian; in doing so, she not only sets out a sort of programme to show women how they can use what they know to approach God, but also uses that same code to reduce to ashes the most obvious marker of gender--the body.⁷

Hannay comments that "Psalm 51 had particular meaning for the Reformers, because of its description of original sin and its stress on faith over works, the sacrifice made in the heart rather than in the temple" ("Unlock" 27). Its introspective tone, and its focus on the wretchedness of the human condition contrasted with the perfection and mercy of the Creator, also made it supremely well-suited to the personal examinations of conscience and explorations of faith encouraged by the protestant community. This most popular of Renaissance penitential pieces provided Locke

with appropriate companion material to the Calvin sermons in her 1560 volume, but the twenty-one sonnets that form the body of the Meditation itself do not attempt to present themselves as a translation of the *Miserere*.⁸ Instead, each sonnet expands upon one verse of the Psalm, with two exceptions--the first two sonnets address the first verse of the Psalm, while sonnets 5 and 6 address the fourth verse. Spiller posits that "it must have seemed to [Locke] that a fourteen line poem could stand in much the same relation to a single line or verse of a psalm as a sermon in relation to a chapter or section of a chapter" ("Locke" ts. 5-6). Locke thus uses the ideal subject matter of the biblical text as a catalyst for her own verse; the sonnets themselves are presented as her own words, albeit veiled prudently by the echo of the (traditionally male) psalmic "I" which resonates through them. This is a cautious test of the boundaries of acceptable eloquence for a woman writer of the Renaissance. While her verses are solidly linked to the Psalm, they represent unapologetic expansion on the sentiment of the biblical text, with the repeated emphasis on the "I" serving to personalise the process further.

The prefatory sonnets have often been discussed only summarily, if generally accurately, by scholars. Susanne Woods describes the five sonnets as "acknowledging the unworthiness of the author and acting as a penitential prelude to the actual meditation" (Woods, "The Body Penitent" 138), and this general assessment is certainly fair; however, the fact that the preface, unlike the main body of the sequence, is not explicitly based on--and therefore not justified by--any other text marks these poems as significant and deserving of attention in their own right, not simply as a run-up to the main body of the Meditation itself. A fairly generic Calvinist sentiment, identified in Woods' comment, is clearly evident in all the sonnets in the sequence, the preface not excepted--much emphasis *is* placed on the utter and inescapable wretchedness of the sinner, who in no way deserves God's mercy; however, the words of the five prefatory sonnets remain the author's own, and they constitute a personal reflection on and preparation for the process of repentance, presented without specific reference to the authority of another text. This process is symbolically initiated for Locke by the failure of the physical body and the assertion of the voice,

the instrument with which a sinner may, through the Meditation, ask God for mercy, as David did in Psalm 51.

Writing of the protestant emphasis on the importance of the individual's personal relationship with God, Alan Sinfield comments on the problems presented by a protestant's necessary awareness of his or her unworthiness: "Protestant thought, by its insistence on divine power and human wretchedness, imposed upon its adherents fundamental psychological and ethical difficulties. . . . The determination to create a more immediate relationship between humanity and God . . . paradoxically placed a vast and uncertain gulf between them" (8-9). The believer who sought salvation was required to seek God's mercy actively through the forging and deepening of a personal relationship with Him, while at the same time having to acknowledge that there was no truly good reason why God should accede to such a relationship. This tension is no more easily resolvable for Locke than it would have been for any other devout protestant; however, from the point of view of women's authorship, one may sense how such a tension is potentially liberating, for it demands that the Christian who desires salvation speak of it and ask for signs of it.

The speaker of the sonnets begins the preface with a recollection of "The hainous gylt of my forsaken ghost" (P1.1), and this is the essential matter for reflection that continues throughout the preface and main body of the sequence alongside pleas for God's mercy. Hannay believes that Locke here "draws on the tradition of the grieving ghosts of Boccaccio and Lydgate, probably derived from the recently published Mirror for Magistrates" ("Unlock" 30).⁹ This pattern leads Elaine Beilin, in writing of Locke and others, to comment that in this respect she is like other female devotional writers of the Renaissance who deflected or buried the feminine voice in their texts: Beilin feels that Locke and women like her "appeared not to contravene their private virtue [in their work], because their Christian virtues in fact coincided with their feminine ones. [These] women presented a persona who testified that she was a humble and penitent sinner who despised the world, the flesh, and the devil, and who trusted alone in the Grace of God" (Redeeming Eve 50). Here is the matter of women "using what they know," eliding the feminine and the Christian;

in Locke's case, however, to dismiss this as a convenient telescoping of values would be a mistake, for it would be to give Locke too little credit in her initial presentation of narrative voice in these poems.

It is true that the voice of Locke's speaker is nowhere explicitly feminine, and this, along with the commendable (from her period's point of view) emphasis on human sinfulness, helps to shield her from charges of an unseemly prolixity. However--and, I think, most importantly--the speaker's abjection and lack of obvious gender are also reminders that, from the protestant viewpoint, the relationship between the sinner and God is constant from human to human, regardless of sex. Even if women were to be considered "worse" sinners because of the burden of Eve, the fact that men and women were all tainted by original sin meant that a sinner was still a sinner before God. The speaker of the preface is in the position of any believer who has yet to receive from God a sign of membership in the elect--that of a "blinde wretch," who, "Amidde my sinnes still groveling in the myre, / Finde not the way that other oft have found" (P2.1, 3-4). The speaker is directly addressed later in the preface simply as "refused wight" (P3.6), again emphasising the idea that gender is unimportant to the matter at hand; a person "refused" God's grace is a lost soul, male or female. The oppressive and difficult protestant construct of human / divine relationships stood to be equally demanding for all, and rising to its challenges was the responsibility of all men and women who desired salvation through God's grace. Perhaps of greatest interest here to modern feminist scholarship, however, is that, without disturbing the integrity of this position, a reader who approaches the sonnets with an awareness of the poet's gender may detect space for a bold female voice in the poems, with discretion still assured for the author; in Beilin's words, women like Locke could, through devotional writing, "respond simultaneously to the enemies of their religion and their sex" (50). The "I" of the sonnets thus allows Locke to cover all the angles, as poet, woman, and Christian, through a deflection of the gender issue that is at once safe, potentially subversive, and completely legitimate.

In the dedicatory epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk, Locke focuses on images of illness and the role of the physician to describe the state of the soul as it journeys toward its salvation. Locke

picks up this theme in the prefatory sonnets and uses it to give critical support to the multi-layered resonance of the speaker's voice, so that problems of gender are further deflected and the strength of the voice is thrown into sharper relief. Through an emphasis on physical pain and weakness, she demolishes notions of the human body's integrity before God, and therefore demolishes notions of gendered superiority. By the end of the five prefatory sonnets, the speaker's body has undergone a sort of textual martyrdom and the voice approaches a state of purity through absolute isolation. The body, which must surrender to its mortality, is unable to aid the soul, which still has hope of eternal salvation; the soul is thus left with the voice as its advocate. Paradoxically, Locke thus creates a space for the possibility of an eloquent Christian female voice while undermining the image most basic to gender identification, the body. There is a parallel between the Christian imperative to speak and a woman writer's desire to assert her own voice--the "absence" of an (obviously gendered) body serves both to emphasise the worthlessness of the body to a protestant and to avert any objections that could be made to the identification of the voice as female.

The subjection of the body in the first two sonnets of the preface focuses almost immediately on the speaker's sense of sight, so highly privileged in the Renaissance hierarchy of the senses. The reality of the speaker's sin is "fixt before my daseld sight" (P1.4), the spectacle of "The lothesome filthe of my disteined life" impairing the speaker's vision (P1.5) and leading to the aforementioned blindness of the speaker, who is described in the second sonnet as a "blinde wretch" and "blinde for grace" (P2.1, 12). This last phrase indicates the serious implications of blindness in this context: the eyes are overcome by the flash of sin, and thus unable to guide the speaker out of the "myre" because the traditional "windows to the soul" cannot let in the light of God's grace. The image of eyes clouded because "Full fraught with teares" (P1.10) is compared to, and implicitly identified with, the speaker's situation (P1.9-P2.4). Interestingly, these tears of fear and remorse, "Sent from the fornace of a grefefull brest" (P1.12), are not presented as fulfilling a cleansing or purging function in this context; rather, they are seen as exacerbating the problem. Overall, the message is that the soul's state is such that a "cherefull glimse of gods

abounding grace" is not available to it (P2.5). The most frightening possible reason for this would be that the speaker is condemned, incapable of receiving God's grace and so blind to it, as implied in the speaker's own perception of "my forsaken ghost"; however, the remorse and fear that are evident here, and the implication that this sinner is capable of shedding tears for the soul's fate, indicate that there is hope that the speaker may yet "finde the waye wherin to walke aright" (P1.14). The perilousness of this uncertainty will become evident as the preface progresses and both possibilities must be faced and dealt with.

Accompanying this impairment of vision is an initial impression of the body as a humiliated object whose abjection reflects the debilitation of the soul. The first prefatory sonnet describes the spirit as "febled" (P1.2), and the distressed speaker "fret[s the] dyeng soule with gnawing paine" (P2.10); only the soul, of course, has the potential for eternal life, and it is that which requires the ministrations of Locke's "heavenly Physitian" for the assuagement of the suffering that is described in bodily terms. But within the text the body itself participates in the experience of suffering as well. Along with its blindness, the general degradation of the physical person is initially emphasised: in being forced to "groape about for grace" because of blindness (P2.11), the speaker is left "groveling in the myre" of sin in "the ugglye place" (P2.3, 7), like an animal that at once cowers in fear and wallows in filth it has produced. The body's progressive failure as the soul strives to obtain remedy emphasises the positive nature of the soul's struggle by contrast, while simultaneously neutralising the body as a sign of (gendered) power.

Coupled with this presentation of the body and deepening its impression is the image of God's wrath as a weapon that inflicts physical pain. His "wrath is sharper than the knife, / And deper woundes than dobleedged sworde," "With pearcing stroke" (P1.7-8; P2.2). Again, the pain to be borne by the soul is described in terms that emphasise the utter inadequacy of the speaker as a physical entity. The vicious cycle of sin and punishment is also evident in the images of physical pain. While the body's destruction is the result of the wasting illness of sin, present from the moment of human conception--"For loe, I was shapen in wickednes, and in sinne my mother conceived me"¹⁰--the process is furthered by God's wrath, which itself descends as a consequence

of sin. The body's suffering, described by the genderless "I" that is the speaker, makes clear the message that there is no way for any human, male or female, to withstand the pain of sin once it has hold, and there is no way to prevent the exacerbation of that pain when the sinner is brought before God, since God alone is justified in his actions. The only possibility for the restoration of wholeness is the chance of receiving God's freely-given mercy.

The explicit emergence of voice at the end of the second sonnet marks what is arguably the most interesting aspect of the preface. The speaker's voice is initially directionless, almost internalised, with no apparent aim but the reiteration of misery: "I . . . / Bewayle my woefull and unhappy case" (P2.8-9). The failing body, however, attempts to rally and lend its remaining strength to the speaker's words: "My fainting breath I gather up and straine, / Mercie, mercie to crye and crye againe" (P2.13-14). This vocalisation of the desire for mercy is deliberate and directed, and it leads to a conflict crucial to the speaker as a Christian, and to Locke as a woman.

The "shreking crye" of the speaker's plea for mercy (P3.1) is immediately countered by another voice--that of despair, among the most dangerous of a Christian's enemies. Preying on the speaker's fear of damnation, despair appeals to the failing faculty of sight: ". . . despeir before my ruthfull eye / Spredes forth my sinne and shame, and semes to saye / In vaine thou brayest forth thy bootlesse noyse" (P3.3-5). As the heckling voice continues, it reminds the speaker of the undeserving nature of any sinner, appealing directly to a kind of logic of despair that must always be dangerously present in the protestant paradox outlined by Sinfield: to be human is to be sinful, and to be sinful is to deserve damnation. "[T]hee, caytif, deserved curse doeth draw / To hell, by justice, for offended law" (P3.13-14). It is no mistake that this force attempts to penetrate the speaker's consciousness through one of the senses, for the logic of despair is also a kind of physical logic which dictates that because the defeat of the body is both certain and deserved, that of the soul is as well.

Locke's text externalises and personifies the usually-internal demon of despair, giving it the ability to speak and "spread forth" the spectacle of sin. Most pointedly, the text presents a voice attempting to silence another voice. The speaker's cries for mercy are described as

"bootlesse noyse" made in "vaine." In fact, despair tells the "refused wight" plainly that God "heares not the forsaken sinners voice" (P3.7). The image conjured here of a repentant Christian whose hopes of salvation are stifled by a tyrannical sense of unworthiness is shadowed by the implicit parallel image of a woman whose attempt to speak or write--of her faith, of anything--is stifled by the voice of a patriarchal structure that seeks to silence her. In order to defuse the threat posed by women who dared to speak out, Tudor society equated such activity with promiscuity, unruliness, with behaviour that was "unwomanly"; to be truly womanly was to be silent, for a "true" woman's words were by definition "bootless," literally without power or meaning. The reality of the society in which women like Locke lived--or, at least, the reality of the larger structure outside the community of the godly--was that a woman's voice was "heard not," for in essence it did not exist; to speak was to be no true woman. Thus, while the outcome of the struggle between voices in these sonnets is most directly significant in Christian terms, it also has important implications for the assertion of woman's voice.

Despair's power over the sinner is great because, as mentioned, it makes sense. In the early protestant context of Locke's faith, in which sinners are saved by God's grace alone, there can be no question of justifying one's life and actions before God and hoping to merit anything but damnation. The very existence of God's mercy as symbolised by the sacrifice of Christ the Son, however, means that despair is a temptation--a human weakness logical in human terms--which the sinner is obliged to resist for the sake of the immortal soul. The impression despair makes on the speaker of the sonnets is obvious: the soul trembles at the "horror" of its sin, and, most dangerously, the speaker imagines "markes and tokens of the reprobate" that "Enforce the profe [proof] of everlastyng hate," and so comes to the verge of surrender--"As in the throte of hell, I quake for feare" (P4.1-2, 4, 7). The speaker, aware that the soul stands "in present perill to be lost" (P4.8), finds the voice of despair supported by the force of conscience, which also "Doth argue vaine my not availyng crye" (P4.11). The logical reaction to the sinner's unworthiness is embraced inside and outside the speaker, attempting to silence the voice that asks for mercy; it is

at this point of crisis that Locke's words in her epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk are most germane, and most supportive of the positive aspect of voice:

For when the wretched man . . . being stricken with the mightie hande of God, feleth him selfe unable to stande, no soundness in his bodye, no strength in his limmes, no helpe of nature to resist the violence of that disease that Gods displeasure hath laide upon him, seeth no signe of Gods grace in his soule, but the depe woundes that Gods anger hath left in his conscience . . . alas what help remaineth in this extremitie? . . . But on th'other side, when the belevynge Christian falleth . . . he knoweth whither to reache his hande to be raised up againe: beyng stong with the stinge of the scorpion he knoweth howe with oyle of the same scorpion to be healed agayne: beyng wounded with the justice of God that hateth sinne, he knoweth howe with the mercy of the same God that pardoneth sinne to have hys peine asswaged and hurt amended. (A4_v, A5_v)

For the believer, "[f]aith does not mean simply intellectual assent to the Christian creed, but trust that God will fulfil his promises [of redemption]" (Rivers 113). Only this true faith can defy the forces that would silence the speaker. The figure in the preface, however distressed, is possessed of this faith, and illustrates the one course of action open to the fallen Christian as described by Locke in her epistle. Refusing to surrender to despair and to the pain of a ruined body, the voice of the speaker resumes its pleas in hope: "To him from whom the endlesse mercy flowes / I cry for mercy to releve my woes" (P4.13-14). Although no sinner can hope to participate in a true dialogue with God--this would imply that God is somehow obliged to explain his design to his creatures--remorse for sin and desire for mercy must be expressed, in the hope that God will send "markes and tokens" of the godly, not the reprobate, in which the soul may read its redemption. Some attempt must be made, not for God's sake, but for that of the sinner, whose pleas and examinations are the foundation of a personal experience of faith.

In having so clear a case for the Christian's need to speak delineated in her protestant convictions, reflected in her epistle, and acted out in her sonnets, Locke is, paradoxically, also

able to signal a subtext of the vindication of woman's voice by avoiding explicit gender identification in her speaker: what is to be understood here is that any Christian remains silent at the soul's peril. If there remains any notion of enjoying the benefits of a gendered superiority when facing the divine, Locke uses the fifth and final prefatory sonnet to complete the process of physical collapse begun in sonnets 1 and 2. As before, it is the sense of sight, traditionally the most noble of the senses, that is least capable in the situation: the "presuming eye" does not dare "Once to beholde the angry heavens face" (P5.1-2). The breakdown of the body soon reaches its apex: "With foltring knee I fallyng to the ground, / [Bend] my yelding handes to heavens throne" while "tost with panges and passions of despeir" (P5.5-6, 13). This position of frailty and supplication stands in contrast to the voice's continual efforts to stave off despair--to make itself heard above that other voice whose "panges and passions" are attempts to silence the speaker. The voice, while plaintive, manages to send "From troubled sprite . . . confused crye," and "Poure forth [its] piteous plaint with woefull sound" (P5.3, 7). The repeated emphasis on the "I" focuses attention on both the intensely personal nature of the realisation of sin and the speaker's sense of sole responsibility for incurring the wrath of the Creator, "the Lord, whom synner I, / I cursed wretch, I have offended so" (P5.9-10). With the body rendered useless, the personal but genderless "I" of the Psalms themselves, appropriated by Locke, is left to work on behalf of the soul. In the final line of the preface, "Thus crave I mercy with repentant chere" (P5.14), there is the will to overcome stifling, negative forces--of despair, of a patriarchy that would confine good women to silence--and to frame the speaker's "plaint" in the sonnets of the Meditation itself.

Locke could easily have presented the Meditation without these introductory sonnets; the title gives sufficient context to the sequence. The preface, however, serves to establish an environment and condition for the penitent sinner--describing the state of the "passioned minde" of the preface's title that Locke identifies in her epistle with the "mynde not well instructed," the "conscience not well quieted" (A2_v)--that links the sequence even more closely with the material that precedes the sonnets. The themes of the soul's illness, suffering and desire for healing which run through Locke's epistle and are the biblical occasion for Calvin's sermons are concentrated

and highlighted in the physical and spiritual distress of the five prefatory sonnets. Although the same themes, among others, are present in the Meditation, they are necessarily more diffuse, the speaker giving more scope to reflection on sin and to appeals to God's mercy as dictated by the different verses of the Psalm. The relative brevity of the preface lends an urgency to the idea of physical breakdown that owes at least as much to Locke's independent creation of a narrative figure as it does to the anticipated text of Psalm 51. The preface is thus all the more noteworthy for the fact that a vividly-contrasting struggle for the emergence of voice occurs in the same short space, and in such a way as simultaneously to establish a setting and tone for the Meditation and to undermine the image of the body as a gendered sign of power. The voice that survives the torment of the preface to address the Creator in the main sequence is a voice representative of any Christian faced with the task of approaching God's throne to ask for mercy. The scope offered by the form and expansion potential of the Psalms is equally valuable for male and female devotional writers who wish to play out their fears and hopes about salvation textually and vocally, based on the model and authority of David.

The reader of Locke's Meditation finds her speaker struggling to move from a position of uncertainty and isolation to one of integration, from fear of damnation to assurance of grace. It is a painstaking process, but ultimately one that achieves its goal, and it allows Locke to emphasise the primacy of voice that she establishes in the five sonnets that act as a preface to the Meditation-a matter important to the Christian and to the woman. The speaker of the Meditation, possessed of a body whose systematic ruin is traced in the prefatory sonnets, begins the sequence by addressing God directly, no longer caught up in a preparatory and self-reflective description of the body's and soul's wretchedness, as was the case in the preface. Locke's first sonnet expands upon half of Psalm 51's first verse: "Have mercie upon me (o God) after thy great merci" in Locke's own translation of the Psalm, which accompanies the text of her sequence.¹¹ The emphasis in this first sonnet is on God's mercy and the sinner's need for it; the word "mercy" and its derivatives pepper the poem, occurring ten times in fourteen lines. Contrasting with this is the appearance of the word "justice" and its derivatives three times in the middle of the sonnet, in

lines seven and eight. The concept of mercy thus frames and surrounds the sharp burst of justice, so dreadful to the speaker because it is impossible to counter:

But, God of *mercy*, let me come to thee:

Not for *justice*, that *justly* am accusde:

Which selfe word *Justice* so amaseth me,

That scarce I dare thy *mercy* sound againe. (1.6-9, emphasis added)

Sonnet 1 is, in a sense, all voice, that which cries for mercy; the closest one comes to physicality is the related reference to "wretched mouth" (1.4). With its privileging of voice and foregrounding of mercy, this sonnet helps set the tone for the rest of the sequence.

In sonnet 2, which addresses the second half of Psalm 51's first verse, God's redeeming mercy is balanced against the speaker's sin, which is portrayed as a weight that literally drags down the soul: "My many sinnes in number are encrease, / With weight wherof in sea of depe despeire / My sinking soule is now so sore opprest" (2.1-3). Sin's force is so great that it enjoys equal rhetorical footing with mercy in this sonnet, each being invoked five times throughout the sonnet, and each paralleled or contrasted with the other for emphasis:

With endlesse number of thy mercies take

The endlesse number of my sinnes away.

.....

My sinne is cause that I so nede to have

Thy mercies ayde in my so woefull case:

My synne is cause that I scarce dare to crave

Thy mercie manyfolde. . . . (2.6-7, 10-13)

The speaker's desire to have God "Releve my soule" of the burden of sin (2.14) also introduces the notion of sin as that which inhibits the speaker's mobility and keeps the individual away from God, dragged down, alone, into the "sea of depe despeire." Sin is a vortex which keeps the speaker isolated, with only the all-important defence of voice as aid.

The motif of cleansing occurs twice in the Meditation, and the distinctions between the two instances in which it appears are significant, for they help to mark the progress of the speaker's faith and thus the journey toward community. Sonnet 3, which focuses on verse 2 of the Psalm, sees the speaker acutely aware of the extent to which sin is a force that keeps the Christian from approaching God, and there is evident desire for God's absolution, the "washing" that will remove the stain of sin and release the speaker from isolation: ". . . till from sinne I may be washed white, / So foule I dare not, Lord, approche to thee" (3.3-4). The entire sonnet is concerned with this notion, and becomes in itself a repetitive plea for God's "cleansing grace" (3.10). Calvin, in commenting on this verse as originally "spoken" by David, claims that this repetition is no more than natural: "Not as if God could experience any difficulty in cleansing the worst sinner, but the more aggravated a man's sin is, the more earnest naturally are his desires to be delivered from the terrors of conscience" (Commentaries 9: 283). As one reads Locke's sequence, however, and recognises the extent to which her speaker is mired in sin—quite literally stuck and unable to move, as we shall see—something crucial seems to be missing: the conviction, so fundamental to Reformed belief, that God's grace is sufficient once and for all; once grace is recognised, accepted and acknowledged by the Christian, its presence in his or her life is permanent.¹² This grace is symbolised by the ritual cleansing of baptism, one of only two sacraments Calvin chose to retain for the Reformed church; in his words,

[b]aptism is the sign of the initiation by which we are received into the society of the church, in order that, engrafted in Christ, we may be reckoned among God's children. . . . baptism should be a token and proof of our cleansing; or . . . it is like a sealed document to confirm to us that all our sins are so abolished, remitted, and effaced that they can never come to his sight, be recalled, or charged against us. (Institutes 4.15.1)¹³

For a Calvinist Christian, justification for sinful humankind came about with the supreme sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and that sacrifice was made for all believers for all time; no further act is required. Calvin says plainly that it is the duty of all believers, all "saints" of the true

Christian church, "to hold fast the truth that grace is the incorruptible seed of God, which never can perish in any heart where it has been deposited" (Commentaries 9: 300). The speaker of this sequence had indeed referred to God's "all-sufficing grace" in the fifth and final prefatory sonnet; however, there are signs here of doubt or ignorance of this Calvinist tenet: "Ofte hath thy mercie washed me before, / Thou madest me cleane: but I am foule again. / Yet washe me Lord againe, and washe me more" (3.5-7). The repeated requests for cleansing which carry through to the end of the sonnet may mark the speaker as either dangerously ignorant (perhaps showing Papist leanings in a desire for something like the sacrament of confession, administered frequently),¹⁴ or, at worst, reprobate, as these requests in fact imply that God has been unable to remove the stain of sin in a lasting way. Dramatically speaking, the plaintive reiteration of this plea of course serves to reinforce the sheer emotionality of the sonnet and the speaker's situation, but it is unwise to dismiss the impact on the sequence of the theological implications of these lines. Those among the elect know that it is unnecessary to ask God to "cleanse me ones againe" (3.14) once they have confessed their faith and been brought to grace, and the fact that the speaker of this sonnet is unaware of this superfluity, or doubts it, signals that a substantial distance lies between this frightened individual and the community of God's chosen.¹⁵ That this is indeed the speaker's reality is confirmed by the reference to sinking "in sea of depe despeire" in sonnet 2, despair being the most dangerous of all indulgences for the Christian.

The reader is reminded by the sonnet that follows that this sort of error in belief is not an esoteric matter for a Christian in the speaker's position. Sonnet 4 illustrates clearly the extent to which the speaker feels alone and unable to move beyond the grip of sin, even while apparently aware that God's mercy is all that is necessary for liberation. There is absolute consciousness here that sin is the root of "oppression" of the soul, as well as an important glimmer of enlightenment about the necessity for the sinner to rely completely on God and reject the notion that he or she has any agency in salvation: even as the speaker declares that "The horror of my guilt doth dayly growe, / And growing weares my feble hope of grace" (4.3-4), a sentiment that would seem dangerously close to despair, there is also a plea to God to "Drawe me to mercie" (4.9). The

speaker makes this request because of a sort of paralysis, and a definite entrapment, brought about by sin:

... for so oft as I

Presume to mercy to direct my sight,

My Chaos and my heape of sinne doth lie,

Betwene me and thy mercies shining light. (4.9-12)

There is a literal obstacle here, cutting the speaker off from God and his elect, leading to isolation and a sort of spiritual myopia--"What ever way I gaze about for grace, / My filth and fault are ever in my face" (4.13-14). This is the myopia of the sinner who assents intellectually to the truth of God's saving grace, but does not accept it in the heart as possible in his or her case; the inadequacy of this half-belief is reflected in the inward torment suffered by the speaker, who threatens to be overwhelmed by the vastness of sin, as though it were so great that God was not powerful enough to overcome it: "I fele and suffer in my thrall'd brest / Secret remorse and gnawing of my hart" (4.5-6). The speaker is self-centred, focused on sin and its seemingly insurmountable power, and so is necessarily alone. In the Calvinist scheme of things, the speaker's demonstrable theological faults quite logically result in alienation and spiritual slavery.

As early as this is in the Meditation, we can now recognise the essential elements of the speaker's problem: an inability to integrate into the community of believers--or, more accurately, an inability to allow God to integrate the individual into the community--caused by an imperfect faith that centres on the speaker's sin, fear and doubt rather than on God's ability and willingness to overcome these obstacles through freely-given grace. The speaker is self-centred, and so in a universe of one, rather than Christ-centred, and so part of the group of the godly. Here, as well, is the tormenting paradox of Calvinism: as a believer, the speaker is obliged to look for evidence in the soul of those "markes and tokens of the reprobate" that the voice of despair threatened in the prefatory sonnets, from which threat the speaker managed to escape (temporarily) by crying out to God the more loudly; at the same time, the speaker's very obsession with these marks--this seemingly ineradicable stain of sin--may itself be the barrier that stands in the way and cuts the

speaker off from salvation and integration. In focusing on sin, the speaker runs the risk of assenting to the counsel of despair, which had formerly been rejected, and so discounting the power and gift of God.

The complication here goes further still. In commenting on the first verse of Psalm 51, Calvin writes that "there is, perhaps, no better remedy against deception in the matter of our sins than to turn our thoughts inward upon ourselves, to concentrate them upon God, and lose every self-complacent imagination in a sharp sense of his displeasure" (Commentaries 9: 286). Here once again is the problem and paradox faced by any Reformation Christian, and the particular challenge to a Renaissance woman writer who seeks to have her voice heard: attempting to concentrate on both the self *and* God results, ultimately, in a transformation of self that entails a certain loss--the believer is to "lose every self-complacent imagination" in God as the old, sinful-but-familiar self is changed radically by faith and grace; as the letter to the Romans has it, "ye, my brethren, are dead . . . to ye Law by the bodie of Christ, that ye shulde be married unto another, even unto him that is raised up from the dead, that we shulde bring forthe frute unto God" (Romans 7). Calvin himself wrote that

. . . we are consecrated and dedicated to God . . . We are not our own
 We are not our own We are not our own we are God's Let
 this therefore be the first step, that a man depart from himself in order that
 he may apply the whole force of his ability in the service of the Lord. . . .
 Christian philosophy bids reason give way to, submit and subject itself
 to, the Holy Spirit so that the man himself may no longer live but hear
 Christ living and reigning within him. (Institutes 3.7.1)

This change, this "central Christian problematics of losing and finding the self" (Swaim 269), is, clearly, the ultimate goal for a believer, the entire purpose of discernment. It also seems bound, however, to jeopardise human community through the radical dislocation, even disappearance, of those imperfect individual souls who constitute it. For Calvinists, the need to concentrate on the state of one's own soul and forge an individual relationship with one's saviour--an activity that

requires a defined, identified "self"--is urged as a necessary step toward discernment of membership in the elect. At the same time, however, the natural ultimate goal of these efforts is inevitably to alter beyond recognition the very self that forms part of that group. This elision of self in a union with the divine is close to the territory of the mystic, both inspirational to the writer--St. John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, Julian of Norwich--and inherently hostile to explanation. For Locke, the way in which the importance of voice coincides for the Christian who must bear witness and the (woman) poet who narrates in first-person thus becomes clear: voice is not body, not soul, not "self," but is an expression and figuring of self, that which traces and describes processes, articulates feelings, and, finally, identifies the group and the individual's integration into it. In this sonnet sequence, voice allows the self to remain viable through the (joyfully) traumatic process of transformation, so that the journey toward discernment may be followed as the speaker pleads with God and traces the soul's progress for the reader. The remaining sonnets of the Meditation will see the speaker variously advance, backslide, make false starts, attempt to bargain with God, and, finally, accept the truth of grace that brings the individual out of isolation and makes him or her a member of the community of the godly.

A nadir of sorts is reached in sonnet 5, a bare quarter of the way into the Meditation, and it is significant that the focus on the physical is more acute in this poem than in any other in the main body of the sequence--in fact, sonnet 5 is in this respect closely allied with the sonnets of Locke's preface, in which physical torment is so prevalent. The stabbing image of the Lord's "allpearing eye" (5.4) that here sees plainly the speaker's sin is reminiscent of the "Lord whos wrath is sharper than the knife" (P1.7); the pain of the speaker who "For mercy" does "lye and grone" (5.3) echoes generally the physical wretchedness of the preface, and particularly the speaker's effort to "Poure forth my piteous plaint with woefull sound, / With smoking sighes & oft repeted grone" (P5.7-8). In fact, in a further reference to the pain of cutting or stabbing, Locke here reaches the most physically violent (and, some might say, the most melodramatic) point in the sequence with the lines "My cruell conscience with sharpned knife / Doth splat my ripped hert" (5.9-10). It is important to note that no such violence exists in the half-verse of Psalm 51

that accompanies sonnet 5, and upon which this sonnet expands: in Locke's conservative translation, the verse is unsurprisingly rendered "Againste thee onely have I sinned, & don evill in thy sight."¹⁶ The intense physicality that Locke inserts here is significant precisely because it is associated with the speaker's lowest spiritual point, and, as well, with an honesty that is both brutal and dangerous: when the conscience turns on the heart, all is laid bare, and the speaker sees "The lothesome secretes of my filthy life" which are also spread out "before the face of God" (11-12). Forced to face the truth of the vast gulf between humankind's wickedness and divine perfection, the speaker concludes the sonnet with the intellectual burden of consciousness added to the visceral burden: "Shame for my dede is added to my paine" (14). In the Calvinist scheme of things, this shame is natural and could even be considered a good sign, for it indicates an unhappiness with one's sinful state, which in itself was thought to be evidence of grace: Calvin comments on this Psalm verse that those who wish truly to repent "are such as have had their consciences wounded with a sense of sin, and who can find no rest until they have obtained assurance of his mercy. We will never seriously apply to God for pardon, until we have obtained such a view of our sins as inspires us with fear" (Commentaries 9: 284-285). In the speaker's current frame of mind, however, the addition of this shame to pain threatens simply to complete the drowning in the "sea of depe despeire" that began in sonnet 2.

In the volume of Calvin's Commentaries that deals with this Psalm, a good deal of footnoting and text is devoted to the wording of the second half of the Miserere's fourth verse. In the Vulgate, from whose text Locke probably translated the Miserere (and in which the Psalm would have appeared as number 50),¹⁷ the words appear: "tibi soli peccavi et malum coram te feci ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis et vincas cum judicaveris." Locke's own version of this part of verse 4 settles on "That thou mightest be founde just in thy sayinges, and maiest over come when thou art judged."¹⁸ This rather surprising rendering, which seems to posit the existence of a power that is capable of judging God, stands in contrast to the text of the Geneva Bible of 1560, which reads, "that thou maiest be juste when thou speakest, and pure when thou judgest";¹⁹ the sentiment of the latter rendering was also favoured by Calvin in his comments on Psalm 51, in

which the half-verse appears as "be clear when thou judgest" in the English translation (Commentaries 9: 288). Despite the apparent contentiousness of a translation that speaks of judging God, however--an impression reinforced in Locke by the line of the accompanying sonnet 6 that speaks of "them that judge the justice of thy cause" (8)--such renderings were standard up to Locke's time: in Felch's words, "'when thou art judged' is the standard English translation, occurring in Marshall's translation of Savonarola, Coverdale's Bible, The Great Bible, Coverdale's diglot psalter, and the Kings [sic] Primer. Only the Geneva (1557 Psalter and 1560 Bible) has 'when thou judgest'."²⁰ However solid the precedent, the usual translation of verse 4 was apparently unsatisfactory to the translators of the Geneva Bible, and this version would eventually appear in the Authorised (King James) Bible in 1611: "that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."²¹

These few words are both potentially troublesome and potentially important to the way in which one views the trajectory of Locke's sequence. A full discussion of this unusual half-verse and the vagaries of its various translations is beyond the scope of this study, but we know that Locke in all likelihood had access to two quite different interpretations of this scripture (the Latin of the Vulgate standing against the self-consciously-protestant English of the Geneva), and that she chose to remain faithful to the Vulgate's unusual sentiment rather than settle on a less-contentious rendering; it is thus fair and useful to present two possible constructions of meaning for her translation here. The matter of the Almighty being "judged" may refer simply to the need for God in his actions to appear absolutely just and fair to the minds of men, in order to deprive them of the opportunity to think him a tyrant and so justify their defiance of his will and laws; or Locke's verse may address a more legalistic notion of judgment, in which "the justice of thy [God's] cause" is considered and pronounced upon in some substantial way, as a suit would be in a court of law. Although this still leaves unanswered the question of just who judges the highest Judge, this latter sense of meaning seems supported by references, in sonnet 6 and elsewhere, to matters of law and justice--in line 6 of this sonnet, for example, the speaker refers to humankind not just as inherently sinful, but as "sighyng sinners, that have broke thy lawes[.]"

