A Little World Made Cunningly:
The Formation of John Donne in the Civil War Period

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Introduction: Dying into Life

To the biographer, interest in the life of the poet and preacher John Donne derives in part from its overlap with historical watersheds of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. Born two years after Queen Elizabeth’s excommunication by Papal Bull (1570) and raised in an eminent Catholic family, Donne left Oxford without a degree around the time of the Spanish Armada (1588), composed poems across the transition from Tudor to Stuart monarchies (1603), entered a clandestine marriage that left him seeking courtly favor in the years after the Gunpowder Plot (1605), took holy orders in the Church of England four years after the introduction of the King James Bible (1611), preached at Charles I’s coronation (1626), and as Dean of St. Paul’s developed a reputation as a powerful sermonizer during the nascent years of ecclesiastical restructuring piloted by the future Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud.¹

To the student of literature, however, Donne’s advent in fact commences with the end of his life in 1631, when Donne’s executors, most notably John Donne Jr., undertook the process of collecting, organizing, and printing a canon previously transmitted, with few exceptions, in manuscript. What one might whimsically term Donne’s life in print, the three decades between his death and the last major addition to his canon in 1661, proves no less significant than his biography in its intersection with milestones of the mid-seventeenth century touching on the English Civil War. The earliest print editions (1632-40) traced years of mounting conflict over Archbishop Laud’s High-Church reforms which, compounded by Charles’ Personal Rule, came under attack

¹ Augustus Jessopp begins his introduction to the Essays in Divinity (1855) with a similar catalogue.
by republicans and Puritans as an intolerable union of despotism and clerical abuse. Punctuating the 1630s, the first volume of Donne’s sermons reached the press during the Bishops’ Wars sparked by Charles’ attempt to institute episcopacy in Scottish churches. Its publication also coincided with the assembly of the Long Parliament, whose endeavors to redress perceived injustices culminated with the outbreak of war in 1642. Printing for Donne’s *Biathanatos* began in the year of Laud’s trial and execution (1644-5), and the second folio of Donne’s sermons followed on the heels of Charles’ beheading in January 1649. With Donne’s final volume of sermons entered into the Stationers’ Register exactly a month after Charles II’s return to London on May 29, 1660 from exile on the Continent, the publication of Donne’s canon fully bridged the Civil War, Interregnum, and Restoration.

Despite the evident correspondence between canon formation and the events of the Civil War period, scholarship around Donne’s texts has centered almost exclusively on parsing the circumstances of composition, to the neglect of dissemination. The work of R. C. Bald and challenges thereto by Dennis Flynn offer biographical narratives through which to understand Donne’s writing; Evelyn Simpson and John Carey interpret Donne’s texts as reflections of the author’s interior states, respectively, his yearning for truth, or his ambition and apostasy; Charles M. Coffin places Donne’s work within a history of ideas related to the “new philosophy” of Galileo and Tycho Brahe; and Peter McCullough calls attention to the influence of auditories on Donne’s sermons.² Notwithstanding a wealth of writing on Donne’s own context, however, relatively little scholarship has examined Donne’s works with reference to the years in which they became an

accessible body of texts—that is, when the canon came into existence.\textsuperscript{3} Seeking to address a gap in the historicist understanding of Donne and his writing, the present study surveys the publication of Donne’s works from his death to the Restoration in order to expose the ways in which printed iterations reflect not only the concerns of Donne’s lifetime, but also those dominant after his death during the politically unstable years of the Civil War period.

Mid-seventeenth-century print editions of Donne’s work reveal among his editors and commemorators three chief interests that serve as the structure for this study: 1) publishing and protecting the canon, 2) erecting a monument to the author, and 3) invoking Donne as an authority on the controversies of the Civil War era. Though seemingly straightforward, efforts to simply transfer Donne’s work into print left an indelible mark on his textual representation, both as a result of the obstacles inherent to manuscripts, and through measures to safeguard the canon against suspicion and suppression as control of the press increasingly reinforced political allegiances. Simultaneously, Donne’s texts reflect a concern among figures like Donne Jr., Jasper Mayne, and Izaak Walton to formulate the author’s legacy as part of a larger trend of antiquarian preservation heightened by the Civil War. Particularly through Walton, a hagiographic biography separating Donne’s younger from his older self emerged as the dominant paradigm for understanding Donne’s works in the seventeenth century and beyond. Finally, though written decades prior to the outbreak of war, the theological loyalties, skeptical attitudes, and pleas for toleration contained in Donne’s works resonated with the period’s dominant conflicts, often through the mere occasion of their publication and parity with contemporary authors, but equally through their use by polemicists who implicated Donne’s canon in public controversies over Calvinism, Parliament’s dissolution of the Church of England, and national healing.

\textsuperscript{3} A. J. Smith’s \textit{John Donne: The Critical Heritage} focuses on later critics, but not their contexts.
Though addressed severally for the sake of clarity, these three interests operate synchronously within Donne’s seventeenth-century canon. Publishing a potentially subversive work might—and did—require posturing Donne’s life in a way that conformed to the current ruling faction, but undercut Donne’s synonymity with the Church. Conversely, editors might disregard political peril and elevate Donne as a representative of England’s pre-war glory. The volatility of the period, the varied character of Donne’s works, and the range of figures involved necessarily established a legacy far short of cohesive. The impossibility of cleanly isolating the agendas of Donne’s editors, however, points to a crucial overall feature of Donne’s posthumous creation: Donne’s canon as a product of the mid-seventeenth century embodies the interplay among the motivations to publish and commemorate and invoke, the extent to which these motivations reinforced and undermined one another, and, above all, their responsiveness to changes in context.

Indeed, Donne’s variety has fed much of the interest in his works since his resurgence among New Critics in the twentieth century. What Walt Whitman quips about the multitudes he contains holds true for Donne; as Dayton Haskin notes, Donne speaks “to readers and writers from diverse stances: as a love poet, dandy, rebel, satirist, melancholic, priest.”

The current study, however, does not argue the banal point that a writer as multifarious as Donne composed works that remained relevant after his death, or that Donne had something to say that resonated with readers during the Civil War period. Rather, what Donne had to say crystallized in reference to the context in which the canon developed, as a result of editorial motivations and the circumstances of publication that, far from extraneous, left a discernable impression on mid-century printings of Donne’s writing. The resultant texts, the only then-available canon of Donne’s works, narrowed

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Donne’s variety into a monument of divinity, a royally favored pillar of Anglican piety tempered by religious toleration. These texts made Donne a topical reflection of the Civil War period. Whereas manuscript collections provide invaluable clues into Donne as a writer and thinker, tracking the impetuses of publication, commemoration, and invocation reified in Donne’s posthumous print editions provides the basis for comprehending the process by which what it meant to be “John Donne” became codified in the seventeenth century.
Part I: Halting to the Press

“When thou haft done, thou haft not done, / For, I have more.” (“Hymn to God the Father,” ll. 5-6)

The construction of Donne’s legacy in the years after his death began at a fundamental level with the construction of his canon, brought about by a desire to preserve Donne’s work for the first time in print against intrinsic and extrinsic perils.

Donne and the Press: Well, How Did I Get Here?

Grasping the state of Donne’s work in 1631 requires a brief glimpse into the author’s own relationship with the press, which established the conditions that would guide later canon formation. The necessity of posthumous publication proceeded from Donne’s own preference for manuscript circulation over print. In contrast to his contemporary Ben Jonson, who in 1616 published the first of several editions of his Works, Donne largely spurned print during his lifetime and eschewed any effort to establish a definitive canon. Arthur Marotti, Ted-Larry Pebworth, and Richard Wollman have argued that Donne’s texts, especially his poetry, demand examination as performances in a coterie, in which young wits nursed political aspirations through the judicious circulation of handwritten works.\(^5\)

Within the coterie context, Pebworth identifies three manifest concerns behind Donne’s aversion to the press, two of which (setting aside discussion of the manuscript “aesthetic”) elucidate the state of Donne’s works at his death.\(^6\)

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Most broadly, though modern readers laud Renaissance figures on the basis of literary output, professional poetry in Donne’s lifetime implied a lack of dignity unbecoming a would-be courtier like Donne.⁷ Donne might write and circulate verse within a coterie but must, he remarked in 1609 to Sir Henry Goodyear, be seen to ultimately pursue “a graver course, then of a Poet.”⁸ After allowing the publication of his two “Anniversaries,” eulogizing the daughter of Donne’s patron Sir Robert Drury, Donne repined to George Gerrard in language Pebworth characterizes as denoting “a kind of fall from grace”: “the fault that I acknowledge in myself, is to have descended to print anything in verse.”⁹ An observation particularly relevant to the forthcoming discussion of Donne’s posthumous canon, Pebworth secondarily locates the root of Donne’s aversion to print within the texts themselves. As one can gather from the celebration of “roaving hands” and “Full nakedneſs!” (l. 33; 25) in “Elegy XIX,” Donne’s writing contained much that “might be found objectionable on moral, political, or theological grounds.”¹⁰ Both the aesthetics and ambitions of Donne’s coterie verse, then, mandated the avoidance of print.

Pebworth’s analysis of Donne’s verse through coterie conventions provides a useful ingress into the poet’s aversion to print; however, an overriding obstacle to publication specific to Donne and, importantly, visible within his writings lay in a recurring fear that publication left him vulnerable to misinterpretation. Present throughout his career, Donne’s obsession with interpretation manifests strikingly in the Devotions upon Emergent Occasions (1624), in which the ill Dean relapses into dread that God will take his desire for health as “murmuring” or “dejection,” and requests that the Almighty “interpret” his ailment “as correction and not anger.”¹¹

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⁸ John Donne, Letters to Severall Persons of Honour (1651), 103. Hereafter Letters
¹¹ John Donne, Devotions upon Emergent Occasions (1624), 120; 38. Hereafter Devotions.
Donne applies his concern for interpretation specifically to the press in a letter to Sir Robert Ker, sent with a manuscript of Donne’s treatise in defense of suicide, *Biathanatos*. To avoid the opposite ills of destruction and publication, Donne resorts to the *via media* of manuscripts: “because it is upon a misinterpretable subject, I have always gone so near suppressing it as that it is only not burnt…. Keep it, I pray, with the same jealousy… I only forbid it the Presse, and the Fire.”

Interestingly, and in a way crucial to his posthumous reception, *Biathanatos*’ enumerated goal of reforming “uncharitable misinterpreter[s]” points to a recurring correlation in Donne’s mind between misinterpretation and a lack of charity. Donne similarly links misinterpretation to malevolence in a letter to Sir Tobie Mathew, in which Donne solicits reciprocal good-will by expressing faith in the sincerity of Mathew’s Catholic piety: “I never mis-interpreted your way… And this taste of mine towards you, makes me hope for, and claime the same disposition in you towards me.” As will appear in Part III, the same obsession with charity, especially in matters of theology, that prompted Donne to forgo public exposure contributed to the relevance of his works to the years of religio-political conflict in which they were eventually published.

Equally informative for his later legacy, Donne’s fear of misinterpretation not only impeded publication, but also left an impression on his few forays into print. The desire to avert misinterpretation appears with force in the prefatory material to Donne’s first major printed work, *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610), a long and sober treatise urging English Catholics to take the Oath of Allegiance mandated by Parliament in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot. Controversy around the Oath began mere months after its institution in 1606, when a condemnatory Brief from Pope Paul V caught English Catholics otherwise willing to affirm King James as sovereign in a crisis of

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12 Donne, *Letters*, 21-22; see also Wollman, “The ‘Press and the Fire.’”
conscience. By the time Donne published *Pseudo-Martyr* imploring Catholics to accept the Oath over an uncertain promise of martyrdom, the printed debate had already enlisted Cardinal Bellarmine, Robert Parsons, and James himself. It is unlikely that, as Walton later claimed, Donne composed *Pseudo-Martyr* at James’ personal request, but perhaps the association elsewhere expressed between uncharity and misinterpretation accounts for the text’s notable precaution in engaging disputes over the Oath.15 Instead of a plain list of *Errata* common in contemporary texts, *Pseudo-Martyr* includes an “Advertisement to the Reader” entreating him “to amend with his pen, some of the most important errors” in order to avoid the “danger, of being either deceiued, or scandalized.”16 Bespeaking a concern specific to print, the “Advertisement” anticipates the medium’s pitfalls, and seeks to guide the reader’s interpretation of typography, lest he think “a change of the Character, [indicates] that all those words or sentences so distinguished, are cited from other Authors; for I haue done it sometimes, onely to draw his eye, and vnderstanding more intensly vpon that place.” Doubtless, a combination of subject and medium spurs the work’s overstated attention to reader reception. As will be seen in Part III, although the controversy over the Oath faded, Donne’s cognizance of religious conflict, coupled with his focus on charity, proved vital to his legacy during the Civil War period.

Texts Printed before Death

For the reasons hitherto discussed, Donne saw strikingly few works through the press. The year after *Pseudo-Martyr*, Donne published a Latin satire and its English translation *Ignatius His Conclave*, which describes a Dantean journey to a room in hell reserved for innovators who have given “affront to all antiquitie, and induced doubts… and after, a libertie of beleeuing what they

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16 This and the following quotation from John Donne, *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610), ¶¶2v.
would.”\footnote{John Donne, \textit{Ignatius His Conclave} (1611), ed. T. S. Healey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 9.} Having arrived, Donne observes Satan attempting to subdue the wily, aspiring Ignatius of Loyola, the beatified founder of the Jesuitical order synonymous among English writers with the menace of the Counter-Reformation.\footnote{T. S. Healey, introduction to Donne, \textit{Ignatius His Conclave}, xli.} Notably, Donne’s name appears nowhere on the work, a fact the printer exploits for an anti-Catholic jab: “Doest thou seek after the Author? It is in vain; for hee is harder to be found then the parents of Popes were in the old times.”\footnote{Donne, \textit{Ignatius His Conclave}, 3.}

Isolated poems reached the press in larger volumes like \textit{Coryats Crudities} (1611), and others were published, without Donne’s name, set to music, including “The Expiration” in Alfonso Ferrabosco’s \textit{Ayres} (1609) and “Break of Day” in William Corkine’s \textit{Second Booke of Ayres} (1612)—perhaps Donne refers to these in “The Triple Fool.” The remainder of Donne’s printed verse consists of funeral elegies. Like many contemporaries, Donne in 1613 published an elegy to Prince Henry, and in the previous two years published his “Anniversaries” commemorating Elizabeth Drury.

Donne’s ordination in 1615 as Reader at Lincoln’s Inn and his installment as Dean of St. Paul’s in 1621 wrought a notable, though limited change of attitude towards the press. He prepared several sermons for print at the request of the Masters of the Bench at Lincoln’s Inn, the Virginia Company, and the King.\footnote{P. G. Stanwood, “John Donne’s Sermon Notes,” \textit{The Review of English Studies} 29, no. 115 (1978): 314; see also R. C. Bald, \textit{John Donne: A Life} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970) 447, 438, and 468.} It was during his Deanery, after recovering from a near-fatal bout of fever during the winter of 1623, that Donne published his most enduring prose work, later echoed in the titles of books by Thomas Merton and Ernest Hemingway. Divided into 23 sets of meditations, expostulations, and prayers, \textit{Devotions upon Emergent Occasions} converts the stages of the author’s sickness into explorations of man’s relation to God. For the present purpose, the
text’s significance derives less from its cohesive demonstration of Donne’s theology than from the fact that Donne evidently composed it with the press in mind. He writes to Ker, “my Friends importun’d me to Print them, [and] I importune my Friends to receive them Printed.”

Donne’s decision to print a witty epistle to the future King Charles and to send copies to the Duke of Buckingham and Princess Elizabeth signals a pride of authorship absent from his earlier works.

Although impressive relative to that of other renowned authors like Emily Brontë, the list of works published by Donne comprises a small portion of his output. Pebworth provides the figure that 86 percent of Donne’s poetry (in lines of verse) remained unpublished during his life, the remaining 14 percent accounting for a mere 7 poems.

In addition to verse, Donne’s unpublished works included three folios of sermons, numerous prose letters, a collection of Paradoxes, Problems, Essays & Characters, Catalogus Librorum, Essays in Divinity, and Biathanatos.

Creating the Canon

In its basic form, the canon produced after Donne’s death embodies an ongoing effort by editors to overcome the foundational challenge of compilation that arose from Donne’s aversion to print. Unlike Emily Dickinson, who similarly shunned the press during her lifetime, Donne appears to have made little effort to prepare his works for posthumous publication; Ben Jonson even claimed that Donne sought his poems’ destruction after taking holy orders.

In its hyperbole, Jonson’s statement illustrates the extremity of Donne’s neglect for the state of his verse, a neglect elucidated by a 1614 letter to Goodyear concerning Donne’s intent to print his poems as a “valediction to the world” before ordination. Though the letter expresses Donne’s familiar

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21 Donne, Letters, 249; see also Anthony Raspa, introduction to Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, by John Donne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), xviii.
24 Donne, Letters, 197.
anxiety that he “shall suffer from many interpretations,” a nearer obstacle is the fact that Donne does not possess the poems he intends to print. Having become “a Rhapsoder of [his] own rags,” using “more diligence, to seek them, then [he] did to make them,” Donne requisitions copies from Goodyear, especially of a verse letter praising the Countess of Bedford.

The seven seventeenth-century editions of *Poems by J. D.* (1633, ’35, ’39, ’49, ’50, ’54, and ’69) indicate that Donne’s executors and publishers suffered the same complications as had the author himself, obstacles emanating from Donne’s carelessness to preserve his poems. David Novarr agrees with Herbert Grierson that the *Poems*’ first printer, John Marriot, used copies at (at least) one remove from Donne’s originals, likely basing his text on a commonplace book solicited from Goodyear—Goodyear is the recipient of most printed verse letters—which Marriot supplemented with manuscripts, whose variations likely account for dissimilarities between editions.25 Studies of Donne manuscripts continue to expose shortcomings in early print editions. C. M. Armitage describes a compelling pairing, found in the Huntington Manuscript, of Donne’s “The Funerall” with an epistle to the Countess of Bedford, which all seventeenth-century editions print (with diminished effect) as a prologue to the “Epitaph on Himself.”26 Textual variations aside, though Grierson lauds the 1633 *Poems* as “the most trustworthy of all the old editions,” the volume nevertheless provides an incomplete canon.27 The ensuing editions add nearly 30 poems, several of which Donne did not write, and the last of the elegies attributed to Donne (“Love’s Warr”) did not appear in print until 1802.28


28 In 1650, Donne Jr. acknowledged that previous printers erred kindly by “adding something too much, lest any spark of this sacred fire might perish undiscerned” (*Poems* 1650, A3).
Published in 1652/3, *A Sheaf of Miscellany Epigrams* (key to the discussion of biography below), allegedly written in Latin by Donne and translated into English by Jasper Mayne, perfectly demonstrates the effect of Donne’s affinity for manuscripts on the first printed canon. Though the *Sheaf*, unlike Donne’s poems, exists solely in its printed form, its ascription to Donne has drawn competing arguments from Edmund Gosse, Augustus Jessopp, E. K. Chambers, Baird Whitlock, and Dennis Flynn among others. The present study does not seek to determine authorship; the mere fact that it *remains* in question testifies to the instability of Donne’s manuscripts even within 20 years of his death. The exact verdicts issued by Donne scholars on these lewd exercises—four of the 60 concern an old bawd and her house—testify further to the challenge of canon construction. In contrast to Chambers, who suggests that Donne Jr. sought to pass off his own work as that of his father, Jessopp shrewdly concludes that Donne Jr. “had nothing to gain by pretending that his father wrote the Epigrams” and must, therefore, have thought them genuine.29 Gosse attributes the “fraud” to Jasper Mayne who, “ready to make a guinea by any fooling,” “palmed off his verses as really genuine on the credulity of Donne’s son.”30 Whitlock, in the twentieth century, derides the “prim, Victorian” attitude of those who dismiss the *Epigrams*, conceivably half of which may constitute the “epigrammata mea Latina” to which Donne alludes in a letter to Goodyear.31 The greater part of these arguments rests on speculation, but each derives its plausibility from the understood vulnerability of a canon posthumously constructed from manuscripts.

