Reconciling Eros and Agape: The English Catholic Artistic Response to Reforms

Nicole M. Coonradt

University of Denver

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons, and the Religion Commons

Recommended Citation

https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/141

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies at Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu,dig-commons@du.edu.
RECONCILING EROS AND AGAPE: THE ENGLISH CATHOLIC ARTISTIC RESPONSE TO REFORMS

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of Arts and Humanities
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Nicole M. Coonradt
June 2012
Advisor: Linda Bensel-Meyers
Abstract

This study explores the English Catholic artistic response to reforms—reforms being both internal and external to the Catholic Church—as part of the Catholic Reformation. “Response,” for the purposes of this project, may be defined in terms of an “answer” in an ongoing dialogue about the Catholic position and may be seen as both conciliatory and apologetic in nature. Understanding this response is useful when we consider the role of rhetoric and poetry in society and the attendant contemporary theories thereof, in their historical context, especially the duty of the poet. The recent “revisionist” history is central to understanding art contextually. While identifying the key doctrinal debates between Catholics and Protestants, this study traces these elements in the English Catholic art of Edmund Campion, Robert Southwell, and William Byrd and focuses, especially, on the way art attempts to reconcile man’s human and divine natures, or Eros and Agape. This can enrich our understanding of the degree to which the spiritual may be found in the temporal to represent how important the concept of the soul and its believed afterlife was to Renaissance artists and their audiences particularly during a time of sustained religious unrest, censorship, and persecution. From the Catholic perspective, a significant recurring trope is the Blessed Sacrament in the then-forbidden rite of the Catholic Mass and its meritorious powers: to impart grace—even when simply gazed upon; to unify members of the Church as Christ’s Earthly Body and
Bride; to nourish the soul; and, ultimately, to secure the salvation necessary for eternal life. As rhetoric, poetry, and drama are the fruits of education central to the Ignatian charism of “helping souls,” the Jesuit influence on Byrd and other lay figures among the Catholic recusant community such as Sir Thomas Tresham and Sir John Harington may be detected in music, buildings, and verse. This project endeavors to broaden the critical base for additional studies concerned with reforms in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England to enrich our understanding of artistic work in this period, most pointedly in terms of reconciling *Eros* and *Agape*. 
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the official members of my doctoral dissertation committee from the Department of English at the University of Denver (DU), including my director, Dr. Linda Bensel-Meyers, who worked tirelessly with me to get the project to the defense, and Dr. Alexandra Olsen, Dr. Eleanor McNees, Dr. Clark Davis, and our extra-departmental Chair Dr. M. E. Warlick from the Art History department for their insight and engaged participation. Additionally, this project has benefited less officially (though no less usefully) from a number of other scholars and I would be remiss if I neglected to thank them for their time in looking over drafts and offering additional expertise and support via constructive criticisms. These include Dr. Peter Davidson at the University of Aberdeen; Mr. Martin Dodwell, an independent UK scholar; Dr. Gerard Kilroy at University College, London; and Dr. Kerry McCarthy at Duke University here in the States. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the Andrew C. Duncan Trust of the Catholic Record Society for the generous grant they awarded me in 2009 that made possible my research trip to the UK the following autumn of 2010 to visit the Tresham properties in Northamptonshire, the British Library and Jesuit Archives in London, and the Bodleian Library, Oxford. This research proved invaluable to a better understanding of the subjects explored herein. Finally, many thanks to DU’s Peggy Keeran, Arts and Humanities Reference Librarian at Penrose, who, on several occasions, enthusiastically provided vital research assistance for projects that led to this dissertation. I hope with all due sincerity that each of those involved will find in my work some reflection of his or her generous advice. Remaining shortcomings are entirely my own.
# Table of Contents

Chapter One: The Jesuit Tradition: “Helping Souls” as a means to “Love and Live” and the Function of Art in the Catholic Reformation ................................................................. 1

Chapter Two: The Drama of Edmund Campion: *Ambrosia*—Art as Manna ..............30

Chapter Three: Robert Southwell, Living the Emblem: “I Liue to Dye–I Dye to Liue” .. 85

Chapter Four: William Byrd’s Composition—“If music be the food of love, play on!” 128

Chapter Five: Concluding Reflections in which the Ending is also a Beginning ........ 157

Works Cited ........................................................................................................................................... 161

Endnotes.................................................................................................................................................. 176
Chapter One

The Jesuit Tradition: “Helping Souls” as a means to “Love and Live” and the Function of Art in the Catholic Reformation

Most scholars are now aware of the religious turmoil in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries due to the Protestant Reformation, but we may be less aware of the art that arose from it, especially in England. As the Reformation/Counter-Reformation pendulum swung erratically from the reign of Henry VIII through James I, the individual English subject’s concerns about matters of salvation (soteriology) became increasingly anxious as laws regarding religion were made and repealed, reinstated, and often intensified. ¹ Someone like Lady Magdalen Montague (1538-1608) was born during Henry’s reign and lived to see James rule for five years before she died at the age of 70, experiencing five monarchies in all. ² The shifting ideological trends generally necessitated ambiguity for anyone who wished to address matters of Church or State that challenged the status quo, regardless of the monarch sitting on the throne at any given time. In one way or another, contemporary art often reflects the increasing spiritual unrest that reforms introduced, the political and religious being almost inextricably linked; yet, because the laws forbid anxious criticisms—what Shakespeare called “Art made tongue-tied by authority” (S. 66)—one must proceed with caution when exploring period art.
Nevertheless, in spite of restrictions on censure, we have the idea that the poet’s duty is to counsel wayward princes, a concept extending to other forms of artistic expression as well. These very tensions fostered some of England’s most interesting, and at times conflicted, art.

First, then it is necessary to foreground this study in terms of reform in order to establish the significance and usefulness of the term “Catholic Reformation” and also to justify why I employ this term throughout, rather than the more traditional “Counter-Reformation” (except where it appears in citation). Just as “revisionist” history has come to the fore in the past few decades, scholars have begun to rethink the larger picture of Early Modern religious reforms, both internal and external to the Catholic Church, and the degree to which crisis attended those reforms, a concept that is central to this project.

As Alison Shell has argued in her recent study, Catholicism, Controversy and the English Imagination, 1558-1560, although:

imaginative genres were not the main media in which controversies were conducted, they can be an unmatched guide to response; and, crucially, they remind us that responses to anti-Catholic accusation were often not fierce, but conciliatory. (109; emphasis added)

Most especially then, this doctoral dissertation is concerned with exploring the English Catholic artistic response to reforms to establish what that looks like, how it was effected, and how a better understanding of this response can inform subsequent studies of art during the period.
Central to such an exploration is the idea that man is comprised of both body and soul, two potentially opposed forces that, ideally, should exist in harmony. These two sides are often expressed conceptually through love as being at once human and divine, temporal and spiritual, or, more classically, as Eros and Agape. Furthermore, Agape is also the Creator’s love for mankind and as man is believed, biblically, to be created in God’s image, divinity is seen as part of his nature, too, and a thing to be developed, as seen in the charity of “love thy neighbor” (Lev. 19:18). A perceived obstacle to reconciliation was the sustained religious unrest and the attendant lack of toleration, especially for the recusant community in England. Censorship further constrained artistic treatment of religious matters. Nevertheless, artists, both clerical and lay, who struggled to minister to a bereft community of worshippers sought ways to express themselves in spite of suppression. This study examines Edmund Campion, Robert Southwell, and William Byrd—all three of whom are virtually absent from English departments in the Academy—to determine how Catholic artists responded to reforms. Ultimately, as the project’s overriding title suggests, I will argue that the Catholic texts explored herein strive, in a conciliatory and apologetic manner, to reconcile Eros and Agape. In many cases, art performs its own kind of “incarnation” in an attempt to make tangible what had been removed or forbidden.

In the opening sentence of “The Spirituality of the Restored Catholic Church (1553-1558) in the Context of the Counter Reformation,” written for the centenary celebration of Campion Hall, Oxford (1896-1996), David Loades writes:
No serious student of the Reformation would now deny that there was a Catholic reformation in process before Martin Luther made his celebrated protest, and that to see the Counter Reformation simply in terms of a response to that challenge is unacceptable. (3)

This study operates under that assumption because of its focus on the artistic response, which we might understand best in terms of a sustained Catholic apologetics. Therefore, this project sees “response” as a creative answer to questions surrounding reforms and thus in dialogue with the concerns it represents artistically. Furthermore, because such distinctions tend to matter, the term “Counter-Reformation” typically refers to the period that spans the Council of Trent (1545-1563) to the Thirty Years’ War (1648), a period marked in England by severe anti-Catholic sentiment and policies (Shell 109); however, we should note in the historical background, that interest in reforms began much earlier, as Loades acknowledges, reaching back some centuries prior to Luther’s official Protest in 1517 that sparked the Protestant Reformation proper. As Loades suggests, most problematic about the more linguistically pejorative or dependent “Counter-Reformation” is that such a term implies merely a reaction to the Protestant movement—or even an effect of it—rather than any prior or internal positive impetus for change within the Catholic Church by its separate members. Indeed, the Church hundreds of years previously, at various stages, had, through groups or individuals, witnessed instances of reform or desires for reform. In terms of contemporary players, certainly no one would deny that both the brilliant Renaissance humanists Desiderius Erasmus, on the Continent, and his good friend Thomas More, in England, were two devout Catholics who wanted
reforms in some instances, but unlike some, were not willing to go to such destructive extremes to achieve them.  

With the foregoing in mind, this introductory chapter gives the historical background on the Jesuits as a uniquely Catholic reform during what famously has been referred to as the Reformation “tempest.” The significance of their founding (initially a band of seven at Montmartre Hill, France in 1534) by Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) and his own spiritual pilgrimage, Papal approval of the Order in 1540 (shocking to the Protestant opposition), the focus on the charism of “helping souls,” and the relevance of education as part of that philosophy, especially in terms of art, will be presented. This will include a focus on rhetoric and drama as important tools of the Jesuit trade. Of the latter, Edmund Campion was an acknowledged master. Equally significant was the role of poetry, especially as practiced by Robert Southwell, and his subsequent influence on contemporary art. The centrality of the Jesuit motto “Love and Live” is examined, especially with its ties to reconciling Eros and Agape.

Before moving to the history, however, I first would like to review the critical heritage of Campion, Southwell, and Byrd to situate my own study among the existing scholarship and highlight the ways in which I hope to add it. In the main I will identify the doctrinal debates by locating representations of them in the art I examine. The artistic treatment of key concerns signifies the Catholic position and provides a catalog of both ideas and techniques to inform subsequent studies. A review of literature for such a project, of necessity, should be broad enough to incorporate studies on Jesuits,
specifically, but more broadly on the Renaissance, and again more specifically on Byrd who is normally studied in a different field, musicology. One argument for examining all three artists together as “literary” figures (especially the inclusion of Byrd) is the recent and ongoing trend to “redraw the [traditional] boundaries” in the field, per Stephen Greenblatt, to the wider scope of what is now more rightly understood as “cultural” studies, which can give us a clearer, more detailed picture of the period. Cultural studies also should include, marginalized, excluded, or overlooked religious voices, among which Byrd is numbered along with the Jesuits. For example, in their introductory comments, Greenblatt and Giles trace this “redrawing” phenomenon and its significance:

At least one historical field, namely, Renaissance studies, is under pressure to change its name; others, like American literary studies before and after the Civil War, eighteenth-century studies, and modernist studies, have experienced a series of challenges to their constitutive interpretive paradigms. And virtually every field has been altered, sometimes radically, by the recovery of lost or marginalized texts of women writers. Just as none of the critical approaches that antedate this period, from psychological and Marxist criticism to reader-response theory and cultural criticism, has remained stable, so none of the historical fields and subfields that constitute English and American literary studies has been left untouched by revisionist energies. (1)

These “energies”—those of Eamon Duffy, Edwin Jones, J. J. Scarisbrick, et al.—have greatly impacted our understanding of the strained climate in which Renaissance “texts” were produced and are crucial to a study that hopes to add to and build on these trends.

For the Jesuits, then, we have the various biographies, old and new, and the recent critical studies of their work; however, the studies on the more distinctly literary aspects of these Jesuits’ writings can be enriched. Jesuit writing is normally excluded, for one
reason or another, from standard English Department fare and literary anthologies, but emerging scholarship is changing that trend. For Edmund Campion (1540-1581), the “modern” accounts span three centuries. The very first account of his life, however, appeared about forty years after his martyrdom, written in Latin by Paolo Bombino (1618). The details were compiled primarily from the notes of Campion’s fellow Jesuit, Robert Persons. Later, Richard Simpson published his biography in the nineteenth century, Evelyn Waugh in the twentieth. Taking the scholarship into the twenty-first century, Peter Joseph published a “revised” edition of Simpson’s biography and Gerard Kilroy has written extensively on Campion, especially about his time at Oxford and his later relations with Sir Thomas Tresham and Sir John Harington. Additionally, a recent study on Campion titled *The Reckoned Expense* that explores the man, his art, and associations, especially at Oxford University, is the collection of essays written to mark the first centenary of Campion Hall, Oxford, in 1996 edited by Thomas McCoog. This collection is especially useful since all the contributors are conversant with the Jesuits and the period.

Spanning mainly the same centuries, for Robert Southwell (1561-1595) we have biographical commentary by Rev. Alexander B. Grosart (Anglican editor of Southwell’s collected poems) in his “Memorial Introduction” for the nineteenth; Janelle Pierre, Christopher Devlin, Philip Caramen, F. W. Brownlow, and Nancy Pollard Brown (who also edited Southwell’s collected poems and has written recent more critical commentary as well) in the twentieth; and Scott Pilarz and Anne Sweeney in the twenty-first, though
these latter two fall under literary criticism as much as they might be considered straight “biography.” Though it explores more than Southwell and is thus somewhat specialized, John Klause’ recent *Shakespeare, the Earl, and the Jesuit* explores Shakespeare in relation to both Henry Wriothesley, the Third Earl of Southampton (Shakespeare’s patron), and Robert Southwell (the Earl’s cousin, and more distantly, Shakespeare’s). Peter Milward has explored the Spiritual Exercises and Southwell in relation to Shakespeare making a contextual artistic connection as well. Both studies illuminate Southwell’s life and work in interesting ways.

For William Byrd (1539-1623), as with Waugh on Campion, we have E. H. Fellowes publishing his biography in the twentieth century. More recently, Philip Brett, John Harley, Joseph Kerman, David Mateer, Kerry McCarthy, Craig Monson, David Skinner, and Jeremy Smith have written myriad studies that involve both history and musicology to bring us into the twenty-first century. McCarthy’s study is especially useful for its contextualizing history with chapters that deal specifically with the Jesuits and the Mission in England to explore Byrd’s extensive involvement with them.

Certainly earlier accounts of all three men exist in manuscript (the basis for the biographies)—some details of which are only now being noticed and transcribed by scholars—that discuss the lives of these three figures that, not surprisingly, are connected. For example, recently I was able to view the *Brudenell Manuscript* at the Bodleian and the *Tresham Papers* at the British Library, both of which are yet to be fully transcribed and made available to the public. Both sets of documents were compiled
and organized by Thomas Tresham before his death in 1605 and were meant to serve as a testament of the Catholic faith as well as a record of it. Literally hidden for safe keeping, the Papers were wrapped in linen that was sealed with wax and concealed in a partition wall at Rushton Hall, to be found by future generations.\textsuperscript{14} The Brudenell MS, copied out by Tresham’s daughter, Mary, who later married a Brudenell, was supposed to have been similarly hidden, but instead was kept at the Brudenell estate, Deane Park, where it went largely unnoticed until it was sold to the Bodleian in 1968. Tellingly, the three men in question are all connected through their Catholicism and the Jesuit Mission, and these documents provide further evidence of that and the way Catholics responded artistically, conciliatorily, and apologetically to reforms in England.

The Brudenell MS, as a kind of Catechism or encyclopedia of the Catholic faith, is an artistic endeavor that demonstrates the extent to which a devout and concerned recusant Catholic worried about the preservation of English Catholicism. It includes discussions of the Jesuits and specifically Campion’s trial and martyrdom, but also includes a catalog of Catholic saints and discusses the doctrinal issues of the times. In two huge, calf-bound volumes, each numbering nearly 1000 pages, the set is an exquisite tribute to the faith with its careful, artistic presentation (modeled after Medieval manuscripts), illuminated capital letters, fine paper (foreign-milled with watermark depicting grapes and a cross), and a single-handed, secretary script (believed to be Mary Tresham’s).\textsuperscript{15} The Brudenell MS is an important archival document that gives us a better
understanding of the world experienced by recusant Catholics under Elizabeth I and James I.

Finally, what has also informed our understanding of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is the recent and ongoing revisionist history spearheaded by scholars such as John Bossy, Eamon Duffy, Christopher Haigh, Edwin Jones, Peter Lake, Michael Questier, Alexandra Walsham, who have been uncovering—or re-discovering—the extent to which crisis marked the period to dispel “The Tudor Myth” that reforms were embraced peaceably and willingly in England.\(^\text{16}\) Duffy writes, “Yet when all is said and done, the Reformation was a violent disruption, not the natural fulfillment, of most of what was vigorous in late Medieval piety and religious practice” (4). Jones study on the importance of John Lingard (1771-1851) and his comprehensive *History of England* (1826) demonstrates this as well. My own work builds on the revisionist history to operate under an assumption of schism as it explores the Catholic artistic response to reforms, both internal and external to the Catholic Church, especially via the Jesuit Mission.

The Society of Jesus, born during the Reformation tempest through the vision and efforts of the chivalrous knight-turned-warrior-for-Christ Ignatius of Loyola, seeks and embraces a love that realizes a total devotion to Christ achieved through humility that is not, as Harro Höpfl notes, “a lack of will . . . [but] requires an iron will, and an inflexible commitment. Humility and submissiveness are only valuable if they are themselves the product of will” (31): one must *choose* them. Notice that choice, as free will, matters, a
concept that will be important in this study as the polemical understanding of free will is among one of the core debates between Catholics and Protestants during the period. In terms of the Jesuits, it is believed that a total devotion to Christ necessarily directs men’s hearts to “help souls,” and in so doing, ultimately frees them. As Fr. Divarkar says:

In his encounter with Christ, Ignatius experiences loyalty as liberation. This paradox is the closest possible approach to a definition of the ignatian charism: loyalty is a firm attachment, something that binds; but loyalty to Christ is a liberation from all that hampers true and total growth. *(A Pilgrim’s Testament, “Notes on the Text” 116)*

This idea works within a paradoxical spiritual *ideal*: total submission to Christ results in total freedom, what we may see as the spiritual in the temporal. This concept is apparent also in the seemingly antithetical concepts “Love and Live,” “Live to Die—Die to Live.”\(^1\) It is believed that through a life devoted to Christ, temporal death brings spiritual reward in eternal life, what Williams has called, “the long-sought joy of mystical death” (xxii).\(^1\) The emblematic ideal provides the thread of *Eros* and *Agape* reconciled that trusses together each chapter of this study as seen in all the work I examine.

In that vein, this introductory chapter explores the extraordinary nature of the Jesuits—who employ the motto “Love and Live”—and what seems the near impossibility of their founding even when coupled with a singular need, given the historical moment in which the Society came into being. Inspired by the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*, they embrace an ideal of love through their own poetry and drama within the framework of Renaissance poetics—rhetorically, to teach, delight, and move.\(^1\) One of the most interesting and important aspects to note about Ignatius’ conversion is the manner in
which it occurred and the central theme it presents about love, specifically as seen in the *Eros/Agape* conflict. Ignatius’ *A Pilgrim’s Testament* documents that significant moment and mission. Ignatius had been injured in battle and while convalescing, spent much of his time reading. He read romances about knights and ladies that in their worldliness, or *Eros*, excited him, but he also realized they left him feeling empty and uneasy. On the other hand, when he read *The Life of Christ* and hagiography, he was similarly stimulated, but rather than feeling drained afterward, he was filled with energizing joy and a more spiritual love, or *Agape*. His focused concentration on these things in his time of physical recovery prompted a spiritual recovery that planted the seeds for the intense meditation that later became *The Spiritual Exercises*. Ignatius was often “absorbed in thinking about [things] for two and three and four hours without realizing it” (8).20 Considering the difference between the positive and negative emotions, “Little by little he came to recognize the difference between the spirits that were stirring, one from the devil, the other from God” (9). This dichotomy informed Ignatius’ idea of the diversity of spirits in *The Exercises*.

As a result of Ignatius’ profound experience of spiritual awakening on his sick bed, the chivalric man who had been wounded in military service, took up the cross for Christ—“don[ned] the armour of Christ” (19)—and became God’s servant with a compelling desire to “help souls” as his guiding principle, embracing the idea that salvation lies in an outpouring of selfless love that is manifest in devoted service to Christ.21 This is a distinctly Catholic idea of “works” (as opposed to Luther’s *Sola Fides*
or salvation “by faith alone”) and Ignatius never considered leaving the embrace of the Mother Church in whose faith he had been raised, though the Reformation storm raged, for both good and ill, throughout Christendom. Readers may find it curious that one of the key aspects distinguishing the Jesuits from other religious orders lies in their intense meditation and the very personal nature of their interaction with God. This mental visualization and the internalization of Christ’s nativity, life, passion, resurrection, and ascension is central to *The Exercises* and forms the rite of passage and spiritual training through which every Jesuit journeys on his life’s pilgrimage. Ignatius had a penetratingly intimate relationship with Christ, something we might normally (perhaps anachronistically now) associate not with Catholicism, but Protestantism given long-standing criticisms against Catholics for being “idolatrous” and distracted by worldly constructs outside of God’s Word. It may seem surprising then, that the Pope so readily gave his blessing to the Society’s founding and the Ignatian *Exercises*, something which even contemporary detractors noted, though critic Ian Wilson comments that the Jesuits were Rome’s plan to stay the spread of Protestantism (47).

In his “Foreword” to *The Exercises*, William Reiser, S. J. comments:

One of Ignatius’ first companions confidently observed that Pope Paul III’s solemn approval of the text of the Exercises in 1548 was both a rare privilege and an extraordinary honor for an individual writing; the pronouncement bordered on being infallible! And one early adversary noted in his copy of the text that such papal approval was “astonishing.” It was, he thought, theologically appalling that a text which came down so strongly on the side of the individual’s direct experience of God should have won the endorsement of the Holy See. (xiii)
Protestants could not imagine Catholics having an intimate relationship with God. Ironically, however, when all the seemingly popish and idolatrous trappings of Catholicism had been purged from countries where Catholicism was outlawed, especially England, where the official State religion became Protestant, the place where faith resided for Catholic recusants was exactly where they were told it did not exist: in the heart. The heart and Sacred Heart are revered symbols to both Jesuits and the greater Catholic community.

One can understand the appeal such internalized devotion, what Höpfl describes as “a highly sophisticated marshalling of senses and passions as well as the reasoning faculties for a systematic assault upon the habits of submission to God generated by pride” (31), with its emphasis on visualization and the imagination, possessed for England and her sizable recusant community after Catholicism was outlawed. The majority of churches had been stripped of ornamentation and the monasteries, similarly, had been plundered—treasures, buildings, and lands confiscated during Henry VIII’s Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s. Alexandra Walsham’s recent study The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, & Memory in Early Modern Britain & Ireland explores iconography and iconoclasm comprehensively. Michael Wood speculates that Shakespeare’s own father, John, may have participated in the whitewashing of sacred paintings even in Straford’s Guild Hall. Whitewash was often used in the hopes that the images could one day be uncovered again. Some images have been restored only recently as the English have begun to realize the importance of this
iconography in their country’s history. To imagine the cultural Zeitgeist of Renaissance Christendom, it seems “Providential” that God called to Ignatius (vocare) at precisely the right moment, an idea we see echoed by scholars discussing Byrd’s work and which we might also apply to other contemporary artists and their creativity. Ignatius’ ideal of love filled a void and the later Jesuit mission to England witnessed the martyrs Campion and Southwell leaving their marks with important literary influences that Arthur Marotti refers to as the new religious “relics,” where the body of one’s work—one’s corpus—provided the only possible remains the faithful might be guaranteed since relics were outlawed and, “[t]he corpse of the author and the corpus of his work were in closer imaginative proximity” (27). The Jesuit Fr. Scott Pilarz’ study on Southwell includes a similar discussion:

Southwell’s physical body and the body of his work serve as sites for making meaning. Theses bodies occupy privileged positions from which the poet-priest adapts, negotiates and integrates resistant and competing ways of thinking, writing, believing and being. Attempts to understand Southwell’s bodies can afford readers similar opportunities. When executioners broke open his corporeal body at Tyburn, they unintentionally reanimated the Jesuit mission, the English Catholic community, and support for the English cause among Continental Catholics. (xiv)²⁷

These ideas of the body certainly influenced those who adhered to the Old Faith—just as they hungered for Christ’s saving Body in the forbidden Eucharist.²⁸

Various, this study explores “Body” in terms of the Church—Christ’s earthly Body or Bride—and the sacrificial body, in terms of both martyrdom—the figurative and
literal—and the Eucharistic Host: *Ave verum corpus*. Höpfl discusses the body in terms of the Jesuits, as well:

The Society of Jesus was unquestionably a *corpus*, a corporation, a "body mystical"; these terms were as appropriate for it as for a guild, a company of merchants [as the Jesuits would later call themselves in coded references] a commonwealth, or the Church as a whole. (24)

Certainly the idea of the Body Politic is also bound up in these images as well—via monarchy and the Divine Right of Kingship. Art played a significant role by shaping, translating, resisting, and documenting the Reformation experience. Since Aristotle (known to Renaissance minds, via Saint Augustine, as *The Philosopher*) first had placed poets above philosophers and historians, they had long been acknowledged the first legislators, prophets, and cataloguers of their times and this was certainly an important contemporary discussion. According to George Puttenham’s *The Arte of English Poesie* (1585), it was also the poet’s duty to censure wayward princes. The problem was a lack of free speech. The best way around censorship proved to be through various indirections and there were multiple rhetorical techniques that artists developed to achieve this, among them ambiguity, paradox, conceit and metaphor, as we see in the satiric epigrams of Sir John Harington (1561-1612), Godson to Queen Elizabeth. Harington famously called himself “*sapiens stulti simulator,*” a “wise pretender of foolery,” and in his verse makes specific reference to subversive strategies employed under repressive monarchs. In keeping with the contemporary views on the role of the poet, “to warn,” he says, “of sinns” (3.1.27),
Harington tells us that “a Poet is one step unto a prophet” (3.1.7) making a specific reference to Renaissance poetic theories as handed down from Aristotle and saying further, “We do but point out vices and detect them / ’Tis you great Prince, that one day must correct them” (“Dedication” ll.13-14). According to Janet Clare in “Art made tongue-tied by authority”: Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship, censorship had particular effects on artists:

It is frequently acknowledged that censorship gives birth to metaphors which thrive on ambiguity. Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists were adept at giving themselves alibis by re-siting their political and satirical plays in the ancient world, or in imaginary courts of Arcadia, Genoa or Ferrara, or by dislocating the action altogether. (235)

Understandably then, in part, many artists employed ambiguity as a safeguard; however, it was also assumed that the audience would labor for the prize of understanding. Puzzling or teasing out the meaning was an important part of the process and not only was an educated audience comprised of skilled practitioners of such reading strategies but they also expected to be challenged. Therefore, ambiguity became an artistic necessity; however, as explained further, the need for ambiguity occurred on more than one level.

We can begin to approach these concepts via Augustine and the “four ways” of reading or the traditional exegetical practice for interpreting scripture. They are: the historical (or literal), the allegorical, the tropological, and the anagogical. According to Martin Dodwell in *The Phoenix Riddle*:

The first two labels are self-explanatory: historical, relates to historical events, and the allegorical to a symbolic reading. Anagogical is less easy to grasp: it suggests literally, teaching-that-leads-to-a-higher-level, and is usually thought of
as the mystical or sublime meaning, pertaining to heaven and union with God. When the Anglo-Saxon writer of *The Phoenix*, interprets the poem of Lactantius in terms of the phoenix being Christ, this is allegorical; when he writes of the blessed souls in heaven *becoming the phoenix*, he is moving from the allegorical to the anagogical. (363)

For the tropogogical level, Dodwell explains that from the Greek “*tropos,*” or “to turn,” we get to the heart of how this level operates. Making reference to the well-known biblical story of King David and Bathsheba from 2 *Samuel* (11-12), Dodwell shows how the instructive “turning” functions. First, the story engages the audience—and here, in *Samuel*, David is the immediate audience for the prophet Nathan. Nathan captivates David’s attention (as he does similarly biblical readers) in his parable of the wronged, poor shepherd. David’s reaction is to condemn the rich man who, even though he owned a whole flock of sheep from which he might have chosen one to feed his dinner guest, the weary traveller, he had stolen and killed the poor man’s prized, solitary lamb. It is at this crucial point of engaged but blind or misguided comprehension that Nathan reveals to David: “You are that man” (*2 Sam*. 12:1-7). Dodwell illustrates with this example how story-telling effects a reaction in the audience in a very specific and significant way (364). Just as David misunderstands initially, so, too, do many readers. It is through the revelatory moment when the truth is revealed: “the turn” effects meaning through a more profound, insightful recognition. Rhetorically, Nathan was able to teach, delight, and move his audience in a much more effective way than if he had simply censured King David outright and unambiguously for his adulterous transgressions. Furthermore, 2
Samuel’s parable provides the perfect example of a poetic prophet carrying out his duty and using rhetoric and art to correct a wayward prince.

The point is that throughout the Medieval period and beyond, certain, select readers—all persons of a particular level of education and numbered among an elite, intended audience for many artists—would have been schooled in “the four ways” of reading. Such an audience would have possessed the necessary skills for understanding coupled with a keen desire for challenging texts on which to practice them. To put ourselves in their frame of mind as we attempt to read in context, we should consider texts not on only one level, or even two, but multiple levels since many artists would have been operating on all four, thus spanning the widest possible range of understanding to reach the broadest number of readers. Additionally, in a creative manner, artists generally can be seen to adapt methods to suit their own peculiar talents and circumstances; therefore, not every use or understanding of the four ways will be rigid. Readings herein will consider the multivalent especially given that censorship was a real concern and artists laboured to untie their tongues, aided by the fact that “[r]eaders were familiar with codes of reference which enabled the writer to comment on prohibited matters” (Clare 42). This study highlights many of those prohibitions that were often the focus of art that engaged in contemporary polemics.

Along these same lines of understanding, in De Doctrina Christiana, Augustine refers to what he calls “useful and healthy obscurity” designed to “stimulate the desire to learn,” noting that “things are perceived more readily through similitudes and that what is

19
sought with difficulty is discovered with more pleasure” (4.8.22). He further suggests that such discoveries probably are retained in the memory better (4.8.22). Nevertheless, where Augustine advises against ambiguity (4.10.24), many Renaissance artists were forced to employ it. In their *kairotic* moment, necessity became the mother of rhetorical *inventio* in a very immediate and urgent way. We might readily link this phenomenon based on *kairos* to Cicero’s nuanced definition of rhetoric: “To teach is a necessity, to please is a sweetness, to persuade is a victory” (*Oratorio* 21.69). Artists worked toward these ends, many relying on rhetorical veils for security.

In terms of rhetoric, the contemporary discussions give particular insight into its value in Renaissance culture—as the preoccupation with the ancients attests. In spite of reforms, theirs was not simply a secular obsession, even though it was very much “of the age.” Instead, we should remember that the age was deeply influenced by issues of faith, and the fascination with the ancients had much to do with contemporary religious interests. In his study on stellification, *Time’s Purpled Masquers: Stars and the Afterlife in Renaissance English Literature*, Alastair Fowler traces these important interests. He writes: “The ‘ruins of Rome’ obsessively meditated by Renaissance poets and artists were signs neither of pagan supersession nor, merely, of papal decline; instead, they represented surviving links with virtuous antiquity” (4-5). Fowler continues, showing that “hyberbolic claims for art, however aestheticist they may seem now, were likely to be expressed through religious imagery, *if not to cover real religious hopes*” (5; emphasis added). This applies to the Catholic artists in this study.
Edmund Campion, an acknowledged master of the art of rhetoric, had first impressed Queen Elizabeth during her royal visit to Oxford in August 1566. This display, in addition to the queen’s admiration, earned Campion the patronage of Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, who was one of the queen’s court favorites. It is well known and documented that Campion was so popular that he was widely imitated by his peers, especially by the younger students at Oxford—to the extent that his mannerisms, speech, and dress were copied. It is widely believed that had he remained at Oxford and complied with the State mandates, Elizabeth eventually would have made him Archbishop of Canterbury. Oxford had always been the more Catholic of the two major universities. Campion actually had taken the Oath of Supremacy while there, even as many avoided it or refused outright. Refusal was an act of rebellion that could lead to fines and expulsion from the university, and, in a few cases involving priests, death.38

Significantly, from Oxford alone, 56 men who had studied there later became martyrs. The Oath was required of students aged sixteen and older and Leicester (Campion’s patron) as Chancellor, in the main, was responsible for this policy.39 As with John Donne and his younger brother, 12 and 11, respectively, when they entered the university (McCclough “Donne, John” *ODNB*), we know that many Catholic families sent their sons to Oxford early so as to have them educated before they turned sixteen and were required to take the Oath.40 This strategy was one way families tried to keep their sons at home (in *England*) for education since it was illegal, often risky, and expensive to send them abroad.41 Problematically, those who traveled to the Continent to be educated
were forbidden to return, hence the need for secrecy. Furthermore, “So numerous were
the exiles [abroad] at Douai from the two universities in England that there were soon
two houses” referred to as Oxford and Cambridge (Kilory, Memory 41). Shell writes,
“The circumstance of exile had one consummate advantage over living in England, the
freedom to be outspoken . . . as in the lengthy texts and elaborate staging of Jesuit
drama—greater opportunity for the leisurely elaboration of polemical messages” (109).42

In an early chapter of The Reckoned Expense, contributor James McConica
catalogues these university martyrs in “The Catholic Experience in Tudor Oxford” (39-
63). The list of those from Oxford who gave their lives for their faith is consigned to a
footnote, rather than being part of the text proper (Note 93, 63). Ironically, such an act
almost seems to participate in the marginalization of Catholic recusants, even while it
aims to be honoring them. In a study meant to commemorate the centenary of Campion
Hall, Oxford, it seems curious that Campion and his fellow martyrs would not be
accorded a greater tribute for their sacrifice in this particular instance. To be fair,
McConica does say:

Apart from those who escaped with their lives, the list of Oxford men who are
claimed as martyrs in Tudor and Stuart times commands respect from any point of
view. Of the nearly seventy listed who are known to have belonged to the
university of Oxford, more than fifty left the university in the reign of Elizabeth . .
. The memory and example of these graduates . . . will have made an indelible
impression upon their co-religionists in the university, something about which we
can only conjecture. What is clear is that despite the effective triumph of the
government’s policy by the end of Elizabeth’s reign, the Catholicism of the place
was tenacious still. (62-63)
Be that as it may, it might prove more “celebratory” to incorporate and acknowledge those Catholic martyrs as part of the chapter directly and more noticeably rather than relegate them to a more liminal, paratextual space that could well be overlooked by readers.¹⁴³

Many believe Campion’s initial complicity with reforms resulted from pride and an unwillingness to reject the opportunity to practice oration and to rise within the Reformed Church; however, prompted by his uneasy conscience, he later left England for the Continent, renounced Protestantism, and became a Jesuit and thus was seen as a “traitor” to the English State, a “crime” for which he gave his life at Tyburn Tree. Insofar as this project is concerned, there are many excellent studies on Campion’s life and martyrdom that inform our understanding. In the main, I neither challenge nor try to improve upon the earlier scholarship. My concern is to do with how Campion’s art—particularly his drama and rhetorical expertise—participated in a shared tradition and influenced his contemporaries in England and on the Continent, especially his Neo-Latin play Ambrosia, which is both little known and little studied, and which provides the focus of the following chapter. If we do not know a text, we can hardly understand its significance or its possible influences. My reading of Ambrosia as an example of the Catholic artistic response to reforms hopes to offer a base on which others might build.

Ambrosia can be read as an apologetic, Catholic Reformation text that Campion probably intended to reach England. I explore the possibility that it includes a host of distinctly Catholic markers that engage directly with the doctrinal debates introduced by
religious schism such as, but not limited to, a negative portrayal of Elizabeth I, Marian characters, discussions of free will, and charitable acts that demonstrate the Ignatian practice of “helping souls.” The Mass is central to the play as it is central to Catholicism—something to which the play’s title alerts us—and it serves as a prime example of this recurring trope in Catholic Renaissance art. Furthermore, according to Catholic belief, the focus on the ideal “Love and Live” suggests the primary example of how Eros and Agape might be reconciled, man being comprised of both body and soul.

Not a play about martyrdom, Ambrosia nevertheless includes the miraculous discovery of the relics of two early Christian martyrs, a discovery that is particularly affective for Augustine as he struggles with conversion. Ambrosia provides an apt template for many recurring themes and devices examined later in this study.44

Similarly, we have the poetry and other writings of Robert Southwell, Campion’s fellow English Jesuit, writer, and martyr. Although this study resists a tempting foray into the greater quagmire of Shakespeare and his possible involvement with the Jesuit Mission, John Klause, in his recent study, cited above, Shakespeare, the Earl, and the Jesuit, has shown most effectively through exhaustive catalogs the shared language of Southwell and Shakespeare, which often draws on common sources, including the bible. At the least, there existed some “dialogue” between the two poets, by and large responsively for Shakespeare given that Southwell was martyred in 1595. What this poetic dialogue means, however, is yet to be determined. Grosart had previously noted
similar “Shakespeare-parallels and (probable or possible) allusions and elucidations” to which he “invite[d] attention” (xcii).

In her chapter “Catholic Poetics and the Protestant Canon,” Shell has argued for Southwell’s significant influence, especially lyrically, on his contemporaries, particularly Edmund Spenser (1552-1599) and Philip Sidney (1554-1586), as well as on later writers, such as the more obvious John Donne (1572–1631) and George Herbert (1593-1633), but also the lesser-known William Alabaster (1567–1640) and Richard Crashaw (1613-1648) (Catholicism, Controversy 56-104). We might note how dangerously Southwell wrote about his faith fairly openly—indeed, as a Jesuit hiding his faith in his writing would have been unthinkable as counter-productive of the Jesuit Mission and a direct violation of all that he believed. Recall his famous censure of those poets who were thought to be wasting their time on temporality to the detriment of spirituality when in Saint Peters Complaynte (The Author to the Reader) Southwell wrote: “Still finest wits are ’stilling Venus’ rose, / In Paynim toyes the sweetest vaines are spent,” which most believe is a direct slight against Shakespeare and his Venus and Adonis. But “secular” artists had to take care not to overstep the restrictive laws governing writing and printing, one reason manuscript circulation of texts was so popular. By examining religious schism and the temporal and spiritual conflicts of the day to note the ways in which Southwell, among his fellow Catholic artists, created conciliatory, apologetic art, we can then ask interesting questions about the work of other artists when we see similar language and techniques, recurring images, themes, and devices, which are often presented more obliquely. To
reiterate, my hope is that this study, in establishing those Catholic markers, provides a foundation for subsequent studies involving other contemporary artists and “texts.”