Perhaps the most fruitful way in which to read Locke's translation of this part of the Psalm, and the speaker's related lines in the sonnet, involves expanding on the first possible reading while not entirely dismissing the second. When Locke expresses the wish that God may "over come when thou art judged[.]" she is surely aware that he is in no real danger of being able to "over come" opposition to the justice of his "cause"; what is to be overcome is the power of sin in the lives of God's human creatures, and their tendency, both natural and obstinate in fallen nature, to gravitate toward sin. What must be made apparent to the imperfect judgment of humankind is the absolute logic and correctness of God's actions in punishing sin; when this is made apparent, the complete gratuitousness and generosity of the gift of grace are all the more stunning. That God's actions *appear* to be just to human eyes and minds is thus of great importance, as there is a "trial" of sorts to which God's justice is subjected in his creatures' eyes; the vital difference between the rendering of judgment here and elsewhere, however, is that the verdict has absolutely no consequences for God—only, and crucially, for man. God's right to punish people must be somehow comprehensible to humans precisely so that his tremendous forbearance can be appreciated by them. This also, and importantly, reminds readers of these sonnets and of Locke's Psalm translation that, notwithstanding the importance of the Old Testament to Calvinists, the old law has been superseded for Christians by the new law of Christ's sacrifice, the law of love. First come the limited and faulty human reference points of the justice of causes, the careful weighing of pro and con; then comes the overwhelming intimation of divine love, unearned, unmerited, and freely-given. James Anderson, translator of Calvin's Commentaries on the Psalms, claims that, for Calvin, "the words are a part of David's confession; . . . he not only confesses his sin in the first part of the verse, but also here acknowledges the divine righteousness should God condemn him" (Commentaries 9: 287 n.1). Thus, in the eyes of the godly, God has condescended to make his actions in some measure intelligible to sinners, "The worldes injustice wholly to confound" (6.10). This reading of both Locke's scripture translation and sonnet points to yet more Calvinist orthodoxy, as it highlights "what Calvin called 'accommodation,' the process by which a wholly unintelligible and incomprehensible deity

represents himself, in human terms, to mankind" (Keefer 148). Everything here necessarily refers to humankind's terms, structures, and intellectual capacities, and everything redounds upon humankind, as well.

The matter of Locke's particular rendering of these few words of Biblical text is important because of the way this half-verse relates to and supports the subtext of the sonnet that addresses it. In sonnet 6, the speaker attempts to present divine forgiveness of an individual as an opportunity for God to transform a sinner into a living example of divine mercy. The speaker pleads for this fate, saying, "Withdraw my soule from the deserved hell, / O Lord of glory, for thy glories sake: / That I may saved of thy mercy tell" (6.2-4), thus deflecting any notion of merit on the speaker's part--damnation is admittedly "deserved"--and presenting the matter as entirely a reflection on God's "glory" and a way to spread his Word. A Christian who discerns signs of election in him- or herself, despite the acknowledged presence of sin, can testify to the action of God's grace in his or her life, and thus "shew how thou [God] . . . / . . . / Performest mercy" (6.5, 7), providing the world, in a sense, with evidence for the court. This is indeed consistent with the Calvinist view, for the sinner bears witness that although God would be absolutely correct in "damning [the sinner] to depth of during woe[.]" he still chooses to spare the soul from the "deserved flames" (6.11, 13). As Hannay sees it, Locke "uses mouth imagery to demonstrate that the speaker, who prays to be delivered 'From gaping throte of depe deuouring hell,' will be qualified by 'the profe of myne example' to 'preache / The bitter frute of lust and foule delight'" ("Unlock" 35). As hopeful as this sonnet is, however, it may also be viewed as suspect. The speaker does seem ready to turn away from the self-centred horror of the earlier poems and toward the real possibility of God's mercy, and thus toward others (here, those who need to learn about God's promise of mercy); at the same time, however, the desperation that has to this point possessed the speaker imbues these lines with an undercurrent of barter, casting the speaker--who, it must be remembered, is not yet secure in the knowledge of election--as one who promises to spread God's message in exchange for salvation. The speaker does not say, "because you have done this, I will do that"; rather, the agreement is contingent--"if you do this, *then* I will do that."

In this context, the notion of God being "judged" on his actions echoes more literally, if feebly: the saved speaker offers to become a living exhibit of "the justice of thy cause" in a pathetic attempt to appear of some worth to the Creator. Apparent Calvinist conformity notwithstanding, the speaker here essentially proposes a deal with this reasoned and balanced presentation to God of the advantages of saving this particular sinner. As with the matter of washing, the speaker's distance from God is highlighted here by ignorance of theological tenets: Calvin, in his commentary on Psalm 51, says plainly that "[t]he contrite heart . . . has no dealings with God upon the principle of exchange" (Commentaries 9: 306). The often double-layered reading of the speaker's situation that has characterised the Meditation to this point makes it difficult to ignore the element of bargaining present in this sonnet, particularly as this element will re-assert itself more blatantly later in the sequence.

The four sonnets that follow the speaker's first attempt to strike a deal with God witness an intense and tantalising series of near-epiphanies for the speaker, who comes ever closer to the truth that will allow completion and integration, only to be swayed once again to despair--and turn, once again, to voice for a lifeline. The pattern that thus emerges in Locke's sequence in fact faithfully reflects the Calvinist view of the rocky progress of the Christian toward security in faith and knowledge of election. Lewalski notes this progress in her discussion of the stages of the protestant spiritual life, particularly those of repentance and its concomitant of saving faith:

[English Renaissance devotional writer] Richard Rogers observes that this faith grows throughout the elect Christian's life. At the time of his conversion it may be only a "little faith," whereby he understands his sins to be pardonable but is not sure that they are forgiven; subsequently, he may attain to some weak assurance but will often lose it and need to strive hard to recover it. At length he attains to a ripe and strong faith, so that most of the time he has a full persuasion of the mercy of God effecting his own salvation[.] . . . Those who are in the middle age of the Christian life experience that life as a "combate and a conflict" against sinful lusts, unruly

desires, and all manner of temptation, as well as a pilgrimage in the course of which they experience many lets and hindrances. (Protestant Poetics 22-24)

One-quarter of the way through the Meditation, the "lets and hindrances" are not yet over for Locke's speaker.

The familiar theme of sinfulness dominates sonnet 7, with the speaker now identifying sin explicitly as a condition inherent in humankind, rather than merely performative: "Sinne is my nature and my kinde alas" (7.3). This, again, is in keeping with the Calvinist view that human beings are creatures corrupt in every part: Calvin comments that "[t]he language of David sounds very differently from that of the Papists, [as the Psalm declares] *I was formed in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*. . . . [Papists would] restrict its [sin's] seat . . . to the inferior part of the soul and the gross appetites" (Commentaries 9: 291, emphasis in trans.).²² The truth for Calvinist Christians, in the words of William Perkins, is that "the heart of man is a vast gulf of sinne, without either bottome or banke, and hath infinite hidden corruptions in it" (D3). Locke's speaker, however, pointedly mentions that this native aspect of sin is not presented as an excuse for individual wretchedness: "I plead not this [inherent human sinfulness] as to excuse my blame, / On kynde or parentes myne owne gilt to lay" (7.9-10).²³ Instead, the speaker claims that identifying the pervasive nature of sin--this "disclosing of my sinne, my shame" (7.11) that echoes, in its revelatory character, the "laying abrode" of the "lothesome secretes of my filthy life" in sonnet 5--highlights "[my] nede of helpe" (7.12). As well, in a move reminiscent of the bargaining ploy of sonnet 6, this admission of the speaker's complete abjection reminds God again of his chance "to displaye / Thy mightie mercy" (7.12-13) should he choose to remit this person's sins.

Regardless of the conviction with which the speaker denies an intention to blame the general sinfulness of humankind for personal sinfulness, this disclaimer seems paradoxical in view of the emphasis earlier in the sonnet on the fact that an individual human is inescapably sinful through and through from the very beginning of life--"With sede and shape my sinne I toke also" (7.2). Hannay comments that Locke here "picks up a reference to the seed of David in Calvin's

commentary on verse 13" of this Psalm ("Unlock" 32), and she chooses to expand upon that reference in a way that indicates that sin is necessarily a building-block of earthly life, growing as the person grows:

In sinne my mother me conceived: Lo

I am but sinne . . .

.....

Such bloome and frute loe sinne doth multiplie,

Such was my roote, such is my juyse [juice] within. (7.4-5, 7-8)

Interestingly, sin is here presented not in corrupt terms of rot or noxiousness, but in sensuously organic terms through the image of a living, growing plant--sin is humanity's "roote," "bloome," "frute" and "juyse." While these are both sinful in themselves and "multiplied" by sin throughout life, the "lothesome" and "filthy" nature of sin as described earlier is nearly undermined here by the attractive, life-affirming metaphor used to illustrate it. The first eight lines of sonnet 7 thus serve to reveal yet another facet of complexity in Locke's presentation of community: while sin is that which keeps the speaker from God and from the godly, it is also that which links one human to other humans; it is the essential legacy of the fallen soul and helps to define all men and women and bind them to one another. While ending on a note similar to that of sonnet 6--the speaker's free admission of the need for God's grace, and the attempt to "flatter" God into granting it--sonnet 7 disturbs the flow of this cajolery with an earthy description of sin that is more reminiscent of blossoming life than creeping decay.²⁴

The first tentative but real step toward God occurs in the eighth sonnet of the Meditation, in which sin, however temporarily, begins to recede sufficiently from the speaker's gaze to allow the introduction of some perspective. Sin is by no means trivialised or minimised--in the Calvinist plan, this would only be possible for those who were hopelessly reprobate, which the speaker does not yet seem to be--but the rupture represented by the vital, startling image of the blooming plant of sonnet 7 seems to have a cathartic effect on the speaker, whose tone in sonnets 9 and 10 is calmer, more insightful, and more positive than at any previous point in the sequence. The

word that is most striking in sonnet 8 is, in fact, “simply” and its variants, which occur five times, clustered near the poem’s beginning and its end. No longer thrashing in blind panic, hemmed in by “Chaos” and a “heape of sinne” that blot out the view of the “shining light” of God’s mercy, the speaker is quiet: “Lo simplie, Lord, I do confesse my case, / And simplie crave thy mercy in my woe” (8.3-4). The speaker recognises the fact that “thou [God] lovest simple sooth” (8.1), and that he has granted to the speaker that special gift which is necessary for salvation:

This secrete wisdom hast thou graunted me,
 To se my sinnes, & whence my sinnes do growe:
 This hidden knowledge have I learnd of thee,
 To fele my sinnes, and howe my sinnes do flow[.] (8.5-8)

At the beginning of the Meditation, a hyper-awareness of sin frightened the speaker so badly that paralysis and entrapment were all that resulted; now this awareness is transformed into the secret, hidden knowledge to which the godly are privy. The recognition of sinfulness is no longer just that which enforces isolation, but a gift, a sign on the path of discernment. There is still fear here, as there should be: as in sonnet 2, the speaker is still “Dreding to drowne” and “bewailyng my desert”; now, however, the reaction to this fear is movement, and the acknowledgement that a sinner must move toward God: “lo howe I flee . . . / . . . / Releved simply by thy hand to be” (8.10, 12). The speaker has moved far from the violence of sonnet 5; where there was only “Shame for my dede” at the acknowledgement of sin, there is now “secrete wisdom” and “hidden knowledge” therein—instead of being its own end, sin is an element of the person, one which helps set the speaker’s feet on the path to God and his mercy.

The imagery of cleansing returns to the sequence in sonnet 9, and the reader is clearly meant to contrast its presentation here with that seen in sonnet 3. Although the two Psalm verses from which the sonnets take their inspiration also deal with cleansing, they are themselves fairly simple variations on a theme, with no dramatic differences between their sentiments: Locke renders verse 2 of the Miserere as “Wash me yet more from my wickednes, and clense me from my sinne,” and verse 7 as “Sprinkle me, Lorde, with hisope and I shalbe cleane: washe me and I

shalbe whiter then snow." The main difference is a move from a general notion of "cleansing" to mention of the specific ritual cleansing agent of hyssop, and Locke makes this change a telling one. The differences between the sonnets that comment on these verses are more pronounced than those between the verses themselves, and serve to illustrate the distance the speaker has travelled by the mid-point of the Meditation.

In sonnet 3, the stain of sin was declared an impediment to the speaker's approach to God: ". . . till from sinne I may be washed white, / So foule I dare not, Lord, approche to thee" (3.3-4). The possibility of being "washed white," and thus able to approach God and ask for his mercy, seemed remote, however; the significance of the speaker's repeated pleas for cleansing has been discussed, and the impression sonnet 3 leaves with the reader is that the process is perpetual and never sufficient. In sonnet 9, however, the speaker's new-found enlightenment about sin seems to spread to an understanding of its forgiveness--that is, the cleansing brought about by God's mercy and grace. The speaker first requests of God, "With swete Hysope besprinkle thou my sprite" (9.1). Hyssop was used by the ancient Hebrews in rituals of purification that signalled an individual's fitness to re-enter his or her community after a period of segregation; such rituals were performed after, for instance, childbirth, or recovery from certain diseases, such as leprosy.²⁵ The reference here hearkens back to the mention of the speaker's "leprous bodie" in sonnet 3--there, seemingly, with no remedy available to it. In sonnet 9, however, not only does the speaker name the specific agent of purification, hyssop, but symbolically characterises the type of hyssop required for the task at hand:

Not such hysope, nor so besprinkle me,
 As law unperfect shade of perfect lyght
 Did use as an apointed signe to be
 Foreshewing figure of thy grace behight.
 With death and bloodshed of thine only sonne,
 The swete hysope, cleanse me defyled wight.
 Sprinkle my soule. (9.2-8)

The speaker of sonnet 3, paralyzed by terror, would not have been able to distinguish between the hyssop of the old "law," that of justice without mercy--only an "unperfect shade" of God's promised mercy to come--and the "swete hysope" of the new law of love, which sees justice tempered by mercy through the sacrifice of Christ, the fulfilment of God's promise. Here, in sonnet 9, the speaker understands the difference that Christ's death has made: the references to washing at the end of the poem are, as in sonnet 3, frequent, but now they do not express a perpetual, unsatisfied desire for cleansing--rather, there is the conviction that this washing will suffice. Once the speaker's soul is washed with "droppes of mercy and of grace, / I shalbe cleane as cleansed of my synne" (9.9-10). While sonnet 3 ends with the plea "cleanse me ones againe" (3.14), sonnet 9 concludes, "Wash me, O Lord: when I am washed soe, / I shalbe whiter than the whitest snowe" (9.13-14). This state of grace is, clearly, still in the future: ". . . *when* I am washed soe, / I *shalbe* whiter than the whitest snowe" (emphasis added); however, a time may now at least be anticipated when the speaker will be cleansed by imputed righteousness, and, according to the significance of the ritual, will be ready to take part in the community.

Immediately after this breakthrough the reader approaches the middle of the Meditation, and while it is clear that the speaker's journey toward a home with the godly is not complete, sonnet 10 incorporates all the elements that have preceded it--fear, voice, physical pain and violence--and adds to them the tentative strength of the speaker's recent epiphany. The reader is also reminded here once again that voice, so vital in the sonnets of the preface to the Christian speaker and the female poet, is still of primary importance to the speaker for the process at hand. Indeed, this is probably the "noisiest" sonnet of the Meditation, full of both sound and, significantly, *responsive* hearing. Just as the voice of despair attempted to undermine the speaker's cry for mercy in the third sonnet of the preface, here "the soundes / Of dredfull threates and thonders of the law" attempt to dishearten the speaker, in whose "gylty minde" their "Eccho . . . resoundes" (10.1-2, 3). The speaker may recognise the old law as an "unperfect shade," but its ability to prey on a mind not yet sure of mercy is still considerable; indeed, this noise, both distracting and compelling, threatens to drown out "mercies gentle voice" (10.5), just as despair

had nearly silenced the speaker's pleas to God earlier. Fortunately, here the right path is again chosen--instead of falling silent, the speaker says that "louder, Lorde, I am constraynde to call" (10.6). Locke chooses the most structurally-appropriate point in the sequence, the peak reached at the end of its first half, to draw together the different aspects of the speaker's struggle, and re-assert the importance and efficacy of voice in that struggle. This time, however, there is a vital difference: in the preface, the speaker is completely physically defeated by the weight of sin and the voice of despair, relying blindly, if fortunately, on the power of voice--the cry is desperate, a plea for rescue that calls out wildly to God and does not engage the forces around it; here, the speaker responds to these forces with some sense of comprehension, as if recognising that confronting and coping with them are part of the process of coming to God, a process necessarily riddled with paradox and pain. There is an acceptance, almost an eagerness, to the speaker's reactions, as sound and hearing are transformed through pain into something recognised as ultimately positive, and therefore to be invited: "Lorde, *pearce* myne eares, & make me to *rejoyse*, / When I shall *heare*, and when thy mercy shall / *Sounde* in my hart the gospell of thy grace" (10.7-9, emphasis added). There is listening here as well as hearing, and joy in pain, as the sonnet echoes the references of the Psalm verse: along with the constructive violence of "pearce[d]" hearing, there are "broosed bones" that "Shall leape for joy" (10.12, 14)--bones bruised by God himself and leaping for joy at the knowledge of his mercy. In the preface, the speaker was acted upon, suffering physical destruction and desperation. Now, while there is still pain, there is also a sense of reciprocity; a relationship exists. The "dredfull threates and thonders" of the old law may echo fearfully in the speaker's heart, but the "gospell of . . . [God's] grace" sounds there as well. With the knowledge that God's mercy is offered to sinners through grace, and that that offer may include this particular sinner, joy returns to the sense of hearing (10.8-10), "The joy that onely may releve my case" (10.11). Joy is recognised as a surprising necessity. Obstacles in the speaker's path have not been removed, but a way of dealing with them is now shown to be possible.

In the Meditation, Locke consistently links the most spiritually desperate or arid parts of her speaker's journey with physical wretchedness. The sequence thus dwells pointedly upon the physical, and particularly upon the senses, in sonnets 11 and 12, as the speaker suffers again a collapse like that of the preface, as though exhausted by the painful exhilaration of the epiphanic moment and by the constant, and still tremendous, strain of sin's burden and fear's threatening presence. Once again, the focus is on the privileged sense of sight—but, as with the earlier matter of cleansing, there is here a difference in treatment. In the preface, the tears shed for sin turned the speaker into a "blinde wretch" (P2.1). The radical self-centredness of this early stage of the spiritual journey dictated that only the speaker's point of view was considered; only the sinner's "presuming eye" and its failed gaze mattered (P5.1). In sonnet 11, the emphasis is on God's gaze and its implications, both because the speaker's own sight has failed and so can do no "looking" of its own, and because the gradual movement away from destructive solipsism and toward God dictates a change in perspective. As well, although sin is able to blind the speaker, it cannot, of course, blind God. Instead, it operates as an odious obstruction, the "Chaos and . . . heape of sinne" of sonnet 4, which cause God to avert his eyes in disgust and which maintain the speaker's segregation from God and his chosen.²⁶ Still, while the speaker can never do more than plead—no sinful being could possibly do more—there is now the recognition that the individual sinful Christian, while never completely severed from the sin that is part of his or her nature (the "bloome and frute" of sonnet 7), has the potential to be something other than the prisoner of a "heape of sinne" with the help of God's grace. From the sentiment that "I am but sinne, and sinfull ought to dye" (7.5), the speaker has moved to asking God to "Looke not how I / Am foule by sinne: but make me by thy grace / Pure in thy mercies sight" (11.11-13).²⁷ The speaker understands that the possibility exists for God to "Loke on me . . . but loke not on my sinne" (11.6), a difficult realisation, as sin has been accepted as so integral and organic a part of the self. Here is a further reinforcement of the speaker's desire to be cleansed with the "swete hysope" of the "death and bloodshed of thine [God's] only sonne"; that sacrifice is the living manifestation of God's grace, which has the power to make the speaker "Pure in thy mercies sight."

In his A Treatise Tending Unto A Declaration Whether A Man Be In The Estate Of Damnation Or In The Estate Of Grace, Perkins makes an observation that could have been written as commentary upon sonnets 10 to 12 in Locke's sequence:

[W]hen the spirit hath made a man see his sins, he seeth further the curse of the law, & so he finds himselfe to be in bondage under Satan, hel, death, damnation: at which most terrible sight his heart is smitten with feare and trembling, through the consideration of his hellish and damnable estate."

(D3v-4)

Awareness of the fact that God can justify the sinner through the sacrifice of Christ, and thus look upon the sinner but not the sin, is not yet sufficient to provide the speaker with a smooth path to salvation. Sonnet 12 is once again reminiscent of the sonnets of the preface and the earlier part of the main body of the Meditation, as it seems to reveal a disheartening regression on the speaker's part that sweeps away the gains of sonnets 7 and 8. There is little ambiguous about the poem's opening lines:

Sinne and despeir have so possest my hart,
 And hold my captive soule in such restraint,
 As of thy mercies I can fele no part,
 But still in languor do I lye and faint. (12.1-4)

The imprisonment, isolation, and physical helplessness of the initial stages of the speaker's spiritual journey are all here. Once again, there are echoes of the prefatory sonnets with the references to physical breakdown: as well as lying and fainting in "languor," the speaker is armed with only "feble faith" that is "Staggring" and "fallen" (12.7-9). That which Lewalski sees in Richard Rogers' description of the Christian's spiritual progress is evident here: there is yet really only "a 'little faith,' whereby [the speaker] understands . . . sins to be pardonable but is not sure that they are forgiven;" having attained "to some weak assurance" the speaker has lost it, and will "need to strive hard to recover it."

One promising element remains, however, and it is a critical one: the speaker recognises a need for renewal, desires "a new pure hart" (12.5). This seems to echo Calvin's thoughts on the definition of repentance: "The Hebrew word for 'repentance' is derived from conversion or return; the Greek word, from change of mind or of intention. . . . The meaning is that, departing from ourselves, we turn to God, and *having taken off our former mind, we put on a new*" (Institutes 3.3.5, emphasis added). With true repentance for sin comes the acknowledgement that one's very core and lifeblood must be replaced, just as the new law must supercede the old. Initially in the Meditation, the force of despair goaded the speaker to cry out abjectly for mercy; now, added to the positive instinct to call out to God is the invitation to him to change something within the speaker--not just to obliterate the old (which Locke perpetually presents as weak and inadequate), but to replace it with something new and strong. Here we see the importance of voice in marking the individual: tracing the progress of the soul from the preface, through sonnet 10, to this point, we see how voice guides the self along a definite trajectory that responds consistently to the threat of despair and results in a movement toward true repentance and, thus, salvation. In the preface, the speaker sends up a general, panicked, "shreking crye" for mercy as despair "Spredes forth my sinne & shame" in an attempt to discourage an appeal to God (P3.1, 4); in sonnet 10, the speaker calls to God to "pearce myne eares, & make me to rejoyse," stirring the senses into a responsive relationship with mercy, just as the "dredfull threatens and thonders of the law" descend (10.7, 2); in sonnet 12, the speaker asks God to enter into and remake the speaker's being--"Create a new pure hart within my brest ; / . . . / Renew, O Lord, in me a constant sprite" (12.5, 10)--just at the moment when "Sinne and despeir" have "so possest my hart" (12.1). Voice allows the self not to be lost, even as it must be lost. Calvin writes that in this process of repentance, "withdrawing from ourselves we turn to God," and here it is voice that illuminates that mystic manoeuvre: the self, ever helpless before God, cannot in its weakness really withdraw from itself, but instead invites God in to effect the necessary change only possible by grace.

The Meditation sees Locke lead her speaker through a recognisable Calvinist pattern of gain and loss, advancement and backsliding, that illustrates the struggle that any given soul must

experience in the course of true discernment of salvation or damnation. She also maintains consistently her own poetic pattern of tying physical inadequacy to spiritual wretchedness and foregrounding voice as the essential link between the floundering sinner and God, developing the themes she established in the five sonnets of her preface, and thus the coincidence of the needs of the Christian and the writing woman.

The speaker seems to make some progress in the painfully slow climb toward God and that ideal state of "assurance of thy love" (12.14) as sonnets 13 and 14 unfold. While once again the speaker assumes the posture of the preface, "prostrate" and "With sighes depe drawne" (13.1, 2), the great distance between the speaker and God seems literally to have been bridged. Before, the closest the speaker could come was "not daring . . . / . . . to beholde the angry heavens face" and "Bending my yelding handes to heavens throne" (P5.1-2, 6), obstructed by "My Chaos and my heape of sinne . . . [that lay] / Betwene me and thy mercies shining light" (4.11-12); now, the speaker is "prostrate, Lorde, before thy face" (13.1). The plea to God to "Dryve me not from thy face in my distresse" (13.4), and the accompanying tender litany of joys associated with the sight of that face ("Thy face of mercie and of swete relefe, / The face that fedes angels with onely sight, / The face of comfort in extremest grefe" [13.5-7]) bespeak a closeness to the divine presence that was distressingly absent earlier in the sequence. This closeness is described in terms of an extreme physical proximity ("Dryve me not from thy face") that contrasts with the shapeless exile of the "ugglye place" to which the speaker was confined in the preface and early part of the main body of the sequence (P2.7)--the "ugglye place" out of which a "cherefull glimse of gods abounding grace / . . . / Hath brought to joy" many other Christians (P2.6, 7). Now, too, the speaker can sense the spiritual comfort that accompanies the concrete image of God's "face": "Take not away the succour of thy sprite, / Thy holy sprite" (13.8-9). Along with this is the recognition that it is this spirit that saves the speaker from succumbing to the forces that would silence pleas for mercy: it is "The stay that when despeir assaileth me, / In faintest hope yet moveth me to pray, / To pray for mercy, and to pray to thee" (13.10-12).

The prayer that is this sonnet is encapsulated in the final couplet, which in turn succinctly re-phrases Locke's translation of Psalm 51's verse 11: Locke's "Cast me not away from thy face, and take not thy holy spirit from me" becomes "Lord, cast me not from presence of thy face, / Nor take from me the spirite of thy grace" (13.13-14). There is more here than simple repetition of scripture, however; the speaker has come a long way from the scattered panic of earlier on, and is now able to articulate the goal of the spiritual journey: to dwell in God's presence, upheld by the spirit of his *grace*, which will always allow the speaker to resist the depredations of despair. This signals the realisation that grace has surely been at work in the speaker all along, a sign not of the reprobate, but of the chosen. In this moment of calm, clear-eyed assessment, the speaker is also able to express a direct, individual link to God, as grace moves the speaker not just "To pray for mercy" generally but "to pray to thee" (13.12). In these few lines the speaker acknowledges total dependence on God--not just in the sense that the speaker's fate rests with his will, but in the sense that all emanates from him, even the desire and ability to ask for mercy; it is grace itself that has allowed the speaker's voice to cry out and not fall silent when threatened by despair. This acknowledgement of complete dependence on and provenance in God is a watershed in the Calvinist spiritual journey, for it marks the blurring of the boundaries of self that serve to keep the Christian apart from God.

Interestingly, with this proximity to the divine and its requisite rebirth of the self comes a broadened perspective, a longer memory. The speaker seems to recollect in sonnet 14 a state of contentment in the security of God's grace that has not been indicated before in the Meditation, as if being in the divine presence--or being able to imagine being there--has rendered the speaker truly conscious again. Once able to see past the "filth and fault [that] are ever in my face" (4.14), the speaker, who had been "gaz[ing] about for grace" (4.13), detects grace not only in the present, but recalls it in the past. The plea to "render me my wonted joyes againe" (14.1), and the recollection of "The tast, that thy love whilome did embrace / My chearfull soule, the signes that dyd assure / My felyng ghost of favor in thy sight" (14.4-6), all reveal that the speaker here is going through a process of *re-integration* into a community, attempting to reclaim membership in

a once-familiar group. This may seem surprising, considering the speaker's assertion at the beginning of the preface that "I . . . / . . . / Finde not the way that other oft have found" and the reference to being left in the "ugglye place, / Where I in darke of everlasting night / Bewayle my woefull and unhappy case" (P2.1, 4; 7-9), all of which seem to bespeak an isolation experienced without interruption from the beginning of the speaker's life. Here, however, it is clear that the speaker desires "The swete retorne of grace that I have lost" (14.10), and identifies the "ground of all my paine" as "Doubt of thy mercy" (14.3). The signs of grace "Are fled from me, and wretched I endure / Senslesse of grace the absence of thy sprite" (14.7-8). Grace was once known; its absence is now felt; physical breakdown ("paine," "senslesse[ness]"), so integral to the sequence as a manifestation of spiritual wretchedness, has followed; voice has traced the whole story. Just as the speaker asked God in the crucial sonnet 10 to "geve my hearing joy againe" (10.10)—the "againe" giving one of the few indications that grace was once active in this life—here God is asked to "Restore my joyes" (9); just as in sonnet 10 God is asked to animate the speaker with sense—hearing, feeling—here he is asked to "make me *fele* againe / the swete retorne of grace" (14.9, emphasis added). The lifeless body needs reanimation with sense, the soul with grace. This recollective passage serves to correct the theological fault of sonnet 3, reminding the reader "that grace is the incorruptibe seed of God" (Calvin, Commentaries 9: 300). The longed-for connection between the speaker and God is again articulated: "With thy free sprite confirme my feble ghost" (14.12).

This sinner has been justified by God's grace, but has, in the course of ordinary human weakness, fallen away temporarily. The experience of being distant from God, like that of a child who has wandered away from its parent, brings with it such overwhelming fear that the speaker begins an examination for "markes and tokens of the reprobate" (P4.2), forgetting that grace is "all sufficing" (P5.4). Was the voice of despair telling the truth? Was grace imagined? Can the examination ever cease? Can a human being ever feel truly secure in justification, or would that lead to a dangerous presumptuousness? These questions are immediate and serious for a Calvinist Christian, and Locke demonstrates consistently throughout her sequence the constant weaknesses

of believers that lead them to stumble and doubt, however thorough their objective knowledge of the ineradicable nature of grace. Membership in the body of the elect may mean living on the margins of that community, as long as faith is "feble". As reformers like Rogers describe, the threat of being plucked out and isolated by doubt and despair may be present in a believer's life long after evidence of grace is manifest.

Locke does not let that notion rest after sonnet 14; in expanding upon the sentiment of Psalm 51, the following three sonnets of the Meditation play out yet again the actions of a desperate and fearful sinner. The progress that has been made step by step throughout the sequence, reflecting that made throughout a saved Christian's life, does lead the speaker closer to God, as we have seen, but even this late in the Meditation it is clear that that progress stands to be interrupted by regressions that are bound regularly to plague a sinful nature. Sonnets 15 and 16 see the speaker once again attempting to bargain with God, holding out an "if / then" proposition: "Lord, of thy mercy if thou me withdraw / From gaping throte of depe devouring hell, / Loe, I shall preach the justice of thy law" (15.1-3).²⁸ If God refrains from striking the speaker "with thy revengyng sworde[,] / So, Lord, my joying tong shall talke thy praise" (16.8-9). As before, God is reminded that this is all to his own glory, and would serve to promote him as a merciful creator: "Hyve [have] mercy, Lorde, in me example make / Of lawe and mercy, for thy mercies sake" (15.13-14). Through the witness of the saved speaker, "The wicked . . . / . . . / . . . suche as lewd delight hath ledde astray" (15.5, 7) will benefit from this show of mercy, a term invoked nine times in these two sonnets. God is invited to "shew thy might to save" in sparing this sinner (16.2).

The fact that the speaker recognises in sonnet 15 that "lawe and mercy" are connected--that God tempers "the justice of thy law" (15.3) with a mercy that accommodates human weakness--shows hopeful enlightenment; so does the fact that the "frute" of sonnet 7, that strangely attractive figuring of sin, is now called "bitter," the result of "lust and foule delight" (15.10). The notion that something is still wrong here, however, is first urged by the cloud of barter that overcasts this and sonnet 16, and then confirmed by sonnet 17.

The speaker refers to the "God of my health" in the second-last line of sonnet 16, one of several links throughout the sequence between salvation and the notion of spiritual health that stand in opposition to the physical misery of the despairing sinner.²⁹ Sonnet 17, however, begins with something not present in the Psalm verse--the union of the speaker's two greatest nemeses, despair and paine:

Lo straining crampe of colde despeir againe

In feble brest doth pinche my pinyng hart,

So as in greatest nede to cry and plaine

My speache doth faile to utter thee my smart. (17.1-4)

As before, voice is threatened by despair, and, for the first time in the sequence, it seems here that despair may prevail--the speaker will be silenced. Sonnet 17, however, contains perhaps the sharpest turnaround and most crucial articulation to be found anywhere in the Meditation. The first quatrain of the sonnet sees the greatest danger yet experienced by the speaker--voice fails. The second quatrain is a plea to God that attempts to counter the smothering "crampe" of despair, and it refers specifically to the faculty of speech: after asking God, as in sonnet 12, to "Refreshe my yelding hert" (17.5), the speaker asks him to "loose my speche, and make me call to thee. / Lord open thou my lippes. . ." (17.6-7)--the first reference in the sonnet to the accompanying Psalm verse. Here is reinforcement of the earlier realisation that everything must be recognised as emanating from God, even the desire of the sinner to importune him for mercy. The sonnet's third quatrain expands upon this, laying out plainly the speaker's understanding of the need for complete reliance upon God:

I can not pray without thy movyng ayde,

Ne can I ryse, ne can I stande alone.

Lord, make me pray, & graunt when I have praide.

Lord, loose my lippes, I may expresse my mone[.] (17.9-12)

The final couplet, its starting point again the Psalm, subtly posits voice as the bridge between the speaker, God, and other sinners: "And findyng grace with open mouth I may / Thy mercies

praise, and holy name display" (17.13-14). "With open mouth" may refer to the method of "findyng grace"--one calls for mercy--and also to the way in which one praises "Thy mercies" and displays the "holy name"--through verbal witness. Locke here carries through with her insistence on the important role of voice in connecting one person to a community, making it clear that no Christian can afford to remain silent.

The intensity of sonnet 17 results from its *omnium gatherum* nature: in this poem the speaker confronts despair, experiences pain, and struggles to rally voice; then asks God to transform a "yelding hert," recognises him as the absolute agent of all action, and asks for help; and, finally, says that voice, itself God's gift and instrument,³⁰ is to be used both to cry for mercy and to bear witness to it. This sonnet is a microcosm of the spiritual journey--struggle, progress and triumph writ small. It marks the end of the speaker's trouble, and the advent of reintegration.

Like the components of the Trinity, the final steps toward the godly are three in number. Sonnet 18 focuses on an understanding of the role of praise and a final, complete assent to the efficacy of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.³¹ Praise, the speaker now knows, is not to be held out as a unit of barter, something to be offered in exchange for salvation. The desire to praise God comes from him, and praise must return to him, offered up freely: "Thy mercies praise, instede of sacrifice, / With thankfull minde so shall I yeld to thee" (18.1-2). This is the true sacrifice, replacing the burnt offering of "catell slayne and burnt with sacred flame" (18.5) that represents the old law, the old life of the sinner before transformation. The speaker now truly believes in the absolute efficacy of grace, manifested in the sacrifice of Christ and able to affect the mystic union that draws God and his people together:

. . . thy swete sonne alone,

With one sufficing sacrifice for all

Appeaseth thee, and maketh the [sic] at one

With sinfull man

That sacred hoste is ever in thine eyes.

The praise of that I yeld for sacrifice. (18.9-14)

The sacrifice of praise is important, but it only prefigures a far more important offering--the entire self. With the body hopelessly inadequate, and, the speaker realises, serving only as a prison for the soul which desires to be with God, a complete "yielding" is necessary:

I yeld my self, I offer up my ghoste,

My slayne delightes, my dyeng hart to thee.