The publication history of Donne’s prose equally attests to the difficulties of compilation from manuscript. With the exception of reprints and Donne’s last sermon *Death’s Duel* (1632), the publication of Donne’s prose suffered greater delay than the bulk of his poems; it is likely not

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a coincidence that the first major body of prose to be printed, the *LXXX Sermons* (1640), is one that Donne personally prepared for his son to “hereafter make some use.”32 Adding to the volatility of the unprinted canon, between 1631 and the *LXXX Sermons*, Donne’s papers changed hands from his executor Henry King to Donne Jr., who subsequently directed publication of his father’s prose. A letter from King to Walton betrays a lingering resentment over what he implies was an uncordial appropriation: “How these were got out of my hands… and how lost both to me and your self, is not now seasonable to complain.”33 Whatever their quarrels, King, Walton, and Donne Jr. mutually emphasize the herculean labor involved in combing through the late Dean’s papers. Slightly reducing a figure given by King in the above letter, Walton relates in his *Life of John Donne* that in addition to Donne’s works, executors “found in his Studie” (and all in Donne’s own hand!) “the resultance of 1400. Authors,” as well as “all businesses that past of any publique consequence in this or any of our neighbour Kingdoms, [summarized] either in Latine, or in the Language of the Nation,” “divers Letters and Cases of Conscience… and divers other businesses of importance.”34 The volume and variety of text left by Donne may explain his son’s intimations of excavation in subtitling the Latin *Epigrams* as “lately found among his papers,” and the 1650 *Poems* as containing “divers copies under his own hand never before in print.”

**Censorship**

While the compilation of Donne’s canon constitutes *ipso facto* a construction of legacy, early print sources point to an additional influence on Donne’s literary formation, residing in the perceived necessity of navigating censoring authorities. In one sense, Donne’s publishers confronted the same content-based dangers that had influenced the author’s aversion to print;

33 Izaak Walton, *Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert* (1670), 2.
however, attention to public reception acquired greater consequence in the decades after Donne’s death, as censoring institutions continually reinforced the shifts in authority wrought by the Civil War. Intent on publication, Donne’s editors responded to the period’s political volatility by altering Donne’s presentation through his work to reflect authoritative expectations.

While authorities like the Revels Office, the Company of Stationers, and the court of High Commissions date to the sixteenth century, Cyndia Susan Clegg stresses that the activity of censoring bodies escalated in the years around the Civil War as censorship served increasingly as a tool for partisanship, both political and doctrinal. One of several efforts to enforce ideology through censorship occurred in 1637, when, as he admitted during his trial, Archbishop Laud encouraged the Attorney General to target “libelous, seditious, and mutinous bookes” printed “to the disturbance of the Peace of the Church and State,” by consolidating oversight of licensing under the Bishop of London and the Archbishop, and by transferring all enforcement authority to the court of High Commission and the Star Chamber, two courts operating, respectively, on behalf of the Church and Monarchy.35 Though sedition and libel seem fairly neutral grounds for censorship, Peter Heylyn in 1668 claimed a doctrinal agenda, in that the Archbishop was “intent upon all Advantages of keeping down the Genevian [Calvinist] Party,” growing in its opposition to Laud’s High-Church reforms.36 Substantiating Heylyn’s assessment, the Puritan William Prynne was among the Star Chamber’s high-profile targets in 1637. Indicative of the partisanship exercised through censorship, Puritans in the Long Parliament restored Prynne’s liberty and founded a committee to redress the illegality of the Chamber’s proceedings.

36 Peter Heylyn, Cyprianus Anglicus (1668), 362.
The Civil War and regicide redirected rather than abolished the threat of suppression, as Parliament responded to Caroline abuses with its own press restrictions. One such effort, the Licensing Order of 1643, prompted Milton’s enduring treatise on free press, *Areopagitica* (1644). Clegg records at least fifty-five occasions between 1643 and 1649 on which books were referred to the Committee on Printing, or authors and printers became the target of Parliamentary enforcement.\(^{37}\) Under Parliament and the Commonwealth, ideology provided a prominent basis for suppression. Granting rights of search and seizure to military and civil authorities, Parliament in 1647 outlawed any “reproach of the proceedings of Parliament and the Army,” and toughened its stance in 1649 by redefining treason as “Writing, Printing, or Publicly declaring That the Government is Tyrannical, Usurped, or Unlawful.”\(^{38}\) With censorship enforcing loyalty to the Commonwealth, printing the works of a preacher favored by the King mandated caution.

It is worth briefly acknowledging debates around the efficacy of Caroline and Commonwealth censorship. Some scholars, like Annabel Patterson, emphasize the restrictive influence of censoring authorities, while others like Jason McElligott argue that authors around the Civil War “were relatively free to produce a range of libelous, seditious or scandalous items.”\(^{39}\) Nevertheless, McElligott’s determination that the Cromwellian government saw licensing not “as a Berlin Wall blocking all potentially offensive material, but as a ‘Keep off the Grass’ sign which would deter most transgressors and allow for… selective punishment,” points to a feature of press censorship indispensable for examining publication from the perspective of editors: as much as a “Keep of the Grass” approach makes censorship less constant, it also makes censorship less


\(^{38}\) Ibid.

predictable. However (in)effective censorship in the period proved, it is clear from the state of Donne’s works printed around the Civil War that his editors feared and took steps within the texts to avoid scandal that might lead to suppression or, far more fatal to the enterprise of publishing the canon, utter loss.

Cognizance of censorship prompted several textual manipulations in one of Donne’s earliest posthumous volumes, 1633’s *Poems* and *Juvenilia*, printed separately but bound together in numerous extant copies. In an explicit imposition of censoring authority, the first edition of *Juvenilia* includes two printed licenses from the Master of Revels, Henry Herbert (Fig. 1). Interestingly, the inclusion of Herbert’s license reveals both the reality and volatility of contemporary censorship. The State Papers indicate that less than a month later on November 14, the Star Chamber (on Charles’ orders) summoned Herbert to give an account “why he warranted the book of Dr. Dun’s Paradoxes to be printed.” From the “odd-looking” *Juvenilia*, Gosse infers

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40 Ibid., 99.
that Herbert had allowed scandalous material escape his expurgating pen—interestingly, a copy of the 1633 Poems reputedly owned by Charles lacks the Juvenilia.\textsuperscript{42} Joseph Quincey Adams implies an alternative explanation, in that licensing the Juvenilia contributed to the Master’s efforts to assert authority over print in addition to his proper domain, the stage.\textsuperscript{43} Perhaps Herbert was called to account not for a failure to censor, but for exceeding his office.

In addition to affixed licenses, censorship left a constitutive mark on the accompanying Poems, in which conspicuous dashes replace several lines from two of Donne’s biting court satires (Fig. 2). The excisions appear in brackets below. From “Satire II”:

\begin{quote}
To out-doe [Dildoes,] and out-ufe Jewes;
To out-drinke the sea, to out-fweare the [Letanie]. (ll. 32-33)
\end{quote}

From the same:

\begin{quote}
[And to every fluitor lye in every thing,
Like a Kings favourite, yea like a King;]
…for
[Baftardy abounds not in Kings titles, nor
Symonie and Sodomy in Churchmens lives,]
As theſe things do in him; by theſe he thrives. (ll. 69-76)
\end{quote}

From “Satire IV,” describing the treasonous contagion of a courtier:

\begin{quote}
…I found
[That as burnt venome Leachers do growe found
By giving others their foares, I might growe
Guilty, and he free:] Therefore I did fnew
All fignes of loathing. (ll. 133-137)
\end{quote}

Onanism, syphilis, religious flippancy, and jibes against monarchy make it obvious why these lines were singled out for removal in the maiden edition of Donne’s poems. Subsequent editions similarly omit lines, words, and entire poems (“Elegy XIX” was not printed until 1669) whose prurient or seditious tenor might invite suppression.

\textsuperscript{42} Gosse, The Life and Letters of John Donne, vol.1, 16-17; Charles’ reputed copy is housed at the British Library, catalogued G.11415.
Though the rationale for excision is obvious, by whom these lines were cut proves less clear. The text’s two entries in the Stationers’ Register in 1632 offer evidence for C. A. Patrides’ claim that the removal represents an act of institutional censorship.\textsuperscript{44} The first entry on September 13 licenses Donne’s “booke of verses and Poems,” but withholds license from “five satires, [and] the first, second, Tenth, Eleaventh and Thirteenth Elegies” until Marriot “bringes lawfull authority.”\textsuperscript{45} Marriot appears again on October 31 for “five Satires written by Doctor J: Dun… excepted in his last entrance.”\textsuperscript{46} Perhaps acquiring a license required Marriot to make the omissions visible in the 1633 Poems—though cuts from two satires do not fully account for the delay applied to all five. If, alternatively, one accepts W. Milgate’s view that the cuts show the prudence of a “wise and politque editor,” then the decision not simply to expurgate offensive lines, but to publicize their omission with a series of dashes may represent an attempt to signal to authorities the printers’ willingness to conform.\textsuperscript{47} The extant evidence encourages conjecture. Whether mandated or pre-emptive, however,

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure2.png}
\caption{Lines omitted from “Satire II” in Poems by J. D. (1633). Accessed through the Rare Book Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 287.
these omissions demonstrate the impact of publishers’ responsiveness to institutional censorship on Donne’s presentation through his works.

**Paratext and Preservation**

As with conspicuous omissions, the paratexts of Donne’s posthumous volumes speak to the desire among editors and publishers to navigate censorship, in a pattern increasingly apparent in step with the mounting instability of England’s political landscape. It is notable, for example, that during the war, as anonymous and unlicensed texts proliferated, the title page of *Biathanatos* pronounces itself “Published by Authority,” perhaps advertising Donne Jr’s or the printer’s willingness to color within the lines, even as those lines were subject to change.⁴⁸

The dedicatory epistles Donne Jr. began contributing to his father’s works in 1640 provide an extensive body of evidence for the role of paratexts in skirting suppression. In contrast to the deferential epistles Donne himself prefixed to the *Devotions* and various sermons, Donne Jr.’s appeals for patronage evince an overbearing anxiety around authoritative interference, an anxiety validated by Donne Jr.’s experience during and after the war. Though they give an incomplete picture, appearances of Donne Jr.’s name in the State Papers indicate several instances of suspicion and harassment by Parliamentary forces in the 1640s. A petition in the Journals of the House of Lords on June 14, 1648 confirms that he had been “arrested, contrary to the Privilege of Parliament” while chaplain to Basil Earl of Denbigh.⁴⁹ Though Donne Jr. did not sit in Parliament, his service to Denbigh ought to have guaranteed immunity; John Selden cites the precedent that “during the Parliament,” “the Lords Knights &c. and their men, and servants [including the five chaplains to which Earls were entitled] should not be arrested or otherwise imprisoned.”⁵₀

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⁴⁸ For information about unlicensed printing see Clegg, *Press Censorship in Caroline England*, 222.
Jr.’s arrest and the grounds of his appeal attest to the indispensability of patronage in the volatile climate of the Civil War.

Another apparent confrontation with authority occurred in June 1643, when the State Papers record a “restraint upon Dr. Donne being taken off” in reference to the restoration of 12 rings and “a bag of money” deposited with Colonel Edmund Harvey, who is elsewhere recorded as seizing “money, plate, arms, ammunition, &c., supposed to belong to Papists, malignants and other ill-affected persons.”51 The ambiguous “restraint” may have arisen from an ongoing dispute, discussed by Margaret Beese, between Donne Jr. and Richard Titled over a rectory at Ufford.52 By 1643, the private quarrel seems to have embroiled Donne Jr. in Parliament’s trial against the Archbishop; in the course of invectives against Laud’s “ecclesiastical abuses” and his “investing himself with Papal tyrannical power,” the State Papers record a complaint from Titled, alleging that, when presented with a petition over the Ufford parsonage, the Archbishop “not ignorant of the premises, refused [the] petitioner and admitted Dr. Donne upon a pretended title.”53 The entry does not simply name Donne Jr. for the sake of narrative detail, but excoriates him as an agent of Caroline despotism embodied in the courts specifically targeted by the Long Parliament: “to force the possession [of the parsonage]… [Donne] caused [Titled] and his friends to be subpoenaed into the Star Chamber and…to appear in the High Commission Court.” Whether or not this episode explains the reference to “Dr. Donne’s restraint,” the fact that his release involved the signatures

53 This and the following quotation from State Papers, Domestic, 1641-43, 526.
of figures like Sir Henry Vane (to whom Donne Jr. later dedicated the *Essays in Divinity*) likely reinforced the necessity of protective patronage.\textsuperscript{54}

The content of Donne Jr.’s dedicatory epistles consistently centers on pleas for protection from their influential recipients, often with explicit reference to the current climate. Describing the war through an allusion to Virgil, his dedication of the *Letters* (1651) to Lady Bridget Dunch likens the task of publishing his father’s work to Aeneas’ rescuing Anchises from the flames of Troy.\textsuperscript{55} More directly concerned with the role of politics in the fate of a text, Donne Jr.’s dedication of *Biathanatos* to Lord Philip Herbert clearly demonstrates the influence of the Civil War on the impetus to preserve the canon in print. Though his father forbade “the Presse, and the Fire,” Donne Jr. justifies publication on the grounds that he “could finde no certayne way to defend it from the one, but by committing it to the other.”\textsuperscript{56} Importantly, though he claims to harbor equal fear for those who might destroy the text and those who might appropriate it for atheism, the fact that Donne Jr. chose the press over the fire (a more effective recourse against the latter group) testifies to the greater immediacy of his fear for the text’s being “utterly lost.” Indeed, it is for this potentiality that the epistle allots a potent explanation: “since the beginning of this War, my Study [has] been often searched, all my Books (and al-most my braines, by their continuall allarums) sequestred, for the use of the Committee”—the Committee of Safety, on which Herbert’s father sat. Cognizant of the war and prioritizing preservation, Donne Jr. wisely appeals to Herbert’s influence to “defend this Innocent.”

Though they appear formulaic, the fact that Donne Jr.’s dedications consistently reflect transfers of power substantiates the sincerity of his pleas. Before the war, he dedicated the *LXXX*

\begin{footnotesize}
\bibitem{54} State Papers, Addenda, March 1625 to January 1649, 650.
\bibitem{55} Donne, *Letters*, A3r-A4v.
\bibitem{56} All quotations in this paragraph from Donne, *Biathanatos*, ¶3-¶4.
\end{footnotesize}
Sermons to Charles I; L Sermons, printed after the regicide, couples a dedication to Denbigh with an appeal to the three new commissioners of the Great Seal (John Lisle, Richard Keble, and Bulstrode Whitelocke); and in his dedication of the Essays in Divinity (1651) to Sir Henry Vane the younger, a figure instrumental in the creation of the New Model Army, Donne Jr. goes so far as to compare Vane’s martial prowess in expelling monarchy to the angel’s sword defending Paradise from “ADAM himself, who was the first and lawful Heir.”

When England restored the Monarchy in 1660, Donne Jr. restored the original allegiances of his epistles by dedicating the XXVI Sermons (1661) to Charles II. Remarkably, the consistency with which Donne Jr.’s epistles had reflected changes in authority prompted him to offer an awkward defense of his turn-coating:

For the Second Volume [of sermons], I was forced to take Protection from those that were then in Authority, lest… they might have incurred the danger, First, to have been voted No Sermons, and then, that No Sermons should have bin burnt by the hand of the Publick Executioner.

In addition to conveying the burden of conscience imposed by the Civil War and Interregnum, Donne Jr.’s self-justification, like the dedication to Biathanatos, places his editorial motivations in sharp focus: with the period’s political uncertainty and the transience inherent to manuscript, ideology became secondary to simply preserving the canon in printed form.

In perhaps the most notable effect on Donne’s legacy produced by the program of preserving his canon, Donne Jr.’s dedications not only implore but also rationalize protection by bringing his father’s work in conformity with the dispositions of recipients. Since their shared genre and printer limits confounding variables, the first two editions of Donne’s sermons exemplify a trend visible across several texts published between 1631 and 1661. Addressed to Charles, the dedication to the LXXX Sermons (1640) preemptively averts scandal by citing

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58 John Donne, XXVI Sermons (1661), B.
encouragement “from the Person most intrusted by your Majestie in the government of the Church,” i.e. Archbishop Laud, who, one should recall, also represented one of the nation’s chief censoring authorities after 1637. More importantly, Donne Jr. assuages the anxiety revealed in his reference to Laud by interpreting the sermons as conducive to Charles’ union of church and monarchy; friends “could not preserve their piety to [Donne], without taking leave to inscribe the same with your Majesties sacred Name, [and giving] a hope of a long continuance both to these VVorks of his, and to his gratitude.” An accurate understanding of Donne, his son claims, necessitates merging devotion to God and to the King.

With a new government in 1649, however, Donne Jr.’s interpretation of his father’s sermons executes an about-face. As described in the dedication, the L Sermons no longer contain equal parts Church and State, but instead represent disembodied shows of piety that may “outlive the very Churches that they were preached in.” In a striking departure from the allegiances of the previous volume, Donne Jr. draws an analogy between the dissolved Church of England and paganism, out of whose justly-razed temples and idols “we are suffered to know [through writings] those religions, that we are not allowed to practice.” Notably, marking a clear union between Donne’s presentation in print and Donne Jr.’s effort to eschew suppression, the overall structures of the LXXX Sermons and L Sermons implement the philosophies expressed in their dedications; where the decidedly Anglican 1640 volume organizes sermons according to the Church calendar, the 1649 volume lists sermons according to location and audience.