Another significant point to note about Southwell’s verse is its meditative nature—it very much serves to exemplify the contemplative essence of the Spiritual Exercises on many levels. While some have argued against the theory that Southwell may have had in mind to write poems that demonstrated the Exercises or the Rosary, his poems’ meditative qualities cannot be underestimated, nor can we dismiss how affective they likely were for his contemporary recusant Catholic audience—denied as its members were opportunities to embrace openly the basic tangible tenets of their forbidden faith.  

Artists, perhaps best of all people, know that the mind, even when conflicted about laws, is safe from government intervention, though as Shell notes that The Church of England “included a number of theologians who manifested extreme unease with the visual elements of worship, extending the notion of idolatry even to the imaging power of the mind” (92; emphasis added). Nevertheless, even if Catholics could not celebrate the Mass regularly to commune with others in worship and eat of the forbidden Eucharist, they could meditate on Christ’s nativity, life, and passion—his literal sacrificial suffering that preceded what Catholics celebrate and experience in Holy Communion. Through meditative practices, the “exercitant” is brought closer to Christ through a contemplative shared suffering. In the case of the recusant community and her many martyrs, both clerical and lay, Catholics experienced suffering through persecution in a very real and direct way.
In similar fashion, Southwell’s verse also closely examines the Holy Family, with a focus on the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph. Mary aside, in figures such as Joseph, Saint Peter, and Mary Magdalen, Southwell was able to offer human examples of faith and suffering with which his recusant audience could readily identify. Other artists, however, were not able to explore biblical characters in the same way, religion being dangerous ground. As we have noted, however, the Renaissance preoccupation with the ancients and what Fowler called “virtuous antiquity” influenced poetry and drama because the past provided ways to think about contemporary concerns, much as with Southwell’s treatment of biblical figures. With Jesuits, we know the basic position on religion of figures like Campion and Southwell and so, too, with Byrd; with “secular” artists, however, who were still very much “of the age”—a religious age—their stance is much less overt. In the ancients, artists found “cover for real religious hopes,” especially in Rome (Fowler 5).

William Byrd, the recusant Catholic composer, is another particularly useful artist in the discussion of reconciling Eros and Agape to understand the Catholic artistic response to reforms. While he is quite openly Catholic, his work connects very neatly with Southwell’s verse, especially in its contemplative nature, again with a focus on the centrality of the Mass and representations of the spiritual in the temporal. We also know that Byrd worked within a closely-knit recusant community that included men of power and prestige such as John Petre (1549-1613) and Thomas Tresham (1543-1605) and that also involved the Jesuits, including Campion, Southwell, and Henry Garnet. The most
comprehensive and salient study to date on Byrd is *Liturgy and Contemplation in Byrd’s Gradualia* by Kerry McCarthy (cited above). Much in McCarthy’s study has proven inspirational and informative to my own project, especially because the first three chapters of her book explore and document the Jesuit Mission to England and the recusant community, among which we know Byrd is numbered. The meditative qualities of Byrd’s composition participate intimately in the *vita contemplativa*.

McCarthy’s introductory comments open with a citation from Byrd from one of his dedicatory prefaces in which he writes:

> In the words themselves (as I have learned from experience) there is such hidden and mysterious power that to a person thinking over divine things, diligently and earnestly turning them over in his mind, the most appropriate measures come, I do not know how, and offer themselves freely to the mind that is neither idle nor inert. (ix)

He further notes that he sees his own role as one of a servant who hopes, like Tresham and Harington, that his work will leave a mark of devotion for posterity. Byrd writes:

> My spirit, mindful of its fidelity, duty, and devotion to God, burns to leave for posterity in at least some way a grateful soul’s public testimony, crediting all to the Creator. Therefore, in this, my advanced age [he was not that old], being committed to the divine service, I have set out (although unworthy and unequal to the task) to add notes as a garland to certain delightful phrases of the Christian rite. (qtd. in McCarthy13)

Byrd’s sense of duty will be explored in greater detail in a subsequent chapter, but here, we can at least note that he means the *Roman Catholic* rite—the liturgy of the Mass. Byrd’s art demonstrates a level of sustained engagement in the recusant community. Moreover, Byrd is part of a recusant movement often led by various influential figures
like Sir Thomas Tresham. Tresham’s coded architecture pays tribute to his Catholic faith and leaves a (mostly) lasting monument to posterity, along with his writings (the *Tresham Papers* and the *Brudenell MS*), and his recently discovered emblem. Sir John Harington (1561-1612), writer, epigrammist, and Godson of Queen Elizabeth, is another figure of interest in this narrative.

When we consider English Renaissance art in its historical context of Religious schism and the on-going lack of toleration with its persecution of recusancy—marked by the laws and censorship that forbid one to speak about these things openly—we can trace a pattern of shared dialogue and images in Catholic “texts” that demonstrates a reverence for the forbidden Mass through which artists attempt to minister to a beleaguered community as they also catalogue their suffering for posterity. The examples of Catholic art studied herein offer evidence of the reconciliation of *Eros* and *Agape*. On a soteriological level, Love is divine and submission to Christ through service to others ultimately saves the faithful via a path of consolation through desolation. This study provides a template of the English Catholic artistic conciliatory response to reforms and the sustained persecution and censorship by authorities that sought to make art “tongue-tied.”
Chapter Two

The Drama of Edmund Campion: Ambrosia—Art as Manna

It is a great and awful thing that God rained manna on the Jews from heaven. But distinguish. What is greater, manna from heaven or the body of Christ? Certainly the body of Christ who is the maker of heaven. Then he who ate manna died. Whosoever eats this body shall have remission of sins and shall never die. (Saint Ambrose, On the Mysteries 4.5.24, 114)47

The study of art and locating the spiritual in the temporal as a means of reconciling Eros and Agape will begin with Edmund Campion (25 January 1540 – 1 December 1581) and the analysis of his little known and less studied play, Ambrosia (written and performed in Prague in 1578). Ambrosia will serve as a template to establish both what a Catholic Reformation text looks like as well as how Campion’s art contributes to this movement in crucial ways. Ambrosia is tantalizing with its link to Saint Ambrose and his treatise on the sacraments, especially with the commentary on manna, cited above.

Campion’s influence is significant in that, as noted, he first had been a celebrated orator and rising star at Oxford, its “flower” in fact, according to his contemporary Thomas Alfield in the account of Campion’s martyrdom printed the year after his execution.48 Gerard Kilroy, in his recent study on Campion, Edmund Campion: Memory and Transcription, calls Campion “a cult figure” and, citing Alfield, “a glass and mirror,
a light and lantern, a paterne and example to youth, to age, to lerned, to unlearned” (39). Moreover, in a country torn by schism, Campion was one of Queen Elizabeth’s favorites and most likely destined for Protestant greatness as a future Archbishop of Canterbury. After first having taken the Oath, he struggled with his conscience, and finally gave it all up to leave England for the Continent where he eventually joined the Jesuits (as a novice in 1573; then, was ordained deacon and priest in 1578). Later, he reluctantly returned to England as part of the Jesuit Mission (ODNB).

Campion enjoyed the distinct honor of having been selected to speak before both Mary I and Elizabeth I. For the latter, in 1566 at Oxford, Campion’s Latin oration on the heavenly bodies, which introduced:

the chaos caused when the moon came too close to the earth [that] can be seen as a plea, skillfully disguised as flattery, for the new chancellor [Earl of Leicester] and his sovereign, already symbolised by the moon, to take a less interventionist role in the University. (Kilroy, Memory 40)

As Kilroy explains, Campion is reacting directly to state interference that increasingly harmed Oxford:

Leicester’s oppressive interventions in every aspect of university affairs depleted the university and meant it was difficult to find anyone to take on public lectures or sermons. (“Tradition and the Freedom of Ideas” 3)

As a scholar at Oxford funded by the Grocers’ Company, Campion was to preach at Paul’s Cross, an assignment he put off time and again until he finally rejected it outright and left for Ireland, where he wrote his Histories of Ireland (1571), and then traveled to the Continent. Kilroy attributes this refusal to preach, in part, to all the violence of
religious controversy that Campion had witnessed in his short life, much of which centered around Paul’s Cross, London, in whose shadow Campion had come of age. The violence involved variously angry orators and crowds, mob unrest, knives and gunfire: “It is not surprising that Campion refused, ten years later, the Grocers’ request that he preach from Paul’s Cross, or that he was reluctant to come back to England” (“Edmund Campion and Subversive Publication: Books, printers and afterthoughts” 2-3). Fulfilling an assignment to preach also would also have compromised Campion’s conscience further as he would have been expected to preach as a Protestant, which, despite having taken the Oath, he was not. Thus, Campion rejected temporal fame and its trappings to pursue a spiritual life, following his conscience and the Old Faith, that of his forebears, in spite of his uncertainty about his own parents’ adherence to that faith. Kilroy cites a guarded statement, written in Brno, Moravia:

   Campion joined the Jesuit province there in 1574, [which] confirms the date of his birth as 1540 and embodies the anxiety of a son divided by religion from both his patria and his pater, able only to hope (and not to know) that his parents ‘had died, it is to be hoped, in the Catholic faith’. (“Subversive” 2)

Many of Campion’s contemporaries would suffer the same spiritual anxieties, especially concerning their families.  

   In “‘We are Made Spectacle’: Campion’s Dramas,” which is the only published scholarly study to date that explores Ambrosia in any way, although it is yet very limited, Allison Shell notes that Campion was both the leading rhetorician and the leading dramatist among the Elizabethan English Catholic Martyrs (103). With no modicum of
reluctance, as noted by Kilroy, above, Campion consented to join the Jesuit Mission to England, where he was eventually martyred at Tyburn on 1 December 1581 (“Subversive” 8). Campion’s neo-Latin play Ambrosia provides a solid base for an examination of the Jesuit movement because it addresses the Reformation rift in very specific ways offering the Catholic side in virtually unambiguous terms even while it operates within Renaissance imaginative traditions offering some more tantalizingly veiled artistic political utterances (for example, the play’s title and the Empress-regent Justina, both discussed presently). Shell argues that Campion:

may well have bequeathed a prototype to some later dramatists from his own country; but he certainly left them a personality which came to be incorporated into their own propagandist plays to celebrate and advance the Catholic cause (103).

Moreover, according to Kilroy, Campion’s youth spent in Paul’s Churchyard instilled in him “a passion for disputation, a love of printed books, and a profound belief that the solution to the painful divisions of the period lay in theological argument and not in political oppression or political subversion” (8), of which his Raciones Decem or Ten Reasons offers proof. As suggested above, if we understand Campion’s drama, therefore, as functioning within the Catholic Reformation, we can define particular aspects of what a Jesuit text—and, thus, in a broader sense, a specifically Catholic text—looks like and how it functions. This will establish a template for examining other works in the chapters that follow, especially as concerns art reconciling Eros and Agape.
Central to Catholicism, and much disputed by Protestant sects, is the Catholic concept of the Eucharist, which is also central to the Mass. The Mass had been outlawed in England under Protestant monarchs. In 1550, Scottish reformer John Knox (c. 1514–1572) had written his *A Vindication of the Doctrine that the Sacrifice of the Mass is Idolatry* about the matter. For Catholics, in the Eucharist, and the most solemn liturgy of the Eucharist, the spiritual and temporal worlds coalesce as the spiritual takes on temporal form in the perfect image of *Eros* and *Agape*.\(^{54}\) During the Mass, the physical wafer and wine, the “Gifts,” are offered up to God in thanksgiving by the members of the Church. The faithful are seen as both Christ’s earthly Body and His Bride (Christ is the Bridegroom to individual souls). Moreover, the Church is seen as the Mother, frequently represented by the Blessed Virgin. All these rituals and concepts would have been ubiquitous and palpable to Campion’s contemporary audience.\(^{55}\)

According to belief, the physical wafer and wine are transformed (transubstantiated) into the Real Presence of Christ who makes himself the heavenly food, the ambrosia, the manna in the desert: “Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.” Jesus said:

> He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. (*John* 6:53-6)

Making direct reference to Manna, Christ continues:

> As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not
as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread, shall live for ever. (John 6: 57-8)

Asquith has called this “the earthly garment for the creator” (Shadowplay 200), noting how Renaissance theologians emphasized the Aristotelian “distinction between essence and existence to express the way God was present within consecrated bread” (199-200). Anne Sweeney, citing Cardinal Robert Bellarmine’s theories about art, calls this the “transferral of import through object” and “the transferral of belief to object” (Snow in Arcadia).

In 1551 during the Thirteenth Session of the Council of Trent in the “Decree Concerning the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist,” the Council asserted:

after the consecration of bread and wine, Our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is truly, really and substantially contained in the august sacrament of the Holy Eucharist under the appearance of those sensible things. (Chapter 1, 73)

The doctrinal belief is even more meaningful when we note that, according to Catholic belief, in terms of human love and divine love, God’s love for man was the reason He sent His only Son, becoming man, “The Word made Flesh,” for fallen humanity’s salvation. While this coincides with a general Christian belief, in terms of Catholic doctrine, it is closely linked to “the will” (as choice) and “works.” Accordingly, all God asks for in return is love, or as the Jesuit motto proclaims: “Love and Live.” This chapter will explore the Mass and the Blessed Sacrament as well as other theological elements in Ambrosia that all serve as Catholic indicators, including: the Jesuit charism of “helping souls,” Mariology, meditative practices, works, miracles, exorcism, free will, primacy of
the clergy, and sacramental issues such as oral confession, contrition, reconciliation, and forgiveness. Many of these elements either were disputed or, more often than not, rejected outright and vilified by many of the burgeoning Protestant sects. The increasingly anti-Catholic policies targeted many Catholic practices.

David Beauregard’s recent work on Shakespeare, *Catholic Theology in Shakespeare’s Plays*, proves useful because of his theories about doctrinal matters that divided Catholics and Protestants and that led to the rift that devastated the country. Protestantism retained only two of the seven sacraments: Baptism and Communion, and on both of these held differing views from Catholicism. In his introduction, Beauregard qualifies how his study seeks to focus on these disputes:

> where there are distinct differences, and . . . to provide quotations from sixteenth-century authorities on both sides of the doctrinal divide that spell out those specific differences. Without a dialectical methodology, there is a danger of assigning certainty to evidence that is merely ambiguous or indeterminate. (22)

This approach proves equally useful here in establishing those differences and anticipating the parallels that will be explored in the coming chapters, especially because we can be in no doubt about Campion’s religious stance or convictions.

Furthermore, we should note that even discussing Catholic theology—except to disparage it in Protestant propaganda—was illegal in England. Elizabeth instituted strict laws protecting the new faith as with *The Act of Uniformity* (1559) number 3 prohibiting “any interludes, plays, songs, rhymes or . . . other open words” to malign or challenge religious reforms or, as with other legislation, forbidding anyone to speak well of, or to
indulge in, the “hated and dangerous” Old Faith (Marotti 9). After the Oath of Supremacy under Henry VIII and all the attendant Acts meant to further reforms and strengthen control, “heresy” became “treason” with freedom of conscience at the heart of this. English Catholics pressed and hoped for toleration, which was sometimes promised but never came. Subsequently, at a crucial point in history for the recusant community, the Gunpowder Plot (1605), “condemned English Catholicism to over two hundred years in the tomb” (“Changing Eyes” 14). As alluded to above, the most lenient punishments included fines and brief imprisonment; the harshest included forfeiture of all property and chattel and/or life imprisonment, banishment, torture, and execution. Additionally, until Emancipation more than two centuries later, Catholics were denied access to Parliament, the military, and, perhaps most importantly, the universities—the reason so many Catholics were forced to study abroad in secret. “Reforms” are also the reason education went “underground” at home in England (Kilroy, “Oxford in 1566”). This persecution was especially true under Elizabeth I, particularly via the 1585 “Act against Jesuits, seminary priests and such other like disobedient persons.”

The immediate and ongoing oppression would have made Campion’s highly topical drama dangerous and illegal. Nevertheless, it is possible that Campion intended Ambrosia to make its way to England eventually—to influence a royal audience while also ministering to the sizable recusant community there, many of whom were an elite educated audience—even before he knew he would join the Jesuit Mission to England. Ambrosia was part of his work to fight heresy, academically, and an example of a
“performing deed” enacted to “help souls.” While on one level very Jesuitical, these goals also fit among the duties of the poet as handed down through the ages, especially to censure wayward princes. For example, in views echoed by Sir Philip Sidney in his own *Defense of Poesy* (1595), George Puttenham, in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1569), notes variously, “How Poets were the first priests, the first prophets, the first Legislators and politicians in the world” (1.3), “How the Poets were the first Philosophers, the first Astronomers and Historiographers and Oratours and Musitiens of the world” (1.4), and “In what forme of Poesie the euill and outragious bahauious of Princes were reprehended.” Puttenham catalogs how Satyre and Comedy were the forms through which errant princes were chastised, their transgressions made public (1.15).

Importantly, censure could only occur after the tyrant had died, for obvious reasons. As Puttenham says, “when posteritie stood no more in dread of them” (1.15). For period evidence that began with John Skelton (c. 1460–1529)—a good example would be his satiric attacks on Wolsey (and the clergy more generally) in *Colyn Cloute* (1531)—we might well think of Ben Jonson’s highly seditious *Sejanus, His Fall* (1603) in this satiric tradition that trod rather too close to the truth for James I’s comfort. The original playtext, as it was first performed, is no longer extant but even the revised edition remains quite obviously seditious, in spite of the subterfuge of all Jonson’s explanatory notes in Latin. *Sejanus* includes not only unflattering portraits of James (as Tiberius) and Robert Cecil (as Sejanus), but also of the recently-deceased Elizabeth I (as Livia). Although “posteritie stood no more in dread of [Elizabeth],” to quote Puttenham
obliquely, Jonson seems not to have heeded this cautionary advice carefully enough concerning his prince and the too-powerful secretary of state. Similarly, Kilroy notes that Donne’s *Satyre IIII* (c. 1594-97) criticizes the Elizabethan court (‘Changing Eyes” 6-7). Importantly, however, if the prince were not deceased, the poet had to perform his duty with extreme caution, as Janet Clare’s work has shown. Nevertheless, on the Continent, as a writer, Campion enjoyed certain freedoms denied his English peers.

As concerns the censure of wayward princes, in the play itself, Ambrose will say of Emperor Theodosius, “Safe in his high position, he has nobody to censure him. Hard is the lot of princes. For a man of lower rank will at once hear such things from his friends or enemies” (5.1.1000-03). We are told that this difficult job fell to the poet, but in England, such a duty was made nearly impossible because “Art [had been] made tongue-tied by authority” (Shakespeare, Sonnet 66). Nevertheless, we see Campion’s dual goals mirrored perfectly in the way the play shows Bishop Ambrose in the clerical role of authority over both the Empress Justina and the Emperor Theodosius, the two models of which Shell says, respectively:

the first [is] how a pious priest should behave when threatened by an heretical state [Justina’s], and the second [is] how that same priest can move a monarch [Theodosius] to repentance. The King is appointed by God, but so is the priest; and if kingship is glorified, it is seen to be most glorious in its submission to the Church. (106)

This treatment seems to offer a palpable topical message to Campion’s temporal head, Elizabeth I. As Shell observes, “England was Campion’s most obvious model for a heretical country,” but it is important to note that she does not see the play as exclusive to
problems in England given that all of Christendom was affected by the Protestant
Reformation (108).

Campion’s neo-Latin play, *Ambrosia*, is unique in that it draws on Church history
to dramatize Ambrose’s struggles with Justina and Theodosius employing material that
had not been used previously (Simons xvi). Since the play was performed at the court of
Rudolf II in 1578 in “fiercely anti-Catholic Prague” (Simons xiv), clearly more than one
royal audience was meant to benefit from the play’s themes in the vein of “helping souls”
as Shell’s study observes. Sadly, *Ambrosia* is Campion’s only surviving play and was not
printed in England until as belatedly as 1970 (Kilroy, *Memory* 7, 46). Moreover, the
original manuscript is no longer extant and we have, in a letter to another priest, whose
identity remains a mystery, Campion’s lament for the loss of the copy he had shared.
Campion wrote:

> Because you ask me in other letters about the *Ambrosia*, you must know, dear
Father, that it was not given back to me after you returned from Vienna, but that I
saw it in your room. I have no doubt that it is lying about somewhere among your
things, or is in the hands of someone who asked you for it when you were busy,
so you don’t remember. (qtd. in Kilroy, “Subversive” 1)\(^1\)

As Campion seems keen to have his copy returned to him and is disappointed that it has
been mislaid, he may have had other plans for it. If he had already shared a copy (others
yet existed then—we know this because the play was performed after his martyrdom, in
Munich in 1591, the only public performance on record other than the 1578 premiere in
Prague during his time there),\(^2\) it could well be that there were others with whom he
wished to share it after this unnamed “dear Father” finished with it. Nevertheless, there
are several reasons why an English Catholic in exile, especially one who had joined the Jesuits and would later return to England to minister to the recusant community, would have wanted copies of his very Catholic Reformation play to make its way to his native England.

A primary reason would be to fulfil the Jesuit concept of *charism* as “helping souls.” Perhaps in no place, for Catholics, was the soul seen to be in greater danger than in Elizabethan England and here the concern with salvation necessarily extended to the monarch as well, the temporal head of the body politic. Those who were martyred at Tyburn (and elsewhere in the country) prayed for Elizabeth and swore temporal allegiance to her just before the execution noose was placed around their “traitorous” necks, including Campion who maintained, “I have and do pray for her” (Simpson 321).⁶³ Famously, in November 1581, Campion had already declared his allegiance to Elizabeth as his temporal ruler during his trial as part of his “Give unto Caesar” logic:

I acknowledged her highness as my governess and sovereign; I acknowledged her majesty both *facto et jure* to be my queen; I confessed an obedience due to the crown as to my temporal head and primate. This I said then, so I say now. If, then, I failed in aught, I am now ready to supply it. What would you more? I will willingly pay to her majesty what is hers, yet I must pay to God what is his. (qtd. in Simpson 295)⁶⁴

Campion’s statement reiterates a clear distinction about the theory concerning the separate duties of Church and State and he draws on biblical tradition to support such a position. The “tragedy” of Theodosius, who infamously disobeyed Ambrose to perpetrate the Massacre of Seven Thousand at Thessalonica in AD 390, offers a positive model of
how the temporal and spiritual might co-exist and the monarch’s soul might be helped. Theodosius’ punishment is to be denied the sacraments through temporary excommunication, only being restored when he submits to his spiritual head, as represented by Bishop Ambrose, after following a proper course of repentance and acts of contrition. Shell calls the two roles, “the complementary but separate duties of Church and state” (109). “Helping souls” more broadly through “the common good” could best be effected through these two avenues that, ideally, ought to be in harmony, but often were not. As Harro Höpfl notes in Jesuit Political Thought:

[I]t was beyond contention for Jesuits that the end and justification of government, law, and policy was the common good (or the common felicitas, beatitudo, utilitas, all impeccably Aristotelian and Thomist synonyms). (283)

The spiritual and temporal needed to be aligned as much as possible for each had its rightful place in supporting the other.

Campion’s play also fulfils the Jesuit educational role of rhetoric and Ambrosia was a play written to be performed, initially, by Campion’s students in Prague, because drama was central to the Jesuit system of education:

As a teaching-aid these dramas trained the boys in fluent Latinity, poise and memory skills; and as didactic instruments they inculcated the capacity to make moral judgements, though always within a framework conditioning the boys in characteristically Jesuit mental habits of resourceful obedience. (Shell 105)

Thus, not only did it help students hone their Latin, but the themes reinforced the most basic tenets of Catholicism as well and so served as an important part of character formation. Additionally, in Campion’s case, the students were also schooled in Catholic
Reformation apologetics. In the humanist tradition, these ideas about training and character and the value of rhetoric had been advanced previously by others including Erasmus in his *De Ratione Studii* and *De Copia*. Furthermore, the broad scope of Campion’s play allowed for a great number of students to participate rather than limiting participation to a handful of roles.\(^{65}\)

Opening scenes are highly significant and often encapsulate the whole of a play’s argument and themes.\(^{66}\) In the Empress-regent Justina, who provides Campion’s negative portrayal of love in a woman, we find what seems an overt reference to Elizabeth I. Significantly, the Empress says, “I would rather tolerate all my enemies than those who are called Catholics” (1.1.27-28). Moreover, Justina’s Arian faith, which Ambrose challenges, may be seen as Protestantism, the reformed faith that Catholics viewed as heretical. The play opens with Justina lamenting:

I, . . . ruler over an empire that covers all Hesperia and the western region, to whom so many bend the knee and show obedience, whose reign of terror the princes under my command fear, I, Augusta, who was believed to be happy but am now so miserable, by what insignificant men am I harassed? Relying on assistance of commanders who are made strong by gold, mercenaries, power and acclimations, I am waging war against one single cleric, who is made strong by the vulgar and by his affliction because his star begins to fade. . . . [Ambrose] rejoices in the piety of his people, his anointed hands and his high repute with the Supreme Head protect him. . . . Indeed, this scoundrel shall see my fury. Sitting on his bishop’s throne he exposes himself to the threats of the sovereign by thundering his anathema against our doctrines. . . . If he continues to inveigh against the belief of Arius, which is also my belief, and if he does not reject that homoousian doctrine, which is nowhere taught by the Holy Bible, he must be regarded as an enemy, and he must expiate that horrible crime. Yes, we will see who is master, Ambrose or I, Justina, and whose doctrine goes to ruin first. (1.1.1-9, 21-22, 34-36)

All of Justina’s concerns can be read on a topical level.
To begin to identify the many parallels between the historical account depicted in the drama and Campion’s contemporary moment, we first have a female temporal ruler, Justina, a Christian who is viewed as heretical in the eyes of Catholics. Justina is a character strikingly similar to the Tudor monarch, Elizabeth I, in England. In the play, it is not until Justina’s death that peace is returned to “all good men” (4.1.747). While *Ambrosia* was written over two decades before Elizabeth’s death, we might note that many of her subjects remained hopeful that once she was deceased a better era might dawn for them, which is one reason the issue of succession later became so crucial. At the time *Ambrosia* was performed, Elizabeth had been on the throne for twenty years, which was already a long time compared to her predecessors, a time made to feel interminably long to those who suffered under her harsh policies. By the end of her long reign (45 years), myriad references to the forty years of exile recounted in *Exodus* would be common among Catholic apologists.67

We might also note that Justina is referred to by Sophronius in Simons’ translation as “Mistress” (2.1.300), from the Latin *Domina*. Significantly, Mistress would have been a contemporary term/usage and touches on an older meaning: sovereign lady, ruler, queen, also figurative (*MED*), which certainly fits the context of the play and is significant as a potential topical marker for Elizabeth. Be that as it may, Simons’ use of “Mistress” can be seen as potentially anachronistic (or at least our twenty-first century understanding of it may be) since it is, in some respects, connotatively different from *Domina*, even though the Latin term can be translated as “Mistress” and is the root of the
term “domination.” Nevertheless, perhaps it is even more significant that Campion uses *Domina* in the first place, which is linked to God and could easily been seen as a disparaging reference to Elizabeth who posited herself as both the temporal *and* spiritual head of her subjects as their *supreme* ruler, a theme central to the play and the contemporary religious conflicts that plagued Elizabethans. Paronomasia was a common method of effecting rhetorical ambiguity, as seen in all of Harington’s epigrams and in the works of myriad other contemporary texts.\(^68\) It makes sense that Campion would choose a word with multiple meanings.

We might note that John Knox uses the term “dominion” in his *First Blast to Awaken Women Degenerate*:

> To promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, *dominion*, or empire above any realm, nation, or city, is repugnant to nature; contumely to God, a thing most contrary to his revealed will and approved ordinance; and finally, it is the subversion of good order, of all equity and justice. (para. 1; emphasis added)\(^69\)

In terms of polemical debates, Knox offers what, by some (especially twenty-first readers), may be seen as extreme; yet, he is fairly representative of the cultural climate.\(^70\) Furthermore, Theodosius is never referred to with the same terminology in the same way. Besides “Emperor,” the terms used by other characters to address Theodosius include: “Augustus” (3.2.580, 4.1.759, 5.1.995, 5.4.1154, and 5.8.1327) and “Caesar” (5.4.1154). The only time, which is telling, that anyone uses parallel language to that of Justina as “Mistress,” via *Domina*, with its initial capitalization, is when Ambrose, the spiritual head, calls Theodosius, “lord and son,” via *domine* and *fili*, which are in all lower-case
letters and refer to the temporal status of Theodosius (5.4.1190) in relation to his holy father Bishop Ambrose. This example provides a striking contrast that highlights the temporal versus the spiritual.⁷¹

“Hesperia” as a reference to contemporary England would be a common enough conceit because plays with sensitive matter about England were often displaced to Italy (and elsewhere) to avoid the censor; therefore, it is not a stretch to see how such a strategy of displacement provided an additional allusion to Rome as the seat of Catholicism.⁷² The “insignificant men” who “harass” Justina might be seen as Catholic priests, either at home or abroad. The “reign of terror” could easily be a reference to Elizabeth’s severe anti-Catholic policies.⁷³ Kilroy has noted that everyone in England at this time was affected by the lack of religious toleration in some way, if not on a personal level: “Every sensitive and intelligent person was affected by the conflict that was tearing the country apart; everyone had friends or relatives who had suffered” (“Changing Eyes” 14).⁷⁴ The “one single cleric” in the play and on the surface, of course, is Ambrose, but he also serves, in the light of Catholic theology, as an agent of the Pope, Justina’s “Supreme Head,” the ultimate spiritual leader to whom the sixteenth-century Reformed Church most objected and the figure rejected when reforms challenged the primacy of the clergy. As was true of many monarchs, Elizabeth, herself, maintained her rule through the wealth and power bestowed on her supporters, which may be seen as a clear reference to Justina “[r]elying on assistance of commanders who are made strong by gold,
mercenaries, power and acclimations.” Perhaps most significant is the reference to “Arius” and the rejection of “homoousian doctrine” to signify Protestantism.

When Campion’s drama employs references to historical figures and beliefs such as “Arius” and “homoousian doctrine,” respectively, on one level, these historical details clearly allude to the contemporary polemical doctrinal debates during the Reformation. Arius was the early Christian who challenged the idea of a Triune God, namely asserting that the Godhead was supreme, rejecting the idea of the three-in-one balance of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit embraced and defended by Catholicism even to this day. Arianism then, as a topical marker, would refer to the Protestant position. “Homoousian doctrine” was the name given to the concept of the Triune God (substantially three-in-one or of the “same substance”) at the First Council of Nicaea, AD 325, which Arius challenged, and thus, topically, can be seen as an allusion to Catholicism. In large part, the historical disagreement about the Holy Trinity depicted in Ambrosia encapsulates a significant later divide between Protestants and Catholics, to varying degrees depending on the theologians involved, and would have alerted Campion’s audience that the play was not just a “mouldy tale,” but, rather, one of contemporary importance very much concerned with the immediate crisis in England.

For example, Calvin had challenged the “unicity” and simplicity of God in his Institutes of the Christian Religion (1.13: 16-20). He emphasized not separate “persons” but, rather, “aspects” or “substances” (which any single “person” might possess or do; the word and concept of “person” being rejected because of its too-human nature). These
“peculiar subsistences” in the divine essence underscored what Calvin believed to be a particular kind of divine unity that presented a digression from Augustinian philosophy and the Creeds. The Augustinian position seems all the more significant given that Augustine is a character of some magnitude in Campion’s drama. Interestingly, and useful to the context of the play, Calvin specifically calls the Arian and Macedonian positions “heresies” (the Arians had been the followers of Bishop Macedonius) (16). Calvin called Arius “blasphemous.” In Chapter 13 of The Institutes, Calvin asserts that “the Godhead is absolutely from itself. And hence also we hold that the Son, regarded as God and without reference to Person, is from himself; though we also say that, regarded as Son, he is from the Father” (Section 25). Calvin famously refused to reject or affirm the Nicene or Athanasian Creeds in the 1537 Trinitarian Controversy. This example provides one of the doctrinal differences among the Protestant sects.

Trinitarianism is discussed further in the play when Ambrose examines Augustine before his baptism. After confirming that Augustine and the other two with whom he will be baptized, Alipius and Adeodatus, know the faith through “the short creed” (2.5.475), Ambrose questions them concerning some particulars. Adeodatus says, “We hate this perverted sect and the Manichaean falsehoods” (2.5.478-79), the philosophy that the convertites, including Augustine, had previously embraced, much to Monica’s distress. They discuss God’s power to save and, more specifically, about the “homoousian doctrine” Ambrose asks them, “[I]s the Spirit sharer with the Father and the Son?” (2.5.486-87), to which Adeodatus replies, “He is equally God” (2.5.485). Further,
Ambrose asks, “Did the Council of Nicaea teach the faith of which there is no doubt?” (2.5.489), and they all agree, thus being welcomed into the Church. Additionally, in 2.7 when Ambrose examines Augustine we have a kind of antiphonal litany of Trinitarian praise to close that scene that again reaffirms the homoousian doctrine:

AMB: God the Father of tremendous majesty,
AUG: And Christ, born of the Word, who is as old as Thou art.
AMB: Equal honour be to the Holy Ghost. (2.7.520-22)

In Campion’s play where time and place are condensed, historical Arianism and Manichaeism in early Christianity provided evocative examples for the Jesuit playwright to dramatize contemporary debates about religion, including Calvin’s challenges to Catholicism and other sects.81

All of the foregoing parallels are fairly explicit, but there are others we might not immediately notice until we consider the way the Reformed Church claimed to have access to an earlier, purer form of Christianity that was believed to have been subverted and adulterated by the Catholic Church through the ages.82 One of the issues central to this theory was the way Rome was believed to have made the faithful superstitious by introducing religious practices that Protestants claim are not found in the bible and thus are not supported by the Word of God. This includes Mariology, or reverence of the Blessed Virgin. The 1559 edition of the Elizabethan Book of Common Prayer, states:

Some [ceremonies] at the firste were of Godlye entent and purpose devysed, and yet at length, turned to vanitie and supersticicion: some entered into the Churche, by undiscrete devocion and suche a zeale as was withoute knowledge: and for because they were winked at in the beginning, they grue daily to more and more abuses, which not only for their unprofitablenes, but also because they have
muche blynded the people, and obscured the glorye of God, are woorthy to be cut away, and cleane rejected. (“Of Ceremonies: Why Some Be Abolished, and Some Retayned”)

The Protestant rejection of certain Catholic beliefs and practices explicitly involved any devotion to Mary, which was viewed as being among those “supersticion[s]” that were “begun withoute knowledge” and considered blasphemous.

In this neglected play, Campion often depicts love, especially charitable examples of love, in female characters whom he portrays as distinctly Marian. The Empress Flaccilla and Saint Monica provide sympathetic examples of charitable Marian characters in the play. Campion also portrays love’s antithesis—as hate or intolerance—in a female character, as seen in Justina, who is decidedly merciless. We should consider contemporary examples of how women were often viewed. Protestants, especially Puritans, considered women to be both particularly vulnerable and dangerous. John Knox claims that his position in his vitriolic *The First Blast* against women is supported wholly by scripture. On the other hand, Catholics viewed women, along with children and the less-educated, as vulnerable to heresy, but they also saw women as a necessary strength in the English Mission. Women were important to the Jesuit Mission—often central—for the assistance they provided. Help ranged from financial aid (including shelter) to a more active “handmaid’s” engagement, which found women assisting with secret masses and ministering to Catholic children. For these reasons, women are numbered among those prominent in the recusant community. From Magdelen Browne, the Vicountess Montegue (1538–1608), to Anne Line (martyred under Elizabeth in 1601 for harboring
priests), we have many examples of women who were intimately involved in the recusant community so it is no wonder they were viewed as dangerous by reformers.⁸³

Because, the Catholic Church saw women (children and the illiterate) as acutely susceptible to heresy and sought to protect them, women especially being important to the Mission, Henry Garnet developed the Confraternity of the Rosary, in part, to provide aid to those recusants bereft of organized worship and a faith community in England in an effort to “help souls.”⁸⁴ The Confraternity of the Rosary sought to restore the tradition of the Rosary of Our Lady, even while it revised it for contemporary needs. One significant alteration was the greater focus on the life of Christ, as we see in the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. Marian characters, when portrayed in a positive light (in Protestant texts they were often used to mock or disparage Catholicism), provide specific markers in Catholic texts. In Campion’s Ambrosia that includes two overtly Marian characters we see the playwright dramatizing Catholic doctrine. Additionally, as Beauregard’s study on Catholic Theology explores, we have many examples of references to the Blessed Virgin as “mediatrix” (53-54) that highlight the Catholic belief in Mary’s participation in attaining grace for the suppliant via intercessory prayer (146).⁸⁵ Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) is one noteworthy contemporary voice on Mary as Mediatrix, whose views were relevant to recusants because a “martyrdom of the heart,” as Mary was believed to have undergone, was often far more difficult than literal martyrdom (Sweeney 129).⁸⁶
While Mariology is rejected by Protestants as idolatrous, ironically Elizabeth assumed the mantle of the “Virgin” Queen, which the state vigorously sought to promote in a new kind of temporal idolatry. Catholics also see Mary as a type of the Church and the conflation of Queen/Wife/Bride/Mother/Daughter is a rich trope in Catholic texts. In *Ambrosia*, for example, Theodosius will refer to the church as the mother he has angered when he asks to be welcomed back into its fold: “This is the day I have wished for, which will again admit me into the house and bosom of the mother whom I outraged by my crime” (5.6.233-34). Saint Monica makes this same maternal reference.

In the plot line that depicts Augustine’s conversion, his devoted mother, Saint Monica, demonstrates her love for God and her son, for whose conversion she prays continuously: “If only I could see that day arrive when you, Augustine, after your rebirth, have put on Christ, you my son, my consolation and my grief. . . . For that purpose I bore you” (2.2.307-09). The Pauline idea of “put[ing] on Christ” is distinctly Ignatian and Monica’s comments foreshadow Augustine’s Angelic visitation later in Act 2, Scene 2 during which the Angel exhorts Augustine to read Paul. If the faithful are to embrace the mission of “helping souls,” they must “share in the grace of apostleship, to be companions of Jesus” (Reiser xvi) and live the Word. Monica says of her dream:

[T]he time would come when you would be on the catholic side. . . . With pleasure I shall be freed from the burden of the flesh as soon as I shall have given you back to your Mother, to our Mother Church, without whom there is no salvation. (2.5.447-52)
Again, this is distinctly Catholic to refer to the Church as maternal and also underscores the importance of the Blessed Virgin. In giving birth to a saint, Monica herself may be seen as a Marian figure and a mediatrix, appealing to God with intercessory prayers on her son’s behalf.