To God a trobled sprite is pleasing hoste. (19.1-3)

Sonnet 19 acknowledges, for a last time, the failure of the body, which is now a "fainting corps" unable to contain "the fleing sprite" (19.8). Acknowledging that "My pining soule for famine of thy grace / So feares alas the faintnesse of my faithe" (19.9-10), the speaker takes the only possible course for saving the soul: "I offre up my trobled sprite" (19.11). All control is surrendered to God. The speaker knows the offering cannot possibly be worthy of God's mercy, but also knows that it represents the entire self, and that it is the sort of sacrifice--worth nothing, containing everything--that God requires: "My trobled sprite refuse not in thy wraethe./ Such offering likes thee" (19.12-13).

Sonnet 20 addresses the 18th verse of the Miserere, "Shew favour, o lord in thy good will unto Sion, that th[e] walles of Hierusalem may be bylded." That the speaker has finally been enfolded in the arms of the community of the godly is indicated by the pointed way in which the sentiment of the Psalm verse is introduced in the first line of the sonnet: "Show mercie, Lord, not unto me alone[.]"³² This poem, which represents the third of the final three steps toward (re)integration at the end of the Meditation, is all about envisioning the Christian community, and it does so in an increasingly more focused way as the sonnet unfolds. In the first quatrain, God is invited to "stretch thy favor and thy pleased will, / To sprede thy bountie and thy grace upon / Sion, for Sion is thy holly hyll" (20.2-4). The second quatrain speaks more specifically of "thy Hierusalem" (20.5), the holy city (metaphorically) upon Sion, identified clearly in the third quatrain with "thy chirch" (20.9), in which the speaker hopes God will succour his chosen "with mighty wall" (20.5) and allow this fortress to stand as an example to the sinful world:

Defend thy chirch, Lord, and advaunce it soe,

So in despite of tyrannie to stand,
 That trembling at thy power the world may know
 It is upholden by thy mighty hand[.] (20.9-12)

A safe, comforting, enclosed community will be the result if God grants the speaker's wish and gives not only his grace but also his protection to true believers, "That Sion and Hierusalem may be / A safe abode for them that honor thee" (20.13-14). Locke here imagines her speaker squarely within the defined and protected boundaries of the holy city, far from the mire of sin in which the speaker was lodged early in the sequence. Here in sonnet 20 is also Locke's subtle but pointed political message to her fellow countrymen and England's young queen in 1560: England, now freed from the Catholicism that reigned with Mary Tudor, may become the new "Hierusalem," a model of Calvinist Christianity like Geneva, if Elizabeth, God's anointed, guards the English church carefully against "myning fraude or mighty violence" (20.8). Fervent protestants like Locke, newly returned from the Continent at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, felt obliged to remind England at every possible opportunity of its responsibility to cohere into a godly community now that God had seen fit to deliver it from Popish tyranny; thus, the speaker's journey in this sequence from the knowledge of grace, experienced before the Meditation opens, to the mire of sin, and back to grace with a renewed sense of security may also be cast as England's journey from the "godliness" of Henry VIII and Edward VI, to the darkness of Mary's reign, to, now, the promise of Elizabeth.

If sonnets 1 to 20 have seen a slow but inexorable move forward, sonnet 21 spreads the momentum laterally, perching like a crown on the sequence. The speaker envisions in greater detail the community of the new Jerusalem, and, significantly, it is full of the sound of communal voice. If the holy city is made real by God's grace, the speaker promises that "The brute shall of thy praised name resoune / In thankfull mouthes" (21.3-4), and that "thy people [shall] crye: / We praise thee, God our God" (21.7-8). The speaker here is not bargaining with God for salvation, but is "I" among "we" in this vision, one of those who has contributed to "Many a yelden host of humbled hart" upon which God now looks with "gentle eyes" (21.6, 4). Lines 10 and 11 remind

readers that this is indeed a vision, a projected city of which the speaker is a citizen: "That I then, Lorde, may also honor thee, / Releve my sorow, and my sinnes deface"; however, now that the true nature of sacrifice and forgiveness has been revealed to the speaker, the reality is close enough to be portrayed in detail. The speaker is no longer panicking, but simply acknowledging, and asking, "Be, Lord of mercie, mercifull to me" (21.12). Once the group can be imagined, the individual can reflect positively on his or her situation as one person who, fallen from the security of grace, may regain it. That person may dare to ask that he or she again be allowed to make one among those who gather around "thine altar" (21.5) to offer up their humbled hearts within the security of the "walled towne" (21.1): "Restore my feling of thy grace againe: / Assure my soule, I crave it not in vaine" (21.13-14). Here an important connection between the anonymous, ungendered speaker of the sequence and the female Christian writer Anne Locke may be described in Kim Walker's words: Locke's "published poem becomes the sign of God's grace, and her work as a poet can be framed as the 'sacrifice' of a 'thankfull minde' (sig. A7). . . . [her] sequence can thus open out from the penitent sinner to the community of believers which she inhabits" (59).³³

The England into which Anne Locke introduced her first published work was, in many ways, in flux. The young monarch who had occupied the throne for only two years had indeed shown herself to be protestant, to the relief of many, but she was also a woman, to the consternation of at least some. Surely increasing this consternation was the fact that this woman was unmarried, and in 1560 the disastrous marriage venture of England's late queen Mary Tudor would still have been vivid in the national memory. England was also in dire straits financially when Elizabeth ascended the throne, and found itself once more engaged in the traditional task of keeping France and Spain from joining forces in a way detrimental to England's interests and security--a task now made all the more acute by the fact that England's renewed official protestantism alienated the nation further from French and Spanish sympathies (at least until erupting religious dissent began to make certain factions of the French royal family more amenable to English friendship). Perhaps most importantly--and happily--for a reform-minded

Calvinist like Locke, the character of the English Church in 1560 still seemed malleable. The Elizabethan Settlement would not be complete until 1563, with the approval of the Thirty-Nine Articles (Thompson 627-628), and even the measures taken by 1560 were to prove unsatisfactory quite quickly to a number of people who felt it stood for compromise rather than the advancement of true religion (Somerset 80-81). The early years of Elizabeth's reign thus offered a mixture of apprehension and tentative hope to a nation that had not known a prolonged period of stability, religious or otherwise, for some time, and in this period a woman like Anne Locke was able to find a space for her own authorial venture in the name of aiding the establishment of the true church in England.

Hers was, of course, still far from a woman's world; neither law nor tradition reflected any serious concept of women as creatures capable of social and intellectual autonomy parallel to that of men. The emphasis of Calvinism on the dignity of women's traditional roles as wives and mothers, however, together with its assertion that all believers needed to bear witness to God's grace and help others to do so, combined to Locke's advantage. This is not to deny that everything about the presentation of *A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner* bespeaks caution and discretion: Locke did not sign it; she placed it (or agreed, perhaps, to have it placed) unobtrusively in the back of a translated volume of sermons; she identifies herself in the volume only by her initials, which appear only once; the speaker of her sonnets, taking on the protective mantle of the (usually male) psalmic voice, remains resolutely genderless; and no overtly feminist issues are dealt with in her sequence. Despite all of this, however, Locke quietly but insistently points throughout the *Meditation* to the worthlessness of the (necessarily-gendered) body in the face of sin and judgment, and focuses on the Christian community, of which she is obviously a member, as a locus of true power--the power of forgiveness and salvation, coming directly from God and unconcerned with patriarchal notions of value. Belonging to this Christ-centred community is everything; being shut out from it renders all else worthless. Locke understands this as well as she understands the strictures her society places on her as a published female writer,

and presents her sequence in a way that demonstrates her comprehension of all elements of her position, as a Christian and as a woman.

Hannay finds that Locke's tendency in the sonnets is to "stress the negative aspects" of protestant doctrine ("Wisdom" 67). No one could call Locke's poems celebratory or joyful, and the fact that they are so firmly cast in the mould of harshly introspective Calvinist literature has doubtless contributed to the neglect to which they have been subject for most of their existence. The most serious consequence of this neglect, of course, has been that the text of what is probably the first original sonnet sequence composed in the English language was largely ignored by or unknown to most scholars in the past. That such material is critical to the English Renaissance canon need hardly be stated. When one adds to this issue the matter of probable female authorship, the importance of the material increases dramatically: while their contextualisation within the boundaries of the pious material considered acceptable for Renaissance women's literary endeavours may have lead some to downplay or overlook their inherent value, these poems represent a major milestone in the recovery of women writers. This would be so even if the Meditation and its preface were not particularly accomplished poetic works. They are not simply pieces of historical interest in the structure of the canon, however; the sonnets themselves, possessed of what Spiller terms "a structural virtuosity unmatched until Sidney began to write more than two decades later" ("Locke" ts. 1), show a sophistication--and, in the preface especially, a concentrated energy--that more than confirms their poetic merits. They are also a noteworthy example of the way in which a devout and erudite woman justified woman's voice in the imperative of her faith. Speech is represented not as the mark of the unchaste, "unwomanly" woman; it is the duty of the Christian who must testify to his or her experience of faith, sin and forgiveness. In one of the many paradoxes that mark this doctrine, woman's voice finds space precisely because of woman's state as a sinful and inferior creature--inferior to the divine, that is, not to other sinful mortals of either gender. For Locke and writers like her, Christian necessity is woman's opportunity.

Chapter 2 Notes

¹ This was "Joye's translation of [Martin] Bucer's 1529 Latin text, published under the pseudonym Aretius Felinus in Antwerp in 1530" (Hannay et al 4).

² Hannay, Kinnamon and Brennan claim that "ninety English versions [of the Psalms were] published in the sixteenth century" (3); Kathleen M. Swaim also notes this (254). John Ottenhoff goes on to say that

between 1530 and 1600, a partial list of English poetic versions of [Psalm 51 alone] include[s] George Joye's 1530 *The Psalter of David in Englishe purely and faithfully translated . . .*; Richard Tavener's 1539 *An Epitome of the Psalmes, or briefe meditacions upon the same . . .*; Thomas Wyatt's 1549 *Certayne Psalmes chosen out of the psalter of David . . .*; the Earl of Surrey's 1549 *Certayne Chapters of the proverbes of Salomon . . .*; and William Hunnis's 1550 *Certayne Psalmes chosen out of the Psalter of David . . .* And, of course, Mary Sidney Herbert's continuation of her brother's *The Psalmes of David* was finished by the end of the century. (e-mail to Kel Morin-Parsons, 11 November 1999)

For a good genealogy of the Psalms in English, see Hannay et al. 4.

³ This is the numbering according to "psalters used in the English Church" (Rebholz 453) and, after Locke's time, the Authorised (King James) version of the Bible. Liturgically speaking, Hannay notes that

[t]he Seven Penitential Psalmes . . . had been of central importance in the medieval liturgy, but had gradually been phased out of daily use in England, since the Reformers saw the purpose of penitence as consolation, rather than discipline. No longer part of the rites for Visitation of the Sick or Burial of the Dead in the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer*, they were confined to the service for Ash Wednesday. ("Unlock my lipps" 27; "Wisdom the Wordes" 69)

Outside of the liturgy, however, people were encouraged to use them for all manner of private devotions (see chapter 1).

⁴ In the mid-1560's, Knox looked to one of the Penitential Psalms to provide him with material for an address to his pious mother-in-law, Margery Bowes, which was published as *An Exposition uppon the syxt Psalme of David* (Laing 3: 111-156).

⁵ One may say, of course, that many men had to learn the language of the inferior in order to conduct relationships with social superiors, and this is certainly true; it was not true for all men all the time, however, whereas women seldom lived in circumstances in which their submission to men could be dispensed with.

⁶ Somerset also gives a number of other examples of Elizabeth's use of the rhetoric of women's weakness (59-60).

⁷ This is one of what Mary Ellen Lamb refers to as the "sometimes complex or even devious ways in which women created themselves as authors [which] render visible the sites of resistance, the loopholes, the contradictions, the shiftings within gender ideology restricting women's language in the Renaissance" (10).

⁸ Although the sonnets themselves do not represent an actual rendering of the biblical text, it would seem that Locke was responsible for the prose translation of the Miserere that appears in italics in the margins of the Meditation, for this version of Psalm 51 does not exactly correspond to any available at the time (Geneva, Coverdale, etc.). Hannay notes that "more than half of it [Locke's Miserere rendering] is identical to the 1560 Geneva. More significantly, some phrases . . . match the exceedingly rare 1557 psalter. . . . [but] her version occasionally departs from both Genevan psalters" ("Unlock" 22). For further discussion of this point, see Hannay, and also Spiller, "Locke."

⁹ Scholars, including Hannay, are only now beginning to investigate the matter of Locke's literary and poetic sources and influences, which, unlike her biblical and theological sources, are frequently less obvious and more potentially diffuse, particularly when one considers Locke's

facility in French and Latin as well as English; this speculation on Locke's literary influences, appearing in an article published in 1993, is one of the earliest of its kind. Locke's literary "roots" will doubtless eventually prove the subject of a major scholarly publication, but must remain largely outside the boundaries of this particular discussion, which is primarily concerned with close readings of the primary verse texts of Locke, Pembroke and Lanyer.

¹⁰ This is Locke's rendering of verse 5 of Psalm 51, found in the margin by Meditation sonnet 7 (Aa5).

¹¹ All verses of Locke's translation of Psalm 51 referred to here accompany the sonnets addressed to them.

¹² Like reformed Christians, Roman Catholics believed that "a baptized Christian who has sinned must acknowledge, i.e., confess, sinfulness. A person must candidly accept responsibility for personal sin; one must admit that one is a sinner" (Osborne, "Confession, auricular"). For Calvin, however, the most important acknowledgement of sinfulness came before baptism (either an adult confessed to being inherently sinful by submitting to baptism, or an infant's parents confessed the child's inherent sinfulness before this sacrament), and while a believer had naturally to acknowledge the occurrence of sin throughout his or her life, the symbolic cleansing of baptism superseded the need for any further defined ritual of pardon (see n. 21 for further comments on baptism). (In sonnet 3, Locke's speaker is thus in the position of an "unbaptised" sinner, or is simply a Papist.) The sacramental nature of confession as upheld by the Roman Catholic Church was thus rejected by Calvin, who denied that confession was of divine origin and maintained that believers should unburden themselves of their confessions to each other, and pray for each other, as James instructs in scripture (Institutes 3.4.6). The role of "confessor," according to Calvin, was not confined to priests and did not confer divine status, and the act of confession itself was intended simply to accommodate the needs of naturally weak human beings who derived comfort from unburdening themselves of the weight of sin through oral acknowledgement thereof. If a person felt the need of something more, he or she should confess directly to God: ". . . in

Scripture, one way of confession is prescribed to this effect: since it is the Lord who forgives, forgets, and wipes out, sins, let us confess our sins to him in order to obtain pardon" (Institutes 3.4.9).

¹³ See n. 22 for further discussion of Calvin's definition of baptism and its function, and the differences between his view and that of the Roman Catholic Church.

¹⁴ Felch sees in Locke's poetic style "a nonconformist molded by the catholic Christian tradition" (Introduction xxxviii); while Susanne Woods insists that Locke's "theology is firmly Protestant" throughout her poems, she does concede that, here, "the portrayal [of cleansing] is both emotional and physical, suggesting the medieval heritage Felch notes in Lock's style" (Lanyer 132). Locke is "closer in time . . . to an iconic Catholic tradition" than to a protestant tradition, and therefore may be closer in "rhetorical tendency" (Lanyer 132). I believe that one should not dismiss this "tendency" when considering the theological implications of this particular passage in sonnet 3, as Locke's sequence is tracing a journey *toward* the certainty of salvation, and not beginning from a position of such certainty; reprobate tendencies in the very rhetoric of her text are therefore possible and even logical.

¹⁵ See chapter 3 for further discussion on the implications of repeated cleansings in a Calvinist context.

¹⁶ Compare this to the nearly-identical Geneva translation: "Against thee, against thee onely have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight[.]"

¹⁷ In protestant divisions of the Bible, Psalm 8 was divided into two, thus causing a discrepancy in the numbering of all later Psalms between protestant versions and, for instance, the Vulgate.

¹⁸ The confusion about the wording of this half-verse in Locke's rendering and elsewhere may in fact lie in faulty Hebrew scholarship. According to a note in Anderson, who translated Calvin's Psalm commentaries, Locke's translation is among those that contain a mistake noticed by Street: Street claims that "when thou judgest" is the proper way to read the text from the original

Hebrew, and says that "our translators seem to have mistaken the sense of it; for they render it, 'That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome *when thou art judged* [emphasis Street's].' But who shall judge the Almighty?" (qtd. in Commentaries 9: 288-289 n.1). The Vulgate rendering--presumably the text used by "our translators" in Street's comment--of "vincas cum judicaveris" does lend itself to the "faulty" interpretation of which Street writes; this seems further to argue for Locke's use of the Vulgate as the source for her own translation. See "The Role of the Vulgate in the Work of Anne Lock" for Felch's argument that Locke did indeed use the text of the Vulgate as her source when translating Psalm 51 into English. See also n. 21.

¹⁹ The gloss in the margin for this verse also indicates the perceived need for elaboration here; it reads: "When thou givest sentence against sinners, thei must needes confesse thee to be just and them selves sinners." It should be noted that the 1560 edition of the Geneva Bible does not seem consistent about the re-wording of Psalm 51, verse 4: it is cited again in verse 4 of the third chapter of Romans, which reads, "God forbid: yea, let God be true, and everie man a liar, as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy wordes, and overcome, when thou art judged."

²⁰ Susan Felch, e-mail to Kel Morin-Parsons, 1 November 1998.

²¹ Hannay and her fellow Pembroke editors, in their notes on the countess's rendering of Psalm 51, see this passage as unproblematic in its original context, in which King David was narrator: "The necessity for judgement [sic] on the ruler is acknowledged, so that all may recognize God's justice is not influenced by rank" (368-369, n. to line 12).

²² Roman Catholic doctrine dictated that original sin was remitted by baptism, which "pardons all sins, rescues recipients from the power of darkness, and joins them to Christ's suffering, death, and Resurrection" (Sherman). Calvinists maintained that only God's grace (which could only be given freely by God and could never be merited) could overcome the stain of original sin, and that original sin itself was never actually "removed"--the elect simply had righteousness imputed to them through the sacrifice of Christ. For Calvin, baptism's value was symbolic--he denies that baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation (Institutes 4.15.20)--and it

necessarily implied initial repentance on the part of the sinner; in speaking of John the Baptist's mission, Calvin says, "Whom, therefore, would he have baptized except those who had confessed themselves sinners? Baptism is the symbol of forgiveness of sins. Who would have been admitted to this symbol but sinners and those who recognize themselves as such?" (Institutes 3.4.6) (Calvin's advocacy of infant baptism is thus complicated by the fact that infants obviously cannot acknowledge themselves as sinful; regardless, Calvin insisted both on his definition of baptism's function and on the efficacy of infant baptism consistently. See Institutes 4.16.1, 5 for a discussion of infant baptism.) For delineation and discussion of the stages of the Calvinist spiritual life, see chapter 1 of Lewalski's *Protestant Poetics*.

²³ This assertion reflects Calvin's own position:

Our destruction . . . comes from the guilt of our flesh, not from God, inasmuch as we have perished solely because we have degenerated from our original condition. . . . If the whole nature of men, whom the Lord does not deem worthy to share in his grace, is condemnable, we know that destruction is prepared for them. Nevertheless, they perish by their own iniquity, not by any unjust hatred on God's part (Institutes 2.2.10; 2.8.20).

²⁴ Locke here draws the obverse image of the "Blessed . . . man" in Psalm 1 of the Old Testament whose "delite is in the Law of the Lord . . . / For he shal be like a tre planted by the rivers of water, that wil bring forthe her frute in due season: whose leafe shal not fade: so whatsoever he shal do, shal prosper." Locke's "tree of sin" is a solidly New Testament image of the sinner: "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sinnes, which were by the Law, had force in our membres, to bring forthe frute unto death" (Romans 7.5). Calvin's emphasis on the importance of observance of the Law has been mentioned, but this obedience must figure only as a manifestation of God's grace in the life of one who is already saved - one cannot gain salvation through love of the Law. For Christians, "deliting" in the Law, while pleasing to God, is no longer enough.

²⁵ Hyssop was used with cedar of Lebanon "for purposes of purification--in the preparation of the ashes of the red heifer (Num. 19: 6), as well as in the water for the purification of the leper (Lev. 14: 4) and of the house smitten with leprosy (*ibid.* 14: 49). In Egypt a bunch of hyssop was used for sprinkling blood on the Israelites' doors (Ex. 12: 22)" (Feliks).

²⁶ Think of how Donne, too, struggles with the matter of God's gaze / gazing upon God in "Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward."

²⁷ The possible pun on Locke's name that runs throughout this sonnet with the use of "look," four times spelled "Loke," may perhaps argue further for Locke's authorship of this unsigned sequence.

²⁸ Locke is, of course, constantly referring to the text of the Psalm to guide the sentiment of her sonnets. In terms of the matter of bargaining, however, it should be noted that the Psalm text accompanying sonnet 6, the poem in which this motif is first introduced, contains no note of barter, or even pleading; verse 4, in its entirety (the sonnet of course addresses only the second half of the verse), reads: "Againste thee onelye have I sinned, & don evill in thy sight. That thou mightest be founde just in thy sayinges, and maiest over come when thou art judged." Locke thus inserts the speaker's pleading into her sonnet independently. In doing this, she is perhaps anticipating verses 14 and 15 of the Psalm, in which a sort of "if / then" proposition is finally, and briefly, presented: "Deliver me from bloud o God, God of my helth & my tong shall joyfullye talke of thy justice. Lord, open thou my lippes, and my mouth shal shewe thy praise." It can thus be said that the notion of "bartering" with God for salvation has its seeds in the Psalm; however, Locke's early introduction of this motif, and her considerable expansion upon it, clearly give it a prominence not accorded to it in the Psalm, and allow her to develop it into an important aspect of the speaker's spiritual journey.

²⁹ The prominence of the motif of God as the "heavenly Physitian" in Locke's epistle to the duchess of Suffolk is pointed to by Locke scholars as a link between the epistle and the sequence, and thus as evidence of Locke's authorship of the Meditation.

³⁰ The writing / speaking Christian woman's voice is thus not only authorised by her need to bear witness to God's grace in her life, but by the fact that the agent of this witnessing voice is God himself; those who object to her voice are essentially objecting to the voice of God.

³¹ Hannay notes that the "final verses of Psalm 51 [are] now generally believed to be a late addition" ("Wisdom" 77).

³² Calvin recognises the invitation to inclusion and identification contained within this Psalm verse (rendered in his commentary as "Do good to Zion in thy good pleasure: build thou the walls of Jerusalem"): "From prayer in his [King David's] own behalf he now proceeds to offer up supplications for the collective Church of God" (Commentaries 9: 306-307).

³³ While Walker correctly notes that the Meditation is "Remarkable in its status as the first sonnet sequence in English," she incorrectly describes it as commencing with "six prefatory sonnets that establish a context" for the main body (59); the preface, of course, contains five sonnets.

Chapter 3

Locke and Pembroke

In the late 1590's, as Elizabeth I's long reign was drawing to a close, Robert Cleaver issued the following piece of advice to Englishmen seeking wives:

Now silence is the best ornament of a woman, and therefore the law was given to the man, rather then to the woman, to shew that he should be the teacher, and she the hearer, and therefore she is commaunded to learne of her husband. . . .
As the Eccho answereth but one word for many, which are spoken to her, so a maides answer should be in a word: for shée which is full of talke, is not likely to prove a quiet wife. (G5-G5v)

During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the book from which this is taken, Cleaver's A Godly Forme of Household Government, was "the most popular of . . . [marital conduct] books (it went through nine editions between 1598 and 1624)" (Guibbory 120). Popular wisdom on the matter of women's self-expression had changed little between the time Anne Locke first published her Calvin translation with accompanying sonnets and the close of the sixteenth century. Similarly, the constraints placed on women who insisted on pursuing literary endeavours remained consistent throughout the century:

Even the more liberal sixteenth-century humanist attitudes toward women's aspirations as scholars and writers . . . cautioned women not to undertake any public displays of learning (including original writing) because their supposed innate moral instability might lead others astray. A woman was encouraged, rather, to copy the moral sentiments of male writers or perhaps to translate such passages from English to Latin, but not to add to or evaluate what she wrote.
(Fisken, "To the Angell" 263, 265)

Those who dared to venture into the field of publishing were still best to confine themselves to the translation of pious works, as Locke herself had done again in 1590 with her Taffin volume. Even some time later, in 1621, the appearance of Mary Wroth's Urania subjected Wroth to criticism

because of its subject matter; Hannay cites

Sir Edward Denny's oft-quoted rebuke of Mary Sidney's niece, Lady Wroth, for publishing a secular work. Wroth, he admonishes, should "repent you of so many ill spent yeares of so vaine a booke" and "redeeme the tyme" by writing "as large a volume of heavenly layes and holy love as you have of lascivious tales and amorous toyes." She should "followe the rare, and pious example of your vertuous and learned Aunt [Sidney], who translated so many godly books and especially the holly psalmes of David." (Hannay, "House-confined maids" 51)

Wroth's "vertuous and learned Aunt," Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke (1561-1621), was completing the translation of the "holly psalmes"--that is, The Psalmes of David, a work begun by her brother, Sir Philip Sidney--just a few years after the appearance of Locke's volume of Taffin, with Locke's poem "The necessitie and benefite of affliction"; the two women were thus engaged in devotional translation and composition amid the same fin-de-siècle cultural climate.¹ Although such things as the endorsement of women's silence had remained consistent over the years, certain elements of the religious climate had changed between 1560, when Locke published her Psalm-based work, and the mid-1590s, when the younger countess was in the final stages of her Psalm translation. As well, the difference in social status between Locke and Pembroke would further have affected their respective authorial circumstances at any time. A brief examination of the Countess of Pembroke's social and religious context, and her approach to Psalm translation and versification, illustrates some of the similarities and differences between Locke's Psalm project and her own.

Kathleen Swaim succinctly locates the Countess of Pembroke within the English social and religious landscape of her time: "Mary Sidney--A Dudley by her mother's side, a Sidney by her father's, and a Herbert by marriage--combined in her person the blood, power, and intellectual leadership of the most important English aristocracy of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, families controlling something like two-thirds of the nation's land" (262). At the age of fifteen, Mary Sidney became the wife of Henry Herbert, 2nd Earl of Pembroke, a member of

Elizabeth's Privy Council and "the man reputed to be the richest nobleman in England" (Briley 53, 47); her husband was at least twenty-five years older than she, and had been married twice previously (Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 38-39).² Childless in his first two marriages, the earl was presented with two sons and two daughters by his young wife within the first decade of their marriage (Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 50-55). Aside from her powerful husband, Mary Sidney Herbert counted among her relatives the earls of Warwick, Huntington and Leicester--the last being Robert Dudley, Queen Elizabeth's sometime-favourite--all of whom were the countess's uncles (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 127). Her education was substantial--"she had been trained in French, Italian, Latin, Greek, and possibly Hebrew" (Freer 481)--and solidly protestant-humanist--"[h]er religious education had placed her firmly in the camp of the Reformed Protestants: the Sidney family as a whole was thoroughly dedicated to 'godly' living, Calvinist doctrine, and the politics of the Puritan earls of Leicester, Warwick, and Huntington" (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 127).³ At the same time, the Sidney family was apparently sophisticated by early modern standards when it came to dealing with the reality of a world in which a variety of religious persuasions and opinions was becoming more common. Margaret Hannay, Noel Kinnamon, and Michael Brennan, in their recent scholarly edition of Pembroke's works, remark that

[t]he Sidneys seem to have been able to separate their political concerns, such as their ardent defence of Continental Protestantism in the 1580s and 1590s, from their personal relations. Despite their involvement in the activist Protestant party of Leicester and their friendships with such Huguenots as Hubert Languet and Philippe de Mornay, the Sidneys also retained ties with Catholic friends and relatives. (26)

Despite her position virtually from birth near the pinnacle of power, the countess's life was not without its trials. During her childhood, her father, Sir Henry Sidney, was "persuaded to take up the dreaded and unwanted post of Lord Deputy of Ireland" (Briley 49). While he was considered a success at this difficult job, he was in dire financial straits for much of his time there, and, indeed, for much of his life (Briley 50-51; Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 28-29); in 1572, Sir

Henry's wife Mary Dudley Sidney had to write to Sir William Cordell, Master of the Rolls, refusing the title of baron offered to Sir Henry on the grounds that the Sidneys' income could not bear the costs that accompanied such a station (Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 28). Sir Henry was in fact forced to borrow much of the 3 000 pounds for his daughter's dowry, the final payment of which he made some ten months after young Mary and the Earl of Pembroke were married in April 1577 (Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 38-40). Aside from penury, the elder Sidneys also endured the bitter consequence of Mary Dudley Sidney's service to her sovereign in time of illness; her "devotion in nursing Elizabeth through her bout with smallpox in 1562 ruined her own appearance and health" (Fisken, "Mary Sidney" 174). While the Queen recovered unscathed, the countess's mother contracted the disease and was so badly scarred as a result that "ever afterward she appeared at court only veiled or masked" (Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 18). On the same day as she gave birth to her second son, Philip, in 1584, the countess herself endured the loss of her three-year-old daughter Katherine (Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 55). Two years later, in 1586, she lost both of her parents, and her brother, the celebrated Sir Philip Sidney (Freer 482); this last loss would prove particularly significant to Mary Sidney Herbert in her development as a devotional poet.

As chatelaine of Wilton House, the Earl of Pembroke's family estate in Wiltshire, the countess apparently enjoyed free rein to run her large and active household as she saw fit. She was intensely interested in chemistry, and Coburn Freer records that she "had a laboratory built at Wilton and supported a chemist in his research" (483). This was a not inappropriate area of study for a woman, who would have been expected to know a good deal about medicine for the welfare of her family and staff; the degree of financial commitment required to support a chemist in his own facilities, however, bespeaks a depth of interest doubtless displayed by few Renaissance Englishwomen. Better-known than this passion, however, were the countess's efforts to establish Wilton as a centre of literary activity revolving around translation and poetic and dramatic composition, over which she would preside as patroness and muse, and in which she would participate as translator and writer. The Earl of Pembroke supported her in this; "pleased with

this brilliant young woman who had borne him two sons, he encouraged her literary activities" (Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 106), and she was at liberty to welcome into her circle whom she pleased. Freer writes that "[t]he Countess's taste and hospitality were celebrated by Francis Meres, Edmund Spenser, Abraham Fraunce, Nicholas Breton, Thomas Moffet, Fulke Greville, Thomas Nashe, Gabriel Harvey, Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, John Davies of Hereford, Ben Jonson, [and] John Donne" (482). J. C. A. Rathmell adds to this list of those favoured by the countess the names of Thomas Howell, Thomas Churchyard, Barnabe Barnes, and "the celebrated Chapel Royal musician, Thomas Morley" (xxix). Rathmell also speculates that "Spenser's dedication of his Ruines of Time (1591) to the Countess . . . may indicate a relationship similar to that enjoyed by Daniel[,] who was "employed as tutor at Wilton (probably from 1591 to 1593)" (Rathmell xxix, xxvii). Writers both major and minor thus credited the Countess of Pembroke with encouraging them in their work.⁴

Mary Sidney Herbert's position as a person able to offer concrete support and encouragement to other writers represents in itself a significant difference between Anne Locke's situation and her own in the late sixteenth century, when the countess was enjoying the zenith of her reputation as both a patroness and a writer. Susanne Woods, in an article on Locke and Aemilia Lanyer, looks at Locke's 1560 dedicatory epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk, and compares its tone with that of the dedication written to the Countess of Warwick in Locke's 1590 Taffin translation; Woods' observations are significant here, for in commenting on these epistles, she comments on the evolving religious character of England, and, by extension, on the changing relative positions of persons like Locke and the Countess of Pembroke. Woods notes that Locke, in her 1560 epistle to the duchess, "acknowledges her humble position in relation to the Duchess, but also implies the democracy inherent in the Christian faith"; as well, Locke praises the duchess for her personal piety, not her high social status ("Anne Locke and Aemilia Lanyer" ts 9). Thirty years later, much had changed; Woods draws attention to the fact that Locke's epistle to the Countess of Warwick not only contains the now-famous pronouncement on the limitations imposed on her by her gender (see chapter 1), but also pointedly refers to the difference in social

degree between Locke and her dedicatee: the countess occupies "a higher place of dignitie than many other" and is "a light upon an high candlesticke" (qtd. in Woods, "Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts 11). Woods' assessment of the change in Locke's approach says something about the world faced by a woman writer late in the sixteenth century:

Allied now [in the 1590's] with the social and political hierarchies of the rest of society, English Protestantism had very little room for the democratic and gender-blind impulses Lock comfortably assumed in 1560. . . . Locke's voice [in the 1590 epistle] is somewhat more subdued, her approach to her patron less personal, and the preface itself considerably shorter than in her earlier enterprise. . . . The context of the passage [from the Warwick epistle in which Locke refers to her gender and the countess's status] seems to reinforce the impression that the democratic and gender-irrelevant ideals of the earlier preface are long gone, as she acknowledges both the social distinction between herself and her dedicatee, and the limits placed on a woman's public role What it does illustrate is Lock's decision to be explicit, if not submissive, about both social and gender hierarchy, a definite change from the 1560 preface. (Woods, "Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts 10, 11, 12)

Pembroke was herself, of course, a very well-placed member of the "social and political hierarchy" that had apparently settled into an established English church by the end of the sixteenth century, and so would herself presumably have been among those in "a higher place of dignitie than many other," far from the group of noble fellow travellers like the Duchess of Suffolk with whom Locke seemed to identify comfortably early in Elizabeth's reign, when struggle encouraged at least the rhetoric of solidarity among those dedicated to reforming the English church. In the 1590s, the countess was firmly located within a privileged echelon of English society that made little pretence of closeness to the merchant class, even for the sake of advancing a Calvinist agenda of reform. Pembroke was, however, one of a significant number, led by such powerful men as her uncle Leicester,⁵ who would indeed have agreed with Locke on the essential

matter at hand: that the established church had not gone far enough in sloughing off its Papist skin and embracing the true faith of Calvinism. The Martin Marprelate crisis of the late 1580s, discussed in chapter 1, led Elizabeth to crack down on elements favouring more radical reform within the English church; the death in 1588 of the Earl of Leicester, "the Puritans' 'greatest stay and aid' within the [Privy] Council" (Somerset 496), had left Calvinist reformers without a powerful ally near the English throne, and, "[a]s Elizabeth had all along intended, the Church of 1559" remained intact as her reign drew to a close (Somerset 497). Locke's Taffin volume, published for public consumption and appearing at the nadir of Calvinist hopes in 1590, seems more obviously responsive to these events than any of the countess's works; but the latter's decision to devote considerable time and effort to a sophisticated poeticising of the Psalms, the sacred text perhaps most beloved of English reformed Christians, must have been partly informed by her desire to advance the cause of Calvinist "godly living" that her family had long embraced.