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59 All quotations in this paragraph from John Donne, LXXX Sermons (1640), A3r-A4r.
60 All quotations in this paragraph from John Donne, L Sermons (1649), A2r-v.
Conclusion

The forthcoming discussion hinges on recognizing Donne’s seventeenth-century canon as something invented, not a gift delivered from on high. Donne’s renunciation of the press coupled with the state of his papers made error and a perennial incompletion inevitable, and while omissions pose little threat to one volume among many (as in the present), in the seventeenth century these obstacles influenced the only available canon of Donne’s work. Of greater importance than accidental variations, the desire to preserve Donne’s canon in print necessitated not only compiling, but concurrently altering his works in order to avoid suppression, particularly as control of the press grafted onto struggles for political power. Through prudent excisions and epistolary requests for patrons’ protection, Donne’s publishers tailored his works to the proclivities of changing authorities. Because the texts in which they appeared constituted the only extant canon, these dedications, the allegiances they imply, the interpretations they offer, and the organizing principles they establish dictated what seventeenth-century readers would receive as Donne’s own work. The canon represents not merely a construction, but one rooted in its context.
Part II:
“Donne’s” Monument

“...thou hast expressed thine own Image; from thy third booke; the Scriptures, where thou hadst written all in the Old, and then lightedst us a candle to read it by, in the New Testament.” (Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, Expostulation 9)

The foundational impetus to print contributed to a larger effort in the 30 years after Donne’s death to codify the memory of Donne himself. For the printer of Donne’s 1633 Poems, Donne’s works served as an all-sufficient monument to “the memory of the Author”; his preface informs readers that, in contrast to “other works, where perhaps there is need of it, to prepare men to digest such stuffe as follows,” this volume relegates “Encomiums of the Author” to the end, “for whoever reads the rest so farre, shall perceive that there is no occasion to use them to that [preparatory] purpose.”

Though expressed early in the timeline of canon formation, the printer’s notion of Donne’s works as sui-monumental represents a minority view among Donne’s editors and commemorators in the seventeenth century. Even as they stress Donne’s literary skill, the encomia dismissed by the printer reveal, by their very existence, a keenness to supplement Donne’s bare texts. Beyond auxiliary encomia, such supplementation altered the presentation of Donne’s own words. In his message to readers of the XXVI Sermons in 1661, Donne Jr. relates the necessity of editorial influence in reifying the understood relationship between Donne’s canon and personal monument: “I did purposely select these [sermons] from amongst all the rest, for, being to finish this Monument, which I was to erect to his Memory, I ought to reserve those materials that were set forth with the best Polish.”

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61 John Donne, Poems by J. D. (1633), A2.
62 Donne, XXVI Sermons (1661), B2.
Concurrent with the addition of texts to Donne’s monument, the publication of Izaak Walton’s formative *Life and Death of John Donne* (hereinafter called *Life*) in 1640 and its expansion in 1658 established a cohesive life-narrative whose organization and celebratory aim provided external validation for an ongoing effort to impress Donne’s biography onto his works. For Donne Jr. and Walton especially, the notion that Donne’s writing might speak for itself confronted an obstacle inherent to the canon, one that would hound Victorians like Jessopp and Grosart: how to preserve the memory of Dr. Donne, Dean of St. Paul’s against writings that attest the man described by Richard Baker in 1643 as “a great visiter of Ladies, a great frequenter of Playes, [and] a great writer of conceited Verses.”  

The varied character of Donne’s work brought the publication of his canon and the erection of his monument into a conflict whose resolution required not simply formulating a biography alongside Donne’s writings, but applying an interpretation to the texts themselves through their appearance in Walton’s *Life*, paratexts, encomia, and volume organization. Despite Donne’s variability, the effort to compose his works into a monument had, by the 1650s, developed into a unified theory of a dichotomous Donne that would color the author’s reception from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. According to the model codified in biography and imposed onto Donne’s printed texts, the rake Jack Donne of secular aspirations and amorous verse had yielded to Donne’s true self, the reverend divine, by whose light one may safely read a destined divinity in early writings.

The Two Donnes

The dichotomous model that would guide criticism for centuries after Donne’s death originated with a pattern set by Donne himself after ordination. Within the bounds of the press and the fire prescribed for *Biathanatos*, Donne requests that Robert Ker let any reader know “that it is

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a Book written by Jack Donne, and not by D. Donne.”64 A 1623 letter to the Duke of Buckingham in Spain effects a similar bifurcation in reporting that the books of Donne’s library span from the “Mistresse of my youth, Poetry, to the wyfe of mine age, Divinity.”65 Donne’s insistence on a split self registers as the kind of speech “betwixt jest and earnest” that Robert Burton identifies in Johannes Kepler.66 Dr. Donne has not extricated himself from Jack so far as to stop circulating his work, and the second letter tacitly admits that the poetry symbolizing Donne’s former self cohabits with the texts of his current divinity. Donne seems to have taken the advice of Tranio in the Taming of the Shrew: “Let’s be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray, / Or so devote to Aristotle’s checks / As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured” (1.1.31-33).

Walton’s Life

Although Donne himself invited readers to consider his life as split into two stages, the most significant effort to organize Donne’s biography according to a distinction between Jack and Dr. Donne appeared posthumously in the form of Walton’s Life. Published and revised four times in the seventeenth century (1640, ’58, ’70, and ’75), Walton’s Life centers on the erection of Donne’s monument, embodied in the themes of memory and legacy. Aiming to transfer “love to [Donne’s] memory” into “fame beyond the forgetfull grave,” Walton in his 1658 dedication to Robert Holt of Aston provides the raison d’être for the ensuing work, that Donne’s “life ought to be the example of more then that age in which he died.”67 To that end, Walton postures the Life as itself a crafted monument: “this copy, though… short of the Originall, will present you with some

64 Donne, Letters, 22.
65 Bald, John Donne: A Life, 446.
67 Walton, Life of John Donne (1658), 2; A8r-v. Unless otherwise notes, Walton is quoted in the 1658 edition.
features not unlike your dead friend, and with fewer blemishes and more ornaments than when ’twas first made publique."68

Walton’s goal of fusing memory and legacy into a monument appears within the Life through his focus on the marble statue of Donne installed in St. Paul’s after his death. Rendering Donne’s monument instrumental to his legacy, Walton utilizes the statue’s design, creation, and installation as springboards for lauding Donne’s character. The “gratefull unknown friend” who funds “the making of his Monument,” for instance, mirrors Walton in his belief that “Dr. Donne’s memory ought to be perpetuated.”69 Somewhat humorously, the Life’s clunky defense of Donne’s lithic immortalization highlights its indispensability to Walton.

[W]e want not sacred examples to justifie the desire of having our memory to out-live our lives: which I mention, because Dr. Donne, by the perswasion of Dr. Fox, yielded at this very time to have a Monument made for him; but Dr. Fox undertook not to perswade how or what it should be; that was left to Dr. Donne himself.70

Confronted by a clash between Donne’s humility and his desire for longevity, Walton equivocates. Donne’s acquiescence to a monument conforms to divine examples, which, nonetheless, Donne emulated only at Fox’s urging. Lest the reader dismiss the resulting monument as an arbitrary imposition devoid of significance, however, Walton assures that Donne himself chose the design. Cementing the importance of Donne’s monument, the 1640 Life concludes with a full folio-page transcription of Donne’s epitaph in St. Paul’s.

Life during War Time

Keeping in view the goal of investigating Donne’s legacy in reference to the Civil War, it is necessary to note that Walton’s Life—and focus on Donne’s monument—is not a formulaic commemoration free from temporal or local constraint, but one rooted in a movement of

68 Ibid., A7v.
69 Ibid., 120.
70 Ibid., 111.
antiquarianism active in the years surrounding the Civil War. Allied with humanism and the scientific revolution, antiquarianism designates the interest among “Antiquaries” like William Camden and Elias Ashmole to engage the past empirically through catalogues and collections of items like documents, coins, and (importantly for Walton) monuments. Although sometimes manifested in a “cabinet of curiosities” like that which Ashmole donated to Oxford, these collections were often textual; Camden’s *Brittania* conducts a topographical survey of Great Britain and Ireland. Importantly, though operative in the previous century, antiquarian preservation assumed new urgency around the Civil War, due to the threat of tangible loss often deliberately conducted by warring factions—recall Donne Jr.’s printing *Biahathanatos* to save it from the fire. Emblematic of a greater trend, Sir Thomas Browne’s *Repertorium* collects memories from figures affiliated with the cathedral church in Norwich, in order to save from “oblivion” the burial places of “considerable persons” defaced in the “late civil wars.”

Walton’s attention to Donne’s monument alone suggests his connection to antiquarianism, but further evidence for the *Life*’s contextuality appears in the work Walton published between the first and second editions of the *Life, The Complete Angler* (1653). Walton’s aside in reference to “Doctor Nowel sometimes Dean of S. Paul’s,” that “his Monument stands yet undefaced,” conveys a fear for longevity akin to Browne’s, and similarly derived from the volatile climate of the Civil War and Commonwealth. The *Angler* profoundly echoes passages in the *Life* in its antiquarian rationale that “such a one [as Nowell] should stand as a rule for faith and manners to… posteritie.”

As evidence for the war’s impact on Walton’s mindset, between 1640 and 1658 Walton altered the priority of adjectives applied to Donne’s death from “thus memorable, thus exemplary was the

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71 Ashmole’s donation is the origin of the modern Ashmolean Museum.
74 This and the following from Izaak Walton, *Complete Angler* (1653), 30-1.
death of this most excellent man” to “thus excellent, thus exemplary was the Death of this memorable man.”

Donne remains excellent, exemplary, and memorable, but it is his memory that occupies Walton in the post-war edition.

Walton’s St. Donne

Within the framework of antiquarianism, Walton’s monument to Donne rests on molding the events of Donne’s life into a singular impression of Donne as a modern saint—or, at least, the closest Protestant alternative. Importantly, despite Walton’s claim to “either speak [his] own knowledge, or from the testimony of such as dare do any thing, rather that speak an untruth,” Novarr observes from careful examination of the Life that Walton “often knew more than he told, and that the ‘edifying’ quality was achieved by him through innumerable carefully chosen words and literary stratagems.”

This study does not endeavor to amend Walton’s narrative, but the predominance of Walton’s strategic narration in service to a monument of sainthood stands at the core of Donne’s biographically oriented canon-formation, and therefore demands consideration.

Though Walton rarely eschews an opportunity to detail Donne’s virtues or to excuse his missteps, chiefly his clandestine marriage to Anne More, Walton’s account of Donne’s life points beyond human excellence and elevates Donne through analogy with recognized holy figures and through narrative parallels with ancient hagiographies. The Life opens by presupposing the sainthood it aims to prove, invoking Donne in language one envisions as being uttered from an alter: “if the Authors glorious spirit which now is in heaven, can have the leisure to look down and see me… in the midst of this officious duty, confident I am he wil not disdain this well-meant sacrifice to his memory.”

In service to his portrait of sainthood, Walton regularly aligns Donne’s

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75 Walton, Life (1640), B6v; Walton, Life (1658), 117.
76 Novarr, Making of Walton’s Lives, 25; Walton, Life (1658), A10r.
77 Walton, Life (1658), 4.
worldly virtues with their immortal scriptural and patristic counterparts. Relating the death of Donne’s wife in 1617, which the *Life* strategically antedates to the year of Donne’s ordination, Walton likens Donne’s condition to that of Job or the Israelites “mourning by the rivers of Babylon,” before casting Anne’s departure as Donne’s final step towards Augustinian disengagement: “he became crucified to the world, and all those vanities, those imaginary pleasures that are dayly acted on that restlesse stage.”78

On the whole, both the structure and content of Walton’s narrative seal Donne’s saintliness through a conventionally hagiographic fixation on Donne’s blessed death. As Novarr writes, Walton’s *Life* “build[s] gradually a picture of such piety that it can be exceeded only by the extreme holiness of the death.”79 Its priority in Walton’s mind results in close to a third of the narrative transpiring after Donne enters his final illness. In a parallel with Eusebius’ fourth-century panegyric the *Life of Constantine*, Walton’s account of Donne’s saintly death commences with a self-eulogizing final sermon.80 Like the Carthaginian martyr Perpetua and her companions—celebrated in the Church on March 7—who each receive the manner of death for which they prayed, Donne writes in a letter reproduced by Walton, “It hath been my desire, and God may be pleased to grant it, that I might dye in the Pulpit” or “dye the sooner by occasion of those labours.”81 Already looking beyond the present world, Donne counters

friends (who with sorrow saw his sicknesse had left him onely so much flesh as did cover his bones) doubted his strength to performe [the sermon]; and therefore dissuaded him from undertaking it, assuring him however, it was like to shorten his daies; but… he would not doubt that God who in many weaknesses had assisted

78 Ibid., 52.
80 Eusebius’ influence on Walton would be a worthwhile topic for a future study. Interestingly, Constantine, too, prepares his own funeral monument. For more on Walton and Eusebius, see Novarr, 499-502.
him with an unexpected strength, would not now withdraw it in his last employment; professing an holy ambition to performe that sacred work."82

Walton heightens the implication of martyrdom in Donne’s final labor by likening his ensuing weariness to that of St. Stephen’s corpse. On the “day of his dissolution,” Donne attains peak saintliness; “as his body melted away and vapoured into spirit, his soul having… some revelation of the Beatificall Vision, he said, I were miserable if I might not die; and after those words closed many periods of his faint breath by saying often, Thy kingdome come, thy will be done.”83

In a way that accomplishes thematic harmony, Donne’s monument undergirds the saintliness of his death; just as Donne’s saintly characteristics compose his monument in the Life, his physical monument replicates his preparation for the next world. Donne assumes a pose:

[H]aving put off all his clothes, [he] had his sheet put on him, and so tied with knots at his head and feet, and his hands so placed as dead bodies are usually fitted for the grave. Upon this Urn he thus stood with his eyes shut, and so much of the sheet turned aside as might shew his lean, pale, and death-like face, which was purposely turned toward the East, from whence he expected the second coming of our Saviour.84

As if afraid that the reader will miss the interdependence of Donne’s monument and his sainthood, Walton adds at the end of the 1658 edition that Donne’s monument represents (note a switch to the present tense) “a Statue indeed so like Dr. Donne, that… it seems to breath faintly, and Posterity shall look upon it as a kind of artificiall Miracle.”85

Donne the Saint and Donne the Rake in Walton

Foundational to Donne’s legacy in the Civil War period, Walton’s elevation of Donne to sainthood requires bifurcating Donne into his younger and older selves, while organizing the narrative so as to overshadow the former through the eminence of the latter. Novarr states Walton’s

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82 Ibid., 103-5.
83 Ibid., 110; 116.
84 Ibid., 112.
85 Ibid., 120.
predicament succinctly: although “the venerable old Dean... determined the impression that Walton gives in the *Life,*” at “his death, [Donne] had been in holy orders for only sixteen years,” forcing Walton “to narrate the story of the more than forty secular years and still emphasize the last.”\(^{86}\) Structurally, Walton addresses the incongruity of the younger and older Donne by simply weighting his narrative towards the later years. Donne takes holy orders before the *Life*’s midpoint. More subtly, Walton defends Dr. Donne from Jack Donne’s contamination through a careful manipulation of narrative chronology by which Walton establishes Donne’s divinity as the major premise of his syllogism of Donne’s life before addressing his youth in detail; only in the *Life*’s final third, with Donne’s deathbed scene in the periphery, does Walton allow “Digression” (Walton’s own term) into Donne’s early years.\(^{87}\)

Despite suppressing much of Donne’s early life and, at times, treating ordination as a clean break between Jack and Dr. Donne, Walton’s biography additionally aims to salve the young Donne in the sanctity of the old by painting the venerable Dean as an outcome foreshadowed in apparent deviations from saintliness early in life. In keeping with Novarr’s and Harold Nicolson’s attestation that the *Life* “is written in the deductive manner,” much of Walton’s testimony assumes that the Deanery represented Donne’s inevitable destination.\(^{88}\) Uncomfortable with the prospect that Donne might have prospered as a lawyer, never to attain the supreme sanctity of the saintly Dean, for instance, Walton dismisses Donne’s legal studies at Lincoln’s Inn as an undertaking that “never served him for other use than an Ornament and Self-satisfaction.”\(^{89}\) Similarly, Walton’s

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\(^{89}\) Walton, *Life* (1658), 8.
decision to gloss over Donne’s youthful Catholicism perhaps reflects his unwillingness to picture Donne as a saint for another church.

Several episodes in the *Life* imply that the preeminent figures of England’s civil and intellectual centers spent Donne’s early years impatiently waiting for him to enter his destined career in the ministry. Walton misrepresents the circumstances of Donne’s *Pseudo-Martyr* in order to cast James as among the first to identify Donne’s latent aptitude for divinity. Though Donne’s own dedication claims inspiration from James’ “conversation with [his] Subiects, by way of [his] Bookes,” Walton describes such “conversation” as mealtime exchanges with the King, who “apprehended such a validity and clearnesse in [Donne’s] stating the Questions, and his Answers to them, that his Majesty commanded him to bestow some time in drawing the Arguments into a method.”90 Immediately after publication, Walton fabricates, James “perswaded Mr. Donne to enter into the Ministry,” leading Walton to attribute the subsequent delay of “three years” (in fact, five years) to Donne’s studying Greek and Hebrew.91 Walton’s wish to see Donne’s ordination as inevitable similarly motivates his account of Donne’s honorary DD from Cambridge. Walton claims that “Doctor Harsnet… knowing [Donne] to be the Author of the *Pseudo-Martyr*, required no other proof of his abilities, but proposed [the degree] to the University, who presently assented and exprest a gladnesse, that they had such an occasion to intitle [Donne] to be theirs.”92 In reality, as McCullough points out and as Donne himself knew, “the honorary DD that James wrested from the university’s heads” served more to threaten Donne’s standing in the ministry than to affirm a longstanding faith in his abilities.93

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92 Ibid., 50.
The extent to which Walton dwells upon particulars of Donne’s early life directly corresponds with the extent to which they foreshadow destined saintliness. That Donne “in the most unsettled days of his youth” spent from “four in a morning… till past ten… employed in study” reveals the seeds of the “continued study” that defined Donne’s later life as a preacher, during which “after his Sermon he never gave his eyes rest, till he had chosen out a new Text, and that night cast his Sermon into a forme, and his Text into divisions.”94 Cleverly, having established the venerable Dean as the true Donne, Walton alchemizes apparent deviation into a further argument for sainthood. That Donne underwent conversion, that he eloped with the niece of his employer, and that his course to ordination suffered delay need not, Walton implies, challenge our image of the reverend Dr. Donne. In-so-doing, Donne gave “the English Church… a second St. Augustine”; “none was so like him before his conversion; none so like St. Ambrose after it; and if his youth had the infirmities of the one, his age had the excellencies of the other, the learning and holinesse of both.”95 Like the errant turned arch-apostle, “where he had been a Saul… in his irregular youth,” he became “a Paul, and preach[ed] salvation to his brethren.”96 Even so, Walton’s strategic structuring makes clear that only by first grasping Donne’s saintliness can one safely reflect on his early deviation.