Worth exploring at length, after Monica makes a prayer of petition to the martyrs Protase and Gervase to aid her son, “who is in danger” in effecting “a clear wonder that is even greater than when [they] restored the sight of Severus’ eyes” (2.2.324, 321-22) via conversion, Augustine says:

> God tames this intamable heart and crucifies it. What a mother and what a son! How much misery she has endured, tending my wounds! And what next? . . . . We ought to be ashamed of our books and sciences. Unlettered men, as if they were princes, tread down both the filthy lucre of the world and the amassed riches. We are believed to be educated men, but we concern ourselves with this dirt! Sluggishly we crawl among the ground. Ah, till when shall I delay? Till tomorrow? And to-morrow again? Away with this bondage of procrastination! Lord, I begin now, penetrate into my soul. (2.2.325-38)\(^90\)

The clear parallels between Augustine and his mother and the crucified Christ and the Blessed Virgin further mark this text as Catholic apologetics as does the concern for “unlettered men” and the rejection of “amassed riches” of the Church. We should also note that intercessory prayers to Saints, especially to the Blessed Virgin, is also a practice rejected by Protestants, who believe God or Christ are the only ones to whom prayer might be directed.
After the Angel appears to Augustine, a concept of divine inspiration that had also been rejected by reforms (noted again, below, and in the next chapter), he converts, quoting Paul’s *Epistle to the Romans* (13:14):

> Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. This suffices. My friend, I am restored again to life, I feel it, inward peace has come. A voice exhorted me to read, and look, and I have heard the life-giving word, which I will follow without delay. My mother wished this robe for me a little while ago . . . by her sighs [she] brings forth my salvation. (2.2.358-61, 267-68)

While this account is taken from Augustine’s *Confessions* (8.11-12), Campion gives his scene a distinctly Jesuitical flavor with the emphasis on pairing the Word with action to serve God, as in James, where faith without works is dead (2:17), a concept challenged by Luther (“Luther Canon,” *The Luther Bible*, 1522 edition). Protestants favor *Sola Fide/Sola Scriptura/Sola gratia.* Views vary among Protestant sects, but privileging the Word and salvation through “faith alone” is a hallmark of reformed thinking and directly challenge the Catholic position on “works.” We see the Catholic stance depicted in *Ambrosia.*

It is convenient for Campion and perhaps inspirational that historically Augustine’s conversion occurred after contemplating the life of Saint Antony, just as Ignatius meditating on the saints’ lives (and Christ’s) led to his own conversion and encouraged the *Spiritual Exercises.* As with good and bad spirits in Ignatian theory, Augustine realizes that God has given him both the will and the capacity to make his conversion. As Monica tells him, “He who has given the will will also provide the ability,
as He always does” (2.2.314), thus allowing Augustine to reject the Manichean tenets he previously accepted; he has God-given free will and actively chooses Christ.

Perhaps most obviously, Campion also demonstrates the “love to serve” in his portrayal of Empress Flaccilla, Theodosius’ wife, another overtly Marian character, who spends her days ministering to the city’s poor and needy “helping souls” (2.4). Flaccilla notes that the food they will distribute among the hungry was “prepared in honour of Christ” (2.4.395). Significantly, she says, “Accept, O Jesus, the tributes of thy worthless handmaid. It is no great thing that I do. Great is what Thou allowest to be done by me for Thee, most mighty Ruler” (2.4.420; emphasis added). The “handmaid” through whom God works is a distinct Marian reference to The Gospel According to Luke, Chapter 1, which establishes the Ave Maria among the joyful mysteries that are part of the Rosary of Our Lady (represented by the white rose). 94 These were rejected by Protestants and later revived in England through the Confraternity of the Rosary and various versions of The Rosary of Our Lady. The Douai-Rheims bible recounts this joyful mystery first with Gabriel’s visit to Mary and from which the Ave Maria commences with: “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women” (Luke 1:28). 95 After Gabriel explains to Mary that she will give birth to Jesus, God’s Son, Mary chooses to obey, her fiat, saying, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38) and later, “[H]e hath regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed” (1.48). 96 Subsequently, at the Visitation, Mary’s aged cousin, Elizabeth, who, previously barren, carries in her womb John the
Baptist, the baby who leaps within her when the pregnant Mary approaches, will cry out: “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb” (1:42). These biblical references encapsulated in the Ave Maria are apparent in a Marian character enacting the role of “handmaid” to the Lord and would have been obvious and immediate to a Catholic audience to provide another artistic representation of the spiritual in the temporal to reconcile Eros and Agape. Protestants had rejected Marian doctrine and here we see another element that situates the play as Catholic apologetic drama, specifically concerning the contested beliefs of the Blessed Virgin, who is always a model of faith and obedience for Catholics as exercised through her fiat.

Another Marian element can be seen in the five poor sufferers surrounding Flaccilla, whom she sees as, “A reminder of Christ’s five wounds” (2.4.425). Five is a significant number in Catholic numerology and the reference to Christ’s Passion is central to that symbolic meaning. So, too, is Mary, in Catholic belief because of her role as “Mother of God” (a belief rejected by Protestants), since without her as the human vessel, a Holy Grail, the handmaid, through whom God achieves great works, there would be no Christ. We should also note that as Adam prefigures Christ, who is often called “The Second Adam,” so, too, does Eve prefigure Mary, which is why The Fall of Adam and Eve is often referred to as “The Fortunate Fall” in necessitating Christ’s coming and posits Mary as the redeeming woman in the narrative through whom His humanity is made manifest. Mary is often called “The Second Eve.”
Sir Thomas Tresham (1543–1605) had a special interest in sacred numerology and therefore is relevant to understanding its value among the recusant community. Tresham, a leader within Catholic circles, is an important figure in the Jesuit story because of his association with Campion, who had stayed at Tresham’s estate, Rushton Hall. Tresham famously averted swearing to Campion’s presence before the Privy Council by saying, “Your lordship says [Campion] stayed little with me, came much disguised in apparel, and altering his name. All which made me refuse to swear, lest haply he might have been in my house and my company, I not knowing him” (qtd. in Simpson 249). In spite of his clever defense, it was for the suspicion of harboring this Jesuit priest that Tresham spent more than two decades in prison. In this respect, Tresham was lucky; others, like Anne Line, were condemned to death for the same offense. In addition to his lengthy prison stays, Tresham was fined approximately £9,000 for recusancy, which is among the reasons construction of Lyveden New Bield, one of his coded buildings, was never completed. Tresham had dedicated his money, time, and energy to the Catholic faith, and his manuscripts and those found at Brudenell house, which he organized and which his daughter, Mary, is believed to have transcribed, pay tribute to Campion and leave a record of the forbidden faith in England that provides a sense of what Catholicism meant to the recusant community.99

To understand the importance of Tresham’s contributions to Campion and the recusant community overall, Kilroy explains the role of numerology in Tresham’s manuscripts and buildings. Five is of special interest:
The date, ’25. December 1585,’ reflects Tresham’s concern with five, which in his manuscripts he represents as a pentagon with three words of five letters, all bringing us salvation: *Iusvs, Salvs, Maria*, the five wounds of Christ . . . , and ’25,’ the date of both the Annunciation and the Nativity, which he calls the ‘quadrant’ of five (BL Add. MS 39831, fols. 5r-15v). The first seven (seven for the instruments of the Passion) words on the frieze that runs round Lyveden New Bield—‘Iesvs mvndi salvs gavde mater virgo Maria’—all have five letters. (“Emblem” 160)

We should note that here the Virgin Mary is called, *Maria*, which employs the number five in the letters of the Latin spelling of her name, a numerological strategy we see in the play’s title, as well, in “Ambrosia” for “Ambrose,” the significance of which shall be discussed at the end of this chapter in greater detail. Additionally, it is significant that there are seven words in the phrase “*Iesvs mvndi salvs gavde mater virgo Maria*.” Like the seven instruments of the Passion that, here, are overcome by the salvic, celebratory message of the inscription: “Jesus salvation of the world rejoice Mother Virgin Mary.”

Like Mary, a figure of salvation, Flaccilla humbles herself before God, as the true Ruler. Her ability to visualize, and to bring to mind with words the five wounds of Christ, is another link to the meditative and imaginative aspects of both the Rosary and *The Exercises* concerning the sacred mysteries. Just as Christ obediently served the Father, so Flaccilla serves Christ, as Ignatius would have it. Her love is made manifest through her selfless “works” and these were seen as a necessary means of obtaining grace through the higher saving merit of Christ, a kind of active virtue. On a literal level, the play has a large cast and a scene such as this would have afforded the students an opportunity to participate in Flaccilla’s charitable, *loving*, ministrations in a distinctly deliberative
way—for the greater good and helping souls. Similarly, Campion’s drama engages in Renaissance rhetorical models to instruct both his audience and his young players with part of his focus on the Blessed Virgin, contemplation, and works: all very Catholic Reformation markers that again show the conflation of the temporal with the spiritual and the way art attempts to reconcile *Eros* and *Agape*.

Other Catholic markers include the miracles in *Ambrosia*, specifically Ambrose finding the remains of the martyrs, Gervase and Protase (1.4), as revealed to him through an intercessory visitation by Saint Paul, and the subsequent miracle Ambrose works through the martyrs by restoring sight to the blind Severus (1.6). As noted above, there is also an Angel who appears to Augustine (2.2.357), urging him to read and convert. In many ways it seems almost miraculous the way Ambrose avoids martyrdom in his opposition to Justina and in saving Theodosius, who, by the end, chooses to obey rather than be denied salvation. Shell says of martyrdom, “*Ambrosia* is a play about martyrdom, but martyrdom either exhumed, as with the bones of Gervase and Protase, or risked and averted, in the case of Ambrose himself” (114). Additionally, by the end, Theodosius refers to military victory as miraculous (5.10.1384). These kinds of supernatural occurrences were rejected by the Reformed Church as Catholic superstition and idolatry—relics had been made illegal—and thus provide further evidence of the play as Catholic apologetics.

Related to miracles and also rejected by the Reformed Church was the concept of exorcism. In Act 1, Scene 5, Bishop Ambrose cures the possessed Energumen saying,
“Satan, our enemy, go out of this image of God” (1.5.185). Perhaps one of the best accounts of the Protestants’ distrust and rejection of exorcisms can be found in a contemporary account written by a Jesuit, Fr. William Weston’s *An Autobiography from the Jesuit Underground*. Exorcisms, like miracles, were dismissed as superstition. Publicly, William Cecil is noted to have treated the accounts of them as comical and “brushed them aside as probably fraud and as a series of impostures devised by priests in order to deceive people” (Weston 25). In spite of Cecil’s dismissive stance, Weston thinks that Cecil is more frightened by the accounts than he lets on:

> He was afraid, I think, that such startling testimony to the truth would force open his eyes and he would have to assent. Or, perhaps, with a conscience already ill at ease, he feared it might add to his remorse. (25)

Barbara Rosen’s study on witchcraft gives evidence of anti-Catholic bias, especially as demonstrated by Reginald Scot’s *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (London, 1584), which Rosen argues was anti-Catholic “to an extent distasteful even in the context of Elizabethan polemics” (171). Scot claims the only people misled by fallacious stories of possession are “children, fools, melancholic persons, and papists” (16.2). Samuel Harsnett famously denounced Catholic exorcisms in his *A Declaration of egregious Popish Impostures* (London, 1603). Clearly, discussions of exorcism and possession, presented in a positive light, provide distinct Catholic approaches to the supernatural. Moreover, in terms of Campion’s art, which is not simply for art’s sake, but part of the Jesuit mission and a “performing deed” to “save souls,” this becomes a pivotal scene in which Campion depicts what he believed to be a reality in his faith— with the temporal
and spiritual colliding—as it demonstrates yet another way divine love, Agape, reconciles Eros.

Free will had been debated vehemently since the start of the reformation (and before) and the Council of Trent devoted much of its Sixth Session (1543) to the topic. Reflecting Catholic doctrine, Campion shows very unambiguously that choice is paramount to the Catholic faith; more specifically, the soul is drawn to good and has agency in attaining grace. Early in the Reformation, the concept of free will had been addressed by Luther and Erasmus in Free Will and Salvation. In the extreme, some Protestants, especially Calvinists with their Doctrine of the Elect, favored Providence, which they claimed effectively made choice impossible and by which man has little agency in achieving salvation, as believed to be supported wholly by scripture; whereas the Catholic stance and tradition maintain that man is an active participant in salvation when he exercises his will to choose rightly, especially after his soul is stirred by the divine to seek goodness, truth, and beauty. Moreover, we might note one of Gregory Martin’s annotations for The Book of Wisdom in the Douai-Rheims bible (1582) concerning free will that asserts: “God’s prescience does not prejudice mans free wil” (Chapter 3). The oppositional Calvinist view often influenced matters in England.

As Anne Sweeney comments in her study of Robert Southwell, the Jesuits:

engaged with the contemporary controversies over the access of divine grace, highlighting a perceived weakness of Calvinism: ‘performing deed’ seemed irrelevant to a ‘Saved’ soul already destined heavenward; and if a soul were denied such heavenly election from birth, what difference would a good deed make? (20)
Alexandra Walsham discusses:

The brands of Swiss Reformed and later Calvinist theology that came to exert the dominant intellectual influence on [reforms] evolution in Britain and Ireland involved an uncompromising rejection of the idea that the material world was capable of containing and transmitting salvic grace. (82)

Kristeller in *Renaissance Thought and Sources* notes that the glorification of man, “was not approved by all Renaissance thinkers” and offers Luther and Calvin as dissenters “who insist on the depravity of man after Adam’s fall, perhaps in conscious reaction against the humanist emphasis on [man’s] dignity” (168). Free will and man’s choice as a means to access grace as a kind of *active virtue* that helps one to achieve salvation was a central concern at the time and is certainly a focus in Campion’s drama to emphasize the use of free will that divides Catholics and Protestants.

I have already noted Mary’s choice in submitting to God’s plan, her *fiat*, and this example of the Blessed Virgin was one Catholics were taught to emulate: one was to *choose* to do the right thing, seeking discernment from God. I have also noted Saint Monica telling her son that God gives man the will to act (2.2.314). In the pre-baptismal discussion about Manichaeism, Ambrose questions the catechumens about free will variously to confirm the Catholic position that “the human will is wholly free” (2.5.479-80) but not “efficacious” (2.5.485-86) absent Christ, reiterating Monica’s position that man’s free will is a gift from God and that grace comes only through God when man exercises his will to choose rightly. The particular presentation of free will in the play and the way it mirrors the Catholic Church’s position on the topic is further evidence that
Campion’s drama is specifically part of the Catholic Reformation and demonstrates the ways in which the Catholic Church responded to the reformed ideas of Protestantism, namely those of Providence and Predestination that were understood to impact one’s ability to exercise the will freely in order that one may choose either good or evil, as Sweeney notes above, and as the Council of Trent addressed (see below). We learn later, in terms of Theodosius’ choice to commit the massacre of seven thousand, after he first decided to obey Ambrose, that the will, though it cannot be forced, most certainly can be influenced by evil. In choosing evil, man actively rejects grace and the opportunity for salvation, or justification, an idea explored further in the discussion of Theodosius as a tragic hero where the notion of free will is examined more closely.

In the Council of Trent, for the Decree on justification, there are thirty-three canons that respond to the Protestant challenges about this doctrinal issue. Canon 4 (Ch. 10) ruled:

If anyone says that man’s free will moved and aroused by God, by assenting to God’s call and action, in no way cooperates toward disposing and preparing itself to obtain the grace of justification, that it cannot refuse its assent if it wishes, but that as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive, let him be anathema. (Schroeder, Canons and Decrees 43)

Canon 5 makes it clear the belief that free will was not “lost and destroyed” with Adam’s fall. Canons 9 and 10 address, specifically, Luther’s Solo Fides. They state, respectively: “If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone”—a statement that clearly targets Luther’s position—“meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and
disposed by the action of the will, let him be anathema” and that justification comes through Christ (43). Further, as concerns predestination, the Council declared in Canon 17:

If anyone says that the grace of justification is shared by those only who are predestined to life, but that all others who are called are called indeed but receive not grace, as if they are by divine power predestined to evil, let him be anathema. (44)

Finally, as concerns works (the Jesuitical “performing deeds” among these), which had been rejected specifically by Luther who wished, at one point, to cut James from the bible (along with apocryphal texts), in which we find “Faith without works is dead” (James 2:26; see also 2:14-25 preceding), Canon 24 ruled:

If anyone says that the justice received is not preserved and also not increased before God through good works, but that those works are merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not the cause of its increase, let him be anathema. (45)

The debate over free will at the time is a significant theme in the texts of the period. With the call to “help souls,” Jesuit art offers further important contemporary support of the ways in which doctrine influenced art that sought to reconcile Eros and Agape.

To demonstrate how the spiritual and temporal should co-exist for the common good, Campion dramatizes the importance of the primacy of the clergy. As the sacrament of Holy Orders, the primacy of the clergy provides an example of one of the five sacraments rejected by the Reformed Church. Shell notes the play’s double themes as, “the triumph of orthodoxy over heresy and the relative rights of Church and state” (106).
The first deals with both Justina, as discussed, and, in part with Augustine, who is saved from worse heresies by his mother’s mediatrix prayers, the intervention of an angel, and his own spiritual yearnings. The second theme that deals with Church and state is depicted through the Emperor Theodosius. We might see *Ambrosia* as a “tragedy,” although not a perfect one in the strict Aristotelian sense even if it is referred to as “the famous *Tragoedia Ambrosiana*” by both Richard Simpson (90) and Campion himself, the latter in that same letter mentioned above that the dramatist wrote to the unknown Father to whom he had lent a copy of his play. If it is tragedy, the tragic character is not Ambrose so much as Theodosius; Ambrose serves to unify the otherwise unrelated plot lines. Theodosius, as the emperor, provides the tragic elements in the play with his fall from grace through which he is denied the Eucharist and hope for salvation, until he is redeemed through his submission to his spiritual leader, Ambrose, and the Church, via the sacrament of reconciliation, effected through acts of confession and penance. We also know that Gregory Martin, Campion’s dear friend, refers to the play as a tragedy in his commemorative poem about the martyr, which appeared in Bridgewater’s 1589 *Concertatio* (Simons x).

Because these contemporary views about generic function are important, in this section, I examine the play in terms of a hypothesis about genre: *Ambrosia* gives us a nuanced, Catholic version of the Classical pagan model of tragedy. The theological elements include confession, contrition, reconciliation, and forgiveness that transform tragedy to comedy. Spiritual death is averted by God’s saving grace when it is actively
sought by the contrite, penitent soul. Campion exploits dramatic and generic conventions to strengthen the delivery of his religious lesson about Theodosius rhetorically in a very deliberative fashion. As penance, Theodosius will perform many deeds of contrition. Performatively, the play enacts transformation and salvation in its generic shift. An initial bad choice plunges the hero into tragedy but his demise is later remedied by a subsequent good choice as the hero makes amends. Campion dramatizes how Theodosius is saved by divine grace as a result of his works in another demonstration of art reconciling *Eros* and *Agape*.

Obedience is central to Theodosius’ salvation. At the end of the play when he has been welcomed back into the embrace of the Church, and is embraced literally by Ambrose (5.10.1403), Theodosius declares: “How good it is to obey!” (5.10.1405). We might also note that “obedience” would be foremost in a Jesuit’s mind. Höpfl states:

> What is fundamental to the Jesuits’ principles of organisation is their distinctive understanding of the virtue of obedience, not any military model or pragmatic considerations. The pre-eminent place Jesuits assigned to obedience is evident in the abundance of authoritative texts emphasising and justifying it. (26-27)

While general obedience to God is a Christian tenet, *differentia specifica* for Jesuits means that “they unhesitatingly made the manifestations of God’s will in ‘visible’ superiority, institutions, and office-holders the object of obedience, not only for Jesuits but *mutatis mutandis* for all Christians” (34). Jesuit ideas about obedience provide additional evidence of expressions of the spiritual in the temporal in the tragedy of *Ambrosia.*
The tragic elements in *Ambrosia* hinge on “the will” and making “choices.” In terms of the Aristotelian model as established in the *Poetics*, *proairesis* is Aristotle’s technical term for the moral act of “choice.” A choice is an action and characters exist in tragedy—an arrangement of incidents (1450a)—in order to make choices via what we would call “the will,” where one is free to choose a certain thing over another, thus revealing character strengths and flaws. Aristotle says that *proairesis* “shows what sort of thing a man chooses or avoids in circumstances where the choice is not obvious” (1450b). The problem of *akrasia*, when one acts against one’s better judgment, applies to Theodosius, who first resolves to obey Ambrose choosing the better of two options, but subsequently is persuaded by bad advisors to act otherwise, eventually choosing the worse of the two. As a topical statement, this could refer to Elizabeth submitting to her bad advisors, a problem addressed by other artists at the time.\(^{108}\) Theodosius’ *akrasia* also could be viewed in light of good and bad spirits in Ignatian theory that was often represented, dramatically, as *psychomachia* in the morality plays.\(^{109}\) Both kinds of spirits are present in Campion’s drama.

Regarding *ethos*, or character, Fyfe explains that *proairesis*:

is a technical term in Aristotle’s ethics, corresponding to our use of the term “Will,” the deliberate adoption of any course of conduct or line of action. It is a man’s will or choice in the sense that determines the goodness [strengths] or badness [flaws] of his character. If character is to be revealed in drama, a man must be shown in the exercise of his will, choosing between one line of conduct and another, and he must be placed in circumstances in which the choice is not obvious, i.e., circumstances in which everybody’s choice would not be the same. The choice of death rather than dishonourable wealth reveals character; the choice of a nectarine rather than a turnip does not. (Note 4, 1450b)\(^{110}\)
Because free will is central to this discussion of *Ambrosia* as a particular kind of tragedy, especially the Catholic notion of it and its limited “efficacy,” I foreground the discussion of Theodosius as a tragic figure by first briefly examining Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* as a Classical model since the idea of will differs significantly from the Catholic model, particularly since divine judgment comes into play for the latter.

When Oedipus quarrels with, and then kills, the old man he meets on the highway who will not yield, he does so without realizing the horror of the murder as patricide; otherwise, he would not have killed him since he tries to avoid the prophecy, a point which Aristotle notes: “[The hero] may do the deed but without realizing the horror of it [as with Medea killing her children] and then discover the relationship afterwards, like Oedipus in Sophocles (1453a [1]). Nor does Oedipus realize, when he solves the Sphinx’ riddle, that the woman whom he will marry in reward is really his mother; otherwise, he would not have married her. He struggles to *avoid* the Oracular prophecy (as do his parents), but in the tragic world of the Greeks, man is at the mercy of *Moira* and this differs from Renaissance depictions, where Christianity largely colors man’s world view and free will takes on additional meaning as it is debated by Catholics and Protestants. We still get references to Fortune’s wheel and Fate, as with Justina’s “Relieve me my bitter fate” (2.1.284), but because these ideas compete with the ubiquitous Renaissance notions of Christianity—conflicted as those were during the Reformation—tragedy differs from what we find in the Classical model, especially as established in *Oedipus*. 
Oedipus makes choices with only limited information (not only is his choice not obvious, neither, for him, are the options or the consequences); therefore, we cannot consider him as “choosing between one line of conduct or another,” insofar as it directly relates to the prophecy. He does not move from “ignorance to knowledge” until the “discovery” at which point it is too late (Aristotle 1452a). Ultimately, hubris must be Oedipus’ hamartia that leads to the fulfillment of the prophecy—indeed enables it to be fulfilled in a moment of dramatic irony—in the first instance, as he attempts to shame others with his assumed superiority when the travelers will not yield to him on the highway. Nevertheless:

Whether Aristotle regards the “flaw” as intellectual or moral has been hotly discussed. It may cover both senses. The hero must not deserve his misfortune, but he must cause it by making a fatal mistake, an error of judgement, which may well involve some imperfection of character but not such as to make us regard him as “morally responsible” for the disasters although they are nevertheless the consequences of the flaw in him, and his wrong decision at a crisis is the inevitable outcome of his character. (Fyfe, Note 1, 1453a)

Oedipus’ actions realize the first part of the prophecy and reveal his character flaw. The shift we see in Renaissance tragedy, generally, results in a concept of will that differs from the Classical model whereby moral responsibility does, in fact, become a central concern. This is true in Ambrosia and Theodosius’ ordering the massacre.

Informed by the general Christian ideals about morality and divine judgment, characters, in exercising choice, understand that making poor choices to transgress the laws (as with choosing evil over good)—whether God’s (spiritual) or man’s (temporal, nevertheless based on the spiritual in a Christian context)—will result in severe
punishment, whether physical or spiritual death, because they “deserve [their] misfortune,” they being held morally responsible. The greater part of Oedipus’ punishment, his blinding and desire for banishment, is self-inflicted as is his anguish for the inadvertent horror of patricide and maternal incest and the disasters that consequently follow as a result of his hamartia. In part, the distinction, as noted, lies in belief in divine judgment, which differs from a pagan to a Christian context. Oedipus becomes his own judge and inflicts his own punishment. In Campion’s Catholic drama, punishment, via excommunication for the temporal Emperor Theodosius, comes via the spiritual agent, Bishop Ambrose.

With this background, we can return to Ambrosia more directly to understand that Campion’s tragic hero, Theodosius, does not quite fit a pure Aristotelian pagan model, especially in terms of his proairesis because he exercises his will with clear knowledge of the choices—presented to him by Ambrose, who, as his spiritual head, tells him to choose rightly—to avoid the potential consequence of damnation. Ambrose says he has come to advise Theodosius for “the welfare of [his] soul” exhorting him to be Christ-like saying, “Be good and merciful as He is” (4.1.761, 763). Ambrose counsels Theodosius to “mitigate the rigorous provisions of the laws, do not create a bitter mood, fear the progress of violent anger and refrain from impetuous acts” (4.1.765-67). Ambrose then states very clearly the choices:

There are two things one could propose. It will be inevitable for you to do one or the other: either to butcher a good many people who do not deserve it, so long as you desire to revenge these offences with the sword. Or, if you let them all off
their punishment, you release only very few culprits from their just fate. (4.1.773-78)

When Theodosius challenges the Bishop’s logic, Ambrose says, “You cannot avoid both. Be sensible and choose the lesser evil” (4.1.779). At this juncture, Theodosius agrees with Ambrose’s wisdom saying, “I prefer to spare the scoundrels rather than massacre good people” (4.1.781).

Later, however, Theodosius will change his mind _akratically_ to override his earlier sound judgment to choose the greater of the two evils when he is overcome by the influence of bad advisers and his hubristic anger gets the better of him—even though Ambrose had warned him in no uncertain terms about both his duty and his soul. Ambrose will later remind him that “wrath is the source of this evil, beware of wrath” (5.4.1183-84). For choosing to conduct the massacre at Thessalonica, Theodosius is excommunicated and denied the Eucharist and thus is presented with the possibility of spiritual death. By contrast, Ambrose is steadfast and Justina is shrewish. Theodosius, a generally good man, a good ruler, eventually _chooses_ evil and must earn redemption through confession and penitence, again conscious choices—active virtue—that are followed by the deeds that reinforce his intent. Ambrose prays for Theodosius:

_Clement Jesus, look down in mercy on Augustus, soiled by a recent brand of disgrace [traditionally, _hubris_ is marked by shame for the perpetrator for his grave error], fallen by his felonious fury, not knowing how hideous his wound is, how full of blood his hands are. . . . He is making his way, as I understand, to the basilica with a proud step._ (5.1.995-98; 1004-05)
About Thessalonica and the possibility for “an immense calamity” (3.4.636), the Fury, Alecto, says of the will, “Although the free will cannot be forced, when it is attracted it will possibly be overcome by evil” (3.4.657-8), which foreshadows Theodosius’ *hamartia*—his eventual choice of evil over good that must then be remedied. As noted, however, in context, even Theodosius’ will—to do good or evil—is not efficacious enough in a Catholic model: he must submit to Ambrose, his spiritual leader, and await God’s grace while actively striving for justification through his penitent actions. The temporal and spiritual must be balanced. Shell discusses the explicit core message of *Ambrosia*: “Heresy leads to internecine conflict and evil action, and princes, to rule wisely, must be accountable to the Church in a way that only Catholic monarchs can claim to be” (108). Theodosius learns this lesson the hard way but is rewarded in the end.

Ambrose’s logic of sparing many for a guilty few is a kind of inversion of the idea about killing one to save many, which runs parallel to the idea of tyrannicide—a contentious topic in Elizabethan England and part of the infamous “Bloody Question” that Catholics encountered. When Elizabeth I was excommunicated by the Papal Bull *Regnans in Excelsis* under Pope Pius V in 1570, the recusant community in England faced the crisis of what to do in the case of an invasion. The Bull demanded that they support the Catholic cause (of course the Spanish Armada of 1588 famously failed), but to do so was yet another mark of treason. Most English recusants accepted Elizabeth as their *temporal* head, unequivocally, and many were very loyal and “patriotic” in that respect, but rejected her as their spiritual head. This conflict is the result of the
problematic confusion of Church and State begun under Henry VIII and his Oath of Supremacy and every subsequent Act that strengthened the monarch’s spiritual grip over all English subjects. Nevertheless, tyrannicide was an ongoing concern for the English state and its subjects.

Campion, both before joining the English Mission (which he did reluctantly), and after, had:

asked twice, once in 1573 and again in 1580, for a mitigation of the obligations imposed on Catholics by the Papal bull, Regnans in Excelsis. At his trial, Campion expresses strong doubts as to the legitimacy of the Papal bull, and carefully distinguishes between the pope’s authority in spiritual and temporal matters. (Kilroy, “Edmundus Campianus Oxoniensis” 4)

Alice Hogge in God’s Secret Agents writes: “The Bloody Question was the government’s attempt to impose from the outside, by means of a single interrogatory, a forced separation of the secular from the spiritual” (234). That is, in the event of an invasion, whose side are you on: the Queen’s or the Pope’s? “Unfortunately for English Catholics the Bloody Question was unanswerable” (234). Any hints of tyrannicide in the play might well be wrestling with this quandary, especially as concerns Justina and her anxieties, “For me one grief follows another” (2.1.273), as she worries especially about invasion. Fear of foreign invasion would have provided another topical marker for Campion’s audience if Justina is viewed as a reference to Elizabeth.

Before the massacre, Theodosius is faced with Maximus’ tyranny and says:

I am sparing of blood. For I do not want to buy the laurel-wreath of a triumph with the slaughter of so many thousands. . . . Yet the one head of the tyrant shall
ransom the heads of a very large number. Should they hand over the traitor Maximus, they would be safe. (3.2.568-72)\textsuperscript{112}

Especially interesting for Jesuits, who preferred obedience and order to anything else, “the killing of a superior and a public person by an inferior and private person . . . was inherently unjustifiable” (Höpfl 315). Machiavellian ideas, however, would have made the ends justify the means in this respect. Höpfl reminds readers that “in all except the most outrageous cases, [the Jesuit’s] presumption was in favor of obedience to rulers: \textit{in dubio praesumendum est pro Superiore, et obediendum illi est}” (314). In the case of Theodosius, however, he is not just “an inferior and private person” but an emperor, which did make a difference.\textsuperscript{113} Höpfl states that tyrannicide had “to be capable of being re-categorised in some other way by careful distinctions” such as when “a legitimate ruler behav[ed] tyrannically” (315-16). This could be seen to apply to Elizabeth I, and Campion may have had her in mind given her treatment of the recusant community in England. Additionally, many believed her to be \textit{illegitimate} and the Papal Bull only complicated matters further for English recusants.\textsuperscript{114} While Campion’s play only touches on this heated issue, it provides another topical marker that a contemporary audience could have recognized with some immediacy.

More important than tyrannicide is how a legitimate temporal ruler like Theodosius, when he himself becomes tyrannical, is encouraged to obey his spiritual superior in order to redeem himself and, ultimately, save his soul. To that end, in relation to the two choices, as noted above, Theodosius is warned further by Ambrose: “You
cannot avoid both. Be sensible and choose the lesser evil” (2.1.779-80). At first, Theodosius chooses rightly, but goaded by Ruffinus, Critolus, and Dion, he changes his mind saying, “The city shall be given up to the sword!” (4.2.822) so that “[s]even thousand men [shall] expiate this atrocious crime” (4.2.824). Clearly, Theodosius’ will is “overcome by evil” as had been foreshadowed by the bad spirit Alecto (3.4.657-8).

Rather than suffer physical death for his imperial sins of wrath, vengeance, and pride (Oedipus’ hamartia), he is denied Eucharistic grace, and thus exposed to the prospect of eternal spiritual death; however, Theodosius is given the opportunity for mercy and forgiveness. Ambrose orders penance and repentance; a contrite Theodosius complies by choosing obedience, and all eventually is set to rights.

All of these doctrinal issues are very Catholic in terms of the seven sacraments (Baptism, Communion, Reconciliation, Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders, Anointing of the Sick), and the Protestants officially had rejected all but two: Baptism and Communion. Even these, however, were debated with vigor. Beauregard explores all seven sacraments in his study and shows the specific doctrinal differences that divided Catholics and Protestants. Bound-up in Reconciliation are penance, repentance, contrition and forgiveness, and the problem for Protestants was the link to “works” by which the penitent made an oral confession, whether public or private—Theodosius will do both—but then confession must be followed by specific acts of contrition to do penance and demonstrate repentance. In the play, Theodosius is forbidden even to enter the church and may not “touch the bread of life” (5.1.1020) until he has “washed away [his] guilt by
penance and repentance” (5.1.1025-27). As a “blood-stained prince” (5.1.1012), he must atone for his sins.

The Council of Trent had addressed the sacrament of confession to emphasize its importance in response to the Protestant rejection of it. Citing Tanner’s *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Scott Pilarz writes:

After condemning ‘the vain confidence of heretics,’ Council members unambiguously restated the need for sacramental confession: ‘Those who fall away by sin from the grace of justification which they had received [at baptism], can again be justified when at God’s prompting they have made the effort through the sacraments of penance to recover, by the merit of Christ, the grace which was lost. (246)

Note again, “God’s prompting,” and the “effort” through both word and deed on the part of the penitent, through the efficacy of Christ’s meritorious grace. As in the play, there is cooperation on the part of the sinner who may access grace through active virtue. The same Decree also emphasized “works,” asserting them effectually “wrought in God,” which, tellingly, include the very duties imposed on Theodosius: “labors, watchings, alms, deeds, prayers and offerings, . . . fastings and chastity” (Tanner 676). Those who perform such works can “expect and hope for an eternal reward from God through his mercy and the merits of Christ, if by acting rightly and keeping the divine commandments they persevere to the end (680)” (qtd. in Pilarz 247). Moreover, as concerns free will, its exercise “under the influence of grace and through sacramental confession, can lead to justification” (247). I have already cited, above, the Canons concerning free will. As presented in Canon 4 (Ch. 10), the idea of the will being “moved
and roused by God”—“God’s prompting,” cited above—and “God’s summons and inspiration” (Schroeder 43) are depicted in Augustine’s yearnings, noted in relation to his conversion. The Canon also underscores the choice of the individual who has been roused, that he must act on those feelings, must choose them. Theodosius actively chooses to obey, and he is depicted as contrite and “respect[ful] of all bishops” while “his loyal soul bears the yoke [of penance] without complaint” (5.1.1045, 1042-43).

Furthermore, just as we see with Theodosius’ reaction, the Council further defined the sacrament of contrition in terms of how it affects the penitent, through “a sorrow of mind and a detestation for sin committed with the purpose of not sinning in the future” (Schroeder 91). Ambrose’s imposition of the thirty-day reprieve on death sentences is a further safeguard for Theodosius to keep his hubristic wrath in check that he might avoid the same kind of sin in the future (5.4.1185-88).

As a demonstration of Theodosius’ response to Ambrose’s injunctions, the Emperor says:

It is quite right that I must bear this misery; it is quite right that the shame of such great contumely has been brought upon me.⁠¹¹⁵ O stony hardness, accursed sword, lamentable fall that brings this disgrace upon me! How much better it would have been to restrain the savage and wild impulse of hasty anger! With what face shall I look up at Heaven? Can I expect a mild divine judgement on my misdeeds, I, who simply destroyed innocent people in revenge? Heaven and earth, sigh together with me and bemoan my fate. Does the chance slip through my fingers to expiate this crime? (5.1.1027-36)

While Elizabeth I did not massacre seven thousand, the numbers of those who died because of her policies is steep and for the recusant community, of which Campion was a
part, awareness that Elizabeth’s anti-Catholic rule resulted in the execution of so many innocents was all too palpable.

By way of example, although exact numbers are impossible to determine, especially as so many died in prison, Eamon Duffy offers these figures for priests alone: “Of the 471 seminary priests known to have been active in England in Elizabeth’s reign, at least 294, 62 per cent, were imprisoned at some time or another; 116 were executed, 17 died in gaol, and 91 were banished” (*ODNB* on William, Cardinal Allen). We do know, however, that as a result of the Northern Rebellion of 1569, 600-700 people were executed and an unknown number fled into exile. Making exact numbers even more difficult to determine, an uncountable number of subjects died in prison as a result of torture, illness, or disease. Just as some later see Elizabeth reflected in Lady Macbeth trying to wash the blood of innocents from her hands, so Theodosius’ bloody hands, mentioned several times in *Ambrosia*, may have aided the audience in identifying Elizabeth I with the Emperor.

Additionally, both rulers were excommunicated. Many must have wished that Elizabeth, like Theodosius, could make a similar conciliatory speech. Scholars such as John Guy have noted the persecution that occurred in order to implement laws: “The dark side of Elizabethan enforcement was, of course, that torture was used [and] the majority of the victims were Catholic conspirators, Jesuit priests, and recusants” (*Tudor England* 326). As with the seven thousand massacred by Theodosius, too many innocents died at the hands of the Elizabethan State under its harsh, anti-Catholic laws and policies. As
Marotti has argued, “English nationalism rests on a foundation of anti-Catholicism” (*Religious Ideology* 1).