The fraught matter of authorship in the sixteenth century, for men and women, has been discussed in chapter 1. Locke's Calvin publication of 1560, with its unsigned sonnet sequence and its dedicatory epistle bearing only her initials, indicated a hesitancy on Locke's part to identify herself overtly as a published author, something she would have been doubly discouraged from doing because of her gender. By 1590, little seems to have changed in this regard - Locke again affixed only initials to her Taffin work, placing "A.P." (she was by then Anne Prowse) at the end of the dedicatory epistle to the Countess of Warwick that opens Of the marks ; the accompanying poem was, like the Meditation thirty years earlier, not signed at all. The Taffin book was, however, published and therefore generally available to the public, as the Calvin volume had been. The Countess of Pembroke lived and moved in a very different social milieu than did Locke, and this may account at least in part for the fact that her Psalmes of David, a work begun by her brother, was not published in her lifetime (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 148). Pembroke did make some of her work public: A Discourse of Life and Death, translated from de Mornay, and the Antonius of Robert Garnier, "were published together in 1592" (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 128), and Freer pointedly notes that "on the title page [of these works] the

Countess is acknowledged as the author" (Freer 484).⁶ Beilin speculates, however, that Pembroke "may have planned a conscious development for herself from prose to poetry. . . . That her most skillful, most successful, and final work was a version of the Psalms probably indicates both the goals and the limits she consciously set upon her writing career" (130-131); the fact that the Psalms were sacred text may have led the countess to privilege their versification as her life's ultimate work, and this, combined with the fact that the exercise required original poetic composition as well as translation, perhaps made her psalmic work inappropriate, in Pembroke's eyes, for publication.⁷

Declining to publish would not have removed the countess's work entirely from the realm of the transgressive; "[f]ears of women's authorship extended to unpublished as well as published writing, as shown by Puttenham's warning that gentlewomen who become 'too precise Poets' may 'with their shrewd wits, when they are married [sic] . . . become a little too phantastical wives'" (Lamb 7). The subject matter of her work, however, would have greatly reduced any anxiety about the countess degenerating into a "phantastical wife" as the result of becoming a "precise Poet." As well, the trajectory of the poems' development seems to indicate that Pembroke envisioned her Psalmes as a long-term personal project, designed primarily to encourage her own spiritual and literary growth--and that of a select number of her peers--rather than to forward the cause of the true faith in England or to shore up Calvinist spirits in times of trouble. Locke's work, both in 1560 as Calvinism was reshaping English devotional practice, and in 1590 as many of the "godly" were dealing with persecution and tribulations, has a missionary air to it--Locke seeks to help make spiritual enlightenment and comfort available to her fellow believers. Hannay, in her biography of the countess entitled Philip's Phoenix, does see a definite aspect of political statement manifested in the Sidneian Psalms as a work "giving advice to the monarch about the means necessary to maintain the one true faith[,] but admits that the Psalmes "were more important artistically than politically" (85). Perhaps more importantly, there is a difference in accessibility between the countess's poetry and Locke's; Pembroke's "elegant psalm versifications . . . were far more suited for the courtly circle they reached in manuscript than for 'the simplest

poore man' with his 'small peece of monie.' . . . Lok must have had a more general audience in mind for her published sonnets, for the Protestant tradition had a dual place for the psalms, both for private reading and for public recitation" (Hannay, "Unlock" 26). As well, Beilin comments that "[t]he seventeen extant manuscripts [of the Psalmes] reveal a long process of writing and revising over ten years, suggesting that the countess considered this work worthy of considerable serious effort in order to accomplish her goals" (Redeeming Eve 145); the length of time for revision also serves as a reminder that Pembroke had leisure to pursue the refinement of her work, and as propriety also encouraged women generally to keep such endeavours private, there was doubtless less urgency attached to the completion of the Psalmes overall than there may have been to Locke's translation of Calvin's sermons and the accompanying Meditation.

Despite the lack of actual publication and the apparently private nature of this work, however, Pembroke's poems were, in a way, as prominent as Locke's: Hannay notes that the Psalmes "circulated in manuscript among a literary coterie and influenced the work of such later writers as John Donne and George Herbert" ("Wisdom" 68), while Rathmell adds that these poems "were probably sung occasionally in private devotions[.]" noting that "[a] fragmentary manuscript in the British Museum . . . contains two of her psalms, 51 and 130, set to music for treble voice with tablature for lute" (xxvii). Donne, at least, saw Pembroke's project with her deceased brother on a grand scale, viewing it as "patriotic contribution" to the reformed English church (Hannay et al. 10), while Samuel Daniel pointedly praised the countess "not because she is a patron, but because she is a writer" (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 126). Pembroke's literary reputation was well-established among people of the class she clearly meant to address--aristocrats and the writers they patronised--whose numbers were always limited and whose knowledge of her work was not heavily dependent upon its availability in published form. The Psalmes may thus be seen as an instrument with which "Mary Sidney sought to play her part in the encouragement of godliness among her peers" (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 145), if not directly among ordinary Englishmen and Englishwomen .

Swaim, comparing the fate of Shakespeare's imagined sister, as created by Virginia Woolf,

to that of Pembroke, comments: "[c]ertainly the conditions were not favorable for a provincial middle-class woman [like the fictitious Judith Shakespeare], however gifted, to develop literary talents in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England. But cultural constraints could be at least modified when the potential author was well placed, well endowed, and aristocratic[.]" as the Countess of Pembroke unquestionably was (261). Regardless, Pembroke was still a woman, and the discretion demanded of her in matters of writing and publication because of her class was compounded by her gender. Edward Denny's scolding of Pembroke's niece, Lady Mary Wroth, for publishing the *Urania* illustrates the extent to which women in particular were still discouraged from straying from devotional material in their literary endeavours some twenty-five years after the Countess of Pembroke completed her *Psalmes*. Swaim sees the countess as negotiating both the advantages of her social position and the restrictions placed on her sex in such a way as to enjoy a literary reputation while remaining within the boundaries deemed acceptable for a woman: "[i]n it [her Psalm translation] she performs the kind of pious literary 'work' that was allowed women of the age, but its wide circulation, shielded by spiritual and liturgical priorities, and forwarded by the economics and distribution realities of her vast patronage, stretches her achievement well beyond what might be projected for . . . the writing woman of the age" (263). Beilin, however, maintains that "despite her considerable growth as a poet and despite her widened audience, these 'good works' [the psalmic poems] still characterize the Countess of Pembroke as a learned and virtuous woman writer aware of her limitations" (*Redeeming Eve* 121). As Mary Ellen Lamb has remarked, "[w]hile the warning not to confuse patriarchal discourse with lived experience is aptly taken, it is equally dangerous to underestimate the effect of powerful cultural discourses" (4). Even with the relative advantages of her nobility, the countess, like Locke, would have been forbidden "great things by reason of [her] sex"--but also like Locke, she did what she could to subvert or compromise subtly the restrictions imposed upon her.

Also like Locke, Pembroke found a particularly sympathetic forum for expression of voice in the *Psalms*. Hannay, Kinnamon and Brennan point out, as outlined in chapter 2 of this

discussion, that "Psalm translation provided more scope for independent statement than other scriptural translation, because the ambiguous 'I' of the Psalms leaves a space for the reader to insert a personal voice" (8). At the same time, "[b]y identifying her voice with that of the psalmist, by disguising creative, original work as merely sacred translation, a woman [like Pembroke] could also become 'a very presentable right poet'" (Hannay, "'House-confined maids'" 49). The Countess of Pembroke saw in the Psalms the variety of form, depth of emotion, and multivocality that had doubtless appealed to Locke over thirty years before when she attempted to insert her voice into the (public) discourse of faith. Pembroke, however, had yet another authorial shelter afforded her aside from the authorising voice (or voices) of the original psalmist: "that of her brother Philip, who had not only begun to translate the psalms, but had praised them as the highest form of poetry" (Hannay, "'House-confined maids'" 49).

The role played by the Countess of Pembroke in the nurturing of her brother's legend is well-known. Seven years younger than the celebrated courtier, Pembroke spent time with him at Wilton after her marriage, where Sir Philip apparently mentored and encouraged his sister as they pursued the literary activities that engaged them both. Fisker emphasises the importance of this bond to the countess's work: "all of Mary Sidney's literary endeavor centered on her brother's example, whether it was editing his work, translating a play in the classical tradition he approved, penning a translation of a work by de Mornay, his personal friend . . . finishing his verse-translations of the Psalms, or composing poetry in his memory" ("To the Angell" 266). As well as inspiring the countess, this relationship thus afforded her a particularly useful layer of authorial protection; by presenting herself as the guardian of her brother's legacy, her own writing could be filtered through the lens of the Sidney legend, as the countess kept his "Angell spirit" alive by carrying on his work. This obtained with the versification of the Psalms as with her other works; just as Locke had assumed the voice of the psalmist in order to shelter her own, so Pembroke enfolded her voice in layers comprising not only the psalmist, but also her brother. Discussing the countess's dedicatory poem entitled "To the Angell spirit of the most excellent Sir Philip Sidney," Fisker traces these layers:

Mary Sidney was inspired by her brother, who emulated David, "thy Kinglie Prophet," in re-creating the "high Tons . . . which Angells sing in their caelestiall Quire" in praise of "heaven's King" (ll. 14, 11, 8). The traditional religious hierarchy in which the woman takes the lowest seat is invoked in this poem to recreate a lineage of poetic inspiration with Mary Sidney the apologetic inheritor. (Fisken, "To the Angell" 271)

Philip Sidney's devotion to the idea of the Psalms as poetry inspired and shaped Mary Sidney Herbert's identity as a writer, and his romantic and noble public personae allowed her to develop her own literary voice within the protective shadow of his legend.

Fisken remarks of Pembroke's poetry that

[f]or her imagery she drew from her public experiences as a woman of responsibility, influence, and power (first as daughter to Henry Sidney, lord deputy of Ireland, and as a youthful lady-in-waiting at Elizabeth's court, and then as wife to the earl of Pembroke). She also drew upon her private perceptions as a woman and a mother to transform her paraphrases of the Psalms into individual exercises in meditation. ("To the Angell" 263)

While Pembroke had in common with Locke the experiences of marriage and motherhood, the generational and social differences between the two women could not but have given each a distinctive (if, in both cases, distinctly protestant) world view. For Locke, part of this view was shaped by her relationship with Knox and her spiritual, historical and, at one time, geographical proximity to Calvin. The frankly sombre and often embattled approaches of these two men to the cause of the new religion in its early years in Europe is reflected in the tone of much of Locke's Meditation. The outlook of Pembroke, who was writing psalmic poetry after the deaths of both Reformers and amidst the legacy of several decades of protestant practice in England, was doubtless more deeply coloured by the example of her brother, whose status was defined not solely by his membership in one of England's most prominent reformist families, but also by his conviction that the development of English poetry and poetic genres was worthwhile. In her

psalmic poetry, Pembroke's relative autonomy from Calvin in favour of the influence of Philip Sidney is reflected in the observation that "[a]lthough she does frequently echo Calvin in wording or interpretation, she uses his commentary with caution. . . . Where Bèze and Calvin disagree, she usually follows Bèze" (Hannay et al. 21-22), a favourite Psalm interpreter of her brother's.

A clear difficulty of comparing any of Pembroke's Psalmes to Locke's Meditation lies in the fact that the countess's poems do not form one consistent, manageable narrative with a focus upon a single Psalm, as is the case with Locke. One can, however, fruitfully examine Pembroke's versification of Psalm 51, the piece chosen by Locke herself as the focus of her own poetry, with an eye to the Meditation, as both are allied by virtue of their common source material, as well as by virtue of the very fact that both of these women wrote devotional poetry in a sixteenth-century English protestant setting, making them part of a very small company. The differences in their respective situations of time and class, as well as the immediacy of quite different personal influences on the writing of each, manifest themselves in the distinct tones and emphases in their works. Specifically, I believe that the countess's position as one close to the seat of power, writing "in the comparative safety" of late Elizabethan England, in "a more peaceful era" than Locke knew in 1560 (Hannay, "'Wisdom'" 75, 74), made a detailed tracing of the integration of the self into community a less compelling matter for her than it had been for Locke. Hannay, Kinnamon and Brennan remark that "[u]nlike most of her sources, Pembroke does not adopt the Christian practice of referring to the Church as the 'True Jerusalem', nor does she ever mention the word 'Church' in her Psalmes" ("Literary Context" 20). Unlike Locke, the countess was not writing as Calvinism was resettling on the hoped-for "New Jerusalem" of England after the Catholic interval of Mary Tudor; notwithstanding desire for further reform, Pembroke may have felt less obligation to identify the English church with the New Jerusalem. The atmosphere in which she wrote may also have made her feel less pressed to present a "pattern" of the Calvinist spiritual life for the benefit of English protestants, illustrating the individual's rocky but ultimately triumphant journey to community, as Locke did. This difference in perspective affects the presence of community in her version of the Miserere--although, as we shall see, that presence is

by no means eradicated, nor is the path to its attainment vague. The following examination will look at just how community, as well as voice, do figure in this psalmic poem.

In writing of the Countess of Pembroke's poetry, Fisker describes a psalmic vision that could easily be Locke's:

There is urgent drama in every hour of the day, as the human spirit struggles to sustain its belief in God's grace; and it was the desolation of the soul, cut off from God and crying for a sign of forgiveness, that most engaged Mary Sidney as a writer. In fact, throughout her Psalmes, Mary Sidney tended to view affirmations of grace as precious gifts--awarded only after intense grappling and soul searching --which are in imminent danger of loss because of the incapacity to sustain faith through testing and ordeal. ("Mary Sidney" 170)

It seems evident that, in constructing this vision, Pembroke had occasion to call upon Locke's own, "because she quotes Lok's phrase 'O god, god of my health' (51.40) and adapts her phrase 'filthie fault' (51.9)" in her own versification of the Miserere (Hannay et al. 7-8). As well, Hannay notes that "[a]lthough the Countess of Pembroke translated her version [of Psalm 51] some thirty years later than Lok, she relied heavily on the same Genevan source" ("Unlock" 29). Indeed, the countess's translation of Psalm 51 specifically "relies primarily on Geneva [Bible], Coverdale Calvin, and Lok" (Hannay et al. 13). Pembroke's erudition and her desire to have these "Englished" Psalms reflect with accuracy the richness of the Hebrew originals led her to research the psalmic tradition carefully, to the point where "it would be difficult to state categorically that she did *not* use any specific sources available to her" (Hannay et al. 31).⁸ As well, both she and her brother, whose 43 psalmic poems she edited and revised after his death, sought to avoid the plodding sameness of such treatments as the Sternhold-Hopkins psalter, which aimed at congregational accessibility rather than poetic integrity or innovation. The overall result of such research and artistic determination is that "there is no previous collection of lyrics in English so varied metrically as these 150 poems, and the 107 by the Countess are if anything more complex stylistically, more sophisticated in technique, than their counterparts by her brother" (Freer 483).

Among her sources for this Herculean task, Pembroke clearly saw Locke's pioneering work as a significant antecedent to her own, and recognised in the Meditation a Calvinist sensibility familiar in its goals, if different in its tone, to her own.

Woods writes that "Lock's sonnet sequence on Psalm 51 and the countess of Pembroke's poeticizing of [the Psalms] . . . illustrate two Protestant approaches to Englishing the biblical lyric, one of passionate repentance and the other of assured salvation" (Lanyer 131). A comparison of the Miserere as treated by each writer reinforces this point. Locke's close, elaborate expansion upon the Psalm allows her to establish in the Meditation and its preface a dramatic sense of place--she situates her speaker physically in relation to a sort of spiritual geography that at first consists of a fearsome wasteland (the "myre," the "ugglye place," the "heape of sinne"), and then eventually, as the speaker travels onward, gives way to the ordered security of the dwelling-place of the godly ("thy Hierusalem" surrounded by a "mighty wall" on "Sion . . . thy holly hyll"). As well, the character of the Meditation's speaker is delineated in relation to others--the unspeaking figure of God Himself, hectoring Despair, and the hymn-singing Christians in "Hierusalem." The prefatory sonnets dwell on the "hainous gylt" harrowing the speaker, and the main sequence itself cuts straight to the plea, "Have mercy, God" (Meditation 1.1). The setting of Pembroke's Miserere is far less crowded and far calmer, with the speaker addressing God directly from the beginning, starting with praise that imparts a wondrous sense of metaphysical spaciousness and limitlessness rather than a harsh, hostile landscape: "O lord, whose grace *no limitts comprehend;* / sweet lord, whose mercies stand *from measure free*" (1-2, emphasis added). Pembroke thus chooses to begin the Psalm by illustrating "the limitations of human understanding with the infinite power and wisdom of God" (Fisken, "Mary Sidney" 180). The speaker then asks for forgiveness: "to mee that grace, to mee that mercie send, / and wipe o lord my sinnes from sinnfull mee" (1-4). Hannay, comparing Pembroke's tone to that evident in Locke's preface, echoes Woods with the remark that "[n]o such anguish that the speaker may be foreordained to damnation haunts the lines of Mary Sidney. . . . Confident of God's mercy, the speaker can ask that it be applied to 'sinnfull mee'" ("Unlock'" 31). The landscape of God's grace is vast--beyond human measure--but

the speaker is not lost in it, and there seem to be no obstacles impeding the speaker's request that God "send" grace and mercy to the sinfull soul. No troubling voices undermine these efforts or distract the speaker, who is able to acknowledge sin and ask for mercy and grace in the first four lines of Pembroke's poem. The essential sentiment of the entire Psalm is thus presented to the reader in the poem's first stanza.

Hannay believes that "Mary Sidney's choice of rime royal for Psalm 51 . . . underscores its importance" ("Unlock" 28). This so-called Chaucerian stanza, used by Chaucer in, among other works, his *Troilus and Criseyde*, was also employed by Shakespeare in his *Lucrece*, and was "an important form of English verse in the 15th and 16th centuries" (Baldick). Pembroke herself, like her contemporaries, probably believed the form to have been used by King James I of Scotland in the 15th century; its history to her day would thus have marked it as a form suitable for epic or regal subject matter.⁹ "Written in iambic pentameter measures, it is a Sicilian triplet and a quatrain consisting of two heroic couplets, the first of which interlocks with the triplet" (Turco). While Locke used the sonnet form for her treatment, Pembroke shares with her the use of repetition to underline certain concepts in or features of her verse. In the seven lines of Pembroke's first stanza, the word "still" (in the sense of "yet," "more") occurs twice; "lord" occurs three times; and "mee" occurs four times, as does "my." This repetition serves to emphasise the individual's need for grace ("to mee that grace, to mee that mercie send" [3]; "till staines and spotts in mee leave noe remaynings" [7]), and sense of personal responsibility for sin ("my sinnes," "sinfull mee" [4]; "my fowle iniquitie" [5]; "my spotts," "my staynings" [6]). It also makes clear that the poem's "sweet lord" alone is capable of delivering the speaker from the state of sin. It is interesting to note here Pembroke's editors' comment that "[t]he need for repeated washings . . . is emphasized by Calvin" (368, n. to line 6).¹⁰ The plea of Locke's speaker for cleansing early in the *Meditation* seems compatible with this assertion, but, as I have argued, its occurrence at a point when the speaker is still dangerously close to despair and fearful of reprobation marks it as suspect. Locke's phrasing reveals the speaker's perilous confusion: "*Ofte hath thy mercie washed me before, / Thou madest me cleane: but I am foule again. / Yet washe me Lord againe, and*

washe me more" (3.5-7, emphasis added). Once "made clean" by grace, an individual, while hardly inured to the lure of sin, need not doubt the efficacy of the cleansing; one may stumble--Locke's speaker recalls a former time when sin corrupted a state of happiness, and, as we shall see, Pembroke's speaker does the same--but should not fear slipping completely away, as though God's grace were not, in fact, "all sufficing" (P5.4). Only in sonnet 9 of the Meditation, with the reference to hyssop, does Locke's speaker approach the concept of cleansing with a heart open to grace and mercy instead of fearful of damnation. Beginning here in the first stanza of the poem, Pembroke's speaker pleads for one thorough, all-sufficing cleansing, the request made contiguous in sentiment with the treatment of hyssop in the fourth stanza. As we shall see, once this request is made, the energy of voice and action will be unleashed, and there will be no turning back.

The sense of assurance and completion evident throughout the poem is linked inextricably to a sense of private immediacy in Pembroke's verse; her speaker need not wade through "myre" and shout down the voice of despair with cries for mercy in order to reach God and the godly, but need only request entry into the vastness of His unlimited grace and mercy. It is telling that, as Hannay, Kinnamon and Brennan note, "[t]he emphasis on grace [present in Pembroke's first line] . . . is not usually included in the opening of the Psalm itself, except in Wyatt's opening, 'Rue on me, Lord, for thy goodness and grace'" (368, n. to line 1).¹¹ Locke was probably acquainted with Wyatt's Certayne Psalmes, published in 1549, but God's grace is notably absent from the opening lines of the Meditation--Locke's speaker is "blinde for grace" and must "groape about" for it at first (P2.12, 11), needing to travel a considerable spiritual distance before the concept will be as accessible as it is from the start to Pembroke's narrator. For Locke, grace resides at some distance; for Pembroke, grace is all around.

As though to illustrate more pointedly that the Christian heart may approach the same terrible fact of sin in varying states--her calmness contrasting with the Meditation's panic--Pembroke chooses the beginning of the second stanza to echo Locke. Along with the mention of the "filthie fault" noted by Hannay and her fellow Pembroke editors (Hannay et al. 8), Locke's influence may also be detected in the reference to the "sowles eye" being confronted

"unceasantlie" with the speaker's "faultie filthines" (10, 9); this parallels Locke's "ruthefull eye" forced to view "my sinne and shame" as despair "Spredes [it] forth" in the Meditation (P3.4-5). From this image of the foul and transgressive, Pembroke immediately moves to a legalistic setting--one in which transgression is, presumably, punished--presenting a condensed version of the material covered by Locke in sonnets four to six of the Meditation. Fisker notes that in Pembroke's Psalms, "legal and business metaphors" are used "usually to emphasize the inadequacy of a merely legalistic point of view" ("Mary Sidney" 180). This inadequacy is the very thing highlighted in Locke's dramatic plea bargaining; here, however, Pembroke's speaker never loses perspective on the all-important relationship between the individual and God, and thus never "plays to the audience" in the way that Locke's speaker does when still so far from the goal of grace and integration. Hannay, Kinnamon and Brennan note that, in Pembroke's second stanza, the speaker, originally the Old Testament's King David, "confesses to God only, emphasizing the nature of penance and confession from a Protestant perspective" (Hannay et al., 368, n. to line 11; also, see Calvin, Institutes 3.4.9). Thus, even as the court's gaze is trained upon Pembroke's speaker, the sense of personal connection between the speaker and the Creator is retained; sin is confessed personally and directly to God, while also being "tried" before others. The wrong, having been "done to thee [God], to thee I do confesse" (11); simultaneously, this confession is public, made in the context of a trial before judge and jury. Moreover--and most significantly--the narrator recognises that God Himself occupies every role here--those of "Just, judge, true wittnes" (12). Pembroke's careful recourse to her sources helps her maintain her speaker's perspective here, as Hannay and her colleagues note that "[t]he conjunction of God as offended party, judge, and witness is also present in Calvin and Beze" (Hannay et al., 368, n. to line 11).

At first, Locke's speaker is surrounded by mire that traps her speaker and prevents movement toward community. Pembroke's speaker is also surrounded, but to very different effect--the "courtroom," so menacing in Locke, is, for Pembroke, a place where God literally surrounds the sinner as "just, judge, true wittnes," just as surely as he will do in the New Jerusalem that is the home of the godly. Here, the setting itself becomes one model of community, and

though its shape changes, it consistently remains familiar, rather than foreign, to the speaker. This is emphasised by the move Pembroke makes in her third stanza from court to womb. Pembroke's speaker, like Locke's, admits that "My mother, loe! when I began to be, / conceaving me, with me did sinne conceive" (15-16), emphasising the inevitability of sin in the human character; however, Pembroke outstrips Locke in linking sin with something organic and positive by having her narrator remind the reader that "with living heate shée [her mother] cherisht me[.]" even if, in the womb, "corruption did like cherishing receive" (17-18). Fisker writes that "[t]he instinctive animalism of 'living heate' emphasizes our sensual origins, while the alliterative connection between 'conceive,' 'corruption,' and 'cherishing' underlines the irony that this physical bond between mother and child reflects the spiritual peril that is our birthright from conception." ("Mary Sidney" 178). Like Locke with her growing plant, Pembroke links sin with life, but here, the link is directly to the very source of human life, as well as to the traditional genesis of human love--the child "cherished" in its mother's womb.

Hannay sees the roots of Pembroke's image in her sources: "Mary Sidney expands the metaphor of heat used in Calvin's explanation that 'we be cherished & kept warme in sin, as long as we lye hid in the bowels of our mothers.' Yet the countess softens the passage, showing that the mother cherished the child as well as sin and corruption" ("Unlock" 33). Ironically, however, this tender portrayal of the child nourished in the womb is the one instance in the poem in which Pembroke places her speaker and sin together on an equal footing, without the immediate mitigation of a divine presence. While the womb is a place of warmth and generation, it is not immediately a community like the courtroom, in which the speaker is enveloped by God's presence and sin is the narrative whose acknowledgement by the speaker brings God and Christian closer. Pembroke does not lose sight of the fact that, for any Christian, the womb is a locus of death as well as life, and she presents it as a sort of imagistic snapshot that separates her first model of community from the next.

This notion of the speaker as a child, with all the vulnerability and innocence that implies, is underlined by this next figuring of community in the countess's poem--one in which, again, only

the speaker and God will be present. As well as being contained by the court and then the womb, the speaker's "trewand soule" learns that God's "love to purest good doth cleave / and inward truth" in the "hid schoole" in which God tutors His children, Pembroke implies, from before birth: Hannay notes that "[a]lthough the usual interpretation [of verse 6 of the Psalm, addressed here] is that God's wisdom is hidden within the heart, the countess's juxtaposition of the child cherished within the womb implies that the womb itself may be a place where God imparts knowledge, even though the child is stained by original sin" ("Unlock" 33). This contrasts with the sort of "secrete wisdom" and "hidden knowledge" imparted to Locke's speaker (Meditation 8.5, 7)—that which is "hidden within the heart," as Hannay has it—which consists entirely of an (adult) awareness of depravity: the speaker is granted the ability "To se my sinnes, & whence my sinnes do growe" and "To fele my sinnes, and howe my sinnes do flowe / With such excesse" (Meditation 8.6, 8-9). While this acknowledgement of sin is critical to the speaker's process of discernment—only the reprobate fail to see the magnitude of their own unworthiness—Locke's figuring of God's revelatory teaching of the individual is markedly different, and far less loving, than Pembroke's; it is this sort of interpretation that leads Hannay to remark that "[t]ypically, Lok stresses the negative aspects . . . and the countess the positive aspects of the same doctrines" ("Unlock" 19). The layering of the "hid schoole" within the womb helps to reinforce the positive aspect of the latter's divided nature as a place of first contact with sin but also a place of warm, loving generation.

Half-way through her versification of the Miserere, Pembroke refers to "leapers," for whom the hyssop of the Psalm was a ritual purifier, a symbol of fitness to re-enter society. Whereas Locke, in her ninth sonnet, follows her translation of the Psalm in omitting specific mention of leprosy or lepers, Pembroke explicitly identifies her speaker with this community of outcasts, inviting God to "purge me so" with hyssop, "as thie self to leapers hast assign'd," in order to "clense the leaprie of my mind" (23, 22, 24). As was the case with many types of affliction or deformity in Pembroke's own day, this disease had traditionally been seen as a physical manifestation of punishment for sin;¹² sin, presented earlier in the poem as a sort of

parallel being growing in the womb with the sinner, thus emerges here among these afflicted human forms, into one of whom the speaker has inevitably matured. The speaker, a "trewand soule" raised up into this community of sinners, those with "leaprie of . . . mind," now asks to be released, to graduate from the hidden school in which the grains of "purest good" and "inward truth" that connect the godly to the Creator have been nurtured. This is achieved by ritual cleansing with the hyssop of grace, and by allowing "over me thie mercies streames to flow" (25), enabling the sinner to leave the outcast community of the afflicted--here, as in Locke, unredeemed sin means isolation, whether for an individual or for an entire group--and, by implication, join the community of the saved.

"Thou shalt make me heare joye and gladnesse, al the bones which thou hast broken shal rejoyse" reads Locke's translation of verse 8 of the Miserere. This paradoxical passage marks the beginning of an epiphany in the sonnets of the Meditation, as Locke's speaker truly starts out on the road to the heavenly community by embracing pain with joy and understanding instead of abject fear. In Pembroke's more concentrated verse rendering of Psalm 51, this moment is also crucial, but more intense. Pembroke's speaker implores God, "to eare and hart send soundes and thoughts of gladdnes, / that brused bones maie daunce awaie their saddnes" (27-28). Hannay claims that Pembroke is "closer to Calvin here than is Lok. Her 'gladdnes / saddnes' rhyme comes directly from Golding's translation of Calvin's commentary on the central paradox of Christian experience: 'verely bicause the sadnes which tormenteth them, openeth them the gate to true ioy . . . true gladnesse' (sig. Cc iiii v)" ("Wisdom" 72). The countess's faithfulness to her source, however, is disturbed by the expression of her speaker's own epiphanic moment: "[m]ore surprising is her incorporation of sacred dance of joy into . . . [lines 27-28]. Pembroke's joyous phrase is not present in Bèze, Calvin, or Lok, and certainly not in Geneva" (Hannay et al. 28). As Locke associates the sense of hearing with renewed happiness--"Then shalt thou geve my hearing joy againe" (10)--so Pembroke asks God to send music to "eare and hart" (27). The speaker is released from the isolated community of sinners, those afflicted with "leaprie of . . . mind[.]" and dances to glad music at this "graduation" from the divine school buried deep in the womb, whose

tutelage has allowed the speaker to overcome the disease of sin which was a parallel natal legacy. "[T]hie mercies streames" have cleansed and baptised the speaker into the community of the godly.

These vignettes of community may seem random, and, certainly, Pembroke does not draw a lineal path from chaos to order in the style of Locke. There is, however, a definite progression here, and its result is significant. As Pembroke's speaker moves from the dual-natured womb, with its growing sin and its divine school, to sinful life and spiritual leprosy, and is liberated finally by the cleansing sensation of God's mercy, a collateral liberation of voice occurs. The fifth stanza of the countess's psalmic poem consists almost entirely of imperatives:

This ill-pleas'd eye from my misdeedes *avert*:

Cancel the registers my sinns containe:

create in me a pure, cleane, spottles hart:

inspire a sprite where love of right maie raigne.

ah! *cast* me not from thee: *take* not againe

thie breathing grace: againe thie comfort *send* me,

and *let* the guard of thy free sprite attend me. (29-35, emphasis added)

Words and wishes literally spill out of the speaker's mouth upon this liberation, as God begins here to grant the plea contained in the Psalm to "open . . . my lippes," as Locke's translation has it. In this litany, Pembroke's speaker in fact outlines the entire process of forgiveness and reconciliation, the movement from leper to graduate: the Lord averts His eyes from the sinner's inherent unworthiness and imputes righteousness to him or her, thus "cancelling the registers" of sin--in Locke's terms, God agrees to "Loke on me . . . but loke not on my sinne" (11.6). He then renews the heart of the sinner through grace, and breathes life into, or "inspires," the regenerate spirit, as He breathed life into the prelapsarian Adam. Finally, He allows the redeemed soul into His presence, which is the natural home of the godly, toward which every sinner must attempt to move. While Locke makes God's gaze metonymic of His presence throughout the section of the Meditation that parallels this stanza of Pembroke's--Locke's speaker pleads, "cast me not from

presence of thy face" (13.13)--the countess focuses on breath, the literal inspiration of the human organism: her speaker begs God, "take not againe / thy breathing grace [from me]" (33-34), presenting grace as being as necessary as air to the redeemed Christian.¹³ The fact that Pembroke's speaker is able to articulate this journey toward redemption so keenly and succinctly is again related to the "cheerful sense of God's presence" that pervades the countess's poem (Hannay, "Wisdom" 74). As Fisker writes, "Mary Sidney's God is ever-present at the psalmist's elbow, available to comfort as well as to discipline" ("Mary Sidney" 170); Hannay sees in this the maintenance of the parent / child relationship posited by Pembroke early in the poem: "[l]ike a parent, God is 'ill-pleased' by . . . [the speaker's] 'misdeedes,' but God's child has no real fear of abandonment" ("Wisdom" 74). This well-placed woman, meditating on the fate of the godly from a position of comfort both material and spiritual, imbues her Psalm rendering with a reassuring sense of the inevitability of salvation that stands in stark contrast to the perilous struggle in which Locke's poetic persona engages in the process of discernment.

Pembroke's sixth stanza, like Locke's fifteenth and sixteenth sonnets, records the crucial act of witnessing and testifying to God's goodness and mercy: ". . . soe shall my tongue be raised / to praise thy truth, enough can not bee praised" (41-42). Instead of engaging in Locke's desperate offer to God to act as spokesperson in return for salvation, however, the countess focuses on the concept of journeying, temporarily backgrounding voice until the end of the stanza: the speaker will offer "a guiding hand" to other sinners (36), helping to redirect "faultie feete [that] have wandred from thie [God's] way" (37). This represents an approach to fellow Christians that is firm but compassionate, as they are steered lovingly rather than preached at with terror--Locke thunders of teaching "The wicked" of "The bitter frute of lust and foule delight" (15.5, 10)--and the speaker's agency in helping others who have been "ledd astraie" by sin is modestly stated (39). The simultaneous desire and obligation of the redeemed protestant to help lead others to God is clearly important--the speaker longs to "praise thy truth" when God grants forgiveness for "my bloodie crime" (40-41)--but it is the path that matters, for the sense is that sinners literally go around in circles when they stray from the road to salvation. These sinners,

once they are "turn'd from sinne" will "make retorne to" God (38), just as they once "turn'd from" Him through the lure of sin. Significantly, it is not the countess's narrator who journeys in search of salvation here, but others--wandering sinners who may be aided by the "guiding hand" of the centred, grounded speaker, who has already known the divine presence. The stumbling, frightened narrator of Locke's Meditation has less in common with Pembroke's speaker than with those people of "faultie feete" who require guidance, illustrating the different relative positions in which each poet envisions her speaker, and a different locus of impetus for each: Locke's speaker, and the sinners in Pembroke's poem, attempt to propel themselves toward God, hoping for the divine hand to take hold of and guide them to the goal; the countess presents her narrator as one who is initially steered by God through childhood instruction to maturity and graduation, and who then, armed with the knowledge of God's mercy, is sent out into the world protected by "the guard of thy free sprite" to teach others (35). The two poets' speakers are, in a sense, going in opposite directions, reflecting the different suppositions, and thus starting points, of each--Locke's speaker must move toward certainty, while Pembroke's has long known it.

By the end of the stanza, Pembroke has returned the focus to voice and the speaker's own sense of sin, with Locke's influence present in the speaker's invocation of the "god of my health" (40); this is a "direct quotation from Lok . . . one that echoes the content of other Psalters but here connects with the healing of bruised bones and leprosy" (Hannay et al., 369, n. to line 40). Pembroke, again, is consistent in underlining the loving and positive in this poem, never allowing her speaker to lose perspective in fear and panic, as Locke's does. Even in the midst of acknowledging a "bloodie crime,"¹⁴ the countess's speaker recognises that healing and wholeness are nearby, requiring only the expression of repentance and conviction. Accordingly, the speaker begins the poem's penultimate stanza with a request to God to "Unlock my lipps, shut up with sinnfull shame" (43), recognising not only the necessity of voicing praise, but the fact that it is God Himself who enables this: only after God unlocks the lips of sinners by imputing righteousness, "*then* shall my mouth o lord thy honor sing" (44, emphasis added). Pembroke then takes the occasion offered by the Psalm to complete this Calvinist lesson with a reminder of the

futility of works: "for bleeding fuell for thy alters flame, / to gaine thy grace what bootes it me to bring? / burnt-offrings are to thee no pleasaunt thing" (45-47). The two lines that close this stanza read like a children's primer on Christian duty to the Creator: "the sacrifice that god will hold respected, / is the hart-broken soule, the sprite dejected" (48-49). Pembroke eschews the Petrarchan drama of Locke's interpretation in her nineteenth sonnet, "I yeld my self, I offer up my ghoste, / My slayne delightes, my dyeng hart to thee" (19.1-2), in favour of a neat and pointed couplet, crowning with confident simplicity a stanza that imparts the basic tenets of faith over works.