**Walton and Donne’s Canon**

Although not Walton’s chief focus, Donne’s works emerge from the *Life* bearing the imprint of Walton’s bifurcated Donne and his emphasis on divinity. In addition to forgoing a single mention of Donne’s poetry until the digression of the *Life*’s last third, Walton takes care to discard Donne’s poems as “facetiously Composed and carelesly scattered” and to falsely relegate their

95 Ibid., 44.
96 Ibid., 56.
composition to “before the twentieth year of his age.” As with Walton’s short treatment of legal training, the minimization of verse as youthful facetiousness reassures the reader that although he dabbled in poetry, the reverend Dean never threatened to become a poet instead. Instances in which Walton exceeds cursory reference to the young Donne’s works reinforce the pattern set by the *Life* of transforming seeming deviance into a foretaste of divinity. Walton acknowledges Donne’s authorship of “an exact and laborious Treatise concerning *self-murther*, called *Biathanatos*,” which, although “written in his younger dayes,” shows his “perfect[ion] in the *Civil and Canon Law.*” Donne’s early affinity for verse also transitioned into his ministry in the form of “Divine Sonnets.” Texts more difficult to reconcile with Donne’s divinity, Walton simply excludes from his version of the canon.

In what is simultaneously the *Life*’s deepest and least conspicuous imposition of biographical interpretation onto Donne’s work, Walton guides readers’ understanding of Donne’s texts through selective emulation. In addition to Walton’s explicit quotations from “Hymn to God the Father” and poems exchanged with “that man of primitive piety Mr. George Herbert,” Novarr and Simpson have shown that Walton borrows *without citation* themes from Donne’s *Sermon of Commemoration* for Lady Danvers, and phrasing from Donne’s description of preachers speaking as “angels out of clouds” in his poem “To Mr. Tillman.” All the more significant for their inconspicuity, these unacknowledged allusions subtly weave textual interpretation together with an interpretation of Donne’s life in a way that treats life and letters as already mutually reinforcing.

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97 Ibid., 75-6.
98 Ibid., 88.
99 Ibid., 76.
100 Ibid., 81.
Listed with *Pseudo-Martyr* as one of only two texts acknowledged in Walton’s marginalia in 1658, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* provides Walton with a stylistic framework whose emulation most substantially imprints hagiography onto Donne’s canon. Though he ignores flippant texts like the *Paradoxes & Problems*, Walton eagerly incorporates this “Sacred picture of spirituall extasies” into his monument to Donne’s sainthood.\(^\text{102}\) As characterized by Anthony Raspa, Donne’s *Devotions* hinge on “word and type,” scripture and—the present concern—historical events and figures understood as exemplary prototypes “for judging… moral character and mystical meaning.”\(^\text{103}\) Blending the conceits of his poems with the technique of scriptural allusion David Colclough identifies in the sermons, Donne weaves his steps in sickness with biblical examples so tightly that his own words are often distinguishable from those of figures like David and Job only through typography and marginal notes.\(^\text{104}\) Donne’s introduction of sources within the body of text serves to identify his condition more strongly with that of the cited type; phrases akin to “I am fallen into the hands of God with David, and with David I see that his Mercies are great” saturate the *Devotions*.\(^\text{105}\)

With the effect of uniting Donne’s literary style with his biography, Walton’s *Life* mimics the *Devotions’* technique of aligning present conditions with biblical prototypes. Like Jacob, Donne endures separation from his lawful wife; before taking orders, Donne asks “Davids thankful question, Lord who am I that thou art so mindful of me?”; and upon Anne’s death, Donne pours “forth his passions like Job.”\(^\text{106}\) Walton’s marginal citations guarantee that he had read the *Devotions*, and comparison between the biblical analogies in the *Life* and the straightforward

\(^\text{103}\) Raspa, introduction to *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, xix.
\(^\text{106}\) Walton, *Life* (1658), 20; 42; 53
quotations preferred in Walton’s *Life of Mr. George Herbert* (1670) marks the parallel between the *Devotions* and the *Life* as a deliberate stylistic choice, not Walton’s default method of citation. Walton’s imitation of Donne acquires greater weight given that, rather than supplementing readers’ existing knowledge, Walton evidently conceives of the *Life* as a textual introduction, preparing readers to take up a copy of the *Devotions* where they “may see, the most secret thoughts that possesst [Donne’s] soul.”

Thus, Walton goes beyond paying homage to Donne’s style; he emulates the style of a work that epitomizes Donne’s piety, makes that pious style the language of Donne’s life itself, and prepares readers to apply the same paradigm in reverse to their subsequent (selective) reading of Donne’s work.

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107 Ibid., 72.

Figure 3. Walton’s poem from 1635 duplicated in the Poems of 1650 Accessed through the Rare Book Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
1635 Poems

Walton provides a necessary starting point for understanding the influence of Donne’s monument on his seventeenth-century canon, not only for his thoroughness in uniting textual criticism with a bifurcated view of Donne’s life, but also for the scope of his influence outside the Life. Walton’s role in shaping Donne’s canon around biography in fact began prior to the Life, with the second edition of Poems in 1635. That Walton had a hand in the 1635 volume is incontrovertible. In addition to the fact that his will names Richard Marriot, the son of the Poems’ printer, as his “old friend,” Walton’s contribution of a poem to the frontispiece indicates his involvement (Fig. 3). More importantly, the nature of Walton’s contribution to the 1635 Poems replicates the Life’s paradigm in a way that renders the printed canon dependent on biography. Walton’s poem establishes a contrast between Donne’s “youth,” which “Most count their golden Age,” and his “later yeares,” when “youths Drosse, mirth, & wit” yielded to “nothing but the Praise / Of th[e] Creator.” Novarr and Gosse also attribute to Walton the “Hexastichon ad Bibliopolam Incerti” added in 1635 to compliment the “Hexastichon” of 1633. Mirroring the biographical bifurcation expressed in Walton’s poem, the “Hexastichon Incerti” commends the printing of Donne’s verse for the sake of Donne’s “Eternitie,” but recommends “a better way; / Print but his Sermons.” If not written by Walton, the understanding that Donne’s monument requires only—“but”—his sermons certainly supports Walton’s conception of the older divine as the true Donne.

Walton’s interpretation of Donne’s biography dictates the overall makeup of the 1635 Poems through a series of modifications that carry over into all subsequent seventeenth-century editions of Donne’s verse. At the outset, the fact that the 1635 volume adds Walton’s poem but

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110 John Donne, Poems by J. D. (1635), A4v.
shows no change from 1633 in either printer or bookseller identifies Walton as a probable source for the substantial changes between the editions. As Novarr observes, considerable overlap between the letters and poems cited in Walton’s *Life* and those added in 1635 similarly suggests his deep involvement in the preparation of the volume.\textsuperscript{111} Notably, the four letters added in 1635 themselves show signs of Walto
ian manipulation. In line with Walton’s characterization of Donne’s life, the 1635 version of Donne’s letter (already cited) to George Gerrard retains Donne’s shame at having “descended to print any thing in verse” and his claim to regard legal studies as “entertainment, and pastime,” but, as revealed by comparison with the longer version from the *Letters* (1651), removes what the editor—if not Walton, then someone with an identical agenda—saw as extraneous details about Donne’s activities and contacts in France.\textsuperscript{112}

These minor changes culminate in a radical union of canon and biography, executed in the volume’s reorganization according to the categories of sacred and secular. It may surprise twenty-first-century readers to learn that the headings of “Songs and Sonnets” and “Divine Poems” replicated in most volumes of Donne’s verse in fact originate with the *Poems*’ second edition. The ordering of the 1633 volume more closely resembles extant commonplace books, which mingle Donne’s erotic and religious writings to the point that, as Deborah Aldrich Larson argues, “Donne’s contemporaries were able to accept the poet-lover and preacher as a unified (and titillating) whole.”\textsuperscript{113} If not a smoking gun, Walton’s request on the frontispiece for Donne to “Witness this Booke, (thy Emblem) which begins / With Love: but endes, with Sighes, and Teares for sins,” indicates at minimum his foreknowledge and approval of the volume’s organization. Moreover, his depiction of the text an “Embleme” of Donne in its progression from youthful erring

\textsuperscript{111} Novarr, *Making of Walton’s Lives*, 45.
to mature divinity implies an important corollary for the canon as a whole; in the view given by the frontispiece, readers ought to regard as a true representation of Donne only those texts that reinforce his bifurcated life. As Erin McCarthy concludes, the 1635 volume’s merger of text and biography “promulgated the tale of Jack Donne’s transformation into Doctor Donne and made it the dominant way of understanding Donne’s life and work.” More importantly, it codified a reading of Donne’s life borne out for the first time within his texts.

**Donne’s Textual Monument**

It would be a mistake to treat Walton as the sole purveyor of the bifurcated-Donne mythology. With surprising regularity, contributors to Donne’s monument in the form of editorial influence and commemorative verse separate Donne into two selves, laud the older, and cast Donne the divine as the light by which to safely examine his early output.

The paratexts of Donne’s seventeenth-century print editions bolster a Waltonian scheme contrasting the young Donne with Donne the divine. Notably, Walton’s *Life* itself first appeared as an introduction to the *LXXX Sermons*. These paratexts, however, tend to encourage the biographical reading with greater subtlety. Across Donne’s printed canon, the inclusion of Donne’s image—rather, the choice of image—reinforces a connection between Donne’s life and work. The 1635 frontispiece (Fig. 3) features an engraving of Donne as a gallant of 19, which, when supplemented by Walton’s poem, visually designates Donne’s early self as the author of his verse and provides a foil for the penitent Dean on which Walton’s poem asks readers to focus. Conversely, *LXXX Sermons* and *Letters to Several Persons of Honour* reproduce Donne’s two post-ordination portraits. Operating in tandem with images, the titles of Donne’s various works

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similarly emphasize biographical segmentation. Where each volume of sermons names its author as “That Learned and Reverend Divine, Iohn Donne, Dr in Divinity, Late Deane of the Cathedrall Church of S. Pauls,” the less-consistently pious Poems give their author as simply “J. D.” In an enthralling conflation of canon, biography, and monument through paratextual imagery, the frontispiece of the LXXX Sermons not only aligns the volume with the later Donne, but also incorporates his portrait into a mock funeral monument whose epitaph bears the title of the volume (Fig. 4). It is worth emphasizing that these paratextual choices function as more than visual flare; in the aggregate, they prompt readers to apply a particular understanding of Donne’s biography to his writings and to interpret Donne’s work as a monument to his later self.

The “Elegies upon the Authors Death” published with Donne’s Poems further encourage reading a dichotomy between Donne’s older and younger selves into his writing. Published only in 1633, Thomas Browne’s elegy stands out among its peers for its overt union of biographical interpretation with the desire to manipulate Donne’s printed texts. Uncomfortable with the volume’s organization—recall that it lacks the categories added in 1635—Browne employs the metaphor of ritual purification to convey the necessity of separating Donne’s “Loose raptures” from his “Sanctified Prose”; “How will [readers], with sharper eyes, / the Fore-skinne of they phanseie circumcise?”

Though circumcision imagery implies a need to discard Donne’s amorous verse, Browne complicates the perceived severability of Donne’s early and late writings by foreshadowing Walton’s technique of reading Donne’s youth deductively, in a manner predicated on his later divinity. Browne distinguishes between common readers and “knowing eyes” who, familiar with Donne as Dean, “Will not admire / At this Strange Fire,” but consider his “Wanton Story” in light of later piety, as “Confession, not [his] Glory.” As in Walton’s Life, Browne argues

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115 Browne’s elegy found in Donne, Poems (1633), 376.
for an understanding of Donne’s life as a progression from rake to divine as the interpretive key to Donne’s verse. Ironically, Browne’s anxiety about the state of the volume seems to concede that

Figure 4. The frontispiece to the LXXX Sermons (1640), Rare Book Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
the writings central to Donne’s monument require interposition by an editor in order to convey the bifurcated biography on which he insists.

Browne typifies a trend across the elegies in his understanding of the canon as reflecting two Donnes. Jasper Mayne wittily fuses his bifurcation of Donne into decorous humility: “this low praise / Is written onely for [Donne’s] yonger dayes,” not his “deepe Divinity.”116 While several elegies foreshadow the Life’s paradigm, a more direct connection lies in Walton’s reliance thereon. Walton quotes at length from John Chudleigh who, among the elegists, most explicitly casts Donne’s early life as a prediction of his later piety: “He kept his love but not his object: wit, / He did not banish, but transplanted it.”117 As with references to Donne’s work, Walton’s selective use of elegies codifies and draws readers’ attention to those that emphasize what McCarthy terms a “teleological narrative of Donne’s growth.”118

A Competing Monument

In 1633, however, Walton’s Life had not yet achieved dominance and, as McCarthy notes, “the contours of Donne’s biography were still being contested.”119 Alongside elegies later privileged by Walton, others in 1633, even as they recognize two stages in Donne’s life, emphasize correspondence over separation in an approach that, though often eclipsed by Walton, provides an alternative reading of Donne’s life important for grasping the theme of Donne’s monument as it plays out in his canon. In contrast to the Life, which favors Dr. Donne by disparaging his early writing, Henry Valentine and Thomas Carew propose a monument rooted equally in Donne’s verse and divinity. Valentine looks to a future that will “Idolatrize” Donne the Poet and Saint together

116 Mayne’s elegy found in Donne, Poems (1633), 393-6.
117 Walton, Life (1658), 48-49.
118 McCarthy, “Poems, by J. D. (1635) and the Creation of John Donne's Literary Biography,” 65.
119 Ibid., 63.
by means of his “Numbers” (i.e. verse) and “his Reliques.” Carew’s elegy reverses Mayne’s progression from secular youth to sacred age, and instead opens with a description of Donne as a preacher before turning to the main subject of his elegy: Donne as a redemptive poet in the tradition of Orpheus, who pays “the debts of our penurious bankrupt age,” purges “Pedantique weedes,” plants “fresh invention,” and opens a “Mine / Of rich and pregnant phansie.” Carew’s proposed epitaph at the end of the poem duplicates the familiar impression of a bifurcated Donne, whose grave contains “two Flamens… / Apollo’s first, [and] at last, the true Gods Priest.” Here, however, Donne’s service to Apollo through verse is neither a foreskin to remove nor an inconvenient detail to overlook as we fix our gaze on Donne’s divinity; in Donne’s works, as with the books on his shelf, both flamens reside together.

Biography and Prose

In a blend of the paradigms developed by the Life and Carew’s elegy, Donne Jr.’s editorial decisions over his father’s prose attempt to harmonize Donne’s two selves by rendering his texts dependent upon an understanding of biography in which the piety of the older Donne salves the younger. A 1652/3 volume comprising Donne’s Paradoxes, Problems, Essays, & Characters, A Sheaf of Miscellany Epigrams, Ignatius his Conclave, and Essays in Divinity exemplifies Donne Jr.’s imposition of biographical interpretation onto his father’s prose, in an effort to allow for the complete publication of Donne’s varied canon without damaging the monument to Donne the divine.121

The volume in its entirety argues for understanding Donne’s life as a progression, duplicating in prose the organization the 1635 Poems. Though his dedication to Francis Lord Newport contrasts “the Essays of two Ages, where you may see the quicknesse of the first, and the

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120 Valentine’s and Carew’s elegies found in Donne, Poems (1633), 379-81; 385-8.
121 The date given on the title page is 1652, but some of the texts appear in the Stationers’ Register in early 1653.
firmness of the latter,” Donne Jr. aims ultimately to reconcile the products of his father’s two ages. With a touch of humor, he offers a series of justifying metaphors that escalate from the germane—"the riper Fruit serves only to quicken and provoke our Appetite to a courser Fare”—to the theological—Christ “began his first Miracle here, by turning Water into Wine, and made it his last to ascend from Earth to Heaven.” In a short space, Donne Jr.’s analogies accomplish a profound characterization of his father’s life and letters well worth deconstructing. In the first place, he suggests, early rakishness need not disqualify later piety, for “he that begins with things conducing to cheerfulness & entertainment of Mankind may afterward... change his conversation from Men to Angels.” Each comparison invites readers to consider Donne’s early texts as, like Christ’s early miracles, different from later ones in degree rather than kind. Finally, by casting Donne’s early works as a prefiguring of supreme divinity, Donne Jr. offers a methodology for understanding Donne through his texts, not by trimming the canon (as in the Life) but by adjusting one’s directionality of approach; as with reading the Wedding at Cana in light of the greater miracle of the Ascension, one must establish Dr. Donne (the name on the title page) as one’s starting point for considering his early texts. To that end, the volume juxtaposes the “Things of the least and greatest weight, that ever fell from [Donne’s] Pen.”

Donne Jr.’s goal of reconciliation relies mainly on the Essays in Divinity, which unifies the otherwise disparate texts around an impression of Donne’s divinity. The work consists of two sermonic explications of the first verses in Genesis and Exodus, followed by several prayers that, at times, capture Donne at the height of his piety and literary wit. One prayer capping an essay on the generations of Israelites in Egypt reads, “O God, thou hast multiplied thy children in me, by begetting and cherishing in me reverent devotions, and pious affections towards thee, but that

\footnote{All quotations in this paragraph from John Donne, \textit{Paradoxes, Problemes, Essayes, Characters} (1652), A2-A6.}
mine own corruption, mine own Pharaoh hath ever smothered and strangled them."123 Within the 1652/3 volume, the Essays represent the superlative miracle of Ascension that a judicious reader has in mind when encountering the miracle of water to wine.

Donne Jr.’s effort to salve his father’s early writings through the volume’s organization extends to the individual works therein. While Donne Jr. sanitizes the often flippant and vulgar Paradoxes, Problems, Essays, & Characters by casting them as the youthful counterpart to the Essays in Divinity, Donne’s bawdy Latin Epigrams bear intrinsic signs of salvific tampering, both through their titular minimization as a mere “sheaf” and through their translation into English by “J: Maine, D.D.” The importance of Mayne’s involvement derives from the fact that Early Modern translations eschewed expectations of literalism. Sir Thomas Wyatt’s translations of Petrarch’s sonnets demonstrate contemporary understandings of translation as a somewhat creative enterprise reflecting on the translator, whose product might diverge from the original in phrasing, pacing, and emphasis. (Bloodshed over Bible translations proves the point less cheerily.)124 Readers, especially those who did not move beyond the title page, could infer, and Donne Jr. could expect them to infer, that Mayne’s translation involved more than finding syntactic equivalents for Donne’s Latin. If not inferred, cursory comparison between the sole Latin original provided (Epigram 59) and its translation, “Idem Anglicè versum,” indicates Mayne’s activity in shaping the Latin into English couplets. As evidenced by a title page that designates the author and translator respectively as “J. D.” (the same as in the Poems) and “J: Maine, D.D.,” Mayne’s presence furthers the volume’s effort to salve Donne’s early texts in his later divinity; despite being written before Donne’s ordination, the Epigrams receive a Christian baptism through translation

123 Donne, Essays in Divinity, 96.
by a figure whose rank reflects Donne’s latter form, a fellow divine, allowing Donne Jr. to mollify the *Epigrams* without excluding them from the canon.