In line with the Decrees, among Theodosius’ acts of penance is giving money to the poor. As he distributes the money, the Almoner says, “Out of a heavy bag I rain money! Let needy people come here, let them lighten the emperor’s purse! He buys off his sins with tears, hunger and thirst! Helavishes all his money and asks for forgiveness” (5.2.1065-67). Ambrose comments on how Theodosius’ soul is already affected, “his loyal soul bears the yoke without compliant” (5.2.1042-43). Among the clergy with whom he consults Ambrose says:

> My dear Fathers, it would be necessary to be more lenient if the uncommon virtuousness of this man and his susceptible manly disposition could not digest my exhortations and if he did not know that we love him. We give solid food to the stomach that can take it. Besides, what he did was undoubtedly dreadful, and he would not in the least recover his health with a mild medicine. (5.1.1053-57)\textsuperscript{117}

Ambrose determines that Theodosius must comply with canon law (5.2.1150), telling him to “imitate David in his contrition” (5.4.1175-76), and to make public confession (5.4.1181). Ambrose also orders, as noted above, that in the future, to curb Theodosius’ potentially dangerous wrath, anyone who is sentenced to death “shall be granted a reprieve for thirty days, so that you yourself, in case you have erred, may arouse your soul to fair resolutions and contain your anger during that time” (5.4.1185-88). Theodosius accepts all and acknowledges that Ambrose has “authority over [him]” (5.4.1195), thus averting spiritual death.
Campion’s tragedy presents a nuanced concept of *proairesis* and punishment of what we witness in the Classical model, colored as it is not just by Christian tenets, but specifically by Catholic theology, and, ultimately, *Ambrosia* offers an important model for the wayward monarch who has chosen to disregard the Church and its teachings. Campion shows how balance is maintained when the temporal ruler freely chooses to submit to the spiritual leader, thus transforming tragedy to comedy, especially as heightened by a Catholic representation and interpretation in an example of artistic *Divine Comedy*. Theodosius confirms all this saying, “How good it is to obey! . . . Let us enter the church and offer our souls and ourselves as a sacrifice to the highest Sovereign” (5.10.1405, 1406-07).

As concerns the idea of giving “solid food” as a remedy against evil and as a means to good health, we readily understand that Ambrose means *spiritual* health, via the figurative use of that concept. This brings me to the final but important exploration of the title, *Ambrosia*. Though it certainly refers to Saint Ambrose, the eponymous character who provides the connective thread among the three otherwise unrelated plots, “ambrosia” also plays on the idea of “food for gods.” It would not be unlike Campion—the scholar and brilliant rhetorician—to employ multiple meanings and a kind of divine inversion to adapt the pagan to the Christian in the true exegetical Augustinian and Renaissance traditions. We might easily make the leap from the pagan “food for gods” to the Catholic Eucharistic—and forbidden in England—“God as Food.” Furthermore, as the feminine Latin, *ambrosia* is derived etymologically from the Greek “pertaining to the
immortals” (OED), which further strengthens the possible link to the Eucharist as embodied in the Last Supper and spiritual immortality. “Ambrosia” also refers to a healing herb (MED, OED). Significantly, Theodosius’ punishment after the massacre at Thessalonica is denial of the Lord’s Supper through excommunication. After his penance, he is forgiven and receives the healing grace of the Sacrament of Communion, administered by Ambrose, thus bringing the image full circle with consumption of the Eucharistic Host: God as Food, Who saves.

The word “ambrosia” also incorporates a numerological message in its eight letters. Just as we saw with Mary’s Latin name “Maria” being numerologically significant with its five letters and their link to Christ as Savior, Ambrose’s Latin name, “Ambrosia,” is numerologically significant with its eight letters and their link to salvation. In Catholic numerology eight represents Resurrection. Baptismal fonts were often octagonal in shape alluding to the fact that through Baptism one is saved by Christ and original sin is forgiven. Christ represents the New Creation on the eighth day.

Important to understanding the soteriological significance of eight, there were seven instruments of Christ’s passion, but His resurrection and triumph over death, represented by the number eight, effectively undermine their destructive power because eight is greater than seven. Kilroy notes:

The seven instruments of the Passion, such a distinctive feature of the left side of the sitter [in the Tresham Emblem], are found eight times round the frieze of Lyveden New Bield . . . eight symbolizing the Resurrection, which now transforms the Passion (“Emblem” 160)
This very symbolic word, *Ambrosia*, and its transformative powers finds even greater numerological force and meaning for Catholics in its eight letters, representing Christ’s saving grace, especially as found in the concept of “God as Food.”

What I would like to suggest further, however, is the way that the play itself provides “solid food” for the spiritual health of the audience. This also fits with the Jesuit ideas about education, and we can easily see in light of the old adages, “You are what you eat” and “food for thought,” how we can apply this figuratively to the consumption of material that edifies the soul of the consumer. Thus, the play provides spiritual manna to the audience, especially if we consider that art, for Catholics, is thought to be divinely inspired and its highest purpose should be to glorify the Creator. Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, in *The Mind’s Ascent to God*, had said of art, “[W]hat men make would not happen without God’s cooperation,” and, “Whatever genius has flowed down to your nature comes from this fountain [God]. If you admire human genius, you should admire God more” (136). For Catholics, as voiced by the Jesuit Martyr Robert Southwell in 1595, “God, who delivering many parts of scripture in verse, and by his Apostle willing us to exercise our devotion in Himnes and Spiritual Sonnets, warranteth the Arte to be good, and the use allowable” (“The Author to His Loving Cousin” para. 1). With all of its Catholic markers, the text of *Ambrosia* is extremely didactic, but as art, it is also affective in significant ways that the same material, were it presented in a treatise or a lecture would not be. This idea would certainly fit the Jesuit motto of “helping souls,” for which John Gerard had praised Southwell, who, like Campion, “excel[ed] in the art of
helping and gaining souls” (*The Condition of Catholics Under James I*, xxv). We also should remember that art and its purpose or role were additional fiercely debated topics among Catholics and Protestants and the Dissolution of the Monasteries began the pointed and sustained destruction and rejection of Holy art in England that Protestants saw as “idolatrous.” While art would continue to flourish on the Continent, especially in Catholic countries, it languished in England, leaving many hungry for its beauty and the religious messages and solace it might have provided, as well as its link to their culture’s past.

About the play’s title and its loaded Catholic meaning, Shell only comments in passing: “The pun transmuting St Ambrose’s name into the food of the gods must have suggested itself to contemporary panegyrist of Campion’s rhetorical skill, even before his execution gave it a new and poignant meaning” (113). She cites Simpson here, but says he does not give “any specific reference” (N. 27). Oddly, Simpson never mentions the connection and comments on others whom he says noted “the nectar and ambrosia that distilled from [Campion’s mouth]” (90). I find the title to be much more significant than just a mere pun; furthermore, I think it was intentional in an almost brazen way—the Eucharist is central to the faith, after all, just as it is central to this very Catholic play. Moreover, Ambrose’s discussion of manna in his *On The Mysteries* quoted at the beginning of this chapter makes the connection to the Eucharist even more pointed. *Performatively*, the play functions as ambrosia. It is the prefect artistic image of *Eros* and *Agape* reconciled, especially as spiritual nourishment. I believe that Campion intended it
to serve as a model for his contemporary artists, especially in England, and as eventual nourishment for the English recusants, who were viewed as undergoing spiritual starvation as they suffered under the severity of the persecution of sustained anti-Catholic laws and policies. *Ambrosia* is Art as Manna.
Chapter Three

Robert Southwell, Living the Emblem: “I Liue to Dye – I Dye to Liue”

In the previous chapter we examined all the Catholic elements in *Ambrosia* that make it a specifically Catholic Reformation text. Campion had been working, teaching, and writing on the Continent, not in England. While there was anti-Catholic sentiment in Prague when he wrote his Latin play and it was performed (and well-received), he was freer to express himself than artists in England.121 The late Anne R. Sweeney in her recent study of Southwell (1561–1595), *Robert Southwell—Snow in Arcadia*, explores the necessity of coded writing when any discussion of particular religious elements had been made illegal.122 Punishments for violating the law ranged from fines to execution.123 About Campion, Sweeney notes, “[His] vigorous anti-Protestant labours in Prague were interrupted (and ultimately terminated) by the requirement to go to England,” where he obviously faced the same restrictions on writing as his fellow English subjects (6). Under stifling conditions that continued to worsen, Act by Act, Sweeney notes:

The specificity and severity of the Acts and penalties increased towards and first Campion’s, and then Southwell’s mission, beginning with “An Act to retain the Queen’s Majesty’s subjects in their due obedience” (1581); and “An Act for provision to be made for the surety of the Queen’s most royal person” (1585). (431, 78, 204-05)

These were followed in 1585 by “An act against Jesuits, seminary priests and such other like disobedient persons,” and in 1593 by “An Act against popish recusants.”124 This was
the hostile environment in which Campion, Southwell, and their recusant flock found themselves. Sweeney refers to all those who challenged the new laws as “traitorous, Tyburn-fodder” (205).

Robert Southwell’s art, which participates in the Jesuit tradition of “performing deeds” that are meant to “help souls,” achieves these deliberative goals by employing and advancing Renaissance conventions such as devices—especially emblems—sacred numerology, and various rhetorical tools. Such devices have elements of encoding that are not always apparent at first glance. Two recent studies that prove useful to our understanding of Southwell and the Jesuit Mission are those of Sweeney, just noted, and Scott Pilarz, S. J. (Robert Southwell and the Mission of Literature, 1561-1595: Writing Reconciliation). It is not my intention to try to challenge the careful work of these two scholars, which I accept as valid, insightful, and illuminating readings that are crucial to our understanding of Southwell as both priest and poet; rather, this chapter builds on these readings and their attendant theories to explore further how Eros and Agape are reconciled in art as a means to lead souls heavenward as Southwell’s work and life provide evidence. In fact, Southwell, the priest-poet, offers a living emblem of this endeavor. An examination of the emblematic “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” will serve as the basis for this study and is made evident by tracing similar elements in the poet’s prose and verse.

A discussion of emblems is necessary to consider their revival and development during the Renaissance. As Alastair Fowler argues in Time’s Purpled Masquers: Stars
and the Afterlife in Renaissance English Literature, the Renaissance “was unmistakably a religious awakening,” and central to this was humanist learning that often expressed itself “through religious imagery, if not to cover real religious hopes” (4-5). This is applicable to much of the sacred imagery that continued to pervade art during the period and so is particularly useful to a discussion of emblems and other devices through which these images are communicated. Daniel Russell, in his recent article for Emblematica, “Emblems, Frames, and Other Marginalia: Defining the Emblematic,” cites the influences of Cicero, Pliny, Quintilian and others who refer to the emblem as detachable rhetorical ornamentation (4). Russell discusses “figures of rhetoric that enhance the rhetorical brilliance of a text without actually altering the primary sense of the host composition” giving Erasmus’ De Copia as a contemporary example of the exploration of this function (Russell 4), a figure Fowler cites as highly influential as well (Fowler 6).

The meaning and uses of the emblem evolved, and Russell notes how “the word took on other meanings that involve framing and foregrounding: reliquary, shrine, niche, or setting. These meanings seem to attach to emblems in different ways” (5). Discussing the idea of “framing,” Russell explains:

Emblems were often enclosed in elaborate frames to remind us perhaps that the emblem itself framed, or provided a new setting for, a detached fragment of traditional lore within a short, interpolative text that channeled it to new purposes while recalling its original context by its status and familiarity for the surrounding culture. (6)

This will be apparent with Southwell’s work. Fowler notes that Emblems might include “the body of proverbial wisdom, biblical lore and especially the Psalms, and the work of
a particularly well-known ancient author such as Ovid or Virgil” (11). Fowler notes that pervasiveness as well:

For recent scholarship has revealed that several of the principal sonnet and lyric sequences depended structurally on the liturgy of the Church. They incorporated *frames* of the Psalter and the calendar; following these not only in sequence and arrangement, but even in *numerical* proportions. Petrarch’s and Spenser’s sequences are both arranged calendrically; while many of Shakespeare’s sonnets correspond to matching Psalms, as Kenneth Muir and others have shown. (3; emphasis added)\(^\text{126}\)

The known, established meanings of these other “texts,” to which the emblems make reference, help to shape the meanings of what they frame. Already, the Jesuits had made extensive use of emblems on the Continent and would continue to do so; thus, the concern with devices that employed myriad elements to generate meaning based on previously known texts was already part of their tradition.\(^\text{127}\)

Russell notes the extrinsic and intrinsic nature of emblems—simultaneously inside and outside the various texts and contexts (7). Important to this study, emblems were not just pictorial and text was not only crucial in establish meaning, but became increasingly dominant: “Quotations began to take on an independent existence, separate from the text in which they are embedded, and available as such for use in other contexts” (31). In Southwell’s verse, we see the way that words, in fact, become central to the very meaning of the emblem, via the images they employ and the reactions those images evoke as he attempts to appeal to the soul to move it to a higher state. The emblematic presentation of Southwell’s words serve “to attract attention to the message
being presented and bring it into sharper focus” (Russell 35), the larger and ultimate context being soteriological.

We can also cite George Puttenham again and his _Art of English Poesy_ (1589), which, in part, explores shaped poems. In “Of Proportion in Figure,” Puttenham discusses “ocular representation” of meter in geometrical figures (179-80), much as we see later in George Herbert’s famous emblematic poems “Easter Wings” and “The Altar.” Terms used by Puttenham for shaped poetry or pattern poems include spindle, fuzee, and triquet, which, according to Whigham and Rebhorn, came from heraldic terminology (N. 5, 180). So even here we see the overlap of word and image in the “text” to generate meaning. The editors explain that “device” was “a combination of text and image composed of a motto and a visual representation presenting its subject. Some devices include explanatory text or epigrams” (N. 55, 191). This will help us understand Southwell’s use of motto and emblem as well as shaped verse (fairly ubiquitous at the time), the latter as when Sweeney explores columns in Southwell’s poetry. Puttenham’s study provides one example of the contemporary discussions of poetics and he refers to the column shape as a “pillar” or “spire” noting that one typically reads them from the bottom up (185-85). Puttenham’s poetics describe how important appeals to the eye are as a rhetorical counterpart to verbal rhetoric during the age, a technique particularly important to understanding the texts of the Catholic Reformation and especially Southwell’s. His Jesuit training positioned him to do something unique with the standard
Renaissance idea of patterned verse, which demonstrates a kind of incarnation where religious elements of Catholic belief are present in the art.

Building on the initial enquiries made by Davidson and Shell, the work of Gerard Kilroy has informed my own research, especially on Sir Thomas Tresham (1543-1605) and Sir John Harington (1561-1612), prominent recusants who were closely connected with the Jesuits, whose art relied on the use of sacred numerology, emblems, and sacred shapes, such as the cross—in buildings such as Tresham’s Triangular Lodge and Lyveden New Bield and his personal emblem—and Renaissance rhetorical commonplaces including puns, omissions, and ambiguity found in Harington’s satiric epigrams and other writings. These men’s artistic representations of their faith through coded methods can help us understand the way censorship and persecution were subverted creatively and—as with Campion’s Ambrosia as an example of a Jesuit, Catholic Reformation text—can help us locate similar subversive techniques in other artists, as explored in this chapter with Southwell’s poetry and later with Byrd. While Renaissance devices were artistically ubiquitous, the specifics of their construction and use within the recusant community are unique and once again locate the spiritual in the temporal.

Because of the dangers of censorship, Sweeney also notes the substantial difference between print and manuscript writing, much as Kilroy’s work has demonstrated as regards Tresham and Harington in relation to Campion and the recusant community in England as they sought to “transcribe his memory” and the Old Faith for themselves and posterity. For example, after Campion’s execution, when Stephen
Vallenger printed Henry Walpole’s memorial poem about Campion, “Why Doe I Use My Paper, Ynke and Pen?,” he was “imprisoned, pilloried and, after having his ears cut off, died in prison” (Kilroy, Memory 60). Print was highly regulated and censored—even the paper mills were controlled by the crown—but work in manuscript was not, especially in verse, even though it could still be confiscated and, if its author were known, that person could face serious consequences, as could the person in whose possession the manuscript was found, hence the need for caution at all times. Affirming this, Sweeney notes:

"[T]hough a printing press allowed access to a wider audience than that afforded by a spoken sermon, print was controlled by law, while poetry was not; and manuscript disseminated could allow confidences to be exchanged amongst sympathisers alert to subtextual meanings.(98)

“Subtextual,” on one level, refers to dissident messages and, here, Sweeney means verse in manuscript and we might note the long tradition of this kind of sharing whereby the gentleman poet wrote for what was often a very intimate, educated coterie. Moreover, “[p]rinting was so heavily controlled for both Catholics and puritan nonconformists that the choice of ‘ynke and pen’ serves to represent the protest of an oppressed community against a régime which denied expression to the deepest beliefs of its subjects” (Kilroy, Memory 59). This choice of manuscript over print also provided a kind of guarantee of authenticity, because of the absence of the meddling hand of the state (60). In light of this, many writers chose to use both as the situation dictated. This was true of Southwell, who used manuscript primarily for his verse.
Southwell wrote both prose and verse, including his famous epistles. The *Epistle unto His Father* (c. 1586), exhorted Richard Southwell’s return to Catholicism. An *Epistle of Comfort*, his longest prose work subtitled *to the reverend priestes, and to the honorable, worshipful, and other of the laye sort, restrayned in durance for the Catholicke faith* (1587-88) was mainly written for the condemned recusant Philip Howard (now a Catholic Saint), Earl of Arundel, during his long imprisonment (for “treason” against the Queen, his second cousin) in the Tower (1585-1595). A *Short Rule of Good Life* (1596) was written for Anne Howard, the Countess of Arundel, Howard’s wife, who had housed Southwell. An *Humble Supplication to Her Majesty* (1591), appealing to the Queen for mercy on behalf of English Catholics, was likely never read by her (at least not while Southwell was still alive). The letter that became known as *The Triumphs Over Death* (1595) was also addressed to Philip Howard to comfort him on the death of his half-sister, Lady Margaret Sackville, in 1591. The prose poem *Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares*, was so popular that it saw six printings by 1609 (some with Southwell’s direct involvement). Nancy Pollard Brown observes that this popular poem “led the Catholic who felt abandoned and desolate through the agony endured by Mary Magdalen in the hours following the crucifixion” (“Southwell, Robert” *ODNB*).

Southwell’s other poems, including *Saint Peters Complaynte* and over 50 lyrics, were collected by Henry Garnet when Southwell was arrested. They were later published by John Wolf after Southwell’s death in 1595. There are other letters of a more personal nature, not meant for public consumption or edification, and Pilarz especially makes
reference to many of these in his study. A nineteenth-century memorial printing of Southwell’s complete works was compiled and edited by the Rev. Alexander Grosart in 1872. Grosart’s commentary and notes are also useful to this study. Quite different from Campion, whom Kilroy calls “effectively . . . suppressed” (144), we have virtually all of Southwell’s prose and verse thanks to the care of Fr. Garnet and others. This care provides evidence of the continuing manuscript circulation of texts among certain circles, namely the Jesuits and recusants. Again, the corpus of Southwell’s work became as sacred as bodily relics and helped preserve his memory and mission.

For his own choices in the matter of manuscript versus print, Southwell suited the form to his audience: “Southwell, given the options of print or manuscript, wrote in various ways to fit messages to particular minds in particular circumstances” (Sweeney 98), such as a general recusant audience versus a more specialized, courtier one. This affected Southwell’s work, the “curious shifts in texture and quality” (98) that may mystify modern readers, which occurred because he was keen to design each text for its unique readership. All of this was modified further due to the different roles Southwell was thought to have played: “polemicist and reprover, or attractor and reconciler, or both at once” (98). Moreover, due to these pressures, especially for printed texts, which were sometimes required, the need for a press became important to the Jesuit mission, and secret presses were established in England, such as the one at Stoner Park on which Campion’s Rationes Decem (Ten Reasons) was printed.132 Similarly, Southwell’s Epistle
of Comfort was printed at Anne Howard’s Spitafields estate on the secret press she established there.

Nevertheless, it is clear that because of restrictions on printed material, manuscript was often the preferred method of writing and sharing work in the recusant world. Extant manuscripts became, in fact, precious “relics” of those destroyed by the State in an attempt to silence them, literal corporal relics having been made illegal so that the “corpus” of a writer’s work became a new kind of relic. If authors’ names appeared on the manuscripts, they were often rubbed out as were certain inflammatory words or phrases. Taking advantage of the open hand of rhetoric, Harington even left blank spaces in his epigrams so that the reader would be invited to insert the appropriate missing word (Kilroy, Memory 104, 107). Harington’s “ydle Epigrams” demonstrate “a wholly innovative pattern of unfinished poems which conceal meaning so as to defer conclusion till the reader himself has selected the meaning” (Kilroy, Memory 6). As a further example, absence is also used by Tresham in his emblem, when St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians is quoted in Latin and only part of the famous quotation is included, “When I was a child I thought like a child” (1 Cor. 13:11). Kilroy notes that the truncated part that remains unsaid “is just as important: ‘When I became a man, I emptied out the things that belonged to childhood’” (“Emblem” 161). This quotation borders, or frames, the top edge of the emblem, and is 34 letters in Latin, which Kilroy cites Tresham himself having noted as being the important “year wherein Christ suffered and lived” (161). The same occurs repeatedly with the inscriptions on the Triangular Lodge; the emphasis
is often in the continuing lines, which are often “physically” absent. The reader supplies them and thus participates in generating meaning. While these techniques are in keeping with the “open hand” of rhetoric more generally, they became increasingly useful for subversive messages, wherein what is “not” said is just as crucial as what is—and, thus, far less dangerous to the author, potentially seditious matter being materially absent.

In Southwell, we see in action the rhetorician, who is first a Jesuit priest, keen to suit the word—as part of a performing deed—to the rhetorical moment. Like Campion, Sweeney notes, “[A]s a Jesuit [Southwell] was a trained rhetorician with a didactic brief: the creation of poetry for its own sake was not his end; helping souls was” (8), and in this, the Jesuit aim was to attract souls, that the individual might actively choose and pursue salvation, which is far different from coercion. As Sweeney observes, the notion of a “performing deed” is intrinsic to all of Southwell’s work, indeed central “to both his ministry and his poetics. It is the moment where his poetics and his ministry meet, the pivot around which turns his entire mission” (20). It is also part of his plan for reconciliation, as Pilarz explores, by which Southwell hoped to see his family return to Catholicism, especially his father. Southwell’s own eventual, literal martyrdom becomes the enactment of that ultimate “performing deed,” as with the last stanza of “Christ’s Bloody Sweate.”

To appreciate how Southwell’s art functioned within the mission to reconcile Eros and Agape, we need to remind ourselves of how central rhetorical education and disputatio were to the age and to the Jesuit mission in particular. Campion’s aim in
Rationes Decem paralleled that and appears in Harrington’s work that strives for the “continuation of [Campion’s] argument for ‘peaceble parley’ to replace persecution” (Memory 44-45). Rhetoric was meant to teach, delight, and move the intended audience, which again implies a particular kind of engagement and active choice. One should be “moved” to a specific action having first been engaged and taught something. Again, this is far different from being forced to do, or not do, something. It was believed that man, as a rational creature, if given the correct information, could not but choose rightly, which, according to Aristotle’s Rhetoric, had to do with achieving happiness, especially “prosperity combined with virtue” (1.5).135 For Christians, whether Catholic or Protestant, happiness ultimately means spiritual salvation. For recusant Catholics in England, however, faith was not a matter of choice but was being dictated by the state. Denied regular worship, many understandably worried about salvation. Additionally, censorship and the continued suppression of free speech and the constant threat of persecution made open rhetorical engagement difficult for anyone who wished to discuss forbidden matters. As Kilroy writes:

Never before have books or writing or letters been as dangerous as they were 1581 and 1606: proclamation after proclamation forbade seditious writings; books were seized in midnight raids, and men were questioned for copying poems. . . . Writing went underground, between the lines, into the paper and into code; far from suppressing language, the state’s actions seemed merely to put value on writing. . . . Of more significance, for the literary and cultural historian of early modern England, it is the double act of writing a public visible text, and encoding a language hidden in the paper itself, or in ‘devices’ [including emblems]. (Memory 1)
These are the constraints the Jesuits faced while trying to minister to England’s recusant community and which made, more often than not, indirection and ambiguity important and necessary devices as Janet Clare’s work has explored (cited above). These were often effected through the use of emblems, numerology, anagrams, acrostics, puns, and various other linguistic and rhetorical puzzles. Moreover, as previously discussed, we know the educated elite delighted in both using and understanding these ambiguous devices even when they were not necessitated by censorship and potential persecution.¹³⁶

A recently-discovered emblem of Sir Thomas Tresham depicts important elements of Catholic theology including numerology. The emblem is by the engraver Remigius Hogenberg (1536-88) whose commissions included a portrait of the Archbishop of Canterbury (1573). Hogenberg also worked with cartographers making engravings for Christopher Saxton’s Atlas of England and Wales (1579). During one stint in prison (for at least fifteen years), “Tresham work[ed] out an elaborate numerological and geometric code that could not be cracked by the authorities. The detailed intricacy of this would hardly be believed if it were not for the autograph evidence of the manuscript” (Kilroy, “Emblem” 154). Given that we know Tresham was a leading member of an elite recusant community, its “unofficial spokesman of the Catholics who wished to be loyal to the crown and yet resist its religious reforms” (152), his interest in, and development of, coded methods of communicating are of particular relevance in comprehending and better appreciating how those whom the State tried to silence responded to censorship and persecution. Just as Campion provides one way to understand how Catholic
Reformation texts function in *Ambrosia*, Tresham’s emblem provides another. Both can help us read Southwell’s poetry as well. Kilroy calls Tresham’s emblem “the dynamism of [a] psychomachia between the worldly and the spiritual self” as he notes its depiction of the transition from temporal to spiritual, all presented in code through traditional Catholic iconography, geometry, and numerology (155). All of this was an attempt to express the outlawed Catholic religious beliefs just as it was also a very humanistic plea for toleration and freedom of conscience as artists tried to portray and marry the temporal and the spiritual through their conciliatory craft. Indeed, the very act of doing this was a performative means to witness one’s faith as an important deed and part of the “martyrdom” of the everyday, the term literally meaning “to witness.” For the Jesuits, as Sweeny’s study explores, “[t]he martyrdom expected of the Jesuit was not necessarily to be literal” (41), though for many it was. Southwell’s execution at Tyburn is one example of the literal.

The idea that in temporal death the faithful find spiritual life, happiness for eternity—in reconciling Eros and Agape—is central to Christianity in general, but it specifically colors the Catholic-Reformation mentality, especially that of the Jesuits, and, more particularly, those who served in the Mission to England, perhaps because they faced the prospect of literal martyrdom in a most immediate way for their acts of “treason.” As noted, a 1585 Act of Parliament (cited above) ruled that anyone ordained abroad was barred from returning to England, thus effectively making Priests traitors to the realm. Rather than heresy—the offense of religious non-conformity, which had
effectively been made treason—the issue became political. For someone like Robert Southwell, Campion’s fellow English Jesuit martyred at Tyburn on 21 February 1595, we might actually say that he lived the motto: “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue,” as did so many others for their faith. His work effects this as well. On the title page of Southwell’s almost immediately, posthumously-published Saint Peters Complaynte, we find the following:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
I liue & I dy \\
to & to \\
dy & liue \\
\end{array}
\]

This text is very much an emblem—“framed” in a book, which is perched on a winged skull that is wearing a laurel wreath, above the earth. That image is framed further by what looks like the depiction of an actual picture frame. The image presents several layers of self-referential framing.

Before discussing the emblematic, I would like to explore the spelling “dye.” Grosart transcribes it “dy,” but the alternate spelling with the final “e” makes more sense for several reasons (3). First, to the naked eye, it actually looks like a small superscript “e” after “dy.” Next, and most tellingly, Southwell spells it with the final “e” throughout his verse. While he does use “die” as a variant, nowhere does he use just “dy,” and manuscript versions of his work, especially Saint Peters Complaynte, serve as “autograph” evidence of this preference.137 Additionally, we also see “dye” in contemporary texts, as with Gregory Martin’s commentary in the Douai-Rheims bible,
cited below (Book of Wisdom). Finally, as explored in terms of sacred numerology, use of “dye” makes the total number of letters in the motto interesting at 10, which often represents God and perfection, as we will see in greater detail below. Sweeney refers to the way Southwell’s verse often imitates “the numerically perfect Creation, the cross-action of divine grace as experienced by humanity” (251) and we see this within the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem as well.

Overall, this motto is an emblematic representation of the Christian Ideal of suffering like Christ. As Augustine noted from Saint Paul, and, as is echoed in Campion’s Ambrosia, one must “Put on Christ” and participate in His suffering, something of which Ignatius was keenly aware as well and which was important to the founding of the Jesuit order. The way in which the words are arranged chiastically on the page, as a cross, is significant. They function like a kind of palindrome or an anagram via words, again mirroring the transformative power of divine grace and the way that it is believed that Christ’s suffering and death became the triumph over sin making it possible for man to live for a spiritual eternity—if he chooses Christ. Note the way they can be read in columns from top to bottom, bottom to top and crosswise, via the chai, as well, so that any which way, the message keeps repeating. We can also read the emblem in the sense that one dies to the world and earthly things to live spiritually. This will be most obvious in Southwell’s paradoxical poems that explore this theme such as “Love’s Servile Lott,” “Life is but Losse,” “I Dye Alive,” and “Life’s Death, Love’s Life.”
For Catholics, man was and is a participant, via free will, in attaining God’s grace. As Sweeney notes, “Talking about the right thing is not doing it, and cannot attract divine grace” (20). This is the upward/downward ideal of grace: Catholic art was meant to elevate the soul and bring it closer to God as it glorified Him, as Bellarmine famously argued, whereby beauty attracts the soul to heaven and repels heresy (Sweeney 42), just as God’s grace can then rain down on the faithful who act in an attempt to access grace; the actions are reciprocal. As Sweeney notes:

Theologically, this engaged with the contemporary controversies over the access of divine grace, highlighting a perceived weakness of Calvinism: ‘performing deed’ seemed irrelevant to a ‘Saved’ soul already destined heavenward; and if a soul were denied such heavenly election from birth, what difference would a good deed make? (20)

In a title very close to this emblem, Sweeney also notes Southwell’s poem “I Dye Alive,” “which plays with the desirability of a ‘right’ death over a ‘wrong’ life, through the delicate intertwining of upward impulses—feelings of remorse, pleas for forgiveness, confessions of love—with the hoped-for downward movement of grace in response” (231). Similarly, in “Decease, Release,” Southwell’s dangerous memorial poem about Mary Queen of Scots, we find, “My speedy deth hath shortenèd longe annoy, / And losse of life an endless life assur’d” (5.3-4). These are all very Catholic reactions to man’s temporal plight and show, again, the belief in the power of the spiritual to overcome earthly woes.

Sweeney’s study also gives us additional ways to interpret the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem. In chapter 7, “The ‘performing Word’: Southwell’s sacralised
poetic,” Sweeney explores numerology in “Christ’s Bloody Sweate.” Sweeney draws attention to the poem’s form, representing four columns that show links between the vertical and horizontal elements of the poem that she likens to the “graphic magic such as the word square . . . in the ROTAS-SATOR” puzzle (252). Sweeney reveals, significantly, that this poem is more than a mere “shaped” poem:

[The] transferral of belief to object is reflected in Southwell’s implication of his sacred purpose into his writing; or of the sacred content of the church imagery into poetic metaphor; it may well have had expression too in his more complex geometrically constructed holy poetry such as “Christ’s bloody sweat”, . . . not “pattern poetry” as such, but runnels of meaning as reflections of divine-human interaction flowing up and down as well as side to side, like acrostics. This was the age that had rediscovered the Alexandrians; and the Jesuits, allowing the “New Christians”—converted Spanish Jews—to enter the Society, will not have been ignorant of the cabala. Such “magic” piety could well have been written in response to this new scientific interest in the effects of divine power on the individual. (107-08)

This provides evidence of Southwell’s use of Incarnation as a poetic metaphor. Interested readers may wish to consult the Carcanet edition of Southwell’s poems in which the shape of the poem is most easily understood as it is in the manuscript layout by which the magic square is most apparent. The poem’s detailed arrangement is similar to what we see in the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem, though “Christ’s Bloody Sweate” is far more complex than these eight words, even though they encapsulate the same core Ideal.

Sweeney notes the priest’s role in celebrating the Mass in offering up the Eucharist. She writes:
The conflation of the blood, sweat and tears Christ shed during his agony with the various liquid comestibles should not surprise, coming from a writer who believed he consumed Christ’s actual body and blood, willingly offered as food, and more importantly, who was authorized to administer such a miracle food to others. Southwell is here administering in the magic of poetic numbers the holy emanations of Christ’s Passion, just as he would if giving Holy Communion. This poem becomes the written testament to that authority and that miracle in one. Read with the blocks of related meaning separated from each other by extra spacing, we have four separate poems, defining four different substances: wheat/bread, water, oil, and wine. The last element of the fourth of the downward set, “at will”, leads us out of the mere action of the moisture and into its significance (wine here linked to blood, as if caught in the very act of transubstantiation): Christ volunteered; the sacred substances are produced “unforc’d” (l. 5). His freely offered emanations anticipate the enforced emanations of his crucifixion drawn out by the Five Wounds, “The whips, the thornes, the nailes, the speares, and the roode” (l. 6) (potent emblems in English Catholicism). (252-53)

All of this analysis is useful in understanding how to read Southwell’s verse emblematically and typologically. Moreover, the depiction of transubstantiation, as noted in Sweeney’s first parenthetical aside, becomes a kind of performative magic in the poem. Additionally, the poem itself becomes spiritual food for the reader, with Southwell, the Jesuit priest-poet as celebrant, ministering to a spiritually starving community. We might also note, significantly, the way Southwell uses “prevents”:

“Thus Christ unforc’d preventes in shedding bloode / The whippes the thornes the nailes the speare and roode” (5-6). Sweeney explains that by playing on the Latin root of the word, “praeveneri,” which she calls, “the obliging anticipation of the wishes of others” (253), Christ’s willing Gift is better understood. Significantly, Christ retains power over persecution and His offering remains one, freely given, as it is not coerced. The use of “unforc’d” is an interesting word that functions through a kind of antithesis. OED defines
it first as: “1. a. not compelled or constrained,” but also as a kind of effortlessness because it is an action that may be understood best as being “2. Not pushed beyond the natural limits; not produced by exertion or effort; easy, natural.” By freely giving Himself, Christ undermines the act of his enemies by subverting their power to take anything from Him, whereby Body and Blood are divine Gift. In mirroring this sacrifice, we find the same sentiment in the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem, where again choice, not force, is significant in seeking and attaining salvation.

Sacred numerology was a Renaissance interest having been handed down from ancients like Pythagoras and the early Church Doctors who adapted the pagan to the Christian. Saint Augustine saw in numbers divine assurance of truth in God’s “numerically perfect Creation” (Sweeney 251). Influenced by this, Southwell applies the concept of numeric puzzles to his most religious verse, “as if seeing the game of sound and number played via his poetry as something approaching a mystery in its own right, a sort of Pythagorean transubstantiation” (235). Just as the courtly poets embraced Neoplatonic ideals of creativity, Southwell, “in his imaginative inspiration, [became] an imitation of God the Maker” (235). Here, we can see “God the Maker” as simultaneously Christ, whose Passion the faithful, like Southwell, imitate in their earthly suffering, as mirrored in the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem. Thus, we should also note the significance of the number eight: there are eight words in the emblem “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue.” Eight, which is symbolic of infinity, links to spiritual salvation. As introduced in the previous chapter with Ambrosia—the eight-lettered word
representing Eucharistic spiritual food that Campion employed metaphorically and literally as a celebrant to feed his hungry audience—the sacred number eight represents for Catholics Christ’s Resurrection whereby He is the eighth day of creation and saves man, for eternity, through His passion and resurrection if man chooses Christ, a mirroring of the divine “at will!” in “Christ’s Bloody Sweate” (1.6). As seen in Tresham’s emblem, man is thought to be “saved from the snares of this world by the grace of Christ” (Kilroy, “Emblem” 156). In this simple, mirrored image: “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue,” we get the whole of faith represented in four repeated words, a perfect emblematic meditation on the meaning of faith. Moreover, as noted, there are ten letters on each side, ten being the number of divine perfection. The significance of four may be seen in the four columns of “Christ’s Bloody Sweate,” and the earthly elements of wheat/bread, water, oil, and wine. If three is a Trinitarian number of salvation, often representing the soul, four is the temporal (the earthly body with its four humors and passions and the world with its four elements and directions, etc.).\textsuperscript{145} In the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem with its four words on each side, we have a doubling of four to get a total of eight words, from ten prophetic letters, that transform the temporal to the spiritual, as with the Catholic concept of transubstantiation, reconciling Eros and Agape.\textsuperscript{146}

The “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem also evokes images of martyrdom, which is conceptually central to Southwell’s work. While not always explicit, the spirit of martyrdom pervades many of his poems through meditations on sacrifice and choosing to be Christ-like. In part, this attention to martyrdom stems from Southwell’s position as a
Jesuit expected to embrace martyrdom on a daily basis through his obedience and devotion to the Mission to “help souls.” Southwell’s own life demonstrates this through his chosen devotion to Christ. Furthermore, Southwell’s poetry shares models of martyrdom with his recusant audience. In his meditative verse, characters face situations that mirror his reader’s circumstances, such as those that portray the suffering of Peter, Joseph, and Mary Magdalen, who might be seen as undergoing martyrdom of the heart. Sometimes his verse addresses figures more immediately significant to his readers such as “Decease, Release,” Southwell’s memorial poem about Mary Queen of Scots whose “losse of life an endles life assur’d” (5.4). These poems offered hope and solace to a spiritually anxious, bereft community.