As the final stanza of this poem opens, Pembroke's careful construction of one sinner's testimony to the progress of grace has become clear. What at first seem like discrete sketches self-contained within each stanza of her verse are in fact accounts of successive stages of the speaker's experience of Christian community and witness. Instead of being drawn from the hostile country of sin to the structured safety of grace and enveloped within the New Jerusalem of the godly at the end of the journey, as happens in the Meditation, Pembroke's speaker experiences community as action; induction into it is the epiphanic moment of matriculation from the world of spiritual leprosy, and what follows is a movement away from safety toward constant witness in the fallen world. This point is made most strikingly in the first two lines of Pembroke's last stanza: "Lastly, O lord how soe I stand or fall, / leave not thy loved Sion to embrace" (50-51). Pembroke's editors comment on this that it "is an original statement of David's concern for Israel, or, in the Protestant reading, for 'the whole Church, because through his sinne it was in danger of Gods judgement' (Geneva note v. 18)" (Hannay et al., 370, n. to lines 50-51). By extension, however, this declaration can also be seen as a statement about the individual and community. Pembroke's speaker seems willing to countenance the possibility of a future fall from grace, and, in doing so, makes an explicit distinction between the self and the rest of the Christian community. Locke's speaker asks for protection for "Sion . . . thy holly hill" (20.4), as well as for the self—"Shew mercie, Lord, not unto me alone" but also to Sion (20.1-4); there is no sense that the speaker can envision exclusion from this home once it has been so perilously attained.

Pembroke's narrator expresses the wish that God will "build up Salems wall, / and still in peace, maintaine that peacefull place" (52-53), whatever else may happen. Also notable here is the fact that the countess's speaker claims that, when Sion is well-ordered and secure, "then shalt thou turne a well-accepting face / to sacred fires with offred guiftes perfumed: / till ev'n whole calves on alters be consumed" (54-56). Locke keeps this idea of sacrifice solidly protestant by keeping it in the realm of the metaphorical and internal at the close of her sequence, speaking of an offering of "Many a yelden host of humbled hart" (21.6); she makes no material concession to her accompanying Psalm translation's mention of "burnt offrings and oblations. . . . yonge bullockes upon thine altare." Hannay and her fellow Pembroke editors comment that this verse of the Psalm is "now generally believed to be a late addition to justify temple sacrifice," and that it "is problematic since it appears to contradict verses 16-17[.]" in which, in Pembroke's poem, sacrifice of "bleeding fuell" is seen as pointless. The editors also admit that "Pembroke does not here speak explicitly, as does Wyatt, of 'Inward Zion' and the 'heart's Jerusalem'[,]" a route also taken by Locke with her sacrifice of humbled hearts; there seems little room for an alternative, more Calvinist-friendly construction of this notion of sacrifice in Pembroke's poem. The countess's editors finally turn to Calvin's verdict that "God will accept the 'solemne Ceremonies' so long as they 'are joyned with the pure affection of the harte'" (Hannay et al., 370, n. to lines 54-56). This, I believe, is precisely in keeping with the practical vision of Pembroke's missionary, who is prepared to work with straying sinners, and is clear-eyed about the constant dangers of life in the fallen world; this speaker may simply recognise the inevitability--perhaps even the positive aspect --of ritual as an expression of praise for ordinary Christians whose hearts have already been yielded to God. Such sympathy is, in turn, in keeping with the speaker's understanding of God Himself, as He who "penetrates the recesses of our souls and speaks to us in our own language to make us understand His will" (Fisken, "Mary Sidney" 171).

A quite distinct scenario was traditionally associated with Psalm 51: it was said to recount King David's plea to the Lord for forgiveness after the prophet Nathan had made the king see the error of his ways in the latter's pursuit of Bathsheba. Hannay weaves this into an interesting

comment on Pembroke's work:

Although the countess does not specifically mention David, Bathsheba, or Nathan, they would have been present for the reader in her text. The circumstances contextualized the psalm [51], making it a statement about the efficacy of poetry, both in bringing the sinner to repentance, as Nathan did, and in presenting sacred poetry as the true sacrifice of praise sought by God. (Hannay, "Unlock" 29)

Locke, with her published but unsigned sonnet sequence, used the occasion of the *Miserere* to trace the path of the Christian's spiritual life, and, in doing so, offered the Meditation as an example of praise acceptable to God and of women's literary endeavour (at least marginally) acceptable to man. The countess, with her acknowledged but unpublished Psalm translations nurtured carefully in the shadow of her brother's legend and her own reputation, did the same thing; her *Miserere* illustrates in microcosm the efficacy of poetry for the purposes of instruction, penitence and prayer, as Hannay notes, and simultaneously stands as the work of a talented and pious woman writer. Both women address the need for the individual Christian to ask for grace and forgiveness, and to praise when those are granted; both connect the individual Christian variously with a state of isolation or with the family of the saved, according to his or her circumstances. The important difference between the works of Locke and Pembroke is one of approach, direction. Locke's speaker moves painstakingly away from the desert of sin toward the safety of the Calvinist Sion, a goal still feared elusive for protestants emerging from exile in early Elizabethan England. Pembroke's speaker, already saved from the isolation of sin and baptised into the community of the godly, moves away from its security, carrying it internally while ministering to those wandering in the desert. The comfort and confidence known by Pembroke's speaker, reflecting that of Pembroke herself, allows for a different kind of courage from that required in the Meditation; instead of the ability to move toward home, one must be able to move away--knowing that, once grace and mercy are received, that family need never really be left behind.

Chapter 3 Notes

¹ Hannay writes that "a reference in Henry Parry's *Victoria Christiana* indicates that the countess had completed a draft of the Psalms by 1594" (Philip's Phoenix 240 n. to line 3). As noted above, the Psalms went through extensive revisions and polishing over a period of years; Hannay claims that Pembroke "completed the Psalms in time for the queen's intended visit to Wilton [Pembroke's Wiltshire home] in 1599" (Philip's Phoenix).

² The earl's first marriage, to Katherine Grey, sister of the ill-fated Jane Grey, was unconsummated, and annulled in 1554 (Hannay, Philip's Phoenix 36-37).

³ Writing of the death of one of this godly family, Philip Sidney, at Zutphen in 1586, Anne Somerset notes that "Sidney had never been a personal favourite of the Queen . . . [having] incurred her displeasure by identifying himself too closely with the Protestant cause in the Netherlands in the years when she had hoped it would be possible to remain out of the war there" (423).

⁴ In noting those poets who paid tribute to the countess in their work, Fiske mentions Henry Lok, Anne Locke's hapless eldest son ("To the Angell" 268).

⁵ While he later in life became known as a staunch advocate of reform in the English Church, Leicester was not above compromising his family's position in matters of religion when, early in Elizabeth's reign, it seemed likely that he would win the Queen's hand; in 1560, the year of the Meditation, The Countess of Pembroke's father, "Sir Henry Sidney, went to the Spanish ambassador and passed on an assurance from Dudley [Leicester] that once he and the Queen were man and wife, Catholicism would be restored in England. Because of this Sidney suggested that Philip II should try to further Dudley's cause by conveying to Elizabeth that he would be very pleased if she became Lord Robert's [Leicester's] wife." After the failure of this initiative to win Elizabeth, however, Leicester abandoned his flexibility to become one who "flaunted strong Protestant convictions" openly (Somerset 135).

⁶ While Beilin says that the Garnier and the de Mornay works appeared together in 1595,

Freer claims that the countess's translation of Garnier "was first published in 1592 under the title of *Antonius: a tragedie*, and then was reprinted in 1595 as *The Tragedie of Antonie*, in the same volume as the translation of de Mornay" (484).

⁷ Beth Wynne Fisker also notes that the countess's treatment of the Psalms goes beyond the boundaries of strict translation--"her verse-paraphrases of Psalms 44-150 . . . would be more rightly termed 'imitations' in the classical sense, as they surpass the literalism of her translations of Robert Garnier's *Antonie* and Philippe de Mornay's *Discourse of Life and Death*" ("*To the Angell*" 263). In another article on the countess, Fisker expands upon this notion of imitation, describing it as an exercise "in which [Mary] Sidney strove to reconstruct the style and matter of the original within a context that would carry weight and meaning, first for her contemporary society, and ultimately, for herself as an individual" ("*Mary Sidney*" 168).

⁸ For a discussion of the Sidney Psalms in specific relation to the originals in Hebrew, see Theodore Steinberg, "The Sidneys and the Psalmes," *Studies in Philology* 92.1 (Winter 1995): 1-17.

⁹ Baldick says that "the name of this stanza seems to come from its use in *The Kingis Quair* (c. 1424), a poem uncertainly attributed to King James I of Scotland." Turco claims confidently of the form that "James I of Scotland used it."

¹⁰ See my reference in chapter 2 to Calvin's remark on the significance of a repeated request for cleansing in this Psalm (*Commentaries* 9: 283).

¹¹ "The doctrine of God's grace is particularly emphasized in Pembroke's paraphrase of Psalm 51, where she incorporates that doctrine into her opening phrase, 'O lord, whose grace no limitts comprehend', and emphasizes that God does not demand sacrifices--or, implicitly, good works--'to gaine thy grace' (46)" (Hannay et al. 20). Even after several decades of official Calvinism in England, the need to remind protestants that grace is all-sufficing, and, by extension, good works pointless (and Papist), is still evident.

¹² The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* notes this of leprosy:

Medical texts of the Ancient Near East attribute disease either to evil magic or the sufferer's sin In both cases, rituals are prescribed which bear a striking resemblance to those in the Bible . . . with one critical difference. The pagan employs rituals as therapy, believing them to be the counter-magic needed to exorcise the disease. The Bible, on the contrary, denies the therapeutic value of rituals, prescribing them only after healing has taken place[.]” (Michman)

Both Locke and Pembroke present hyssop as the actual agent of cleansing, as well as the symbolic agent of purification that signifies fitness to re-enter society.

13 Hannay and her colleagues note that "Pembroke's repeated 'again' implies that on other occasions God had taken away His grace and then had sent comfort" (369, n. to lines 33-34); I have noted the same implication in Locke's fourteenth sonnet, in which the speaker seems to reveal a previous experience of God's grace, now lost, and sought again. As this is not present in the text of the Psalm itself, it may in fact be further evidence for the influence of Locke on Pembroke.

14 According to Hannay et al., "Geneva notes (v. 14): 'the murder of Uriiah'" on orders of King David (369, n. to line 41).

Chapter 4

Locke and Lanyer

Lisa Schnell, in her recent article on Aemilia Lanyer's Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum, writes that, among feminist Renaissance scholars, "[t]he tendency has been to see early modern women as an undifferentiated category" (23). Schnell considers this identification of all Renaissance-era women as members of one group necessary to "the commitment to community that is the heart and soul of any feminist ideological position[.]" a commitment that Schnell believes is manufactured for the convenience of feminist scholars and is in danger of leading us toward inaccurate assumptions about early modern women and their world(s) (23). Although Schnell's complaint is aimed particularly at recent Lanyer scholarship, in which the idea of female community is dwelt upon invariably, much scholarship on women writers of the English Renaissance generally does make assumptions about common obstacles and goals thought to be shared by these women and reflected in their work, and often there is indeed a desire to see these women as, in a sense, showing solidarity with one another in their writings for the sake of expressing frustrations or desires common to their sex, regardless of differences in social station, education, or personal background.¹ Lynette McGrath, exploring the ways in which so-called "relational" feminism may be defined for the purposes of Renaissance scholarship,² seems to answer Schnell with her support of the notion of community in Lanyer's work: Lanyer, she observes, "expresses her consciousness of a difference articulated on gender that works against the interests of women as a group . . . [and] she asserts the value of a female community, of women's history, and of women's intellectual, virtuous, and writerly potential" (334). Both McGrath's and Schnell's positions have merit: the idea of community, and specifically gendered community, does exist in Lanyer's 1611 work Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum, as we shall see; at the same time, however, it is safe to say that the notion of a Renaissance "sisterhood" flourishing in the works of various women Renaissance writers may at times serve scholarly convenience to a greater extent than it serves a historical social reality.

Part of that reality, however, is that, quite apart from any connection to concerns of

gender or gendered writing, matters of community are of importance to the English Renaissance imagination generally. One need only turn to many of the plays of Shakespeare, comic or tragic, for evidence of a preoccupation with the coherence of social groups and the consequences of rupturing that coherence: aside from the oft-cited Shakespearean comic ending, full of peacemaking and marriages, there is Lear's fatal abdication of monarchical responsibility, or Richard III's unsuccessful attempt to hold onto power without the support of family or friends. As well, when it comes to the writings of Renaissance women, the treatment of community is not automatically and explicitly gendered. The issues of gender and gender roles may not figure obviously in women writers' discourse on community at all; or, when these issues do surface, they may do so in the context of examining women's roles in a larger community, such as that of Christians, that includes both women and men--the presence of what we may identify as general feminist concerns is not necessarily contingent upon the presence of an all-female community. It is thus possible to be cognisant of the particular personal and socioeconomic situation of a particular Englishwoman writing in the Renaissance and still detect the existence of concern for women's roles and the function of community in her writing--even if these matters are not dealt with in precisely the same way and to the same extent by every writer. In closely reading devotional poetic works by Anne Locke and by Lanyer herself, one of course learns a great deal generally about what each poet is trying to achieve, and the methods by which she attempts to reach her goals; more specifically, however, an examination of these poets' works reveals that each addresses what can be identified as feminist concerns (in the case of Lanyer, of course, there is little debate about this) and / or matters of the individual and community.³ While each woman deals with these matters in different ways--and, I would argue, with different degrees of success--the concerns are there, and investigating Lanyer's approach to them while keeping Locke's in mind can tell us much about these women as individual writers, and, perhaps, more about Renaissance English people in general.

Taking Locke and Lanyer as a sampling provides us with two markedly different examples of women writers of the English Renaissance, for, at first glance, perhaps the only thing they

clearly have in common is the fact that each wrote religious poetry in an English protestant milieu. Locke was a well-educated woman of the merchant class who presented her unsigned sonnet sequence on Psalm 51 as an unobtrusive part of another, signed (initialled) volume of translated work which she published in 1560, at the beginning of Elizabeth I's reign; her knowledge of French and Latin, and her temporary separation from her husband for the cause of religion, mark her as unusual among women of her time. Aemilia Lanyer was the daughter of an Italian musician, possibly of Jewish descent, at Elizabeth's court and of his common-law wife. The young Aemilia was first the mistress of Elizabeth's "foul-mouthed but capable" Lord Chamberlain (Somerset 65), her cousin Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon; later, when pregnant by Hunsdon, Aemilia married another court musician named Alphonso Lanyer, apparently by Hunsdon's arrangement. She published Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum, a work generally regarded as overtly feminist, under her own (married) name in 1611, nearly half-way through the reign of James I, and seems to have lived much of her adult life in varying degrees of financial distress and personal hardship, striving for entry and acceptance into an aristocratic world on whose fringes she had long dwelt. A span of fifty years and a wide range of life experience thus separate these women and their poetry, and this separation is evident in the quite different forms and characters of their respective works; but if it seems that the works of these two share more differences than similarities, it is important to remember that they are linked by their devotional nature, and that, as I will argue, both speak to issues of women's roles as Christians and / or social beings and to the relationship between individual and community. A careful reading of Lanyer's Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum in light of my earlier reading of Locke renders evidence that both of these women did concern themselves at some level with matters that most feminist scholars believe engaged the intellects of many Renaissance women, consciously or unconsciously, just as they occupy many women today.

As mentioned, these poets give different degrees of expression in their works to what we would now call feminist concerns--matters of voice and a woman's right to have one in public discourse, the issue of (feminine) self-consciousness in writing and the creative process,

conceptions of women as beings with or without inherent integrity or as beings inherently inferior to men. Lanyer is clearly the more explicit of the two in her assertion of herself as a self-consciously female writer--and, as mentioned, her feminism is figured in "relational" terms: she displays "a consciousness of women's rights and solidarity in the face of their oppression by male power" (McGrath 333). Locke, writing half a century before Lanyer, seldom gets any more direct in addressing matters of gender than her attempt to undermine the strength and capability of the human body, her world's most obvious marker of (male) gendered superiority, in her prefatory sonnets. Insofar as I would wish to categorise Locke's feminism at all, I would call it "individualist": although Locke certainly is writing in service to a community, it is the ungendered community of Christians; her text centres on the trials of a single sinner; and her feminism is less evident in the words of her text than in the signals that she, as a woman writing, sends to the outside world--the significance of her preface, the fact that she wrote and published at all. Later, I will attempt briefly to contextualise the extent to which the boldness of a poet's handling of certain issues is tied to her era--was Lanyer's early seventeenth-century England much more "used to" women writers than the England of the mid sixteenth-century in which Locke published? Was Lanyer's world "better" for women than Locke's? More immediately definable, however, is the matter of community that figures in the poetry of both women.

The value placed upon individuality and equality by late twentieth-century western culture can make appreciation of such notions as community and social hierarchy difficult for those approaching the study of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. While gender inequality and its consequences have been, and continue to be, vivid parts of some modern experience, the constructs and authority of religion and monarchy, such important factors in the perception of self and one's place in the world for women and men of Renaissance England, are largely foreign to the modern western mind as mitigating influences. In the works of Locke and Lanyer, community is defined variously, but in both cases that which might now be termed individuality is problematic, and often represents no more or less than, in fact, alienation; in this sense, both of these women show themselves to be true writers of the English Renaissance. Regardless of the

particular characteristics of community in either of these works--the extent to which a community is or is not constituted as explicitly gendered, for instance--the group, in these poems, is ultimately identified with protection, legitimacy, and affirmation; only in being a part of the larger whole can the individual self truly be complete. In this context, the individual standing alone, cut off from community, is not asserting an enlightened independence from the group, but is in fact simply estranged from it; that person must then undergo a process of integration, or reintegration, into the community. In the work of women like Anne Locke and Aemilia Lanyer, this process can be viewed as necessary from two perspectives: that of the Calvinist Christian, who is either a reprobate excluded from the elect by the isolating force of sin, or a member of the elect and thus certain of salvation--and who always seeks to know which he or she is; and also that of the speaking / writing woman, who must both assert an individual voice and then have it legitimised by acceptance into the group.⁴ As we have seen, Locke's wretched sinner, marooned in the wasteland of sin at the beginning of the Meditation, travels with success, if difficulty, to the orderly safety of the New Jerusalem; this serves to vindicate both the speaker's struggle toward faith, and the author's attempt to contribute to the (public) discourse of piety. The following discussion will attempt to assess whether or not Lanyer's work achieves the same degree of vindication.

Was the England in which Aemilia Lanyer published her one known work, Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum, far different from that in which Locke lived and wrote?⁵ By 1611, the year in which Lanyer's book appeared, Elizabeth had been dead for eight years, and in her place reigned James I, a man not known for his sympathy to women. Guibbory states:

[w]ith the accession of James I in 1603, the dominant structure of power shaping English culture and society became more distinctly patriarchal than it had been in Elizabeth's reign. . . . James promoted a rigorously patriarchal authority in both church and state. . . . Masculine authority was also emphasised in the king's writings and speeches, as James figured himself as husband and father of the realm.

(106-107)

Josephine Roberts also remarks that "James' surviving writings, including 'A Satire against Woemen,' reveal a scarcely veiled contempt" for the sex (Critical Introduction xv); as well, she records the observations of the French ambassador Beaumont on the subject: James "piques himself on great contempt for women. They are obliged to kneel before him when they are presented, he exorts them openly to virtue, and scoffs with great levity at men who pay them honour" (qtd. in Roberts, Critical Introduction xv). An attempt to balance this to some degree came from James's consort, Anne of Denmark, who clearly did provide the crown with a lively female presence, and maintained her own, separate, female-centred court;⁶ this, doubtless, drew some of its energy from the bitter resentment also noted by Beaumont: "'You may easily conceive that the English ladies do not spare him [James] but hold him in abhorrence and tear him to pieces with their tongues, each according to her humour'" (Critical Introduction xv-xvi). Whatever the vigour of ladies' invective against James, however, gone was the overwhelming counterbalance of a woman like Elizabeth, a direct wielder of power. Legally speaking, women were still considered chattel, still meant ideally to be under subjection to husbands or other male relatives; as in Locke's day, an affluent widowhood was the closest most women--particularly aristocrats--could hope to come to autonomy. Women suffered a setback in cultural and social appreciation with the accession of James, and high-born ladies stood to feel this most acutely precisely because of their relative proximity to the source of the devaluation.

The rise of the merchant class, however, and the emphasis placed by many protestant sects on individual industry, meant that an increasing number of ordinary Englishwomen were able to operate in the marketplace, either by their husbands' sides, on their own as widows, or, occasionally, as independent spinsters.⁷ In terms of the state of women's education at the time, while Lewalski writes that "[e]ducation for Jacobean ladies is said to have declined, especially by comparison with the humanist classical education some Tudor women enjoyed" ("Re-writing" 88), Krontiris believes that, in general, during the Jacobean period, "[m]any more women than before were receiving some form of education" (102). Although the outlook varied from one sect to another, it is true that many protestants considered female literacy and education important, or

at least acceptable--Fraser points out that Quakers, for instance, believed strongly in educating both girls and boys, as "the Lord might move in any spirit, regardless of sex" (*The Weaker Vessel* 427-428)--and this was doubtless largely responsible for whatever increase in educational opportunities Englishwomen enjoyed. Here, again, this may have favoured one social class over another, as many women of the merchant class would have required some degree of functional literacy for practical purposes, a necessity less pressing for aristocratic women. During Lanyer's time, then, ordinary women may thus have had increasing opportunities to become, at least, functionally literate, while their better-born counterparts may in fact have had less opportunity than during the sixteenth century.

Janel Mueller, surveying the misogynist landscape around Lanyer as she published, claims that "in the interval between flare-ups in 1588-97 and 1615-37, the English controversy about women [the ongoing *querelle des femmes*] saw a relatively quiescent phase with regard, at least, to the circulation of antifeminist themes in satirical tracts or polemical diatribes" (214). Lewalski, however, disagrees, insisting that "beyond question the period [during which Lanyer lived and wrote] saw an outpouring of repressive or overtly misogynist sermons, tracts, and plays, detailing women's physical and mental defects, spiritual evils, rebelliousness, shrewishness, and natural inferiority in the hierarchy of being" (Lewalski, "Re-writing" 88). While Mueller's view seems more optimistic, she does see one thing running counter to the supposed lull; that is

a conspicuous development in London stage plays that drama historians regularly note This is the quite sudden emergence, from a virtual void, of women with the full stature of evil-doing tragic protagonists like Alice Arden in *Arden of Faversham* (1591), Anne Frankford in Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603), and Shakespeare's *Lady Macbeth* (1606). (Mueller 214-215)

Mueller believes that this development in the public portrayal of women was one of the reasons Lanyer chose to write what she did when she did, although her assessment contrasts in turn with Krontiris's apparently positive claim that popular theatre during the Jacobean period "was paying

more attention to women, and though most dramatists simply exploited the gender issue, some were questioning traditional notions" (102). When one considers the trajectory of seventeenth-century drama, however, Mueller's and Lewalski's views seems easier to support than those of Krontiris; while the English stage may be fairly charged with never having been overly generous to women in its portrayal of them, it seems a downhill journey from, for instance, Kyd's *Bel-Imperia* or Marlowe's *Zenocrate*, products of the 1580's and '90's, to the characters of a playwright like Middleton later in the seventeenth century.⁸ Elizabeth Harvey may express it best: writing of the "voices" of fictional female characters created by male writers in the early modern period--a process she terms ventriloquization--Harvey comments that "ventriloquizations of women in the Renaissance achieved the power they did partly because so few women actually wrote and spoke, but the representations of feminine speech that were current in literary and popular accounts, as well as in ventriloquizations, fostered a vision that tended to reinforce women's silence or to marginalize their voices when they did speak or write" (5). While different critics may thus assess variously the state of popular and literary misogyny in Lanyer's time, women, real and fictional, evidently remained popular targets for public ridicule or criticism of various sorts in early 17th-century England.

It is thus clear that Lanyer lived in an England that was, at the very least, no more open to the notion of the worth of women and their endeavours than that of Anne Locke had been at any point. This was, unsurprisingly, reflected in the fact that, by 1611--the year in which not only *Salve Deus* but also, of course, the Authorised Version of the Bible first appeared⁹--the religious landscape had also changed from the transitional phase of the mid-sixteenth century. Roberts, recording the observations of another of James's contemporaries, refers to the king's later "order to the Bishop of London that the clergy should 'inveigh vehemently and bitterly in theyre sermons against the insolencie of our women'" (Critical Introduction xv), indicating that a certain fluidity in the early Elizabethan religious sphere that opened up a space for Locke as a writing and publishing member of the Christian community was beginning to settle back into a restricting social and gender stratification by Lanyer's adulthood. This was reinforced by an "outpouring of

pamphlets and sermons, books of instruction and divine counsel" throughout James's reign that placed the English Church at the forefront of the movement to root out women's "insolencie" (Roberts, *Critical Introduction* xvi). The very fact that women were becoming increasingly literate and increasingly visible in the public world of commerce during the Jacobean period may have exacerbated the will to target them more vigorously in such spheres as that of the church and the theatre than was the case during most of the sixteenth century. Finally, in terms of participation in the realm of publishing, Elaine Beilin has estimated that the first fifty years of the seventeenth century saw "about 120 known printed publications" by English women; while this obviously represents a notable increase from the number of similar publications in the first half of the sixteenth century, it is clear that women's publications were still relatively rare things in Lanyer's time; indeed, Beilin points out that even the above figure "is somewhat misleading, since at least 50 of [these publications] are by one author, Eleanor Douglas."¹⁰ Schnell thus correctly observes that "[t]he mere publication of the book [Salve Deus] constitutes Lanyer as an exceptional woman in the early seventeenth century" (26).

Aside from any relevant differences between the eras in which the two women flourished, the background and position of Lanyer herself are sufficiently different from those of Locke to have placed her, perhaps, closer to the centre of misogynistic controversy, and to have provoked reaction to an extent that Locke might have found, at the least, unnecessary. Anne Locke was, by the standards of her time, an eminently "respectable" woman--solidly merchant class, well-educated, fervently religious, appropriately married, and a mother.¹¹ She seems to have lived in reasonable material security all of her life; she enjoyed certain ties to the English court as a child (through her parents' connections to Henry VIII and his various consorts) and, possibly, as an adult (she felt able to address the Duchess of Suffolk and Countess of Warwick as fellow believers in her published epistles); and she apparently occupied a position of some respect in the English Christian community (Collinson describes her status after the death of her first husband as that of "a female elder or deaconess" [The Elizabethan Puritan Movement 134]). Locke showed an unapologetic commitment to her faith by writing in service to her community when it was in

need--and in the 1590's, as discussed in chapter 2, this was not always the safest thing to do--and by making a second marriage that brought her closer to religious controversy (it is most interesting that her second husband was named "Dering"); throughout, however, her lifestyle was apparently that of an Englishwoman of irreproachable uprightness. Born in 1569 (Woods, Introduction xv-xvi), Aemilia Bassano Lanyer was a very different creature.¹² While she, too, had ties with the English court, she was linked not only through relatives--her musician father and husband--but through the illicit affair she carried on with Queen Elizabeth's cousin, Lord Chamberlain Henry Hunsdon, a man forty-five years Lanyer's senior and of far higher social rank. Hunsdon kept her as his mistress, apparently in some luxury, from approximately 1587 to 1592, the year of her marriage to Alphonso Lanyer. Although this association with Hunsdon apparently brought Lanyer well within the orbit of court life, at least for a time, she was a person far more marginalised within her context than was Locke in her own: added to the tenuous and illicit nature of her court connection, which resulted in a hasty marriage of convenience when Lanyer became pregnant by Hunsdon, is the fact that Lanyer's father and husband were foreigners; her father was possibly Jewish, her husband Catholic; and she herself experienced periods of financial distress at different points in her life that required her to earn money to support herself and, eventually, her family.¹³ Although she perhaps overstates the case, Coiro's assessment of Lanyer does emphasise how far apart Lanyer and Locke were in terms of background, lifestyle and circumstances: "[i]t is really impossible to emphasize strongly enough how marginal, how unusual her [Lanyer's] position was in Renaissance England--as a Jew, converted or not, as an Italian, as the wife of a Catholic, as a woman artist making a living as a fringe member of the court" (362). Even with her one known publishing venture, Lanyer seems to have had a more difficult experience than Locke: while the latter's Calvin volume saw two (and possibly three) editions, Lanyer's book "did not . . . attract a wide readership. As far as they can be retrieved, the publication details of the *Salve Deus* suggest that it had one printing, with possibly another special issue, but with very few copies finally printed in all"¹⁴ (McGrath 331).

Despite these differences, however, there is, apparently, a link between these two women.

Woods reveals that "Anne Lock's only brother, Stephen Vaughan the younger, and his wife were close friends of Aemilia Lanyer's parents. . . . When [Aemilia's mother] Margaret Johnson Bassano died in 1587 . . . the will's primary overseer was 'Stephen Vaughan, Esquier,'" ("Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 2-3); as the Vaughans and Bassanos are both known to have lived in the parish of St. Botolph's at Bishopsgate, Woods declares firmly that "this Stephen Vaughan is in fact the brother of Anne Vaughan Lock" ("Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 3). Woods also sees a possible connection in the fact that Lanyer speaks in Salve Deus of having spent her childhood in the household of Susan, Countess of Kent, who was the daughter of Catherine, Duchess of Suffolk, to whom Locke dedicated her 1560 work ("Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 3).¹⁵ As well, Locke's 1590 Taffin translation was dedicated to Anne, Countess of Warwick, who was sister to Margaret, Countess of Cumberland--the woman Lanyer claims as her model and patron in Salve Deus. Clearly, the network of interconnections among literate protestant Englishwomen that developed in the aftermath of the Reformation encompassed both Locke and Lanyer at different times. Woods goes on to posit that Locke's first book would have been available to Lanyer either in her own parents' household or in that of the Vaughans, and that Lanyer may have been aware of the Taffin volume through its second edition of 1608 ("Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 4). Woods believes that Locke's writing, especially her well-crafted dedicatory epistles (rather than her unsigned poetry), would have presented Lanyer with solid examples of unapologetic, ungendered, thoroughly Christian texts written (or translated) by a woman and presented for public consumption. Also significant for Lanyer is the aforementioned fact that, in the 1560 volume, Locke addresses her social superior, a duchess, in a way that renders "the social distinction between Locke and her dedicatee . . . scarcely noticeable" ("Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 9); Woods thus sees Locke's "definite influence on Lanyer's dedications to the countess of Cumberland" ("Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 5). Overall, Woods states that "Lanyer's access to . . . [the Calvin volume] accounts better for the ease of her literary authority than any other known fact of her life" ("Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 10). Woods' research into the ties between the Vaughans and the Bassanos, and her interesting analysis

of possible similarities between the rhetoric of Locke's epistles and that of Lanyer's poetry, do make a convincing case for Lanyer having been, at the very least, aware of the work and example of Anne Locke.¹⁶

Lanyer's overt feminism in *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* has been both acknowledged and thoroughly examined by critics; while they may disagree on its precise nature--on whether or not, in essence, it fits into the late twentieth-century mould of the "true" feminism of politicised response--few deny that, as mentioned above, Lanyer does indeed concern herself in her poetry with the oppression and injustice to which many women of her day were subject. While feminist concerns in the poetry are obviously of interest to me throughout this discussion, a close feminist reading of Lanyer's long and varied work, similar to the Calvinist treatment given above to Locke's compact sonnet sequence, is not possible here, nor is it necessary--I do not wish simply to tread again over well-documented territory. Instead, I wish to examine Lanyer in light of Locke, and, as I believe that both women are concerned with matters of the individual's integration into, or alienation from, community, I thus intend to focus on the way in which Lanyer's constitution of community differs from that of her predecessor, keeping the question of women's concerns in mind.

George Parfitt reminds us that "pretty well any writing by a woman in the seventeenth century could be seen as a challenge to men. . . . In a sense . . . all women's poems are acts of rebellion, regardless of form or subject matter" (231), and surely this could be said of Locke's writing in the sixteenth century as well; matters of faith, however, still provided a "safe" context for that rebellion during the Renaissance period--Krontiris re-iterates that "[f]or women authors, religion was a general licence that they used, consciously or unconsciously, to do a number of things which could not easily be done otherwise" (108). It is, however, Lanyer's insistence in her work on "rebellious" by characterising the Christian community (and, consequently, the whole process of integration) as feminine / feminist that results in a project that is ultimately less successful than Locke's. Locke's sequence demonstrates the need for each individual, regardless of gender, to focus on a quest for spiritual freedom, which is accomplished through God's grace

by the integration of the soul into the community of the godly. Lanyer attempts to read spiritual freedom, gained through the sacrifice of Christ, as equal to freedom and equality for the female community in a fallen world, a world marked by such evidence of sin as gender strife and class difference--and it is this that is bound to fail.

The discretion evident in Locke's anonymous and careful presentation of her poems is coincidentally complemented by the very nature of her sequence. The Meditation is an everyman's / everywoman's story of returning to the straight and narrow path after having gone astray. There is a single narrative voice, punctuated only by the occasional, although crucial, threatenings of despair or "the law." The sequence invites the reader to place him- or herself in the position of the narrator, in order to benefit from the salutary effects of tracing the narrator's journey--it is, like Locke's Calvin translation, offered for the benefit of all Christians; at the same time, the Meditation is the most private of devotions, the record of the still small voice that is struggling to make its cry for mercy heard. Its implied audience is the entire community of believers, but each believer must, in a sense, experience the sequence on his or her own. Fittingly, Locke presents the book containing the sequence to one person, the Duchess of Suffolk; Locke's epistle to her, whatever the differences in station between the two women, is the letter of one fervent Christian to another--a letter that just happens to be open to the eyes of all the godly. Thus, while her book as a whole is indeed an offering to the entire English Calvinist community, a sense of the private and personal simultaneously pervades Locke's work, particularly her poetry, in 1560.

Fifty years later, Lanyer's book is a very different matter. It is a most "public" venture in a number of ways, beginning with the matter of author identification. Critics generally note the unapologetic but shrewdly careful title page of this pioneering work, "the first volume of poetry in English written by a woman" (Mueller 208).¹⁷ "Written by Mistris Aemilia Lanyer, Wife to Captaine Alfonso Lanyer Servant to the Kings Majestie" (Woods, The Poems 1).¹⁸ These words serve, in an immediate and public way, to identify the woman writing--she reveals her first name--and also to establish her social legitimacy--she may be female, but she is married, her husband a military officer in King James's service. In Krontiris's words, Lanyer's initial introduction to the

reading public thus "involves the deployment of conventional notions of respectability" (105), allowing her to identify herself directly but with appropriate modesty. Woods adds that "[t]he certification of her husband's name on the title page . . . gives Lanyer authority to speak outside the household, and her religious topic is not on the surface exceptionable" (Introduction xxxi). The matter of devotional topics offering socially-acceptable opportunities to women who wished to write has been noted here previously, particularly in chapter 2. McGrath writes that "Amelia Lanier offers an example of a woman writer employing an acceptably conventional topic or genre to conceal a level of subversive discourse in which she pursues the revolutionary possibility of self-definition" (341). This matter of the nature of "self-definition" is one of the ways in which Lanyer is very different from Locke, as we shall see.