The inclusion of *Ignatius his Conclave*, which already existed in print, similarly demonstrates Donne Jr.’s desire to manipulate the printed canon in order to salve works less-obviously representative of Dr. Donne. The publication history of *Ignatius* provides clues, however circumstantial, as to Donne Jr.’s design in reprinting the text in a new context in 1652/3. Irrefutably less grave than *Pseudo-Martyr*, Donne’s satire in *Ignatius* epitomizes the type of problematic work confronting his editors and commemorators. Walton ignores the text, along with others in the 1652/3 volume. Donne’s attack on regicidal Jesuits frequently descends to mere mockery of the “French-spanish mungrell, Ignatius,” and often crosses into the religiously flippant, sexual brand of humor excised from the 1633 *Poems*.\(^{125}\) The Pope, Donne claims, executes sodomites “not so much for the offence, as for usurping the right of the Ecclesiastique Princes.”\(^{126}\) Similarly, the momentum of Donne’s satire caries him perilously close to the brink of blasphemy in parodying Johannine descriptions of Christ: “out of your [Lucifer’s] abundant love, you begot this deerely beloved sonne of yours, *Ignatius*.”\(^{127}\)

Donne deliberately left his name off the two English versions of *Ignatius* published during his lifetime, “vnwilling,” the printer writes, “to haue this booke published, thinking it vnfit… for that grauity which himselfe had proposed and obserued in [*Pseudo-Martyr*].”\(^{128}\) The first edition to name Donne as author appeared in 1634, printed for John Marriot (the seller of Donne’s *Poems*), who reprinted it in 1635. Marriot’s edition occasioned the following petition to Archbishop Laud from Donne Jr. in 1637.

\(^{125}\) Donne, *Ignatius His Conclave*, 25.  
\(^{126}\) Ibid., 39.  
\(^{127}\) Ibid., 27.  
\(^{128}\) Ibid., 3.
The humble petition of John Donne, Clercke. Doth show unto your Grace that since ye death of his Father (latly Deane of Pauls) there hath bene manie scandalous Pamflets printed, and published, under his name, which were none of his, by severall Boocksellers, withoute anie leave or Autoritie; in particuluer one entituled Juvenilia, printed for Henry Seale; another by John Marriott and William Sheares, entituled Ignatius his Conclave, as allsoe certaine Poems by ye sayde John Marriote… to the greife of your Petr and the discrede of ye memorie of his Father. Wherefore your Petr doth bee seece your Grace that you would bee pleased by your Commaunde, to stopp their farther proceedinge herein.129

While this petition speaks to the instability of Donne’s papers and to the influence of ecclesiastical authority on their publication, Donne Jr.’s exact demands also provide insights into his later motivations as an editor. The first two grounds for suppression—unauthorized printing and false attribution to Donne—are patently dishonest, as evidenced by entries in the Stationers’ Register and by the fact that Donne Jr. himself republished the works after acquiring his father’s papers. Although Donne Jr.’s dishonesty seems to support Jessopp’s claim that Donne Jr. sold his father’s works for profit “whenever the fit took him,”130 the fact that he withheld Ignatius for 15 years suggests a motive other than fiscal; moreover, the specific works named in the petition suggest that “discredite of ye memorie of his Father” constituted Donne Jr.’s primary motivation. Had Donne Jr. sought money alone, he would have done well to demand access to the Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, which had been printed thrice between 1624 and 1634. Instead, however, Donne Jr. concentrates on his father’s most misinterpretable works, the Poems, Juvenilia (Paradoxes and Problems), and Ignatius, the latter two of which Donne Jr. republished with the Essays in Divinity in a volume that seeks, as has been shown, to baptize Donne’s early writings in his later piety. So thorough a coincidence in favor of Donne Jr.’s preferred interpretation of his father’s prose is difficult to dismiss as chance.

Conclusion

Haskin, drawing on Arthur Marotti, observes that in a general sense, Donne’s posthumous works “reinflected the name of a man who was remembered as a public figure [and] made ‘Donne’ to signify an author.” Examination of Donne’s printed canon together with appended elegies and Walton’s Life reveals in particular that the project of publishing Donne’s works made “Donne” to signify the narrative of a divine author who emerged from rakishness. Donne’s seventeenth-century canon contains the products of what was, at the time, an ongoing construction of legacy. To Walton’s focus on Donne’s divinity, the author’s early writings posed a less serious problem than for editors and commemorators intent upon representing the whole of Donne’s output. The Life excludes or draws attention away from works that complicate Donne’s sainthood. In contrast, Donne Jr. elected to satisfy both impetuses to publish and monumentalize, and sustained the impression of Dr. Donne by imposing a biographical reading onto Donne’s writings as Walton had done in 1635. Donne Jr. aimed more than Walton to join rather than sever the two Donnes, but both ultimately engaged Donne’s monument in a way that shaped his printed texts. The effort worked insofar as seventeenth-century writers like William Winstanley and Thomas Fuller elevated Donne, through Walton, as a figure of the Church. Winstanley tellingly concludes his entry on Donne in England’s Worthies (1660) by transcribing Walton’s poem from the 1635 frontispiece. Still, though twentieth-century scholars dismissed the myth of two Donnes, another enduring legacy of the original canon lies in the perennial effort to harmonize Donne’s variable writings. Donne’s canon as handed down from the seventeenth century embodies the compromise of tailoring reality to fit the dimensions of an idealized monument.

132 Three of several such efforts (found in the bibliography) are Simpson’s A Study of the Prose Work of John Donne, Carey’s John Donne: Life, Mind and Art, and Guibbory’s “Reconsidering Donne: from Libertine Verse to Arminian Sermons.”
Part III: “Donne” in Politics

With respect to the processes of publishing and monumentalizing Donne, the relationship between the Civil War period and Donne’s texts exhibits a single direction of influence, from context to content. Donne’s seventeenth-century print editions, however, equally evince an effort by editors and commemorators to not only navigate political strife, but also construct and apply Donne’s legacy to the vital concerns of the national consciousness in the years before, during, and after the Civil War. In a way reflected in his texts and their usage, Donne emerged in the Civil War period as a resource and a pattern for public discourse bearing on three principal zones of conflict: Laudianism and its Calvinist opponents, broad religious and civic fracturing through war, and the dissolution of the Church of England in the Interregnum.

During a period that forged a crisis around the relationship between church and state, Donne’s life and letters became political weapons, sometimes by the mere occasion of their publication, but often through the layers of interpretation packaged with the works themselves. The resultant political formations of Donne shifted with the needs of the period, but followed identifiable trends: amidst schism, iconoclasm, and anti-Monarchy (directed jointly at the Church of England), the publication of Donne’s work, his monument, and his invocation by other writers made him a Laudian anti-Calvinist, a pillar of the righteous Church of England, and a proponent of ecumenical moderation and pacific cohesion.

**Anti-Calvinism**

The first decade of canon formation coincided with growing tension within the Church of England between Arminianism and Calvinism, competing models of salvation that correspond
theologically with the doctrines of individual choice and predestination, and in Caroline England grafted onto religio-political conflict between Laud and the Puritans. The conflict’s early stages had, in fact, touched Donne’s ministry; at the York House Conference in 1626, the Earls of Pembroke and Carlisle discouraged preaching predestination to undiscerning commoners, who might take the “perseverance of the saints”—Calvin’s view that the elect can sin without losing salvation—as license for libertinism. Leading up to the Civil War, however, soteriological divisions became synonymous with their implications for the relationship between church and state, such that reference to either system in terms of politics or theology inevitably implied its political or theological corollary. (Recall that the Star Chamber’s targeting “mutinous books” in theory meant suppressing the “Genevian Party” in practice.) Nor did conflict resolve with the outbreak of war as the Puritan faction prosecuted Laud and pressed governmental reform. Even with the ascension of the Puritan Oliver Cromwell, theological tensions continued to inform debates about acceptable worship in the Commonwealth. Donne’s writings, of course, predate the tensest years of intra-ecclesiastical conflict, but the discussions of salvation and church structure contained therein acquired political weight through the context of publication.

Scholars have issued wildly variable verdicts on Donne’s true relation to Calvinism. In contrast to Daniel W. Doerksen, who calls Donne a “moderate Calvinist,” and Lori Anne Ferrell, who argues that Donne’s belief in preaching over sacraments placed him at odds with Laudian Arminianism, Achsah Guibbory emphasizes Donne’s uneasiness with the doctrine of predestination, as well as the similarities between his and Laud’s criticism of Puritanism.

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Difficulty in assessing Donne’s ideological allegiance arises in part because, unlike Oscar Wilde’s Reverend Chasuble, who boasts that his sermon on manna “can be adapted to almost any occasion,” Donne maintained that a preacher “does not his duty, if he consider not… to whom, and at what time, and how much he is to speak.” Colclough’s study of Donne’s separate sermons to the King and his household paints a vivid picture of the influence a change in audience could exert on Donne’s theological work. Consequently, Colclough has noted of Donne’s Caroline court sermons that especially as religio-political disputes escalated, Donne displays a “gradual turning away from controversial topics” and towards the joys of the next world. Even as early as 1617, Donne expressed his reluctance to discuss Calvinist doctrine: “Resistibility, and Irresistibility of grace, which is every Artificers wearing now, was a stuff that our Fathers wore not… [T]hey knew Gods pleasure, Nolumus disputari: It should scarce be disputed of in Schools, much less serv’d in every popular pulpit.” Donne’s avoidance of controversy yields statements applicable to either faction.

Despite the variability of Donne’s voiced beliefs, texts and commemorations after his death narrowed him into a decidedly anti-Calvinist perspective, most basically through the occasion of publication. The timing and choice of works (re)published during the Civil War period suggest editors’ awareness of their relevance to intra-ecclesiastical debates. First issued in the 1633 Poems, “The Cross” takes several swipes at Puritan iconoclasts, in defiance of whom Donne writes, “From mee, no Pulpit, nor misgrounded law, / Nor scandall taken, shall this Crosse withdraw” (ll. 9-10).

In a way that evokes Jonson’s Puritan caricature Zeal-of-the-land Busy in Bartholomew Fair,

136 Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays (New York: Penguin Group, 2000), 324; Donne, XXVI Sermons, 359.
139 Donne, XXVI Sermons (1661), 4.
Donne mocks the trope of the Puritan hypocrite, self-satisfied with his own humility: “as oft, Alchimists doe coyners prove, / So may a selfe-dispising, get selfe-love” (ll. 37-38).\(^{140}\) Donne’s *Problem* of “Why Puritans make long Sermons,” though likely written at the beginning of the century, similarly carried implications for debates within the Church upon publication in 1633. With the text’s post-regicide republication, Donne’s explanation that “*usurping… a liberty to speak freely of Kings, [Puritans] would reigne as long as they could*” registers as topical.\(^{141}\)

In addition to arguably inadvertent applications of Donne’s work to contemporary conflicts, evidence for a deliberate overall effort to align Donne with the anti-Puritan faction appears in Donne Jr.’s dedication to Charles in the *LXXX Sermons*. The dedication bespeaks a context-specific wariness of the potential scandal imbedded in Donne’s sermons as a genre intimately tied to ecclesiastical conflict. Favoring ceremony, Laud in the 1620s had persuaded Charles to diminish the role of sermons in church service and to elevate the liturgy and prayers neglected under James.\(^{142}\) In contrast, Puritans and anti-episcopal reformers in Parliament placed sermons at the center of Christian worship. In a 1640 sermon to the House of Commons, Stephen Marshall declared, “preaching of the Word is the *Scepter* of Christ’s Kingdome, the *glory* of a Nation, the *Chariot* upon which life & salvation comes riding.”\(^{143}\) As noted in Part I, Donne Jr.’s dedication anxiously stresses the volume’s conformity by claiming support from Laud, an invocation which in itself serves to unite Donne’s sermons with the Laudian faction. Unsatisfied with implication, however, Donne Jr. appeals directly to doctrinal conformity in an effort to dispel any association with the Church’s opponents through his reference to “zeal.”


\(^{141}\) Donne, *Parodoxes, Problemes, Essayes, Characters*, 41.

\(^{142}\) Colclough, introduction to *Sermons of John Donne*, vol. 3, xxi.

\(^{143}\) Stephen Marshall, *A Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Commons* (1641), 33.
The concept of zeal operates multifariously in Donne’s work, a variety clearest in Donne’s poems. The same poem (“The Litany”) that describes “Our zealous thankes” for the Virgin Mary (l. 43) also hints at the danger of religious passion, praying that what theologians “mis-said, wee to that may not adhere, / [else] Their zeale may be our sinne” (ll. 115-16). In contrast to its variability in Donne’s works, “zeal” as it appeared in conflicts between Puritans and Laudians applied exclusively to the former, and denoted the class of “Spirituall Cholerique Crytiques” Donne describes in his verse letter to Lady Carey and Mistress Essex Rich, those who “forgive no fall, / [and] Have, through their zeale, Vertue but in their Gall” (ll. 28-30). The anti-Calvinist Richard Montagu employed analogous language in attacking his opponents’ “unchristian, fiery, Puritanicall zeale.”

The contemporary association between zeal and Puritanism elucidates Donne Jr.’s twice qualifying his father’s sermons as displaying “zeal and discretion, that whilst… Glory be given to God, this is accompanied every where with a scrupulous care… that Peace be likewise setled amongst men.” The sermons, he claims, show piety befitting a divine, but without any taint of socially disruptive Puritanism.

Donne Jr.’s dedication further distances Donne from Puritanism through its reference to “charity.” In refuting arguments for Donne’s “moderate Calvinism,” Guibbory shows that, like “zeal,” “charity” materialized in ecclesiastical debates as the exclusive linguistic missile of anti-Calvinists. Analyzing the language of Donne’s sermons, she writes that Donne’s emphasis on charity “aligns him with the Arminians who repeatedly invoked the ideal of ‘charity’ in attacking predestination and who attacked Puritans and Calvinists as rigid and uncharitable.” If Guibbory’s analysis holds true of Donne’s language during his lifetime, it applies all the more

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145 Donne, LXXX Sermons, A3r-A4r.
strongly to the intensified conflict after his death. Given the terms’ link to Arminianism, Donne Jr.’s classifying the sermons’ content as a “charitable doctrine” of “discreet zeal” signals a deliberate effort to bestow (or extract) an anti-Puritanical inflection on Donne’s work.

Although one can be forgiven for distrusting the motive of Donne Jr.’s anti-Puritan interpretation, since, as has been shown, the loyalties of his dedications dovetail with a desire to avoid suppression, Donne Jr.’s aim of separating his father’s sermons from Puritanism finds an ally in the elegy Mayne contributed to the 1633 *Poems*. To his account of Donne’s ability as a preacher to embody as well as profess belief, Mayne adds the comic qualification,

\[
\text{Not like our Sonnes of Zeale, who to reforme} \\
\text{Their hearers, fiercely at the Pulpit storme,} \\
\text{And beate the cushion into worse estate,} \\
\text{Then if they did conclude it reprobate,} \\
\text{Who can out pray the glasse, then lay about} \\
\text{Till all Predestination be runne out.} \\
\text{And from the point such tedious uses draw,} \\
\text{Their repetitions would make Gospell, Law.}^{147}
\]

As in Donne Jr.’s dedication to Charles, Mayne’s use of the loaded term “Zeale” suggests an anxiety to establish Donne as a figure of intense piety and skillful sermonizing, without implying an affinity with the Puritans who likewise boasted the primacy of sermons. Mayne also shares Donne Jr.’s tactic of aligning Donne with Laudian Arminianism through “charity,” here invoked negatively by denouncing the violent Puritanical judgements that reduce the Gospel to Old Testament law. Mayne surpasses Donne Jr.’s profession of theological loyalties in uniting zeal explicitly with Calvinism, mocking the *mésalliance* between Puritans’ ferocity in the pulpit and their inner spiritual lethargy, brought on by belief in predestination. It is important to point out the

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147 Mayne’s elegy found in Donne, *Poems* (1633), 393-6.
obvious that, like Donne Jr.’s dedication, Mayne’s attempt to sever Donne from Calvinists appears within and guides the interpretation of Donne’s work.

Walton’s Life executes a similar anti-Puritan narrowing. More on Walton will follow in reference to the Church of England under the Protectorate; however, part of Walton’s effort in 1658 to elevate Donne as a force for the former Church involves separating Donne from the Church’s Calvinist opponents. In terms that parallel Anglican invectives against Puritan ministers, a passage added to the 1658 Life distinguishes Donne from figures that the churchmen John Gauden and Thomas Fuller called “ignorant, mechanic, and hedge-creeping teachers” “who leap from loom to pulpit,” violating what John Spurr summarizes as the Church of England’s ideal of a minister who “attain[s] the right to preach, pray and administer the sacraments by nurturing his gifts, educating his intellect… and finally being set apart for the Lord’s work by solemn ordination.” Walton’s addition in 1658 establishes Donne in direct contrast to low-brow Puritans “blown into the ministry”:

when the Clergy were look'd upon with reverence, and deserved it,… those onely were then judged worthy the Ministry, whose quiet and meek spirits did make them look upon that sacred calling with an humble adoration and fear to undertake it; which indeed requires such great degrees of humility, and labour, and care; that none but such were then thought worthy of that Celestiall dignity.

Though Walton neglects to name the implied opposite to Donne’s example, his Puritan target becomes clear through a later anecdote relating Donne’s only experience with the King’s displeasure. It was occasioned by some malicious whisperer, who had told his Majesty that Dr. Donne… was become busie in insinuating a fear of the Kings inclining to Popery… and [a dislike of] his turning the evening Lectures into Catechising, and expounding

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149 Ibid., 25.
150 Walton, Life (1658), 40-41.
the Prayer of our Lord, [which] His Majesty was more inclinable to believe, [for a friend of Donne’s] was about this time discarded the Court... which begot many rumours in the common people, who in this Nation think they are not wise, unless they be busie about what they understand not, and especially about Religion.\footnote{Ibid., 64-67.}

In addition to asserting Donne’s favor with the King, who “received this news with so much discontent and restlesnesse, that he would not suffer the Sun to set and leave him under this doubt,” Walton’s account resumes, in more direct terms, his attack on Puritans intent upon engaging religion in spite of inaptitude. Although the 1640 account shows a similar care to dispel conflict between Donne and Laud’s de-emphasis of sermons, Walton in 1658 gives the anecdote a clear anti-Puritan thrust by adding the accusation that Donne insinuated “fear of the Kings inclining to Popery,” Puritans’ favorite attack on the Laudian Church recorded, among others, by William Prynne: Laud sought “to alter and subvert Gods true Religion by Law established in this Realme, and instead thereof, to set up Popish Superstition and Idolatry, and reconcile us to the Church of Rome.”\footnote{William Prynne, \textit{Canterburies Doome} (1646), 26.} In addition to absolving Donne of guilt, Walton implies that only a “malicious whisperer” would associate Donne with the imbecilic dregs of the Puritan ranks.

\textbf{The Lost Church of England}

Beginning with the Long Parliament and escalating throughout the war, dissatisfied Puritan and republican factions answered perceived Caroline abuses with an assault on the Monarchy’s clerical branch: the Church of England. As early as 1641, Parliament targeted Laud’s High-Church reforms and excluded bishops from the House of Lords.\footnote{For the Long Parliament and Laudian reforms see Ch. 1 of Spurr, \textit{The Restoration Church of England}.} A ban on the Book of Common Prayer followed the writ of attainder for Laud’s execution, and a series of Acts in the 1640s, including the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643 and the Engagement of 1645, reinforced the interdependency of civil and religious loyalties by requiring the denunciation of episcopacy and
monarchy. John Spurr estimates that 3,600 clergy suffered legal harassment between 1640 and the Restoration.\textsuperscript{154} By 1655, William Sheppard declared that the Church of England was “abolished, and gone, and not owned by our law at this day.”\textsuperscript{155}

Despite efforts during the war (discussed below) to stress Donne’s role in bridging fissures, partisanship resurfaced in Donne’s construction during the Interregnum through the invocation of Donne’s legacy and canon in defending, celebrating, and sustaining the lost Church of England. To a degree, Donne’s deployment on behalf of the Church constitutes an extension of the effort to align Donne with Laudianism in opposition to the Puritans; however, in the years after the Civil War, Donne functioned less as an authority on theological matters within the Church, than, already a model of divinity, as a monument to the Church itself, operating in domestic exile under the Commonwealth. Through subtopics like Royalism, episcopacy, ceremonialism, and apostolicity, Donne and his writings emerged in contemporary sources as an argument for the legitimacy of pre-war Anglicanism and as an agent for its covert practice.