Catholic contemporary discussions of martyrdom parallel Southwell’s sensibilities. Gregory Martin’s annotated translation of the Douai-Rheims Bible gives us a clear idea of how Catholics viewed martyrdom. In The Book of Wisdom, we find the following:

The iuste condemned by the wicked, and proued by tentations are happie. And the wicked unhappie. Chastitie shal be rewarded, & adulterous generations shal not prosper. . . . But the soules of the iust are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them. They semed in the eies of the vnwise to die: and their decease was counted affliction: and that which with us in the way, is destruction: but they are in peace. And though before men they suffered torments, their hope is ful of immortalitie. (3:1-5)

Martin’s annotation to this biblical passage reads: “Temporal death of the iust, is the way to eternal life. vwhere damnation (called here the torment of death) [can] not touch them.” Then he explains why: “For albeit Martyrs seme in the eyes of the vnwise to dye, or to be
extinguished, they passe in dede into eternal, and vnspeakable glorie” (342). Martin’s gloss highlights the significance of martyrdom for the Catholic Community and many, like Southwell, ardently embraced these ideals. The poet-priest’s eventual, literal performance of martyrdom seems rather obvious, but his literary works offer another glimpse of that Christly devotion and sacrifice. Southwell’s verse explores life-through-death as a manifestation of the Jesuit motto, “Love and Live,” whereby his art, as a performing deed, is meant to “help souls” and glorify the Creator.¹⁴⁹

Sweeney makes clear that all Jesuits embraced martyrdom, which for each was meant to be their submission, through total obedience, to their faith and their superiors. Theirs was to be the martyrdom of ministry through their commitment in their role as missionaries. In serving Christ, they were to undergo a “self-martyrdom” through works in which “death” was not the “desiderata” (41). Still, knowing the likelihood of execution for Jesuit priests in Elizabethan England, labeled and hunted as they were for being “traitors,” it is difficult not to consider the literal, and Southwell would have been keenly aware of this possibility just as many of his earlier biographers have chosen to read his work as a prefiguration or rehearsal for martyrdom, some of whom see it as his personal “desiderata,” though this is debatable.¹⁵⁰ In The Construction of Martyrdom, Dillon adds to this concept of sacrifice:

Beyond the literal act of martyrdom, the martyr functions as a rhetorical device, a fecund lexicon through which the writers and image-makers from opposing doctrinal positions define their positions and mark out their difference across the religious divide. (19)
We should note that many of the contemporary Protestant texts, such as pamphlets that attack Catholicism, serve as good sources of understanding both positions, especially in cases when the Catholic side is less overt, it being forbidden.\textsuperscript{151}

Southwell’s figurative martyrdom is best understood in terms of soteriological divine love, \textit{Agape}, that is often made manifest through reconciliation. Writing is an act and, moreover, an act that one chooses, and this fits neatly with what we know to have been central to the Jesuits and the larger Catholic community. Southwell wrote to inspire reconciliation for his greater, often devout family, to Catholicism. His methods, when contrasted with many of his contemporaries’ are “tempered and moderate. Southwell labors . . . to mediate his loyalty to and love for compromising relatives and his increasingly exacting religion” (Pilarz 26). Pilarz notes the commonplace emotions that fill Southwell’s letters, but links this to the Ignatian tradition because, as in his letter to his father:

\begin{quote}
Southwell introduces an exercise he encountered as a Jesuit novice. He wants his father to consider death as the context for making a choice or election. There is something modern about what Southwell recommends, which stands in stark contrast to how others were trying to force decisions through theological, economic, political or legal threats. He does refer to the threat of damnation, but his overriding emphasis is on a well-made, autonomous, decision. (33)\textsuperscript{152}
\end{quote}

This idea of “death as the context for making a choice” is significant in terms of both free will and the way that the reality of death pervaded life when the danger of spiritual death (Martin’s “damnation,” the torment of death) \textit{after} temporal death becomes a reason to choose wisely \textit{now}.

108
To lead the faithful to choose wisely, Southwell often uses a fishing metaphor hoping to attract souls and lure them heavenward.153 Certainly we may think of Christ’s appeal in Matthew, “Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (4:19; see also, Mark 1:17), but souls being caught in a net is not quite the same as the imagery that Southwell employs. In his Epistle of Comfort, Pilarz describes how Southwell:

imagines himself ‘baiting hooks’ in order ‘to draw a soul out of the puddle of schism’ (654-55). A puddle is an unattractive image, but other authors use far more vitriol in describing faiths other than their own. Moreover, he likens his attempt to fishing, an activity traditionally associated with apostolic efforts, and angling for souls does not involve force or compulsion. (37)

Southwell’s Ignatian training, particularly the Exercises, “equipped him for reconciling theological rigor and pastoral sensitivity,” (something Sweeney’s study highlights as well) and “[t]he result is a response at once aligned with Catholic tradition and modern in its commitment to religious truth while underscoring the need for decisions to be made in freedom and integrity” (Pilarz 2). Clearly, choice is paramount.

The Epistle to His Father demonstrates Southwell’s filial love for his father, while serving the heavenly Father; yet, as an ordained Jesuit, he is also, simultaneously, instructing his own father as a priestly father—a special aspect of his interest in the Jesuit mission in England (Pilarz 30-31). He hopes to reconcile a family with a history of betrayal—a long list of prior poor choices that Southwell wishes to remedy via subsequent good choices as a means to God’s saving grace (similar to the tragedy-turned-comedy of Ambrosia). Pilarz’ chapter 1, “Reconciling Family: The Epistle to His Father,” discusses many of Southwell’s ancestors’ betrayals (see especially 8-15). It is no wonder
Southwell was preoccupied with the topic of loyalty and would have been drawn particularly to the active life of the Jesuits. The focus of betrayal in Saint Peters Complaynte deals most directly with this theme as the poet imagines himself as the living Christ’s dear apostle, the one who had both slept thrice and denied Him thrice when Christ most needed his loyalty: betrayal that was not enacted for thirty pieces of silver.

Southwell’s Peter is “Iniurious to man, to God vngratefull” (5.6) and in a reversal of the concept of the emblem “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue,” Peter says:

I fear’d with life, to die, by death to liue;
I left my guide,—now left, and leaving God.
To breath in blisse, I fear’d my breath to giue;
I fear’d for heauenly raigne an earthly rod.
These feares I fear’d, feares feeling no mishaps:
O fond! O faint! O false! O faultie lapse! (9.1-6)

This passage underscores human weakness and temporal woes that Peter tried to avoid, but in doing so, Peter fears he has forfeited spiritual rewards in heaven.154

Peter goes on to say, “How can I liue, that thus my life deni’d? / What can I hope, that lost my hope in feare? / What trust to one, that Truth it selfe defi’d? / What good in him, that did his God forsweare?” (10.1-4). Again, he chose the temporal over the spiritual and weeps for his betrayal and the potential loss of eternal salvation: “I liv’d, but so, that sauing life, I lost it” (38.2), which is another inversion of the soteriological emblem: by privileging temporal life, he risks losing the more important spiritual one.

We may also see Southwell’s shame for the family in Saint Peter’s lament: “Heire to thy father’s foyles, and borne to griewe” (30.6). Although the reference in the poem is to
Adam, we also could read the Southwells into this story with relative ease, much in the same way that many of Southwell’s recusant readers might just as easily identify with Saint Peter and his plight on a personal level. This is a community torn between an earthly leader and a spiritual one, and many were conflicted about how to cope, perhaps worrying about betraying their faith just to protect the temporal, on various levels—be it property, fortune, or human life—just as Peter betrayed Christ.

As noted above, Southwell’s poems are perhaps the best place to trace the Jesuit ideal of divine love—Agape—even as the poems themselves participate in the mission to “help souls” as Ignatian performing deeds. Southwell also demonstrates, however, the individual’s struggle with the temporal that interferes with the spiritual, that which stops him from accessing divine grace, much as we see with his depiction of Saint Peter. On one level, Southwell’s verse may be seen to demonstrate the Exercises, bringing the opportunity of that experience of intense meditation on the life of Christ—the interiority of faith and Catholic theology—to his readers, especially important when they were deprived of all outward demonstrations or signs of faith. As Sweeney reminds her readers, “In England [the physical] church did not exist outside the minds of [Southwell’s] congregation—they were wanderers in the wintry night indeed” (13). This is an advantageous point at which to discuss “The Burning Babe,” Southwell’s best-known occasional poem.155

Southwell’s Christmas poem offers both Christ’s nativity and passion simultaneously and is presented to readers by a speaker who stands “shivering in the
“snow” (1.2). By the poem’s end, after having been visited by the Christ child, the eponymous “Burning Babe,” the speaker is reminded that it is “Christmasse day (8.4). Numerologically, including the title of the poem, and titles were always important to Southwell (Sweeney 231), “The Burning Babe” has 33 lines. Sweeney, somehow overlooking the title, counts only 32 lines (189). Yet, thirty-three, of course, is significant as the number of years in Christ’s life (also the age of Southwell when he was put to death, which was noted even by his contemporaries at the time of his martyrdom).156 Furthermore, there are eight stanzas. Eight, as noted above, is the number of resurrection, whereby eight, representing Christ, overcomes the seven instruments of the passion: once again, the spiritual transforms the temporal. This number is especially significant in a poem about salvation that is prefigured in Christ’s coming into the world as an infant at Christmas and realized in his Easter Passion thirty-three years later.

Additionally, the stanzas, which are quatrains, may be seen to make reference to those four earthly and human elements discussed above—again, the temporal—that are then overcome or contained and then transformed by the soteriological number eight of the stanzas. The lines present a number of distinctly material elements, traditionally: earth, water, air, and fire. For earth, we have thorns, ashes, fuel, coals, and metal. For water we have snow, floods of tears, melting, a bath of blood, and washing. For air we have heat that glows, air (directly noted), warmth, sighs, smoke, blows, ethereal vanishing, and shrinking. For fire we have fire (used four times), burning bright, scorching, excessive heat, flames, fiery heats that fry, and a furnace. As the poem
progresses, the salvic power of the Burning Babe quenches the destructive flames of
damnation with His blood, which is referred to in succession as Love, Justice, and Mercy
in a poetic pouring fourth of Christ’s Passion, like the “runnels of meaning” Sweeney
described in “Christ’s Bloody Sweate” (108). “The Burning Babe” seems to offer the
same kind of performative artistic transubstantiation that occurs in Southwell’s other
Christ-centered verse.

Southwell was apt to use numerology in his most sacred verse, which clearly
includes his Christological poems. It is as if, emblematically, the Babe comes of age
through the thirty-three lines of the poem that tell His story. His vanishing in line 30
offers a reminder of His Ascension in Acts (1:9-11), just as the angel reminds the
Disciples that Christ will one day return in the same manner.157 According to Catholic
doctrinal beliefs, however, only those who have chosen Christ will be saved, and this
poem serves as a warning to the reader when the Burning Babe says: “none approach to
warm their harts, / Or feele my fire, but I” (16-17). Again, choice, not force, is
paramount.

In “A Childe My Choyse,” another of Southwell’s Christological poems, the
speaker says:

I praise and love that Childe / . . . / I praise Him most, I love Him best, all prayse
and love is His; / While Him I love, in Him I live, and cannot lyve amisse. / Love’s sweetest mark, lavde’s highest theme, man’s most desirèd light, / To love
Him life, to leave Him death, to live in Him delighte. (3, 6-9)158
Again in this poem, the title is significant as is its focus on “Choyse.” As with “The Burning Babe,” Christ is an infant, an “Almighty Babe” (30), and echoed throughout is the focus on Love, *Agape*, as a means to salvation and eternal spiritual life through Christ’s “gift” (14); whereas, the opposite is spiritual death: “to leave Him death” (12). As with the “Burning Babe,” this poem about the Christ Child is in the same form: eight quatrains that run alternately tetrameter and trimeter, with the end-rhymes recurring at lines two and four in each stanza, for 32 lines, the title making it, again, 33 in sum. These striking details make this a companion poem, thematically and stylistically, to “The Burning Babe.” Additionally, given the established emphasis on free will and the soul’s active participation in salvation—in both seeking and then choosing it—“A Childe My Choyse” is fundamental to that theme and the sixth line cited above underscores the Jesuit motto: “Love and Live” and echoes the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem and the transcendent, conciliatory power of *Agape*.

One way Southwell uses art as a means to reconciliation for his recusant audience is through his personations of biblical characters who had not been treated in verse previously, and certainly not as Southwell treats them, realistically, especially as with his Joseph, Peter, and Magdalen. In these characters, as Sweeney argues, Southwell offers credibly human examples to his recusant audience, characters with whom, typologically, they can identify on a very visceral level. Interestingly, Sweeney makes the case that most of Southwell’s verse is purposely void of angelic figures so typical of other narratives and certainly ubiquitous in the early baroque art on the Continent, explaining
that this very literally mirrors the plight of Southwell’s reader: there were no angels in Reformed England, they having been rejected, along with Mariology and so much else that was viewed as “superstitious” and “idolatrous.”¹⁶⁰

Southwell’s poems are also the place to find the baseness of Eros or corrupt love and the temporal. This is a depiction of an Eros bereft of the transformative powers of Agape. In a direct inversion of what we find in “A Childe My Choyse” and the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem, we have “Lewd Love is Losse” that results in knowing that “to live is death, to die is hell” (7.6) if one rejects Christ like those who choose to ignore the Burning Babe’s warmth on a frigid winter night. In “Love’s Servile Lott,” where Eros is personified as the epitome of the lust for temporal pleasures that destroy man’s soul, Sweeney argues for the “reflection of England’s fallen state” (164) depicted in the poem, an England that is “out of step, unnatural and uncanny, not only in its apparent fall from religious engagement but its replacing of Christ and his Mother by Elizabeth at the centre of its landscape” (164). Elizabeth had assumed Marian dates and presented herself as the “Virgin Queen” and “Chaste Diana,” which her Catholic subjects saw as a usurpation of rejected Mariology. Much of “Love’s Servile Lott” seems to describe a corrupt court led not by a “Virgin” but by an antithetical “fruitless drudge,” as alluded to in “Fortune’s Falsehood” (6.4), “drudge” being a common contemporary term for “whore,” and Elizabeth was notoriously “fruitless,” which resulted in all kinds of problems concerning succession before her death. Elizabeth I as “mistres” (1.1) has already been noted.¹⁶¹
Michael Bath explores the problem of succession. His scholarship on Queen Elizabeth’s Scottish cousin, Mary, *Emblems for a Queen: The Needlework of Mary Queen of Scots*, discusses Elizabeth’s fruitlessness in “Incriminating Emblems.” Bath explores Mary Stuart’s emblematic, coded embroidery showing the sterile vine (Elizabeth) being pruned so that the fertile one (Mary) can flourish (59). This became evidence at the Norfolk trial (1572):

[T]here can be little doubt that citing of an emblematic artifact as evidence in the state trial of a prominent member of the English Catholic nobility is of a piece with those former occasions on which emblems, including emblematic embroideries, were produced as evidence in state trials. The most famous of these, and quite probably the example which established the immediate precedent for this very curious Elizabethan legal practice was *Verescit vulnere virtus*. (58)

Mary had considered marrying the Fourth Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Howard (1538-72), who was eventually executed for treason after the Revolt of the Northern Earls (1569). The plot to wed Mary and Howard would have meant an eventual claim for the throne. Bath, calling Norfolk “England’s premier earl” describes this strategy as a potential remedy for Mary’s “difficulties which might have resolved the problems of her own exile if not the succession to the English and Scottish thrones” (58).

Mary had sent an embroidered cushion like the one described above to Norfolk in which:

a disembodied hand reaches down from the sky to prune the unfruitful branches of a vine which is growing between two fruit trees. The motto in the scroll reads *VIRES CIT VVLENERE VIRTVS*, and Mary’s distinctive cipher/monogram is shown beside the tree on the left side, with the royal arms of Scotland . . . on the right. (59)
Bath notes that the same “incriminating” emblem appears elsewhere among Mary’s belongings, including a silver hand bell (60-61). Another seditious emblem presents Mary as a Lion with her cub, an image that drew on the Aesop fable about the fox and the lion. This, too, address, indirectly, Elizabeth’s “fruitlessness.” The inscription reads *Unum quidem sed leonem*, “Only one, but that one a lion” (58). Bath’s study provides additional evidence of the way Catholics perceived Elizabeth. The shared image of the monarch as “fruitless” highlights the anxieties surrounding the problem of barrenness for the Catholic community in terms of succession to bring them into sharper focus, whether the emblematic depiction of this dilemma occurs through verse or needlework.

Sweeney stresses Southwell’s skill, his “canny manipulative power over his reader’s imagination” (206) when he employs “an increasingly insistent courtly language-register” (206-07). Besides the more universal reading, one might well arrive at a more topical one by substituting Elizabeth for the feminine pronouns throughout the poem: “The will she robbeth from the witt, / The sence from reason’s lore; / She is delightfull in the ryne, / Corrupted in the core. / She shroudeth Vice in Vertue’s veyle, / Pretendinge good in ill; / She offereth joy, affordeth greife, / A kisse, where she doth kill” (2.1-4, 3.1-4). We might remember here that Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss for the price of thirty silver coins, a clear image of how the temporal corrupts, a bad choice for which Judas pays dearly when he takes his own life in despair, trading spiritual life and salvation for temporal death and damnation.
We see a similar phenomenon regarding the temporal in Southwell’s, “Fortune’s Falsehood,” in what Sweeney calls “a picture of something approaching a court masque, but one in which the masks are gradually lifted to expose the vicious skowls beneath” (206). Applying Bellarmine’s theories about the role of art in religion and the triumph of Truth over falsehood, Southwell tells his readers that “truth is not with Elizabeth or her English Courts, because they are not with the true Church: Images of Elizabeth are idols; praise of Elizabeth is idolatry” (206). Sweeney later observes that it must have appeared “a vainglorious hypocrisy to have stripped the churches of their so-called ‘idolatrous’ imagery only to redeploy it in promotion of the Queen” which she calls the “deliberate subsumation of the Catholic iconography, especially that of the Virgin” that marked Elizabeth’s reign and was vehemently controlled by the government (214). As further evidence of this phenomenon and the rejection of it by the recusant Catholic community, Davidson explores a parallel between a statue of Elizabeth as the Virgin Queen vandalized in Ireland and the Vulnerata statue of the Madonna and Child vandalized in Cadiz (later venerated in Valladolid, 1600), positing the likelihood of the latter being directed as pointed retaliation by Cecil (“Solemnity of the Vulnerata at Valladolid 1600” 43). Catholics in England and abroad were keenly aware of the government’s appropriation of the Blessed Virgin for Elizabeth, and Southwell’s verse depicts the Catholic reaction to such a strategy.

Significantly, Fortune, identified at 2.1, becomes a tyrant, another topical sign of crisis (as seen in Ambrosia), who wields increasingly destructive power: “Constant in
cruelty, she never altereth / But from one violence to more oppression” (4.3-4), which clearly plays, satirically, on Elizabeth’s motto: Semper Eadem, always the same.

Moreover, she is “chaungeable” and “wavering,” “In all things mutable but mutabilities” (10.1, 4). Sweeney highlights what was viewed by many to be the hypocrisy in Elizabeth’s motto:

One method of deconstructing without actually attacking the body politic is to pull the rug out from under it by suggesting a lack of bona fides. Elizabeth’s claim of semper eadem was her weakest point, after the shifts of the English Reformation and her own apparent movement amongst the various doctrinal and ritual options debated in the English Church in her time; Donne’s cry about the confused identity of Christ’s spouse the Church, “Show me dear Christ, thy spouse so bright and clear”, is a caustic reflection upon a century of alterations. Elizabeth could not, from the Catholic point of view, be said to have kept the faith of her fathers . . . whatever the need for Reformation. So one of the principal branches of the counter-argument from the Catholic English . . . was that she or her churchmen had betrayed the British Christian heritage. (206)

It is interesting that Kilroy cites Donne’s contemporary Satyre IIII for similar insight about schism, arguing that Donne was the one in his family who “opted to live” when he abandoned the faith of his forebears who included his great-uncle, Sir Thomas More, and two Jesuit Priests (“Changing Eyes” 6). Sweeney notes “the theological position that underlies [Southwell’s] love poetry: true love does not—cannot—alter where it alteration finds,” unlike the Protestant Hydra of Heresy. “Recusancy only seemed like a choice to those who had already exercised a choice to remove from the old faith—‘heretic’ comes from the Greek haireisthasi, ‘to choose’, after all” (131). The point for Southwell is that he is making a plea for Catholics to continue unchanged in their faith; their “choice,” in essence, is to not choose but, rather, remain steadfast in their beliefs, which they saw
as having always been as they were. They wish to be *Semper Eadem*, even if their monarch is not.

Southwell mentions “humble suppliants” (8.1), perhaps rehearsing for his famous *An Humble Supplication to Her Majesty*, but Fortune is a “tyran most obstinate” (8.1) as he discovered through his own martyrdom at Tyburn. Sweeney argues that while the poem feels fairly simple on one level, “Southwell’s awareness of possible tensions in the reader’s mind allows a more complex reading” (207). This would be the subtext that certain readers would be keen to understand. Most importantly, we can get a better sense of how other artists might approach similar topics. Here, reliance on *Eros* and the temporal undermines salvation.

By contrast, the salvic can be found again in “Life’s Death, Love’s Life,” very close to the “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” emblem with a focus on free will and choice, where, on one level, Love represents Christ, “Who for our love did choose to live, / And was content to dye; / Who lov’d our love more then His life, / And love with life did buy” (2.1-4). So we can note also the play on life and death in these lines and the *inversion*, as seen in the emblem “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue,” wrought through spiritual love, *Agape*, that saves man from death thus allowing for transcendence. Here again is another Christological poem that is 33 lines, via eight quatrains with the same Southwellian rhyme scheme and metrical arrangement. As the biblical story of Christ relates, out of love, Christ *chose* to live as a human man among mankind as Emmanuel, meaning “One with us,” to share fully in human strife, suffering death for the remission of man’s sin,
buying mankind the chance for eternal life if man freely chooses to love Him and his fellow men in return— another perfect image of the Jesuit motto: “Love and Live.”

Southwell’s poems effectively participate, as performing deeds, in the Jesuit Mission to “help souls.”

As mentioned above, Saint Peter grieves that he betrayed this divine love in Saint Peters Complaynte as he worries about his soul and damnation, just as many recusants worried about the condition of their souls. Moreover, The Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen demonstrate divine love through devotion and lamentation in Southwell’s Marian verse, which, like Saint Peters Complaynte, employ lachrymosity as a means to healing, something with which his recusant audience could identify and which offered an outward show of inward faith and a physical reaction to sin, guilt, grief, and contrition/repentance among those most in danger of falling into despair. All of this provides fertile material for contemporary writers, and we know Southwell’s work was widely circulated in manuscript prior to its publication after his martyrdom. We can get a sense of the significance of Southwell’s execution, even to the state, because the execution of a notorious thief was scheduled concurrently at a different location as an apparent strategy to draw spectators away from Tyburn.

Shell’s study argues for an increased awareness of how Southwell’s lyric verse influenced his contemporaries, especially tears poetry, which was another problem for Protestants. Two salient examples are the Protestant treatment of Saint Peter, as seen in John Davies’ Peter who only weeps when Christ looks on him: “an imaginative variation
to the Southwellian prototype, downplaying the human role in repentance and foregrounding that of the divine” (87). Tearful devotion was associated with “popery” and thus needed to be avoided, subverted, or qualified by Protestant writers and preachers (87). The second example would be the poem “now attributed to John Ford, ‘Christes Bloodie Sweat’ (1613), [which] is a good—if shameless—illustration of [poetic] copying” (82) and also draws heavily on Southwell’s *Saint Peters Complaynte*, though Ford urges the poet to reform. Many of the myriad linguistic parallels between Southwell and Shakespeare, as noted, have been cataloged by John Klause in *Shakespeare, the Earl, and the Jesuit*.  

The sequence of Southwell’s poems, especially the Life of Christ series about the Holy Family and Christ’s Passion closely follow *The Spiritual Exercises* for sensory meditation on those important events, among the divine mysteries, and so are also linked to the Rosary of Our Lady. Rosaries, crucifixes, *Agnes Deis*, and other Catholic items of worship were among the “idolatrous” tangibles banned in England as a result of reforms and marked the loss of so much that was tactile in Catholic worship, the loss that both Eamon Duffy’s work has explored, especially his *The Stripping of the Altars*, and Alexandra Walsham’s recent study *The Reformation of the Landscape*.  

In reaction to the forbidden tangibles in the Catholic faith, meditative practices, as we see in Southwell’s verse, fill a particular need of the recusant community. Although not the first to establish societies of the rosary in England, Henry Garnet’s *Confraternity of the Rosary* (c. 1593), both the text and the sometimes more communal organizations
devoted to Our Lady and Christ, provided additional attempts to revive meditation and interior worship in the spiritually-deprived recusant community, which is central to the following chapter on Byrd.\textsuperscript{171} Asquith notes the way victory at Lepanto affected views of the rosary, which came to be regarded by many optimistic Catholics as a “powerful spiritual weapon.” The Jesuit General, Henry Garnet, “printed his book on the rosary on secret presses shortly after his arrival in England in the belief that the spread of the devotion would dispel heresy” (199; see also 97).\textsuperscript{172} Anne Dillon has explored this same Marian phenomenon in “Praying by Number: The Confraternity of the Rosary and the English Catholic Community, c.1580–1700.” Echoing Asquith, Dillon writes how after Lepanto:

Mary began to mutate from that of the gentle, compassionate mother of pre-Reformation times to that of Our Lady Queen of Victories who had led a triumphant spiritual army into battle against the heretic. And it was to this potent image of the Virgin with the sword in her hand that members of the confraternities consecrated themselves as they prepared for their work on the English mission. (462)

Dillon’s research underscores the fact that there was a particular need for the rosary in England and that its revival was viewed by many as also a revision (463). In the main, though, there was a far greater focus on Christ.

Sweeney further explains how “Garnet, through his theories of the uses of the rosary, promis[ed] to engage the English, even if illiterate, in the basics of religious observation, whether or not they had access to a church or priest” (86). Furthermore, “like many of his contemporaries, Garnet believed in the transferability of the real
presence of divine power from things; the rosary or corona of Our Lady was the perfect expression of the belief” (107). (“Corona” is an important image as well and will be discussed in the following chapter.) Significantly, the confraternity, which was meant to be all inclusive, was yet, according to Garnet, meant also to minister to those whose souls were seen to be in the greatest danger of being lost, namely women, children, and the less-educated among the recusant community. In his *Societie of the Rosary*, Garnet writes that no one should be bereft of the spiritual comfort or community:


> neither the husband man in the fields, nor the travailler in his jorney, nor the labourer with his toiling, nor the simple by his unskilfulnes, nor the woman by her sex, nor the maried by their estate, nor the yong by their ignorance, nor the aged by their impotencie, nor the sicke by their infirmitie, nor the poore for want of abilitie, nor the blind for want of sight, yea the Religious them selves of both sexes, att all times, and in all places, when they might want either bookes, or other ordinary helpes of spirite. (35-6)

These were the same groups seen as both most vulnerable and most dangerous by reformers. The confraternity provided those cut off from regular worship an opportunity to maintain their faith and a sense of community. Given that the Church is viewed as Christ’s Bride and earthly Body, a sense of community was an important part of the Jesuit mission to England. The Jesuits saw such opportunities for instruction and ministry as an important means to “helping souls.” Because of the benefits promised the faithful, Dillon likens participation in the confraternity to “an immense, unlimited, sacred bank account to which everyone had access in return for a small individual personal deposit” (468). Membership in the Confraternity of the Rosary, according to Dillon,
became a kind of “catechism” for those deprived of regular worship and spiritual instruction, especially the uneducated. Membership:

Demonstrated and encouraged a simple practice of the Ignatian composition of place for each of the mysteries of the rosary. With this blending of meditation, affective devotion and prayer, it linked the contemplative aspect of pre-Reformation passion prayers with Counter-Reformation Ignatian spirituality. Instead of seeing pictures on the wall of the church or chapel or indeed in books, each person created his or her own unique mental Images. (469)

Supporting this mission and enriching the visual interiority of his recusant reader to add to these renewed yet familiar forms of worship, Southwell’s poems “painted” pictures, what Sweeney called “redrawing the English lyric landscape.” The confraternity was unique in the way it “gave spiritual autonomy to the laity, encouraged family and local community worship, and gave its members a sense of identification with a wider, international community” and thus, according to Dillon, the rosary became “a subtle piece of Counter-Reformation social and spiritual engineering” as it provided “endless possibilities for the subtle and subversive undermining of Protestant authority and teaching” (470-71). In these ways it both recalled an earlier cherished tradition in worship even as it revised it for the needs of the Elizabethan recusant Catholic community. Clearly, the rosary and the mysteries it explored and celebrated—“the joyous,” “sorrowful,” and “glorious mysteries”—were ubiquitous images in Elizabethan England, especially for Catholics, whether active or apostate. These sacred mysteries are represented figuratively by roses, hence the name “Rosary.” The white rose represents the
joyful mysteries; the red rose, sorrowful mysteries; the damasked rose, glorious mysteries.¹⁷⁴

One might read Southwell’s works, many of which explore the divine mysteries in the manner of the rosary, to undertake *The Spiritual Exercises*, which may have been among his reasons for writing them as part of the Mission as some have argued. Sweeney extends this to the rosary but qualifies it saying:

As in the argument over whether or not his poetry was a reproduction of elements the Exercises, I am suggesting not that he was reproducing aspects of the rosary directly, but that he was using affective imagery to put the mind of the reader in a sufficiently sensitive mood to make his or her prayers more effective, opening the eye of the heart, so to speak. (109)

Sweeney also cites the importance of religious objects, much as Garnet emphasized in his Confraternities and their Rosary instruction, in noting how the concept is absorbed in Southwell’s “sacred purpose into his writing; or of the sacred content of church imagery into poetic metaphor” (107-08). We have seen already his use of other graphic and numerological strategies,¹⁷⁵ which offer further evidence of the kinds of devices employed by artists who were unable to express themselves openly, just as it demonstrates another way the temporal can be used to represent the spiritual as a means of reconciling *Eros* and *Agape*.

The following chapter explores William Byrd and the way his composition participates in these Catholic Reformation themes and the Jesuit Mission in “helping souls” while he also attempts to reconcile *Eros* and *Agape* through his art, much as
Southwell literally lived the emblematic through his work and martyrdom enacted at Tyburn: “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue.”
Chapter Four

William Byrd’s Composition—“If music be the food of love, play on!”

As this chapter’s title suggests, William Byrd feeds his fellow hungry recusants with music where “love” is divine and music part of the faithful’s spiritual sustenance. Sir John Harington’s verse, in the first epigram of his third book, argues for a similar strategy: “for theis our myndes refresh, when those do weary us” (3.1.15), “those” referring to temporal woes, especially for Catholics those tied to a repressive state. In the lead epigram of the collection, moreover, Harington specifically employs a food metaphor as he instructs his audience how to read his work: “Till in what sort to feed you must be taught” (1.1.4), which hinges on understanding the subversive nature of the text and the reader’s direct participation to effect meaning. Interestingly, Harington also mentions “musicque” as having a similar function (3.1.19). Just as we have seen the way the Jesuits ministered to the recusant community in drama and verse to provide artistic, spiritual manna, part of that ministry would not have been complete without another form of art: music.

Certain kinds of music had been banned under Protestant reforms (in spite of Queen Elizabeth’s love of music), especially as connected with the forbidden Mass, to which music has always been so integral. It is well known that the composer William
Byrd (1539-1623) was closely linked to that cause, that is, clandestine celebration of the Catholic rites. As E. H. Fellowes wrote in his twentieth-century biography on Byrd, times of upheaval call for responsive talents. Fellowes says, “History in its various branches, provides many instances of the appearance of the right kind of genius at the exact moment when exceptional gifts are needed for coping with a particular crisis” (9-10). We see this, to varying degrees, with all the artists this study explores. Byrd, known as “The Father of English Music” (Fellowes 12), is significant in this discussion both for his unique fame (then as now) and the sheer volume of Catholic music he wrote, including music for the Catholic liturgy—all while such was forbidden. As Harley asserts about Byrd’s Masses in his study, William Byrd: Gentleman of the Chapel Royal: “[They] are among the great documents of human experience” (316). Moreover, Byrd associated with the Jesuits. Directly he worked with Robert Southwell, William Weston, and Henry Garnet, and the recusant community. Indirectly, he incorporated meditative practices of the Spiritual Exercises in his composition, as Kerry McCarthy’s recent work on Byrd’s Gradualia demonstrates in “‘Meditate These Wel’” (Chapter 2). These facts make closer attention to his composition imperative to this study especially as he was working on a similar level as Campion and Southwell with “performing deeds” to “feed” a spiritually starving community—all while taking significant risk to do so.

Kerman, in Write All These Down, notes Byrd’s “retirement,” first to Harlington, in West Middlesex (1577-1592) and then, subsequently, to Stondon Place (1594/95), as his move to devote himself more fully to the recusant community that most often met at
Ingatestone, John Petre’s Essex estates’ center. This marked “a new and deeper commitment by Byrd to his religion” (85). He moved his entire household and extended family to the area to participate in this very Catholic communal life, composing extensive liturgical music. Kerman suggests that Garnet makes specific reference to this and Byrd’s work when he writes, “We kept Corpus Christi Day with great solemnity and music . . . and the day of the Octave made a solemn procession about the great garden, the house being watched, which we knew not until the next day” (87). Moreover, the two are known to have met in London for musical gathering some months subsequent to this (87). Byrd has been discussed by scholars in terms of his association with the Catholic community and I would like to examine him as part of the Catholic Reformation in England to explore how his composition answers specific needs, reactively, as noted by Fellowes, above. Like Campion and Southwell, Byrd is responding creatively, apologetically, and conciliatorily to his particular cultural moment.

Artistically, there are important affective things music does as part of worship, that, as this study examines, run parallel to what we see in rhetoric and verse. Understanding these techniques can enrich our knowledge of how this beleaguered community attempted to maintain its faith in the face of persecution and how its members engaged themselves in the various aspects of devotion. Moreover, music had always been part of a total temporal experience of worship that involved the five senses in very palpable ways and all these aspects of worship were forbidden under reforms because they were viewed as superstitious and idolatrous. The Mass previously had been what
worshippers could see, feel, smell, hear, and taste: through the visual space of the church with its stained glass, its carvings, its cross and altar with the service, the Eucharist on which the congregation gazed at the moment of consecration because of beliefs in the Real Presence, the baptismal font with its eight sides representing Christ in sacred numerology and new life through His Passion and Resurrection; the Cross or statues of the Blessed Virgin or Saints that were kissed or embraced reverently by the congregation, Rosary beads and crucifixes; its incense and candles meant to sanctify and draw the soul heavenward to higher mysteries, the chrism used for anointing; the sacred music of the liturgy, the responsorial psalms, the prayers and Creed; and the wafer in which Christ’s Body, His Real Presence, is believed to reside, as with the holy wine. These comprised the tactile “popish trappings of superstitious idolatry” that reforms had forbidden in England. All five senses and the sacred experience of the Roman liturgical rites noted above are addressed by Southwell in his poem, “Of the Blessed Sacrament of the Aulter,” including a reference to “musick”:

To ravishe eyes here heavenly bewtyes are,
To winne the eare sweete musicks sweetest sound,
To lure the tast the Angells heavenly fare,
To sooth the sent divine perfumes abounde,
To please the touch he in our hartes doth bedd,
Whose touch doth cure the dephe, the dumm, the dedd. (6.1-6)

Additionally, Byrd’s music responds directly to The Council of Trent Canons and Decrees with a renewed focus on what McCarthy notes is Byrd’s aim at “adornment,” that is, to crown what is already deserving (14). In exploring Byrd’s role in the Mission—
which he very much saw as his contribution to divine service, especially to glorify the
Creator while ministering to hungry souls—the terminology, motifs, and practice will
help tighten our focus on, while providing even more of, the Catholic markers that were
ubiquitous to the recusant community and appear in comparable use elsewhere. As with
Campion and Southwell, Byrd’s Catholicism is beyond doubt. The surety of his faith
serves to heighten the significance of the evidence for additional readings of his
composition in that vein—details others have yet to notice in terms of sacred numerology
and other Renaissance devices—but also provides a broader base for future studies of art
during the period. Finally, Byrd’s composition participates directly at the site of the
spiritual in the temporal that this study has been tracing and, ultimately, in the idea of art
reconciling Eros and Agape.

Fellowes’ biography on Byrd begins:

The greatest crisis in the entire history of Church music was precipitated by a
decree of the Council of Trent in 1563, which practically ruled out of use most of
the music which had been written up to that time for the services of the Church.
The reason for this drastic resolution was that it had become a common practice to
build up a piece of Church music, and more especially the music of the Mass, on
some popular melody, treated as a canto fermo. These melodies were usually of
secular songs and were often associated with words of a frivolous and ribald
character. . . . It can cause no surprise that in these circumstances the ecclesiastical
authorities took steps to rid the services of so gross a form of abuse. The
immediate effect was to deliver a stunning blow to Church music from which it
might never have recovered. (9)

In its Twenty-Second Session: The Mass, Chapter IX of the Council of Trent, the “Decree
Concerning the Things to be Observed and Avoided in the Celebration of Mass” says of
divine music: “They shall also banish from the churches all such music which, whether
by the organ or in the singing, contains things that are lascivious or impure” (Schroeder 153). While generally a problem for Catholic composers in a broad sense, matters were compounded in England by the fact that the Mass itself was forbidden, along with all its various accoutrements. Therefore, Byrd was responding to a multiple set of restrictions, from both the Roman Church abroad and the English State at home. As all Byrd’s commentators note, whether because of or in spite of these strictures, it is clear that he was particularly keen to do something new with the Latin Church music and he is continually focused on fitting the music to the words, as the Word in divine scripture; not as mere ornament but as something meaningful and inherently and inseparably tied to a deeply understood and felt meaning of the sacred nature of the text. This practice provides another example of metaphorical Incarnation.

Furthermore, as cited in Fellowes, above, Byrd departs from that criticized, forbidden trend to fit the tune of a popular, secular song to Liturgical music—apparently choral members or parishioners would actually sing the secular, known words during services instead of the religious ones. Fellowes writes, “Thus it is noteworthy that the Masses of Byrd have no relation to any popular melody, as was the case with Taverner’s ‘Western Wynde’ Mass” (11), the lyrics of which, believed to be part of a Medieval fragment of verse, include this line: “Christ! If my love were in my arms, And I in my bed again” (The Westron Wynde). It is the practice of conflating the secular—Eros—with the spiritual—Agape, to the detriment of the latter, which was viewed as a distinct profanation of the divine, especially during the Mass, to which the Decree, cited above,
responds; however, it might be possible to see the inversion of this tactic if such were expedient to avoid censure, that is, “embedding” the spiritual in the temporal when the spiritual was deemed too dangerous or illegal to discuss outright. Initially, we might see here a parallel to Southwell’s insistence that verse be used for sacred purposes. Later, however, Thimelby will make a case against Catholic verse to argue that “all religious language had been invalidated by double-entendre” (Shell, Catholicism, Controversy 99).