As well as this public identification of her name with her writing, Lanyer advertises her project through no fewer than eleven prefatory dedications in her book. Nine are in verse, two in prose; all are addressed to women. Through them, Lanyer connects her work to nine noblewomen, including Queen Anne (consort of James I), her daughter Princess Elizabeth, the noted writers and patrons Lucy, Countess of Bedford and Mary, Countess of Pembroke, and Lanyer's own putative patron, Margaret, dowager Countess of Cumberland. In the very title of her dedication to Susan Bertie, dowager Countess of Kent (Woods, The Poems 18), Lanyer also links herself to Locke's great protestant duchess, Katherine of Suffolk--she who, according to Lanyer's epistle, "liv'd unsubjected" (24), and who, the title reminds us, was Susan Bertie's mother. Along with this illustrious company, Lanyer writes "To all vertuous Ladies in generall," and "To the Vertuous Reader." While not all dedications appeared in every copy of Salve Deus, a number of copies did contain the entire complement of dedicatory material.¹⁹ Lewalski comments on Lanyer's strategy here:

Offering multiple dedications was tricky though not uncommon; it was perhaps easiest to bring off when (as in Spenser's Faerie Queene) the monarch was the principal dedicatee, and the others (seventeen in Spenser's case) were ancillary. Lanyer devises a comparable strategy, making the several ladies an ideal version of

Queen Anne's own court and entourage. More than that, however, she comprehends all the dedications within the thematic unity of her volume, addressing these ladies as a contemporary community of good women[.] (Lewalski, "Imagining" 220)

With this very public presentation of a lengthy series of dedications that a reader must encounter before reaching the main body of her poem itself, Lanyer thus instantly constitutes a community of readers for her poem, "a whole commonwealth of women--or city of ladies [like that of medieval writer Christine de Pisan]--learned and virtuous, to whom she may appeal" (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 185).

Lanyer did not know all of the noblewomen to whom she wrote--she refers to herself as a "stranger" to one of her dedicatees, the Countess of Suffolk (2), and, indeed, we have only Lanyer's own text as evidence that she knew the Countess of Cumberland, at whom the entire project is aimed. McGrath feels, however, that Lanyer's choice of ladies was quite careful and deliberate:

Among those to whom Lanier addressed poetic dedications, there are . . . examples of politically silenced women: Lady Arabella [Stuart], dangerous to the Stuarts' claim to the throne and incarcerated in the Tower; and Susan Bertie and her mother Catherine Willoughby who, because she "liv'd unsubjected" . . . was forced, with her daughter, to flee from England as a Marian exile. . . . Other examples of victims of the Law of patriarchy . . . [include] Lucy, Countess of Bedford, who[,] in the early 17th century, had fallen into a precarious financial situation which undermined her status as a patron and at court, and Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, who, in the aftermath of her widowhood and almost certainly as its result, had been threatened with loss of authority on the Pembroke estates in Cardiff by law suits[.] (McGrath 338)

Whether or not Lanyer knew these women individually, they were all precisely the sort of readers she desired for her poem: prominent, protestant, of good reputation,²⁰--and, in a number of

cases, embattled. She chooses several women with whose situations she hopes to identify in her own struggling state, differences in class notwithstanding: Lanyer reminds Queen Anne in her first dedication that "all Kings their wealth of . . . [Christ] do borrow. / For he is Crowne and Crowner of all Kings, / The hopefull haven of the meaner sort" (48-50), and McGrath points out that "despite the difference in their social position, Lanier and the poem's principal dedicatee, the Countess of Cumberland, shared experiences of oppression and discrimination at the hands of men" (336).²¹ When it comes to the function of these dedications, however, Lanyer does seem aware of what Coiro claims she ignores: that, in this fallen world, "it is virtually impossible to separate out gender as a category unrelated to class position" (Coiro 358); Lanyer thus makes sure that she addresses her book to virtuous women who are prominent enough both to draw attention to her work and to act as a sort of protective layer between her and the possible criticisms of a disapproving public. The invoked presence of these good women allows Lanyer in turn to extend her address to "Each blessed Lady that in Virtue spends / Your pretious time to beautifie your soules" in her epistle "To all vertuous Ladies in general" (1-2). As a woman introducing her work into the public realm, Lanyer does well to define, precisely and immediately, the audience she sees as worthy of her high-minded verse; as Coiro remarks of *Salve Deus* overall, this book is "an affirmation of good women, but it is very explicitly not an affirmation of *all* women" (365, italics Coiro's)—only the virtuous are to be welcomed into this community of readers, and the most prominent and powerful of them are given particular attention. The title page and dedications of *Salve Deus* broadcast Lanyer's published work, but they also attempt to restrict access to the text to those—that is, those women—worthy of it.

Lanyer focuses on accomplishing other tasks as well in her dedicatory epistles, and they, too, are related at various stages to the matter of community and her concept of it. For the sake of convenience, I will first discuss some of her objectives, and then relate them to community, with its attendant problem of the isolation of the individual, and to Locke. Lanyer's sense of "self-definition," mentioned earlier, comes through clearly throughout her book as she makes a conscious effort to cast herself as "poet," one who has produced a work worthy of her dedicatees'

attention--and one who sees herself operating from a new, feminized position with which her dedicatees will supposedly be eager to identify. In the epistle to Queen Anne, Lanyer presents herself and the inspiration of Nature as an alternative literary model to that of men and the inspiration of scholarship in order to locate herself and justify her writing as legitimate artistic endeavour:

Not that I Learning to my selfe assume,
Or that I would compare with any man:
But as they [men] are Scholers, and by Art do write,
So Nature yeelds my Soule a sad delight. (147-150)

Lanyer thus attempts to shield herself from charges of encroachment upon the artistic "territory" of men by avoiding it altogether, instead offering nature as a new space for the woman poet. Here she essentially embraces the usual (and usually negative) characterisation of women as unlearned or unteachable beings, creatures of feeling rather than reason, and presents it as positive: woman's character is fostered by the creative, feminine power of nature / emotion, which is capable of producing women poets just as art / reason produces male poets. The female figure of "Nature . . . / . . . Mother of Perfection" (151-152) is a valid guide and inspiration--"Why should not She now grace my barren Muse, / And in a Woman all defects excuse[?]" (155-156) (she proceeds to talk of her work and her "Muse" in virtually all of her other dedications). Indeed, nature is presented as superior to scholarship in its inspirational potential, because it is anterior: "all Arts at first from Nature came" (151); nature thus committed the ultimate female act in giving birth to art, which is the secondary, created "Learning" by which male "Scholars . . . do write[.]"²²

Having located her writing self in this new, feminized way in the first of her dedications, Lanyer gathers up the protective mantle of religious devotion that overlies her entire project,²³ and points subtly to one of her dedicatees as setting a precedent for her own role: Mary Sidney Herbert, the (by then dowager) Countess of Pembroke, a woman well-established by Lanyer's time as a talented poet, is honoured by Lanyer in a long dream-vision dedication (Woods, The

Poems 21-31). Although Pembroke's own literary endeavours were considerable, and acknowledged as such in her own lifetime (see chapter 3 of this discussion), Lanyer, like Pembroke herself, is careful to foreground Pembroke's position as the sister of Sir Philip Sidney, whose versification of the Psalms was famously continued by his sister after his death; as examined in chapter 3, Pembroke played a large part in nurturing the memory of Sidney as both a military hero and pious poet, and managed to introduce what became her best-known work in the name of honouring him and continuing his work, thus ensuring a sort of male protection for her own Psalm project. Lanyer implies that Pembroke has inspired her and will accept Lanyer's text, however humble, as the work of another devout Christian poet, recognising that "there is honny in the meanest flowres" (196). Lanyer's identification of herself as poet continues throughout her book; McGrath quotes from the "Salve Deus" poem itself when she comments that "Lanier makes frequent conscious comment on her role as a poet, praying[,] for instance, for 'Power and Strength to Write' [Salve Deus 298], and, as a moral gesture, choosing 'plainest Words' for her task" (340).

The aristocratic women like Queen Anne and Mary Sidney whose names lend some degree of instant legitimacy to Lanyer's calling and project are also, at least theoretically, able to bestow patronage on the poet if they so choose. While we do not know if Krontiris is correct in asserting confidently that Lanyer "turned to writing for economic reasons" (103), it is clear that she desired patronage as a poet. Lewalski writes that "[t]he nine dedications [addressed to specific individuals] make a bold bid for patronage on a very wide front: they are obviously intended to call Lanyer to the attention of past patrons or acquaintances from her better Elizabethan days, and to attract new ones. She has chosen her targets very carefully, reaching out to all the obvious female power brokers of the court" ("Imagining" 219-220).²⁴ Woods notes that, at this time, "[i]t was still usual for high-born writers to avoid the self-advertising 'stigma of print,' but it was acceptable for middle-class writers to claim attention--and assistance--by blazoning their patrons' virtues in verse" (Introduction xxxii-xxxiii). This is precisely what Lanyer does--while presenting herself as a female writer of poetry and lining up her ideal female readers, she also invites those

readers to see their pious characters flatteringly reflected in her work--and, presumably, to respond with Christian generosity. "The author positions herself among these women [to whom she has written dedications], describing her book as the glass which shows their several virtues, and inviting them to receive and meditate upon Christ their Bridegroom here depicted" (Lewalski, "Of God" 208): in her dedication to Queen Anne, for example, Lanyer refers to Salve Deus as a "Mirroure of a worthy Mind" (37); Coiro adds that "[t]he queen is being subjected throughout the poem to a sustained critique for failing to provide the patronage to Lanyer that Elizabeth had done" (367), in the days when, as Lanyer claims, "great *Elizaes* favour blest my youth" ("To the Queenes most Excellent Majestie" 110, italics in text). The image of the mirror is repeated in the prose dedication to Lanyer's supposed patron, the Countess of Cumberland ("the mirroure of your most worthy minde," Woods, The Poems 35), and in several other epistles, including the dream-vision dedication to Pembroke (210). Lewalski, noting that "Margaret Clifford and Aemilia Lanyer may comprise the first English example of female patron and female literary client" ("Re-writing" 87), sees Lanyer fitting her campaign for support into her overall project; her "dedications re-write the institution of patronage in female terms, transforming the relationships assumed in the male patronage system into an ideal community" ("Imagining" 221). Krontiris, too, recognises Lanyer's appropriation of the male poet's prerogative in this respect: "[i]n writing for patronage . . . Lanyer is using institutionalized language shaped by and for men" (108).²⁵

Lanyer's above-mentioned reminder to Queen Anne that all rulers enjoy power and wealth only by the grace of God marks the first instance in which she gives a well-worn but, for her, truly significant ground for daring to present herself and her poetry to her high-born dedicatees. Although she does on several occasions embrace the humility topos typical of low-born writers addressing the high-born--referring to her "slender skill" in her address to the Queen (131), disparaging her "poore lines" in the epistle to the Countess of Kent (48), acknowledging to the Princess Elizabeth that "your faire eyes farre better Bookes have seene" (12)--Lanyer insists throughout the dedications, and throughout Salve Deus as a whole, on the complete dependence of humans upon God for their earthly power and status, and on the identification of Christ with

the poor and dispossessed. As Coiro puts it, "[w]hat she [Lanyer] insists virtuous ladies see throughout Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum is a leveling Christ" (368). Lanyer emphasises that the sacrifice of Christ should be considered the sole thing of value to a Christian, regardless of that person's station in life: echoing the biblical exhortation (Mat. 6: 19-21), Lanyer urges "all vertuous Ladies in generall" to look to heaven, not earth, for wealth: "Of heav'nly riches make your greatest hoord" (53); the Countess of Pembroke is reminded that "though our sinnes in number passe the sand, / They all are purg'd by his [Christ's] Divinity" (223-224); the Countess of Cumberland is to see in the sacrificed Christ "the inestimable treasure of all elected soules" (Woods 35). Just as Locke's speaker realises that the community of the elect is the only locus of true significance, Lanyer encourages the ladies to whom she writes to reject worldly notions of value and power--notions elemental to the patriarchal structure in which Lanyer and her female contemporaries would always be secondary.

It is perhaps in Lanyer's epistle to Anne, Countess of Dorset, the daughter of the Countess of Cumberland, that the poet expounds at greatest length upon the insignificance of earthly rank and wealth and the need to focus on the only thing of worth--the sacrifice of Christ, who is portrayed throughout Salve Deus as humble and outcast. The countess is reminded that "Greatnesse is no sure frame to build upon," and is asked, "What difference was there when the world began, / Was it not Virtue that distinguisht all?" (17, 33-34); Christ, here, is both "He [who] open set the dore / To Eternall life" and "the stone the builders did refuse" (127-128, 129). Christian ladies should be constantly mindful of Christ's example, and let Christ's virtue and humility dictate their own approach to life. The epistle to Dorset also indicates that there is an added duty for ladies of rank: Dorset, with whom Lanyer was apparently once personally acquainted,²⁶ is here cast as "Gods Steward" (57). Lanyer makes it clear that the countess is responsible, because of her knowledge of the Christian truth and her high earthly rank, for the well-being of those less-fortunate Christians around her--Christians, one presumes, like Lanyer herself: "Gods Stewards must for all the poore provide, / If in Gods house they purpose to abide" (55-56). Because the countess is both a woman and a Christian, Lanyer expects her to recognise

her true duty and act with according virtue, instead of resting content with the earthly trappings of wealth and rank, as a man might be expected to do. (As if worried that she has been too harsh, Lanyer is in turn careful to assure Dorset that there is no doubt of the countess understanding her obligations: "I know right well these are but needlesse lines, / To you, that are so perfect in your part" [89-90].) As Lewalski comments, Lanyer, in the epistle to Dorset, "makes their former association and the present gulf between them, owing to rank and class, the basis for a trenchant critique of hierarchy founded upon patriarchal values" ("Imagining" 225); it is hard to deny, however, that Lanyer is also "a poet who courts the network of privilege she . . . [uses] religion to condemn" (Schoenfeldt 211). Throughout the dedications Lanyer thus attempts to combine her bid for patronage with the razing (or at least minimisation) of the boundaries that her society insists must exist between people of different social rank--and to cast those boundaries in gendered terms. She does all of this under the aegis of a liberating devotion; just as the sacrifice of Christ "justifies" the godly in the eyes of the Creator, the need to proclaim that fact justifies Lanyer's writing in the eyes of the ladies to whom she writes, and, by extension, in the eyes of the world.

Lanyer characterises her work in several ways throughout her dedicatory epistles. As well as simply "this little Booke" ("To the Ladie Arabella" 9; "To the Ladie Katharine Countesse of Suffolke" 50) or "this worke of grace" ("To the Ladie Katharine . . . " 7; "To the Ladie Anne, Countesse of Dorcet" 1), Lanyer's volume--or, at least ostensibly, the story it tells--is also the aforementioned mirror, a precious gem ("To the Ladie Margaret . . . " 11; "To the Ladie Katharine . . . " 57), and, perhaps most importantly, a "feast." She issues specific invitations to this meal to Queen Anne, Princess Elizabeth, the dowager Duchess of Kent, and the Countess of Pembroke; as well, in her address to "all vertuous Ladies in generall," she refers to Christ as "The Bridegroom [who] stayes to entertaine you all" (9), and speaks to the Countess of Dorset of entering "with the Bridegroom to the feast" (15), indicating a wedding feast for which the women need to prepare themselves better than did the foolish virgins of Jesus' parable (Mat. 25: 1-13).

The use of this image in the dedicatory epistles is particularly significant, as it reveals much about the shape and dynamic of community for Lanyer. Invitations to the feast are issued until, as Beilin writes, "the poet has completed a female communion: all the seats are for virtuous ladies who act as the new apostles attending Christ. No other image in the poem expresses so powerfully Lanyer's conviction of the unity of women with the central doctrines of Christianity" (Redeeming Eve 186-187). It is, however, also the case that no other image in the poem expresses so powerfully Lanyer's conviction of the centrality of her work to the community she creates. Having selected her readers for their virtue but also for their prominence, having figured herself as "their" poet and sought their patronage as fellow Christians more materially blest than she, Lanyer draws them around her and her work as she would draw guests around her dining table; she "[a]ppropriat[es] the traditionally masculine roles of priest and poet under the traditionally feminine domain of food-preparation" (Schoenfeldt 212). Lanyer's is a "wholesome feast" ("To the Lady Elizabeths Grace" 9), a "holy feast" ("To the Ladie Susan . . ." 6), and, most pointedly, "*my* feast" ("The Authors Dreame . . ." 206, emphasis added). The event is, clearly, not just Christ's Passion itself, but Lanyer's depiction of it in her poetry; this forms the centre around which she builds a community of carefully-chosen women readers. This construct stands in marked contrast to Locke's Meditation, in which community is an already-defined group toward which the speaker must move, and into which the speaker must attempt to gain entry.

In Locke's poems, the community is that of the godly, gathered around God by his grace. Her work is indisputably "Christ-centred"; there is no question of the goal toward which her speaker is moving, or the core around which the community is formed. Lanyer also seems to desire a Christ-centred group, albeit one comprised solely of female Christians; however, as one progresses through the dedications, a question arises as to the true nature of her community's centre. McGrath asserts that "Lanier is highly conscious of her temerity--and originality--in undertaking the poetic project of building a community of women and inscribing herself within that community" (340); if the act of "building" seems inorganic or artificial compared to the community presented in Locke's sequence, Lanyer's self-inscription is even more problematic.

While Christ's Passion is claimed as the focal point for Lanyer's noble ladies, it comes to them through Lanyer's narration—which, as critics have consistently noted (and as I shall discuss), represents something far different than a simple versified rendering of the Gospel accounts; the Passion shares the stage with Lanyer the poet and her poetic presentation of the crucifixion and resurrection. Lanyer thus draws the group not only around Christ, but also around herself, and so threatens to elide the boundary of significance between the Passion and the poet. Locke's narrator moves toward a community which gathers around God; Lanyer places her poetic persona and its product near God, and brings the community to her.

Locke's speaker is separated from community by the barrier of sin, and as grace overcomes the barrier, so it overcomes the isolation. In the dedications of Salve Deus one may also detect Lanyer's concern with the matter of the isolation of the individual; however, the way in which such isolation is evaluated and remedied is markedly different for Lanyer than for Locke: while Locke's speaker must be integrated into the elect or continue to suffer spiritual isolation, Lanyer must secure herself a place of patronage among her aristocratic, wealthy women readers, or run the risk of both floundering materially and being criticised for her public literary presumption. For a woman who once knew the glories of Elizabeth's court, alienation from the spiritual community of the godly may seem less immediate than alienation from the worldly community of the powerful. Identifying herself as a poet, presenting her poetry as pious verse to ladies she praises as virtuous, and seeking the patronage of those women are all part of Lanyer's attempt to integrate herself into a community that she has written into existence—and whose centre will continue to focus on her and her work to at least the same extent that it focuses on the truth of the Gospel.

Some feminist critics point to Lanyer's final dedicatory epistle, "To the Vertuous Reader," as evidence that Lanyer's feminism is essentially conservative, concerned not with radical change but simply with encouraging women to behave themselves. Krontiris describes Lanyer's views as "basically conformist. Women's problem is presented mainly as bad faith on the part of men, and the solution proposed is for women to refrain from provoking men's criticism. Implicitly, women

are asked to comply with the rules that reproduce their subordination" (114). While some may feel that this piece provides a useful barometer of the authenticity of Lanyer's feminism (or lack thereof), of more interest to this discussion is the fact that this epistle also builds a bridge between her dedications and the actual poem "Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum" by introducing the element of oppositional communities. In the epistle, Lanyer lowers both on women who "speake unadvisedly against the rest of their sexe" (14-15) and, more pointedly, on "evill disposed men" who speak badly of women; such men,

forgetting they were borne of women, nourished of women, and that if it were not by the means of women, they would be quite extinguished out of the world . . . doe like Vipers deface the wombes wherein they were bred Such as these, were they that dishonoured Christ[,] his Apostles and Prophets, putting them to shamefull deaths. (19-26)

The virtuous ladies to whom Lanyer has been speaking and for whom she has written her book constitute a community—the one that counts, the one to which Lanyer needs to belong—but not the only community. Lanyer means her readers to strengthen their identification with "her" group, and thus with her, by defining themselves against other groups—women who, "forgetting they are women themselves," slander women; and, particularly, "evill disposed men" who slander women; in turn, she invites her readers to identify any "evill disposed" male contemporaries who mistreat them—perhaps their own husbands, brothers, or even King—with the men who crucified the Saviour. Lanyer here draws the initial lines between the guests at her feast and those who are explicitly not welcome there; this motif of oppositional communities carries over into "Salve Deus" and is there expanded.

Lanyer's account of Christ's Passion itself does not occupy the whole of the "Salve Deus" poem proper; rather, it is nested within a long, framing section devoted to the Countess of Cumberland. At the beginning of this section, Lanyer declares her purpose in writing, and the reason for her choice of focal point, both of which emphasise the troubling primacy of Cumberland's role—and Lanyer's own—in this work:

Sith Cynthia is ascended to that rest
 Of endlesse Joy and true Eternitie,

.....
 To thee great Countesse now I will applie

My Pen, to write thy never dying fame[.] (1-2, 9-10)

Cumberland is cast as a sort of substitute for the dead Elizabeth, again reminding readers, and the countess herself, of Lanyer's glorious former ties (1-8), and also emphasising the poet's special power to memorialise her subject. Lanyer goes about this task by describing in extravagant terms the pious character of her putative patroness, and, again, by encouraging the countess to identify herself with members of a certain community and to disavow others. Early in the frame, the countess's misfortunes are alluded to briefly as "waves of woe" (34), and "the infinite annoyes / That Satan to thy well-staid mind can show" (37-38); she is then identified in solid Calvinist terms as possessing "the Spirit of Grace" that allows her to endure in her faith (39). The Calvinist notion of the necessary transformation of a Christian, so important to Locke, also figures in Lanyer's comment that "we happily are chang'd" by the Resurrection (62). The countess, according to Lanyer, is clearly among the elect, and is held up as a model of Christian constancy in the face of worldly travails:

Thy Mind so perfect by thy Maker fram'd
 No vaine delights can harbour in thy heart,
 With his sweet love, thou art so much inflam'd
 As of the world thou seem'st to have no part[.] (41-44)

Lanyer then reminds her to take comfort in the love of her Saviour: "So, love him still . . . / 'Tis He that made thee, what thou wert, and art" (45-46). Lanyer invites the Countess of Cumberland to see herself as eminently fit to sit at the head of the community of pious ladies that Lanyer seeks to gather--and, as poet, lead--and the frame of "Salve Deus" is devoted largely to illustrating this fitness. Not only is the countess a properly orthodox protestant, tempered by earthly troubles and cognisant of the need for grace, she is also described as detached from the world, as every chaste

woman was encouraged to be--she seems to "have no part" in the fallen world, and, later, reference is made to the fact that "Thou from the Court to the Countrie art retir'd" (161), a certain sign that this lady desires to withdraw herself from urban wickedness in favour of rural purity.²⁷

Lanyer, her own marriage less than ideal, invites this other long-suffering wife to complete her rejection of the earthly order by viewing the Lord to whom she is so devoted as a husband-substitute, one who will not cause her the grief of a mortal mate. Lanyer bestows a sort of marriage-blessing upon the countess for her piety:

Long mai'st thou joy in this almightie love,
 Long may thy Soule be pleasing in his sight;
 Long mai'st thou have true comforts from above,
 Long mai'st thou set on him thy whole delight[.] (65-68)

She then says pointedly of Christ that "He will surely do thee right" (70)--unlike the countess's late, estranged earl--and describes Christ as "this Bridegroom" clad in a wedding garment of honour (77, 73). Lanyer also claims that he offers the best of both youth and age--of both men's gravity and women's beauty: "He is exceeding glorious to behold, / Antient of Times; so faire, and yet so old" (87-88); this androgynous duality will figure more prominently as "Salve Deus" progresses. Most significant here, however, is the poet's assertion that this divine suitor will punish those misogynistic slanderers Lanyer had identified in "To the Vertuous Reader" as standing against women, those who "double-hearted bee, / Who with their tongues the righteous Soules doe slay" (105-106). Five stanzas are devoted to the poet's indignant warnings to this community of enemies with "Deceitfull tongues" (112) before she returns to Cumberland from this passionate outburst with, "Pardon (good Madame) though I have digrest / From what I doe intend to write of thee" (145-146); Lanyer then proceeds to link the countess with this struggle against slander by casting her as a warrior whose Christian devotion ensures that earthly distractions "have no force, to force thee from the field: / Thy constant faith like to the Turtle Dove / Continues combat, and will never yield" (156-158).

Another fit of passion soon overtakes the poet, however, as she unleashes a stream of

"invective against outward beauty unaccompanied with virtue" (Woods, *The Poems* 59). What Lanyer truly laments here, however, is the fact that "greatest perills do attend the faire" (205), that beauty has traditionally left even virtuous women vulnerable to victimisation and dishonour. The tales of several tragic female figures--Helen, Lucrece, Cleopatra, Rosamund and Matilda--are here invoked as evidence that the physical beauty prized by the world as a woman's greatest blessing is in fact a locus for misery. Lanyer, in her youth the mistress of a powerful courtier, discarded and hastily married off by her lover when she became pregnant, reveals an understandable sympathy toward even her more infamous subjects in these lines (185-248): Rosamund, mistress of Henry II, is presented as victim of the worldly ambition against which Lanyer has attempted to warn the countess and her peers--"Beautie betraid her thoughts, aloft to clime / To build strong castles in uncertaine aire" (227-228); and Cleopatra, the woman in this list perhaps best described as possessing beauty "unaccompanied by virtue," is rather mourned than lashed by Lanyer: "Poore blinded Queene, could'st thou no better see, / But entertaine disgrace, in stead of fame? / Do these designes with Majestie agree?" (219-220). Lanyer's final example, however, is the virtuous Matilda, who preferred death to yielding to the advances of King John (233-248); her fortitude is attributed to the all-important quality of grace, and she is immediately linked with the Countess of Cumberland because of this--Matilda's choice of honourable death over violated life "could all Heavenly grace to her impart. / This Grace great Lady, doth possesse thy Soule" (248-249). The countess thus becomes part of a continuum of women either corrupted by the world because of their beauty (Cleopatra, Rosamund), or, like the countess herself, martyred because of their virtue (Lucrece, Matilda, and, in a sense, Helen); either way, all have met with earthly tribulation because of men. This sets the stage for the presentation of men and women in the upcoming story of the Passion itself.

These tales of woe reinforce the wisdom of the countess's devotion to "the Husband of thy Soule" (253), as does Lanyer's projected return for such devotion, which is daring in its scope, in both Calvinist and feminist terms. Casting Christ and the countess as husband and wife, Lanyer claims that Christ, "dying made her [Cumberland] Dowager of all; / Nay more, Co-heire of that

eternall blisse / That Angels lost" (257-259). The countess is thus placed by Lanyer on an equal footing with Christ, in a position approached only by that of the Virgin Mary in Roman Catholic tradition. Cumberland will not only be treated far more fairly than she was by her earthly husband, whose will stripped her and her daughter of their proper entitlements (McGrath 336-337; Lewalski, "Re-writing" 90), but she will be accorded a status unknown to any Englishwoman--she will be her mate's equal. The troubling aspect of this is the way that it places the Countess--and, by extension, the poet herself, who construes and records all of this--at the centre of this supposedly Christ-centred narrative. The implications of this crowded focal point for integration into a Christian community will become evident as "Salve Deus" proceeds.

Roughly 1000 of the 1840 lines of the "Salve Deus" poem actually focus on Christ's Passion and resurrection; the remainder, nearly half of the entire length, comprises the poem's frame, devoted to the countess.²⁸ Having presented the countess as a loving spouse of Christ, and thus worthy to be the leader of the group of Christian women she has gathered for her "feast," Lanyer prepares to embark on the story of the Passion by making the poet's traditional application to her muse, and then a direct appeal to God himself, to aid her in her task (265-328). Here, reminding herself of the fates of Icarus and Phaeton, she expresses the fear that her subject may consume her narrative control in a conflagration--"The little World of thy weake Wit on fire, / Where thou wilt perish in thine owne desire" (287-288); the sense here, however, is also that of being overcome by the passion of a great love, the woman as well as the poet perishing in the flames of desire. Lanyer then expresses hope that her susceptibility to love, traditionally seen as a feminine weakness, will in fact work in her favour: "But yet the Weaker thou doest seeme to be / In Sexe, or Sence, the more his Glory shines" (289-290). The poet also compares her effort to "The Widowes Myte" (293), and says that "I humbly for his [God's] Grace will pray, / That he will give me Power and Strength to Write" (297-298); thus, as well as embracing the humility topos typical of early modern writers generally, Lanyer also effects a simultaneous engagement with and rejection of the notion of female inadequacy--she, a woman, is "weak in sense," but recognises this, and sees this condition as making her more open to the imposition of God's will.

In Achsah Guibbory's words, Lanyer implies that "women are more qualified than men" to address matters of religion publicly "since in their weakness and humility they are closer to God and more open to his grace Lanyer suggests that the traditionally masculine faculty of reason ('Sence'), like the masculine 'Sexe', in its supposed strength competes with and hence may exclude divine illumination" (110).

All of Lanyer's reference points are in place when the story of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus opens--she has gathered Christian ladies around her and her putative patroness, the Countess of Cumberland; she has identified herself and her "guests" as belonging to the community of the elect, those touched by grace, and has presented the figure of the countess as an exemplar and leader of this group, a spouse of Christ who turns from the imperfection of earthly husbands; she has identified an opposing community of those who would attempt to denigrate women's worth and virtue and corrupt their beauty; and she has warned that the Saviour of the elect will punish them. Finally, she has inserted herself both humbly and boldly as the shaper and recounter of this structure. The key element of the "Salve Deus" narrative for the purposes of this discussion will be this definition of the communities surrounding Christ, and the portrayal of Christ himself in relation to them.

The initial focus of the Passion narrative, which "follows closely Matthew 26:30-28:10" (Woods, Introduction xxxvi), is Jesus' last private actions and his arrest, to which Lanyer devotes over 300 lines (329-632). The sense conveyed, often movingly, is that of Christ's intense isolation as he faces the knowledge in Gethsemane of his impending suffering, finds his supposedly-watchful apostles asleep, and is transported, abandoned and friendless, to the Jewish authorities after his arrest. Lanyer reflects sorrowfully on the inability of Christ's followers to understand his fear--"Sweet Lord, how couldst thou thus to flesh and blood / Communicate thy grieffe? tell of thy woes? / Thou knew'st they had no powre to doe thee good" (377-379)--and describes Jesus alone in the garden, "Beeing in an agony, thy glasse neere run, / Thou prayedst more earnestly in so great feare, / That pretious sweat came trickling to the ground" (405-407). In recounting his arrest, she evokes the flavour of her earlier tales of virtuous beauty ruined by (male) corruption, in

particular the case of Lucrece: "Here Grace was seised on with hands impure, / And Virtue now must be supprest by Vice, / Pure Innocencie made a prey to Sinne" (525-527). Further emphasising this sense of the feminine is the fact that Christ displays a womanly tractability in his response: "Here faire Obedience shined in his breast" (529). His apostles abandon him, and Lanyer's comment thereon is telling--though once they were "attendant at his becke and call" (626), fear exposes their true natures: "Though they protest they never will forsake him, / They do like men, when dangers overtake them" (631-632). Lanyer will build upon this characterisation of male response as, among other things, cowardly and false as her narrative continues.

The virtuous women who read this poem, and the Countess of Cumberland in particular, are invited not only to sympathise with Jesus' fate, but to identify with it; as well as innocent, virtuous, and obedient, Christ is "siely [and] weake" (551), and questions the arresting soldiers "meekely" (617)--that is, he displays traditional feminine traits, and is subject to the crushing force of male authority. At the same time, he is also fulfilling the role of the true "husband of the soul" of the countess and her ilk, sacrificing himself not just for the spiritual sake of the unworthy men around him, but also for his devoted earthly "wives." Here, again, is Jesus as both male and female, a man sacrificing his life for his beloved, but never sacrificing the tenderness and virtue of what Lanyer asserts as the true female character.²⁹ As he is taken before Caiphas and the Jewish authorities, Jesus endures the slanders of "the throng" and "False Witnesses" (638-639)--those who will, Lanyer has warned, be punished for their libel; they are possessed of "trothlesse tongues" that "serve him as a Passing bell" (640, 649), thus making these liars directly responsible for Jesus' death sentence. Christ, however, "so true a Lover" (672), maintains a modest silence in the face of questions and accusations (666, 669); when he does finally respond to "The chiefest Hel-hounds of this hatefull crew" (689), he is "mild[,] with a "harmelesse tongue" (697, 699). In Mueller's words, Lanyer's "Christ, like the ideal woman of the Puritan manuals, is silent except when induced to speak, and modest and taciturn when he does; he is gentle, mild, peaceable, and submissive to higher male authorities" (222). Throughout his ordeal, Christ thus remains instantly

recognisable to Lanyer's female audience because of the extent to which he reflects the values they are expected, by both English society and the poet herself, to embrace.

To this point in the story of Christ's last hours, the landscape has been inhabited exclusively by men, and Lanyer has taken every opportunity of linking them to the negative and admonitory. As Jesus is brought before Pilate for judgment, Lanyer introduces women into the narrative, and, with them, the concept of a community of female believers contemporary with Jesus himself. Lanyer, despite her knowledge of Pilate's ultimate decision, pleads in her narration, "O noble Governour, make thou yet a pause, / Doe not in innocent blood imbrue thy hands" (749-750); Pilate is asked to "heare the words of thy most worthy wife" (751), "whom the Bible reports as warning her husband to have 'nothing to do with that just man,' Jesus (Mat. 27: 19)" (Woods, Introduction xxxv), because she has been troubled by a dream about him. At this point, "[a]lmost imperceptibly, the voice of Pilate's wife merges into the poet's" (Beilin, *Redeeming Eve* 196-197), as Lanyer insert a nine-stanza apostrophe, designated in the margin as "Eve's Apologie" (Woods, *The Poems* 84), in which she presents Pilate's decision as that which stands to free women from male domination.

The expulsion of humankind from the Garden of Eden, traditionally attributed to Eve's ingestion of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, is compared to the murder of humankind's Saviour, which Lanyer sees as committed exclusively by men--particularly Pilate, whose assent to the Jews' wishes sent Jesus to his crucifixion. Not only does Lanyer see this latter sin as inherently greater than Eve's--"if unjustly you condemne [Jesus] to die, / Her sinne was small, to what you doe commit" (817-818)--but she claims that the root cause of each is fundamentally, and crucially, different. Eve "Was simply good" (765), a creature of "undiscerning Ignorance" and "harmelesse Heart" (769, 774), "whose fault was onely too much love, / Which made her give this present [the fruit] to her Deare" (801-802). Using patriarchy's own logic, Lanyer goes on to claim that Eve's very simplicity and weakness makes Adam all the more culpable, as "What Weaknesse offerd, / Strength might have refusde" (778-779). If Eve, as a foolish woman, knew no better than to listen to the serpent, Adam has no such excuse, "For he

was Lord and King of all the earth, / Before poore Eve had either life or breath" (783-784); Lanyer thus asks, "If he would eat it [the fruit], who had powre to stay him?" (799-800). Adding insult to injury, claims Lanyer, is the fact that "Men will boast of Knowledge, which he [Adam] tooke / From Eves faire hand, as from a learned Booke" (807-808); here is support for the poet's earlier assertion, in the epistle to Queen Anne, that feminine Nature is the predecessor and dame of masculine reason / Knowledge. The result of Adam's actions and reactions, Lanyer complains, is that "we (poore women) must endure it all" (794)--men's opprobrium and blame for introducing sin into the world. Now, however, as Pilate delivers his judgment, Lanyer sees not only occasion to air women's griefs, but a day of reckoning for the misogynistic forces that have deprived women of freedom and equality in the name of Eve's transgression: she says to Pilate and his ilk that Eve's "weaknesse did the Serpents words obey; / But you in malice Gods deare Sonne betray" (815-816). Lanyer weighs "the characteristic sin of women (excessive love) against that of men (violence)" (Lewalski, "Imagining" 231).