Understanding Donne’s narrowing in the period requires acknowledging at the outset that as with Arminianism, Donne exhibits a lack of consistency on questions of church and state. Donne alternates between statements that sanction monarchical hierarchy—“Heaven is a Kingdome, and Christ a King, and a popular parity agrees not with that State, with a Monarchy”—and quasi-levelling remarks like that in the \textit{Essays}, “ye Princes of the Earth,… know ye by how few descents ye are derived from Nothing?”\textsuperscript{156} Nor does Donne offer a unified position on the High Church. Donne’s dismay at Barlow’s \textit{Answer to a Catholick Englishman}, “That the Divines of these times, are become meer Advocates [who] write for Religion, without it,” reveals his refusal to equate

\textsuperscript{154} Spurr, \textit{The Restoration Church of England}, 6.
\textsuperscript{155} William Sheppard, \textit{A view of all the Laws and statutes of this nation concerning the service of God or Religion} (1655), 78.
\textsuperscript{156} Donne, \textit{LXXX Sermons}, 743; Donne, \textit{Essays in Divinity}, 30.
ecclesiastical title with rectitude.\textsuperscript{157} Donne himself defied expectations of institutional credence in writing several religious texts prior to ordination, a fact he acknowledges in the \textit{Essays}: “I am one, and in a low degree, of the first and vulgar rank, and write but to my equals.”\textsuperscript{158} Ironically, the High-Church ceremonialism in support of which Donne was posthumously enlisted directly threatened the divinity that made Donne a citable authority in the first place; Donne’s reputation as a preacher rested on the very sermons Laud succeeded in relegating. Nevertheless, Donne’s editors and commemorators after his death narrowed his canon into a body of work operating on behalf of the Church of England.

The timely publication of Donne’s texts in the years after the Civil War nourished his role in supporting the Church of England. A recurring pattern in Donne’s posthumous canon, Donne’s terminology, even when neutral at the time of composition, had the potential to register as politically loaded to readers with fresh memories of the recent conflict. Donne’s push for comprehension in the \textit{Essays in Divinity} (discussed in the final section), going so far as to prefer a version of Catholicism “discharged of disputations” over contentious Anglicanism, would have reminded astute readers in 1651 of the charge of Popish treason levelled against Laud, who, seeking “the Unity of the whole Church” over “a torn and divided Christendom,” had stated in his \textit{Relation of the Conference} (1639) that Rome was a “True Church” not entirely fallen “away from Christ.”\textsuperscript{159} Donne’s “fervent” desire for “Unity and agreement” also threatened to recall Charles’ missteps in the Bishops’ Wars, one of several increments building to Civil War in 1642; the Book of Common Prayer Charles disastrously introduced into Scottish churches expressed the desire

\textsuperscript{157} Donne, \textit{Letters}, 160.  
\textsuperscript{158} Donne, \textit{Essays in Divinity}, 59.  
that “the whole Church of Christ were one as well in forme of publike worship as in doctrine.”

Though Donne tends to distinguish between faith and its outward practice, his emphasis on unity aligned his works at the time of their publication with the ethos of Laud and Charles.

A minor detail that, when coupled with the texts’ content, holds major significance, two of Donne’s volumes accrued political allegiance through their publisher, Humphrey Moseley. Though Donne Jr. published most of his father’s work with John and Richard Marriot, Moseley is named as the bookseller for *Biathanatos* and the 1652/3 volume of *Paradoxes, Problems, Characters, Epigrams*, and *Ignatius* (the *Essays in Divinity*, bound therein, were originally printed separately for Marriot). In addition to defying Puritan tastes by publishing drama, a genre loathed by Puritans like Prynne, Moseley, according to Marotti, established himself around the war as “the preserver of an endangered Royalist or loyalist body of texts.”

Like Donne Jr., Moseley signaled his allegiances in paratexts. His preface to *The Last Remains of Sr. John Suckling*, in which he also quotes Donne’s “The Storm,” calls Suckling one who “liv’d only long enough to see the Sun-set of that Majesty from whose auspicious beams he derived his lustre.” It does not follow that the appearance of Moseley’s name on a work declared allegiance to Charles per se; Moseley published Milton’s *Poems* in 1645. Nevertheless, that Donne’s works appeared under Moseley’s name and in relation to titles like *Loyalties tears flowing after the bloud of the royall sufferer Charles I*, at the end of which *Biathanatos* was advertised, weighted Donne’s texts towards their existing Royalist and Anglican potential.

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160 Donne, *Essays in Divinity*, 51-2; *The Booke of Common Prayer* (Edinburgh, 1637), a3r.
Walton

Beyond the timing of publication, Donne’s editors and commemorators consciously formulated Donne and his canon as proponents of the Church of England. As with Donne’s monument, Walton’s *Life* provides the most comprehensive contemporary effort to invoke Donne’s legacy in favor of the lost Church. Side-by-side comparison of the 1640 and 1658 editions of Walton’s *Life* reveals marked changes, not only in the latter’s visible expansion, but also in Walton’s addition of a temporal agenda to his edification of Donne. As will become clear, Walton is startlingly cavalier in his advocacy for the Church. Though Oliver Cromwell’s death the same year might help rationalize Walton’s seeming recklessness—indeed, a survey of the texts published in 1658 and 1659 shows a surge in titles celebrating the Monarchy—a fact that Cromwell died late in 1658, and that Walton’s dedication calls the present an age “in which Truth & Innocence have not beene able to defend themselves,” cautions against reading Walton’s second edition in light of either Cromwell’s death or the coming Restoration. Though published at the end of the Protectorate, Walton’s second edition distills the author’s attitudes at a moment in which the future of the Church and Monarchy seemed bleak.

While episodes like Donne’s beautifying the chapel read as anti-Puritan when transplanted from 1640 to 1658, Walton develops his invocation of Donne in celebration of the Monarchy and Church of England primarily through the 1658 volume’s substantial, politically targeted additions. Before the *Life* begins, Walton’s dedication to Robert Holt establishes the text’s religio-political sympathies unambiguously, referring to Charles as “our late learned & eloquent King,” and calling Holt’s grandfather (presumably John King, Bishop of London) “an Angel of our once glorious

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Church.”¹⁶⁵ Rather than simply lamenting the Church’s loss through nostalgic epithets, however, Walton uses Donne’s biography as a platform for apologetics touching on the apostolicity and legitimacy of the former Church. In a passage already quoted in reference to Calvinism, Walton uses Donne’s ordination to highlight two contrasts that convey the Church’s supremacy over its detractors: the first implied between Puritans zealous for the ministry and Anglican divines who “look[ed] upon that sacred calling with an humble adoration,” and the second between the current era of anti-episcopacy and “the first and most blessed times of Christianity, when the Clergy were look’d upon with reverence.”¹⁶⁶ Importantly, Walton presents the Church’s apostolicity and legitimacy as emanating from as well as around Donne. Walton makes Donne the mouthpiece for the Life’s ideology by quoting a letter to Henry King that mimics Walton’s penchant for contrast: “the Primitive Clergy were watchfull against all appearances of [sacrilege]… But instead of such Christians, who [obeyed] a pious Clergy… Our times abound with men that are busie and litigious about trifles and Church-Ceremonies.”¹⁶⁷

Walton forcefully unites Donne’s legacy with Anglican apologetics through a lengthy passage added in 1658 on the propriety of hymns in church service, a synecdoche for the Laudian pomp found objectionable by the Puritan victors of the Civil War. Elaborating on Donne’s “Hymn to God the Father,” Walton begins by aligning Donne’s unassailable piety with Church ceremony; “he caus’d it to be set to a most grave and solemn tune, and to be often sung to the Organ by the Choristers of that Church… especially at the Evening Service.”¹⁶⁸ What follows, disguised as another demonstration of Donne’s divinity, constitutes nothing short of a diatribe in defense of the Church of England. Rather than distracting from worship’s true object, as Calvin alleges of music

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., A3r-A5v.
¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 40-41.
¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 69-70.
¹⁶⁸ This and the following quotations from Walton, Life (1658), 77-79.
in Book III of the *Institutes*,

Donne’s hymn attests the “power of Church-musick” to raise “the affections” and to quicken “graces of zeal and gratitude.” Not content to rest on the practical functionality of hymns, Walton justifies music and the church that incorporates it according to the standards of primitive piety: “After this manner did the Disciples of our Saviour, and the best of Christians in those Ages of the Church nearest to his time, offer their praises to Almighty God.” Though aligning hymns with the “best of Christians” implies the correlative inferiority of Puritan worship, additional citation of Augustine cements Puritan aversion to ceremony as *anti*-Christian wickedness. Augustine, Walton reminds, lamented “that the enemies of Christianity had… prophaned and ruin’d [Christian] Sanctuaries, and [that] their *Publick Hymns* and Lauds were lost out of their Churches.” Given its context, Walton’s use of the term “Lauds” to describe lost instruments of piety seems deliberately allusive. By the end of the passage, Walton transforms Donne’s hymn into a testimony to the devotional benefits of the High-Church ceremony abolished by Puritan enemies of Christianity.

Of paramount importance to the nature of Donne’s posthumous partisanship, Walton’s emendations aim on the whole to activate readers’ loyalty to the Church and advance its survival through covert practice. In the opening chapter of his study of the Church of England in the Restoration, Spurr notes that the Church did not “emerge like a phoenix from her own ashes in 1660-62,” but owed its “flowering” in the Restoration to its persistence among former clergy and ordinary citizens in the Interregnum.

Following the Royalist churchman Henry Hammond, who in 1653 wrote that the Church “is still preserved in Bishops and Presbyters rightly ordained,” Walton encourages readers to understand the state of the Church as a live issue by repeatedly using

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169.“We must, however, carefully beware, lest our ears be more intent on the music than our minds on the spiritual meaning of the words” (Book III, Chapter 20, section 32).

Donne’s Deanery and the events of his life as touchstones for digressions concerning the continued plight of English clergy, who “still live to be patterns of Apostolicall Charity, and of more than Humane Patience.”¹⁷¹ To that end, Walton extends praise of Donne to his friend “Dr. Morton, the most laborious and learned Bishop of Durham,” who, Walton adds, “is yet living,” though “is now (be it spoken with sorrow) reduced to a narrow estate.”¹⁷² Walton similarly qualifies “Dr. Duppa Bishop of Salisbury, and Dr. Henry King Bishop of Chichester” as “both now living-men.”¹⁷³ Like Hammond, Walton focuses on the clergy with the goal of asserting that the Church of England is not an institution entirely lost to history, but a living body epitomized by Donne and preserved in his clerical counterparts.

Just as Donne’s personal monument facilitates Walton’s celebration of clergy, Donne’s textual monument (his religious canon) offers a resource for Walton’s enterprise of sustaining the Church through readers. As Spurr points out, a thriving church requires more than clergy and apologetics; the Church survived the Interregnum in part through private piety among the multitudes, enabled by the continued use of Anglican texts like the Book of Common Prayer.¹⁷⁴ In light of Spurr’s analysis, it is notable that to his use in 1640 of Donne’s Devotions as an argument for Donne’s personal piety, Walton adds the suggestion in 1658 that readers not passively accept his summary, but seek out Donne’s original to “see, the most secret thoughts that then possest his soul, Paraphrased and make [sic] publick.”¹⁷⁵ What appears as a casual book recommendation is in fact an incitement for readers to engage with a textual representation of the Church of England; the Devotions, which Donne wrote while Dean of St. Paul’s and dedicated to the future King

¹⁷² Walton, Life (1658), 26; see also Novarr, Making of Walton’s Lives, 71. Novarr clarifies that in 1648, Morton had been driven from his estate by Parliament.
¹⁷³ Walton, Life (1658), 81.
¹⁷⁵ Walton, Life (1658), 72.
Charles, contain some of Donne’s strongest statements connecting his private piety to belief in a union between Monarchy and Church. He asks God to “continue the same blessings vpon this State, and this Church by the same hand [the King], so long, as that thy Son when he comes in the clouds, may find him [James], or his Son [Charles], or his sonnes sonnes ready to giue an account… for their faithfull Stewardship.” Walton similarly enlivens the Church through Donne’s works in lengthy description of the verse letters exchanged between Donne and the poet and preacher George Herbert, whose biography Walton later wrote. Though Novarr rightly infers that Walton references Herbert’s “proverbial” piety to bolster Donne’s reputation, Walton’s loaded terminology in associating Donne with “that man of primitive piety,” points additionally to an underlying polemic. Citing Herbert as “Author of the Temple or Sacred Poems and Ejaculations,” Walton combines Donne and Herbert into a diptych of Anglican piety, contained in a body of work through which readers can sustain the Church.

Donne Jr.

To a lesser but conspicuous extent, Donne Jr. joined Walton in establishing Donne and his writing as agents of the pre-war Church. In a way that transforms the volume into a topical argument, Donne Jr.’s dedication to the 1650 Poems violates the pattern of caution visible elsewhere in his epistles and renders Donne an emissary of England’s lost model of church and state. Addressed to William Lord Craven, a nobleman of Royalist leanings whose property Parliament later confiscated under suspicion of treason, Donne Jr.’s dedication harps on the country’s fallen state and establishes Donne in opposition to an array of perversions ushered by the Parliamentary victors. Satirically dubbing “the poets of these latter times” the most prodigious “Amongst all the monsters [of] this unlucky age,” Donne Jr. equates poetic plagiarists with

176 Donne, Devotions, 199-200.
177 Novarr, Making of Walton’s Lives, 74-75; Walton, Life (1658), 81.
proponents of popular sovereignty, as men who “would level understandings too as well as estates, acknowledging no inequality of parts and Judgements.”

Donne Jr. adds a dig against low-church Puritans, monsters who “pretend as indifferently to the chaire of wit as to the Pulpit.” In contrast, Donne Jr. aligns the excellence of his father’s verse with a former, superior version of civil and religious culture. The Muses once fond of England have absconded, he argues in a blend of humor and gravity, due to the bad verse of “rude pretenders” and the fear provoked by “the Churches ruine.” In a final show of deference, Donne Jr. elevates his father’s verse as united with Craven’s “Honour” in preserving “what England was in all her pomp and greatness.”

Donne Jr.’s Allegiances

Donne Jr.’s level of sincerity does not diminish the political loyalties a reader finds in the 1650 Poems; however, a 1662 volume entitled Donne’s Satyr, Donne Jr.’s only original publication before his death the next year, provides some evidence for the authenticity of his criticisms against Puritan Parliamentarians and, regardless, urges readers to view them as such. Two poems in particular, portraits of a “Roundhead” and a “Cavalier” (popular nicknames for Parliamentarians and Royalists) printed opposite one another, imply genuine Royalism. The Roundhead “on top of Fortune’s Wheel” anticipates a turn that will bring him back to poverty as recompense for his “Sacriledge,” while the Cavalier “at Fortune’s lowest pitch” recalls the example of Job and concludes that “God will raise Us from the dust.” A note along the bottom of the page informs, “For these Verses (which were sent to a Gentleman and miscarried) I lay long time in Prison in Marshal Hoptons House, the Year afore the last great Sickness in Shrewsbury [in 1645].” Unlike much of Walton’s chronology, Donne’s dating his imprisonment to 1644 matches evidence already cited from the State Papers—though it is unclear that verse was the cause.

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178 All quotations in this paragraph from John Donne, Poems (1650), A3r-A4r.
179 All quotations taken from John Donne [Jr.], Donne’s Satyr (1662), sheet between 14 and 15.
Possibly Donne Jr. wrote the poems later than he claims in an attempt to project loyalties retroactively. References to Charles II help date some of the poems in the volume to the Restoration, but Donne Jr. seems to have added the Cavalier-Roundhead comparison to an otherwise separate collection. It bears the instruction, “Place this between folio 14, & 15.” If the poem was not written when Donne Jr. claims, he went to great lengths to make it appear so. In either case, Donne Jr.’s ostensible favoring of the Cavalier over the Roundhead in 1662 bolsters the loyalties expressed in the dedication of the 1650 Poems.

Fuller and Gunton

While Walton and Donne Jr. narrowed Donne by projecting loyalties that rendered his life and texts an argument on behalf of the Church of England, Donne’s ultimate codification as a pillar of the pre-war Church and state stemmed from writers in the Interregnum who incorporated Donne’s religio-political characterization into works of apologetics. Among others in the period, the clergyman and historian Thomas Fuller includes Donne in his extensive Church History of Britain (1655), citing Walton’s 1640 Life as his source. Though the work’s title implies objectivity, Fuller’s writings as a whole exhibit clear bias in favor of the Church of England. Fuller himself, though he subscribed to Parliament’s 1642 oath condemning “Popish Innovations,” harbored moderate Royalism. The following year, he delivered a sermon echoing Laud’s conciliatory and, to the Puritans, objectionable remarks, arguing that the Church “should not give needless offence to Roman Catholics, who were also ‘professors of Christianity.’”

The Church History into which Fuller incorporates Donne replicates the loyalties present across Fuller’s oeuvre, not tucked slyly into one of its more than a thousand pages, but foregrounded in Fuller’s address to the reader. The “Church of England,” he writes, “is still, (and

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long may it be) in being, though disturb’d, distempered, distracted, God help and heal her most sad condition.”

In his 1659 response to critics of the History, the Appeal of Injured Innocence, Fuller expresses his loyalties with still less subtlety:

I in Writing my Book, am for the Church of England, as it stood established by Law; the Creed being the Contracted Articles, and the 39. Articles the Expanded Creed of her Doctrine, as the Canons of her Discipline. And still I prize her Favour highest, though for the present it be least worth, as little able to protect, and less to prefer any that are faithfull to her Interest.

Especially important given its reliance on Walton’s hagiography, Donne’s appearance in Fuller’s partisan text places him in a class of figures whose examples coalesce into a panegyric of pre-war Anglicanism and an argument for its perpetuation.