What is clear from these polemical concerns, however, is the way Byrd approached his duty as composer with all due reverence for the tradition of Catholic sacred music, knowing what sacred music needed to be, and yet to this he adds his own vision of what sacred music could be: something new that responded to his own significantly strained historical moment as he responded to prohibitions and reforms. Byrd’s endeavors were successful:

Any Catholic consumer of the Gradualia would likely have muttered it hundreds of times in the course of his or her life. Byrd’s interpretation, like any successful meditation on an old theme, must have brought with it the shock of both the new and the familiar. (19)

This renewal and revision of known “texts” is much as we see with the importation of the Spiritual Exercises and the revived Rosary (noted above and discussed in greater detail, below). Especially true of the Rosary, it was adapted to the needs of the recusant audience.
Byrd’s *Gradualia*, then, was a project to compose a series of set liturgical pieces (over one hundred in total) for various feast days and celebrations throughout the Roman Church year in response to the needs of the recusant community in England. These feast days included Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost (as well as the days leading up to those events, such as the forty days of the Lenten season preceding Easter), what McCarthy notes are “pointedly Catholic Holidays”: Corpus Christi, All Saints,’ The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. Byrd also composed for other sacred services such as Requiems (ix) and Office of the Dead (1575) (4). For inspiration, Byrd considered:

Savonarola, Augustine, the darker corners of the Scriptures, a variety of freely composed texts, and—when it suited him—the traditional Latin liturgy. He chose words for their emotional force, for their imagery, for their political connotations, or for whatever else invited a creative response. (ix)

Prior to Byrd, not many composers had attempted to address the Mass proper that extensively, and McCarthy finds it “surprising to see Byrd taking on this sort of project in a rural backwater of Jacobean England, where it was strictly illegal to use the music as he intended it” (x-xi), which makes the project all the more significant. Harley notes the “fierce restrictions [that] had recently been reimposed on Catholics” (318) early in James’ reign, and then especially after the Gunpowder Plot.181 Only a highly dedicated Catholic would take such risks, in spite of whatever leniency he may have enjoyed under Elizabeth at Chapel Royal and beyond.

We should remember, however, that both Byrd and his wife, Julian (née Birley), and various servants were fined heavily for recusancy, which demonstrates that they were
not spared the law’s greedy hand in financial matters (Fellowes 14). Fellowes observes, “Illegal [Mass] certainly was, but in return [participants] paid handsome fines as ‘recusants’, and this was a source of income not to be despised by the Crown” (32).

Joseph Kerman, in *Write All These Down*, also confirms that at this point in Byrd’s career, his music changes significantly as he commits himself more fully to his Catholic faith. Kerman also mentions the fines, specifically those of Byrd’s wife, Juliana, in 1577, and of Byrd himself in 1585 because their Catholic leanings had become increasingly more evident: “After 1580 the signs multiply. Clearly the authorities were now more vigilant, but clearly also Byrd was more engaged” (Kerman 81) and committed, and thus willing to pay those fines.

John Harley in his study on Byrd, writes:

Byrd and his household were themselves subject to penalties as recusants, and the family of fellow-Catholics into which his eldest son married in 1591 or 1592 had endured the seizure of the greater part of their property. The mere possession of an openly Catholic book could lead to suspicion and interrogation; its printing and publication might incur serious penalties. To write even one Mass was a bold and unusual decision, which could only have been prompted by the strongest possible personal motivation. . . There is little doubt that the Masses were intended for the clandestine services maintained by men like the Petres and the Pastons, and for performance by small groups of singers, probably with one voice to a part. (308)

While his patrons were able to provide some amount of security, the dangers inherent in Byrd’s work are well known.

At this juncture, I would like to suggest the possibility that Byrd’s many legal battles at Stondon Place in Essex (near the Petre estates at Ingatestone and West Horndon), where the majority of his Latin music was composed, had to do with privacy.
The litigation with Jane Shelley, the widow of the prior owner of Stondon Place—it had been confiscated by the crown when her husband, William, was imprisoned as a Catholic conspirator in the 1580s—is well documented. While he was still only leasing the property (he did not purchase it until Mrs. Shelley’s death in 1609), Byrd had made various improvements to the property—including chimneys, partition walls, and plumbing—but when he “cut down greate store of tymber-trees worth one hundred marks growing in the grounds, had felled all the underwoods worth £100 and made therein greate spoyle,” Mrs. Shelley was duly upset (qtd. in Fellowes 16). Byrd also ejected a tenant farmer and had made, what were supposed to be public roads traversing his property, inaccessible. In one instance he adopted “the policy of previous owners who had barred the way with a hedge,” for which locals accused Byrd of “stopping up the way against the Kyng’s liege people” so that “to this day the lane ends abruptly” at the ejected tenant’s farm (Fellowes 16-17). These changes to the landscape—felling trees, clearing bush, and blocking roads may well have been a calculated effort to secure greater privacy by increasing visibility of surrounding land and points of approach as well as blocking access via what previously had been public roads. This theory about protective precautions becomes increasingly plausible when we consider other recusant properties where we know the same thing happened. Moreover, increasing the field of sight as a preventative strategy is a common survival tactic seen in both the human and animal world.
If one visits the Tresham buildings of Rushton Hall, The Triangular Lodge, and Lyveden New Bield in Northamptonshire, introduced above, the requirement for safety and the ways in which it was effected become clearer. Being able to see the surrounding property when Mass was being celebrated or a priest were on site in order to keep watch for pursuivants and other spies was a necessary precaution, as were priest holes, secret passageways, and underground tunnels as a further means of concealment and escape. For example, there was a tunnel that ran from the no-longer-extant chapel at Rushton, under the Hall, and out to the Triangular Lodge, with egress points along the way. A clearly visible line of sight also made surveying the property much easier, as seen in a contemporary etching on display at Rushton Hall (now an hotel and spa), by which the warning signals could be made between the buildings. Portions of the tunnel still exist, though parts of it have collapsed, and aerial sonar from helicopters has detected these various points.

Nearby Lyveden New Bield, another of Tresham’s coded buildings, on which construction was never completed due to a lack of funds, was built with plenty of open fields around it. The “ground” floor is actually an upper level with only tiny lookout windows below. Visitors would have been delivered to the front entrance at a raised platform, accessible by carriage. The building is also surrounded by a wide ditch for further protection especially for concealment of recusants escaping. A canal afforded a further deterrent to would-be intruders. It was officially a dining hall, but the Lord’s Supper would have been celebrated there clandestinely, had the building ever been
finished. Construction ceased in 1605 when Tresham died. Significantly, “bield” (versus “build” with which it is often wrongly confused), comes from the Anglo Saxon word “bieldu,” which means variously: boldness, courage, arrogance, confidence (A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary 42). Tresham, as the pattern of codes makes clear, meant Lyveden to be a protective and protected space and Kilroy adds to this its function as a “resource against hunger, refuge or shelter” (Memory 141) in a distinctly spiritual sense. Conceptually, we can further understand the image as “the protection of the Word of God the Blessed Virgin in a pattern which reflects Jesus, Mary and the Trinitarian nature of the Godhead” (141-42). Lyveden New Bield as a property provides an important example of the way the worshipful had to take precautions when pursuing illegal clandestine undertakings. Tresham took the idea a step further by making all his buildings a tribute to the Catholic faith.

In Essex, Ingatestone Hall has a priest hole and McCarthy relates:

Clergy seem to have been harbored and masses celebrated at Ingatestone with some regularity. Byrd wrote in the dedication to his second book of Gradualia that his liturgical music “proceeded from [Petre’s] house, most generous to me and mine”, and there is no reason not to take that statement literally: in fact his visits most often coincided with Christmas, Pentecost, and the other principal feasts of the church year, which were celebrated lavishly in the Petre household.

Given the dangers associated with the Mass, it is evident why care was taken to secure the various properties where illegal activities were conducted. Byrd seems to have been rightly concerned about prying eyes and keen to try to make Stondon Place less vulnerable to unwanted visitors, especially given the illicit nature of his work.
Perhaps making his composition even more dangerous, Kerman sees the purpose of Byrd’s use of biblical texts such as Jeremiah as having “frankly political intent” (82), with Jerusalem, the Holy City, and its captivity by Babylon a thinly veiled political reference to the religious crisis for Catholics in England. “Boldest of all, perhaps,” Kerman continues, “is Circumspice Jerusalem, a text from the Apocrypha,” which provides a clear Catholic marker since apocryphal texts had been rejected by Protestants (as with Judith, Susanna, et al.). Kerman suggests Byrd uses this text to make explicit reference to the Jesuit missionaries. Circumspice Jerusalem reads, in part:

Look around toward the East, o Jerusalem, and see the joy that is coming to you from God! Behold, your sons are coming, whom you sent away and dispersed; they come gathered together from the East to the West, at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God. (82)

Kerman connects this passage to what Campion had written in his famous Brag, the open letter challenging the Privy Council: “Whereas I have come out of Germany and Boëmeland, being sent by my Superiors, and adventured myself into this noble realm, my dear country, for the glory of God and the benefit of souls” (82-83). Kerman asks: “Would this not have been ideal music for the welcome party for Southwell and Garnet?” (Note 4, 89). Many would have seen it as such, and the fact that we find similar biblical echoes in other period art offers further support of its relevance and the overt nature as regards particular audiences. Of special relevance are Gregory Martin’s notes and commentary in the Douai-Rheims Bible. As an English Catholic, writing an English translation of the Catholic bible, with the recusant Catholic community his intended
audience, Martin produced work that provides significant insight into the contemporary
Catholic sensibility.\textsuperscript{190}

Byrd’s dedication and his compositions, especially in the grand project of the

\textit{Gradualia}:

show him to be a committed reader of “sacred sentences.” He was far from alone
in this interest. The devotional life of any educated Counter-Reformation layman
was focused strongly on the printed word. The situation of Catholics in England,
where the sacraments and other physical observances of religion were hard to
come by, nourished (or forced) an even more text-centered piety. It is no
coincidence that Byrd used the language of religious contemplation when he
discussed his musical text setting. (McCarthy 17)

Worth noticing, McCarthy’s “nourished (or forced)” may call to mind echoes of what
Gerard Kilroy has written about the heightened worth of texts during that period of
sustained persecution in \textit{Edmund Campion: Memory and Transcription}:

Never before have books or writing or letters been as dangerous as they were
between 1581 and 1606: proclamation after proclamation forbade seditious
writings; books were seized in midnight raids, and men were questioned for
copying poems. . . Writing went underground, between the lines, into the paper
and into code; \textit{far from suppressing language, the state’s actions seemed merely
to put value on writing}. (1; emphasis added)

Ironically, perhaps, Byrd’s composition makes clear the value of words on a musical
level through its various projects and their focus on language. Interestingly, Byrd set
Walpole’s dangerous memorial poem on Campion’s Martyrdom, \textit{Why doe I use my
paper, ynke and pen?}, to music. Significantly, in terms of sacred numerology as
discussed in previous chapters, it is madrigal No. 33 in Byrd’s \textit{Psalms, Sonnets and
Songs of Sadness and Pietie} (1588). As discussed in the previous chapter, thirty-three is
significant as Christ’s age at the time of His Passion. Thomas Herron’s recent scholarship explores the significance of numerology in Catholic-Reformation poetry, inspired by Christianized Neo-Platonism, especially the number 33 and contemporary uses of it, including Byrd’s madrigal No. 33 (1, 3, 5). Byrd had achieved this poetic and musical feat, “after carefully editing out the particular references to Campion” (Kilroy, Memory 67), which would have made the printed text even more seditious; after all, Vallenger died for having printed it in the first place.

Of course previously, in his work with Tallis while at the Chapel Royal, the pair dedicated their 1575 Cantiones Sacrae to Queen Elizabeth:

The Authors of the Songs to the Reader
we commend these first-fruits to you,
gentle reader, as a woman still weak from childbirth
entrusts her infant to the care of the faithful nurse,
for your esteem will be their milk.
Thus nourished, they will promise a fruitful harvest;
if unfruitful, they will fall by an honorable sickle. (qtd. in McCarthy 7)

According to McCarthy, in the Cantiones Sacrae dedication:

Byrd could not indulge in a dedication to the pope, or a member of the Jesuit hierarchy, for basic reasons of self-preservation. Given the focus of his later publications, and his changing relationship to the authority of his patrons, he would likely not have done so even if it had been politically expedient. (8)

As she explores the metaphor, McCarthy continues, “Just as crops grow more fruitfully under a temperate sky, so the Muses yield sweeter and more abundant fruits through the kindness of patrons” (10). Interestingly, McCarthy says there is no reference to sacred matter, yet the title is Cantiones sacrae, or “Sacred Songs.” Departure from the 1575 title
read: “songs on which account of their subject matter are called sacred,” which McCarthy calls, “coy circumlocution” (10). What I would like to suggest, however, is that there does seem to be a very pointed allusion to the sacred via the fruit imagery, specifically the understandably biblical “first fruits.” This 1575 dedication to Elizabeth I appears to make reference to *Leviticus* (23:9-14), which is the Old Testament text about first fruits of the harvest and God’s command to Moses that foretells Christ’s Passion as the sacrificial Lamb and the bread and wine of life as the Blessed Sacrament. If the sacred songs are meant to bring to mind the forbidden faith and feed the hungry recusant community, this oblique strategy would make perfect sense. Furthermore, the importance of First Fruits is explored in the following sacred texts: *Exodus* 34:26, *Leviticus* 23:20, *Numbers* 18:12-15, *Deuteronomy* 18:1-5, 26:1-11, especially 2-4, *Matthew* 27:52-53, and *Proverbs* 3:9. References to these passages would have been recognizable to a contemporary audience, even as the concept of “first fruits” is still understood biblically to refer to Christ. Even then, prior to his more political and religious devotion after his time at the Chapel Royal, Byrd seems already to be thinking about sacred texts and appealing to his recusant contemporaries, with “coy circumlocution,” if we credit McCarthy’s insights.

To consider Byrd’s focus on the Words further, he writes famously in one of his later dedicatory prefaces:

In the words themselves (as I have learned from experience) there is such hidden and mysterious power that to a person thinking over divine things, diligently and earnestly turning them over in his mind, the most appropriate measures come, I do
This passage is often taken out of context or truncated by secular scholars, as McCarthy has shown, “[W]hat [critics] often neglect is the statement on the worthiness of the sacred words and the importance of setting them in an appropriate fashion” (11). The analogy is that “precious raw material is to fine craftsmanship as liturgical text is to fine musical setting. The precious material is a given; Byrd’s duty as a craftsman or composer is to do it justice” (11). The critical tendency to dismiss the importance of the sacred nature of the texts ignores Byrd’s focus on the divine inspiration the passage describes. Something I would like to suggest that further heightens this supposed divinity is Byrd’s use of “idle,” which may be seen as a Catholic marker in certain contexts.

The contemporary pun is on “idol” as in “idolatry,” the corruption of which Protestants accused “superstitious” Catholics and one of the reasons given for the dissolution of the monasteries and the wholesale confiscation and/or destruction of holy buildings and art in England, and, subsequently, prohibitions against art. Richard Wilson in Secret Shakespeare: Studies in Theater, Religion and Resistance, explores iconoclasm in “Love and Idleness” where he discusses the idle/idol pun and draws attention to “the persistence with which the rites and symbols of medieval Catholicism were deliberately perpetuated in defiance of the iconoclasts” (151). For another important example of contemporary usage we have again Harington’s “ydle Epigrams,” which, in a telling statement, he himself calls a “[c]ollection or rather confusion of all my ydle
Epigrams” and then uses the term repeatedly throughout (3.6.1, 3.54.3, 3.74.6, etc.). Additionally, Harington’s use of “confusion” alerts the reader to the strategy of ambiguity in the collection, just as he referred to himself as a “wise pretender of foolery,” as cited above. Kilroy also highlights the pun on idol and its “intended hint at idolatry (or Catholicism)” (Memory101).

Furthermore, because “idle” and “inert” are very close in meaning, it is curious that Byrd would use both terms, unless, however, he wished to draw attention to them more particularly, as separate denotatively, especially if the first transmits an alternate sense given Byrd’s preoccupation with “words.”

As Harley emphasized in his study:

At one level Byrd’s settings are illustrative commentaries upon the words. At another level, they are prayers of petition and thanksgiving, and they are musical records of thoughts and feelings springing from the contemplation of a text which he must have pondered long and often. . . [H]e must have meditated many times and ever more deeply on the meaning of the words he was setting. (310)

This attention to diction, sacred in nature, is paramount in Byrd’s composition—indeed, central to his personal mission as a composer. Here, Byrd’s use of “idle” seems to benefit from his general strategy of privileging words and their sacred nature.

Of course Byrd was far from “idle” in the sense of being “vain or useless.” He kept busy composing music for Catholic worship to which meditative practices were central especially in terms of his music’s intended effect on worshippers. McCarthy relates the influence of both the Spiritual Exercises and the Rosary of Our Lady through the Confraternity of the Rosary established by the Jesuit Henry Garnet in England (discussed above), which “amounted to a pious mutual aid organization” (52). Moreover,
as with Byrd’s reworking of liturgy, Garnet’s *Societie*, as a means of instruction on meditative practices of the Rosary, is more than just a translation, and is rhetorically suited to the needs of his audience as “a do-it-yourself devotional kit for Catholics who were isolated from the most communal expressions of worship” (52). Again, we see very specifically how the needs of the recusant community are met by Catholic Reformation art.

As introduced above, Byrd viewed his composition as his “duty” or “service” to his faith, which may be considered his own spiritual election, per the *Spiritual Exercises*, that is, a lay person choosing a path to make a contribution, to serve others, and thus lead the self on a course to the desired spiritual salvation. McCarthy notes Byrd’s use of the Latin *inservire*, to serve:

which has an additional set of connotations beyond its root word *servire*: this intensified form means to serve, indeed to be a slave to, but it implies ‘devotion to’ or ‘attachment to’ as well. *Inservire* is also the technical term used to describe the person who serves at Mass, that is, who performs the complementary duties to the priest and speaks or sings the responses. (13)

Byrd’s work is presented to his audience “*pro vestra exercitatione*—literally ‘for your exercise’” (12), which also links him to the Mission and the Jesuit *Spiritual Exercises*. McCarthy further identifies this connection as, “another long, systematic journey through the events of the liturgical year” (12). In his preface concerning all these ideas Byrd writes:

My spirit, mindful of its fidelity, duty, and devotion to God, burns to leave behind for posterity in at least some way a grateful soul’s public testimony, crediting all to the Creator. Therefore, in this, my advanced age, being committed to the
As stated, his use of “inservire” posits the composer as being in service to the celebrant priest, something which he sees as a duty. More importantly, perhaps, is the additional desire for his work to serve as a testament of faith—for future generations—much as we see with others in the recusant community, like Tresham and Harington. Clearly, Byrd’s Gradualia is no ordinary composition. Moreover, given the religious unrest, the focus on this sort of testament, “crediting the Creator,” is in line with the Catholic stance toward art, its validity and purpose, as discussed above in prior chapters, per Robert Bellarmine, et al. It is also telling that Byrd would make such a public statement, in writing, in print, given the danger inherent in doing so.  

McCarthy also spends considerable time discussing the act of “crowning” and the use of composition as “garland” that she considers an important metaphor because it recalls Byrd’s prior comments on ornamentation and alludes to Psalm 64:12: “You bless the crown [or garland] of the year with your goodness,” so suited to the liturgical calendar’s music (13). Even more interesting is Byrd’s use of “coronis” to which McCarthy draws the reader’s attention because of its uncommon nature, which is:

not the usual Latin word corona used in the verse from Psalm 64 and elsewhere in the Vulgate. The Greek koronis refers literally to a garland, to the decorated prow of a ship, or to the scribal flourish at the end of a literary composition—and also, by extension, to the highest ornament or summit of an endeavor. (In antiquity, this scribal flourish—coincidentally—often took the form of a little bird.) Grafted into a humanist Latin text, this term can describe the crowning touch to something.

(13)
As McCarthy suggests, the “little bird” would have been an obvious additional treat for Byrd. What she does not notice, however, that I would like to bring into the discussion, especially to establish the image as a ubiquitous one in contemporary discussions and thus useful for subsequent studies in the field, is the ship. The Church was frequently seen as a ship (as it is to this day)—often referred to as a bark/barque, as in “The Barque of Peter”—and other scholars have already noted this as an image of the Catholic Church, tossed by the storm or Tempest of the Reformation (Davidson, “Solemnity” 47; Kilroy, “Changing Eyes,” 5; Asquith, Shadowplay, 299).196

Another significant word in terms of the Roman Rite (the Mass), is “Office,” and Byrd discusses the concept repeatedly, to which McCarthy also draws attention in cataloging Byrd’s mission: “so the songs might be arranged, each in its own place, according to parts of the Office,” “The Offices of the whole year, set out for your use,” and “to fulfill my office” (14). Writing for the Divine Office of the Mass, Byrd’s work, in suiting the music to the words of sacred scripture and Catholic tradition, does several things artistically. The Real Presence has already been noted, but here we might try to understand even better Byrd’s devotion, skill, and fascination with crowning holy diction. McCarthy discusses the famed piece of the Gradualia: Ave Verum Corpus, “Hail True Body.” As a musicologist, and worth exploring at length, McCarthy instructs readers not to dismiss this well-known piece, or its larger nexus of meaning, advising the reader to
take time to read slowly and reflectively, just as Byrd’s contemporary audience would have been instructed and encouraged to do. McCarthy writes:

Pause for a moment and read the phrase aloud: *Ave verum corpus*. Or sing it to a monotone, a pitch of your choice: *Ave verum corpus*. Or, yet more appealing, sing it to the top line of Byrd’s setting. Even a plain reading or recitation brings out a number of details: the strong alternating rhythm (*A*-ve *ve*-rum *cor*-pus; Byrd rarely set accentual Latin poetry of this sort); the change from the bright, open *a* and *e* vowels of the opening salutation to the darker *o* and *u*, or the sonorous voiced fricative *v* giving way to the dry *r* and *p*. The contour of Byrd’s soprano melody further reflects the ebb and flow of the metrical pattern—the first accented syllable is thrown into relief by an upper semitone, and the second by a whole tone, while the third and last dissolves into a quick flutter of ornamentation. For those who know the piece well, this top line, even sung on its own, will also recall what goes on below it: the pungent harmonic transformation as D major moves to F major (while the syllable itself remains unchanged), emphasizing the all-important word *verum*, “true,” and the attendant claims about the Eucharist; the sting of the cadential seventh as it sounds in the tenor; the serene major third that concludes the phrase. (18)

First, I would like to address what McCarthy notes is “the attendant claims about the Eucharist” that are suggested by “the pungent harmonic transformation as D major moves to F major” recalled by what goes on “below.” In terms of Catholic doctrine and beliefs, McCarthy highlights the fact that “the syllable itself remains unchanged,” in a parenthetical aside which seems to heighten its importance, and which may be seen as the Blessed Sacrament that is imbued with the Real Presence spiritually and yet undergoes no visible material change of substance physically; again that image provides a rhetorical conflation of the spiritual in the temporal as an image of divine love, or *Agape*. Performatively, the composition effects this same “transformation” or musical “transubstantiation” through Byrd’s attention to the sacred text, much as we saw with
Southwell’s verse, especially his Christological poems examined in the previous chapter.

As further support, we have Harley’s similar observations:

*Ave verum corpus* (BE 6a/12) is a prayer to the Blessed Sacrament, and the false relation contained in the second and third chords makes quite clear Byrd’s position on the topical issue of transubstantiation. It lays stress on the word “verum” and the notion that bread and wine are truly the body and blood of Christ. Byrd’s convictions are translated into music of great fervour, possessing a highly personal quality accentuated by his addition to the text of the repeated words “miserere mei.” (326-27)

Recall from the prior chapters the discussions about the contested nature of the doctrine of transubstantiation. Rhetorically, this is Byrd’s argument, as Reformation Catholic apologist, which he effects artistically through his composition along with his repeated appeal to Christ: “miserere mei,” “have mercy on me.”

I would also like to draw on sacred numerology again to point out that even musically the seventh, which McCarthy identifies as having a “sting,” brings to mind the sting of death in Christ’s Passion, and its ultimate ineffectualness, “O death, where is they victory? O death, where is thy sting?” (1 Cor. 15:55), that was effected by the seven instruments of the Passion, as noted above, but then “concludes” with “the serene major third,” three being another sacred number, especially Trinitarian. We might well understand that seven is overcome or concluded by three, in the Body of Christ, the Triune God who is mysteriously Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and is also, as has been discussed, seen symbolically in the number eight and the New Creation and man’s Salvation. The *verum corpus* that is believed to save, does so because of Christ’s three-fold sacrifice as man: life, death, and resurrection, which is rightly mirrored by Byrd’s
sensitive composition. Additionally, in “verum,” as a modifier for “corpus,” we again have five letters that may be seen as significant for Christ’s five wounds by which the institution of the Eucharistic was realized in His Passion. As further support for the soteriological theory in composition, I again offer Harley’s views:

In the Alleluia verse the words “omnes qui laboratis et oneratie estis” (you who labour and are burdened) cause the superius and tenor to sing b’ and bb’ simultaneously . . . . In the Communion (BE 6a/7) Byrd produces a host of C-C# false relations to illustrate a notion very close to the hearts of English Catholics: “Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter justitiam” (Blessed are they who suffer persecution for the sake of justice). For the Offertory lustrorum animae (BE 6a/6), with its thoughts of death, Byrd turns to a profoundly expressive semihomophony in place of the livelier rhythms of the Introit and Gradual. (325)

These techniques Byrd employs were a new way of presenting sacred texts and perfectly suited to the needs of his audience. McCarthy reminds her readers that at the kinds of services at which Ave verum corpus would have been sung and contemplated: “In a religious culture where access to these ceremonies was relatively rare and dangerous, such practices may have been the exception rather than the rule” and this demonstrates “a shift from ritual activity to the most intimate level of personal domestic devotion” (19) using the kind of meditation found in both the Jesuit’s Spiritual Exercises and the Rosary of Our Lady and other Marian devotional practices. We might also remember John Wilkins’ Mercury Or the Secret and Swift Messenger (Mercury is known to be a trickster), mentioned above, that explores coded modes of communication. Chapter 18 deals specifically with music, but the whole of it proves instructive about contemporary devices and methods of communicating secret messages. For example, Chapter 2
explores “Conditions requisite to secrecy” and the use of “Fables of the Heathen” and “Parables in Scripture.” Readers will recognize a whole catalog of period material: inventing new words, inversion, transmutation, diminution, augmentation, using more or fewer letters in words, hieroglyphics, emblems, employing the fabulous or magical, and so on. Byrd is composing within a known tradition of carefully concealed communication even as he serves as a pioneer in musical endeavors.

Among others, musicologist and Byrd scholar David Skinner has identified coded musical communication in exchanges between Byrd and a member of the Spanish court (see “Early Byrd” and “Catholic Music”). Skinner writes:

Byrd also used this form of musical encryption in order to communicate with others beyond the shores of England, as was the case with his manuscript motet *Quomodo cantabimus* [how shall we sing] which is paired with *Super flumina Babylonis* [the waters of Babylon] by the Flemish composer Philippe de Monte. (‘Early Byrd’ 1)

The gist is about “exile,” as Sweeney, Davidson, and others have noted. On one level, English Catholics felt themselves to be exiles in their own country. These pieces set to music *Psalm* 137, with de Monte’s making reference to *Psalm* 137:1, “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.” Byrd’s reply involves the lament of *Psalm* 137:4, “How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land?” *OED* defines “strange” as “a. Of persons, language, customs, etc.: Of or belonging to another country; foreign, alien.” As a verb, “1. *trans.* To remove, banish, keep apart from an accustomed place, condition, relations, etc.” Therefore, although the English Catholic recusants were physically in their own country, they had been made to feel
exiles because their faith was outlawed. Ironically, for centuries, due to rising Nationalism, Catholics would be viewed by Protestants as “other”—not English because of their spiritual loyalty to Rome. Byrd’s reaction to this dilemma was his devotion to the mission to enable his “exiled” fellow recusants to sing the Lord’s song in England.

In keeping with an examination of the affective and performative nature of art, especially as seen in the Latin Rite of the forbidden Mass, McCarthy says of this bit of text, Ave verum corpus, that her study has scarcely explored it in full due to its richness and the depth of its meaning. McCarthy detects an opportunity for empathy suggesting the way in which a twenty-first century audience:

can still forge a direct link with another community that reflected on them more than four hundred years ago. We hear similar sounds and are drawn into a similar affective world, meditated through Byrd’s distinctive reading. In its journey from silently read to spoken to sung to harmonized text, the little fragment Ave verum corpus is transformed from an abstract set of signs on a page to a tangible phenomenon in the mind and ear of the reader. (19)

This is much the way Byrd’s recusant audience would have understood the mysterious, transformative power of the Blessed Sacrament. This is the tactile, sensuous world of the Catholic Mass, where the faithful believe their souls are fed on multiple levels through all their bodily five senses. Music was an important element in those beliefs and traditions that Byrd and others had made part of their mission—in both duty and service—to glorify the Creator and leave a spiritual testament while taking considerable risk to do so.
In this same vein of the inexhaustible nature of the mysteries of faith, Kerman’s reflection on Byrd’s poignant treatment of “alleluia,” meaning “Praise the Lord,” in the *Gradualia* is useful. He says:

Anyone who knows anything of the *Gradualia* will remember the luminous “alleluia” sections in *Sacerdotes Domini, Non vos relinquam orphanos, Contitues eos*, and many other pieces. Byrd’s treatment of these alleluias—there are nearly eighty examples—can perhaps be taken as emblematic of his whole endeavor in the late sacred music. He never thought to cut corners by writing a *da capo* indication for one of these alleluias, though in many cases the liturgical rubrics would have made this perfectly appropriate; he seems to have been fascinated by the problem of setting the same word in dozens of different ways, as though absorbed in the mystery of the *inexhaustible renewal of praise*. The language of the Seven Penitential Psalms and the Book of Jeremiah echoes through the texts of Byrd’s earlier motets. What stays in the mind from the *Gradualia* is the endlessly repeated, endlessly varied acclamation “alleluia” and the act of ritual celebration which it embodies. (88; emphasis added)

I would like to suggest here echoes of this notion of a repetition of subject and the attentive sentiment that seems to be incumbent upon the artist in his “*inexhaustible renewal of praise*.” That is, there seems to be an almost inescapable desire and duty to praise, as found in one possible reading of Shakespeare’s Sonnet 105 if it is understood devotionally: “To one of one still such and ever so . . . my verse to constancy confined . . . One thing expressing, leaves out difference . . . in this change is my invention spent.”

This strategy could also be viewed, perhaps, within the vein of Erasmus’ *De Copia* exercises and the Renaissance use of rhetoric more generally. Artistically, however, the notion of myriad varied repetitions on the same theme seems to be an almost compulsory or instinctive urge for the artist, as with Byrd, who explores the
sacred with renewed, profound reverence while locating the spiritual in the temporal
musically reconciling *Eros* and *Agape*. 
Chapter Five

Concluding Reflections in which the Ending is also a Beginning

All of the works and figures that are the focus of this study about Catholic art make a case for the importance of free will and choice in terms of the Catholic understanding of those human but God-given attributes. Significantly, they speak to the plight of the recusant community in Elizabethan and early Jacobean England just as they offer the Catholic-Reformation stance on the doctrinal issues being debated at the time. As this study demonstrates, the Jesuits and recusant laymen with whom it has been engaged were deeply concerned with and involved in the lives of their fellow Catholic countrymen. The art we have encountered here is significant for what it tells us about how Catholic artists responded to reforms and serves as an important base on which to build. Consider the phrase: “nani gigantum humeris insidentes,” attributed to Bernard de Chartre and echoed by Isaac Newton five centuries later, which translates to “dwarfs on the shoulders of giants.” We might well see Campion, Southwell, and Byrd in this light and their work as the product of Renaissance artists indebted to prior genius; however, in terms of the scholarship that explores these men and their work, such a statement also seems fitting.
As one such humble dwarf obliged to my predecessors, my own efforts build on the historical and critical studies, just as the work of those scholars builds on that of their precursors. I am not alone in making an appeal, in certain instances, for the broadening of both the literary canon and “mainstream” scholarship, as per the representative comments made especially by Greenblatt, Jones, Marotti, and Shell cited in the introduction, especially as concerns revisionist history. Logically, if we are to begin to understand the influence of artists like Campion, Southwell, and Byrd, we must know them first, just as we must understand the cultural context in which they lived and worked. Furthermore, as the historian Edwin Jones has explored in his study, *The English Nation: The Great Myth*, the revisionist history is crucial to understanding and living in the present as well. To quote Fabian Linden’s very Confucian logic, “It is useful occasionally to look at the past to give a perspective on the present.”¹⁹⁸ We talk about “context”—which literally comes from the Latin *textere*, to weave—in similar ways. *Contextere* means “connected” as in “to weave together.” Logically, if we only follow one thread of the whole “text[ile]” without looking at the overall pattern created by all its various threads, we can neither understand the whole nor how the various threads contribute individually to the bigger, comprehensive picture, much like a tapestry.¹⁹⁹

John Lingard (1771-1851) and his *History of England* (1826) provide interesting cases for a lack of toleration. As Edwin Jones’ study demonstrates, Lingard is a noted pioneer in historiography and source criticism, and yet his careful history that challenges “The Great [Protestant] Myth”²⁰⁰ has been largely ignored, even by twenty-first century
As Shell’s work has shown about sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Catholic poets who were seen as “foreign” rather than “English,” Lingard was similarly deracinated, even though he, too, was an Englishman. This is part of the “othering” tendency identified as one of the negative elements of “Nationalism” (see below). Educated abroad at Douai because it was still illegal for Catholics to receive an education in England, Lingard was not connected to either of the main universities (Oxford and Cambridge). This meant that Lingard lacked “the professional pedigree to be taken seriously” by the academy in spite of the fact that he “had received probably the best academic preparation for a future historian available to an Englishman” (Jones 257). Yet, Lingard is known to most (those who have read him at least) as “an enlightened Roman Catholic’ and no more” (257).

While highlighting the relevance of Lingard’s work, Jones makes a distinction between patriotism and nationalism that helps to explain Lingard’s near invisibility as an important historian. Jones dates patriotism to the time of Bede in the seventh century, but maintains that nationalism did not exist then (xv). Nationalism, according to Jones, is a system of thinking that sees “others” as “aliens” and he connects this potentially harmful tendency to the Reformation, which may help explain the persecution and marginalization of Catholics (and others) that occurred thereafter. As Shell, Marotti, and others have noted, many of the important studies that address details concerning the Catholic side of the story have been excluded from “mainstream” discussions. This phenomenon affected Shell’s own research in regard to what became “a gap in the critical
discourse, and the near-invisibility” of relevant sources because they were neither acknowledged nor accepted by “mainstream” scholars. Shell discusses one important study very parallel to her own research that was “concealed in a Catholic periodical” as a result of which “literary scholarship has hardly been affected” (104). She hopes her own work will help alter that. If we are not aware of such studies, or they are dismissed or ignored by “mainstream” scholars, it is difficult to understand fully the context of their subjects, many of which are often the same subjects, generally, explored by conventional literary scholarship employing different methods or operating from divergent pre-existing narratives and influences.

In similar ways, Campion’s *Ambrosia*, most of Southwell’s verse, and Byrd’s composition have not been included much, if at all, in English literature courses that cover the Tudor period, neither have Tresham nor Harington been figures of interest. Similarly, the critical studies that examine these figures have not been taken seriously by most “mainstream” scholars (if they have even read them in the first place), even though, as Stephen Greenblatt notes, “revisionist energies” have greatly impacted our understanding of the traditional “boundaries” of study in the academy (1). Greenblatt notes the potential for busy scholars to be unaware of “significant developments even in their own areas of expertise” (3). According to Greenblatt, the “boundaries” to be addressed in the field of literary studies are necessarily expansive and cover a wide range from “national, linguistic, historical, generational, and geographical to racial, ethnic, social, sexual, political, ethical, and religious” (4). He also observes how:
research projects that would in one generation have resulted in ostracism are in the next rewarded with tenure; questions that at first seemed absurd come in time to be accepted as routine; a technical vocabulary that initially appeared to belong to a different discipline altogether is relocated to the very center of the enterprise of literary analysis. Conversely, practices that were formerly taken as givens are latterly almost completely given up; that which once passed for a satisfactory or even brilliant answer comes to seem woefully inadequate; and texts that did not seem to qualify as “literature” at all are celebrated as major achievements. (5)

These paradigm shifts occur when established “norms” about the way texts are read or understood and notions about who is privileged to study and write about them get challenged, as well as when lesser-known texts are included in the course of study. This project, in examining such texts and the existing scholarship about them, hopes to serve as both a base and a model for the way other Renaissance “texts” might be explored and understood. Logically, if we find echoes of the strategies and techniques that have been identified in Catholic art in other art of the period, we then can ask interesting questions about what those echoes might mean, especially knowing as we do how free speech was suppressed and any legitimate religious toleration was yet hundreds of years in the future. In identifying the major doctrinal issues being debated by Catholics and Protestants during the Reformation, this study has traced those elements in the various art it explored in an attempt to understand better the English Catholic conciliatory, apologetic response to reforms and the way that such art sought to reconcile Eros and Agape. As this study concludes, may it provide a starting point for others.
Works Cited

Primary Sources


---. *Decem Rationes* http://www.freecatholicbooks.com/books/edmundcampion.pdf


162


Harsnett, Samuel. A declaration of egregious popish impostures to with-draw the harts of her Maisties subjects from their allegeance, and from the truth of Christian religion professed in England, vnder the pretence of casting out deuils. Practised by Edmunds, alias Weston a Jesuit, and diuers Romish priestes his wicked associates. Where-vnto are annexed the copies of the confessions, and examinations of the parties themselues, which were pretended to be possessed,


Scot, Reginald. The discoverie of witchcraft wherein the lewde dealing of witches an witchmongers is notablie detected, the knauerie of coniurors, the impietie of inchantors, the follie of soothsaiers, the impudent falshood of cousenors, the infidelitie of atheists, the pestilent practises of pythonists, the curiositie of figurecasters, the vanitie of dreamers, the beggerlie art of alcumystrie, the abomination of idolatrie, the horrible art of poisoning, the vertue and power of naturall magike, and all the conueiances of legierdemaine and iuggling are deciphered: and many other things opened, which have long lien hidden, howbeit verie necessarie to be knowne. Heerevnto is added a treatise vpon the nature and substance of spirits and diuels, &c: all latelie written by Reginald Scot Esquire. London : by [Henry Denham for] William Brome, 1584. Early English Books Online. Web. 9 Apr. 2012.


**Secondary Sources**


---. “Public Liturgy Made Private: The Rosary Confraternity in the Life of a Recusant Household.” *The Triumphs of the Defeated: Early Modern Festivals and*


Reading.


Reading.


Print.


---. “Byrd Chapter (Draft).” Message to Nicole Coonradt. 12 Mar. 2012. E-mail.


---. The Plays and the Exercises: A Hidden Source of Shakespeare’s Inspiration?


Web 4 Sep. 2009.


Endnotes

1 For example, *The Marian Injunctions* (1554) reversed reforms as much as possible, reconciling England with Rome on 29 November 1554 (*Documents* 315); whereas Elizabeth repealed the Marian anti-Protestant laws with *The Act of Supremacy*, *The Act of Uniformity*, *The Elizabethan Injunctions*, *The Eleven Articles* (1559), etc. (*Documents* 318-51). Matters intensified under James as with his *Oath of Allegiance* (1606).