It is at the end of this "apologie" that Lanyer truly reveals what might be termed the political and social agenda of Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum: beyond garnering patronage for herself--and as a way of securing it--she has Pilate's wife make "a fully reasoned claim--no mere call-- . . . for sexual equality in the aftermath of the Crucifixion" (Mueller 234). As men have maliciously sent their Saviour to his death, Eve's sin is cancelled out, as is man's dominion over woman:

Then let us have our Libertie againe,
 And challenge to your selves no Sov'raigtie;
 You came not in the world without our paine,
 Make that a barre against your crueltie;
 Your fault beeing greater, why should you disdain
 Our beeing your equals, free from tyranny?
 If one weake woman simply did offend,
 This sinne of yours, hath no excuse, nor end. (825-832)

Lanyer warns Pilate that "thy wife . . . speakes for all" (834), and, applying Calvinist terminology, asks him, "Why wilt thou be a reprobate with Saul?" (838). Yet she knows, of course, the outcome of the story, as it is the very thing that has allowed her to present the demand for equality in the words of Pilate's wife. Lanyer knows that the politician in Pilate will prevail -- "Yea, so thou mai'st these sinful people please, / Thou art content against all truth and right" (841-842)--and goes on to relate Christ's fate at the governor's hands, as Barrabas is released in Jesus' stead (849-850), Jesus is sent to Herod (873-888), and, finally, Jesus is sent to his execution (945-968). Lanyer dwells on Pilate and his actions for a full ten stanzas after "Eve's Apologie" (833-880, 913-944), seeing his guilt as particularly great because he has, in the poet's view, abdicated the considerable authority that only men are supposed capable of exercising ("Art thou a Judge, and asketh what to do / With one, in whom no fault there can be found?" ([857-858])). Pilate does not act with conviction; he suspects "Christs innocencie, which so plaine appears" (914), and also "That he which now must feele this smart, / Is Gods deare Sonne" (915-916), but allows practical and political considerations to overcome justice--he fears "That he to Caesar could not be a friend, / Unlesse he sent sweet Jesus to his end" (919-920). A virtuous woman in Pilate's place, Lanyer implies, would not allow this sort of cowardice to prevail.

This declaration of independence, however, highlights the essential problem with Salve Deus in terms of integration and community. As carefully-reasoned as Lanyer's argument is, it attempts, from a Calvinist viewpoint, to collapse divine order into that of the fallen world--in essence, to remove the effects of the sin that Christ endured crucifixion to remedy. Lanyer's unwillingness to focus entirely on the realm of the spirit, as Locke does in her Meditation, means that the focus here is compromised. Lanyer seeks to improve her own lot in this (fallen) life by attracting the attention, succour and patronage of a woman, the Countess of Cumberland, who has been rendered (comparatively) powerful by the worldly means of the class system; the poet attempts to secure her favour by posing as a champion of gender equality, a subject on which she assumes the countess will agree with her because of her own poor treatment at the hands of men; and she claims authority to demand equality from the Scriptures themselves, subjecting the

Passion to a re-telling that highlights the innate piety of the women around Jesus, women who are rendered powerless because of their gender. Pilate's moral equivocation, however, is the result of post-lapsarian imperfection as surely as is the oppression of women by men; if such imperfection could be removed, there would have been little reason for Christ's sacrifice. Thus Lanyer presents Jesus, the object of the soul's meditation, and the conduit for its integration with the Creator, in the service of worldly considerations that demand that she place the Countess of Cumberland, and herself as poet, at the centre of a Christian community that seeks to see its divine goals reached here on earth. The confrontation and anger Lanyer expresses are products of sin, and belong to this world, as does her desire to enjoy again the material and social privilege she knew in her youth; the perfection wrought by Christ's death and resurrection is that which all souls, regardless of gender, may hope for in paradise. The terms of the latter world may not be used to impose perfection on this imperfect realm, as Salve Deus will ultimately confirm.

As Christ nears his death and, later, resurrection, Lanyer moves from Pilate and his wife's dream to demonstrate further the natural sympathy for Jesus felt by the women around him, and the special bond they share with him. As he travels "From Pilates Palace to Mount Calvarie" (954), the women--termed by Lanyer in her marginalia "the daughters of Jerusalem" (Woods, The Poems 93)--who are watching his progress weep; unlike Pilate or Herod, before whom Christ was silent, these women are made "Thrice happy" by the attention and words of "their Lord, their Lover, and their King" (982). The entreaties to the men abusing Jesus, however, are "all in vaine, [as] their malice hath no end" (1001). Lanyer then focuses on one woman in particular, Jesus' mother, Mary, whom "the poet exalts . . . in an apostrophe of over fourteen stanzas [extended] to include all the main events of Mary's life" (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 197-198). While Mary was not an object of veneration for protestants like Lanyer, the poet presents her as most worthy of her readers' attention; not only is she a suffering mother, and thus a figure with whom many women could identify, but she is free of physical attachment to any man save Jesus himself, who is "Her Sonne, her Husband, Father, Saviour, King" (1023)--that is, she is herself a model of complete detachment from the world, able to find satisfaction for all her needs in God. She is all that

Lanyer claims good women are naturally--this "most beauteous Queene of Woman-kind" (1039) is "modest" (1061), of "submissive heart" (1073), "a Turtle dove" (1093). More than this, however, she is "Farre from desire of any man[,] and liberated by her virgin state--"Knowing not one, thou art from all men free" (1077-1078). This independence--or, rather, complete dependence on the divine, and freedom from the earthly--has won her worldly fame, the knowledge that "thy praise / Should last so many worlds beyond thy daies" (1047-1048). Lanyer thus traces the culture and tradition of virtuous women to this single *mater dolorosa*, who, while subject to a mother's suffering in the suffering of her son, "appears as the supreme example of a woman empowered by chastity in a male world" (Beilin, Redeeming Eve 198); she is the exemplar for all women, particularly those whose beauty leaves them vulnerable to danger and corruption. Lanyer casts her primary dedicatee, the Countess of Cumberland, as a contemporary model of this sort of independence; while married, she, a mother struggling to secure justice for her daughter, has turned from the world and sought all things in her Saviour, making her worthy to lead the community of Christian ladies Lanyer sees as inheritors of Mary, the daughters of Jerusalem, and all good women from the beginning of the world.

Following the narrative to the crucifixion itself, Lanyer underlines Jesus' abject physical misery and helplessness. "His harmlesse hands" are nailed to the cross (1153); "His eyes [are filled] with teares, his body full of wounds" (1159); "His joynts dis-joynted, and his legges hang downe, / His alabaster breast, his bloody side, / His members torne" (1161-1163). The countess, "Deere Spouse of Christ" (1170), is invited to contemplate this image "with the eie of Faith" (1169), and to remember that "Being dead, he killed Death, and did survive / That proud insulting Tyrant" (1209-1210). Lanyer also asks Cumberland "To judge if ever Lover were so true, / To yeeld himselfe unto such shamefull death" (1267-1268). This portrait of the beaten Christ is contrasted with the ominous protests of the earth at the moment of his death: "His dying breath did rend huge rockes in twaine, / The heavens betooke them to their mourning weede: / The Sunne grew darke, and scorn'd to give them light" (1189-1191); like the women who recognised his greatness, heaven and earth express grief at the injustice of Jesus's execution. Lanyer then

reflects on the way in which this scene, like Christ's nature, is paradoxically dual: it presents "Our Griefe to see our Saviours wretched end, / Our Joy to know both Death and Hell he tam'd" (1221-1222). She goes on to recount his burial in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea (1269-1280), where, after the Sabbath, "The Maries doe with pretious balmes attend, / But beeing come, they find it to no end" (1287-1288).

Crowning the connection between Jesus and women is a sensual description of the resurrected Christ that again presents him as "that Bridegroome that appeares so faire" (1305), this time possessed of a hyper-feminine physical beauty drawn from the Song of Songs. He has "cheekes like skarlet," and "His head is likened to the finest gold, / His curled lockes so beauteous to behold" (1308, 1311-1312). His lips are "like skarlet threeds," "His cheekes are beds of spices, flowers sweet; / His lips, like Lillies, dropping downe pure mirrhe" (1314, 1318-1319). The Bridegroome's beauty is for the benefit of "his faithfull Wife / The holy Church" (1291-1292), and, by extension, Lanyer's virtuous women readers, particularly the wifely countess. Thus, as McGrath comments, "the male Christ figure becomes the object of the female gaze" (343). This does more, however, than bestow upon women the erotic privilege of gazing usually reserved for men; this makes the private world of love shared by Christ and virtuous women completely self-contained, and, in a sense, narcissistic. "Because Christ is presented as like women [in his manner] and supported by women," McGrath writes, "[in] contemplating Him, women are in effect gazing at themselves and thereby discovering themselves" (344). The problem of who truly stands at the crowded, clouded centre of this community thus remains.

Almost as if troubled by this problem, Lanyer abruptly stops and returns to the frame of "Salve Deus," focused on the Countess of Cumberland. The poet asks "leave . . . now to leave / This taske of Beauty which I tooke in hand" (1321-1322); her earlier fear of being overcome by her task resurfaces, as she speaks of literally drowning in this passionate recounting of physical beauty--"I cannot wade so deepe, I may deceave / My selfe, before I can attaine the land" (1323-1324). She chooses instead to leave the countess with Christ's "perfect picture . . . / Deepely engraved in that holy shrine" of the countess's heart (1326-1327). Interestingly, Lanyer invites the

countess to cherish a perpetual image of Jesus at his most physically vulnerable, a "man in miserable case" with "bleeding body" and "dying cheekes" (1330, 1332, 1333); this leaves her, his devoted "wife," in a position in which "you may intreat for grace" (1334), and, through "all your prayers, and your almes-deeds / . . . bring to stop his cruell wounds that bleeds" (1335-1336). Here, at base, Jesus the man is weak, and the countess powerful; as Lanyer reminds Cumberland, "Oft times hath he made triall of your love, / . . . / By Crosses and Afflictions he doth prove" (1337, 1339). Despite the poet's lengthy castigation of men's use and abuse of power throughout "Salve Deus," there is an element of its dynamic in this portrait of the countess and her dying Saviour. Lanyer goes on to depict her as possessing exceptional spiritual status and earthly ability because of her piety. Just as she was earlier cast as "Co-heire" of the heavenly kingdom, she is here described as possessing the keys to heaven: "These are those Keyes Saint Peter did possesse, / Which with a Spirituall powre are giv'n to thee, / To heale the soules of those that doe transgresse" (1369-1371). Lanyer is quite specific about these powers: "If they [sinners] be blind, thou giv'st to them their sight; / If deafe or lame, they heare, and goe upright" (1375-1376). The countess may drive out demons and soothe the mentally troubled (1377-1384), and will convert to the ways of faith "Those weake lost sheepe" who stray from the path of right (1397). She, a woman, is deputized, as Saint Peter was, to lead and heal in Christ's name.

The remainder of the poem is devoted to further praise of the countess as possessed of the perfected Christian soul, as well as of beauty, honour, and wealth (1401-1403). Lanyer returns briefly to Cleopatra as an example of inconstant human love--"Her Love was earthly, and thy Love Divine" (1414), Lanyer reminds the countess--and lectures the Egyptian queen on the extent to which Cumberland's virtues and fidelity outstrip hers (1425-1448); even Cleopatra's "one touch of death" is bettered by Cumberland--"A thousand deaths shee every day doth die" (1439-1440), because "Shee beares his [Christ's] crosse" (1436). The countess is then ranked with several "famous women elder times have knowne" (1465)--first the women of Scythia, with whom Lanyer credits the conquest of Persia (1469-1472), then the Old Testament / Apocrypha heroines Deborah and Judith (1481-1504), Esther (1505-1520), and Susanna (1529-1544)--the last three

having famously prevailed against men who attempted to tyrannise them or their people. The countess, Lanyer claims, is superior to all of them: "Wise Deborah that judged Israel, / Nor valiant Judeth cannot equall thee" (1481-1482); "Yet must faire Hester needs give place to thee" (1514); Susanna is "not to be compar'd to thee, / Whose many virtues doe increase thy fame" (1541-1542). This is because the countess "farre greater warre do'st still maintaine, / Against that many headed monster Sinne" (1489-1490); she "hath continu'd dayes, weekes, months, and yeares, / In Gods true service" (1515-1516); and her "chaste breast, guarded with strength of mind, / Hates the imbracements of unchaste desires" (1545-1546). Lanyer then dwells on the Queen of Sheba for five stanzas, praising her for her bravery as, "Not yeelding to the nicenesse and respect / Of woman-kind[,]" she travelled "past both sea and land" to meet King Solomon, her peer in wisdom (1603-1604); here again, however, this "faire map of majestie and might, / Was but a figure of thy [Cumberland's] deerest Love" (1609-1610). Aside from the hyperbolic praise of a patron, these passages represent the continuation of Lanyer's project to limn a virtuous matriarchy from pre-Christian times through to her own, one which culminates in the Countess of Cumberland. In her, Lanyer claims, one not only finds the qualities of goodness that dwelt in all the good women praised here, but beholds a soul touched by grace, the countess having known the truth of Christ in a way not possible for those women who lived before his birth, and to a degree not revealed to those who lived after. To underline this female legacy, Lanyer returns briefly to Sheba and Solomon, casting them as a prototype of Cumberland and Christ; despite the fact that "her Creator . . . shee never knew" (1696), this "Heathen Queene obtain'd such grace [from God], / By honouring but the shadow of his Love" in King Solomon (1681-1682). The countess is inheritor of this legacy and more, for she is more fortunate than those born before their Saviour, and more divinely inspired than those who, like her, were born Christian; as Beatrice is to Virgil, so is the countess to her predecessors.

Having presented her readers with "a visionary description of the enthroned and judging Christ, based on the Book of Revelation" (Woods, *The Poems* 121 n. to line 1635), Lanyer again praises Cumberland for embracing "him, whose everlasting throne / Is plac'd in heaven, above the

starrie skies" (1633-1634): "Pure thoughted Lady, blessed be thy choyce / Of this Almighty, everlasting King" (1673-1674). Just as the countess rejected her earthly husband and his unworthy behaviour, so she has chosen this husband, always worthy of her love--and to whom she was, in a sense, pre-contracted, making Christ her true spouse: "Him hast thou truely served all thy life, / And for his love, liv'd with the world at strife" (1703-1704). Although he is presented here at the apex of glory, "like the Jasper stone, / . . . / A Rainebow round about his glorious throne" (1635-1637), "Yet came he not in pompe or royaltie, / But in an humble habit, base, dejected" (1706-1707). The countess is praised for her wisdom in seeing his true nature, not his lowly appearance: "Then how much more art thou to be commended, / That seek'st thy love in lowly shepherds weed? / A seeming Trades-mans some . . ." (1713-1715). It is not, Lanyer claims, the very worldly matter of the countess's refusal to accept her husband's, and her king's, deprivation of her and her daughter's rights that has set her at odds with those around her; rather, she has suffered for her devotion to God, even in his humblest form, in a world--a man's world--that does not value this as it should.

"Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum" finishes with a final feminisation of Jesus as mother-figure, in which the blood flowing from his wounds becomes both cleansing and nourishing--"Sweet holy rivers, pure celestiall springs, / . . . / Swift sugred currents that salvation brings" (1729, 1731), as well as "Sweet Nectar and Ambrosia, food of Saints, / Which, whoso tasteth, never after faints" (1735-1736). Like a mother with a small child, he bathes sinners in "Cleare christall streames, purging all sinne and strife" (1732), and nurses them with "Sweet milke, wherewith we weaklings are restored" (1738).³⁰ Here, for the poem's last few stanzas, Lanyer re-introduces men into the narrative--this time, with the positive examples of martyrs Stephen, Laurence, Andrew, Peter, and John the Baptist. This inclusion has provoked speculative comment from scholars including Lewalski, who remarks that "[t]he praise of these male saints as chief of the martyrs and confessors by whom 'our Saviour most was honoured' . . . provides some counterweight to the massive wickedness Lanyer lays to men's charge throughout the poem" ("Of God" 220). Krontiris, however, believes that "as she approaches the end of her volume . . . Lanyer drops her

feminist voice. . . . The praise of these male saints has probably more to do with Lanyer's doubts about her feminist strategy than with her conscience" (119). While there is doubtless some degree of truth to both of these conjectures, I believe that the presence of these men becomes far less problematic when one considers their own weakened, feminised, even infantilised state. These men, Lanyer says, have not hesitated to embrace death because they have, like infants, been nursed, and the security of this connection and promise of its continuance have overshadowed all danger and pain. "This love made Martyrs many deaths to prove, / To taste his sweetnesse, whom they so adored" (1741-1742). "His sweetnese sweet'ned all the sowre of death" for these men (1745), whose descriptions focus on the means of their deaths and on their vulnerability: Stephen "by the river stones did loose his breath" (1747), and was "humbled and cast downe" (1751); Laurence yielded "his naked body to the fire" (1791); Andrew went "most joyfully, / Unto the Crosse" (1799-1800); Peter "chose the Gallowes, that unseemely death" (1815), while John the Baptist "by the Sword did loose his breath" (1816). The unfortunate women of early in the poem whose beauty was their downfall were possessed of "those matchlesse colours Red and White" (193); similarly, these martyrs are adorned with "The purest colours both of White and Red" (1828), universal signs of both suffering and beauty. Lanyer ends by "Folding up all their Beauties in your [Cumberland's] breast" (1832), leaving the countess with this meditation on Christ's death, resurrection, and eternal love for all who are willing, the poet claims, to display the gentleness and vulnerability native to the feminine character, even if this invites the world's abuse.

Lanyer draws clear lines between pro- and anti-Christian communities here, lines that, not coincidentally, also follow gender. She presents "a Christ who is not understood through any species of private or public relationship with other men" (Mueller 218), who abandon and abuse him, while Pilate's wife, Eve, Mary, and the daughters of Jerusalem all recognise Christ's divinity, all weep for his suffering--and are all rendered helpless to stop his execution by the patriarchal power structure in which they live. In revealing their roles and perspectives in the story of the Passion, Lanyer attempts to demonstrate that the community of female believers is, in fact, not manufactured by her narrative, but has always existed; she is not constructing so much as

revealing. This community extends into her own day through women such as the countess, and also reaches back to the virtue of pre-Christian women like Lucrece or the Queen of Sheba, or medieval Christian figures like Matilda. The sense is that women's goodness is inherent and constant, though vulnerable to the destruction or corruption of worldly ambition and lust that resides most naturally with men, who possess power largely unattainable by women. Threatening, and threatened by, this goodness are men, represented in Lanyer's narrative by everyone from Tarquin, rapist of Lucrece, to the soldiers of the Passion who arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, to Caiphas, Pontius Pilate, and even the apostles who abandon Christ in his hour of need. Like "Poore blinded" Cleopatra, a lone queen living by the standards of male conquerors, like Locke's speaker, "blind for grace" in the wasteland of sin, these men are blinded to their Saviour's divinity as the women around Jesus, Lanyer claims, never were.

The final piece in Salve Deus is "The Description of Cooke-ham," Lanyer's commemoration of the "royal manor held by . . . [the countess's] brother, William Russell of Thornhaugh," at which the Countess of Cumberland spent periods of time during her occasional estrangement from her husband and, possibly, after his death in 1605 (Lewalski, "Imagining" 216). Sometime before the marriage of her daughter Anne, in 1609, the countess spent time at Cookham with her daughter, and, the poet claims, Lanyer herself (Lewalski, "Imagining" 216). Woods, among others, claims this work as the first English country-house poem; although Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst," commonly cited as the founding piece in this genre, may have been written before "A Description of Cooke-ham," "Lanyer's work is without question the first in print" (Woods, Introduction xxxix-xl). Woods notes that Lanyer's poem recalls "the classical *locus amoemus*, or 'delightfull Place'" (Woods, Introduction xl) (Lanyer actually refers to the estate as "that delightfull Place" in the narrative [32]), but Lewalski points out that the house itself hardly figures in the poem—"it belonged, after all, to the crown, not to the Countess" ("Imagining" 237). What this truly is is an elegy, not for a lost place, but for a lost state of being shared by a community of women, one in which Lanyer enjoyed a position of both religious and artistic grace (1-4). When the poem opens, this world has already passed; the first word is "Farewell" (1). As

the piece progresses, it is clear that Lanyer's attempts in "Salve Deus" to reconcile worldly and divine interests and create a cohesive female Christian family have collapsed. This is reflected on one level in the poem's pathetic fallacy, in which the countess's presence both heralds and causes the advent of spring (21-34), while her departure triggers an autumn of mourning (133-202). More pointed, though, is the distance between Lanyer and her noble companions. This female Eden, where the poet has observed her patroness "In these sweet woods . . . walke, / With Christ and his Apostles there to talke" (81-82), is ultimately susceptible to "Unconstant Fortune" (103). This fortune, however, is in fact the product of the patriarchal structure under which the Cookham women live. The countess, in conflict with her husband and, by extension, the society around her, must leave Cookham both because "your occasion [duties] call'd you so away" (147), and because the estate is not her own; she is there by the grace of two men, her king and her brother. Equally bound up with patriarchy is the class structure upon which Lanyer blames the rupture of this community: *this* is that which "casts us downe into so lowe a frame: / Where our great friends we cannot dayly see, / So great a diffrence is there in degree" (104-106).

Lanyer's ultimate inability to bridge the "diffrence . . . in degree" between herself and Cumberland, to say nothing of the gap between human and divine, is perhaps best illustrated by her recollection of her last meeting with the countess before the latter left Cookham. Lanyer is led by Cumberland to the oak tree which is the symbolic centre of the estate's edenic glory, from under which the countess had beheld "thirteen shires" (73) and meditated upon God's "beauty, wisdom, grace, love, majestie" reflected in his creatures (79-80). Cumberland, speaking to Lanyer of "the pleasures which had past" (163), then kisses the tree and departs (165); Lanyer then "bereaves" the tree of the kiss by kissing it herself, "Scorning a sencelesse creature should possesse / So rare a favour, so great happinesse" (166-168). The bond between these two women, supposedly strong in this man-free paradise, must be mediated by an inanimate emblem of masculine strength and stability, an oak tree. Lisa Schnell sees in this scene "an unmistakable comic, and bitter, irony[,] a parody of "a social logic that grants favor to unfeeling objects but humiliates devoted subjects" (33)—the sort of oppressive order maintained in a fallen world, but

anathema to the notion of spiritual equality enjoyed in heaven. The countess and her daughter depart, and Lanyer is left with only "sweet Memorie" by which she may be "carried in conceit" back to this crumbled community (117, 111). The poet's insistence on melding worldly interests and imperfect structures with divine ideals of justice and equality leaves her isolated, not integrated, as *Salve Deus* ends, bereft of her patron, her powerful dinner guests, and the Christian community whose centre Christ was never really allowed to fill.

Elaine Beilin has summarised Lanyer's long poem thus: "the dedications present the essential Christian virtues in the figures of contemporary ladies; *Salve Deus* narrates the central experience of their lives, Christ's passion, and justifies the importance of women to Christianity; 'The Description of Cooke-ham' is an elegy for a feminine, Christian paradise" (*Redeeming Eve* 182). This assessment is both sympathetic and fair. Lanyer does attempt to construct a female community--of readers, of patrons, of Christians--around a central narrative that focuses on Christianity's most important event, and she invites virtuous women to see themselves as naturally inclined to receive the truth of God's love and grace as figured in the crucifixion of Jesus. However Lanyer appears to "re-write" the Gospels to foreground the role of women in Christ's life and Passion, her uncovering of the community of women found around Jesus is valid; although she chooses to focus greater attention on these women than any of the four evangelists did, she is pointing to something that is indeed, at least in its raw elements, present in Scripture. This community of female believers is already there--Lanyer simply reveals it. It is in attempting to re-construct such a community in her own time and connect it to the social realities of a post-lapsarian world that Lanyer encounters problems. Schoenfeldt believe that "Lanyer's religious subject is not merely window-dressing for protofeminist polemic but essential to her understanding of the central place of women in the world. The most striking aspect of the *Salve* is the way it links devotional postures to the dual ends of individual promotion and social practice" (212). In terms of overcoming isolation and integrating into a coherent community, however, the "linking" of these different elements proves problematic, particularly in Christian terms. Considerations of class and patronage serve to obscure the true nature of a Christ-centred

community, and Lanyer's need as a poet to place herself and / or her patron near that centre compromises the community's very essence. *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* is, finally, about women, not about Christ.

A young scholar's recent comment on Lanyer's objectives in *Salve Deus* is telling:

Lanyer engagingly represents a double-vision of potential solidarity which is constantly frustrated by real-world hierarchies. Lanyer's "what if" visions of community are perhaps in the vein of early modern utopian ponderings which often highlight the gap between the ideal and the real without negating the perceived need to struggle on to improve this world's allocations of power and authority.³¹

Lewalski, too, sees Lanyer's work attempting to challenge "real-world hierarchies"; she speaks of "the evident importance [in *Salve Deus*] of female communities--mothers and daughters, extended kinship networks, close female friends--as a counterweight to patriarchy" ("Re-writing" 88). The validity of Lanyer's project in these terms is real; this, however, does not alter the fact that Lanyer is indeed, and necessarily, frustrated in her attempts to fuse the needs and agendas of women living in a fallen world--a world structured by and for patriarchy--with the goal appropriate to all protestant Christians: the discernment of the operation of God's grace in one's life, and corresponding acceptance into the (ungendered) community of the godly. Betty Travitsky has remarked of *Salve Deus* that "[a]s totalities, these poems are societal rather than religious in purpose" (29); this assessment may well be valid, and serves to underline the way in which Lanyer's construct of community is, within her context, grounded on imperfect and transitory values--societal, not religious.

Using a twentieth-century term like "feminism" is always problematic when one is discussing works from an age in which the word was unknown, and the concept, at the very least, embryonic. The term can, however, be applied legitimately, if in different ways, in discussions of the poetry of Anne Locke and Aemilia Lanyer. Few critics deny the presence of a sort of feminism in the work of Lanyer; regardless of the extent to which one does or does not see in her a desire for the sort of social and political change that is now considered fundamental to a feminist

agenda, few would argue that *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* is suffused with a sense of the unjust oppression and devaluation of women that Lanyer saw operating in her own life and in the larger English society around her, and about which she clearly desired to speak openly. Conversely, it is difficult to argue for the overt presence of feminist tendencies in the poetry of Anne Locke. Everything about Locke's work seems designed to obscure questions of gender and authorial identity; *A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner* represents just that--private Christian meditation--rather than public statement. As I have argued, however, the very existence of Locke's published work in the mid-sixteenth century, together with her focus on the weakness of the physical body and the importance of voice, point to an awareness on Locke's part of the risk, even the audacity, of a woman's insistence on being heard, however she couched her words. Both within their work and by virtue of its very existence, these two Renaissance women writers confront and negotiate the fact of their gender's disadvantage within their respective social contexts.

Not everyone may agree on the ways in which feminism and community intersect in the works of Locke and Lanyer, or, in the case of Locke, whether they intersect at all. I believe that feminist and community concerns can and do co-exist in both the *Meditation* and *Salve Deus*, and that they may be considered jointly or discretely in each work, although the consistency with which critics insist on linking the two issues in discussions of Lanyer has been noted. What is truly significant about this co-existence, however, is the fact that, while each woman purports to characterise community in her work as primarily Christian, Lanyer's insistence on a community that is also gendered leads ultimately to a sort of competition between the Christian and the feminist. While Lanyer apparently wishes to present feminism and Christianity as supportive of one another, she seems uncertain about which concern is, finally, central to her. In the *Meditation*, Locke is able to level distinctions of class and gender with the Christian community model because she really means it; she lines her speaker up only with God, and moves toward the godly, making her only (even remotely) overt gesture toward feminism the epistle to the Duchess of Suffolk that opens the Calvin volume--a gesture powerful enough in its way, but clearly delimited, and addressing Locke's translation work as well as her poetry. Locke's goal for her

speaker is integration into the community of Christian believers, and she sets aside restrictions of class and gender precisely because she so determinedly ignores them in her poetry. The result is an end to the speaker's isolation; membership in the community is gained. Lanyer is perhaps more concerned with the project of women's solidarity--and, ultimately, with winning patronage for herself--than with moving toward God. She thus fails to level class distinction or to hold together community--a community she has drawn around her, and at whose centre may reside not Christ, but Lanyer herself and the Countess of Cumberland--despite her promotion of Christ the leveller. Lanyer does attempt both to create and--more fruitfully, perhaps--recover from the past a community of women gathered around Christ, but her motivation is too compromised and her focus too scattered for her project to succeed as Locke's does. In the end, Lanyer is once again alone, left with only the dream and memory of belonging; one senses the poet's ongoing marginality and isolation from the group--of Christians? of the powerful?--of which she so much desires to be a part. There is thus a sense in which Locke's "feminism," however subtle, is more successful because her journey toward community is; conversely, Lanyer's feminism, much more overt, may be seen to fail because her community, characterised in the gendered terms of a fallen world, fractures. This is the lesson of "Cooke-ham," in which the women's Eden dissolves. Community, so solid at the end of Locke's sequence, breaks apart here.

Susanne Woods points to some important similarities between Locke and Lanyer:

Both writers praise the life of interior virtue Both writers eschew traditional hierarchies, suggesting not only the authority of the unmediated Christian conscience but, subtly at least, the social leveling implicit in the Protestant faith. Both writers see themselves as called to speak, despite the Pauline injunction against women speaking publicly Like Lock, Lanyer publishes to give example and hope to those who are afflicted, that they may see in the suffering of Christ and his triumph and the constancy of Margaret in her affliction heroic models for human faith and patience. ("Anne Lock and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 4, 14-15)

Woods also points out that, "[u]nlike Lock, Lanyer genders her story from the beginning" ("Anne Locke and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 15), a matter that may ultimately compromise the success of her project. Perhaps Woods' own brief final assessment of the two writers provides the best note on which to end this discussion:

Reading the two together, Lock is without question the writer with a more thoughtful and sophisticated piety. Lanyer is more ambitious, both for herself and for women generally. But Lanyer is not without piety, Lock not without ambition. They are an interesting pair, and serve well as an identifiable line in the development of a tradition of Early Modern English women writers. ("Anne Locke and Aemilia Lanyer" ts. 17)

This seems a worthy way to remember both writers.

Chapter 4 Notes

¹ See also Coiro for discussion of the supposed oversimplification of Lanyer's feminist stance in her work.

² McGrath uses the terms "relational" and "individualist" feminism, taken originally from the work of Karen Offen. McGrath then quotes Constance Jordan on these concepts: individualist feminism focuses on "the autonomy of the female subject"; relational feminism is concerned with "an appreciation of what women are and do in contrast to what men are and do" (qtd. in McGrath 333).

³ Critics have disagreed about whether Lanyer ultimately espouses an agenda that proposes revolutionary change and thus requires women to throw off patriarchal constraints, or one that simply encourages women to behave themselves in order to avoid criticism, thus maintaining the patriarchal status quo; either way, however, no-one disputes the presence in Salve Deus of impassioned and sometimes angry protests against women's lot in Lanyer's time.

⁴ Indeed, Kim Walker, in speaking of the dedicatory epistles that preface Locke's Calvin and Taffin translations, notes the importance of community to the writing woman from the outset: "The dedications of both texts stress the Christian community that provides an authorizing context for . . . [Locke's] dutiful writing" (58).

⁵ Just as one still encounters variations on the spelling of Anne Locke's name, so too did critics differ on the spelling of Aemilia Lanyer's name before Woods' edition more-or-less established a norm in 1993. I follow Woods' example in my own text, but certain sources quoted by me use different spellings--McGrath, for instance, refers consistently to "Amelia Lanier"--and I have presented these without changes.

⁶ Guibbory 107; Lewalski, "Imagining" 220. Anne Clifford, daughter of Margaret Clifford, Lanyer's putative patroness, counted Queen Anne among her active allies in Clifford's ongoing attempts to have her claims to her father's estate recognised by James, indicating that the Queen did not hesitate to intercede with the King on others' behalf when she felt it appropriate to

do so (Lewalski, "Re-writing" 95). Lewalski also refers to Queen Anne's habit of generally espousing and encouraging "oppositional politics and subversive masques" ("Imagining" 221).

⁷ See Fraser, The Weaker Vessel, Chapter 19, "The Delight of Business"; among other accounts, Fraser notes that of Hester Pinney, who was unmarried and worked as a lace-seller in London (426). The ability of Englishwomen in the seventeenth century to increase their representation in the marketplace may be compared with the situation in Geneva, cradle of Calvinism, where "women of citizen status, daughters and wives of *bourgeois*. . . [could] engage in trade without any special restrictions," but found themselves increasingly restricted in their participation in various artisans' guilds (Monter, "Women in Calvinist Geneva" 201; 202-204).

⁸ In looking back toward stronger female characters of the English stage such as those mentioned here, it must be acknowledged that the first half of the sixteenth century did indeed witness unflattering characterisations of women in the drama, in such popular plays as John Heywood's The Four PP; that the form managed to progress later in the century to the point where a Zenocrate was possible or a Bel-Imperia popular is perhaps further evidence of the general influence of Elizabeth's presence. In terms of the decline of women on the English stage, it is true that, in the works of Middleton, few characters of either gender display redeeming qualities; his portrayals of women in particular, however, are often egregiously vicious even by the (misogynistic) standards of his time.

⁹ Woods notes that, although the title-page of Lanyer's book gives the date of 1611, it was entered in the Stationers' Register on 2 October 1610, and that there is an extant copy, apparently a gift from Alphonso Lanyer to his former military colleague Thomas Jones, dated 8 November 1610 (Textual Introduction xlvii). I also wish to note here that a simple Salve Deus, underscored without elipsis, is the accepted short title for this work, and I use this form throughout my discussion; "Salve Deus," in quotation marks, refers to the specific poem of that name within the longer work.

¹⁰ Elaine Beilin, e-mail to Kel Morin-Parsons, 27 January 1999.

¹¹ It is true that Locke's separation from her husband during the 1550's was not the most usual state of affairs for "respectable" married women; however, the mitigating circumstances of the Marian exile, which drove so many fervent protestants away from England for a time, and Locke's reunion with her husband (who apparently approved of her flight) after Mary Tudor's death, contextualise her actions as those of an ardent and persecuted Christian, not a wayward wife. Locke's brief second marriage, to the much younger and extremely provocative Edward Dering, should also be considered within the context of the commitment to their faith that each of them demonstrated; certainly there is no indication that the union was received by their contemporaries as objectionable.

¹² The biographical information on Aemilia Lanyer provided here may be found in virtually any current scholarly assessment of the woman and her work; I have chosen to draw largely upon Susanne Woods' thorough introduction to her edition of Lanyer for my purposes here. Woods, like Lanyer scholars before her, draws upon A. L. Rowse's 1978 study of Lanyer, and every person investigating Lanyer has ultimately been indebted to the journals of the Jacobean astrologer Simon Forman, whom Lanyer visited and who recorded a number of facts and observations about her.

¹³ Woods notes, however, that, contrary to the assertions of some scholars, "if they [Lanyer and her son's family, with whom she lived in the later years of her widowhood] were not wealthy, neither were they poor. . . . [At Lanyer's death the] parish record lists her as a 'pensioner,' a term which designated a steady income" (Introduction xxix, xxx).

¹⁴ Lewalski supports this conclusion: Salve Deus, she says, "was issued twice in 1611, with a minor change in the printer's imprint, and is now very rare; possibly only a few copies were printed, chiefly for presentation purposes, though the epistle 'To the Vertuous Reader' implies a larger intended audience" ("Imagining 219).