One last contemporary treatment of Donne deserves attention, Simon Gunton’s Ortholatreia: or, A brief discourse concerning bodily worship (1650). A churchman and antiquary who had his living at Pytcheley sequestered after the war, Gunton published his pamphlet on bodily worship under the name “S.G. late preacher of the Word of God.” Gunton’s equation of the loss of church office with the loss of God’s Word bespeaks a sense of retrospective yearning similar to that evident among Walton, Fuller, and Donne Jr. Amplifying the implications of the text’s subject, a facet of Laudian ceremomialism, the expanded title broadcasts the treatise’s topicality and religio-political allegiances in likening aversion to bodily worship to rebellion against God. Bodily worship, he claims, is “A thing worthy to be taken into Consideration in these dayes, wherein Prophaness and Irreverence toward the sacred Majesty of God hath so much corrupted our Religious Assemblies, that men are regardless of their being before God.” In a departure from Fuller, who relies on Walton’s mediation, Gunton turns directly to Donne’s exemplary piety and, above all, his writings in order to counter the Puritan accusation that Laudianism equates to Popery.
(cf. Prynne). He quotes from one of Donne’s sermons (printed 1640) criticizing the lack of piety implied by refusal to kneel:

I must say that there come some persons to this Church, and persons of example to many that come with them, of whom, (excepting some few, who must therefore have their praise from us, as no doubt they have their thanks and blessings [sic] from God) I never saw Master nor servant kneel at his coming into this Church, or at any part of Divine Service.

A characteristically Donnean twist on theological language verifies the propriety of ceremony:

As our coming to Church is a testification, a profession of our Religion; to testifie our fall in Adam, the Church appoints us to fall upon our knees: And to testifie our resurrection in Christ Jesus, the Church hath appointed certain times to stand.\(^{183}\)

As indicated by its date, and as Gunton himself acknowledges as a possible objection, this invocation of Donne on behalf of the Church of England comes “into the world… [not] when the business was in agitation, but long after the Question is ceased.”\(^{184}\) Precisely because its defiance succeeds the executions of Laud and Charles and the ostensible dissolution of the Church, however, Gunton’s treatise follows the pattern seen in Donne Jr.’s 1650 dedication, in Walton’s Life, and in Fuller’s Church History. Through these texts, “Dr. John Donne” emerges less as an authority within the Church than as a representative and agent of the lost, righteous Church. Importantly, Gunton endorses and propagates Donne Jr.’s and Walton’s enterprise of projecting Church loyalties ultimately onto Donne’s canon. Donne’s utility to Gunton’s polemic derives from the understanding that Donne personifies divinity—the monument established by Walton and Donne Jr.—and that his legacy as a “glorious Star… shineth still in his Works.”\(^{185}\)

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\(^{183}\) Simon Gunton, Ortholatreia (1650), 48-49; see also LXXX Sermons, 74-75.

\(^{184}\) Gunton, Ortholatreia, A3.

\(^{185}\) Ibid., 48-9.
Healing: Charity, Conscience, and Toleration

Emerging after the intra-ecclesiastical conflicts of the 1630s and somewhat contemporaneous with the apologetics of the 1650s, the outbreak of war in 1642, the dissolution of the Church and Monarchy, and the task of reorganizing government after the regicide shifted the priorities of Donne’s editors from controversy to national healing. Donne’s work took part in a larger body of texts published in the 1640s and 50s that included Sir Thomas Browne’s Religio Medici (1643) and Walton’s Complete Angler (1653), and that spoke to a nation coping with the consequences of civil and religious strife. Donne’s editors and commemorators (including Walton) applied Donne to the Civil War by opportunely publishing texts that offered avenues towards liberality and by echoing Donne in arguments against division. Through its origin earlier religio-political conflicts, its affinity with Civil War writers, and its topical representation by figures like Donne Jr. and Mayne, Donne’s canon developed during and after the war into an instrument for proto-latitudinarian toleration and national reconciliation.

In examining Donne’s bearing on the war, it is necessary to confront the fact that the topics and attitudes compounded in Donne’s formulation as a proponent of cohesion tend to be murkier than a partisan-nonpartisan binary implies. In the first place, the craftsmen of Donne’s legacy evince an eminently human capacity for inconsistency. At times, Walton beats the drum for the Church of England; at others, he seems intent on achieving quiet peace. Adding further complexity, the application of deceptively neutral concepts like charity, schism, and toleration with which editors framed Donne’s topicality proved variable, and, in the Civil War period, often reinforced partisan distinctions. Comprehension might refer to the ideal of a church “open to most men” which Donne describes in “Show Me Dear Christ” (l. 14); it might denote Henry Vane’s desire to grant legal legitimacy to any belief backed by individual conscience; or it might extend only to the
range of practices comprehended by rigid criteria like the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer. Charity might represent an unbiased appeal for magnanimity towards those of contrary opinions; it might serve as the linguistic earmark of an anti-Calvinist; or it might, as Mary C. Fenton claims it did for Milton, justify separating from or whipping opponents of the true church into correction through violent intolerance.\textsuperscript{186} Partisanship similarly lurks beneath the outwardly conciliatory condemnation of schism. As Protestants knew, one’s sectarian allegiances might dictate whether one conceived of schism as religion’s disintegration or its liberation. The following discussion seeks to the extent possible to unsnarl the personal and ideological threads that converge in Donne’s posthumous politicization. Despite occasional partisan encroachment, Donne’s legacy of charity, cohesion, and toleration transcends individual allegiances and advocates a radically inclusive vision of church and state.

Charity

Donne’s role in opposition to conflict begins with his recurring emphasis on charity, understood less in terms of externalized philanthropy than as Browne’s idea of a “merciful disposition and humane inclination.”\textsuperscript{187} As already noted, the notion of charity in works published around the Civil War carried an anti-Puritan connotation; however, rather than fueling factionalism, the primary function of Donne’s emphasis on charity both during his lifetime and during the Civil War period lay in promoting reconciliation. As described by Walton, Donne’s is a universal, not a partisan sensibility: Donne was “A great lover of the offices of humanity, and of so mercifull a spirit, that he never beheld the miseries of mankind without pity.”\textsuperscript{188}

\textsuperscript{186} Mary C. Fenton, \textit{Milton’s Places of Hope: Spiritual and Political Connections of Hope with Land} (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2006), 71.
\textsuperscript{187} Sir Thomas Browne, \textit{Religio Medici} (1645), 125.
\textsuperscript{188} Walton, \textit{Life} (1658), 122.
Although the religio-political conflict occupying Donne’s consciousness in his discussion of charity concerned not Puritans and Laudians, but Anglicans and Catholics, the publication of Donne’s works in the Civil War period recast his emphasis on charity into a contextually relevant argument for reconciliation. Notably, *Biathanatos*, Donne’s sole text brought to the press during the war, also offers his strongest statement on charity.\(^{189}\) Perhaps not having read Donne’s unpublished “Treatise concerning Self-murther” (Donne opts for the unprejudiced term “self-homicide,” which, in legal language, can denote either a justified or an unjustified act), Walton somewhat misses the point in summarizing *Biathanatos* as a work “wherein all the Lawes violated by [suicide], are diligently survayed, and judiciously censured.”\(^{190}\) Donne’s preface plainly identifies charity, not a survey of laws, as his foremost goal. Linking charity to religious strife, Donne relates that his breeding in an “afflicted Religion, accustomed to the despite of death, and hungry of an imagin’d Martyrdom… hath wonne [him] to a charitable interpretation of their action, who dy [by self-homicide].”\(^{191}\) Donne’s “Paradox”—a statement contrary to common opinion, which, in this case, so strongly condemned suicide as sinful that those who took their lives were publically shamed, deprived of estates, and buried without ceremony at crossroads—aims to expose “uncharitable misinterpreter[s]” to “the nakednesse and deformity of their owne reasons,” so that, by suspending judgement, their “zeale will be tamer.”\(^{192}\) As suggested by the epigraph borrowed from John of Salisbury (in Latin “I do not avow all the things are true, but I wish to serve the uses of readers”) the *matter* of Donne’s argument holds less import than its spirit. The reader need not view suicide as desirable, but Donne offers as a rule that when arguments

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\(^{189}\) Though published in 1647, Donne Jr.’s dedication to Herbert coupled with a printed date of 1644 indicate that printing began during the war.

\(^{190}\) Walton, *Life* (1658), 88.

\(^{191}\) Donne, *Biathanatos* 17-18

\(^{192}\) Ibid., 18; 22; 19.
support contrary conclusions (hence his paradox), “it seemes reasonable to me, that this turne the scales, if on either side there appeare charity towards the poore soule departed.”

In addition to the text’s potential relevance to events like the quasi-suicidal death of Lord Falkland and its clear aversion to the type of dogmatism underlying the Civil War, Biathanatos’ emphasis on charity gains conspicuous topicality through its correspondence with Browne’s Religio Medici. Donne and Browne share a fundamental understanding of the proper relationship between belief and charity towards those who deviate. In language similar to Donne’s, Browne qualifies his allegiance to the title of “Christian” by precluding that “my zeale so farre make me forget the general charity I owe unto humanity.” Important for Browne’s bearing on Biathanatos, the forthcoming Oxford edition of Religio Medici compiles evidence for the intensity with which readers engaged Browne’s text immediately after its publication. Of more precise relevance to the present discussion, the text’s reception often revolved around its understood relevance to religio-political conflict; Moltke’s Latin commentary in 1652 includes reference to the Huguenots and the Thirty Years’ War, to which Browne personally bore witness during his medical studies on the Continent. Given Browne’s popularity, to argue that Donne Jr., in acting as publisher, missed the resonances between Biathanatos and Religio Medici requires inferring a nescience wholly out of keeping with the political savvy displayed in his dedications. Though Donne penned Biathanatos decades before the Civil War, its overlap with Browne’s contemporary work coupled with its preparation for the press during and circulation after the war tinted with topicality Donne’s attempt to temper “zeal” with “charity.”

193 Ibid., 21.
194 Browne, Religio Medici, 2.
196 Ibid.
One might reasonably ask to what degree readers understood a link between Civil War conflict and Donne’s charitable paradox. Admittedly, several responses to *Biathanatos* center on its specific theological arguments, with Thomas Philipot in 1682 calling it a “Learned but unfortunate Treatise.” A later denunciation by John Adams in 1700, however, perhaps aided by his distance from the events, recognizes Donne as complicit in a national turn from dogmatism to what Edward Augustus George identifies as “a policy of comprehension and gentleness” that superseded “Militant Anglicanism and rampant Puritanism” after the Restoration. Adams’ refutation stems from “a melancholic Reflection upon my own Country,” and his sense of the need to restore its “lost Zeal for Religion”—lost, Adams’ eagerness to refute Donne implies, through texts like *Biathanatos*. To that end, and with clear reference to Donne’s thematic focus, Adams rebukes jurors and coroners increasingly lenient in suicide cases, warning them “to take care lest [their] Charity shou’d absurdly corrupt [their] Justice.”

**Skepticism**

As shown by *Biathanatos*, the strain of skepticism present in several of Donne’s works published in the Civil War period merged with charity to advance reconciliation and tolerance. Grierson’s assessment that “A spirit of scepticism and paradox plays through and disturbs almost everything [Donne] wrote” typifies a view shared to varying degrees by Gosse, Bald, and Guibbory. In her analysis of “Satire III,” which describes the search for true religion confounded

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197 Thomas Philipot, *Self-homicide-murther, or, Some antidotes and arguments* (1674), A2; see also S. E. Sprott, *The English Debate on Suicide from Donne to Hume* (LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court, 1961).
by competing sectarian claims, Guibbory provides a useful reading of the relationship between
Donne’s particular brand of skepticism and his equally pervasive attention to religion. Donne,

for all his skepticism, still believes there is such a thing as ‘true religion.’ One must
work hard to find it, doubting ‘wisely’ (l. 77), and not become the atheist Phrygius,
who gives up too quickly, concluding that all mistresses (and religions) are
necessarily false because he knows ’some’ are.202

Donne’s canon abounds with the theme of constant striving, conveyed in “Satire III” through the
image of Truth “On a huge hill, / Cragged, and steep” (ll. 79-80). In line with Origen, he writes in
the Essays in Divinity that God accepts scriptural ambiguities “To make men sharpe and
industrious in the inquisition of truth.”203 Our supreme good, Donne implies, lies in the pursuit,
rather than the acquisition of truth. To grasp its contextual implications, one should note that
Donne’s is (largely) not the giddy skepticism of Francis Bacon’s “jesting Pilate,” who questions
“What is truth?” but does not “stay for an answer.”204 Gosse writes of Donne’s “vigilant
scepticism” in “Satire III” that the author “occupies the position not of one who sneers or ridicules,
but who stands aside, trying the spirits whether they be of God.”205 Donne’s skepticism utilizes
doubt and the reservation of judgement towards a greater understanding.

In the interval between present inquiry and future knowledge, Donne’s skepticism
encourages doubt as the basis of tolerance. Skepticism underwrites the charity induced by
Biathanatos, in which Donne commences with a challenge to the “iniquity and burden of…
custome,” which “every body hath so sucked, and digested” that “none brings the metall now to
the test, nor touch, but onely to the balance.”206 Donne’s paradox creates room for charity by

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203 Donne, Essays in Divinity, 56; see also Simpson, A Study of the Prose Works of John Donne, 6.
204 Francis Bacon, The Essayes (1625), 1.
206 Donne, Biathanatos, 26.
scrutinously drilling into the assumed solidity undergirding dogmatic censure. Browne similarly paints charity as an outgrowth of doubt: “I could never divide myself from any man” on the basis of an opinion “which perhaps within a few days I should dissent myself.”207 With the example of Biathanatos in mind, one can identify an analogous tactic in Donne’s Paradoxes (reprinted 1652/3). Bald points out that the text does more than record the musings of a contemptuous contrarian; as one can see in the paradox “That Virginity is a Virtue,” Donne achieves his “most striking effects… not through the denial of a commonly accepted truth but by treating commonplaces… as if they were paradoxes in which no one had any belief.”208 Donne’s penchant for paradox aims not to instate new certainties, but to inject doubt into certainty itself, which, if unchallenged, impedes one’s capacity for charity towards those of a different mind—hardly a remote concept in a country recovering from bellicose intransigence.

While potentially topical on its own, Donne’s skepticism gains further pertinence to contexts of religio-political conflict through its connection with the philosophy of Michel de Montaigne. Characterized by the entertainment of doubts and the willingness to pursue digression, Montaigne’s Essayes, in spite of their inwardness, exhibit an inextricable link to the historical milieu of the French Wars of Religion, which waged between Catholics and the Calvinist Huguenots from 1562 to 1598, and in which Montaigne himself frequently mediated. His essay on “How one ought to governe his will” showcases the link between skepticism and context in bemoaning the uncritical, ad hominem arguments plaguing France’s public discourse: “I greatly accuse this vicious forme of obstinate contesting: He is of the League, because he admireth the grace of the Duke of Guise: or he is a Hugonote, forsomuch as the King of Navarres activity

207 Browne, Religio Medici, 9.
208 Bald, John Donne: A Life, 125.
amazeth him.” That Donne had read Montaigne is a certainty attested by reference in *Catalogus Librorum* (written 1603-1611) to John Florio, who translated the *Essayes* in 1603, and his citation of Montaigne from memory in a letter “To Sr. G.M.”

Far from a hidden influence, Montaigne’s skepticism and its association with religious-political conflict contributed to Donne’s textual legacy during the Civil War period, particularly through *Biathanatos* and the *Essays in Divinity.* Though he expresses misgivings about the unmitigated skepticism (to borrow David Hume’s terminology) of Pyrrhonists, Montaigne’s “Apologie of Raymond Sebond,” like *Biathanatos*, acknowledges skepticism’s value in exposing “the emptiness, vacuitie, and no worth of man,” in order to subdue the “pride and fierceness” derived from each individuals’ tendency to “apply other men’s sayings” to “opinions he hath forejudged in himselfe.” From the same essay, the reader may glean an apt description of Donne’s technique in the *Paradoxes*: “When [Pyrrhonists] say, that heavy things descend downeward, they would be loath to be believed, but desire to be contradicted, therby to engender doubt, and suspense of judgement.” For both Donne and Montaigne, contrariety is not an end, but a means of disrupting dogmatic certainty.

While one expects to find traces of Montaigne in two works bearing the title “Paradox,” Montaigne’s influence on Donne’s *Essays in Divinity* underscores both skepticism’s deep roots in Donne’s thought and its value to the argument for reconciliation implied in the occasion of his texts’ publication. Beyond their genre, the *Essays in Divinity* bespeak a connection to Montaigne through their discussion of the Catalan theologian Raymond of Sebond and his view of the natural

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213 Ibid., 281.
world as a Book of Creatures in which to read the imprint of God—Simpson proposes that Donne learned of Sebond through Montaigne’s “Apologie.” Though Donne does not credit Montaigne’s essay, its influence manifests in several points of convergence, ranging from minor asides about pre-Christian philosophy to substantial inquiries into theological language. Donne’s attraction to Sebond’s Book of Creatures as tool of piety “safer than the Bible it self” points to the topically resonant alliance of Donne and Montaigne toward the mitigation of conflict. Echoing in strikingly similar verbiage Montaigne’s demand, “How many weighty strifes, and important quarrels, hath the doubt of this one silable, Hoc, brought forth in the world,” Donne asks, “How much Schismatick disputation hath proceeded from the change of Simon’s Name into Peter?”

Perusal of Walton reveals that the figures responsible for crafting Donne’s legacy understood the contemporary relevance of his connection to Montaigne. Walton’s *Complete Angler* draws from both authors, quoting Donne’s reply to Marlowe’s “The Passionate Sheppard” as a sample of pastoral serenity, and citing Montaigne’s skeptical anecdote about the player-played relationship between a man and his cat in order to counter those who scoff at the angler Piscator. Through Walton, Montaigne’s link with Donne and reconciliation comes full circle; a version of skepticism forged in France’s Wars of Religion finds an echo in Donne’s promotion of charity amidst the religio-political strife of Jacobean England, and ultimately in a text that quotes both writers within an argument for contemplative angling as an alternative to “war and wantonness,” written by the figure instrumental to Donne’s personal legacy.

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217 Walton, *Complete Angler* (1653), 6-7; 184-86.
218 Ibid., 36.
Anti-Schism

As suggested in his overlap with Montaigne on the limits of language, Donne’s charitable skepticism bore further relevance to Civil War sectarianism through its related condemnation of schism. Perhaps owing to Donne’s Catholic rearing, fear of religious conflict pervades his canon. As will be seen, Donne did not oppose schism out of an aversion to difference or a conviction of the exclusive veracity of his own belief; as it appears in his works, Donne’s fear of schism centers on its destructive consequences. Donne shares Montaigne’s long-term apprehension that if by schism “some articles of their religion be made doubtfull and questionable, [the multitudes] will soone and easily admit an equall uncertainty in all other parts.” In the *Essays in Divinity*, Donne warns against corrosive attacks on variant faiths, lest in cutting the “Cuticula” of “Outward Worship” one damage the “skin itself,” the “integrity of faith.” One might object that a fear of doubt undermines skepticism. For Donne, however, skepticism that tramples pride in human faculties has the effect of reinforcing man’s reliance on the divine over human squabbles: “all acquired knowledg is by degrees, and successive; but God is impartible, and only faith which can receive it all at once, can comprehend him.” Donne similarly lauds faith in a 1628 Lent Sermon, wherein he calls for avoiding obscurities that, while bearing no pious fruit, contain the seeds of schism (note his joint appeal to charity): “blessed are the peace-makers that command, and blessed are the peace-keepers that obey, and accommodate themselves to peace, in forbearing unnecessary uncharitable controversies.”