2 This does not include Lady Jane Grey, “The Nine Days’ Queen” (1553).

3 In Book One of *The Arte of English Poesy*, Puttenham notes “In {w}hat forme of Poesie the euill and outragious behauiours of Princes {w}ere reprehended” (15).

4 To give just a brief catalog of a few polemical texts, consider Stephen Gardiner’s *Of True Obedience* (*De Vera Obedientia*) (c.1535) written during Henry’s reign, which provides a fairly ambiguous reading of the conflicted start of reforms in England, with leanings that support the Old Faith. Antithetically, its later commentary, “Translator to the Christian Reader” by Michal Wood (1553) written during Mary’s reign, gives an unambiguously anti-Catholic reading of the political moment, which is curious given that a Catholic is on the throne. Wood’s comments sound very reminiscent of John Bale’s *Kyne Johan* (c. 1538) with its virulent anti-Catholicism. Also during Mary I’s brief reign (1553-1558), John Heywood wrote *The Spider and the Fly* (1556), an allegorical mock epic in rhyme royal with the fly representing Catholicism; the spider, Protestantism. The woman who saves the day, freeing the fly from the spider’s tangled web is the maid (Mary I) who functions as a Classical *deus ex machina*, “The maid of the house did chop, / Setting her broom hard to the copweb’s top, / Where at one stroke with her broom striken round / The copweb and spider she strake to the ground” (200-03). The just maid spares the spider and a fair trial is conducted. The maid, referring to the Great Chain of Being in discussing “certain precepts weighty and wise” (229), restores order saying, “As Nature and custom willeth you of old, / While reason and custom do me clear encline / My master’s and maistress’ will to work in fine, / As I under them and you under me / May lovely live, I say, each in due degree” (304-08).

5 Jones calls the Protestant shaping of history, attributed first to the influence and control of Cromwell under Henry VIII, “revisionist.” In that vein, perhaps more technically the current “revisionist” history should be called “*revisionist* revisionist” history.

6 Shell makes a case for the importance of including influential Catholic figures like Robert Southwell in anthologies, which I discuss further below. While his “The Burning Babe” poem has often remained a commonplace in some anthologies, his verse is largely unknown because he goes unread, and, thus, as Shell further argues, his substantial
influence remains unrealized. Her section “Catholics and the Canon” explores these ideas in an earnest attempt to help alter that phenomenon. Importantly, Shell is not Roman Catholic, but Anglican. Perhaps like William Cobbett, Alexander Grosart, et al., Shell’s interest in revisionist history and careful scholarship that seeks balance can provide a useful model that lends an even greater validity to the discussion about broadening the canon and re-thinking restrictive definitions that may compartmentalize artists, scholars, and their respective work. Jones similarly notes that “the work of the revisionist school of historians is still the preserve of only a minority of English people,” but on the eve of the twenty-first century Jones optimistically sees the conditions ripening for change (253).

7 Alastair Fowler calls Erasmus a reformer (6). Erasmus and other humanists had challenged matters of “ecclesiastical and liturgical practices, theological authorities, and attitudes of obedience to the Church,” all of which the Jesuits had defended (Höpfl 33). Prior to Luther, we can cite John Wycliffe (1330-1384) and the Lollard movement in England, Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) in Italy for her disputes with the Avignon Papacy in the early schism, Jan Hus (1372-1415) in Bohemia, and Cardinal Ximenes (1436-1517) in Spain. Additionally, we should remember that the Catholic Luther, originally Augustinian, initially had not intended to break from the Church when he posted his famous 95 Theses at Wittenburg on 31 October 1517.

8 Significantly, “culture” comes from the Latin word “cult,” meaning “worship.” When discussing culture today, we might well focus on all the temporal things people “worship,” including technology and material goods. During the sixteenth century, however, culture may more rightly be seen to involve religious worship, though this may not be true of all people. Duffy’s scholarship indicates it certainly was true for a majority, regardless of their faith.

9 Most of the critical commentary on the sixteenth and seventeenth century, unless it deals specifically with theological matters, does not take into account the ubiquitous influence of religious unrest to contextualize writing, nor do most literature courses include study of the writings of Jesuits or other “religious” figures, unless they are either specifically Protestant, or viewed as voices of “protest.” Popular collections of British literature (the kind typically used in undergraduate survey courses), such as the Longman Anthology of English Literature and those discussed briefly below, often ignore or minimize Jesuit writing. Longman (3rd or 4th ed.) does not include the works of Campion, Southwell, or other declared Catholic writers after the Reformation begins. Even the earlier work of Julian of Norwich is listed under the heading “Mystical Writings” in Longman’s table of contents, which seems to consider her apart from her Catholicism, even though all of Christendom was officially “Catholic” at that time. No longer do we find even Southwell’s “Burning Babe” anthologized regularly, a poem that, famously,
Ben Jonson so esteemed as exemplary verse of which he was envious. *Longman* includes excerpts from John Foxe’s *Actes and Monuments* and *The Geneva Bible*, but where do we find a representation of parity with the Catholic voices to pair with these texts? See, for example, John Scarisbrick’s work on Henrician reforms. There are plenty of works that came out of the English College in Rome and from English students and professors from both Douai and Rheims, but those voices are not included in standard anthologies. Perhaps the editors do not consider these “English,” since the exiles were writing on foreign soil and so have been deracinated? Shell has noted that even English authors writing in England are considered “foreign” because of their Catholicism. Regardless, such practices seem irresponsible and provide an obviously limited and biased perspective.

In the *Norton Anthology* (8th ed.), as with *Longman*, neither Campion nor Southwell appear. *The Broadview Anthology, Vol. 2* is far more responsible, with the latest edition adding a section on Southwell that includes not only “The Burning Babe,” but seven other of his poems as well; yet, even here, Campion is nowhere to be found, not even his famous “Brag,” though the anthology does include other non-literary texts, especially those of a political nature. Of course one of the biggest problems facing those who wish to find balance, more generally, *in English literature*, is the fact that when these texts were created the contemporary laws forbade overt challenges to the status quo and the governments of Elizabeth I and James I enforced those laws with severe censorship, which means that any commentary is necessarily guarded and less obvious, if not carefully concealed. The exception to this is when it is an overtly religious author who, nevertheless, took great risk to speak out and often suffered dire consequences for doing so.

As further support, Marotti writes: “The sufferings of lay and clerical Catholics in early modern England have not had a great deal of sympathetic attention from those writing histories or the literary histories of the period. For too long historians ceded such tasks to confessionally apologetic Catholic scholars; and the master narrative of English literary history has had little space for Catholic writing” (3).

---

10 Bombino’s biography was first printed in Antwerp and then revised in Mantua, 1620 (Kilroy, *Memory* 39).

11 Kilroy is currently working on a new biography on Campion. Katherine Duncan Jones has written on Campion’s associations with the Sidneys, Sir Philip and his father (see her essay in *The Reckoned Expense*, 85-102).

12 Pollard Brown especially bridges the two centuries.
Kilroy is one scholar who has been making progress toward this end in working with archival and manuscript texts, by which he is practicing source criticism by consulting the most primary sources available.

For a while, Rushton Hall was a school for the blind and the *Tresham Papers* were found during nineteenth-century renovations when the partition wall in which they were concealed was removed. Other papers were found concealed in floorboards as recently as the mid twentieth century. These more recent papers provide evidence of a coded message (apparently leading to a “treasure”) hidden in the large relief of Christ’s Passion found in the Hall’s secret Oratory, accessible via a narrow back staircase originally used “only” by servants. The message has yet to be deciphered. Such evidence might seem beyond credible to some except for the fact that we have autograph proof from Tresham himself as with these lately discovered papers in manuscript. In the relief, it is believed that the figures depicted in the image either with swords or gesturing hands point to specific letters or words in the Latin text of the relief that provide a “text” for the coded message. Various lines of what seem to be nonsense indicate that rather than a poor job of restoration, the “errors” are intentional and hint at part of the code or the way to decipher it. “Treasure” could refer to altar service or other relics of Catholic worship. We know that many of these were hidden before they could be confiscated or destroyed during the dissolution of the monasteries. The recusants who hid them hoped to be able to unearth them at a later date in order to use them for worship again.

The paper is believed to have originated in or around Lyons, France, c. 1585-1610 (Kilroy, *Memory* 15). We should remember that even the paper mills in England were controlled by the state. Unauthorized texts had to be printed or written on paper that came from other sources, which were most often abroad.

Marotti contends that revisionist historians “have rescued English religious history from the clutches of both Catholic apologists and Marxist interpreters who betray their discomfort with religion by habitually translating religious and ecclesiastical material into economic and political realities” (3). Marotti previously asserted that due to lack of interest and attention, only Catholic apologists were dealing with the history and literature. In that case, “clutches” may be a rather harsh term, pejorative as it is. Nevertheless, his comments highlight the importance of revisionist history.

See the inscription on the title page of Southwell’s *Saint Peters Complaynte* in the Grosart edition for an emblematic representation of this motto that includes sacred numerology and which I discuss in greater depth in chapter 3.

Puttenham’s and Sidney’s contemporary views on poetry will be discussed presently.

*A Pilgrim’s Testament* is Ignatius’ autobiography, but readers should note that he wrote it in the third person, talking about himself at a remove.

Harro Höpfl, in his recent study, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630* (Cambridge UP, 2004), discusses the issue of “militancy” in Jesuit lore. By contrast, Höpfl notes, “[I]n fact military metaphors played no part whatever in the founders’ deliberations about how the Society was to be organised. The metaphors used in the founding documents about enrolling under the ‘banner of Christ’ (*sub cruces vexillo Dei militare*) were utterly conventional, and virtually inescapable as a description of an association intended as an active agency of the ‘Church Militant’. Moreover, they were not invoked to explain or justify the *structure* of the Society, but rather the strenuous and perilous commitment expected of its members.” (25) At *OED*, the first definition for “militant” deals with the Church doing battle with evil on earth. The etymology shows the Latin concerned with service.

“Works” will be explored at length in subsequent chapters of the study.

See Höpfl regarding the personal vs. the communal in “Ordered Passions” (31-34).

See Asquith, Beauregard, Duffy, Kilroy, Milward, McCarthy, *et al.* for relevant discussions of recusancy in England. We should also note that there were other recusants in England besides Catholics and those, in the main, were the Puritans. The word “recusant” comes from the Latin *recusare*, meaning “to refuse.” Recusants in England are those who refused to attend Protestant (later called Anglican) services and were thus fined heavily. By way of example, Thomas Tresham, over the course of his life, was fined approximately £9,000 and was in and out of prison for decades. Consider that an Elizabethan household servant’s yearly income was £2-5. Today, Tresham’s recusancy fines would be approximately £2.3 million or $3.6 million (USD). As a result, he was unable to finish constructing Lyvended New Bield, which, like the Triangular Lodge, is a coded architectural tribute to Catholicism. Unless otherwise noted, the term “recusant” in this study refers primarily to those among the Catholic community in England, they being the largest known subset.

Milward has long considered Shakespeare’s Sonnet 73’s, “The bare ruin’d choirs, where late the sweet birds sang” (73.4), to be a pained allusion to the destruction of the monastic houses, a notion echoed by Walsham and others. Contemporary language that supports such a connection includes Becon and Knox as Walsham reveals: “Much of this discourse [regarding idolatry], of course, was directed against graven images: the
similitudes of things in heaven above, on earth below, and in the waters of the sea beneath which were specifically prohibited by the second commandment. Its primary targets were the pictures and statues that had proliferated within houses and cathedrals and churches during the Middle Ages and transformed houses of prayer, in the words of Thomas Becon, into ‘synagogues of Satan,’ and ‘the vile cages of all filthy and unclean birds’ [Becon, *Catechism*, 65].” (Walsham 88) Note that even private residences were not safe from iconoclasm. Additionally, in the 1550s, “John Knox was said to have declared in one of his thunderous sermons that ‘the only sure way to banish the rooks was to pull down their nests’. This was a specific reference to the cloisters of friars and monks, but the principle that underpinned it had much wider resonances,” that being the utter destruction of “parochial structures in which mass had been celebrated for many centuries” (91).

26 In *The English Nation: The Great Myth*, Jones makes this same case for Lingard in the early nineteenth century, that is, Lingard’s own particular genius responded to a specific need.

27 The same might be said just as certainly of Campion and all those martyred under Elizabeth and James. Tellingly, if one looks at a per annum account of executions, under Mary I and Elizabeth I during their respective reigns, “Bloody” Mary may appear to be the worse of the two half-sisters (by something approximating 38%); however, given that Mary’s reign was but five years and Elizabeth was queen for a lengthy almost 45 years, this severely distorts matters. Over-all, Elizabeth killed, conservatively speaking, 300% more people than her half-sister during the course of her long reign. For instance, Elizabeth ordered the execution of what estimates number between 600-700 people after the Northern Rebellion in 1570, which was, of course, tied to the Catholic-Protestant rift (Mary Stuart and Thomas Howard are discussed in a later chapter). And certainly in regard to any potential “don’t ask don’t tell” policy, the Jesuit mission was obviously secret and yet at least 124 priests were executed for their faith (see Peter Marshall’s *Reformation England 1480-1642*), as were many of their recusant Catholic flock for attending or conducting secret Masses. These numbers do not take into account those who wasted away in prison, often from illness, malnutrition, or starvation; died in prison after heinous torture; lost everything through fines and confiscations of property; were separated from their families—some had their children taken from them to be raised by Protestants, and country through exile—and denied education and public office. This in no way condones or diminishes the horror of the executions under Mary I, but, rather, highlights the fact of Christian hypocrisy as seen in Christian-on-Christian violence during the Early Modern period in England and offers hope to avoid any continued white-washing of what occurred during Elizabeth’s reign where the evidence confirms that
“mercy” did not always season “justice.” Lingard’s history reveals that Elizabeth “was not sparing of the blood of her subjects” (Jones 249).

28 Virtually all the critical texts cited herein deal on some level with the denial of Mass for English Catholic community and its “starving” recusants. Fr. William Weston’s *An Autobiography from the Jesuit Underground* is one important source that discusses first-hand the danger of conducting secret Masses. See also Marotti, Hogge, *et al.* for discussions of punishments.

29 The Latin translates to “The True Body” as Catholics believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist because of the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, which they believe was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* and Elizabethan *Homilies* rejected the Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation.


31 Aquinas refers to Aristotle as “The Philosopher” throughout *Summa Theologica*.

32 See especially Book 1 (1.3). See also Sir Philip Sidney’s *The Defense of Poesy* (1595) for additional contemporary treatment and understanding, especially the following paragraphs that discuss, variously: “true doctrine” (75), “teaching” (81), glorifying God (83), “persuasion” (88), “language,” and “occasion” (89).

33 Kilroy comments: “The poet contrasts his role with that of the pulpit where significantly everything but love is preached” (104).

34 John Wilkins’ *Mercury Or the Secret and Swift Messenger* (1641), though it postdates this study’s period of focus, is useful in understanding concepts of ambiguity as well, of which, one can assume, Wilkins learned from traditional usage. All of his chapter headings are so suggestive and instructive that it serves as a kind of primer for the uninitiated, just as the Rosary texts (many printed in Antwerp) did for members of the confraternities, discussed later. See Anne Dillon’s several studies on the history of the confraternities and the revival and revision of the Rosary as connected to the Jesuits and the *Spiritual Exercises*. Some are cited herein, as with “Praying by Number.”

35 Leo Strauss’ *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (1952) makes parallel claims regarding censorship and artistic response in which “reading between the lines” is a central theme or strategy (see especially 31-2).
Certainly the fact that so many of the laws deal with religious matters attests to the reality that as Marotti and others have argued: politics and religion were fairly inextricable, especially as the monarch was both temporal and spiritual head in England (32).

One of Harington’s “ydle” epigrams in Book 1 discusses stellification, “Of one that seekes to be stellified being no Pithagorian” (1.23). The poem is a satiric attack on “Epicures,” who appear to be linked to Protestant clergymen. The fact that fasting for religious purposes had been made illegal, it being seen as a superstitious popish practice, supports such a reading. “Fasting for merritt is made punishable by statute [during] the raigne of Q. Elizabeth: a thinge never hearde of or observed amongge Turkes or pagans” (Of Fasting, Lib. 28; Kilroy, Memory 13). This epigram and its use of the ancients provide an apt example of the way Classical antiquity was utilized to discuss topical concerns. Harington’s epigrams provide a rich harvest of such practices.

McConica relates the execution of two priests, George Nichols and Richard Yaxley, the latter of whom went by the alias Tankard; and two laymen, Thomas Belson, a gentleman, and Humphrey ap Richard, a servant. The priests, after being tortured in both Bridewell and the Tower, were hung, drawn, and quartered in the usual manner for a conviction of treason, while the laymen were hung for felony. In addition, a widow who owned and operated the inn in which they were all living with Oxford students, “was convicted in a praemunire, [for which] all of her goods were confiscated and she herself was condemned to perpetual imprisonment” (61). OED defines praemunire as “maintaining papal jurisdiction in England . . . so denying the ecclesiastical supremacy of the monarch.” Basically, the landlady’s ruination was the result of her Catholicism; however, like Anne Line and others, she might well have been executed for the worse offense of “harboring priests.”

Under Leicester, 1565- 1580 saw an increase in control via new statues, nova statuta. According to McConica, the statue of November 1581 for matriculation “gave the colleges and halls virtual control over admission to the university, and . . . finally brought into being a Protestant, undergraduate, collegiate university” (58), a statement that he later seems to contradict when he says that by the end of Elizabeth’s reign, “the Catholicism of the place was tenacious still” (63). How can it be Protestant and yet simultaneously and tenaciously Catholic? Kilroy’s recent research on Oxford has revealed the extent to which Leicester’s meddling affected the culture with numbers of chairs and students leaving, often for exile. Interestingly, there was an underground, alternative educational system that had sprung up in taverns and outlying farms and estates. Also, many students were at university unofficially as “servants” to the various
houses, another way around their being forced to take the Oath. (See “Edmund Campion and the Queen’s Visit to Oxford in 1566: A Catholic Perspective.”)

40 In the light of revisionist history, there has been renewed interest of late in a number of figures who long had been assumed to have embraced Reformed thinking and policies—Edmund Spenser, Philip Sidney, and John Donne among them. Scholars are now rethinking the previous criticism to question the status quo. For example, born to a Catholic family—Donne’s mother, Elizabeth (née Heywood, daughter of John Heywood, playwright and epigrammist), was a great-niece of Saint Thomas More and had lived on the Continent for a while (in Antwerp) to escape religious persecution in England—Donne was impacted significantly by religious schism. Two maternal uncles were Jesuits persecuted for their forbidden faith and “treasonous” profession, while Donne’s brother, Henry, was imprisoned for harboring a priest friend who was later executed; Henry died of the plague while yet imprisoned in Newgate. About his family, in Pseudo-Martyr (1610), Donne noted how they “hath endured and suffered more in their persons and fortunes, for obeying the Teachers of Roman Doctrine, then [any family] hath done” (qtd. in Bald 23). Donne had a wife (via a love match to whom he remained devoted throughout their marriage) and ten children to support and some argue that this influenced his religious affiliations. We should note, too, that Donne composed most of his verse, including his Holy Sonnets, while he was yet Catholic. (“Donne, John” ODNB.) For relevant commentary see the recent work on Donne of Katherine Duncan Jones, Alison Shell, and especially A. J. Smith with Catherine Phillips John Donne: A Critical Heritage. Vol. 2.

41 Strangely, even after the Catholic Reform Bills, in the mid nineteenth century—as late as 1854—the Oath was still required for matriculation at Oxford.

42 This idea of freedom in exile is relevant to the forthcoming discussion in the next chapter about Campion’s Latin drama Ambrosia that was written and performed in Prague (1578) prior to his joining the Mission to England.

43 See Gérard Genette and Marie Maclean’s, “Introduction to Paratext.” Regarding “paratext,” Philippe Lejeune calls it, “a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one’s whole reading of the text” (qtd. in Genette 261). While this does not refer directly to footnotes, it seems apt, even if that control is achieved inadvertently. This puts me in mind of the “monument” to Tyburn Tree in London on Oxford Street, the old Tyburn Road. The easy-to-miss, tiny plaque is imbedded in a concrete pedestrian crosswalk and is in a state of disrepair. One wonders what kind of a tribute this is meant to be. It is this sort of marginalization or disregard that this study and others like it endeavor to change—
all the better to realize the significant role various Catholic figures and their art play in the larger picture of reform in England.

44 Marotti’s study seeks to understand “the religious and political crises and history of the time” (6).

45 See Grosart’s “Memorial Introduction” (xc-xci). In her chapter “Catholics and the Canon,” Shell notes that “Southwellian prefaces challenge with their pleas for poets to address religious themes” (Catholicism, Controversy 82).

46 Kerry McCarthy, Duke musicologist and Byrd scholar, has called this view “perceptive if slightly overenthusiastic” (66).

47 “Awful” here means “awesome,” “awe-inspiring.” Other translations substitute other words, such as “wonderful,” meaning “to cause wonder” (like “marvelous”) in the same sense as awe and its cognates.


49 Because of the fact that orthography was very much in flux during the Renaissance, archaic and variant spelling will not be noted per the usual use of “[sic]” unless there is something particularly confusing. The frequent use of work by British scholars also is presented “as is” with its variant spelling and punctuation to which I will not draw attention.

50 See McCoog, The Reckoned Expense. Intro. (xviii); Kilroy, “Subversive” (2-3, 8), and Memory; and ODNB “Edmund Campion,” Michael A. R. Graves.

51 The following chapter on Robert Southwell, Campion’s fellow English Jesuit, artist, and Martyr, documents Southwell’s attempts to reconcile his own father to Catholicism and make amends for a long list of familial betrayals for which it is tempting to see him as a Christ figure, expiating their sins with his own sacrifice at Tyburn.

52 Kilroy cites: ABSI, Collectanea, IV.1, fol. 114r.

53 On disputation see Thomas M. McCoog, S.J. in The Reckoned Expense, “‘Playing the Champion’: The Role of Disputation in the Jesuit Mission” (119-39), Harro Höpfl, Jesuit
Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630, and Campion’s Decem Rationes.

54 “Eucharist” from the Greek means “thanksgiving” (OED). The Eucharist can refer to the liturgy or to the consecrated host.

55 See Clare Asquith, “As You Like It and the Elizabethan Catholic Dilemma.” In The Rosarie of Our Ladie (1590/1600) the Preface describes the Blessed Virgin repeatedly at Christ’s “Espouse.”

56 See Documents of the English Reformation.

57 Toleration did not begin to be a reality until the nineteenth-century Reform Bills.

58 Puttenham writes: “Bvt because in those dayes when the Poets first taxed by Satyre and Comedy, there was no great store of Kings or Emperors or such high estats (al men being yet for the most part rude, & in a maner popularly egall) they could not say of them or of their behauiours any thing to the purpose, which cases of Princes are sithens taken for the highest and greatest matters of all. But after that some men among the moe became mighty and famous in the world, soueraignetie and dominion hauing learned them all maner of lusts and licentiousnes of life, by which occasions also their high estates and felicities fell many times into most lowe and lamentable fortunes: whereas before in their great prosperitiies they were both feared and reuereenced in the highest degree, after their deathes when the posteritie stood no more in dread of them, their infamous life and tyrannies were layd open to all the world, their wickednes reproched, their follies and extreme insolencies derided, and their miserable ends painted out in playes and pageants, to shew the mutabilitie of fortune, and the just punishment of God in reuenge of a vicious and euill life. These matters were also handled by the Poets and represented by action as that of the Comedies: but because the matter was higher then that of the Comedies the Poets stile was also higher and more loftie, the prouision greater, the place more magnificent: for which purpose also the players garments were made more rich & costly and solemne, and euery other thing aperteining, according to that rate.” (Arte 1.15)

59 Shakespeare is thought to have a hand in the playtext (“a second pen: had a good share,” according to Jonson’s comments in the 1605 Quarto) but also is listed as having performed in the 1603 production (perhaps as the wise and witty Lucius Arruntius, who arguably has some of the best lines that are also among the most dangerous, especially his many asides) that was closed down for being too seditious.
In the *Calendar of State Papers* entry for 17 March 1605, the Venetian Ambassador records: “The Puritans cannot bear the present regulation, and are continually besieging his Majesty and Council with petitions. A Puritan minister recently presented one to the King in the country, wherein he blamed the King for attending only to the chase and his own pleasures. The King ordered his arrest, and has sent him to London to be examined.” This provides evidence that one had to be careful when trying to censure a prince.

See Simons Introduction for the Latin transcription of the letter (ix).

Richard Simpson notes, “[Ambrosia] was repeated by command of the empress and the French queen (90).

Similarly, at his execution, Robert Southwell, “Commended into God’s hands the Queen, his country and his soul” (Hogge 189).

Sweeney explores this concept as well in “Caesar’s or God’s? Lave Versus Love” (129-35).

See Joseph Simons’ introductory comments to the play in his translation, especially xiv-xx. All citations herein are to this text.

Joseph Milne emphasized the importance of opening scenes in “Shakespeare’s Cosmos.”

See Kilroy on Harington’s epigrams that deal with the sorrowful mysteries and Lenten themes in both *Memory* (see especially chapter 4, “Sir John Harington: ‘Wise Pretender of Foolery’) and his longer study, *The Epigrams of Sir John Harington*.

Shakespeare’s use of “mistress” comes to mind, especially in Sonnet 130: “My Mistress Eyes are Nothing Like the Sun.” The term appears, pejoratively, in Southwell’s verse as well. See “Love’s Servile Lott” for one example. This poem is examined in the next chapter. See Janet Clare and Leo Strauss on ambiguity and the necessity of it during times of persecution and censorship.

Puttenham also uses the term, as cited above in his *The Arte of English Poesie*: “soueraignetie and dominion hauing learned them all maner of lusts and licentiousnes of life” (1.15).

See *Half Human kind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England 1540-1640*. “Since the very beginnings of literature, ‘half-humankind,’—
female of the species—has been an irresistible subject for the pens of the other half. When men have been the subject of written scrutiny or attack, they have been viewed primarily as individuals or as members of a group . . . rather than as representative of their half of the race. Women, on the other hand, have been repeatedly generalized into Woman, that fascinating topic for diatribes or panegyrics” (3). Knox’ First Blast is a good example of diatribe.

Simons translates “Redi quietus, domine, fili” (5.4.1190) as “Go back with a tranquil heart, my lord and son” (75). “Return in peace, my lord, my son,” would be another option, since “heart” (cor) is not mentioned here.

We see this sort of geographical juxtaposition all the time in the contemporary literature—Pagan Briton in King Lear, Venice in The Merchant of Venice, the forest of Arden in As You Like It (as Arden Forest in England and Ardennes in France—see Asquith’s Shadowplay [139] and Milward’s Shakespeare the Papist [112]), Rome in various plays for Shakespeare and others. Ben Jonson’s Sejanus has already been discussed. Part of the fascination with Classical antiquity so central to Renaissance art is tied up in this re-seeing the present in the past and the useful cover that such a strategy provided in times of severe censorship and persecution. See again Alastair Fowler and Janet Clare on the importance of juxtaposition of place to antiquity for representing sixteenth-century England when discussing dangerous topics.

As the clerics worry about how to best censure Theodosius, one of them asks: “Whom do we serve? Or in whom do we confide, in man or in God? Will not the latter be able to protect the true faith without us doing wicked things? He will be able to do so, and He will carry our good effort to a happy conclusion” (5.1.1048-52). This, too, could well have held a topical meaning for a portion of Campion’s audience, perhaps Church Papists in England, had they been able to view the play. It would have been reassuring to note that God is the highest authority as it encouraged the faithful to be steadfast and avoid evil.

Kilroy’s section on Donne is particularly compelling (6-7). All the conference lectures and entertainments are available for viewing on-line at You-Tube.

This buying of support will be noted in Southwell’s “Fortune’s Falsehoode” in the following chapter, which can be read as a critique of Elizabeth and her court: “sith welth the virtuous might wrest from piety” (7.4).

See Ben Jonson’s reference to Pericles in his poem, “An Ode to Himself” (1629).
This allusion to the Trinitarian doctrinal debates also would have been meaningful elsewhere in Christendom during the spiritual controversies initiated by the Protestant Reformation.


See Theodore Beza’s *The Life of John Calvin* (16-17, 32, 229-30).

We should note that “labels” for various groups are not hard and fast. Even the Catholics varied in how they perceived and discussed themselves. “Church papist,” for example, was a term used by Protestants to describe Catholics who conformed outwardly to the reformed faith but remained inwardly Catholic in their beliefs and private practices. Catholics often used the term “Nicodemites” to describe this phenomenon among themselves. Similarly, the terms, as we understand and use them now to discuss Protestants, are many and in flux during the time being explored in this project.

“Anglican” was not used in print, according to *OED*, until 1598 by James I of Scotland (which he contrasts with “Papistical”) in his *True History*; Campion and Southwell are both deceased by then. In 1572, J. Leslie’s treatise *Treasons against Q. Elizabeth*, is among the first sources cited by *OED* for the terms to distinguish among Protestants, and Anglican is not among them: “Vnder Q. Elizabeth were first Lutherans, · · than Caluinistes, · · then Puritans” (i f. 97). Additional useful citations include: “1573 T. Cartwright *Replye to Answere Whitgifte* 13 If you meane, that those are Puritanes or Catharans, which do set forth a true and perfect patern or platforme of reforming the church, then the marke of thys heresie reacheth vnto those, which made the booke of common prayer,” and “1603 King James VI & I *Basilikon Doron* sig. B 4 v, As to the name Puritanes, I am not ignorant that the style thereof doth properly belong onely to that vile sect amongst the Anabaptists, called the familie of loue; because they thinke themselves onely pure.” The first use of “Presbyterian” cited in *OED* is: “1606 Bp. W. Barlow *One of Foure Serm. Hampton Court* sig. A3 v, The world can witnes that English Bishops haue for Religion done that, which neuer any Clerolaicall Consistorien, or Bench Presbyterian, either Southern or Northern durst, hath, or can performe.” From the *Calendar of State Papers* 8 April 1605: “63. The King to the Same, as Vice Chancellor of Cambridge. As the Universities are the nurseries of learning, and should be free from all factions, thinks it necessary for the students to swear to the Book of Articles. No person henceforth to be admitted to a degree, without taking the oath of supremacy, and another oath, of which the form is given, of adherence to episcopal government, and the liturgies, &c., of the Church of England.” The point is that terms are not firm and these contemporary texts indicate that each Continental reformer influenced reforms in England, some more than others. Furthermore, the terms are not simply interchangeable as synonyms based on the differing treatment that the citations indicate.
It is perhaps a measure of Campion’s genius as a dramatist to have realized in Church history such an evocatively apt “text” to dramatize. These useful parallels must have seemed to the playwright almost too good to be true.


See Marotti’s accounts of Anne Line and Margaret Clitherow, hung and pressed to death, respectively, for harboring Priests and their involvement in the Jesuit mission, in Chapter 2 “Alienating Catholics: Recusant Women, Jesuits, and Ideological Fantasies.”

Tellingly, the Jesuits and the recusant community called Anne Line “Mrs. Martha” for her active role as a worker among them to distinguish her from the idea of Martha’s contemplative sister, Mary. Martin Dodwell’s forthcoming biography on Anne Line fills in many of the gaps in what has been known thus far about Line’s life. (The Neat-herd’s Daughter: The Hidden Life of Saint Anne Line, Catholic UP.)

The Rosary will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, however, interested readers may wish to consult Anne Dillon’s study, “Praying by Number: The Confraternity of the Rosary and the English Catholic Community, c.1580-1700, and Anne Sweeney’s study on Southwell, especially chapter 2 (86).

Peter Milward, S. J. has been especially interested in Shakespeare’s heroines and often argues for a link to Marian doctrine, which Protestants necessarily rejected in their reforms. In the summer of 2009, Milward conducted a retreat at the Jesuit House in Los Altos, CA in August that specifically examined the topic. Beauregard’s study examines similar themes in Shakespeare.

See also Anne Sweeney’s Snow in Arcadia for further discussions of Mary as Mediatrix (107, 124, 149, 247). Fr. John A. Hardon, S. J. has written on Bellarmine and his contribution doctrinal debates about Mary. See “Mary: Mediatrix in the Theology of Bellarmine,” in which Hardon notes Bellarmine’s “understanding of the Blessed Virgin’s position as Mediatrix between fallen man and Almighty God” (para. 2).

The Virgin Queen as the object of idolatry is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter on Southwell, but most of the scholars cited herein comment on this phenomenon. See especially Sweeney, “Emblems and Idolatrous Images” (205-13).
Though not a straight allegorical figure, Kilroy argues for Shakespeare’s Juliet as, on one level, a Marian character, she being fourteen, “for teen,” or born “for sorrow” like the Blessed Virgin who was said to be fourteen when she conceived by the Holy Ghost (“Changing Eyes” 12). See also Asquith’s talk “As You Like It: The English Catholic Dilemma” for discussions of the Mary and the Mystical Body of the Church.

Southwell will play on these kinds of polyvalent roles in “The Nativity of Christe”: “Behoul the father in His daughter’s sonne, / The bird that built the nest is hatchd therin” (1.1-2), ideas repellent to Protestants. To call Mary “the Mother of God” was going too far and seemed to put her above both God and Christ. The 1590 preface to the Rosarie of Our Ladie (Antwerp 1600) refers to Mary repeatedly as the “Espouse.” In a similar conflation, Christian de Chergé, discussed in the concluding chapter, refers to “that true strand of the Gospel which I learned at my mother’s knee, my very first Church” (“Testament” para. 4).

Curiously, we might note crawling and the repetition of tomorrow (and the spelling) that seems to be echoed in Shakespeare’s Macbeth, “To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, / Creeps in this petty pace” (5.5.21-22). Another echo of Ambrosia in Macbeth might be considered in Justina’s comments about her woes, when having cataloged them she asks herself, “Shall you never be free from care? For me one grief follows another. No sooner had I calmed down than a new sorrow arises. . . . Anxieties of many kinds press, frighten and alarm me. What shall I do? . . . [R]elieve my bitter fate” (2.1.272-74, 79, 84). Compare this to Macduff’s catalog of woes to Malcolm: “each new morn / New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows / Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds / As if it felt with Scotland and yell’d out / Like syllable of dolour.” (4.3.4-8)

This translation follows the Douai-Rheims version of the bible.

The “Luther Canon” is the term used for the bible as Luther envisioned it, which prioritized the biblical texts, James given a lower status of importance. The Luther Bible (1522) is Luther’s German translation and demonstrates his views on canonicity. He called James “an epistle of straw” in the Preface to the New Testament in his 1522 translation. Later editions omit this comment.

See Milward (10) for discussion of Luther’s Sola Fide and works.

Southwell’s “The Visitation,” about one of the joyous mysteries, alludes to the biblical passage in which part of the Ave Maria is established. Here we find a poetic meditation on several aspects of Mariology as conflated with the angel Gabriel’s
Salutation. Of special note is the Blessed Virgin’s charitable role as handmaid to the Lord:

Proclaimed Queene and mother of a God,  
The light of earth, the soveraigne of Saints,  
With Pilgrim foot, up tyring hils she trod,  
And heavenly stile with handmaids toile acquaints,  
Her youth to age, her health to sicke she lends,  
Her heart to God, to neighbor hand she bends.  (Oxford 1.1-6)

95 We might note Cassio’s greeting to whom some have argued is a Marian Desdemona: “Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven” (2.1.85). Then calling her “of most blessed condition” (2.1.250) and later, Iago’s, “so blessed a disposition” (2.3.320). See Milward’s A Chronology and Checklist of His Works on Shakespeare, in English, Gathered in the Burns Rare Book Library, Boston College.

96 Kilroy discusses Mariology in “Changing Eyes,” noting the Blessed Virgin’s “yes” to God (8, 12).

97 See Kilroy’s extensive discussions of Catholic numerology in his studies on Campion, Harington, Shakespeare, and Tresham. See bibliography for list of titles.

98 Southwell calls Mary in “The Conception of Our Lady”: “Our second Eve” (1.1) and in “Our Ladie’s Salutation” he plays with the palindrome Eva/Ave: “The first beganne, the last reversed our harms” (1.1-2), wherein artistically even the diction enact this redeeming reversal or the reconciling of Eros and Agape.

99 See Kilroy’s Edmund Campion: Memory and Transcription, Chapter 5, “Within these Walls: The Interior Life of Thomas Tresham,” for detailed discussion of Tresham’s life as a recusant and his close association with the Jesuits, especially Campion.

100 As additional support, Barbara Rosen, in Witchcraft in England, 1558-1618, notes the way “Puritans contended furiously that miracles had ceased” (33).

101 Weston relates Cecil’s comments: “You knave. You’re all knaves—the whole lot of you. I never want to set eyes on you again. Don’t come near my house again—ever!” (25) Weston observes: “But he was wrong. The evidence had disturbed him; and still more had his own conscience. He could not endure to listen further” (25).

102 Demons also appear in Act 3, Scene 4.
The Spanish Jesuit, Luis de Molina, for whom Molinism is named, attempted to reconcile Providence and Free Will in *Concordia* (1588): “Molina believed that the concept of a divine scientia media or middle knowledge of conditional future contingents he there developed allowed for a complete harmonization of the doctrines of grace, foreknowledge, providence, predestination, and reprobation with a radically libertarian notion of human free will” (Voak 131). Fervently debated, Molina’s ideas were attacked by the Dominicans and Pope Paul V issued a decree in 1607 to the effect that “neither side should condemn the other as heretical” (131). Molina’s ideas influenced Richard Hooker whose controversial *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiaticall Politie* explored these concepts. Hooker was viewed by the Protestant mainstreams as being allied with “popish” beliefs (133). This makes the case that a distinct divide existed between Catholics and Protestants, the latter accusing one of their own of siding with the papists within this controversial “flare up” (131). While this debate and Molina’s introduction of scientia media post-dates Campion’s *Ambrosia* by a decade, and his death by seven years, it is clear that the debates about justification lingered long. See Voak’s “English Molinism in the Late 1590s: Richard Hooker on Free Will, Predestination, and Divine Foreknowledge.”

In 1524, Erasmus’ *Diatribe* had challenged Luther’s 1520 *Assertion* and in 1525 Luther countered with *The Bondage of the Will*. Erasmus having said, “[A]ll I am willing to assert is that the will enjoys some power of freedom” (257) further noted that “Luther has asserted, namely, that everything we do happens not on account of our free will, but out of sheer necessity” (261).