¹⁵ Simon Forman's notes also state that Lanyer "was brought up with [i.e. in the same household as] the Countess of Kent" (qtd. in Lewalski, "Imagining" 215). Lewalski explains this

as meaning "that as a young girl she lived with and waited upon the Countess, receiving some part of her education in a noble household, as did many children of the nobility and gentry" ("Imagining 214).

¹⁶ As well, some other small links between Locke's 1560 dedication and those of Lanyer may be detected: Locke refers to her Calvin volume in her letter to the Duchess of Suffolk as a "litle boke" (A6), a term Lanyer uses to describe her work more than once throughout her dedications (see above); Locke's constant theme of "God the heavenly Physitian" who delivers health (A3) is echoed in Lanyer's promise to "deliver you the health of the soule" in her dedication to Margaret, Countess of Cumberland (10); and both women make reference to the parable of the foolish virgins at the wedding feast from Mat. 25: 1-13 (Locke A4_v-A5; Lanyer, see above).

¹⁷ Woods is somewhat more circumspect about Lanyer's pioneering status, but on the whole endorses it: Lanyer "may have been the first Englishwoman to publish a full edition of poems and to claim for herself a professional poetic voice" (Introduction xv).

¹⁸ All further references are to this edition of Lanyer's work. In-text citation of specific poems refers to line numbers, unless otherwise indicated.

¹⁹ See Woods, Textual Introduction, The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer xlvii-li, and McGrath, 345-346, n. 2.

²⁰ Arabella Stuart, as mentioned above, was "taken into custody and sent to the Tower in March 1611 because her marriage in July 1610 to William Seymour strengthened her claim to the throne" (McGrath 345, n. 2), although at the time this indiscretion surely must have seemed more grave to the King and his advisors than to someone like Lanyer, especially as Arabella's reputation as a protestant seems to have been solid. The Countess of Suffolk, along with her husband, Lord Thomas Howard, "Lord Treasurer and Lord Chamberlain of the Royal Household, [were] arrested in 1618 for embezzlement and selling information to the Spanish" (McGrath, 345, n. 2), a more immediately serious offence; this, however, occurred several years after the appearance of Lanyer's book.

²¹ This may be seen as a parallel to the shared experience of Locke and the Duchess of Suffolk, each of whom was forced to flee from the "oppression and discrimination" of religious persecution, each with small children in tow.

²² McGrath notes as well that "Lanyer also employs a 'feminine' structure for her poem that, to use [Josephine] Donovan's terminology, is modelled on the pattern of a web, is more nuclear than linear" (340).

²³ Lewalski notes the added strength of Lanyer's declared status as a religious poet:

Though Lanyer often excuses her poems as faulty and unlearned by reason of her sex, she finds justification for undertaking what is 'seldome seene / A Womans writing of divinest things' ["To the Queenes . . ." 3-4] in the fact that they celebrate divine and female goodness. Since religious poetry is often considered the highest genre, this claim revalues the restriction of women writers to religious subjects, even as her [Lanyer's] celebration of the several noblewomen for their heroic virtue, extraordinary learning, devotion to the Muses, and high poetic achievement implicitly undermines patriarchal ideology. ("Re-writing" 100)

Lanyer's source of inspiration, nature, is superior to that of men's inspiration, art / learning; her Christian subject matter may be presented as superior to other, more "masculine" topics.

²⁴ If the text is to be believed, Lanyer was not promised any monetary reward for writing Salve Deus, and, depending on how one interprets, had probably received no reward for written work prior to this project (indeed, if she did write anything before Salve Deus, it is no longer extant): in her epistle to the dowager Countess of Kent, daughter of the Duchess of Suffolk, she states that "no former gaine hath made me write," and insists (doubtless disingenuously), "Nor any future profit is expected" (43, 47).

²⁵ Lewalski notes that Lanyer's efforts "did not, however, win for her a permanent association with any of these prospective patrons, nor any niche at the Jacobean court" ("Imagining" 217).

26 Lewalski reports:

Sometime during the early 1600s, and before Anne Clifford's marriage in 1609, Lanyer spent a period of time (how long is not clear) with [dowager Countess of Cumberland] Margaret and [her daughter] Anne Clifford at Cookham, a royal manor held by Margaret's brother, William Russell of Thornhaugh, and evidently occupied by her on occasion during her separation from her husband and (perhaps) her early widowhood. ("Imagining" 216)

In the third stanza of the poem "Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum" itself, Lanyer refers to an apparent request from Cumberland that the poet write "praisefull lines of that delightful place" (17-18); this seems to refer to "The Description of Cookham," although whether Lanyer was in fact asked by Cumberland to write anything--or, indeed, whether Lanyer even knew the countess at all--remains unknown. The only evidence of the relationship and the commission is contained in Lanyer's own work. Schnell relates both Lewalski's belief that the poet did indeed know the Clifford women, and her own skepticism about the association:

Although there is no evidence anywhere that Lanyer enjoyed the privileges of patronage, Lewalski confidently submits that "these dedications reveal something about Lanyer's actual associations; though hyperbolic like most of their kind, they would fail of their purpose if they were to falsify too outrageously the terms of a relationship" (220). . . . I [however] would hesitatingly conjecture that the only relationship Lanyer had with any patroness occurred in the realm of wish-fulfillment fantasy." (28, 34)

27 Beilin notes that "withdrawal from court to country [is] a theme that was almost an obsession with Jacobean poets" (Redeeming Eve 201).

28 Lynette McGrath writes that "[i]n terms of sheer bulk, the section on Christ's Passion occupies only about 500 of the poem's 3000 lines" (342); McGrath is presumably counting the lines of "Salve Deus" that deal strictly with the Passion, excluding the resurrection and

peripherals, and is referring to the entire volume of Salve Deus in referring to the poem's "3000 lines" (in Woods' edition, the entire "Salve Deus" poem is 1840 lines long). Krontiris claims that "the passion of Christ . . . actually occupies only about one-third of the title poem" (108), presumably counting the same 500 lines as "about one-third" of 1840.

29 Beilin notes that "[a]s Lanyer develops the metaphor expressing the direct communion of virtuous women with the resurrected Christ, she simply circumvents masculine poetry which treated such figures as extraordinary or as mediators for the poet. Her poetry insists that this is woman's true nature" (Redeeming Eve 187).

30 McGrath cites an early modern example of God as mother-figure "in Lancelot Andrewes' image of God's love overflowing like 'the breasts that are full' (Works I: 100)" (343).

31 Michael Holmes, Ph.D., e-mail, "Aemilia Lanyer and feminism," Reading Early Modern Women electronic discussion group 14 September 1998.

Conclusion

Scholars are seldom fortunate enough to recover a text both as high in quality and as substantial in length as Anne Locke's *A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner*. The implications for the Renaissance canon and the potential for investigation presented by such a work are truly exhilarating, particularly as Locke's work is significant from so many perspectives; as well as widening our knowledge of Renaissance writing generally, the *Meditation* gives us a number of Anne Lockes to pursue--Locke the sonneteer, Locke the devotional poet, Locke the woman author--before we even touch upon Locke the translator or epistolary rhetorician.

This discussion makes no pretense of attempting any sort of definitive inquiry into Locke's poetry--that will be, happily, the work of years for any number of researchers--but it does seek to examine some of the fundamental elements revealed by a close reading of the *Meditation* that resonate throughout the works of Renaissance women authors generally. I have taken as a first principle here the belief that writing for others' consumption, whether through publication or alternative circulation, was a proto-feminist gesture for women writing in Renaissance England, regardless of their subject matter, and, indeed, regardless of whether or not they were overtly identified as the authors of their work in their time. Writing for the eyes of others was a matter integrally bound up with self-definition and voice for any woman writing in this period, precisely because women were exhorted to reject (wanton) voice in favour of (chaste) silence, and largely barred from inserting themselves into public discourse; they were thus discouraged from defining themselves through expression of opinions or beliefs in any but the most private contexts. Locke attempted to participate in the spread of religious reform in England by helping to disseminate Calvinist literature and devotional poetry at a time when the liquidity of religious boundaries opened a small window of possibility for such participation. Locke had internalised her society's strictures on woman's voice--and, indeed, its ambivalence toward authorship generally--to the extent where she declined to add more than her initials to her 1560 prose work, and made no overt claim at all to her poetry; within her sonnets, however, she took the opportunity to demolish the image of the physical, and thus gendered, body as a locus of power or authority, and

presented the rhetoric of weakness and submission, a traditionally feminised discourse, as the language best-suited for the sinner approaching the Creator. This exercise unfolded a map of the reformed Christian's journey of spiritual discernment which also spoke to the role of a writing woman in sixteenth-century England: a sinner must ask for God's mercy and grace to overcome the isolation of sin and enter into the community of the elect; a writing woman must wield the rhetoric of submission to fight marginalisation and ensure her membership in a society that resists the integration of her voice.

Lisa Schnell's contention that scholars tend to view early modern women as an undifferentiated group with the same feminist agenda is a valid concern; however, as well as being separated by strictures of class, as is the case with Aemilia Lanyer and the Countess of Cumberland, the writers examined here are also separated by time, another potentially differentiating factor. Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, was born in 1561, the year after Locke's Calvin translation and sonnet sequence were entered into the Stationers' Register. Her completion of her and her brother's *Psalmes of David* coincided approximately with Locke's 1590 translation of Jean Taffin's *Of the markes of the children of God*, marking a time when protestants of Locke's station and stripe were feeling embattled by governmental suppression of religious reform. Pembroke, too, was a reform-minded Calvinist, but one born after the Elizabethan Settlement and raised in close proximity to the power and influence of Elizabeth's throne; while her family were acknowledged proponents of church reform, the mature countess was a wealthy, settled, fin-de-siècle protestant noblewoman, not a mid-century, merchant-class former Marian exile imbued with missionary fervour. This difference in era and station between Locke and Pembroke is reflected in Pembroke's psalmic work, a much-revised, privately- (if quite widely-)circulated series of poems that, unlike Locke's sequence, never names the New Jerusalem or even the Church. The circumstances in which Pembroke lived and wrote lessened the urgency of defining the community of the godly and the path to its door as sharply as Locke had done; Locke's public readership were presented with a thorough and dramatic pattern of the voyage from the filthy landscape of sin to the walled city of the elect, while Pembroke's select readers saw

small portraits of varying literary sophistication and subtlety that traced the process of discernment on smaller scales. Nevertheless, the aforementioned matter of woman's voice and its attendant exigencies is still a concern for the countess: the Psalmes remained unpublished, and the countess deflected attention from her own authorship of the majority of the psalmic poems by identifying them primarily with the "Angell spirit" of her brother, Sir Philip Sidney; meanwhile, her version of Psalm 51 reveals a vibrant voice loosed by grace and drawn to maternal images of pregnancy and nurture in describing the individual's relationship with God. Community, too, is still a necessary element here--the speaker's praise is triggered by knowledge of election--but the security of the countess's own situation and the relatively settled nature of the English Church in 1590 see her able to envision the community of the elect as secure, and able to envision her speaker as running the risk of exclusion from it--with no real sense that that danger will be realised. Mary Sidney Herbert was, as we have seen, aware of Locke's work, and echoes of it appear in her *Miserere*; her distinct construction of the elements of voice and community in this piece shows the way in which similar concerns in the same context manifest themselves in the poetry of different women.

Susanne Woods has argued that Aemilia Lanyer also knew Locke's work, and may have been influenced by the confident prose and sophisticated rhetoric of the latter's dedicatory epistles. The apparent connection between the family of Locke's brother, Stephen Vaughan, and Lanyer's parents makes such a conduit of influence plausible; Lanyer's Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum, however, reveals a vast difference between her approach and aims and those of Locke. Lanyer's book appeared in 1611, over fifty years after the publication of Locke's Calvin volume, when England was no longer a country in the formative stages of religious reform, and the monarch was no longer a young woman with the potential to inspire hope and a certain boldness in a zealous female protestant. The atmosphere in which Lanyer produced her work combined with the imperatives of her own experience to make her a far more overtly self-conscious woman writer than either Locke or Pembroke, but they also compelled her to use devotional poetry, still one of the few genres open to women writers in the early seventeenth-century, to enlist voice and

community in the service of a struggle whose roots were at least as worldly as divine. No-one can question the sincerity of Lanyer's religious motivations in writing *Salve Deus*, but it is virtually impossible to ignore the fact that this woman, writing in an age when misogyny was enshrined in English culture with a particular acuteness, offered English readers a re-telling of the Passion that simultaneously foregrounded the roles and reactions of the women involved in Christ's story and used that re-telling to plead for women's liberty from oppression in the fallen world. Lanyer's attempt to appeal to a number of women from the aristocracy--a group on whose margins she had dwelt precariously in her youth as the mistress of a powerful English courtier--and to draw them around herself as the centre and voice of a female community, leads to conflict between the secular goals of the frustrated, wronged human and the spiritual goals of the hopeful Christian. Community is no longer defined strictly in terms of redemption, but in terms of gender, and even as passionate a voice as Lanyer's cannot effect the integration of the perfectly divine and the thoroughly fallen.

The three poets discussed here represent three approaches to women's authorship in the early modern English period that vary widely according to the time and circumstance of each woman; each, however, chose to turn away, whether subtly or defiantly, from her world's exhortation to silence in order to engage in a private / public dialect with her Creator.

**A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner: Written in Maner
of a Paraphrase upon the 51. Psalme of David.***

**I have added this meditation folowyng unto the ende of this boke, not as parcell
of maister Calvines worke, but for that it well agreeth with the same argument,
and was delivered me by my frend with whom I knew I might be so bolde to
use & publishe it as pleased me.**

* From "A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner": Anne Locke's Sonnet Sequence, edited and with an introduction by Kel Morin-Parsons (Waterloo, ON: North Waterloo Academic Press, 1997), 53-81.

The preface, expressing the passioned minde of the penitent sinner.

[P1]

The hainous gylt of my forsaken ghost
 So threates, alas, unto my febled sprite
 Deserved death, and (that me greveth most)
 Still stand so fixt before my daseld sight
 The lothesome filthe of my disteined¹ life,
 The mighty wrath of myne offended Lorde,
 My Lord whos wrath is sharper than the knife,
 And deper woundes than doble edged sworde,
 That, as the dimmed and fordulled² eyen
 Full fraught with teares & more & more opprest
 With growing streames of the distilled bryne
 Sent from the fornace of a grefefull³ brest,
 Can not enjoy the comfort of the light,
 Nor finde the waye wherin to walke aright:

[P2]

So I blinde wretch, whome Gods enflamed ire
 With pearcing stroke hath throwne unto the ground,
 Amidde my sinnes still groveling in the myre,
 Finde not the way that other oft have found,
 Whome cherefull glimse of gods abounding grace
 Hath oft releved and oft with shyning light
 Hath brought to joy out of the ugglye place,
 Where I in darke of everlasting night
 Bewayle my woefull and unhappy case,
 And fret my dyeng soule with gnawing paine.
 Yet blinde, alas, I groape about for grace.
 While blinde for grace I groape about in vaine,
 My fainting breath I gather up and straine,
 Mercie, mercie to crye and crye againe.

[P3]

But mercy while I sound with shreking crye
 For graunt of grace and pardon while I pray,
 Even then despeir before my ruthefull⁴ eye
 Spredes forth my sinne & shame, & semes to saye
 In vaine thou brayest forth thy bootlesse⁵ noyse
 To him for mercy, O refused wight,⁶
 That heares not the forsaken sinners voice.

¹*disteined* stained, marred

²*fordulled* weakened, bleary

³*grefefull* grieving, full of grief

⁴*ruthefull* repentant

⁵*bootlesse* useless

⁶*wight* person

Thy reprobate and foreordeined⁷ sprite,
 For damned⁸ vessell of his heavie wrath,
 (As selfe witnes of thy beknowyng hart,
 And secrete gilt of thine owne conscience saith)
 Of his swete promises can claime no part:
 But thee, caytif,⁹ deserved curse doeth draw
 To hell, by justice, for offended law.

[P4]

This horror when my trembling soule doth heare,
 When markes and tokens of the reprobate,
 My growing sinnes, of grace my senslesse cheare,
 Enforce the profe¹⁰ of everlastyng hate,
 That I conceive the heavens king to beare
 Against my sinfull and forsaken ghost:
 As in the throte of hell, I quake for feare,
 And then in present perill to be lost
 (Although by¹¹ conscience wanteth to replye,
 But with remorse enforcing myne offence,
 Doth argue vaine my not availyng crye)
 With woefull sighes and bitter penitence
 To him from whom the endlessse mercy flowes
 I cry for mercy to releve my woes.

[P5]

And then not daring with presuming eye
 Once to beholde the angry heavens face,
 From troubled sprite I send confused crye,
 To crave the crummes of all sufficing grace.
 With foltring knee I fallyng to the ground,
 Bending my yelding handes to heavens throne,
 Poure forth my piteous plaint with woefull sound,
 With smoking sighes & oft repeted grone,
 Before the Lord, the Lord, whom synner I,
 I cursed wretch, I have offended so,
 That dredyng, in his wrekefull¹² wrath to dye,
 And damned downe to depth of hell to go,
 Thus tost with panges and passions of despeir,
 Thus crave I mercy with repentant chere.

⁷*foreordeined* destined for damnation; already judged

⁸*for damned* i.e. foredamned, already condemned

⁹*caytif* wretch

¹⁰*profe* proof

¹¹*by* possible error for "my"?

¹²*wrekefull* vengeful

A Meditation of a penitent sinner, upon the 51. Psalme.

[1]

Have mercy, God, for thy great mercies sake.
 O God: my God, unto my shame I say,
 Beynge fled from thee, so as I dred to take
 Thy name in wretched mouth, and feare to pray
 Or aske the mercy that I have abusde.¹³
 But, God of mercy, let me come to thee:
 Not for justice, that justly am accusede:
 Which selfe word Justice so amaseth me,
 That scarce I dare thy mercy sound¹⁴ againe.
 But mercie, Lord, yet suffer me to crave.
 Mercie is thine: Let me not crye in vaine,
 Thy great mercie for my great fault to have.
 Have mercie, God, pitie my penitence
 With greater mercie than my great offence.

*Have mercie upon
 me (o God) after thy
 great merci*

[2]

My many sinnes in number are encreast,
 With weight wherof in sea of depe despeire
 My sinking soule is now so sore opprest,
 That now in peril and in present fere,
 I crye: susteine me, Lord, and Lord I pray,
 With endlesse number of thy mercies take
 The endlesse number of my sinnes away.
 So by thy mercie, for thy mercies sake,
 Rue on¹⁵ me, Lord, releve me with thy grace.
 My sinne is cause that I so nede to have
 Thy mercies ayde in my so woefull case:
 My synne is cause that scarce I dare to crave
 Thy mercie manyfolde, whiche onely may¹⁶
 Releve my soule, and take my sinnes away.

*And according unto the
 multitude of thy
 mercies do away
 myne offences.*

¹³*abusde* flouted, taken advantage of

¹⁴*sound* test, try

¹⁵*Rue on* Pity

¹⁶*onely may* alone may

[3]

So foule is sinne and lothesome in thy sighte,
 So foule with sinne I see my selfe to be,
 That till from sinne I may be washed white,
 So foule I dare not, Lord, approche to thee.
 Ofte hath thy mercie washed me before,
 Thou madest me cleane: but I am foule againe.
 Yet washe me Lord againe, and washe me more.
 Washe me, O Lord, and do away the staine
 Of ugly sinnes that in my soule appere.
 Let flow thy plentuous¹⁷ streames of clensing grace.
 Washe me againe, yea washe me every where,
 Bothe leprous¹⁸ bodie and defiled face.
 Yea washe me all, for I am all uncleane,
 And from my sin, Lord, cleanse me ones againe.

*Wash me yet more
 from my wickednes,
 and clense me from
 my sinne.*

[4]

Have mercie, Lord, have mercie: for I know
 How muche I nede thy mercie in this case.
 The horror of my gilt doth dayly growe,
 And growing weares²⁰ my feble hope of grace.
 I fele and suffer in my thralld²¹ brest
 Secret remorse and gnawing of my hart.
 I fele my sinne, my sinne that hath opprest
 My soule with sorrow and surmounting smart.
 Drawe me to mercie: for so oft as I
 Presume to mercy to direct my sight,
 My Chaos and my heape of sinne doth lie,
 Betwene me and thy mercies shining light.
 What ever way I gaze about for grace,
 My filth and fault are ever in my face.

*For I knowledge¹⁹ my
 wickednes, and my
 sinne is ever before
 me.*

¹⁷*plentuous* plentiful

¹⁸*leprous* diseased (as with leprosy)

¹⁹*knowledge* acknowledge

²⁰*weares* wears down, discourages

²¹*thralld* enslaved

[5]

Graunt thou me mercy, Lord: thee thee alone
 I have offended, and offendyng thee,
 For mercy loe,²² how I do lye and grone.
 Thou with allpearcing²³ eye beheldest me,
 Without regard that sinned in thy sight.
 Beholde againe, how now my spirite it rues,²⁴
 And wailes the tyme, when I with foule delight
 Thy swete forbearing mercy did abuse.
 My cruell conscience with sharpned knife
 Doth splat my ripped hert, and layes abrode
 The lothesome secretes of my filthy life,
 And spredes them forth before the face of God.
 Whom shame from dede shamelesse cold²⁵ not restrain,
 Shame for my dede is added to my paine.

*Againste thee onelye
 have I sinned, & don
 evill in thy sight.*

[6]

But mercy Lord, O Lord some pitie take,
 Withdraw my soule from the deserved hell,
 O Lord of glory, for thy glories sake:
 That I may saved of thy mercy tell,
 And shew how thou, which mercy hast behight²⁶
 To sighyng sinners, that have broke thy lawes,
 Performest mercy: so as in the sight
 Of them that judge the justice of thy cause
 Thou onely just²⁷ be demed, and no moe,²⁸
 The worldes unjustice wholly to confound:
 That damning me to depth of during²⁹ woe
 Just in thy judgement shouldest thou be found:
 And from deserved flames relevyng me
 Just in thy mercy mayst thou also be.

*That thou mightest be
 founde just in thy
 sayinges, and maiest
 over come when thou
 art judged.*

²²loe interjection, "behold"

²³allpearcing all-piercing, all-seeing

²⁴rues laments

²⁵cold could

²⁶behight promised

²⁷onely just absolutely just, no more than fair

²⁸moe more

²⁹during enduring, eternal

[7]

For lo, in sinne, Lord, I begotten was,
 With sede and shape my sinne I toke also,
 Sinne is my nature and my kinde³⁰ alas,
 In sinne my mother me conceived: Lo
 I am but sinne, and sinfull ought to dye,
 Dye in his wrath that hath forbydden sinne.
 Such bloome and frute loe sinne doth multiplie,
 Such was my roote, such is my juyse³¹ within.
 I plead not this as to excuse my blame,
 On kynde or parentes myne owne gilt to lay:
 But by disclosing of my sinne, my shame,
 And nede of helpe, the plainer to displaye
 Thy mightie mercy, if with plenteous grace
 My plenteous sinnes it please thee to deface.

*For loe, I was shapen
 in wickednes, and in
 sinne my mother
 conceived me.*

[8]

Thou lovest simple sooth,³² not hidden face
 With trutheles visour³³ of deceiving showe.
 Lo simplie, Lord, I do confesse my case,
 And simplie crave thy mercy in my woe.
 This secrete wisdom hast thou graunted me,
 To se my sinnes, & whence my sinnes do growe:
 This hidden knowledge have I learnd of thee,
 To fele my sinnes, and howe my sinnes do flowe
 With such excesse, that with unfained³⁴ hert,
 Dreding to drowne, my Lorde, lo howe I flee,
 Simply with teares bewailyng my desert,
 Releved simply by thy hand to be.
 Thou lovest truth, thou taughtest me the same.
 Helpe, Lord of truth, for glory of thy name.

*But lo, thou haste
 loved trueth, the
 hidden and secrete
 thinges of thy
 wisdom thou haste
 opened unto me.*

³⁰*kinde* species, the nature of my species

³¹*juyse* juice, essence

³²*sooth* truth

³³*visour* mask

³⁴*unfained* unfeigned, sincere

[9]

With swete Hysope³⁵ besprinkle thou my sprite:
 Not such hysope, nor so besprinkle me,
 As law unperfect shade of perfect lyght
 Did use as an apointed signe to be
 Foreshewing³⁶ figure of thy grace behight.
 With death and bloodshed of thine only sonne,
 The swete hysope, cleanse me defyled wyght.
 Sprinkle my soule. And when thou so haste done,
 Bedeawd³⁷ with droppes of mercy and of grace,
 I shalbe cleane as cleansed of my synne.
 Ah wash me, Lord: for I am foule alas:
 That only canst,³⁸ Lord, wash me well within,
 Wash me, O Lord: when I am washed soe,
 I shalbe whiter than the whitest snowe.

*Sprinkle me, Lorde,
 with hisope and I
 shalbe cleane: washe
 me and I shalbe
 whiter then snow.*

[10]

Long have I heard, & yet I heare the soundes
 Of dredfull threates and thonders of the law,
 Which Eccho of my gylty minde resoundes,
 And with redoubled horror doth so draw
 My listening soule from mercies gentle voice,
 That louder, Lorde, I am constraynde to call:
 Lorde, pearce myne eares, & make me to rejoyse,
 When I shall heare, and when thy mercy shall
 Sounde in my hart the goppell of thy grace.
 Then shalt thou geve my hearing joy againe,
 The joy that onely may releve my case.
 And then my broosed bones, that thou with paine
 Hast made to³⁹ weake my febled corps to beare,
 Shall leape for joy, to shewe myne inward chere.

*Thou shalt make me
 heare joye and
 gladnesse, al the
 bones which thou hast
 broken shal rejoyse*

³⁵*Hysope* hyssop, cleansing herb

³⁶*Foreshewing* Foreshadowing

³⁷*Bedeawd* Bedewed; Sprinkled

³⁸*That only canst* You who alone can

³⁹*to* too (common spelling, used again in Sonnets 12 and 19)

[11]

Loke⁴⁰ on me, Lord: though trembling I beknowe,
 That sight of sinne so sore offendeth thee,
 That seing sinne, how it doth overflowe
 My whelmed⁴¹ soule, thou canst not loke on me,
 But with disdain, with horror and despite.
 Loke on me, Lord: but loke not on my sinne.
 Not that I hope to hyde it from thy sight,
 Which seest me all without and eke⁴² within,
 But so remove it from thy wrathfull eye,
 And from the justice of thyne angry face,
 That thou impute it not. Looke not how I
 Am foule by sinne: but make me by thy grace
 Pure in thy mercies sight, and, Lord, I pray,
 That hatest sinne, wipe all my sinnes away.

*Turne away thy face
 from my sinnes,
 and do away all my
 misdedes.*

[12]

Sinne and despeir have so possest my hart,
 And hold my captive soule in such restraint,
 As of thy mercies I can fele no part,
 But still in languor do I lye and faint.
 Create a new pure hart within my brest:
 Myne old can hold no liquour of thy grace.
 My feble faith with heavy lode opprest
 Staggring doth scarcely creepe a reeling pace,
 And fallen it is to faint to rise againe.
 Renew, O Lord, in me a constant sprite,
 That stayde with⁴³ mercy may my soule susteine,
 A sprite so setled and so firmly pight⁴⁴
 Within my bowells,⁴⁵ that it never move,
 But still uphold th'assurance of thy love.

*Create a cleane hart
 within me, O God:
 and renew a stedfast
 spirit within my
 bowels.*

⁴⁰*Loke* Look (note possible pun on poet's name)

⁴¹*whelmed* overwhelmed

⁴²*eke* also

⁴³*stayde with* supported by

⁴⁴*pight* pitched, placed

⁴⁵*bowells* deepest regions (figurative)

[13]

Loe prostrate, Lorde, before thy face I lye,
 With sighes depe drawne depe sorow to expresse.
 O Lord of mercie, mercie do I crye:
 Dryve me not from thy face in my distresse,
 Thy face of mercie and of swete relefe,
 The face that fedes angels with onely sight,
 The face of comfort in extremest grefe.
 Take not away the succour⁴⁶ of thy sprite,
 Thy holy sprite, which is myne onely stay,
 The stay that when despeir assaileth me,
 In faintest hope yet moveth me to pray,
 To pray for mercy, and to pray to thee.
 Lord, cast me not from presence of thy face,
 Nor take from me the spirite of thy grace.

*Cast me not away
 from thy face, and
 take not thy holy
 spirit from me.*

[14]

But render me my wonted⁴⁷ joyes againe,
 Which sinne hath reft,⁴⁸ and planted in theyr place
 Doubt of thy mercy ground of all my paine.
 The tast, that thy love whilome did embrace
 My chearfull soule, the signes that dyd assure
 My felyng ghost of favor in thy sight,
 Are fled from me, and wretched I endure
 Senslesse of grace the absence of thy sprite.
 Restore my joyes, and make me fele againe
 The swete retorne of grace that I have lost,
 That I may hope I pray not all in vayne.
 With thy free sprite confirme my feble ghost,
 To hold my faith from ruine and decay
 With fast affiance⁴⁹ and assured stay.

*Restore to me the
 comforte of thy
 saving helpe, &
 stablishe me with
 thy free spirit.*

⁴⁶*succour* relief

⁴⁷*wonted* accustomed, usual

⁴⁸*reft* taken away

⁴⁹*fast affiance* firm pledge

[15]

Lord, of thy mercy if thou me withdraw
 From gaping throte of depe devouring hell,
 Loe, I shall preach the justice of thy law:
 By mercy saved, thy mercy shall I tell.
 The wicked I wyll teache thyne only way,
 Thy wayes to take, and mans devise⁵⁰ to flee,
 And suche as lewd delight hath ledde astray,
 To rue theyr error and returne to thee.
 So shall the profe of myne example preache
 The bitter frute of lust and foule delight:
 So shall my pardon by thy mercy teache
 The way to finde swete mercy in thy sight.
 Hyve⁵¹ mercy, Lorde, in me example make
 Of lawe and mercy, for thy mercies sake.

*I shal teach thy waies
 unto the wicked, &
 sinne[r]s shall be
 tourned unto thee.*

[16]

O God, God of my health, my saving God,
 Have mercy, Lord, and shew thy might to save,
 Assoile⁵² me, God, from gilt of giltlesse blod,
 And eke from sinne that I ingrowing have
 By fleshe and bloud and by corrupted kinde.
 Upon my bloud and soule extende not, Lorde,
 Vengeance for bloud, but mercy let me finde,
 And strike me not with thy revengyng sworde.
 So, Lord, my joying tong shall talke thy praise,
 Thy name my mouth shall utter in delight,
 My voice shall sounde thy justice, and thy waies,
 Thy waies to justifie thy sinfull wight.
 God of my health, from bloud I saved so
 Shall spred thy prayse for all the world to know.

*Deliver me from
 bloud o God, God
 of my helth & my
 tong shall joyfullye
 talke of thy justice.*

⁵⁰*devise* plan, will

⁵¹*Hyve* Have (possible compositor's error)

⁵²*Assoile* Absolve; Release

[17]

Lo straining crampe of colde despeir againe
 In feble brest doth pinche my pinyng hart,
 So as in greatest nede to cry and plaine⁵³
 My speache doth faile to utter thee my smart.
 Refreshe my yeldyng⁵⁴ hert, with warming grace,
 And loose⁵⁵ my speche, and make me call to thee.
 Lord open thou my lippes to shewe my case,
 My Lord, for mercy Loe to thee I flee.
 I can not pray without thy movyng ayde,
 Ne can I ryse, ne can I stande alone.
 Lord, make me pray, & graunt when I have praide.
 Lord loose my lippes, I may expresse my mone,
 And findyng grace with open mouth I may
 Thy mercies praise, and holy name display.

*Lord, open thou my
 lippes, and my mouth
 shal shewe thy praise.*

[18]

Thy mercies praise, instede of sacrifice,
 With thankfull minde so shall I yeld to thee.
 For if it were delitefull in thine eyes,
 Or hereby⁵⁶ mought⁵⁷ thy wrath appeased be,
 Of cattell slayne and burnt with sacred flame
 Up to the heaven the vapie smoke to send:
 Of gyltlesse beastes, to purge my gilt and blame,
 On altars broylde the savour shold ascend,
 To pease⁵⁸ thy wrath. But thy swete sonne alone,
 With one sufficing sacrifice for all
 Appeaseth thee, and maketh the⁵⁹ at one
 With sinfull man, and hath repaired our fall.
 That sacred hoste is ever in thine eyes.
 The praise of that I yeld for sacrifice.

*If thou haddest
 desired sacrifice,
 I wold have geven
 thou delytest not in
 burnt offrings.*

⁵³*plaine* complain

⁵⁴*yelding* yielding

⁵⁵*loose* loosen

⁵⁶*hereby* should perhaps be "thereby"

⁵⁷*mought* might

⁵⁸*pease* appease

⁵⁹*the* thee

[19]

I yeld my self, I offer up my ghoste,
 My slayne delightes, my dyeng hart to thee.
 To God a trobled sprite is pleasing hoste.
 My trobled sprite doth drede⁶⁰ like him to be,
 In whome tastlesse⁶¹ languor with lingring paine
 Hath febled so the starved appetite,
 That foode to late is offred all in vaine,
 To holde in fainting corps⁶² the fleing sprite.
 My pining soule for famine of thy grace
 So feares alas the faintnesse of my faithe.
 I offre up my trobled sprite: alas,
 My trobled sprite refuse not in thy wrathe.
 Such offering likes⁶³ thee, ne wilt thou despise
 The broken humbled hart in angry wise.

*The sacrifice to God
 is a trobled spirit:
 a broken and an
 humbled hart, o god,
 thou wilt not despise.*

[20]

Shew mercie, Lord, not unto me alone:
 But stretch thy favor and thy pleased will,
 To sprede thy bountie and thy grace upon
 Sion, for Sion is thy holly⁶⁴ hyll:
 That thy Hierusalem with mighty wall
 May be enclosed under thy defense,
 And bylded so that it may never fall
 By myning⁶⁵ fraude or mighty violence.
 Defend thy chirch, Lord, and advaunce it soe,
 So in despite of tyrannie to stand,
 That trembling at thy power the world may know
 It is upholden by thy mighty hand:
 That Sion and Hierusalem may be
 A safe abode for them that honor thee.

*Shew favour, o lord in
 thy good will unto
 Sion, that th[e] walles
 of Hierusalem may
 be bylded.*

⁶⁰*drede* desire, with awe

⁶¹*tastlesse* incapable of tasting or ingesting

⁶²*corps* (living) body

⁶³*likes* pleases

⁶⁴*holly* holy

⁶⁵*myning* undermining

[21]

Then on thy hill, and in thy walled towne,
 Thou shalt receive the pleasing sacrifice,
 The brute⁶⁶ shall of thy praised name resound
 In thankfull mouthes, and then with gentle eyes
 Thou shalt behold upon thine altar lye
 Many a yelden⁶⁷ host of humbled hart,
 And round about then shall thy people crye:
 We praise thee, God our God: thou onely art
 The God of might, of mercie, and of grace.
 That I then, Lorde, may also honor thee,
 Releve my sorow, and my sinnes deface:
 Be, Lord of mercie, mercifull to me:
 Restore my feling of thy grace againe:
 Assure my soule, I crave it not it vaine.

*Then shalt thou
 accept the sacrifice
 of righteousnesse,
 burnt offrings and
 oblations. then shall
 they offre yonge
 bullockes upon thine
 altare.*

F I N I S.

⁶⁶*brute* sound, declaration abroad

⁶⁷*yelden* yielded, offered up

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