Walton predictably minimizes Donne’s skepticism, but nevertheless calls attention to his resultant aversion to schism. In the closest he comes to acknowledging skepticism, Walton writes

221 Ibid., 21.
222 Donne, *XXVI Sermons* (1661), 36.
in the post-war *Life* that the young Donne “had betrothed himself to no Religion that might give him any other denomination than a Christian,” choosing the Church of England only after “Reason and Piety… persuadèd him that there could be no such sin as Schisme, if an adherence to some visible Church were not necessary.”

Among the texts republished in the wake of the Civil War, *Ignatius his Conclave* (1652/3) delivers one of Donne’s strongest and most fiercely topical denunciations of schism. In electing to republish *Ignatius*, Donne Jr. could not have been oblivious to the contemporaneity of a text that, following the executions of Charles and Laud, condemns Ignatius as the patron saint of “spirituall Butchers, and *King-killers*.” Donne singles out these inflexible, combative Jesuits as his chief target among the innovators eligible for hell’s central room (Ignatius succeeds in barring all other contenders).

Here too, Donne’s denunciation of schismatic conflict closely parallels Civil War era texts; just as Donne combines into one infernal space “Antichristian Heroes” and those who ushered a new “Sect,” Browne compares those who “cannot enjoy a singularity without a Heresie, or be the author of an opinion, without they be of a Sect” to “the villany of the first schisme of Lucifer.” Though less tonally consistent than *Biathanatos*, *Ignatius* unites with *Biathanatos* in painting the perils of controversy, often through identical phrasing. Donne’s account in *Biathanatos* that “bookish men [are] more quarrelsome then others… But as long as they go towards peace, that is Truth, it is no matter which way” becomes a virulent reality in the damned innovators who revel in “quarrelsome and brawling controversies: For so the truth be lost, it is no matter how.”

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224 Donne, *Ignatius His Conclave*, 89.
225 Carey writes that Donne attacks “the Jesuits with a pertinacity that seems to reflect a personal grudge” (p. 7).
translated easily to the religious fracturing after Donne’s death and contributed upon its publication to the push for cohesion increasingly prominent in Donne’s Civil-War formulation.

Corroborating the circumstantial evidence of publication dates, a sermon delivered by the translator of Donne’s Latin Epigrams, Jasper Mayne, furnishes an irrefutable connection between Donne’s legacy of anti-schism and the politics of the Civil War period. Initially preached in a Watlington church at the provocation of the Anabaptist John Pendarves, Mayne’s 1652 sermon largely adheres to the conciliatory theme of the published title, a Sermon Against Schism: or, the Separations of these Times—though he cannot resist insinuating that debating truth in the present company is as fruitful as debating color with the blind. Identified by Dennis Flynn as Donnean in style, Mayne’s sermon assumes a position of unapologetic topicality. His opening lamentation describes “not onely three Kingdoms, but our Cityes, Towns, and Villages, nay even our private Familyes divided against themselves,” before introducing his utmost concern: “the Church of Christ among us, which was once as Seamelesse as his Coate, is now so rent by Schismes... that ’tis become like the Coate of Ioseph.”

In a way that serves, like Walton’s Life, to codify particular strains of thought among the many present in Donne’s posthumous works, Mayne addresses ecclesiastical fracturing by emulating Donne’s anti-schismatic, charitable skepticism from the Essays and Biathanatos. The triangulation of several facts hitherto noted ensures that Mayne knew Donne’s works. In his 1633 elegy, Mayne, a contemporary of Donne Jr. at Oxford, describes having heard Donne preach and referenced Donne’s “Anniversaries” as a model for poetic eulogy. In the same year as his sermon, Mayne collaborated with Donne Jr. on the compound volume containing the Essays in Divinity, a volume printed for the same bookseller (Humphrey Moseley) as Biathanatos. Mayne’s sermon

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contains several passages whose specific parallels with Donne’s writings suggest deliberate emulation. Mayne’s aside on “whether a Hermit, or Monastic man, breake not the Law of Nature, because he separates himselfe from the company of Men” uses one of Donne’s recurring case studies, cited in *Biathanatos* against the claim that a suicide steals from the state, and cited in the *Essays* to distinguish between those who “forsake their partnership in our labours” and the few who, like spiritual doctors, properly dedicate themselves to God on behalf of the multitudes.\(^{229}\) On the subject of schism, Mayne shares the *Essays’* view that “Schism, which is a departure from obedience, will quickly become Heresie, which is a wilfull deflexion from the way of faith”; Mayne adds that in the early Church, “a Schismatick, and Hereticke were lookt upon as Twinnes; The one as an *Enemy* to the *Faith*, the other to *Communion*.”\(^{230}\) Ultimately, Mayne applies Donne’s preference for charity over dogmatism to the state of religion in the Commonwealth; since “sinnes are the *Greatest*, which are most contrare [to the] *greatest Christian vertues*” and since “Charity is greater then either *Faith*, or *Hope,*” it follows that an act that “teares the Cords of Charity asunder, is a farre greater sinne then [the] *unbeliefe or Haeresie*” alleged against the Church.\(^{231}\) In Donnean fashion, Mayne aims to unsettle “zealous Arguments” on account of which schismatics are so “far from beleiving themselves to be in an *Errour*, that they strongly thinke all *Others erre who separate not.*”\(^{232}\)

One cannot overstate the significance of Mayne’s sermon as a response to the Civil War modelled on Donne’s works. If thematic correspondence seems insufficient to link Mayne’s anti-schismatic arguments to Donne’s legacy, let the reader remember that the sermon derives from a man whose name appears the same year as the translator of Donne’s Latin *Epigrams*, and who, as

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early as 1633, enjoined his name to Donne’s works in the form of an elegy distancing Donne from violent “sonnes of zeale.” In Mayne, Donne’s canon and personal legacy unite in service to an argument against schism. Coming from a clergyman in the Church of England, Mayne’s sermon has the potential to register as partisan rather than conciliatory, but in light of Donne’s charity and the forthcoming discussion of latitudinarianism, Mayne’s sermon on the whole contributes to Donne’s formation as a proponent of cohesion over destructive separation.

Proto-Latitudinarian Ecumenism

Donne’s final application towards reconciliation in the Civil War period derives from a combination of charity, skepticism, and aversion to the violence of schism into ecumenical toleration grounded in respect for individual conscience and the search for commonality. A 1623 letter to Buckingham during the Duke’s diplomatic venture in Spain foregrounds Donne’s charity-induced, ecumenical inclinations. Although, he writes, Spanish (Catholic) theologians “do not show us the best way to heaven, yet they thinke they doe”; “they do not ly, because they speak their Conscience” and “in charity, I believe so of them.”233 As Carey is quick to point out, Donne could change his tune and describe religious “indifferency” as “a new spiritual disease,” but in the Civil War period, his belief in conscience and comprehension predominated.234

Donne’s charitable ecumenism participated in a culture of similar texts that foreshadowed latitudinarianism in their emphasis on underlying unity over superficial difference. Mention has already been made, through John Adams, to Donne’s implication in a trend towards what George calls “a policy of comprehension and gentleness.”235 George’s description is that of late seventeenth-century latitudinarianism. Though George, focused on figures living in the second

233 Bald, John Donne: A Life, 446.
234 Carey, John Donne: Life, Mind and Art, 16; Donne, LXXX Sermons, 671.
235 George, Seventeenth Century Men of Latitude, 14.
half of the century, does not mention Donne, Donne’s affinity with Browne firmly locates his posthumous texts within the rise of latitudinarianism where, according to Reid Barbour, Charles Dodd also situated Browne’s *Religio Medici*.²³⁶ Clare Jackson likewise examines Browne as a prefiguring of writers like George Mackenzie, who display a “sceptical latitude regarding doctrinal points of difference” and “Eschew ecclesiastical, theological and doctrinal dogmatism, [for] pluralism.”²³⁷ Browne’s remarkable tolerance of religious difference derives from a distinction between the local and global of Christian practice. With palpable humor, he denounces those who restrict salvation to regional varieties and, on the basis of “a few differences, more remarkable in the eyes of man than perhaps in the judgment of God,” uncharitably “usurp the gates of heaven, and turn the key against each other,” contrary to “the mercies of God.”²³⁸ Asia and Africa serve “God in the fire, whereas we honour Him in the sunshine,” yet both serve God.

Donne’s texts published around the Civil War offer an exhaustive catalogue of Brownean statements on the potential of fundamental convergence to overtake outward conflict. He writes in *Biathanatos* that the “tutelare Angels resisted one another in Persia, but neither resisted Gods revealed purpose”; a letter (published 1651) to Goodyear claims that the faiths of Rome, Wittenberg, and Geneva (Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism) “are all virtuall beams of one Sun”; and a 1627 sermon (published in 1649) praises “that God” who “hath kept us without change… in all our foundations [and] who doe[s] truly desire, that the Church may bee truly *Catholique, one stock, in one fold, under one Shepherd*, though *not all of one colour*, of one practise in all outward and disciplinarian points.”²³⁹ One example from 1660’s *Collection of

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Letters Made by Sr Tobie Mathews warrants mention both for its directness and for the fact that it substantiates Donne’s legacy as a proponent of proto-latifudinarianism from outside his canon. Donne writes to the Catholic diplomat that “It is some degree of an union to be united in a serious meditation of God, and to make any Religion the rule of our actions.” That Donne does not write “a god” suggests that his definition of “religion” remains limited to the Judeo-Christian tradition, but with that criterion met, Donne, like Browne, stresses union over division.

Published two years after the regicide, Essays in Divinity delivers the strongest argument for ecumenical toleration among Donne’s posthumous texts. As in the above examples, Donne distinguishes between a church’s firm “corner stone” and its mutable “super-edifications.” Mixing his architectural metaphor with the familial language of Mayne’s claim that “we are all Brethren as Christians: Men allied to one another by one common Hope, one common Faith, one common Saviour, one common God,” Donne emphasizes kinship between the feuding English and Roman Churches: “since [Catholics] keep their right foot fast upon the Rock Christ, I dare not pronounce that [Rome] is not our Sister.” Donne’s charitable approach to difference quickly amasses into a profession of Blakean inclusivism aimed at civic as well as religious peace. That scripture calls the same figure by different names—Esau and Edom—Donne writes, reveals God’s wish for the pious to conclude that “Synagogue and Church is the same thing, and of the Church, Roman and Reformed, and all other distinctions of place, Discipline, or Person, but one Church, journying to one Hierusalem, and directed by one guide, Christ Jesus.” Donne’s maxim about the unimportance of superficial distinction transitions into an unexpected concession from the future Dean, in which he lays bare his prioritization of concord over church loyalty; though he

240 Matthews Collection, 337.
241 Donne, Essays in Divinity, 49.
242 Mayne, A Sermon against Schisme, 6; Donne, Essays in Divinity, 50.
243 This and the following quotations from Donne, Essays in Divinity, 51-2
esteems “the form of Gods worship, established in the Church of England [to] be more convenient, and advantageous then of any other Kingdome,” out of a “fervent” affection for “Unity, I do zealously wish, that the whole catholick Church, were reduced to such Unity and agreement, in the form and profession Established, in any one of these Churches [which have not] destroyed the foundation and possibility of salvation in Christ.” Provoked by decades of conflict between Protestants and Catholics, Donne’s willingness to renounce his own Church in favor of any church that would enable cohesion presents a timely argument for national healing in aftermath of the Civil War.

Donne Jr. understood and sought to maximize the Essays’ relevance to post-Civil War England by dedicating the text’s first printing to Sir Henry Vane. As Guibbory observes, Donne’s ecumenism reflects the author’s particular dislike of limitations to conscience—conscience forms the basis of his charity towards Spanish theologians in his letter to Buckingham.244 As with charity, Donne’s personal focus on conscience gained political weight in the wake of the Civil War, as the country directed its attention not only to questions of governance, but also to national worship. Among those opposed to a national church, Vane had, by the 1650s, established himself as a proponent of conscience in matters of state religion. Printed in 1652, Vane’s Zeal Examined, or, A Discourse for Liberty of Conscience advocated religion unfettered by legal prohibitions or coercion, but the text was not Vane’s first intercession on behalf of free conscience. As governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 1630s, Vane had jeopardized his standing by defending Anne Hutchinson and the Antinomians against legalistic opponents like John Winthorp. As legislation around the regicide increasingly suppressed heresy, Vane exhorted toleration both in England and the Colonies. As Ruth E. Mayers astutely notes, Milton’s contrary sonnets to

Cromwell and Vane, calling Vane the “hand [on which] Religion leans / In peace” while entreat ing Cromwell to “save free Conscience,” demonstrates Vane’s popular association with toleration.\textsuperscript{245} While both Vane and Cromwell opposed rigid Anglican conformity, only Vane extended toleration to all beliefs, however seemingly heretical—his affinity with the author of \textit{Biathanatos} should be clear already.

Due to Vane’s status as a champion of conscience, it is significant for our understanding of Donne’s legacy that Donne Jr. considered Vane an appropriate dedicatee for the \textit{Essays in Divinity}. While Vane’s name alone amplifies the text’s potential bearing on the religious affairs of the Commonwealth, the epistle’s content strengthens Vane’s link with the \textit{Essays} by asserting analogy between Donne at the time of composition and “\textsl{the course you [Vane] now seem to steer}” in merging “\textit{publick Affairs of the State}” with “\textit{private Devotions}.”\textsuperscript{246} As in Milton’s sonnet, which lauds Vane’s effort to “settle peace,” it is Vane’s moderating influence that seems above all to spur Donne Jr.’s pen. By celebrating Vane as a force of equanimity, who “\textit{hath so settled us}” against “\textit{tempestuous North-windes}” (the Scots) and the new government’s threat to “\textit{over-ripen}” before “\textit{it arrive at such a perfection}” Donne Jr. consciously locates the \textit{Essays} within an effort after the heaves of the Civil War and regicide to resolve into cohesion. Through Vane, Donne Jr. aligns his father with a radical, topical vision of toleration, one not limited to the Church of England or Puritan righteousness, but that enfolds all variants in the pursuit of peace.

\textsuperscript{246} All quotations in this paragraph from Donne, \textit{Essays in Divinity}, 3-4.
Conclusion:
For All Time, But of an Age

Both the process and the product of Donne’s canon formation, guided by the three impetuses to print, monumentalize, and politicize, illuminate important features in the current state of Donne scholarship. As a survey of the “Donne” shaped between 1631 and 1661 helps unveil, modern formulations of the author are the direct descendants of a common ancestor that appeared in the mid-seventeenth century. The period of canon formation effectively came to a close first with the printing of the *XXVI Sermons* (1661), the last major volume of Donne’s unpublished work, and finally with the death of Donne Jr. in early 1663. For the next two hundred years, Donne lacked a wide audience.247 When Donne resurfaced in the nineteenth century, the only existing copies of texts like the *Essays in Divinity* were those contained in his original canon.

The body of Donne scholarship since the nineteenth century embodies an equilibrium between reinforcing and expanding the narrowed Donne inherited from the mid-seventeenth century. Working with Donne’s prose, both Jessopp and Simpson emphasized Donne’s unique status as a figure of tolerance in an age of rigidity.248 E. G. Lewis responded in 1938 by widening “Donne” to encompass the author’s statements on conformity and obedience.249 Without disparaging their value, one can think of works like the “mean-spirited hiss” (Edward W. Taylor’s

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words) of Carey’s *John Donne: Life, Mind and Art* as a reaction to the vision of holy Donne, meek and mild, promulgated after his death.²⁵⁰

The same dynamic defines Donne’s status outside the academy. Samuel Jonson, who turned to Donne’s work only after reading Walton’s *Life*, gave Donne his enduring label as a poet of the “metaphysical.”²⁵¹ In a recent BBC documentary, Simon Schama remarked, “I’ve never understood that, because for me, Donne is the most physical of poets; even when he’s talking about the soul it seems to be a thing of flesh and blood.”²⁵² Like the 1635 *Poems*, the documentary, which intersperses biography with poetry readings by actress Fiona Shaw, offers a thematic reorganization of Donne’s canon, one that embraces his saucy sensuousness.

In spite of Flynn’s efforts to diminish scholars’ reliance on Walton,²⁵³ the biographical criticism woven into Donne’s original canon remains the basic outline for his popular reception. In 2012, the City of London installed a monument to Donne the “poet and divine,” a bronze bust in the likeness of his later portraits. Situated in the churchyard of St. Paul’s, the bust faces east, and includes an inscription from Donne’s “Goodfriday, 1613”: “Hence is’t that I am carried towards the West, / This day, when my Soul’s form bends to the East.” Like Walton, the statue incorporates Donne’s poetry insofar as it reinforces divinity—in fairness, “The Flea” hardly seems appropriate for a churchyard. Along with George Herbert, another of Walton’s subjects, the modern Church calendar celebrates Donne on the day of his death, March 31.

The kinship between Donne’s seventeenth-century codification and present scholarship runs deeper than critical revisionism, however. Consciously or otherwise, modern canons often

mirror original editorial efforts. One need look no further than the labels of “Songs and Sonnets” and “Divine Poems” duplicated in each volume of Donne’s verse, categories added with a clear agenda in the 1635 Poems. The ongoing Variorum edition of Donne’s poetry, despite its praiseworthy goal of accounting for all manuscripts, print editions, and criticism, nevertheless relegates the Latin Epigrams to an Appendix for reasons (as noted in Part I) that reflect the initial circumstances of canon formation.

Alongside the Variorum, the most extensive current project in Donne scholarship, the Oxford edition of his sermons, seeks to expand Donne by combining earlier textual criticism with the historicism dominant in the field in recent decades. Rather than uproot preceding attention to formal elements, McCullough proposes a “more accurate” approach that “bring[s] formal and contextual analysis together” in volumes organized around where, when, and to whom Donne preached.254 In a valuable way, historical analysis has joined close reading to flesh out a substantial body of Donne’s work.

The foregoing discussion of Donne’s first printed canon as a product of the Civil War period reinforces the need to situate Donne’s writings in context, but redefines the boundaries of that context to include the formative influence(s) wrought by the circumstances of compilation in addition to those of composition. Recognizing “Donne” as a product of the Civil War opens new dimensions of analysis to be explored by future studies. As Marotti and Flynn have proven of coterie conventions and Catholic nobility, further study into the politics of print, the culture of monuments, the lives of Donne Jr. and Mayne, and other facets of the mid-seventeenth century promise to enrich our understanding of Donne’s work.

254 McCullough, introduction to Sermons of John Donne, vol. 1, xxxi.
Bibliography

Donne’s Texts

Given the nature of this study, quotations from Donne’s works are largely cited as they appear in seventeenth-century editions. Grierson’s 1912 edition supplies the remaining quotations from Donne’s poems. Modern editions consulted for their notes and introductions are cited according to editor.


Primary and Secondary Texts


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**Images**

Figure 1. Donne, John. *Juvenilia* (1633), Rare Book Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Figure 2. Donne, John. *Poems by J. D.* (1633), Rare Book Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Figure 3. Donne, John. *Poems by J. D.* (1650), Rare Book Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Figure 4. Donne, John. *LXXX Sermons* (1640), Rare Book Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.