Martin is also noteworthy as the main translator of the Douai-Rheims bible, the bulk of which includes annotations defending the Catholic faith in the face of Protestant heresy. He died of consumption in France in 1582. He was a tutor to Philip, Earl of Arundel. His comments on the faith included a wish for Judith to slay Holofernes, which was interpreted as regicidal. The commentary in the Douai-Rheims bible on the story of Judith (rejected by Protestants as apocryphal) make it clear that she was viewed as a Catholic symbol of the faithful suffering under heresy. We might note that one of the Shakespeare twins was named Judith. His other daughter, Susanna, had the name of another apocryphal figure (*Book of Daniel*) who was also seen as relevant to the Catholic struggle. Susanna is the daughter, along with John Shakespeare, to be fined for recusancy.

See Philip Hughes’ *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in England* on Calvin’s influence. “It was [Cox] leadership that defeated John Knox’s growing influence at Frankfort in 1555, and saved the colony (and perhaps the future of the English State
religion) from a total subjection to Calvin” (130). Early in Elizabeth’s reign “[t]here are beginning to be ordained the first Protestant clergy, not at first, it must be admitted, the most desirable of types, but, as the reign goes on and the universities recover from the almost fatal blow of 1559, approximating more and more to Calvin’s ideal” (146). Peter Holmes in Resistance and Compromise notes a polemical contemporary book “of immense size” by William Rainolds in 1597 that linked Calvinism to Mohammedanism, “and one aspect of the foreign policy of Queen Elizabeth which was particularly denounced by the Catholics was the diplomatic contact she made during the 1580s with the Turkish Sultan, ‘the public enemy of all Christian profession’”(143). John F. King in Voices of the English Reformation: A Sourcebook, says of Calvin’s influence in England: “The institutionalization of consensual theology based upon the ideas of John Calvin and the Rhineland reformers did not represent a Protestant ‘triumph.’ . . . After the advent of Puritan protest against clerical vestments and retention of ceremonial ritual in the 1560s and 1570s, Presbyterians began to advocate congregational autonomy in place of the official Episcopalian government of the English church” (5). Alice Hogge’s God’s Secret Agents notes the influence of Calvin in England under both Elizabeth I and James I. Hogge identifies Sir Christopher Yelverton as one of the Calvinist party leaders in England (101). In Yelverton’s biography at the ODNB, he is referred to as Puritan, though many of his behaviors describe him as less extreme than some of the stereotypes of Puritans. His contemporary John Gerard calls him a Calvinist directly. Hogge also mentions the effectiveness of Oxford in becoming, by James I’s monarchical visit in August 1605, “the Protestant seminary the Government had hoped for, grooming mildly Calvinistic students for the national Church” (342).

107 As with exorcisms, angels, like evil spirits had been rejected during reforms, which is discussed further in the following chapter.

108 Take, for example, Spenser’s Prosopopia: or Mother Hubberd’s Tale, a satiric fable that reveals the author’s anxiety about reforms in England. Here Elizabeth is the sleeping Lion whose robes, “Crowne and Scepter” are stolen by the pretenders—the Fox and his Ape—who are the ambitious, plotting advisors. “The Ape, thus seized the Regall throne, / Eftsones by counsel of the Foxe alone” (1111-12). This suggests influence for C. S. Lewis’ Narnia Chronicles, especially the Ape and Ass in The Last Battle, in which the Ape dresses the Ass in the Lion’s skin to fool the subjects into believing that the Ass is Aslan. Aesop and the Medieval tradition of Ecclesiastical satire provide other sources. While the Fox is clearly William Cecil, the Ape has not been identified convincingly. I suggest considering Robert Cecil, especially as he was already rising in power and influence in Elizabeth’s court when the satire was re-circulated. (Some have argued that the Ape represents Essex. See Paul Hammer’s The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics [146].) Furthermore, the “Ape” would fit some of the common caricatures of the
disfigured son. Shakespeare’s Richard III, who was not historically hunchbacked or clubfooted, is one example of such portraits. Be that as it may, the fact that the Ape is duped by the Fox, rather than overtly groomed for succession, may complicate this reading, but could suggest family in-fighting. Tellingly, Spenser’s 1591 dedication is to “Lady Compton and Mountegle,” a known recusant patron, which lends additional doubt to an absolute pro-Protestant label for the poet. Furthermore, he clearly attacks the Reformed Church: the clergyman in the tale is poorly educated, “for read he could not evidence nor will” (383), speaks out against the Mass, “to feed men’s soules, is not in man” (433), attacks the Old Faith (448-55), privileges “the plaine word” (390), rejects works and overall disparages the church “of yore.” Some sources consider this a more specific attack on Puritans, but the extensive markers do not make this reading exclusive to Puritans. These are all the same general Protestant arguments against the Old Faith discussed above and prevalent in polemical texts. The Foxe and Ape become clergymen, but abusing these offices, they must flee. We also hear that the best way to advancement is to attach oneself to a nobleman. While there is not space to discuss this in greater depth here, the fact that this offers an argument for Spenser’s anxiety about reforms is enough to question his loyalty to the Reformed Church. As satire, he is also careful to make the monarch not the problem; rather, it is dissembling, ambitious advisors. Furthermore, this animal fable participates in the tradition explored above (see Skelton’s Colyn Cloute [1531]), but as with Heywood, we get a direct connection to political persons and events. Suggested persons for the Courtier and Mercury have been Philip Sidney and Robert Dudley, respectively.

109 Discussing morality plays, Joel Altman in The Tudor Play of Mind: Inquiry and Development of Elizabethan Drama, says of Henry Medwall’s late 15th-century Nature, which Altman calls a humanist morality play, that such plays were reassuring to audiences via “a dramatic exemplum which clarifies, by imaging the hero’s adventures, the nature of our own moral experience. Its comic form suggests that our life, too, can have a happy ending if we are careful and, like the hero of the play, finally make the correct choice. . . . Such a model, which expounds the moral operation of the universe and reveals how man may live successfully within it, is an instrument of affirmation, which expresses the author’s sense of order and finds assent in our own gratified response” (17). Such a reading parallels Campion’s Ambrosia as a kind of Christian tragedy-turned-comedy.

110 Traditionally, however, tragedy, according to Aristotle, it is not so much about character, but action: “[Tragedy] not a representation of men but of a piece of action, of life, of happiness and unhappiness, which come under the head of action, and the end aimed at is the representation not of qualities of character but of some action; and while character makes men what they are, it is their actions and experiences that make them
happy or the opposite. They do not therefore act to represent character, but character-study is included for the sake of the action. It follows that the incidents and the plot are the end at which tragedy aims, and in everything the end aimed at is of prime importance.” (1450a; emphasis added) For Christians, “happiness” is ultimately tied to spiritual salvation in an afterlife.

111 Fyfe cites Aristotle’s Poetics 6.24.

112 On the issue of tyrannicide, see Höpfl, “Tyrannicide, the Oath of Allegiance controversy, and the assassination of Henri IV” (314-38).

113 Beauregard makes this claim for Hamlet, especially in terms of Aristotelian-Thomistic concepts of virtue ethics via which he explores the virtue of just vengeance—especially when laws may be unjust because of tyranny. Contextually, as a prince, Hamlet is also a magistrate with ministerial powers to exact earthy justice on behalf of the divine. “According to Aquinas, law is an exterior principle and virtue is an interior principle of action” (92). (See chapter 5 for full discussion and analysis of “virtue ethics” vs. “duty ethics.”)

114 Details about Elizabeth’s conception and birth often put her legitimacy into question. Conceived with Anne Boleyn before Henry VIII divorced Catherine of Aragon, Henry later divorced Anne, as well, and accused her of witchcraft. Thus, both legally and morally, Elizabeth was viewed by many of her subjects (and those abroad) as illegitimate. This is discussed further in subsequent chapters.

115 Noted previously, “shame” is the classical result in tragedy of hubris, whereby shame falls on the one who has fallen.

116 According to rough numbers, it is ironic to note that Elizabeth was, in fact, more “Bloody” than her half-sister, Mary I, who famously bore that epithet (as discussed in the introduction), especially if we consider the disparity in the lengths of their reigns—5:45 years.

117 Incidentally, this parallels “purgation”—the “medical metaphor” of F. L. Lucas’ famous discussion of the cathartic properties of Tragedy (36).

118 This also demonstrates divine love: “For God so loved the world . . .” (John 3:16)—and the eternal salvation such a gift is believed to offer.
See “Sir Thomas Tresham: His Emblem,” and Edmund Campion: Memory and Transcription (140-42). One wonders if the numbers of lines carry any numerological significance: 1407 total; 704 middle. Might there be a deliberate focus on 7s and 4s? (Hypnerotomachia, The Rule of Four) See Maren-Sofie Rostvig’s “Structure as Prophecy” for further insight about sacred numerology, especially the significance of both 7 and 4.

Sidney argues for poetry’s effectiveness over other modes of writing in his Defense of Poesy.

Alison Shell, in Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660, as cited above, discusses the relative freedom English exiles enjoyed on the Continent (109).

The Act of Uniformity (1559), number 3 restricted “interludes, plays, songs, rhymes [and] other open words” that showed reverence for the old faith or disparaged reforms (Documents 331).

We should note that “execution” was the term used not just for those hung and or dismembered at Tyburn (and elsewhere), but in the sense of an execution of “justice” when a punishment is meted out by the State for some supposed crime. Contemporary accounts refer to various punishments at public executions that range from a hand or ears being lopped off, to the actual on-site killing of the accused. Ben Jonson once faced the prospect of having his nose cut off while he was in prison, for which his mother had secreted poison in to him that he might have the option to commit suicide rather than face disfigurement and the very real possibility of a lingering death as a result of that execution. Thomas Pounde famously had his ears surgically removed before the State could perform his execution. See Harington’s “ydle Epigram” titled “Of a fellow jugdgd to lose his Eares”: “Now on the pillory as he was pearching, / The Jaylor for his eares was busie searching / But all in vaine for there was not an eare, / only the place coverd with locks of heare. / Thou Cosener (sayd the Jaylor seeming wrath) / thou wert condemned for a falsed oath, / But now by right one should of thee complain / afore the Lords for Cosonage againe. / Nay said the man, their order me doth bynde / to lose mine eares, not you mine eares to find.” (4.52.5-14)

This trend continues under James I, who had initially promised that no one would ever be persecuted for matters of faith; a promise he obviously never kept. His Oath of Allegiance (1606) is subtitled “An act for the better discovering and repressing of Popish recusants.” See exchange between Venetian Ambassador, Nicolo Molin and Robert Cecil (c. 17 Mar. 1605) about James’ policies in Calendar of State Papers Relating to English
Affairs in the Archives of Venice, Volume 10: 1603-1607 (223-32). Molin said, “I replied that I could not believe, all the same, that his Majesty would break his word so often given that for questions of religion he wanted neither the property nor blood of any man.” To Molin’s appeals for clemency, Cecil replied, “[T]here is no doubt but that the object of these laws is to extinguish the Catholic religion in this kingdom.” The exchange continued as reported by Molin: “I had instructions to address his Majesty on the subject, but I had not done so because I thought the Catholics might rely on his Majesty’s word, that he did not desire either blood or property of any man for religion’s sake. Cecil said, ‘Your Lordship has heard what I said about blood; you may rest assured no one will be punished without serious cause; as to property the laws must be observed; but they will be enforced very dexterously, as I have explained.’” Horatio Brown, the 1900 editor, includes this additional information at Note 6: “On July 30th, 1604, arrears of recusancy fines were remitted to the thirteen gentlemen who were fined £20 a month. The fines were enforced again on Nov. 28, 1604. See Gardiner I., 203, 224. For Lindsay’s missions, see Gardiner I., 97. 224.”

125 Fowler notes that sixteenth-century miniatures (portraits) were often framed in reliquaries, much as that may seem to us profane, he calls it a possible “aspiration” (3).

126 Liturgical framing and numerology will be apparent in the composition of William Byrd, as well, explored in the next chapter.

127 See Davidson’s work on The Solemnity of the Madonna Vulnerata, Valladolid, 1600, in which he gives extensive descriptions of the art and emblems at the English Catholic colleges on the Continent.

128 Citations will be from Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn’s recent critical edition (2007).

129 Puttenham seems undecided about which shape is most beautiful. He first calls the lozenge/rhombus most beautiful (181); but then says other shapes are most beautiful, too: “The pillar is a figure among all the rest of the geometrical most beautiful, in respect that he is tall and upright and of one bigness from the bottom to the top” (186); and then regarding the Roundel, he says it is “[t]he most excellent of all the figures geometrical is the round for his many perfections” (187).

130 See The Epigrams of Sir John Harington (Ashgate 2005) and Edmund Campion: Memory and Transcription (Ashgate 2005). Davidson has suggested: “Tresham seems to have known the hyperrotomachia [the Rule of Four]—a neighbour in Northants had a copy—the Hieroglyphics in the frieze at Lyveden (again someone should try reading
them as a sentence one day) are too close to the hypnerotomachia to be coincidence or Zeitgeist” (“Southwell,” E-mail). Rostvig’s study establishes the ubiquity of numerological knowledge for any educated person and Tresham’s education seems to have exceeded the average.

131 Shakespeare’s sonnets fall into this category prior to their appearing in print, which some believe occurred without his direction or blessing. According to Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, editors of the 1988 Oxford edition of The Complete Works of Shakespeare, “Textual evidence suggests that Thorpe [the sonnets’ 1609 publisher] printed from a transcript by someone other than Shakespeare” (749). Logically, had the publication occurred with Shakespeare’s ready consent and involvement, Thorpe likely would have used manuscripts supplied to him by the poet himself.

132 Kilroy has explored manuscript writing, paper mills, papers and their watermarks, and secret presses in both of his book-length studies cited above.

133 See Marotti for an extended discussion of “corporal” relics (especially 27), and Sweeney, who notes “the physical quality of relics” Southwell’s poetry assumed (48, 284).

134 Kilroy cites BL Add. MS 39831, fol. 10r.


136 See extended discussion of this in the introduction.

137 See: “I Dye without Desert” (5.5); “I Dye Alive,” used three times as “dye” (2.1, 2.2, 3.1) and also as “die” (4.2); “Life is But Losse,” as “dye” (1.1) and “die” (2.1 and 7.6); “What Joy to Live” (5.6); “Life’s Death, Love’s Life” (2.2); “Lewd Love is Losse” as “die” (7.6); “Dyer’s Phancy Turned to a Sinner’s Complainte” (2.7); “David’s Peccavi” (2.6); “Synne’s Heavey Loade” as “die” (6.3); “I Dye without Desert;” in the final line of “A Childe My Choyse” as “direct me when I dye!”; in “Mary Magdalen’s Complaint at Christ’s Death” (3.6); “Josephe’s Amazement” as “die” (9.6) and “dye” (10.2, 12.5); “The Death of Our Ladie” (1.6, 3.3); “Man to the Wound in Christ’s Side” as “die” (4.1); and “Vpon the Image of Death” as “die” (1.6, 2.6, 3.6, 4.6, 5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.6, 9.6).

138 We might think of someone like Shakespeare’s Claudius and the way that he provides evidence that “talking about the right thing is not doing it, and cannot attract divine grace” (Sweeney 20). This is especially evident when Claudius is “at prayer” in Hamlet: “My words fly up, my thoughts remain below. / Words without thoughts never to heaven
go” (3.3.97-8). He also says he refuses to act to give up “those effects for which I did the murder— / My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen. / May one be pardoned and retain th’offence?” (3.3.53-56).

139 Sweeney discusses Calvinism and the Catholic reaction to it, especially Southwell’s mission in England variously, such as how Calvin had trivialized Mary Magdalen’s tears as “self-indulgent, superstitious and mere feelings of the flesh,” noting how Southwell was ministering to a community “orphaned from its spiritual family” and the tangible world of their faith. Southwell’s use of Magdalen and Joseph challenge the perceived tendency of Calvinism to rationalize human experience in order to “dramatize the English Catholic state of loss” (125). Additionally, no angel can appear “in a Calvinised Albion” (128), that is, in England.

140 Christ’s Bloody Sweate

Fatt soyle, full springe, sweete olive, grape of blesse,
    That yeldes, that streames, that poures, that doest distill,
Untild, undrawne, unstampde, untouchd of presse,
    Deere fruit, clere brookes, fayre oyle, sweete wine at will!
Thus Christ unforcd preventes, in shedding bloode,
The whippes, the thorns, the nayles, the speare, and roode.

He pelican’s, he phoenix’ fate doth prove,
    Whome flames consume, whome streames enforce to die:
How burneth blood, how bleedeth burninge love,
    Can one in flame and streame both bathe and frye?
How coulde He joyne a phoenix’ fyerye paynes
In faynting pelican’s still bleeding vayenes?

Elias once, to prove God’s soveraigne poure,
    By praire procurd a fier of wondrous force,
That blood and wood and water did devour,
    Yea stones and dust byonide all Nature’s course:
Such fire is love, that, fedd with gory bloode,
Doth burne no lesse then in the driest woode.

O sacred fire! come whewe thy force on me,
    That sacrifice to Christe I maye retorne:
If withered wood for fuell fittest bee,
    If stones and dust, ye fleshe and bloode will burne,
I withered am, and stonye to all good,
A sacke of dust, a masse of fleshe and bloode. (Grosart 137)

141 The Manchester Sator Square provides early evidence of the presence of Christianity in Britain.

142 Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) was among the first to promote the syncretism of cabalism in Italy. See his famous 1486 discourse *De hominis dignitate, On the Dignity of Man*.

143 Kilroy argues for a similar theme in Harington, especially those texts with a Lenten theme (Memory 104).

144 “Demiurge” as a creative force would be, in part, the Neoplatonic precursor to monotheistic concepts of a divine Creator. This is the lens through which Sweeney perceives Southwell as “Maker” and fits the contemporary Catholic discussions of art, such as Robert Bellarmine’s in *The Mind’s Ascent from God*. Bellarmine’s image of “God as Creator” is the Fountain.

145 Again, see Rostvig’s “Structure as Prophecy” for detailed reading of numerology.

146 Kilroy emphasizes the significance for Tresham of the number three, especially as seen in his punning on his own name, “tres testimonium dent” (give testimony of three) and his Trinitarian Triangular Lodge. Moreover, twelve, which can be represented mathematically as $3 \times 4$, is the number representing God for Tresham as seen in the twelve letters of the statement in Latin: “‘Tres vnum svnt’ [three are one], a variant of which he put above the door of the Triangular Lodge both to symbolize the Trinity and to pun on the affectionate form of his own name (‘My dear Tres’) that his wife used in her letters” (“Emblem” 156) and which Tresham explains in his notes. See also 161. As discussed briefly, below, Kilroy also explains the significance of four in “Changing Eyes: Faith and Fluctuation in *Romeo and Juliet*.” Additionally, the concept “I Liue to Dye—I Dye to Liue” may be found in Shakespeare’s work. Consider Hero’s “death” in *Much Ado about Nothing* when Friar Francis contrives a plan to *save* Hero telling her: “Die to live” (4.1.256). A similar plan effected through another spiritual guide, Friar Lawrence, occurs in *Romeo and Juliet*, albeit with potentially less positive results, depending on how one interprets it. One reading offered by Kilroy posits Juliet as a representation of Catholicism and the Catholic Church *in England* and its faithful recusant community (Kilroy stresses that she is *not* a straight allegorical figure). The same outcome as Southwell’s emblem may occur on a spiritual level as a kind of transcendence for Juliet as “faithful.”
See Anne Dillon’s recent study, *The Construction of Martyrdom in the English Catholic Community, 1535–1603* for relevant discussions, especially concerning Gregory Martin on schism, idolatry, and martyrdom (207).

Note Southwell’s parallel use of “Decease” in his memorial poem for the executed Scottish queen and the way “Release” frees one from temporal suffering with hope of salvation: spiritual immortality.

The Jesuit motto “Love and Lyve” appears on another title page of *Saint Peters Complaynte* (1559) (see Marotti 29). In this emblem, the Latin inscriptions for “Know Thyself” and “Moderation in All Things” frame the motto on banners, left and right, respectively. That frame is then within a frame—a simple black line—which is then framed by a more elaborate arabesque frame, the top portion of which depicts a tiny scene that includes another Jesuit emblem and the IHS: *Iesus Hominorum Salvator* (Jesus Savoir of Men), below which is a chalice with the Eucharistic wafer suspended above it and Christ’s crown of thorns and the three crucifixion nails below it. A man and woman kneel in prayer on either side of this, their faces raised heavenward. Flanking them are winged hearts (doves, according to biographer James McDonald) crowned by laurel wreaths. Marotti notes the very Catholic nature of the book, suggesting that the martyrdom of Southwell, Saint Peter, and plight of English Catholics is connected (28).

See Brownlow, Caraman, Janelle, and Klause variously.

About the anti-Catholic pamphlet *The Papist St. Dominick and his Rosary* (1681), Dillon notes: “This detailed, disparaging commentary on the confraternity and its indulgences was intended to vilify and expose what it calls the theological “folly and knavery” of Catholicism. But, like all such hostile sources, it is invaluable because it provides meticulous detail about the subject of its attack” (“Public Liturgy Made Private: The Rosary Confraternity in the Life of a Recusant Household” 3).

This is much as we saw with Campion’s Augustine in *Ambrosia* in the discussion of will and ability. It also demonstrates the contradiction to labels such as “militant”—the Jesuits were far from it. Curiously, Marotti uses the word “militant” throughout his study in reference to the Jesuits, but never explains why. One wonders whether he is using the propagandistic language of the Jesuits’ enemies or his own, which can be confusing since in reality the term is unjustified. It may come from the fact that because Ignatius had been a soldier the Jesuits saw themselves as spiritual soldiers for Christ as traditionally the Church Militant was about battling evil on earth. Höpfl’s study discusses the military model but says, “[I]n fact military metaphors played no part whatever in the founders’
deliberations about how the society should be organised” (25), in spite of the conventionality of the Jesuits’ role in bearing “sub cruces vesillo Dei militare” (banner of Christ). He continues, “There was of course no reason to reject military analogies, although they are exceedingly rare in Ignatius’s writings and hardly feature at all in his addresses on obedience: an army simply shares the characteristics which Jesuits ascribed to any orderly human collectivity” (25).

153 See Sweeney’s discussion of fishing (50).

154 *Saint Peters Complaynte* is often read as “a typological acknowledgement by Catholic writers of pre-Counter-Reformation papal corruption” (Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy* 81); although, the most accessible level to any reader is a more personal one.

155 The Burning Babe

As I in hoarie Winters night
  Stoode shivering in the snow,
Surpris’d I was with sodiane heate,
  Which made my hart to glow;

And lifting up a fearefull eye
  To view what fire was neare,
A pretty Babe all burning bright
  Did in the ayre appeare;

Who scorched with excessive heate,
  Such floods of teares did shed,
As though his floods should quench his flames,
  Which with his teares were fed:

Alas (quoth he) but newly borne,
  In fiery heates I frie,
Yet none approach to warme their harts,
  Or feel my fire, but I;

My faultlesse breast the furnace is,
  The fuell wounding thornes:
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoake,
  The ashes, shames and scornes;
The fewell Justice layeth on,
   And Mercie blowes the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought,
   Are mens defiled soules:

For which, as now on fire I am
   To worke them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath,
   To wash them in my blood.

With this he vanisht out of sight,
   And swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I called unto minde,
   That is was Christmasse day. (Sweeney 289)

156 It is a pity that “The Burning Babe” is often presented not as Southwell intended, as 33 separate lines, or in eight quatrains, but with only 16 lines, pairs being combined. See Luminaria for an example of this. Obviously, this interferes with the numerological significance of 33 and would make it impossible for readers to understand the importance of that number if they only see 16 lines.

157 Lines cited for “The Burning Babe” include the title in the count.

158 Interestingly, this poem, which has the same meter and rhyme as “The Burning Babe,” with its title, can also be read as having 33 lines, explored presently. Grosart prints it with the lines paired, but if we read it like “The Burning Babe,” the same format could apply; however, he comments, “In our MS. (to which we adhere) there is no division into stanzas of four short lines each; nor in the 1596” (N. 1, 71). Sweeney and Davidson note numerous errors in Grosart’s edition. As with “The Burning Babe,” I cite the lines with a full count of 33.

159 We might see this same innovative spirit in Campion’s Ambrosia as well, his treatment of the plot lines being the first.

160 In Sweeney chapter 1, “Rome: the discernment of angels,” and chapter 4, “The flight of angels: England’s altered confidence” Sweeney cites early baroque influences (12, 40, 47). Janelle’s biography notes Southwell’s baroque tendencies, though the movement was not named until later. Helen White explores the metaphysical in the baroque, citing the Jesuits as being “recognized as leaders in the Baroque movement” (159). She considers
Marie Magdalen's Funeral Teares “representative of [Southwell’s] Baroque genius . . . The very choice of this subject would seem the epitome of the Baroque; for it is a commonplace that the penitent Magdalen, with her combination of past sensuality and current remorsefulness, was a favorite object of contemplation to the Counter-Reformation” (160). Finally, Shell argues for Southwell’s influence on Crashaw and notes how critics have questioned the usefulness of “importing the term ‘baroque’ into English literature” on behalf of the latter (56). In a section titled “The English Catholic Baroque” in which Southwell’s influence is made evident, Shell states: “[N]either selective blindness nor the Protestantised aesthetic will be solved until Crashaw and his predecessors are read, on a far larger scale than hitherto; and until the English Baroque, with all its attendant Catholic implications, becomes as unproblematic a term for literary critics as it is for the architectural historians” (103; emphasis added). Note Shell indicates the importance of “predecessors” in the equation that traces influence and value.

161 See discussions in the previous chapter of Justina as “Mistress” (Domina) in Ambrosia, in which parallels to Queen Elizabeth I are highlighted.

162 The Latin translates to: “Virtue flourishes from its wounds.”

163 This would be the opposite of the sign of peace or Theodosius’ request to Ambrose: “Si me prius ore sacraris,” “If you first bless me with your mouth,” which, in addition to a verbal blessing would have included a literal kiss as the traditional sign of peace (5.10.1403). The history of signum pacis from pagan to Christian times supports such an assertion. The kiss of peace sealed contracts, unified the estranged, signified reconciliation (as in Ambrosia), often occurred at the threshold of the physical building of the Church, signified giving and keeping oaths, signified one body as it is believed the souls merge in the sacred kiss—the first kiss is believed to have been God’s when he breathed life into Adam at the Creation (Genesis 2:7). Finally, it signifies Agape—men kissed men (and women, women when the congregations were separated), but as man is in the image of God, pax is seen as a means of kissing the divinity in the human, again a reconciliation of Eros and Agape and the spiritual in the temporal. For biblical references, see Romans 16:16, I Cor. 16:20, II Cor. 13:12, I Thess. 5:26, I Peter 5:14, Luke 7:45, 24:36, John 20:21, 26. See also St. Augustine’s Sermon 227: “Christians embrace one another with the holy kiss. This is a sign of peace; as the lips indicate, let peace be made in your conscience, that is, when your lips draw near to those of your brother, do not let your heart withdraw from his. Hence, these are great and powerful sacraments.” He also makes reference to God’s breath and the Holy Spirit in Genesis, as noted above.

164 Readers may find Kilroy’s talk on Romeo and Juliet, “Changing Eyes,” of interest. See especially the extended discussion of “Lest faith turn to despair,” a very real concern
for the recusant community that would come to fruition in the Gunpowder Plot. Kilroy explores the corruption at Elizabeth’s court (and virtually everywhere else in London) citing John Donne’s *Satyre III* (c. 1594-97) as evidence of the moral atrocities at court when the speaker feels himself “turne beast” while “Becomming Traytor” in the midst of such corruption, revealed through “a dream vision of a court which is worse than Dante’s vision of hell” (6-7). Regarding treason, recall that those who refused the Oath and Elizabeth I as their spiritual head, were considered not simply heretics, but traitors—by law. Moreover, Kilroy explains, “In two of the manuscripts the text reads ‘A Topcliffe would have ravish’d him away’; in two others, ‘Pursevant’ is glossed as ‘Topcliffe’, the cruel torturer who was said to have ravished Anne Bellamy, and then used her to trap Robert Southwell at Uxbridge at the beginning of 1593” (6), after which Topcliffe secretly and heinously tortured Southwell in his own home. This offers pointedly contemporary evidence for the kinds of subversive discussions that occurred both in manuscripts and in printed texts, the “subtext” to which various select, sympathetic audiences would have been alert (Sweeney 98).

165 Helen Vendler in *The Art of Shakespeare’s Sonnets* notes a masque-like procession of temporal ills in Shakespeare’s Sonnet 66 (308).

166 The list of temporal ills in Shakespeare’s Sonnet 66 come to mind, especially: “And simple truth miscall’d simplicity” (11).

167 This is Donne’s Holy Sonnet 18—another sacred number, in a poem discussing the Church.

168 This discussion of “alterations” cannot but bring to mind Shakespeare’s Sonnet 116 with its meditation on True Love that is steadfast “when it alteration finds” (l. 3). In one possible reading on a devotional level, as Sweeney’s analysis suggests, “reforms” cannot shake the faithful.

169 Nancy Pollard Brown writes that after Southwell’s martyrdom: “What Janelle called ‘The Apostolate of Letters’ continued, and its influence permeated the religious writing of the last years of the sixteenth century and the work of the metaphysical poets in the first part of the seventeenth. After 1636, however, all publication ceased with the growth of puritan distrust of Catholic and Laudian attitudes. Southwell’s reputation was stifled, and with the changing fashion he became no more than a distant outrider in the procession of literary figures. In more recent years a powerfully original body of work has been reassessed with the recovery of texts, the publication of volumes of his work, and perceptive critical comment.” (*ODNB*)
Kilroy also discusses this in “Changing Eyes,” with a particular focus on the tactile and sacramental quality of the imagery involving hands and lips in the pilgrim sonnet in *Romeo and Juliet* (5, 9).

Dillon notes that as many as eleven priests had been given papal approval to establish confraternities of societies of the rosary prior to Garnet being granted permission to do so in England (463).

For the 1571 victory at Lepanto as part of Pope Pius VI’s Turkish crusade, the invocation of Our Lady and intercessory prayer via the Rosary had been viewed as central to the crusade’s success.


See *The Rosarie of Our Ladie. Otherwise called our Ladies psalter With other Godlie Exercises Mentioned in the Preface*, printed in Antwerp 1600. This text served as a primer or catechism for English recusant Catholics. Accessible at EEBO, that copy is housed at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The three roses and their attendant mysteries are explained with illustrations. The preface, by T. W. P. and is signed, “Your own al and ever in Christ,” is dated 25 March 1590. Such texts were tiny, in order to make them easy to hide to avoid discovery.

Sweeney discusses Garnets passion for music and numerology: “both poetical and mathematical” to argue for the fellow Jesuits influence on Southwell’s verse (107).

William Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* (1.1.1).


Thimelby had criticized the spiritual erotic in Crashaw’s verse. Shell notes: “Crashaw, like many other mystics, designedly uses the linguistic commonplaces surrounding sexual surrender as metaphors for religious ecstasy. But students both of sexuality and of religion at this period have been less broadminded than Crashaw himself: perhaps because, until very recently, interest in one has commonly accompanied distaste for the other. It has led to a reductionist approach” (Shell 100).

See discussion of this in the previous chapter. Tellingly, James’ Oath of Allegiance (1606) is subtitled, “An act for the better discovering and repressing of Popish recusants,” by which fines had been imposed retroactively, a financial burden that was devastating to many but which the crown was happy to level in order to increase revenue. Fines were discussed in greater detail in earlier notes. See exchange between the Venetian Ambassador Molin and Robert Cecil, c. 17 March 1605 in the Calendar of State Paper.

Fellowes says that William Shelley “had been committed first to the Fleet Prison and later to the Tower for taking part in a Popish plot, and the property had been sequestered” (15).

Thomas Tresham had erected partition walls at Rushton Hall in order to conceal the Tresham Papers (now at the British Library); others were hidden under the flooring.

McCarthy writes, “It’s interesting that the road across his property was finally reopened by the persuasion of none other than Lord Petre, who must have convinced him that he was safer keeping an atmosphere of good will with his non-Catholic neighbors” (“Byrd Chapter [Draft],” E-mail). Petre is known to have encouraged recusants to attend Protestant services to avoid trouble and fines but stressed the necessity of remaining free in conscience so this strategy with Byrd is in keeping with his more moderate and anti-confrontational stance as a “Nicodemite” or “Church papist.”

This may seem to be somewhat tangential, yet, consider prairie dogs and their highly specialized communities or “towns” and the division of labor that includes sentries who keep watch. Prairie dogs make their communal burrows only in open spaces where their keen eyes can see for great distances. Boundaries are where lines of sight cease or become obstructed. The sentries warn the community members of potential danger and intruders via a sophisticated system of calls, squeaks, and clicks. The point is very clear: unobstructed surroundings make it extremely difficult for unwanted visitors to approach undetected. Armies are known to take advantage of similar strategies.

See Kilroy for details about the building’s coded nature (Memory 123, 135, 137-38, 140-42, and 145).
McCarthy graciously shared excerpts of the MS draft with me during research for this study. At the time of this writing, the book is forthcoming.

Article 6 of The Thirty-Nine Articles makes clear that Susanna, in The Book of Daniel, being considered apocryphal, does not affect Reformed doctrine.

For this insight, Kerman acknowledges Craig Monson in the same note.

Martin would be a different story if he were say a Jesuit of Spanish descent who were writing another Latin translation of the bible for a predominantly Continental, and thus more generally Catholic, audience. The focus on the English variety of Catholicism and the needs of his recusant audience should not be dismissed. We should note that while Catholic texts were dangerous, as David Beauregard suggests, one convenient and legal solution can be found in the Bishop’s Bible, which included the Catholic and Protestant texts side-by-side with the Protestant refutations of contested doctrine. “Such a volume would have provided perfect cover” (164). This brings to mind a similar strategy Marotti notes whereby, in an attempt to bypass censorship, potentially seditious material often began by adopting the Protestant line to disparage Catholicism, but later became less vitriolic and increasingly sympathetic (190).

See also Asquith’s Shadowplay for discussion of the numerological significance of “Thirty-Three” (299), and for “Five” (292).


Calvin’s Institutes had famously declared, “[T]he human mind is . . . a perpetual forge of idols” (1.11.8). Section 10 addresses: “The evasion of the papists. Their agreement with ancient idolaters.” See Alexandra Walsham’s Reformation of the Landscape for the Protestant condemnation of idolatry (83-94, 97-8, 128-29). “The necessity for the complete obliteration was a theme that found its way into the central documents of Edwardian and Elizabethan reform” (97), complete destruction that included, according to the Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England: “all shrines, covering of shrines, all tables, candlesticks, trindles or rolls of wax, pictures, paintings, and all other monuments of feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry and superstition: so that there remain no memory of the same in walls, glass windows, or elsewhere within their churches or houses” (Vol. 1, 221).

Perhaps this urge to leave something behind is like Shakespeare’s desires articulated in Sonnet 65’s couplet: “O, none, unless this miracle have might, / That in black ink my love may still shine bright.”

As mentioned above, “bark” and “tempest” are both topical makers for the Catholic Church as the Barque of Peter in the Reformation Tempest. Given that both terms appear together in Shakespeare’s Sonnet 116, it is tempting to consider reading it on a spiritual level where “True Minds” refers to the faithful and “Love” to their faith. Sweeney notes Southwell’s use of this imagery as well in “The prodigall childs soule wrack” which is “an emblem-picture of the storm-tossed boat” to show the plight of the recusant soul in England that can only “cling to the wreck” without help. “The ship of the English soul is adrift, the helmsman thrown overboard; indeed, it is sinking, and the lifeboats have been taken away. In this poem at least, the Christian virtues of mercy and grace do supply the smallest of lifeboats” (127).

See discussions of “Nationalism” and the way figures like Lingard and others are deracinated to be viewed as “foreign.”

Though he was a twentieth-century economist, Linden’s insight about perspective has become a commonplace for understanding the present via the past. He is cited by *The American Heritage Dictionary,* 4th ed. by way of example to define perspective.

T. S. Eliot’s carpet analogy employs similar logic.

This is also referred to variously as the Tudor or Whig Myth.

Early during Henry VIII’s reforms, *The Treason Act* (1534) stated that for anyone to “slanderously and maliciously publish and pronounce, by express writing or words, that the King our Sovereign lord should be heretic, schismatic, . . . shall be adjudged traitorous [and] the offenders, therein and their aiders, consenters, counselors and abettors . . . shall have and suffer such pains of death and other penalties, as is limited and customized in cases of high treason” (qtd. in Jones 44). Jones calls this a “[b]old
revolutionary statement based on some vague ‘precedent’ which was taken for granted and backed up by terror tactics” (45). Cromwell’s imprint on the “history” of England “gave from the start, that a priori approach which initially acted as an obstruction to historical research at all, defying historians even to think of testing its premises, and later absorbed the early research into its own structure” (45). To support reforms, “the use of systematic propaganda was to become one of the most effective weapons in the armory of modern nation-states, reaching its apogee in the hands of the totalitarian systems of the twentieth century” (71). This requirement is believed to have sparked the Oxford Movement and John Henry Newman’s eventual conversion to Catholicism. Now the Blessed John Henry Newman, Newman was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI on 19 September 2010 in Birmingham, England.

202 Curiously, Crashaw did not convert to Catholicism until three years before his death, yet as Shell and others have shown, he is not given his due as an English poet because of his ties to Rome. See R. R. Reno’s interview with Robert Miola for First Things.

203 As late as 1854, decades after the Reform Bills, “Oxford undergraduates were still required to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles at matriculation” (Hogge 391).

204 Consider the ideal of nationalism behind both the Israeli and Palestinian attitudes toward a “nation state” as suggested in the journalistic coverage of the Jewish killings in France.

205 Benedict Anderson in his Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, makes the claim that “the dawn of the age of nationalism” can be located in eighteenth-century Western Europe, a period that he considers to be “the dusk of religious modes of thought” (11). See also A. B. C. Cobban, “Edmund Burke and the Origins of the Theory of Nationalism.”

206 Marotti asserts that “English Nationalism rests on a foundation of anti-Catholicism” (9).

207 In “Historicism and the Question of Censorship in the Renaissance,” Janet Clare writes: “As a means of social and artistic control, the focus is not the institution of censorship but power in general. Power not only represses, it creates a ‘truth’ which serves as its own legitimation. Such power, new historicists have argued, interacts with the cultural artefact which serves to replicate it. For new historicists and, less markedly, cultural materialists, power is seen as a vital ingredient both in social and in textual formation. As an institutionalized if crude form of power over literary output and literary form, censorship also represents a more insidious means of control of cultural boundaries.
But it has been given no real place in the power equation by critics with new historicist predilections and, in the case of cultural materialists, it has been regarded unproblematically as repressive and draconian.” (158)